

Blind Field Shuttle, Saturday, June 16, 2012, Portland, OR

Transcript by Carmen Papalia

The following is my interpretation of the audio documentation from a performance of the Blind Field Shuttle that I conducted through the farmer's market on the Portland State University campus on Saturday, June 16, 2012. The documentation was produced by Kai Tillman and was mixed for a stereo output. The total running time of the audio from which this text was derived is 00:20:12.

My participants on the day of the walking tour included: my friend Evan La Londe, a student of mine named Glenn, Glenn's friend Calli, my friend Josh Mong, Josh's wife Lucy, their youngest son Milo, their eldest son Henry, and Henry's friend.

"Okay everybody, we're all going to form a single file line here, behind me."

I wait a couple seconds

In those few seconds the soundscape refines for the listener. The group that is being recorded is in a city with much activity. A low drum beat sounds in the distance and keeps a steady tempo as vehicles and the sound of bodies in motion consume the acoustic space.

"Okay, let's see, you gotta, everyone's single file ... great, okay, cool."

"... is everybody cool?"

A helicopter whirs overhead as the sound of amplified voices and instruments lap like waves on a distant shore.

"Okay, so we're all going to go on a non-visual walk through the park today and we're all going to end up at the Portland Art Museum."

The wirey sound of someone pushing a shopping cart on rough concrete.

People engaged in conversation in the distance.

"... and we're all going to be walking single file like this, and we're all going to be holding the shoulder or the elbow of the person in front of us."

"... so get to know the person in front of you."

A voice says "sorry, sorry, what was your name again, I'm Evan".

Someone says “Glenn” in response to Evan’s question.

Evan says “Glenn, good, hi Glenn”.

The two say “nice to meet you” to each other.

Names are exchanged by a few speakers—although they are muffled by noise.

“My name’s Calli”.

“Awesome, Great, great, introductions ... I’m Carmen by the way.”

“... so now that you know everybody, the person in front of you is the person who you’re going to trust.”

Evan laughs.

“... and, um, you’re all going to be trusted by the person behind you.”

“... and you’re all going to have to trust me of course.”

Most of the people in the group laugh—including myself.

A conversation between a couple speakers moves from the background to the foreground, but the topic of the conversation is lost in noise.

“... and so, this walk is going to be, well, you know ... it’s, it’s, people aren’t often accustomed to walking in this manner.”

“We don’t often walk single file like this—aside from in grade school.”

Evan laughs.

“... but what we’re going to do today, is just be aware of how, like, our bodies are taking up space, and, um, how our bodies are moving through space.”

“I can kind of give you some tips, for walking comfortably.”

“You are going to, maybe, kick the heels of the person in front of you ... and this is okay, this is normal, and you might also get your heels kicked by others so, when you’re walking, like, try some techniques out.”

A vehicle or motorcycle sounds in the distance. Its engine surges for the next few seconds as it weaves in and out of my dialogue.

“... like you can shuffle, see if that works.”

“... also, you can pick your legs up and—“

Chuckling, Evan says “march?”.

“Take big steps, I don’t know, try things out.”

Calli also chuckles.

“Okay cool, oh, another thing, there will be obstacles—“

Evan laughs.

“... and it might be a little disorienting, so I’m going to give you, kind of, directions, while we’re walking ... and I’m going to have other people serve as speakers.”

“... so, I’m going to be a speaker, right up here, at the front, and I’m going to give directions from the front.”

I tap my white cane on the concrete at the front of the line of participants.

“... and when I say something, I’m going to need a couple people in the line to also say things, and carry the information down the chain.”

The sound of a motor revving on a distant street.

“... so I’m a speaker right here.”

Cane tap.

“You’re a speaker.”

Joking, I say “I hope I’m touching shoulders”.

The group laughs.

“You’re a speaker.”

”You’re a speaker.”

“... and that’s it.”

“If you’re a speaker you have a huge responsibility, you have to project your voice so everyone can hear it, and this will kind of, um, I mean, come in handy when we’re crossing streets.”

“... I’m going to say cross, and everyone is going to have to say, you know, carry that information down so we can cross safely.”

An alarm from a nearby parking garage sounds beneath my speech.

“Again, everyone is going to close their eyes for the entire tour, um, and if you open your eyes, you’re ... you’re cheating.”

Everyone laughs.

Amused, Evan repeats "... you're cheating"—as if to himself.

"... so, so, keep that in mind."

