

PODCAST TOOLKIT



**DIVER/
SITY STO
/RIES**

CONTENT

- 1. WHAT IS A PODCAST?**
- 2. TYPES OF PODCASTS**
- 3. MICROPHONES AND RECORDERS**
- 4. EDITING AND SCRIPT**
- 5. PUBLISHING**



ABOUT *DIVERSITY STORIES*

ArtEZ studium generale's *Diversity Stories* is a podcast about diversity in its broadest sense. It can be about different identities, cultural diversity, different perspectives and methodologies of thinking and creating, but also about sustainable production, trade and climate issues: the importance of diversity of economic systems, biodiversity, etc. The podcast is a variety of personal reflections, stories and research by ArtEZ students and staff, and recorded studium generale events.



In 2018 we launched the first season of six episodes featuring many different stories, such as an exploration of cultural appropriation in fashion, personal stories about feeling at home, a feminist opera on menstruation, a column about the (rather disappointing) discovery of Dutch cuisine by one of ArtEZ's international students. Listen to these podcasts via your favourite podcast app (use *Diversity Stories* as key words) and via our website. The second season will be in English. The podcast will appear in monthly episodes (from 1 April 2019), again hosted by students.

We welcome your idea for a podcast! Do you have an idea for *Diversity Stories*? Good! Please contact Fleur Blokhoven: F.Bokhoven@artez.nl. Our editors can offer both technical support and support in terms of content. They can contribute ideas and help you decide on your approach. For the rest, you will be working

on your podcast on your own. Every format is allowed—be it interview, music, documentary, conversation, etc.—as is every perspective: personal, artistic, journalistic. Studium generale has its own recorder, but it also produces podcasts in collaboration with Ondercast.



1. WHAT IS A PODCAST?

A podcast is simply an MP3 file hosted on the internet. Via an RSS feed you can sign up for a podcast, so that you will get new episodes as soon as they appear. This is done via a 'podcatcher' (a podcast app such as the Apple podcast app or Stitcher or Overcast).

The content of a podcast can be anything from a DJ's mix to interviews to reports. If it can be audio, it can be podcast. So, in fact a podcast can be seen as 'radio on demand'. Your podcast app will be a kind of audio Netflix with the added advantage that you can do other things at the same time while listening to a podcast.

The first podcast was brought out as early as 2004 (by Dutch radio maker Adam Curry).

In those days, you still had to pair your iPod or other MP3 player to your laptop to transfer the files. Only when players and telephones with an internet connection were introduced, did it become easy to subscribe to a podcast. *Serial*, a true crime podcast by the makers of *This American Life*, is often said to have been the breakthrough of podcasts to the wider public.



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS

It is impossible to give a conclusive overview of all types of podcasts. As described above, in principle anything that can be done in audio (on the radio), can also be released as a podcast.

On top of that, it is a very accessible medium for makers (a podcast can be made on a small budget or no budget at all), which is why the variety in podcasts has increased enormously, especially over the past few years. The spectrum ranges from serious reports to friends engaged in a conversation at their kitchen table about a niche subject. And, even more

importantly, there are listeners for almost every type of podcast. That is the reason why this section does not present a conclusive overview of all types of podcasts or possible subjects, but rather a cross section that is interesting to people who want to contribute to *Diversity Stories*.



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS

NON-FICTION: REPORTS AND STORYTELLING

**THIS
AMERICAN
LIFE**

Strictly speaking *This American Life* is primarily a radio programme broadcast on American public radio. However, *TAL*'s influence on the current podcast landscape is huge. This programme, created by Ira Glass in 1995, forms the blueprint for many narrative non-fiction podcasts. Instead of dry reports, with the journalist as a distant narrator, *TAL* covers stories based on non-fiction, in which the interviewees become characters and the producer becomes an engaging narrator. In short, storytelling in non-fiction.

- Listen [here](#) to an episode of *This American Life*.
- Watch an interview with Ira Glass on storytelling [here](#).
- Dutch language [Plots](#) was inspired by *TAL*.

Similar to *This American Life* is *Radiolab*, a storytelling podcast that always has a scientific slant. What makes *Radiolab* so special is its comprehensive production. Its creator Jad Abumrad is a trained musician and you can tell: every episode is a playful, dynamic mix of narrator's voice, tape, sound effects and music.

