




**Lon(don)liness**

***Portrait of a liminal society***



## LON(DON)LINESS

This project is a film which explores the condition of Loneliness inside the city of London.

The unprecedented events of lock-down have enhanced an already existing tendency of loneliness and isolation within the city.

The film portrays both city and citizen as one; using one as the metaphor of the other, a fragmented society occupying a matrix of solitary realities, bound by its streets and homes.

Lon(don)liness  
London's loneliness  
/ˈlʌndən/ /ˈləʊnlɪnɪs/



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Still from film "Londonliness"

## LONDON, CITY OF *MODERNITY*



Still from my film "*The oppressive fishtank environment*" - film of Term1\_Study and rapresentation of the city



London has given up a portion of its heritage in exchange for “the contemporary”.

This short video seeks to unveil a reality using the advertising billboards as a canvas. In this film, the streets are trying to warn us, instead of indoctrinating us with a consumerist culture that the city usually feeds us with.

This film was done during Term1 as a study of the city.

Later on, (Term2 and Term 3) learning from this exercise the project evolved into filming the psychological consequences of living inside such an environment.



[Link to film](#)



Poster of the film **“The Oppressive Fishtank Environment”**.  
Currently playing at the London Architectural Film Festival, Housing Crisis capsule.



**Stills from the film.**

Billboards mirror the city's desired image. They act as a catalyst to shape our opinion through processes of projection and idealisation.

The film identifies London's public space as an object of, projection of hierarchies and comodification. The film, identifies London's public space as space of mediation, where through design gestures, which project idealised visions of themselves, the city and the society.

In this case, the city becomes an object of co-modified mediation. It's public domain is the stage where such mediation takes place.

Therefore, the idea of visibly and vulnerability comes into play.

London has continued to use its public space - and our view as an asset - to portray idealised images of itself or it's citizens through billboards.

In order to understand the topic of vulnerability inside the urban, proposed by the unit, I first wanted to question

"Which ones are the structures given by the city which makes us vulnerable or makes us understand vulnerability?"



[Link to film](#)

Still From The (opressive) Fistank Environment 00:01:43



Still From The (opressive) Fistank Environment 00:00:51



Still From The (opressive) Fistank Environment 00:01:04









To understand the current condition of the city of London, the project references work of sociologists who have studied the condition of our psychology in relation to our close environment.

The isolated and the solitary do not belong to the same universe, (...) solitude is an art of living, it consists in a moment when one voluntarily puts oneself apart from others, to take stock with oneself and to better come back to others."

Thierry Paquot, Isolated or solitary on urban land

The idea that man are created free and equal is both true and misleading: men are created different; they loose their social freedom and their individual autonomy in seeking to become like each other.

David Riesman, The lonely crowd

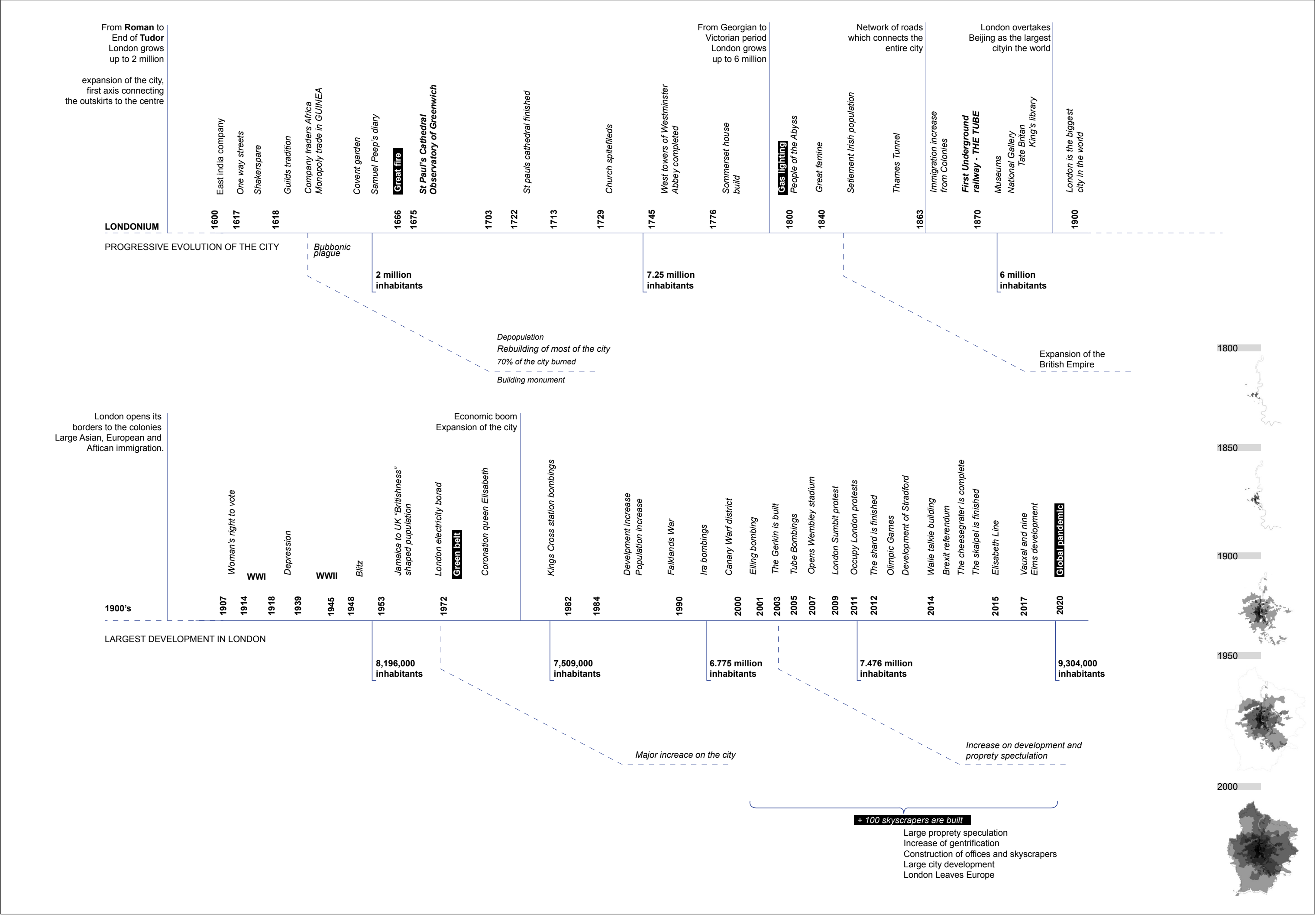
The deepest problems of modern life flow from the attempt of the individual to maintain the independence and individuality of his existence against the sovereign powers of society, historical heritage, external culture and technique of life.

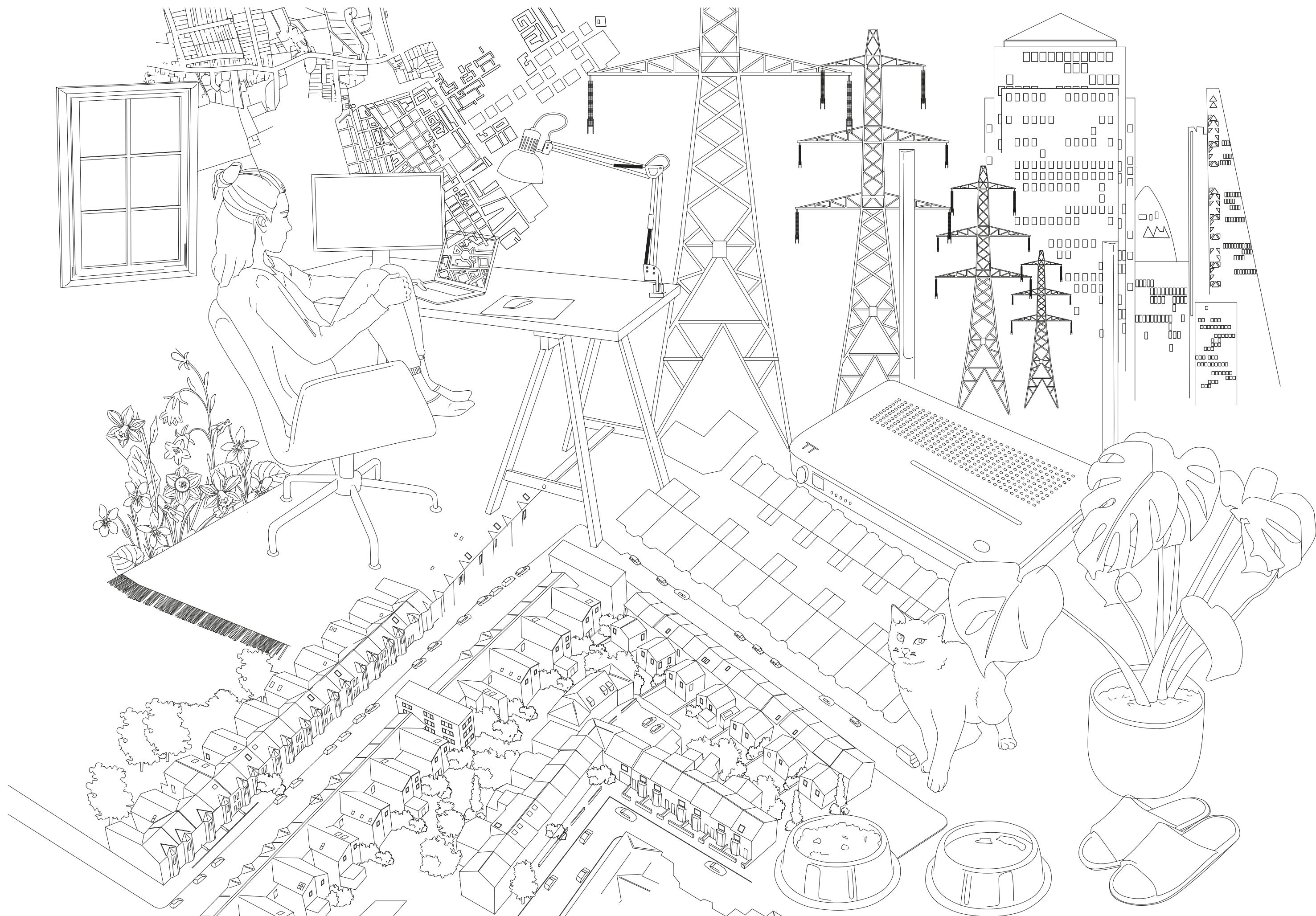
Georg Simmel, Metropolis and Mental life.