"I kind of see it like you're all trusting me to take you to the destination safely, and I'm trusting you to participate given the terms of the project."

"... so I hope it will be fun."

"... I, I know it will be fun ... so, um, yeah."

"Does anyone, does anyone have questions before we go?"

A man, in the background, talks to someone but his words are not clear.

"Allright."

"Okay."

"... and this is also, this is a silent walk, but, if you would like to talk, or you feel the need to, just, just do so."

Evan chuckles "just do so".

"Allright, and we're ready."

"Allright."

Evan says "I think we're ready".

The sound of my cane scraping against concrete as we take our first few steps.

The cane bounces off raised stones and imperfections in the walkway and can be heard, softly, for the next few seconds—until it is finally consumed by the noise of activity.

The sound of people's footsteps gives way to muttering—from my teenage participant Henry.

Non-uniform footsteps.

A quiet, squeaky laugh—from my young participant Milo, Henry's brother.

Henry says something to his friend.

Milo says "oh".

Someone laughs.

Milo makes a squeak that sounds like a cat's meow.

Non-uniform footsteps.

A distant cough.

A guy says "... 3:00 man" the way a stereotypical surfer might.

Henry grumbles.

Distant conversations move from the background to the foreground of the soundscape as the group marches forward—but the topics of these conversations are not discernible.

Women talk.

A young girl says something about cherries.

As the group walks closer to what sounds like a chattering crowd of people, a musician starts playing guitar and harmonica. The guitar keeps a steady, confident tempo for the song while the sound of the harmonica rises and falls—bringing a slight sadness to the composition.

The boys laugh as the group walks into a dense and vibrant soundscape.

I announce the first directions to my group "okay, turn right" and two speakers echo my words in loud voices that carry over the music being played.

As the group walks further and further away from the musician, the music slowly blends into the background of the soundscape.

The sound of my cane scraping against a concrete walkway.

My group of participants are soon consumed by a crowd of people in conversation—although most conversations are muddled by movement and noise.

The sound of footsteps and my cane as it scrapes for detail.

Someone says "What are you going to tell her?".

A child's scream echoes in the distance.

A group of women talk to each other.

An older woman says "move this way".

A young boy says "sorry".

Someone laughs.

A woman with a European accent says "neh, neh, neh, neh, neh ... neh" as if she is agreeing with someone, and proceeds to pass by the group.

A young child's playful scream resonates in the distance.

Shoes scuff concrete.

Men and women talk, but very few words are discernible.

Laughing, a woman says “wow” to her male companion—perhaps commenting on the peculiarity of the walking tour.

As if in agreeance, the man says “... isn’t that great?”.

A female voice, far in the distance, says something loudly.

The sound of a person singing peeks softly through the bustling crowd.

A woman begins, “what are you going to take for—” and her words are lost in the noise of the crowd.

A vendor says “do you want to buy cheddar today?”

“Yeah.”

Clarifying, the vendor says “yeah?” and repeats the order to a coworker.

Henry mumbles something that sounds like “this isn’t a bad idea”.

As the group moves closer to the musician, the first few chords of “Good Riddance (Time Of Your Life)” by Green Day can be heard. The musician strums an acoustic guitar and the song sounds sad and sentimental.

The musician is male and sings the following lyrics with passion:

so take the photographs and still frames in your mind

hang it on a shelf in good health and good time

tattoos of memories and dead skin on trial

for what it’s worth it was worth all the while

it’s something unpredictable

but in the end is right

I hope you had the time of your life

The lyrics are sung loudly and with sincerity, but the musician hesitates when enunciating certain words—perhaps because they have escaped his memory.

The song's lyrics become obscure as the group walks away from the musician, and the noise of the crowd soon consumes the soundscape.

Bits of conversation can be heard as the group walks through the crowd.

A guy playfully calls out “hey, get back here”.

A female voice says “he had them earlier” to a companion who replies “yeah”.

Two women react, with laughter, to a male speaker that says “... well?”—one chuckles softly and the other laughs loudly.

The loud woman's laughter gives way to the sound of metal from a heavy cart that one might use to move boxes or shipping palettes. The sound that the cart makes is shrill, and almost unpleasant, and is the focus of the soundscape for a few long seconds.

The cart clangs each time a wheel catches a bump in the walkway—which is often. It meanders through the dense crowd until its presence is lost within the noise of a conversation.

A loud man says “... I found a 49-dollar jacket, but the next, the next more reasonable size—” but his words are soon obscured by noise.

