

Sketching Product Sounds

A masterclass for getting acquainted with a portion of product sound design

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Sketching is an indispensable creative activity during the conceptual design phase of a product. By doing sketches, designers tentatively embody their imagery concerning both the product (e.g., shaver) and the desired experience (e.g., sportive). Although visual sketching is commonly and easily practiced among designers, sketching is not limited to the visual property of the product. Nowadays more attention is being paid to multi-sensorial product experience. Thus, sketching needs of designers extend to other salient product properties such as product sounds.

Product sound sketching is an under-practiced field mainly due to the fact that the tools and methods to conduct sound sketching are often unavailable to the product design society. It may also be difficult for designers to intuitively sketch sounds by, for example, adopting techniques from visual sketching. Sound is a time-based phenomenon caused by an event (i.e., an object in action over a certain duration) which makes its existence always dependent on its source. Therefore, our mental capacity to perceive, reproduce, and imagine sounds drastically differ from images. Designers definitely deserve to get acquainted with the solutions dedicated for sound sketching.

With this masterclass, we intend to introduce the initial phase of product sound design to designers, design researchers and design students. The activities of the masterclass will mainly cover the conceptual sound design with a focus on sound sketching. During the class, participants will receive theoretical lectures given by experts, do hands-on design exercises, and get familiar with the Product Sound Sketching Tool (PSST!).

The overall aim is to help designers understand the needs of product sound design and learn to incorporate sound in their design decisions. This will be achieved by providing designers with knowledge on the auditory experience, multi-sensorial design, meaning deconstruction, and imagery; by introducing familiar methods for deconstructing the meaning of a desired experience; and by allowing them experience sound design by dedicated tools.

This is a one full day masterclass. The masterclass will take place in the Sound Lab of the faculty. Anyone who is interested in sound design is welcome. We want to limit the number of participants to about 30. Those who are interested are kindly asked to send their motivation for participation together with their affiliation (this info will be used by the organizers to determine the level of the masterclass).

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