

## **Chapter 6: SoundPlay: A Sonic Experience of Digital Loose Parts**

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### **1. “Jump for Joy” by Jessica Maroney**

I’m looking outside my window into my backyard on a beautiful spring day. The birds are fluttering back and forth to the bird feeder while the squirrels scurry underneath it to get whatever is dropped. The leaves on the trees are swaying side to side, almost dancing. The grass is green and full of life, except for a single round patch. This one area was deprived of light because my trampoline used to be covering it. This portion of grass had sacrificed its own life and growth for mine. Looking at this sad patch of crunchy, brown grass, I was reminded of the fun I had right above it for all of those years.

From the moment I climbed the tree stump on the side of the trampoline and hoisted myself up, I was in a different dimension. It was like walking on quicksand and the moon at the same time. The harder you stepped, the deeper your feet got sucked down, and the higher you soared. When I jumped up and down, I could feel the air move past my face, as I broke through it. I existed between the trampoline and the rest of the world and was constantly being pushed by both sides. Forcing my weight down, I begged the trampoline to help me defy gravity, just for a second, then to welcome me back down safely. I could always count on it.

Usually, I liked to jump alone. The trampoline offered me a place of comfort, yet surprise and transcendence. Often, I would go higher than I expected which was exhilarating, but the best part was I knew I would always come down. I wasn’t afraid on the trampoline; I was ready for adventure and new heights. Sometimes, I didn’t even have to bounce; I would just lay there at night, looking at the stars though the branches on the tree above me. I would hear the eerie sounds of crickets and rustling leaves, but I felt comfortable in the cold air.

Gradually, my trampoline found itself fostering the feet of my friends and neighbors who would come to jump with me. The surface of the trampoline was large; it could hold about 10 of us. Everyone loved the feeling of being launched in the air, the rush of excitement while our bodies were tricking gravity for a split second. Some of the other kids would scream and laugh as they pretended to be birds, or rocket ships, or even popcorn, but I just closed my eyes and let the trampoline take me higher. No matter how many kids would jumping with me at the same time, I still felt alone on it. They were just visitors while the trampoline was my home.

One day, there was definitely more people on the trampoline than there should have been, but no one noticed until it was too late. My cousins, friends, neighbors, and even some adults were all jumping and enjoying all it had to offer them. I was staying in the middle, which is my favorite spot because you can go the highest. I tried to ignore the other people surrounding me, but they yelling and laughing and bumping into me, invading my space. I noticed some people getting particularly close to the edge and I was worried they would get hurt. Just when I was about to speak up and tell people to careful, I heard a snap. One of the springs had shot out of place and plummeted to the ground. Then, another one. And another one. I shouted for everyone to get off but they didn’t pay attention to me. They didn’t even notice that my home was being destroyed. A couple more springs popped until finally everyone hopped off.

I stood on the ground in front of my flawed, broken land of freedom. I wondered if it could still support me; if I could still trust it to occupy my adventures, my imagination and my play. My parents concluded that it was too dangerous and took it away. I remember the tears streaming down my face as they removed the trampoline from our backyard and took it out of my sight. For a while, I was angry at the thought of all those bodies who were on the trampoline with me, crowding my fun and destroying my peace. If I had kept the trampoline to myself, this wouldn’t have happened. But then, I might have been jumping alone in my fantasy land forever.

At my age now, I am no longer angry that my days on the trampoline got cut short because I enjoyed the time I had with it. I know that everyone else did too which, made me realize I had been

selfish for only wanting to jump by myself. I recalled that the more people that were on the trampoline at once, the higher everyone would soar. We actually thrived off of each other's play and the trampoline was the root of it all. So looking at this patch of dead grass, I let the memories bounce back into my head. I know that in our minds, the trampoline is invincible.