



All The Right Noises

How Talliston's rooms and gardens became wired for sound

Senses make life meaningful. In fact, it can be said that what is experienced through the senses is life itself. Seeing and hearing are the basic fundamentals of life and as much a necessity as human nourishment as food and water. Though both of the higher senses may seem to be of equal importance, it is not often realized that hearing has the greater effect in determining the character of our lives. In fact, hearing has traditionally been regarded as the highest, most powerful of the senses which is probably why music is arguably the highest and most influential of the arts to many people.

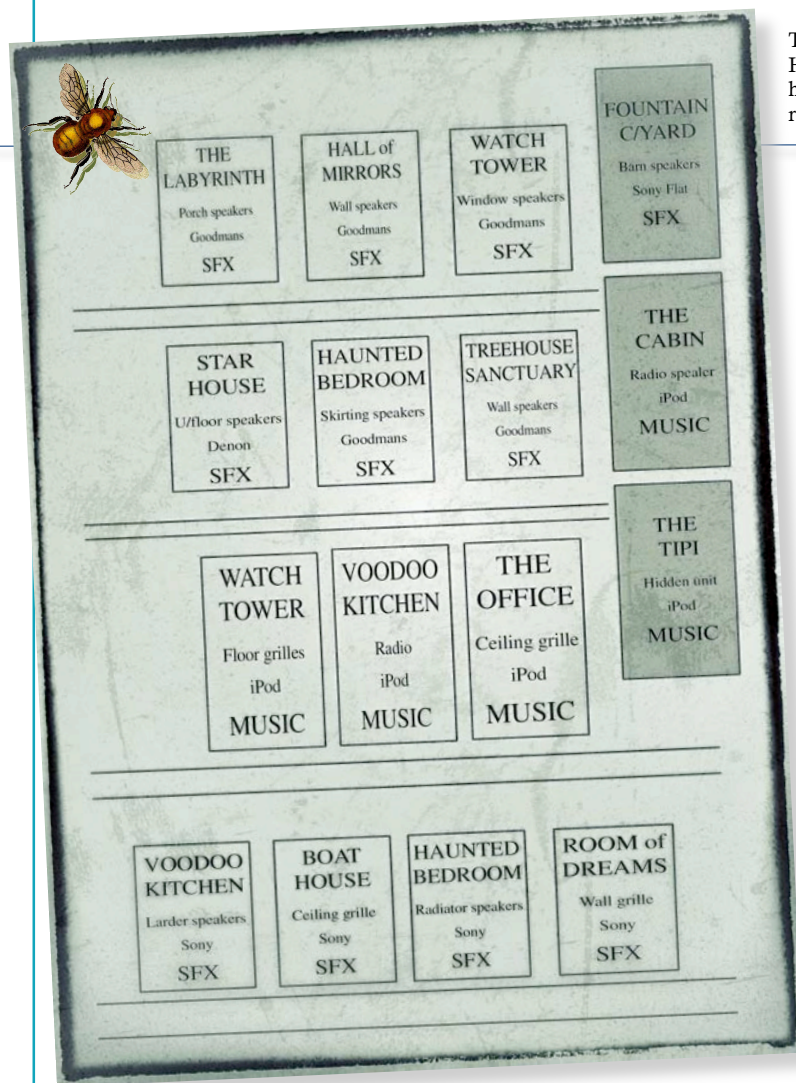
Patrick Drummond, Ardmore's veteran sound editor with over 30 years experience, summed up the joys and motivations of working in the (often unfairly overlooked) sound department, saying: "The last creative brushstroke that is put onto a film is the soundtrack. A real joy can be felt as life is breathed into a film story conceived of many years before..." Films show clearly that sound is undoubtedly a vital element not only in movie production, but also in our life's at large. Can you imagine *Jaws* without John Williams' score? *Psycho* without those grating strings as Janet Leigh is mercilessly knifed in the shower? And the most important aspects of sound are those qualities which convey emotions. It is through the different expressive qualities of sound that we learn the various nuances and subtleties of emotion. This enormous range of gradations in our emotional experience is communicated most often through the sonic arts, thereby saving us the need to have corresponding real-life experiences.

The Sound of Music

There are various reports exploring the effects of ambient noise on creative cognition. Research suggests that it's harder to be creative in a quiet space, while loud workplace can be frustrating and distracting. But there is such a thing as having enough noise to work and the mix of calm and commotion in an environment like a coffee house is proven to be just what you need to get those creative juices flowing. There are even companies like Coffitivity who provide an app that plays coffee house murmur – and I'm listening to it now as I type these words in the race to meet the *Talliston Times* deadline!

Being a little more technical, here's some more info on how ambient noise can affect creativity. Results demonstrate that a moderate (70 dB) versus low (50





TALLISTON'S SOUND SYSTEM

Hidden in the Victorian Boiler Room is the sonic nerve centre for the entire house, allowing multiple levels of ambient SFX and music to flow into every room and location of the house – including the gardens

A World of Sound

In each location of the house and gardens, great pains have been taken to mix both hidden speakers and visible period pieces to create the various levels of sound required. A good example of this is the Treehouse Sanctuary, where quadrophonic speakers surround guests with the noises of birds, creaking tree trunks and the village noises below, while also incorporating a reproduction 1960s stackable three-speed record player/radio from Steepletone Products. Based on original 1960s designs and with a red leatherette finish, this item had to look new to the period rather than buying an authentic antique. Below sit a variety of easy listening vinyl albums to bring a little Bacarach into the ambience. For variety, the sound effects (SFX) can be interchanged to create a high wind scenario and also rainstorm (for the wet season). Visitors have commented that the room actually feels like it is moving in the wind – and a great illustration of how persuasive the element of sound is.

Outside, secreted in porchs, lantern bases and even a bird box external speakers provide sounds of the Canadian wilderness, village life and folk bluegrass to blanket and compliment life outdoors. In this way, an underlying mood is created, and if you do explore further inside the Boiler Room (our coal-black cupboard under the stairs in the Victorian living room), you'll find drawers of individually created CDs and iPod players crammed to the gills with music and SFXs ranging from Big Band anthems through Nordic folk to spine-tingling creeks and scuttling noises that come as if from nowhere in the Haunted Bedroom.

The entire final effect completes the journey of senses through the house – a journey that starts every morning at 06:45 when the entire house switches on for our unique version of the morning alarm call...

dB) level of ambient noise enhances performance on creative tasks and increases the buying likelihood of innovative products. A high level of noise (85 dB), on the other hand, hurts creativity – with different music structures affecting different types of creativity activity (such as writing and painting). And as Talliston was designed specifically to inspire creativity, sounds were always going to be integral to that storytelling palette.

Battling the elements: the opposing room designs at Talliston

EARTH vs WATER	The Labyrinth vs The Fountain Courtyard
AIR vs EARTH	The Hall of Mirrors vs The Voodoo Kitchen
FIRE vs AIR	The Watchtower vs The Starhouse
WATER vs AIR	The Boathouse vs The Treehouse Sanctuary
EARTH vs FIRE	The Cabin vs The Office
FIRE vs WATER	The Haunted Bedroom vs The Room of Dreams
SHADOW	The Tipi