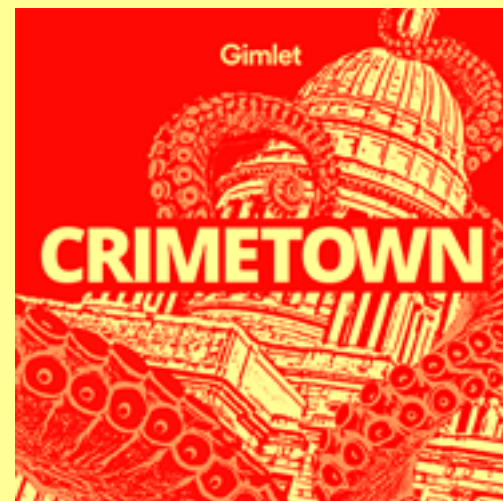
- Listen [here](#) to a *Radiolab* episode.



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS / NON-FICTION: REPORTS AND STORYTELLING



This American Life and *Radiolab* make individual podcasts (with the odd exception). But the same tone and style are also used in serial, journalistic podcasts, often produced in seasons, on a specific theme or issue.



- **Bob** Regarded by many as the breakthrough of podcasts in the Netherlands. A podcast made by SCHIK audio collective and VPRO Broadcasting about the search for somebody who perhaps does not even exist.
- **Crimetown** Season 1 is about the mafia practices of Buddy Cianci, once mayor of Providence.
- **StartUp** Several seasons about starting a business (including the business that produces the podcast).



- **De brand in het landhuis** On 7 December 2003 the eccentric landowner Ewald Marggraff is killed in a fire at his country house in Vught. 15 years after the fire, Simon Heijmans tries to find out what exactly happened.
- **Serial** The first season is about schoolgirl Hae Min Lee's murder and the rightful or wrongful conviction of Adnan Syed, her ex-boyfriend and classmate.
- **More Perfect** A Radiolab series about the US Supreme Court.



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS

NON-FICTION: THE LONG CONVERSATION.



The long conversation has all but disappeared from the radio now. But in the podcast landscape this form has really taken off. Many podcasts consist of just two people talking to each other, often for 90 minutes at a stretch. An example of such a podcast is *WTF* by American comedian Marc Maron. When Maron got sacked from radio station AirAmerica he decided to continue working on his own from his garage. After some searching, a format emerged: long interviews preceded by a monologue spoken by Maron about his life at the moment. The podcast turned out to be so successful in 2015 that the then president Obama visited Maron's garage.

- Listen [here](#) to the *WTF* episode featuring Barack Obama.

The long interview is usually conducted by one host and is characterized by an informal setting. Even though it appears to be one long conversation, that does not mean by definition that this kind of podcast is not being edited. In fact, the original conversations are even longer. There are also podcasts in this genre that are restricted to a niche or theme, usually linked to an organisation. Examples are *Longform* (of the corresponding website) and *Goed Nieuws* (by the Correspondent). Finally, there are long conversations that do not necessarily feature a guest, but are restricted to the hosts who might discuss a niche issue. Examples are *Een podcast over media* (about media) and *De eeuw van de amateur* (about anything).

- Listen to an episode of [Longform](#), [Goed Nieuws](#), [Een podcast over media](#), [De eeuw van de amateur](#).



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS

FICTION: THE RADIO PLAY

In the Netherlands, when we think of a radio play, the gravel bin springs to mind: old fashioned stories in which the sounds almost drown out the texts. Half an hour a week is all that is left for this on the radio: the radio play half hour on Friday evenings. In the English speaking market, particularly in England, the radio play has remained a vital part of the radio landscape. And podcasts also include many radio plays. One of the greatest successes in that field is Gimlet's *Homecoming*. It is being turned into a series now starring none other than Julia Roberts.

- Listen [here](#) to the first episode of *Homecoming*.



FICTION: NARRATIVE PROSE

Narrative prose is a kind of stripped-down version of radio plays, that is boosted with sounds. One of the first great successes of this genre was *Welcome to Night Vale*. That podcast has now expanded into the production company *Night Vale presents*, whose products include the podcast *Alice isn't dead*. In the Netherlands this form is also starting to emerge, with podcasts such as *Babylon* and *De Kloof*.