"Here are men that alter their neighbour's landmark . . .  
Shoulder the poor aside, conspire to oppress the friendless. Reap they the field that is none of theirs, strip they the vineyard wrongfully seized from its owner . . .  
A cry goes up from the city streets, where wounded men lie groaning . . .  
The economic rationale of current city rebuilding is a hoax. . ."

Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of American cities.













**After undertaking a study on the condition of the city of London the project asks itself; What are the psychological implications of living in such environment?**

The paradox of the megacity is that we are all strangers living in between the same walls - We are all suspicious of each other. How did this condition increase due to the unprecedented events of lockdown? And how does this situation reflect upon the people who live in the city?

Perhaps one day it will be normal again, or maybe this pandemic is the first of many disruptions and unexpected changes the anthropocentric society brought upon itself. I don't know the answers, but in any case, I feel the need to look at this moment of emergency and extremes - maybe we can learn something from it?



Link to film

This work is a reminder that both the city, and normality are fragile; maybe even unsustainable - A reminder that what we thought was solid melted into air. If we consider ourselves situational and relational - beings, Isolation has denied our relationships to other people and public space. It has reallocated us to loneliness, we no longer have a place to be but our own.

To think of “isolation” and “solitude” when the model of the global-urbanisation has been shaken - is to to acknowledge its fragility; Accentuating certain moments and feelings, that perhaps people in the future can look upon as a point of reflection.

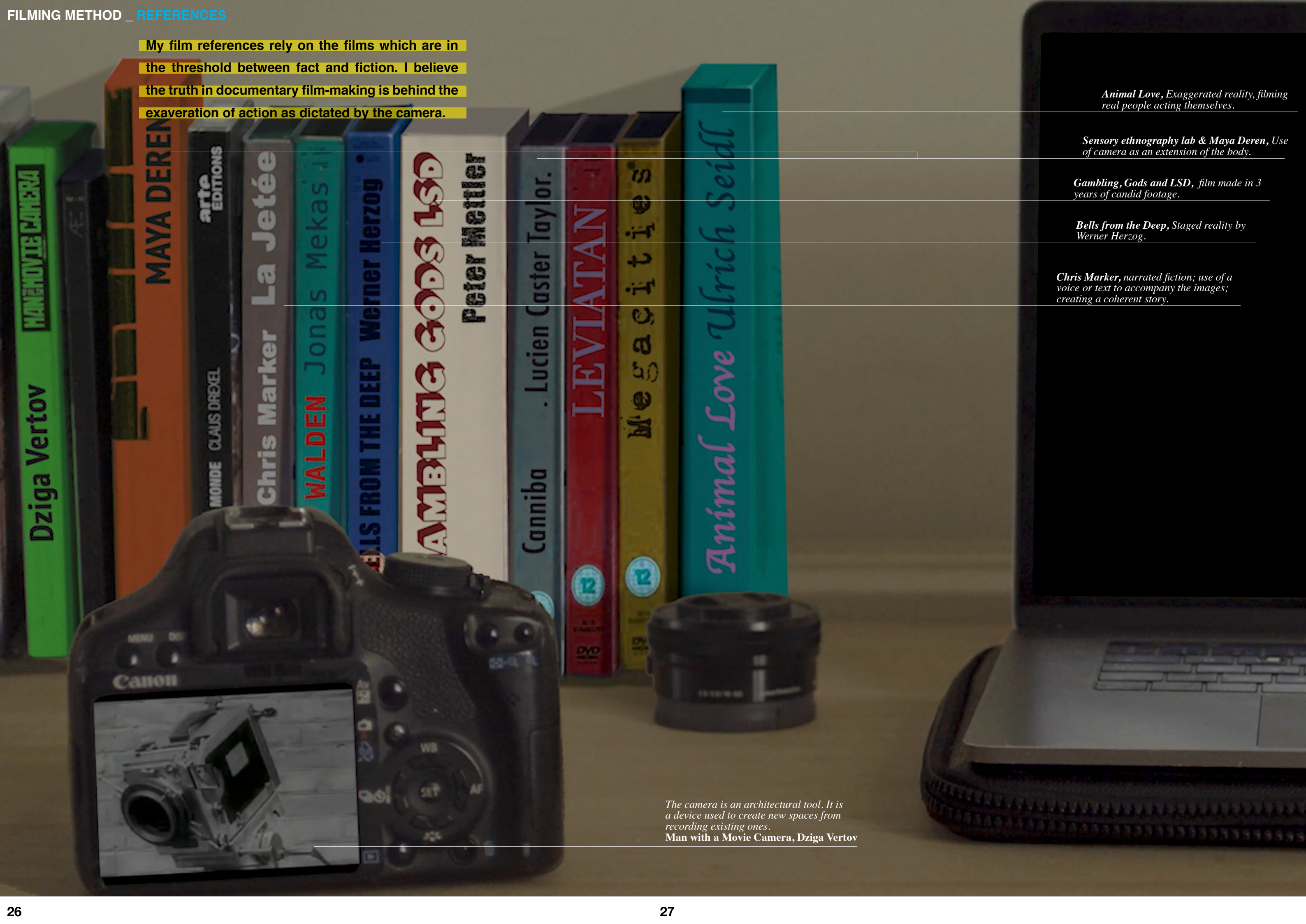
Still From Lon(don)liness 00:02:04



## FILM METHOD







My film references rely on the films which are in the threshold between fact and fiction. I believe the truth in documentary film-making is behind the exaveration of action as dictated by the camera.

*Animal Love*, Exaggerated reality, filming real people acting themselves.

*Sensory ethnography lab & Maya Deren*, Use of camera as an extension of the body.

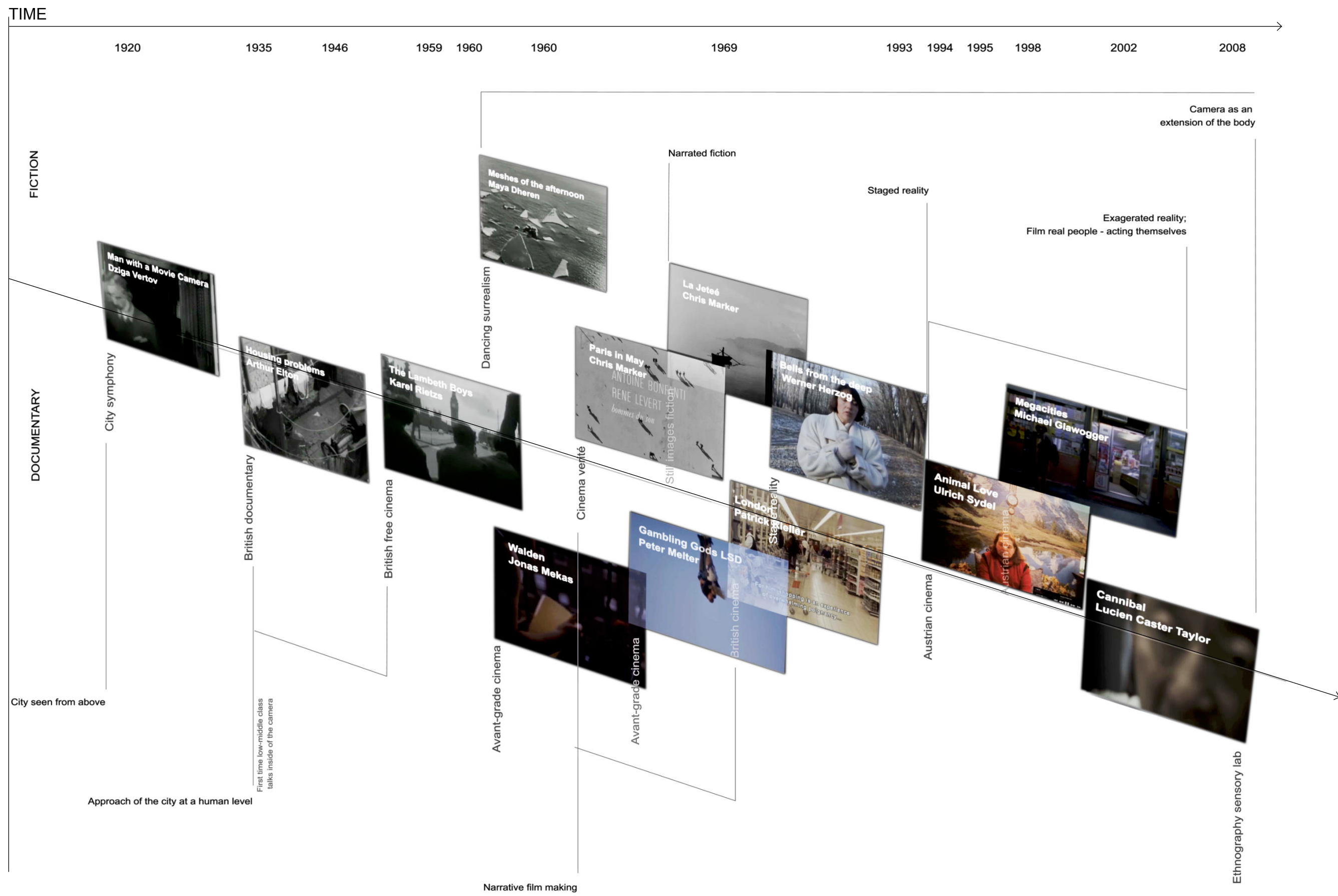
*Gambling, Gods and LSD*, film made in 3 years of candid footage.

*Bells from the Deep*, Staged reality by Werner Herzog.

*Chris Marker*, narrated fiction; use of a voice or text to accompany the images; creating a coherent story.