Someone sneezes.

Calli says “bless you”.

The curious sound of a foreign instrument being played far in the distance.

One of my young participants says “urf” after tripping on a stone or twig—and then laughs.

“sorry”.

The children exchange some words and laugh with each other.

Milo laughs loudly. His laughter is youthful and joyous.

Calli says “hey Josh” and gets Josh's attention.

The sound of the instrument gets clearer—although, still, it is obscured by noise.

“Can you move your hand a bit farther out?”

Josh, who is Milo and Henry's father, and who has been silent for the entire walk, replies “okay”.

“Thank you.”

Josh says “Sorry” quickly and politely.

“It’s fine.”

The instrument is now identifiable as a musical pipe, and it is being used to play an upbeat highland-style folk song.

Someone says “wow”—as if commenting on the sound of the music or skill of the musician.

Milo laughs with excitement.

The boys converse and laugh.

Henry mutters “what are you doing?” and, as if in response to his comment, Milo says something through his laughter that sounds like “don’t keep ignoring people”.

A man that is passing by says “... uh, I got Sex in the City—” and trails off in thought.

As a group of speakers passes by, the musical pipe comes into focus acoustically. The pipe sounds like it has a more limited range than does the standard bagpipe that is commonly played during public ceremonies and memorials. The song that the musician performs is slightly repetitive as it flows playfully within a circular compositional structure—although the song sounds highly free form and improvisational. The song carries a celebratory quality that could easily inspire one to dance.

The pipe gets quieter and quieter as the group walks further away from the musician, and focus, once again, returns to the crowd of passersby.

A male voice says something loudly but his words are quick and incomprehensible.

A baby or toddler screams in the distance.

Someone clears their throat.

A group of friends in conversation passes by. A female speaker with a nasally voice says “... it’s on like Thursday nights—” but her words are lost in the noise of the crowd.

A toddler screams with excitement and says “... over there”.

Someone laughs.

A young-sounding man gives directions to an older-sounding woman but their conversation is not clear. At times his tone suggests that he might be her son or boyfriend, but, for the most part, the two sound like strangers with little patience for each other.

An abrupt noise—like a car door being shut.

Footsteps.

Henry's friend, who has been silent for the entire walk, or whose voice has been too quiet to hear, says something quietly.

Henry asks "what?"

The light patter of drums in the distance.

Henry's friend responds "what?"

Echoing the two older boys, Milo adds "what?"

Henry and his friend talk with each other.

A street car conductor rings a bell in order to indicate, to passengers and passersby, that the trolley is about to start moving. The bell sounds like a schoolhouse fire alarm.

Lucy, who is Milo and Henry's mother, says "... you stepped on my shoe".

Henry says "ah" as he trips on something.

The trolley glides away with the sound of electricity surging to its motor.

Henry mutters and his friend says something about fire.

A steady drum beat can be heard beneath the boy's conversation.

Henry says "what?" and the two boys talk about fire.

A singer chants along with the drum beat.

Evan chuckles "Carmen, you're going fast".

"It's okay."

Evan laughs.

"... I'll slow down."

Evan laughs some more.

The music in the distance refines and a simple stringed instrument and tambourine can be heard. The instruments are played in coordination with the tempo of the drumming but the song sounds improvised—with musicians missing the beat on occasion.

Some girls pass by and one says "yeah, yeah, yeah ... yeah".

The steady instrumentation and chanting is constant, and becomes the baseline sound of the recording for the next minute or so—existing somewhere in the background, beneath each instance of noise.

A large vehicle's brakes screech as it comes to a slow, rolling stop. The sound is ear-piercing and lasts for a few long seconds.

Uniform footsteps.

The rumble of traffic in the distance.

The shrill sound returns with a series of abrupt bursts. The sound gets closer and louder as the vehicle inches in traffic on a nearby street. It continues for the next few seconds and becomes the focus of the soundscape at each instance.

A crowd of people in conversation passes by but their words are not discernible.

Henry's friend says something quietly.

Milo laughs.

Henry says "what?" and, without getting an answer, repeats himself. He finally gives up and says something that sounds like "nerd".

As the group walks closer to the source of the music, it becomes clear that the singing is in a foreign language. Three or so male voices can be heard—one singer sings a repetitive chant that varies slightly from time to time, and the rest of the singers echo the leads chant in a softer voice. The song carries a tone that recalls, for me, meditation and religious practice. From the sound of the composition, it is not clear whether the performers who are singing are also playing instruments—but the number of instrument sounds and distinct singing voices is similar, if not equal.