- Listen [here](#) to *Alice isn't dead*.
- Listen [here](#) to the first episode of *Babylon*.
- Listen [here](#) to an episode of *De Kloof*.



2. TYPES OF PODCASTS

HYBRID: LITERARY NON-FICTION



Of course there is cross-fertilisation between podcasts, resulting in hybrids. This could be called literary non-fiction, just as it is in literature. An example of such a hybrid is *Heavyweight*, in which Jonathan Goldstein tries to help people put something right from their past. There is real tape and the interviews are real, but Goldstein's voice-over can compete with a good short story. Another example is *S-Town*, that is difficult to summarize, but its structure resembles that of a novel.

- Listen [here](#) to *Heavyweight*.
- Listen [here](#) to *S-Town*.

This was just a small selection of podcasts and forms. As has been described before, the result of this medium's accessibility is that podcasts exploring new forms appear every day. There are comedy podcasts such as *With Special Guest Lauren Lapkus* and recordings of Dungeons & Dragons game sessions, such as *Not another D&D podcast*. And everything in between. We are only standing on the threshold of what is also called 'the new golden age of radio'.

- Listen [here](#) to *With Special Guest Lauren Lapkus*.
- Listen [here](#) to *Not another D&D podcast*.



3. MICROPHONES AND RECORDERS

To record a podcast, you have three options (simplified description):

- 1. Recording with a handheld recorder.**
- 2. Recording with a recorder and a microphone.**
- 3. Recording with a microphone and a computer.**

In this section we will briefly discuss when to use which option.



3. MICROPHONES AND RECORDERS

RECORDING WITH A HANDHELD RECORDER



The simplest way to record a podcast is using a so-called handheld recorder. Handheld recorders are small 2-in-1 devices that often come with two microphones (for stereo sound) and a built-in recorder that records onto an SD card. The advantage of such a recorder is of course that it fits inside your pockets and you can take it everywhere. The quality is usually good enough to record an interview or a conversation, for example. Also, it is the cheapest option and it can be used most flexibly, in a variety of ways.



These days many radio makers (like *Man met de Microfoon* presenter Chris Bajema) only use handhelds. They often include a special grip with a so-called suspension mount. That combination ensures that there is no handling noise,

i.e. the sound made while holding the recorder. A disadvantage of handhelds is that they often record many surrounding noises, which makes them less suitable for busy environments. In interviews where you record both participants, you will usually be sitting somewhat further away from the recorder, and as a result other sound in the space will also be heard. Good handhelds are manufactured by brands such as Tascam, Zoom, Marantz, Sony and Roland.

An alternative for the handheld is your mobile phone with a dictaphone app. Very often the microphones on these devices are pretty good as it is, but there are companies who make special microphones for smartphones. This gives you the quality of a handheld, with even less to carry along.



3. MICROPHONES AND RECORDERS

RECORDING WITH A RECORDER AND AN EXTERNAL MICROPHONE



Recording with an external microphone and a recorder has a number of advantages. The main advantage is: you can match the microphone to the situation. You can use a directional microphone for recordings in a crowded environment (or from a distance) and a different microphone for your voice-over or an interview indoors. Needless to say, a disadvantage is that in no time you will be spending a lot of money. But you do not have to do that all in one go. If you know for sure that you will be working with audio quite often, you could start with a handheld that features XLR inputs (such as the Zoom H5 or the Tascam DR-40 and DR-100), as well as built-in microphones. Then you can always scale up in the future.

RECORDING WITH A MICROPHONE AND A LAPTOP

If you are not planning to do any interviews at all, but are mainly going to record things yourself, then this is perhaps your best option: a good (USB) microphone and your laptop. The advantage is that for the price of a handheld recorder you can get a quite good condenser microphone, such as the Røde NT-USB or the Blue Yeti (shown in the picture on the right). Both work via USB connection, so you do not need another interface to connect XLR microphones. If you want to make a podcast with one guest each time, then it would be better if you did buy a second microphone (or an interface to which you can connect several microphones).