The camera is an architectural tool. It is a device used to create new spaces from recording existing ones.  
*Man with a Movie Camera*, Dziga Vertov







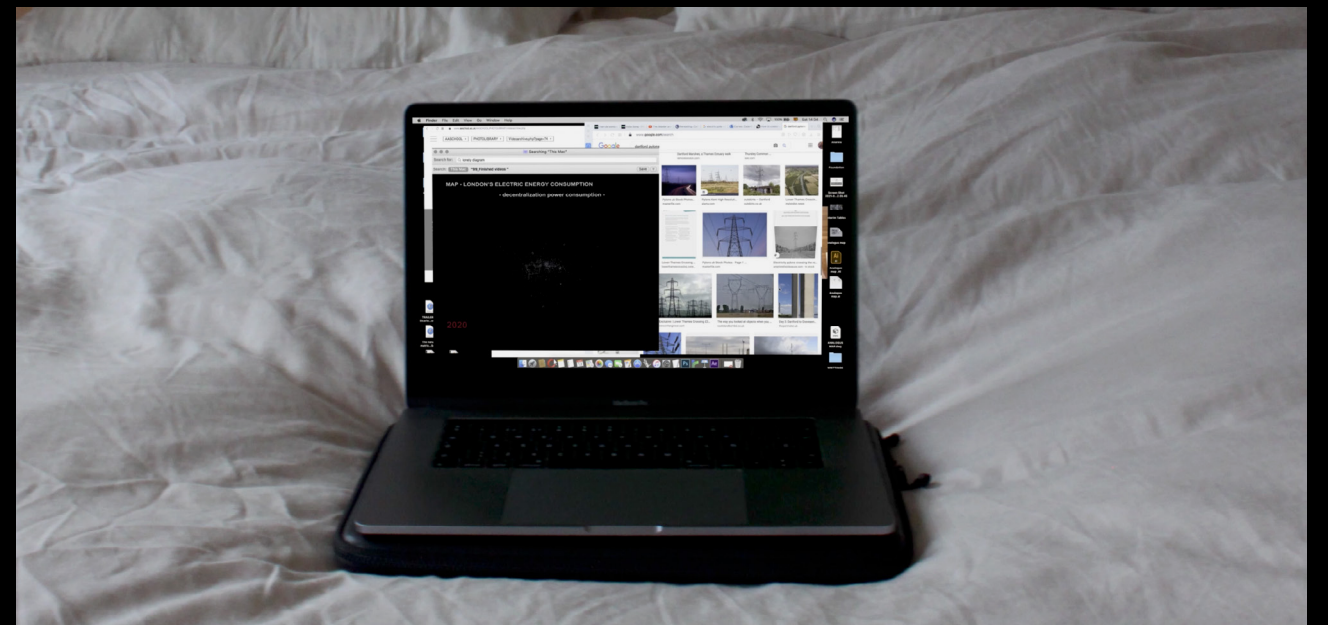


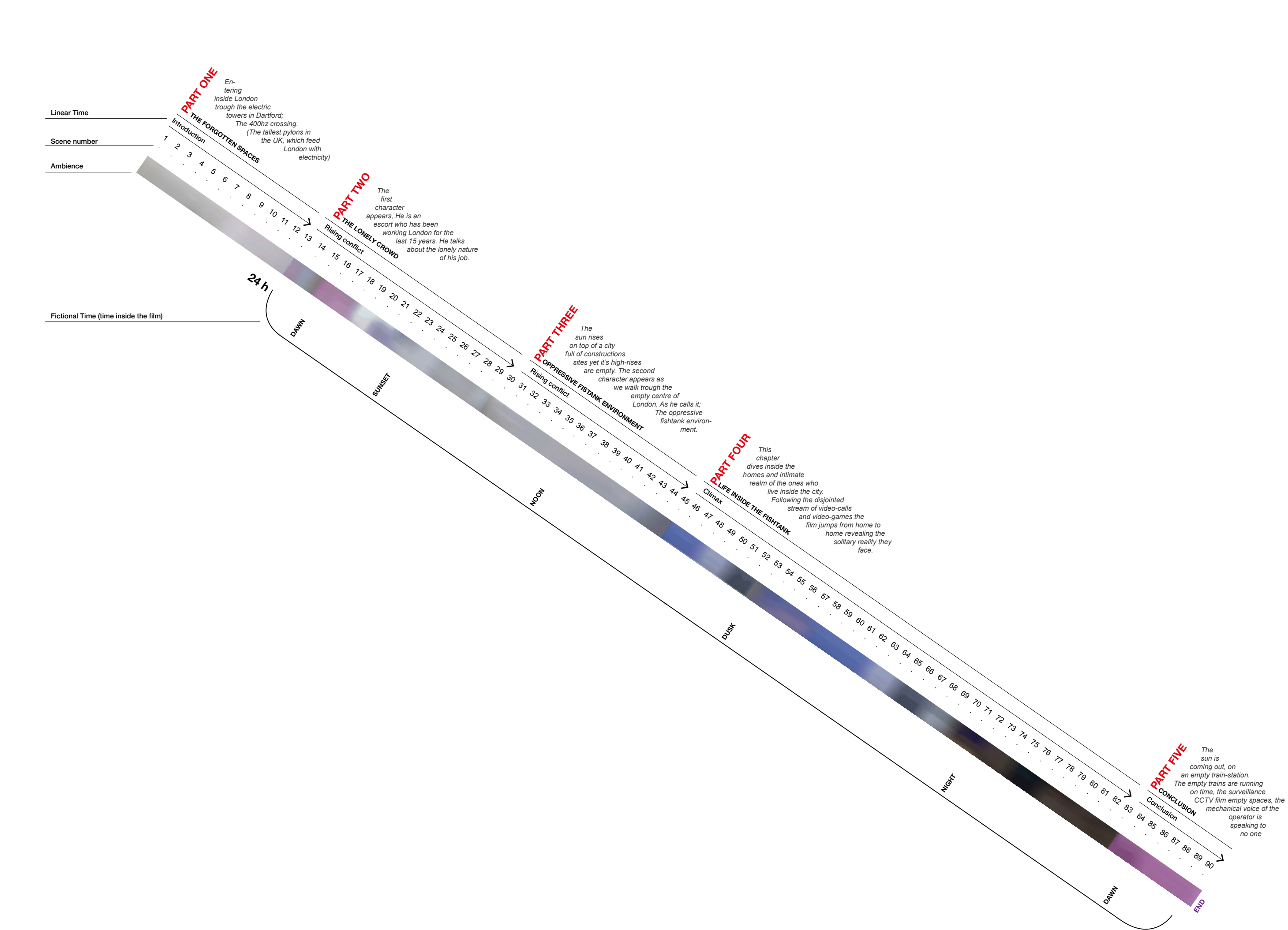
Technical Study research  
(see in pg. 64 to 77)

Travel sketchbook



## STRUCTURE OF THE FILM









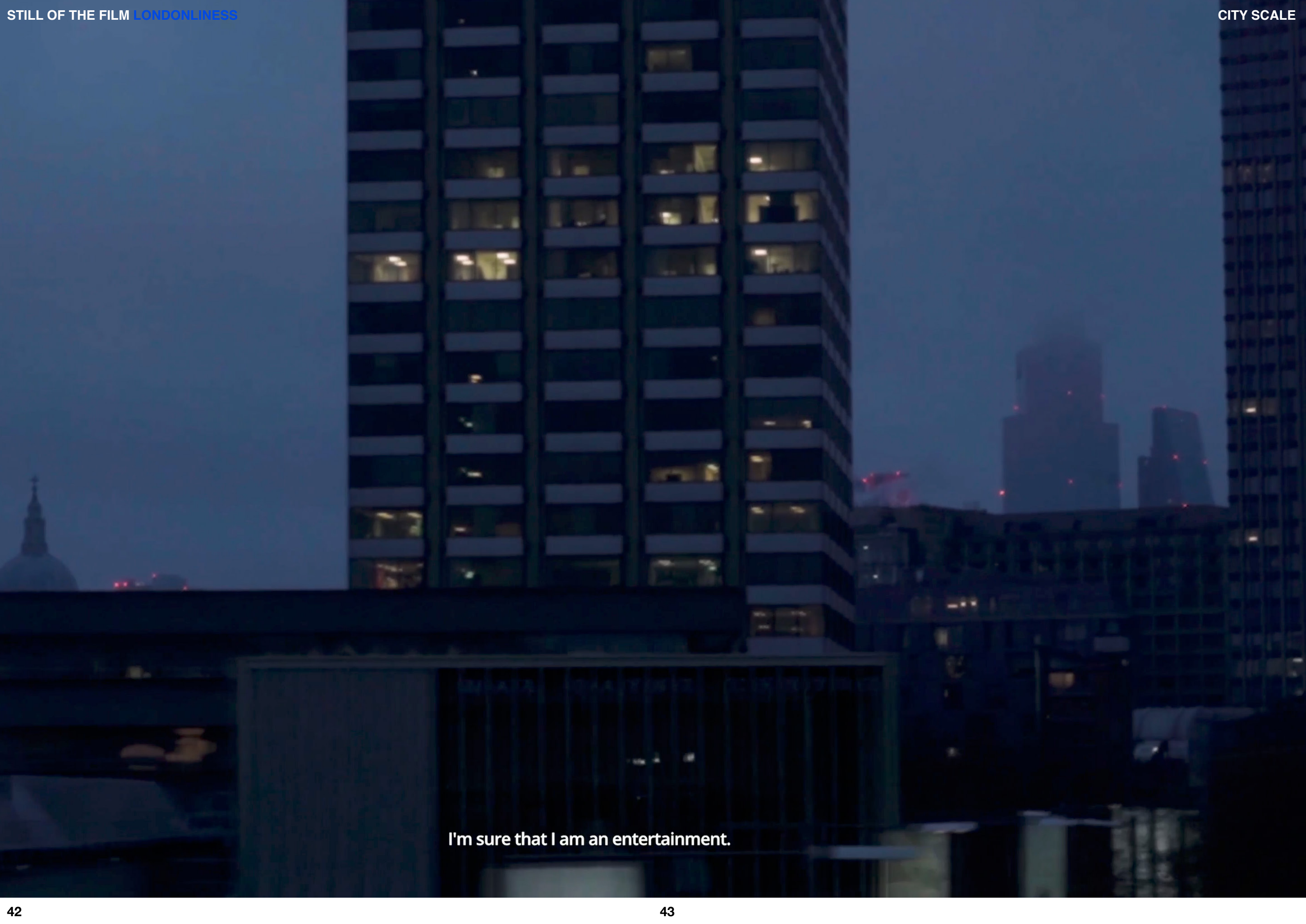












I'm sure that I am an entertainment.