Soon the singing comes to an end and focus shifts toward the curious instrumentation. What sounded like a drum earlier, is now identifiable as the side of a guitar, or a piece of wood, being struck to achieve a driving beat. A tambourine makes a soft, hollow sound—perhaps as the musician plays it against his or her body while dancing. Another musician plucks a stringed instrument that sounds a bit like a ukulele, and which most likely has 4 or 5 thin strings. A repetitive, mesmerizing tune is played on this instrument and serves as an inviting baseline.

The sound of footsteps beneath music.

The group shuffles along—away from the performers.

Josh makes a sound like he has just reached the conclusion of some private thought.

Shuffling footsteps.

An infant's scream can be heard faintly beneath the waning instruments.

The infant cries out again.

I say "okay, veer right" and Glenn repeats my directions.

Calli says "... to your right".

One of the boys says "right".

Henry trips over something with surprise.

The infant's scream becomes louder as the group walk's toward the source.

Now, as the music is almost completely out of range, and the group is waiting quietly for direction, the soundscape seems oddly uneventful.

"Okay, we're waiting to cross the street now."

Calli echos my comment softly.

"... and we're crossing."

Glenn says "crossing" with much energy, and Calli repeats the message.

Soon after, Glenn adds "... and there's a curb".

Calli says "there's a curb".

Evan laughs—perhaps at the seriousness of Glenn and Calli's tone.

Henry mumbles something.

Just as Henry says "where's the curb?", Milo erupts with laughter and surprise as he encounters it.

One of the boys says "whoa".

The sound of feet shuffling clumsily.

Someone's foot hits something.

Henry says "ack" as he finds the curb.

Milo erupts with laughter.

Evan says "Milo's into it again" as Milo continues to laugh.

I say "that's good"—quietly, as if to myself.

The sound of feet shuffling to find the curb.

Henry's friend says something that sounds like "damn that curb" and Henry responds quietly.

Milo excitedly says "... can we go up, can we go—" but my directions obscure the rest of his request.

"Turn left."

Glenn says “turn left” and Calli, once again, repeats Glenn.

I quickly say “there’s a curb” and Glenn and Calli follow my lead—each repeating my directions with seriousness.

Evan laughs.

Glenn adds “... and we’re going down”, and Calli passes on Glenn’s direction.

A toddler screams.

Henry says “what?” and his brother, Milo, quickly follows with “whoa!”

Henry adds “oh, really?” The tone of his voice suggests that he is anxious.

One of my participants says “curb, curb” as if mimicking an alarm clock.

A small yappy dog yelps with excitement.

Milo mimics the dog’s yip and it continues to bark.

The sound of my white cane as it finds a curb.

“there’s another curb.”

Glenn and Calli repeat my message loudly.

Glenn says “going up” and Calli quickly echoes Glenn in a loud voice.

Confused, Henry asks about the location of the curb.

Milo erupts with excitement as he finds the curb. He says something but it is obscured by his laughter.

Henry says “ack” as he trips on the curb—although his reaction seems exaggerated.

Milo continues to laugh.

Traffic sounds consume the soundscape and obscure speaking voices.

Henry asks a question.

Footsteps.

The sound of my white cane bumping and scraping against concrete.

A toddler screams.

Josh says “... a curb” in response to the curb that he has finally encountered. His words are cut off by my directions.

“Turn right.”

Glenn and Calli echo my message.

Caught up in the excitement, Milo says “turn right” with confidence.

A couple of participants also speak this direction, but quietly—as if to themselves.

A toddler screams.

Focus, once again, shifts toward the soundscape of the surrounding park. Traffic on a parallel street passes by.

My cane as it scrapes against the concrete walkway.

Milo says something.

A loud man yells, as if to some companion across the park, “sorry, I was on the phone!”. He does not sound friendly.

A vehicle’s breaks screech as it comes to a rolling stop.

Non-uniform footsteps

Feet shuffling on a walkway—which is paved with gravel or small stones.

The noise of the city overwhelms the soundscape and reduces Milo and Henry’s conversation to a whisper.

A curious, distant instrument sound blends in with the low tones of the soundscape—although the instrument is not identifiable.

Each note is drawn out in a way similar to how one might hold a note while playing a harmonica.

“Veer to your left.”

Glenn calls “left” and Calli follows shortly after.

Milo asks “left?” but nobody answers him.

