

border

Oliver Ginger
2022

walking the same route

once each week

for a year

each walk is documented here by a single photograph, and a text consisting of
fifty-two words



a challenging start, slightly unfocussed.

distracted.

distractions.

irregular, inconsistent pace.

some police officers wearing vests exit a house - strong odour of cannabis.

moving into the quiet - pace becomes more consistent, starting to slow down.

mud, dirt, grey, dark - no one cares about underpasses.

a bird call that I find difficult to identify.

[#1]



focussed, ears lead the way.
steam rises up from layers of fences, repeated in the near-distance.
the almost-alien chirping of a starling - bringing vague memories of first
learning about starlings in the back garden of my first home of fourteen years
or so, which I glance at briefly as I pass by.

[#2]



the A303 is its own environment, consistent and unchanging.
it seems to roar from a different location, behind me, as if it had been moved
entirely.
walking through the underpass, I can only hear the road's environment.
I am at the same location that it occupies, but not in the same place.

[#3]



tired, unfocussed.
noticing the different sections of housing - groups of different terraces and
designs, some detached, a visual history of how the road was built.
the road certainly is quiet when there is no vehicle travelling on it.
the A303 sounds calm today, still droning, but not as angry.
recording failed - incomplete.

[#4]



the birds take centre stage.
the road is and always has been blessed with an abundance of garden birds,
especially house sparrows.
today they are on top form; fighting viciously in the bushes that occasionally
divide the front parking spaces, zig-zagging from one side of the road to the
other, always lively.

[#5]



noticing the first feelings of spring.
a whirring against my right ear, brought on by the breeze - perhaps my ears need
cleaning.
this sensation allows me to focus on how right-heavy the sound environment is,
mainly due to the A303 and town traffic.
beginning to enjoy the comforting routine of the walk.

[#6]



road workers tearing up the tarmac of a driveway near the beginning of the walk substantially add to the chaotic sound world of the north end of the road - growling mechanical sounds contribute to the clear, long diminuendo of the walk. slightly bored towards the end of the walk, into the countryside.

[#7]



the A303 does not show signs of aggression today - the sound world seems tender after the battering from storm Eunice nearly a week before. the white-noise from the trunk road appears to have its tail between its legs, as if it had been told off by the storm, put in its place.

[#8]



vague memories of childhood - imaginary friends.
the mud under the A303 is slippery and difficult to walk on - turning back a few paces to navigate a new route, the first time I've moved backwards during these walks.
a flock of pigeons fly over the tree canopies, making a calm, silent hissing sound.

[#9]



the wind carries the drones from the A303 from their natural place, it also masks the sounds from the town.
the breezes batter my ears, making it difficult to hear the environment, only garden birds pierce through.
the ground is dry except for the underpass, which is rarely dry throughout the year.

[#10]



aching legs.

tired.

the walk becomes a lot calmer after I pass the bin lorry (Wednesday is bin day).
the sound environment seems smooth - the A303 grazes the sound world with light
grey, consistent drones.

the underpass feels ominous - I'm a little jumpy today, weary.

the fog obscures the distant countryside views.

[#11]



the weather lends a calm air to the walk, a kind of respite to the greyness.
there seems to be less chaos, perhaps because today isn't bin day - even the
A303 seems muted, relaxed.
at the end of the road, I stop to listen - only distant hints of droning traffic
and aircraft.

[#12]



finding it difficult to listen to the distant soundscape because of the timing of vehicles passing by on the road - this makes the experience slightly annoying.

town sounds are clearly heard from the end of the road, more so than usual - these fade away as I climb the hill towards the A303.

[#13]



the droning traffic from the town and the A303 interlink and surround the environment like a distant ocean.
a regular beeping, a slow pulse, appears to come from the south end of the road - the source of which I start to doubt.
it feels like the route and I merge together today.

[#14]



feeling detached from the walk today.
disconnected.

difficult to focus.

perhaps a significant moment from between this walk and the last has affected my mood.

I wonder how much the in-between periods influence my walks, and my thought processes.

the sparrows own the road today, darting from one side to the other.

[#15]



the road is active today.
a road sweeper loiters at the southern end - the very edge of town.
its thick drone stubbornly hangs in the air at the interzone between the end of
the road and the underpass.
I finally leave it behind for the true sound of the countryside - the A303.

[#16]



the road lends a calm air to the walk today, even the housing construction work seems muted, laid-back.

it takes me a while to notice the white-noise of the A303.

the reverberations in the underpass make it seem like a true transitional passage before the countryside, a uniquely-sounding location on the route.

[#17]



the transition from town to country has a clarity not experienced before.
the lively road sounds fading (the thin, sharp drones of drilling) as I walk the
incline next to the golf course.
the underpass swallows me into brief darkness, before I reach the bright
countryside; the immediate, potent aroma of rapeseed.