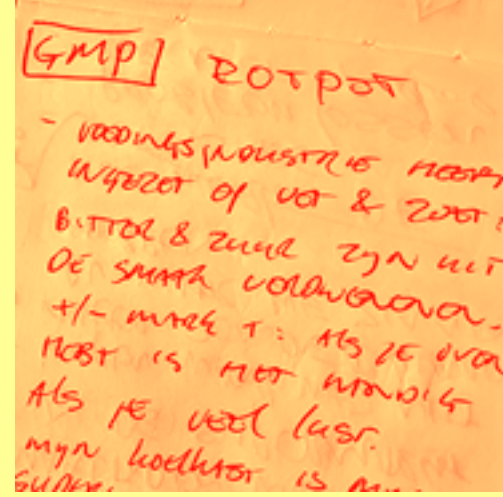
4. EDITING AND SCRIPT

There is not one single way of making a report, radio play or documentary, but in this section we present a set of guidelines for editing and script.



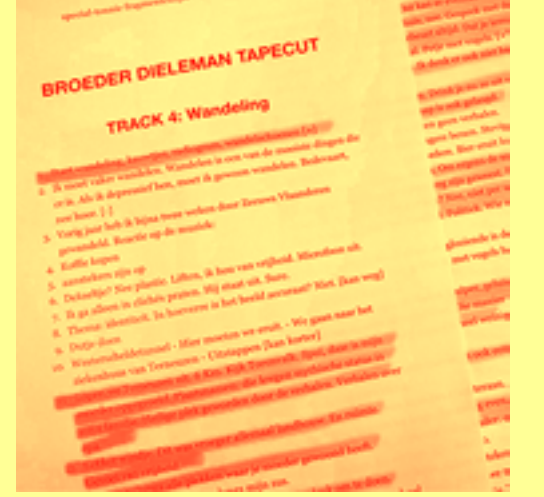
4. EDITING AND SCRIPT

EDITING ON PAPER



Cutting down an interview or selecting audio material for a documentary or radio play actually begins straight away after recording. After finishing an interview or documentary, you immediately write down things that have stuck with you. In the case of a radio play you keep track of the takes, of course: how far did you get in the scene and what was the best take? This way, when you are going to do your editing, you have something to start off with at once. You can also put marks during recording, so you can easily retrieve important parts. The next step is playing back your audio material and making a transcript. This is a time-consuming job, but it is an essential

step in large projects. You can type out the text in full or you can summarize it. Put time codes in your document or put marks in your audio file, so that you know what is being said where. Indicate what the important parts are. You can then order them on paper and later in the audio material. Check to see where you will need a voice-over to connect the parts. Bear in mind that listeners do not tend to rewind tracks easily. So, repeating an important point now and then is not just a luxury. With a radio play or a shorter interview, you could start editing straight away: you save the important parts and then paste them together.