Finally the instrument comes into focus acoustically and it is recognizable as an accordion

The musician, my good friend Rozzell Medina, plays a song that recalls, for me, the tradition of Eastern European folk music—and its recent revival by contemporary musicians. The song is sentimental and hopeful. As the group draws near it becomes clear that there are two sets of notes being played—low notes that set a slow underlying tempo for the song, and higher notes that are played quickly and which bring levity to the composition. The notes sway back and forth, it seems, as the accordion is pulled apart and squeezed together.

The song gets louder and clearer as the group moves toward the source, and noticeably more obscure as the group walks further away—toward a nearby crossing street.

The music is eventually carried away completely by the abrupt sound of air shooting to the brake system of a large vehicle, and the low rumble of a motorcycle or sportscar revving its engine.

The fast vehicle speeds away—far into the distance.

“Veer to your right.”

Glenn and Calli repeat my directions loudly, clearly, and with seriousness. The tone of their voices suggest that they are concentrating and perhaps overwhelmed by the soundscape.

My cane scrapes against the walkway.

A service vehicle’s backup alarm sounds in the distance.

One of the boys asks for someone to repeat the directions, and someone says “veer right”.

The backup alarm continues to beep.

I say “crossing”.

Glenn and Calli politely repeat my directions but their words lack enthusiasm.

As the group crosses the street, a vehicle can be heard shifting gears and speeding far into the distance.

The sound of shuffling feet and my cane as it scrapes for detail.

One of the boys says something that sounds like “oh, damn”.

An airplane or helicopter whirs overhead.

A car honks its horn—perhaps at another motorist.

“Veer left.”

Again, Glenn and Calli repeat my directions with a noticeable degree of seriousness.

The sound of air shooting to the brake system of a large vehicle.

Henry says “I thought you said right, I thought you said right” and his mother, Lucy, tells him not to confuse everybody.

My cane scrapes for detail.

The group is relatively quiet as they encounter a new soundscape. The sound of footsteps and my cane scraping for detail is eventually replaced by ambient city noise. The space is not acoustically cluttered with abrupt sounds as was the path through the park, but instead, is relatively quiet—with washes of

traffic noise that roll along slowly like waves. Soon even the traffic noise disappears and the group is left walking through a quiet ambiance—which seems bare and in stark contrast to the vibrant soundscapes that they walked through only moments ago. For once, the group seems as if they are alone in a place.

Metal clangs.

The sound of water.

A low pitched whine—which drags along and eventually blends into the ambient soundscape.

The sound of spraying water.

The whine persists and is now recognizable as a firetruck's emergency siren. At its onset it blares in a high pitch, and, after a few seconds, dissipates into a low, guttural tone. The siren repeats and gets louder—perhaps as the vehicle heads to an emergency in the area.

The sound of water being sprayed on concrete becomes the focus of the soundscape for the next few seconds. It is calming and hypnotic.

Breaking this focus, a bystander says “danger”.

I immediately shout “left”.

Noticeably surprised, Glenn and Calli shout my directions. Their voices sound as if they are concerned with maintaining the safety of the group.

Milo says “Mom, what’s happening?” and his mother, Lucy, says something to calm him.

A large metal object clangs—like a tailgate or the bucket of a dumptruck being released.

The boys talk to each other quietly and establish their bearings.

Henry says “okay, okay”—as if to himself.

Milo asks Lucy something.

Someone coughs.

“Turn right.”

I speak my words with confidence—so as to ease the group.

Glenn and Calli carry my directions along, but their voices still hold a degree of worry.

Milo echos Glenn and Calli clearly, and with confidence.

A car honks in the distance.

Faint speaking voices.

A burst of air shoots through a hydraulic system on some nearby machinery.

The group reacts to some unexpected bumpy terrain with quiet comments to one another.

Startled, Lucy shouts “oh god” and again, air from the hydraulic system shoots to its source—a sound that is clear and abrupt, and which seems in close proximity to the group. The sound is like a small explosion.

Josh says “... whoa, left”—perhaps as a reaction to the quick blast of air.

Calli continues, “you okay?” to which Lucy replies “... yeah, sorry, I slipped off the curb a little”.

The children scream playfully and try to scare each other, and Milo bursts into laughter.

I say “turn left” and Glenn repeats my message clearly.

A shovel scrapes against concrete.

Concerned, Josh says “... are we all together?”.

Sounding distracted by all of the activity, Calli adds “... turn left”—although a couple seconds too late.