[#18]



the A303 roars today, carried by the wind.
it's a sharp roar, like distant, perpetual high-pitched thunder - already
noticeable at the north end of the road.
that greyness nearly overpowers the sound environment, pregnant with threat.
the wind thrashes at the trees violently, giving the end of the walk a loud
climax.

[#19]



the world's squeakiest wheelbarrow.
a clear transition of birds: on the road, sparrows in abundance, the occasional
crow; between the end of the road and the underpass, blackbirds and tits; after
the underpass in the countryside, robins as abundant as the sparrows, their
calls ghost-noted by finches.
the chaotic humming of flies.

[#20]



disconnected today, feeling uninterested, bored.
the A303 drones on in the background as usual.
the birds are not as vibrant today as in previous weeks - perhaps the weather
has muted the environment, the wind has taken centre stage.
more likely, I am just not as focused or engaged, feeling tired, somewhat
apathetic.

[#21]



starting in a mood.
tired, clouded thoughts.
the road is semi-chaotic - half-term.
the return of the bin lorry.
a need to get away.
immediate calm after the street.
a psychological push through under the A303.
the welcoming countryside, away from it all, comforting.
from murkiness to clarity - the power of a walk.

[#22]



in a relatively calm place.
the road, the route is deepening its routine in my own daily life, which
presents new challenges for me to attend to the environment, albeit not in a
completely negative way.
the walk itself is simultaneously journey and destination.
feeling accustomed to the droning A303 - familiar, home.

[#23]



I was expecting a hectic day, people seem to go wild when the sun comes out -
the atmosphere is calm, laid-back.
the environment can still surprise me.
the sparrows dominate.
memories of playing console games with my brother when we were young.
nostalgia returns - perhaps that's just something out of my control.

[#24]



the road is at its quietest today.
traffic is low, even the A303 is barely noticeable.
the sparrows are out, but not as hectic.
difficult to focus on such an empty sound environment.
at the south end of the road, activity presents itself - the bin lorry turns the
corner, a disappointing sight.

[#25]



I'm fond of suburban areas.
many streets, like this one, have a sense of history - houses have been here for
over a hundred years - who has lived in them?
yet there is an openness to the atmosphere, one that lends an air of locality,
but also non-local - a simultaneous placeness and placeless-ness.

[#26]



it's getting harder to write something down, especially without repeating myself.
I don't notice the A303 until I get close to it - perhaps I'm not listening properly.
but then again, maybe I am - I am aware of the duality between my internal thoughts and the external environment today, more so than usual.

[#27]



I stop at the end of the street to listen - a subtle breeze makes contact with me, persuading me to carry on with the walk, which I am finding a little pointless.

in this moment, I feel like I'm in an Andrei Tarkovsky film.
I've been thinking about Tarkovsky a lot lately.

[#28]



finding it difficult to attend today, back and forth between attending and not. I wonder if, through my continuously growing familiarity of the place, I am now beginning to choose to ignore some aspects of the soundworld - an active approach to not-listening, opposed to the passive approach of simply switching off unconsciously.

[#29]



dramatic clouds - I get the feeling I might not be wearing the appropriate clothing for what may come.
the A303's drones are sharp, fresh - I've missed them recently.
finding it more challenging to consistently listen during each walk now, I wonder if this is just a dip in concentration or an inevitability.

[#30]



the A303 roars - back to normality after a long break.
a teenager passes me by - her hair is bright blue/pink/purple.
I imagine that she had ended school this summer, and now she is exploring her
own identity - becoming herself.
the stench of manure does not go well with the humidity.

[#31]



not a single sparrow.
in fact, hardly any sign of birds at all, especially garden birds.
infrequent chirping from distant finches, from gardens behind the houses, but
nothing on the street itself.
perhaps it's too hot for them, it certainly is for me.
a very quiet walk, probably the quietest so far.

[#32]



the A303, as it drones out into the countryside, is a welcome sound today.
it represents the outskirts, being away from everything, from the working week,
from people, a break from certain responsibilities.
it means solitude, it means I'm free to be by myself, which is the tonic I need
- a comfort.

[#33]



the sound of a lawnmower reveals the small estate that I can see between the houses on the west side of the street, making the road feel less isolated. the lawnmower reveals itself on the golf course behind the south west side of the street. nothing significant today, it's just a walk.

[#34]



I'm starting to come to terms with the simultaneous, intertwining consistencies and inconsistencies of the conditions of: the walk, the place, my listening, my presence.

the routine blends the walk into my daily life.

towards the end of the walk, an amiable hawk dragonfly escorts me along the country path - expert navigator.