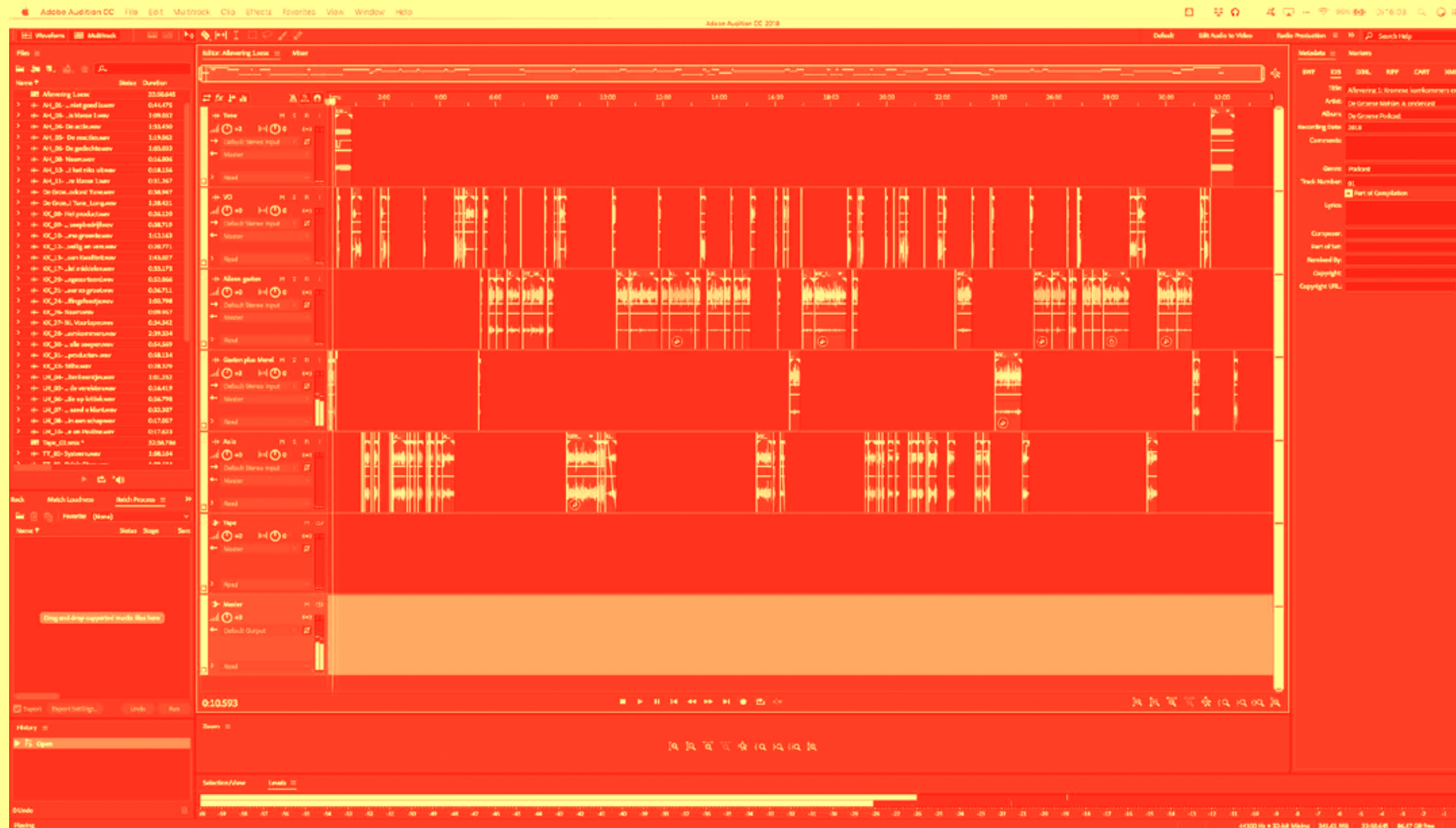


4. EDITING AND SCRIPT

EDITING

The last step is to connect all audio material (tape and audio) by editing it. You learn this best by doing it frequently. Many radio makers use Pro Tools, but Audition and Nuendo are popular DAWs (Digital Audio Workstation) too. Low cost options are Reaper and Hindenburg

(specially created for radio makers). But you can also do a good editing job using free programmes: you will get Garageband with every Apple computer and Audacity can be downloaded for free.



5. PUBLISHING

So, a podcast is nothing more than an MP3 file or a series of MP3 files that you can download to your telephone, computer or MP3 player. To subscribe, you use a so-called podcatcher. The most well-known is of course Apple Podcasts, an app that is on your iPhone by default. Other well-known apps are Stitcher, Overcast, PocketCasts and Tune-In. And Spotify now also has a podcast section.

The question that budding podcast makers ask most is: what do I do to get my podcasts into those apps? The answer is quite simple: you must have an RSS feed for your audio and you pass on its url to the various apps. You can build that RSS feed on your own, entirely from scratch, but it is easier to host with a dedicated podcast host. The advantage of a hosting service is that they often have integration for certain apps such as Spotify and even YouTube. In addition, they make sure that the feed always meets the requirements of the different

podcatchers. There are quite a few hosts now that you can use, including LibSyn (Liberated Syndication) and BuzzSprout who have a long track record. Both offer subscriptions in different price ranges: the more money you pay, the more material you can upload and the more detailed your statistics will be. But you can also start with Soundcloud. The first three hours are free, so you can check to see whether it is really your cup of tea. How you next register your podcast differs per service, but that information is easily available online.

HAVE FUN!

ArtEZ studium generale
www.studiumgenerale.artez.nl

Fleur Bokhoven
F.Bokhoven@artez.nl

Dennis Gaens / Ondercast
dennis@denieuwes.com



**DIVER/
SITY STO
/RIES**