Milo says “... yeah!” in response to Josh’s question. He laughs his words as if his father has just distracted him away from entertaining a private joke.

One of the boys says “I fell off that curb, it hurt”.

Josh replies “... me too”.

Someone says “quit pulling me”.

Still laughing, Milo says “Dad pulled me”.

I say “turn right” but my voice is muffled by traffic sounds.

Glenn and Calli repeat my directions quickly.

Caught up in the excitement, Milo and Henry’s friend also say “turn right”.

Josh says “there’s some step, there’s another curb too.”

Evan says “curb” and Glenn follows with “... there’s another curb down”.

Calli translates the message and says “... curb down” in a clear, sure voice.

Josh says “... oh” as he finds the curb—an utterance, it seems, that starts a chain reaction of comments and laughter from the boys.

Milo says something to his father, Josh, but his words are obscured by a distant emergency siren.

I tap my cane hard against the curb and produce two clear sounds that mark the location of the obstruction.

“Curb.”

Glenn and Calli echo my directions loudly.

Glenn adds “... up” and Calli repeats the message shortly after.

The emergency siren continues to ring in the distance.

Milo says “whoa” as he encounters something that sounds like the leaves from a bush.

“Veer right.”

Josh says something to someone but abandons his comment once he realizes that directions are being shared.

Once again, Glenn and Calli pass my directions along.

One of the boys says “veer right” in a tone that suggests that it is routine.

The emergency siren persists and obscures the quiet conversations that various participants are engaged in. It becomes the focus of the soundscape for the next few seconds—although it is situated somewhere in the background.

Breaking this focus, Henry screams in order to scare the other two boys. The trick is successful and Milo erupts with laughter.

Henry’s friend screams as if he is seriously startled—however his tone carries a degree of annoyance.

Milo, once again, is overtaken by laughter.

Henry’s friend says “... Henry, what did you do?”.

Milo answers the question but his words are obscured by laughter.

Milo says “this is so fun”.

Henry’s friend says “I don’t like Milo either”, to which Henry replies “I don’t either”.

Milo says something about playing basketball to his father, Josh.

One of the boys, as if in response to Milo’s comment, says “... exactly”.

Milo carries on a quiet conversation.

The group is relatively quiet for the next few seconds. The ambiance of traffic and city sounds consume the acoustic space, and my cane lightly scrapes against the bumpy sidewalk.

A loose metal sidewalk grate clangs as someone steps on it.

The scraping of my white cane against the sidewalk persists.

One of the boys says “what?”.

Milo reacts to something with surprise.

Finding the detail particularly relevant, Glenn says “... heading down”.

Calli passes the information on, and is echoed, softly, by Milo.

I say “there’s a big, big curb” and Glenn repeats the words “big curb” loudly.

I emphasise, “... really big curb”, and, almost comically, Glenn and Calli echo my message.

I quickly say “... and we’re crossing”.

Evan tries to repeat my earlier message but abandons his comment in the confusion, and says “be careful”.

In reference to the curb that she has just encountered, Calli adds “... about a foot”.

Evan laughs—perhaps at the amount of attention that is being given to the curb.

Someone else laughs.

Milo says “oh wow” and reacts with surprise as he steps onto the street.

Lucy says “big curb guys”.

A man who is walking by asks “what are you guys doing?”.

Henry trips over the curb.

In response to the man’s question, Calli answers “... non-visual walking tour”.

A plane or helicopter whirs overhead.

I tap my cane on the sidewalk in order to communicate that I have finally crossed the street.

As the group reaches the sidewalk, they remain relatively quiet for a few long seconds—which, in turn, reveals the soundscape of the area. Focus shifts from the patter of my cane as it bounces off small stones and imperfections in the walkway to the buzz of a plane or helicopter overhead. These sounds exist within a greater ambiance of traffic sounds, and are grounded by the rhythm that is the groups footsteps.

Milo sings to himself.

The sound of a car door being shut.

A young girl asks a question—although it is not clear.

As the group walks closer, the girl says the words “copper copper” as if she is asking a question.

People chat as they stand by a doorway.

A woman says something that sounds like “toot toot”.

The young girl says “hey daddy, copper copper”, to which he replies “... copper coppa?”.

She corrects him and says “copper copper”.

Henry trips over something.

I say “... alright” and Milo follows with “great”.

“Stop, and keep your eyes closed.”

Someone spits.

“... and, on the count of three open your eyes.”

“... one.”

“... two.”

“... three.”