

**EXPERIMENTS
IN
ALTERNATE
REALITY**

one person alone indoors
Robert Blatt, 2016

INTRODUCTION

One person finds themselves alone and indoors where no audience is present, except for, perhaps, the one person participating.

In preparation, all or a subset of the sixty provided index cards are arranged into a stack and shuffled.

The index card at the top of the stack is read – quietly, under one's breath, out loud, to oneself. 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.

SCORE

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

i thought i would find hope in being alone, but
despair may prove itself more accurate.

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

at times 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 i am 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 my own thoughts, i,
in fear and without hesitation, hope 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 now know that
doing something will never happen.

outside i saw 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 thoughts. self-absorbed. a sense of
apprehension. uncertain as to who is speaking
and where the thoughts are coming from. in this
moment my 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 i say
that at least i'm not the only ones 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.

my 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 where i am still and without
speech, breathing as quietly and motionlessly as
possible, one might think that i were
intentionally pretending to be dead.

it's inconsequential. the sounds outside continue.

again, interrupted by voices, rambling in
inconsistent patterns of repetition, paying close
attention to their 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 my mind with thoughts that i for some unknown reason 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 me.

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

endlessly talking to myself, 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 has trapped me,
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.