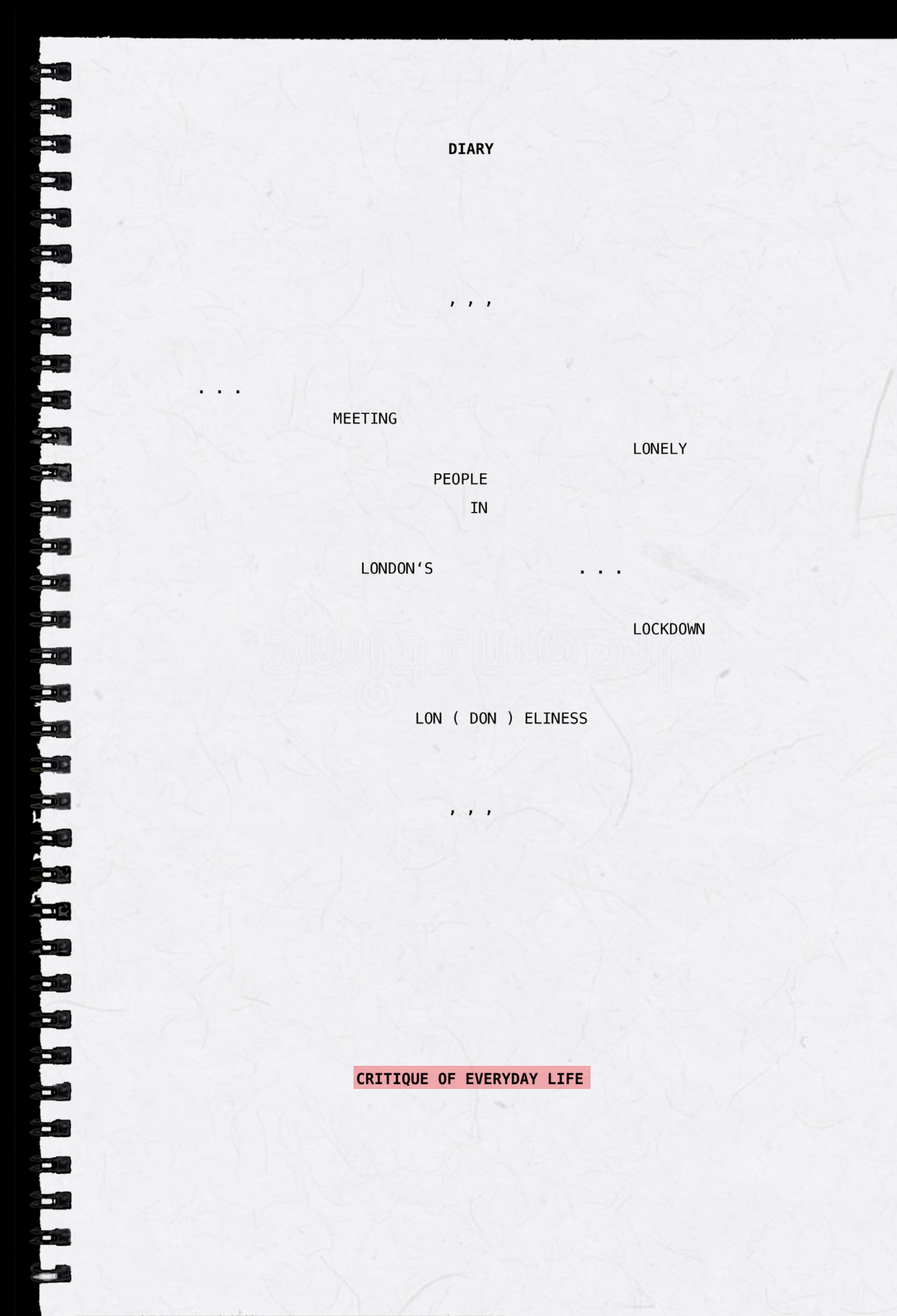








**FIELD WORK**  
(Extract from the diary; notes, conversations and  
interviews)





The diagram is a complex hand-drawn mind map centered on the word "Lifestyle". It branches out into numerous categories and sub-categories, with many nodes connected by arrows, suggesting a flow or relationship between different aspects of life.

**Central Node:** Lifestyle

**Major Branches and Sub-nodes:**

- home**
  - shop
  - cinemas
  - markets
  - malls
  - business
- intimate**
  - hours
- material**
  - technology
- unmaterial**
  - no private ownership
- for all**
  - free
- social**
  - public
- nothing**
- markets**
- recreation**
- work**
- education**
- shopping**
- public activity**
- culture**
  - museums
  - entertainment
- dining**
- drinking**
- apps**
- web**
- lectures**
- exhibitions**
- concerts**
- theatre opera**
- presentation**
  - finished
- 12:00**
- 15:00**
- presentation finished**
- 12:00**

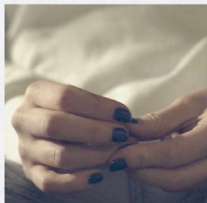
The diagram is highly detailed with many arrows and sub-nodes, indicating a comprehensive view of lifestyle factors.

**Urban History**

- Central London (1800-1900)**
  - 1800: small, dense, medieval core
  - 1850: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1860: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1870: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1880: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1890: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1900: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
- Peripheral London (1900-1950)**
  - 1900: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1910: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1920: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1930: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1940: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1950: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
- Suburban London (1950-1980)**
  - 1950: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1960: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1970: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1980: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
- Post-suburban London (1980-2000)**
  - 1980: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 1990: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 2000: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
- Global London (2000-Present)**
  - 2000: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 2010: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted
  - 2020: "unfettered" = unrestricted = unrestricted



Maia Regis, 37  
Painter.




N15

Maggie Grivakes,  
Recently fired.




SE1P

Mileto Estrella (Alias)  
Young student,



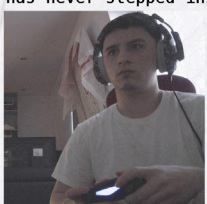
SE15

Julie Lafaye  
Theatre actress




DA12

Ricky Lee Monteiro, 20  
young student.  
has never stepped inside his university



SW1P

Bernat Santa, 24  
Works at McDonalds




SE15

Rebekah  
Recently changed her name,  
her old one was a slave's name.

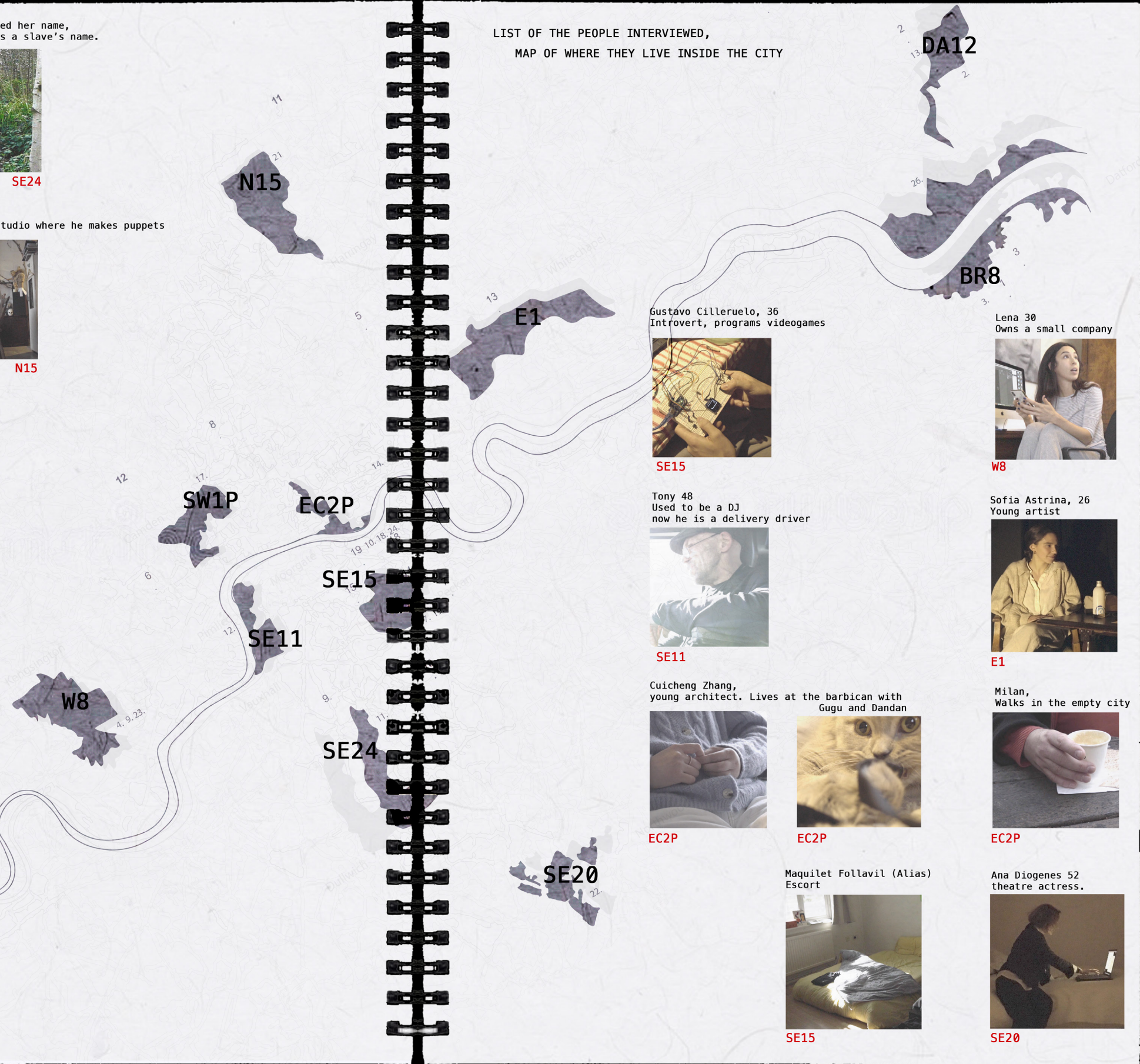


SE24

Leonidas, 36  
Lives in his studio where he makes puppets



N15




LIST OF THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWED,  
MAP OF WHERE THEY LIVE INSIDE THE CITY

Gustavo Cilleruelo, 36  
Introvert, programs videogames



SE15

Tony 48  
Used to be a DJ  
now he is a delivery driver




SE11

Cuicheng Zhang,  
young architect. Lives at the barbican with  
Gugu and Dandan



EC2P



EC2P

Maquilet Follavil (Alias)  
Escort



SE15

Lena 30  
Owns a small company



W8

Sofia Astrina, 26  
Young artist



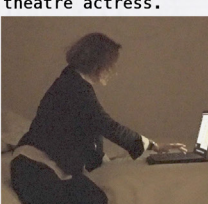
E1

Milan,  
Walks in the empty city



EC2P

Ana Diogenes 52  
theatre actress.

