

February 2014

## Sound Exploration: Text to Music

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### Recommended Citation

Park, Raisa and Swank, Annalisa (2014) "Sound Exploration: Text to Music," *The STEAM Journal*: Vol. 1: Iss. 2, Article 25. DOI: 10.5642/steam.20140102.25  
Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/steam/vol1/iss2/25>

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STEAM is a bi-annual journal published by the Claremont Colleges Library | ISSN 2327-2074 | <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/steam>

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## Sound Exploration: Text to Music

### Abstract

This sound exploration repurposes the familiar – written text – and literally translates it into music giving text a new form.

### Keywords

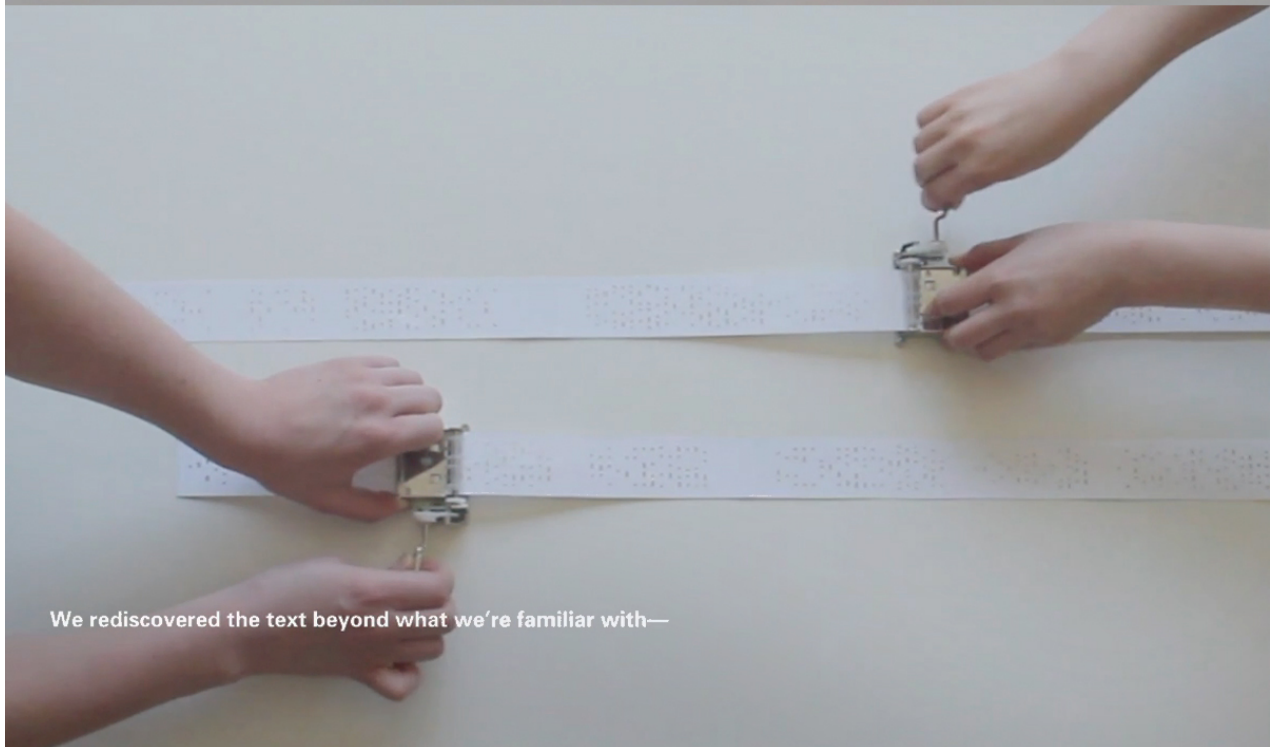
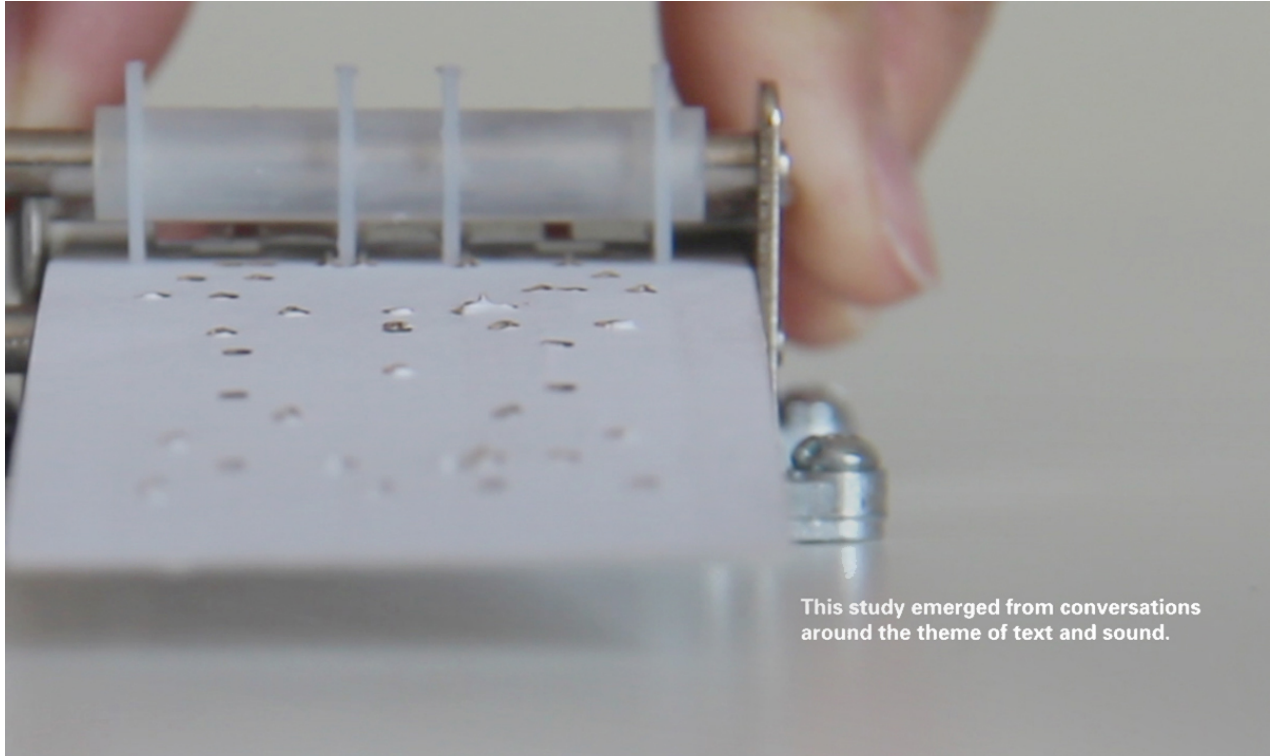
sound, music, text, Braille