[#35]



the ground is wet from this morning's rain, yet it is still warm - I have had to remove my raincoat.

it is the very edge of autumn now, but not quite there yet - caught between seasons.

I find myself looking forward to the autumn/winter months, this summer has long outstayed its welcome.

[#36]



I've noticed that the traffic lights at the start of the walk only turn red when the road is clear.
tired today, a sleepless night.
hoping for winter to come sooner rather than later, this mild/humid/warm weather has become very dull - in need of a change.
town traffic drones on.

[#37]



there are some places inside and outside Andover that I miss.
this is all brought on by the droning A303 from the countryside - I feel that I
may have ignored this sound of late.
I miss places that I don't visit anymore, places that have changed, places that
have stayed the same.

[#38]



when the road is quiet, it's very quiet.
this quiet is occasionally interrupted by bursts of activity.
the road seems happy today - singing dustbin men, busy jackdaws.
autumn is arriving, gradually.
the smell of rotting foliage is faint - the impending seasonal change.
the A303 roars over the countryside, a constant throughout seasons.

[#39]



the wind dominates today - the bin lorry is hard to locate from its mechanical wheezing.

man-made sounds struggle to compete - the wind shows us how it's done, how to make noise.

the A303's drones crash against the crest of the hill.

even the trees drown out the traffic noise in the countryside.

[#40]



it takes me a while to get into this walk.
on the dirt path between the road and the A303 underpass, nature stirs from my presence - squirrels scurry along tree branches, pigeons take off from the treetops, blackbirds rustle in the undergrowth, long-tailed tits bounce along the underside of the tree canopies.

[#41]



the starlings return.
they congregate on the roof of a detached house.
I start to question the value of detached, semi-detached, and terrace houses.
fallen leaves begin to make their carpet on the path between the road and the
underpass - autumn has arrived, finally.
the droning A303 once again conjures unwelcome nostalgia.

[#42]



the road was so long and painful to walk down when I was young, thankfully that is no longer the case.

whistling binmen.

paper leaves cover the wet ground between the road and the A303 overpass. I sneeze in the underpass; the reverberation briefly fills the tunnel - a potential form of echolocation?

[#43]



the angle of the sun's reflection on the asphalt makes it difficult for me to see clearly - I attempt to angle the visor on my cap to compensate. I wonder how many generations of starlings have migrated to this specific location over the years - when did they start coming? the A303 roars.

[#44]



water drips off the houses around me - rain's afterthought.
this happens sporadically along the road, like undisciplined percussionists.
I remember looking through the front window when I was young, out onto the
street - a fast-flowing stream of muddy water from the farmland on the hill
swept down the road, flooding the pavement.

[#45]



a drone from my right, behind the houses, seems to be unmoving as I walk down the road.

the sun's glare off the wet asphalt makes it difficult to see, once again. just before the underpass, the drone returns.

the golf course is being mown - is this the same lawnmower as before?

[#46]



one of the great things about Andover is that you don't have to walk far to get away from people - I wonder if this project is just an excuse to do that. walking over the incline, by the side of the golf course and under the A303 is always a welcome experience.

[#47]



everything is grey under the monochrome sky, reinforced by the droning A303.
relatively calm.

the starlings are still chattering, chirruping, clicking.

a certain empty atmosphere lends a dullness to the walk, like a harsh mid-
winter's day, but without the aching cold.

the place is getting ready for the inevitably long winter chill.

[#48]



quiet, muted.
the town seems inactive, like a christmas afternoon - from the end of the street
before the underpass I notice that distinctive, radiating white noise.
even the A303 is unobtrusive - until I reach the countryside where the traffic
drones fill the open space.
I love days like this - winter is here.

[#49]



the soundworld is muted, stark.
how quiet the environment is without the bin lorry.
the distant town noise roars.
snow lightly covers the ground in patches - looking like a post-modern christmas
card.
frozen mud crunches underfoot.
dead leaves rustle in the breeze, sounding like lethargic rattlesnakes.
winter is the most interesting season.

[#50]



winter has paused; it feels like early autumn today.
thoughts are racing, finding it difficult to settle into the walk.
on the street, I turn around at the right moment - behind me, a red kite glides
low above the houses, free from the contours on the earth that I am bound by.

[#51]



the weather batters the setting; the busy road contributes to the violence of the experience being forced upon me - I struggle to bring myself to the walk today.
the trees roar with frightening anger.
the growling dirt bikes at the end of the walk sustain the furious energy of the full experience.