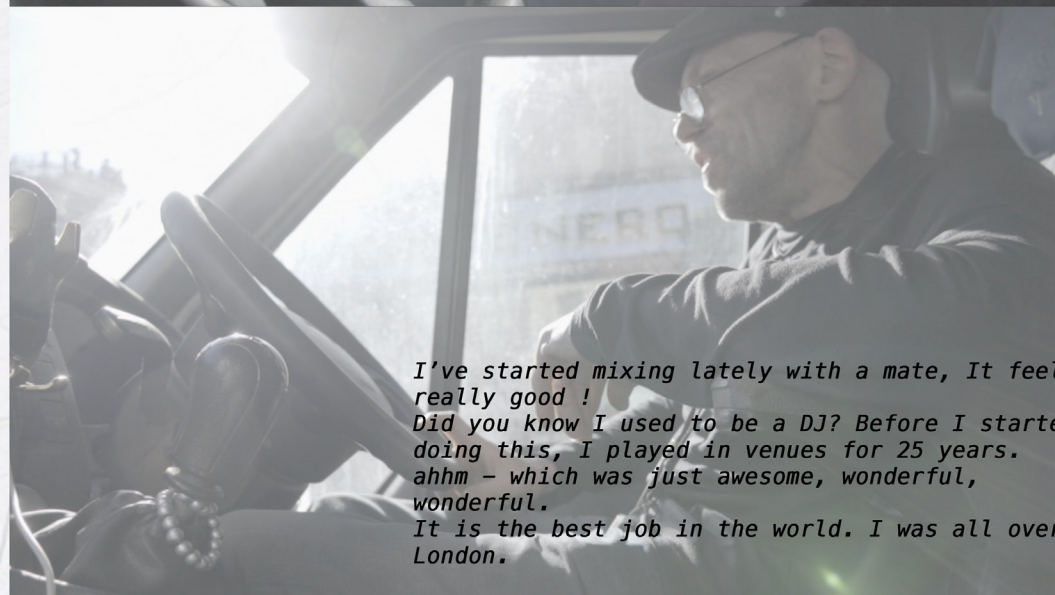
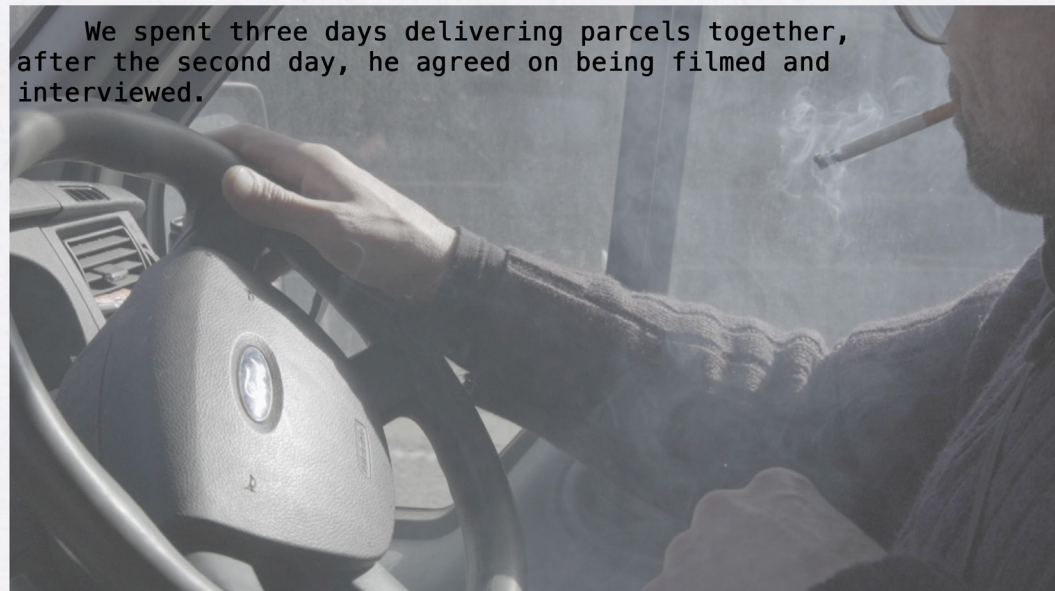


SE20



**Tony – Delivery man (former DJ)**

We spent three days delivering parcels together, after the second day, he agreed on being filmed and interviewed.



*I've started mixing lately with a mate, It feels really good !  
Did you know I used to be a DJ? Before I started doing this, I played in venues for 25 years.  
ahhm – which was just awesome, wonderful, wonderful.  
It is the best job in the world. I was all over London.*

*(...)*

*Now I've started doing deliveries. It is a lovely job because it is a people's job. I do the same route every day. I really got to know my costumers, but I don't know if they know me !  
(loud laughter) (...)*

*So last year when the lockdown was in full. London was completely dead. There was nobody on the street but us. (essential workers)*

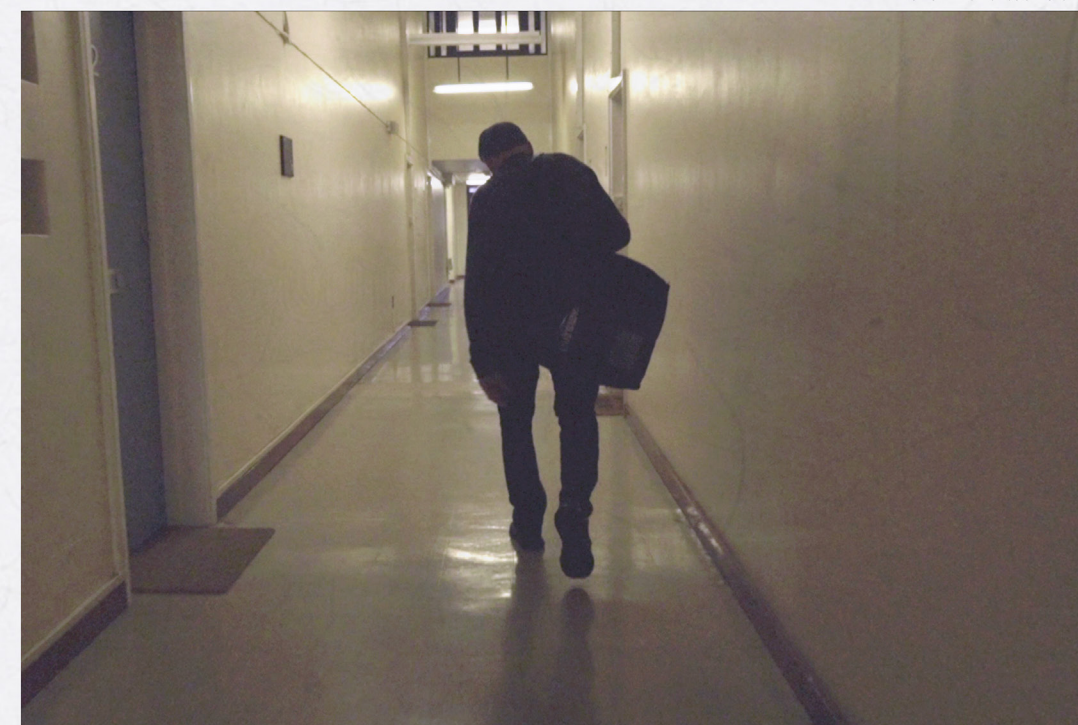
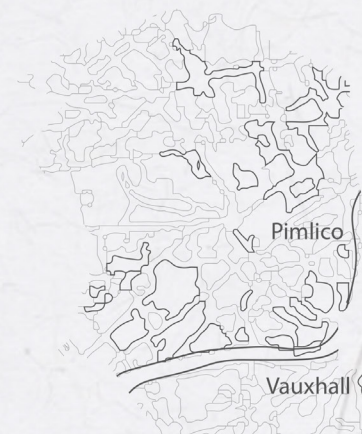
*There was just nothing, nobody, London was never cleaner. Because there was no one about to make it dity. No rubbish on the flor ! It was my absolute favorite moment, and it was easier to deliver parcels, I had lots of work. But work is good. I was happy, but not everyone can say that...*

On the day we filmed we did the same route we had done the other two days around Pimlico. The delivery would start at 7 am sharp and go on until about noon.

The only break he would take is lighting a cigarette inside the Van, whilst still driving.

His job represents one of the many essential workers who now, more than ever have become even more essential, keeping the machinery of the city going.

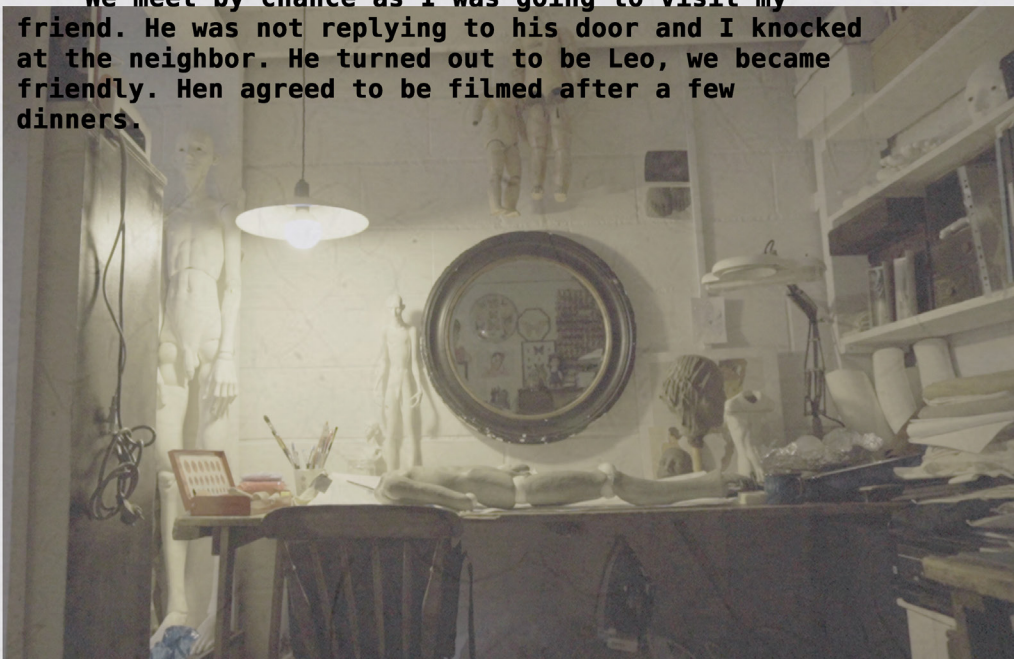
Working at a frantic paste to keep up with the schedules of the APP which controls his salary. Phone always on. Non-stop. No breaks. No days off.





