

The School is Full of Noises



Recently, BBC's Radio 4 broadcast this excellent programme on how tape loops, recycled everyday sounds and countless other weapons of the avant-garde found their way into school music lessons during the 1960s Presented by Ian McMillan, it is a fascinating exploration of musical improvisation and composition in the school built around the ideas of John Paynter and others.

It begins in an attic. Jonny Trunk is a collector of music's less travelled pathways, amongst them LPs of school children from the 1960s performing the most ambitious musical works imaginable. They have titles like 'Music for Cymbals', 'An Aleatory Game' and 'Don't Drink and Drive'.

Ian's journey sets out to rediscover the creators of these musical curiosities, both the educators who conceived them and also the pupils themselves. Eventually, Ian's travels take him to a dark place, a cavern complex near Pateley Bridge where he retreads footsteps taken by children for a recording project. He even manages to find one of the children who participated in the classes and interviews her about the experience.

The programme is accessible [here](#); however, I suspect it might not be there for too much longer so you can download an MP3 of the programme [here](#) too.

<http://www.jsavage.org.uk/jsorg/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-School-Is-Full-of-Noises.mp3>