

Bio

Michelle Lewis-King is a Senior Lecturer, artist and acupuncturist whose projects explore the embodied performance of medicine and technology in a globalised world. Michelle holds a PhD in Art, Science and Technology, exhibits her work internationally and has written for the *Journal of Sonic Studies*, *The Acupuncturist* and *Digital Creativity*.

Title

Qiscapes 氣穴音景: Reading the Cross-Cultural Body

Abstract

This paper introduces Qiscapes 氣穴音景 (2019-), a cross-disciplinary research series that investigates complex inter-relationships between embodiment, the performance of medicine and cross-cultural approaches to science and technology. Drawing on my experience as an artist, acupuncturist and digital humanities scholar, I re-stage the Chinese medicine encounter within a digital performance context to create immersive spatial audio environments that form a co-resonant ‘healing’ relationality between peoples’ bodies and their environments. Qiscapes explores the contested existence of qi 氣. To do this, I created an instrument that sonically amplifies the process of acupuncture point location (qi anatomy) as well as the strength or weakness of ‘biosignals’ (or ‘qi’) that travel through each acu-point (qi physiology). The device is adapted from a clinical device into a medical-performance instrument that explore the meridian and point cartographies of human body (and animal bodies) from traditional Chinese medical texts in relation to the acupuncture point location and qi dynamics in real-time within the bodies of performance participants. As a result, each body emits a bespoke ‘qi’ soundscape that materialises a nonmodern and transcultural vision of the body. Artistic communication of the contemporary Chinese medical encounter to audiences across the US, Europe and China is transdisciplinary and transcultural by its very nature, since it integrates together three disciplines (art, medicine and technology) and two cultural approaches to medicine (allopathic and Chinese medicine). This form of communication is an important area of research development in the humanities because, although artistic and digital performance practices are widely used to communicate biomedical knowledge to global communities, using digital performance to research and communicate Chinese and East Asian knowledge to international audiences has been largely neglected.