

**EXPERIMENTS  
IN  
ALTERNATE  
REALITY**

one or more people indoors  
Robert Blatt, 2016

# INTRODUCTION

One or more people find themselves indoors where no audience is present, except for, perhaps, those participating.

Sixty provided index cards, duplicated as necessary, are used to create as many stacks of index cards as there are people, with each stack containing all or a subset of the sixty provided index cards. In preparation, each stack is shuffled.

Each person reads the index card at the top of their stack – quietly, under their breath, out loud, to themselves. After having read the index card, a pause of inactivity follows for listening, contemplation or otherwise. The next index card is then read, and another pause follows. This process continues for each subsequent index card, everyone at their own pace.

**SCORE**

it moved in a surprisingly predictable fashion,  
almost bored, without haste or emotion,  
imparting a strange form of passage, inconsistent  
and atypical.

there were thoughts of finding hope here, but  
despair may prove itself more accurate.

the moaning continues, softly, from one to  
another. inside and outside. densities shifting.



motionless and without speech. paranoia  
gripping to the edge of paralysis.

barely present, one sound slowly recedes into  
silence.

there is a certain palpable fear of death.

while speaking, convinced by an understood language, a fleeting thought emerges as to how comforting lies can be.

each word spoken, one after another, brings this sentence and myself closer to their inevitable completion.

all of a sudden and without warning, in asynchronous polyphony, rising and falling, voices sound in an uncontrolled cascade of utterances resembling language only by association, guided by fear.

an environment shifting, not slowly, but quickly  
and with every possible degree of predictability  
into one long sound of cliché homogeneity  
initiated without fear, inhibition and empathy.

but outside, silence, in its quiet but densely fragmented state, is punctuated by a loud and intermittent sound reoccurring for an indefinite length.



resting, alone, absorbed in thought, in fear and  
without hesitation, hoping for nothing to change  
this suddenly achieved and wholly  
unsustainable stasis, until it is over.

two pulses, intertwined but independent, slow and almost static, occasionally accelerating and decelerating, starting and ending together.

here, unmoved and trapped, i know now that  
doing something will never happen.

outside were seen clouds of gas encircling doors leading to nowhere but mounds of waste piled up in haphazard intricate constructions.

the muffled sound of an engine and the inaudible movement of a few trees in the distance. and those windows out front, enough for reflection, witnessing everything.

each voice, unique and trembling, grasping for  
breath. each word spoken softer until none  
remain.

walking slowly or just standing still. waiting.  
equally among the crowds or when alone.  
predictable and expected.

found in patches of yellow rock and opaque  
water dripping from piles of reinforced concrete.  
laying motionless on the ground and covered in  
it.



here, finding moments of isolation.

words softly spoken, perceived as noise. apathy  
growing with each accumulation of sound.

through streets, sidewalks and alleyways,  
sometimes alone, with a sustained low noise.

in thought. self-absorbed. a sense of  
apprehension. uncertain as to who is speaking  
and where the thoughts are coming from. in this  
moment, one's schizophrenic self was never  
more clearly present.

an uncountable assemblage of short, closely spaced explosions.

a high tone of inconsistent pitch, perhaps from  
the ventilation or the passing charge of  
electricity. a low and steady drone from vehicles  
in the distance. intermittent frequencies  
resembling speech. all now so suddenly unlikely.

with the present unceasingly addressing  
memories of the past, i hear other words, out  
loud, and continue to quietly forget.

running here, mostly out of breath from shock and anxiety, what a fucking pity it is when you say that at least you're not the only one to feel and hear this way.



in the distance and with a surprising level of polyphony, distinct groups of pitches sound, rising and lowering in frequency, from vehicles arriving at peripheral sites of distress.

there's a mindless mechanization present, one more tragic than first imagined.

a composite of noise, rhythm and pitch, each  
inseparable, fluctuating in volume, at the door.

the mind gives away its deepest sense of longing.

indecipherable murmurings, but for certain words and phrases, recognized now distinctly as my own. for have i become the infinitely recursive mental bifurcation of psycho-visual distortion and schizophrenic auditory hallucination? no, with dread, this is something entirely other, for i have heard that question before.

now, having lost all sense of time, gazing into its  
immediate infinity.

in those moments, still and without speech,  
breathing as quietly and motionlessly as  
possible, one might think that an intention was  
being made to pretend to be dead.

it's inconsequential. the sounds outside continue.



again, interrupted by speech, rambling in  
inconsistent patterns of repetition, paying close  
attention to tone, soft but never inviting,  
haunting when i stop speaking.

intertwined, endlessly approaching and receding  
in the present.

pausing after finishing this thought, the mind wanders in absence, fear and distraction.

numerous tones over a great distance, many in groups of various sizes, some very close to one another, others isolated, each at any pitch, lasting any length, starting and stopping at any point.

highways emerging from restaurants and bars  
now so unexpectedly quiet.

perhaps to drown out the sounds outside or to  
fill the mind with thoughts that for some  
unknown reason I finally knew now were mine.

with time suddenly moving faster, i feel my  
descent at the cresting horizon.

amongst the smell of skin and sweat, the light pierces with an indifferent and uncomfortable brightness. but thank god, for in this condition, these walls are around.



in here, momentarily void of remorse, it begins  
to gain focus.

absorbed in spontaneous, frightening  
connections until reaching here, then waiting  
and listening.

those moments without repetition, free of  
ramble, an instantaneous catalyst of change,  
they're fantasy.

a distant and troubling noise occurs outside. but  
inside, lost in thought, and expressed only in  
words, imagining wind setting flora into one  
long undulating motion.

there's an irony in being together, always isolated  
in one's own thoughts. trauma has a way of  
revealing these truths.

and knowing now that at any moment each word spoken is ready to be overtaken by the noise.

endlessly talking to oneself, repetition among  
repetition, obsessively returning to a processes  
that i fear and wish i could not comprehend.

and outside a sudden loud attack at first masked by numerous transients revealing a complex of overtones from a fundamental of inaudible low frequency, then bands of filtered noise, drifting high in pitch and lasting for prolonged periods of time, ebbing and flowing with subtle spectral variations, suddenly revealing everything in nothingness.



it approaches with every new thought.

i am obsessively returning again to the simple  
repeated failure to comprehend this situated  
innocuity, forcing myself to subtly shift in place  
and terrorize my mind.

hiding here, isolated, fear traps all, rational or not, into an obsessive circle.

with each breath, a new incomprehensible grouping of sounds, quieter, but with increasingly more effort, until it is impossible to proceed.

found not far from here along ever expanding rows of houses stretching for unforeseeable distances.

fleeting cries, unknown and hidden amongst the  
silence, continue, speaking without tongues.

lost and immobile. alone. close.

it is as though once translated, the text, void of  
gesture, is but only pain.



i have lost all hope in this endless static  
temporality.