**Leo - (Leonidas) The puppeteer**

We meet by chance as I was going to visit my friend. He was not replying to his door and I knocked at the neighbor. He turned out to be Leo, we became friendly. He agreed to be filmed after a few dinners.



I hate horror movies. There is nothing I found more disturbing than a horror film...

I don't like it when art needs to be explained to me. For me that means a fail, like so many times I see something at the TATE and I in order to get it I have to go and read that little blurb. Art should really speak by itself. ..

I feel I love being alone, but there is a big difference between being alone and being lonely. I don't usually feel lonely. I am comfortable spending time with myself.

The time I felt the most lonely was when my boyfriend and I broke up. I didn't realize how toxic he was until we were away from each other.

He had managed to separate me from all of my friends without me realizing it. I became dependent on his company, and when he was gone, I couldn't process it.

I suddenly found myself in a void.

To me, loneliness feels like a void.  
An icy void - Ahh I just heard myself (giggles)  
I just said such a clicé!! (...)

Working was a good escape from it. I enjoy my job and I am lucky to have that.

(...)

Leo lives by himself in a warehouse.

He lives immersed in the universe he created. His dolls are in every corner of the house. He collections dolls makes clothes for them, and also makes his own dolls.

He doesn't smoke nor drink. Has his house filled with flowers which he takes care of daily.



His latest puppet is a doll or Rosi de Palma



**Maquilet- (alias) works as an escort**

I found Maquilet through a friend. They met long ago, at a queer party, and put me in contact. We never met in person, at first he was extremely suspicious of the nature of my "project" (like many). We spoke on the phone for a while. And chatted. The following are transcriptions of the first conversation we had.

*Escorts are paid to keep things confidential, I usually don't sleep with my clients, mostly they want someone to give them companionship. . . If I like them I will choose to sleep with them.*

*Guys who buy escorts are looking for a fantasy, plain and simple. They want to feel loved, they want to feel interesting, reassured . . .*

*This city has a lot of lonely people. You'd be surprised if you saw my clients. They are very... normal,*

*Yes, some look for sex, but others just want the companionship of a boy who, in all honesty, probably wouldn't give him the time of day without money.*

*They want to have a moment with a gorgeous man who sits there and acts like they're the center of the universe . . . even if it's only for an hour.*

*They want to feel attractive – most of them aren't.*

*I stumbled across many different types of clients: Some, well, they're entitled pricks. There's no other way to say it. some are married, to a woman, and with kids. Some aren't brave enough to come out of the closet and be who they truly are ....*

*but then, some of the men are .... well ... just sad, lonely, confused, I deal with many lonely people. And, for an evening, make them forget about their loneliness.*

*A lot of men end up getting ignored or taken for granted by their loved ones. And that is when they come to me.*

*You don't really go to escorts if you're a confident person. The people I work with, my clients, need validation from someone. And they will pay money for that evening of validation.*

*I have a few freidns who also do this job. At first everyone has the same reaction – sweet! easy money ! yayy –*

*Then you realize how its not that easy (giggles)*

*After you spend a little time doing this you start building strenght i think. The things which upset me a few years ago don't anymore.*





**Beeryl - cuicheng Zhang - young architect**

Beryl spends most of her time in a studio flat, at the Barbican estate, with her two cats, remote working, watching films and, playing videogames with her friends from china.

One of the walls of her studio is a window looking at the other buildings in the estates. Even if Beryl has been living on that flat for less than a year, she knows most of her neighbours routines.



The neighbor on the first-floor hew starts working with me every day at the same time like 9.30, and his desk is in the same position as mine, close to the window.

And on the second floor the couple making the bed they have a cat - he is so cute he is a yellow cat.

and the guys at the top, he will come to the balcony every day at the same time, whenever the sunset, he will come out and have some fresh air.

And so far, I haven't seen anyone smoke, yet.

And there is couple there on the first floor, I think they are musicians because they have a few guitars hanging on the wall, and I can see sometimes their band is playing.

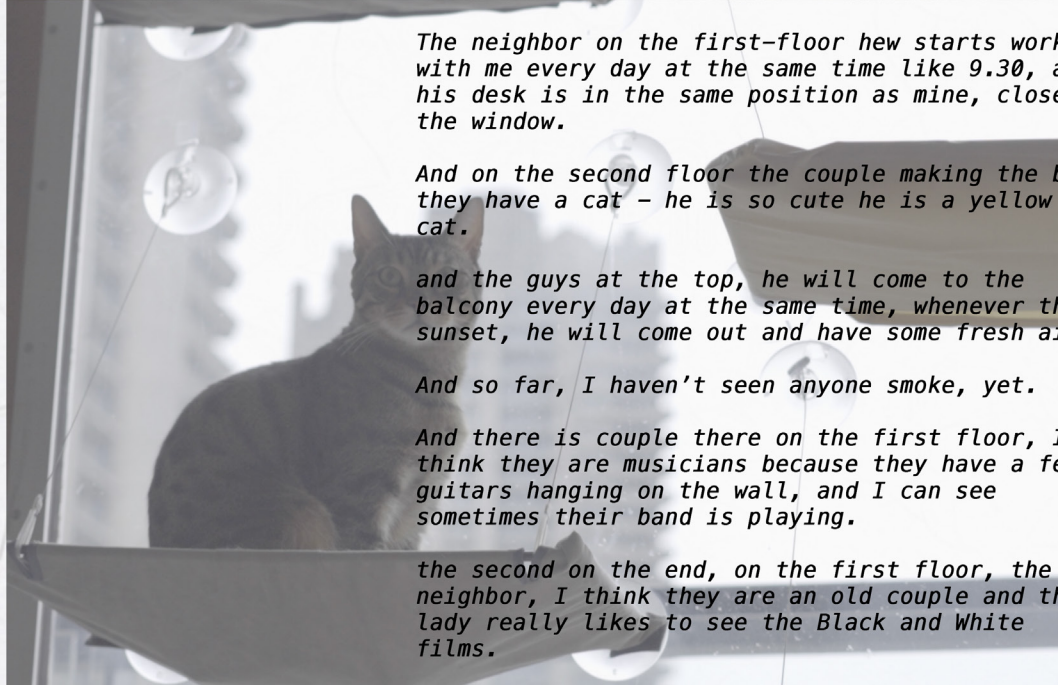
the second on the end, on the first floor, the neighbor, I think they are an old couple and the lady really likes to see the Black and White films.

And for that tower ! the only thing I know is that there is one apartment she/he is always being the latest leaving the lights on ... that is the only thing I know about the Shakespeare tower, that's it.

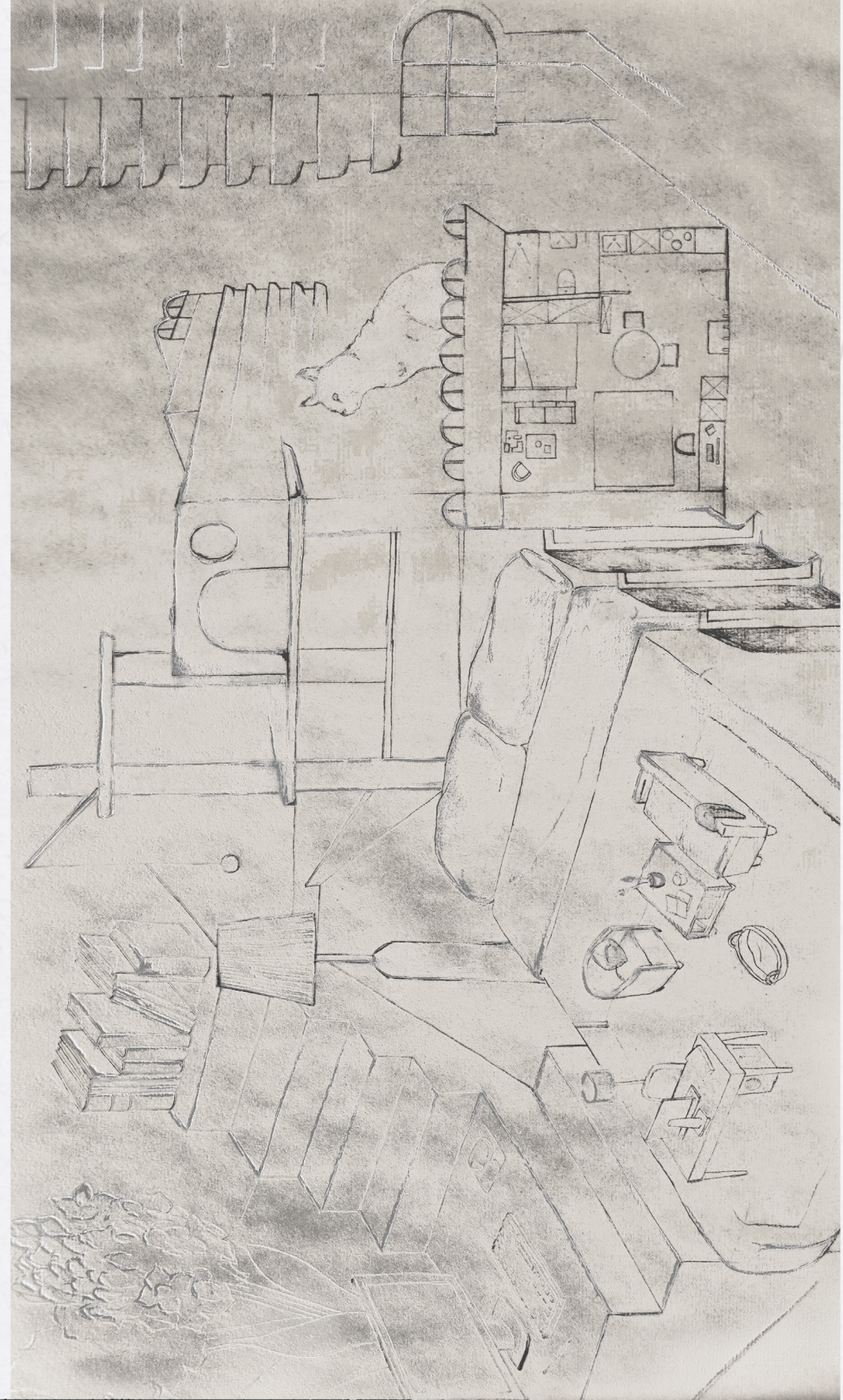
yep

That's, all I know about my neighbors..  
Quite a lot I have to say !! giggles

It's creepy, I'm sorry ! but I'm sure they know the same about me !  
Like it's a young lady with two cats playing video games, I'm sure they know it. . .