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**Sound Exploration: Text to Music**  
Raisa Park & Annalisa Swank



This sound exploration repurposes the familiar – written text – and translates it into music. The aim of the exploration was to give text a form beyond the written and spoken language and create a literal translation from text to music. Additionally, the project sought to make the user a central catalyst in the experience. Preliminary ideation quickly revealed that simple physical tools, which the user could operate seemed most fitting to execute this concept.

Upon initial explorations within sound and code, it was found the dot patterns in Braille have the proper structural formatting to be used as physical input in sound devices, such as music boxes. Because of its physical tactility and its ability to substitute for visually driven communication, Braille was aptly equipped to be used as an input in the exploration.

During subsequent phases of the project, a variety of words and passages (selected for written length and letter pattern, as well as for spoken sound, tone and emotion) were translated into Braille, formatted into narrow columns and laser cut into strips of paper. Fed through a music box, these strips created the musical transcription of the words. Despite the variety within the input, the resulting music always reflected the tone and quality of the music box and no apparent musical patterns were discovered based on the texts' written or spoken properties.

Thus, the direction of the exploration then became less about finding the musical difference between specific words, but instead about highlighting the unique result in the translation of text to music through simple tools. In short, showcasing Braille and a music box as the intermediary between text and music.

This unique musical project was captured on film as a "conversation" between the two designers. The film and additional imagery can be viewed at [www.raisapark.com](http://www.raisapark.com) and [www.annalisaswank.com](http://www.annalisaswank.com).