[#52]

Appendix

[#1]

05/01/2022 - 09:30 am
cold, blue skies, light breezes

[#2]

12/01/2022 - 10:05 am
cold/crisp, clear skies, very light breezes

[#3]

19/01/2022 - 09:55 am
relatively cold, overcast/grey, very light breezes

[#4]

26/01/2022 - 09:45 am
a little chilly, broken overcast, light breezes

[#5]

02/02/2022 - 09:45 am
cool/mild, broken clouds, light breezes

[#6]

09/02/2022 - 09:30 am
mild, broken clouds/blue sky, gentle breezes

[#7]

16/02/2022 - 09:45 am
very mild/getting warm, cloudy/some blue skies, light/moderate breezes

[#8]

23/02/2022 - 09:45 am
relatively mild, cloudy, consistent light/moderate breezes

[#9]

02/03/2022 - 09:15 am
mild, overcast, wet

[#10]

09/03/2022 - 09:35 am
mild, cloudy, moderate breezes

[#11]

16/03/2022 - 10:20 am
mild/humid, grey/overcast/very light fog, very light breezes

[#12]

24/03/2022 - 09:05 am
warm, sunny/blue skies, very light breezes

[#13]

30/03/2022 - 09:25 am
mild, overcast/grey, light breezes

[#14]

06/04/2022 - 09:50 am
mild, grey/cloudy, light/moderate breezes

[#15]

13/04/2022 - 09:40 am
very mild, grey/cloudy, light breezes

[#16]
20/04/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, blue skies/high clouds, light breezes

[#17]
27/04/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, grey/cloudy, light breezes

[#18]
04/05/2022 - 09:40 am
mild/humid, cloudy/blue skies, light breezes

[#19]
11/05/2022 - 09:50 am
mild, cloudy/overcast, moderate breezes

[#20]
18/05/2022 - 09:45 am
warm/humid, blue skies/cloudy, light breezes

[#21]
25/05/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, grey/cloudy/very light rain, light/moderate breezes

[#22]
01/06/2022 - 09:50 am
mild/warm, blue skies/cloudy, calm

[#23]
08/06/2022 - 09:45 am
warm, cloudy/some blue skies, light/moderate breezes

[#24]
15/06/2022 - 09:35 am
warm, blue skies/sunny/high clouds, light breezes/calm

[#25]
22/06/2022 - 09:40 am
very warm, clear blue skies/sunny, very light breezes/calm

[#26]
29/06/2022 - 09:40 am
warm, blue skies/cloudy, light breezes

[#27]
06/07/2022 - 09:55 am
warm/humid, sunny/cloudy, light breezes

[#28]
13/07/2022 - 09:35 am
very warm, sunny/cloudy, very light breezes

[#29]
20/07/2022 - 09:35 am
warm/humid, cloudy/grey, light breezes

[#30]
27/07/2022 - 09:55 am
warm/muggy, cloudy/sunny, light/moderate breezes

[#31]
03/08/2022 - 09:45 am
warm/muggy, overcast, moderate breezes

[#32]
10/08/2022 - 09:40 am
very warm, clear skies/sunny, light breezes

[#33]
17/08/2022 - 09:50 am
warm/humid, cloudy, light breezes

[#34]
24/08/2022 - 09:40 am
warm/humid, cloudy/sunny, light/moderate breezes

[#35]
31/08/2022 - 09:40 am
mild/warm, sunny/light clouds, moderate breezes

[#36]
07/09/2022 - 09:50 am
warm/humid, cloudy/sunny, light breezes

[#37]
14/09/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, cloudy, light breezes

[#38]
21/09/2022 - 09:35 am
mild/slightly warm, blue skies, very light breezes/calm

[#39]
28/09/2022 - 09:50 am
mild/fresh, blue skies/light cloud, light breezes

[#40]
05/10/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, cloudy/some blue skies, moderate/strong breezes

[#41]
12/10/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, blue skies, very light breezes/calm

[#42]
19/10/2022 - 09:45 am
mild, cloudy, light/moderate breezes

[#43]
26/10/2022 - 09:45 am
very mild, cloudy/some light drizzle, moderate breezes

[#44]
02/11/2022 - 09:20 am
cool/mild, blue skies/ high clouds, light breezes

[#45]
07/11/2022 - 10:10 am
mild, grey/cloudy/after rain/light rain, light/moderate breezes

[#46]

16/11/2022 - 09:55 am
cool/mild, blue skies, light breezes

[#47]

23/11/2022 - 09:25 am
cool/mild, blue skies, light/moderate breezes

[#48]

30/11/2022 - 10:00 am
cool/mild, overcast, very light breezes

[#49]

07/12/2022 - 09:45 am
cold/crisp, blue skies, very light breezes

[#50]

14/12/2022 - 11:20 am
cold, light cloud cover, light breezes

[#51]

21/12/2022 - 11:00 am
very mild, cloudy/some blue skies, light breezes

[#52]

28/12/2022 - 11:35 am
mild, overcast/rain, strong breezes