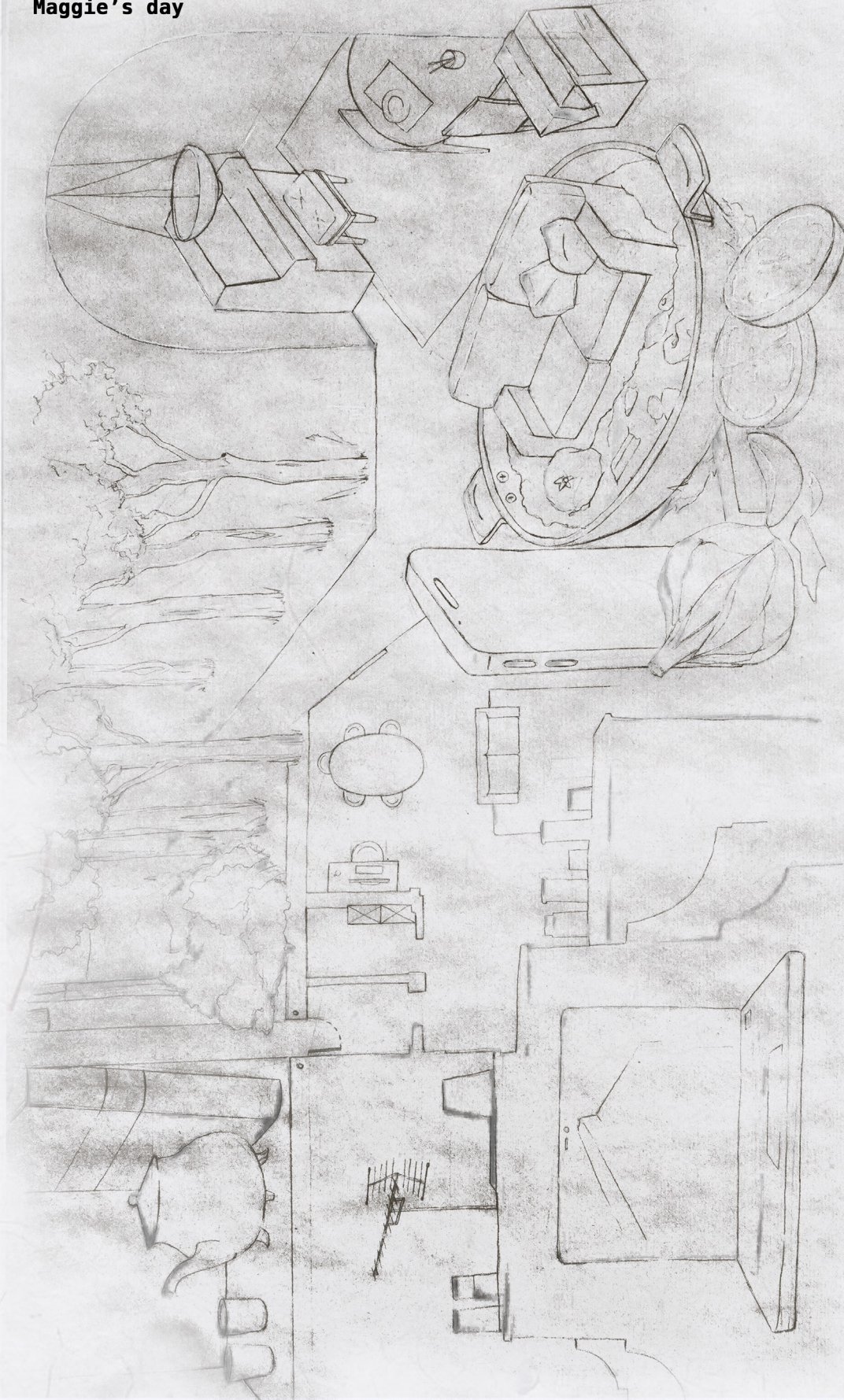


Hand drawing: mapping Beryl's evryday spaces.

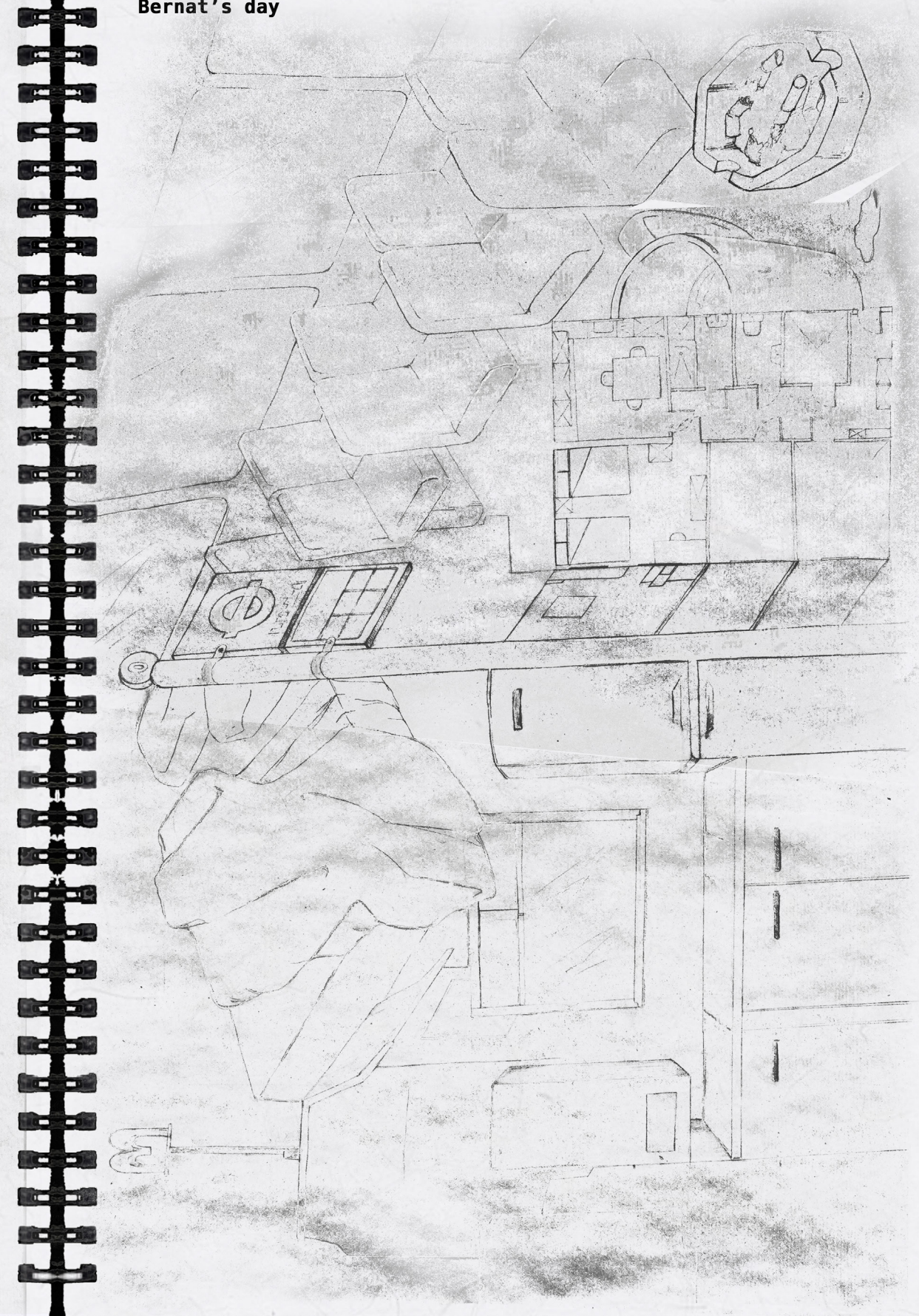




Maggie's day



Bernat's day





**POEM: THE EMPTY CITY**

After a day inside a city turned inside out, it stands in front of us, uncannily,  
Revealing to us the strangeness of the spaces in our every day.

Once we have seen this, we see it for what it is, naked.

We ask ourselves the question what does it mean?

The city, impersonal, offers no answer.

All we are left with is uncertainty,

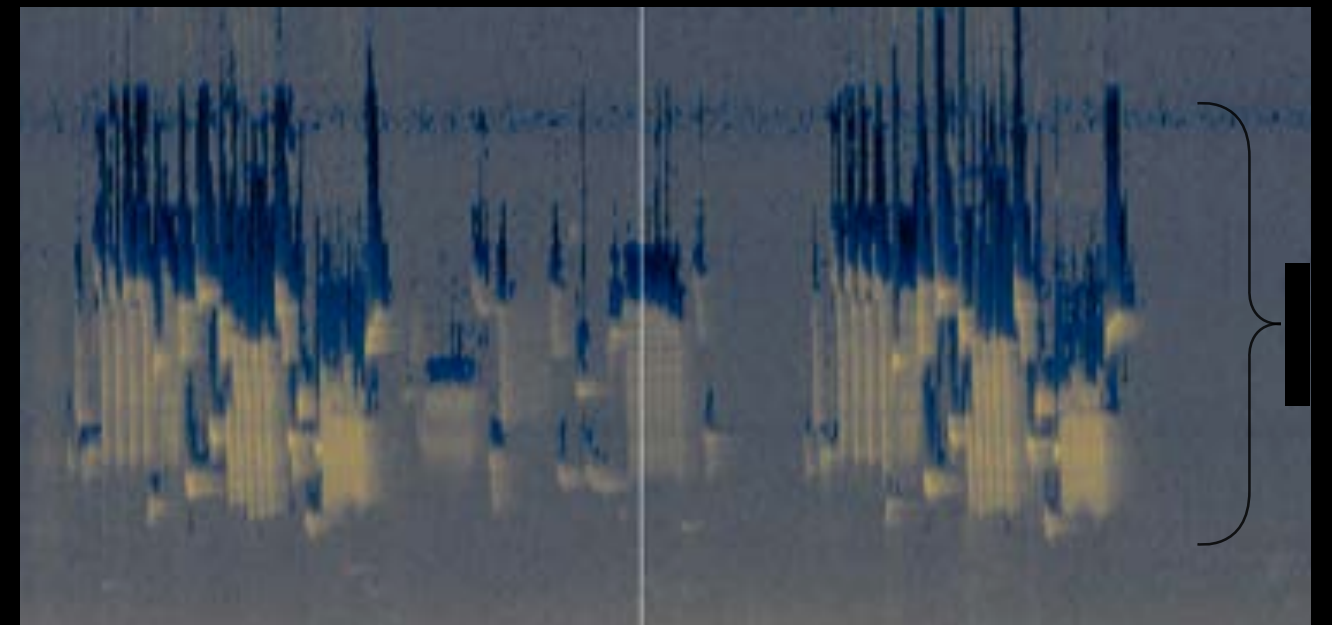
The absurdity of it all.

..





**SOUND RESEARCH**  
(Extract from ETS5 project; The sound of space)





# i)Method of design





# iii) Audial Analysis ( Scale $\text{dBV}^2$ + Scale $\text{dBV}$ )

## DECIBEL SCALE IN SONIC VISUALIZER

In order to analyse this experiment I will use the sound visualizations of the software Sonic Visualizer, as it has a large range of parameters in order to best code the spectrogram in order to show what we are looking for.

The main two parameters which will change in this experiment is the colour pallet of the visualization, for clarity and distinction proposes, and, the decibel Scale (dB).

The two scales I will be looking at are

\_dBV

\_dBV<sup>2</sup>

dBV stands for Decibel within a ratio of Voltages. Since the decibel is defined with respect to power, not amplitude, conversions of voltage ratios to decibels must square the amplitude.

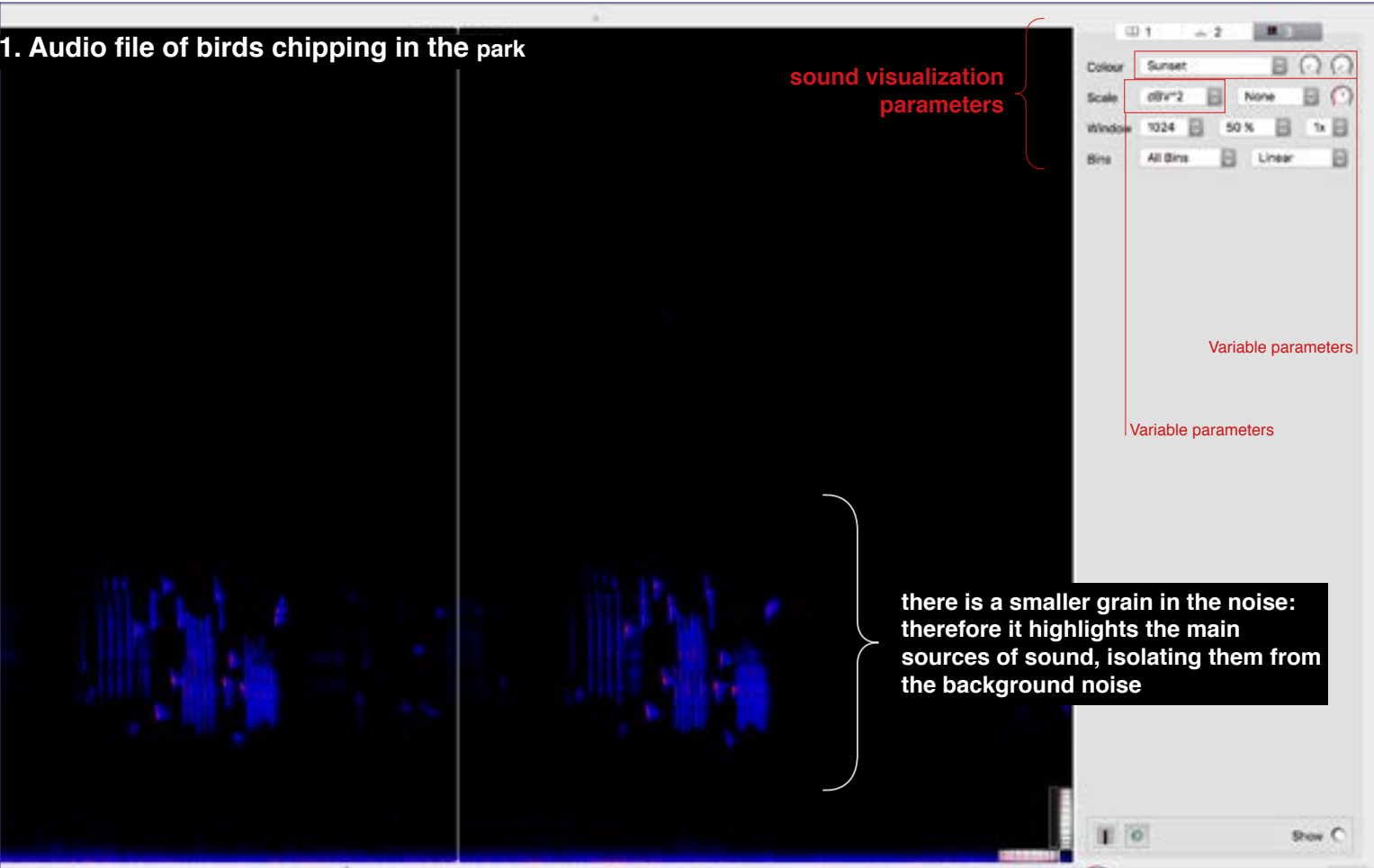
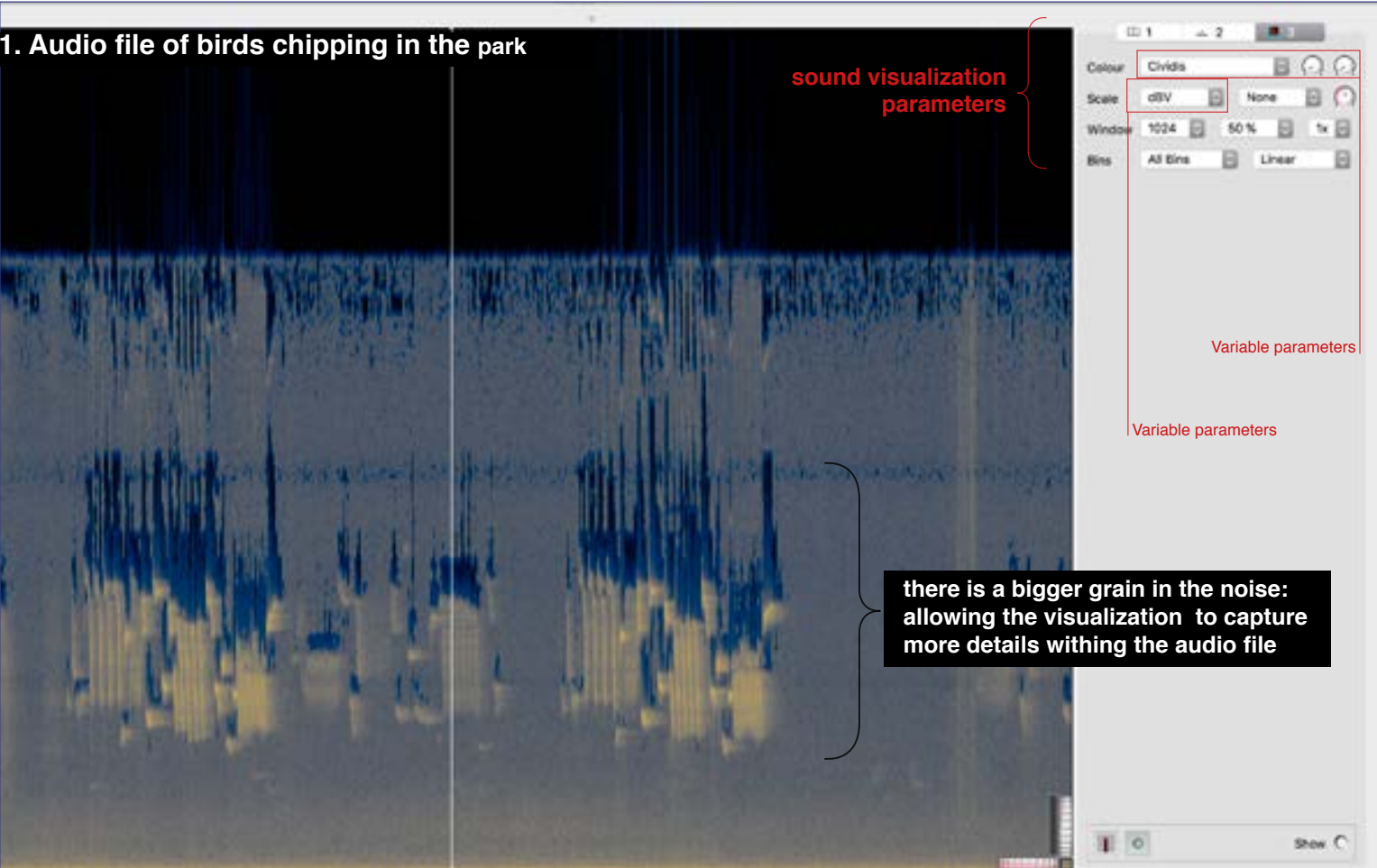
Therefore the first scale; dBV means 1 decibel is represented in respect to 1 Volt.

On the other hand, dBV<sup>2</sup> means that 1 decibel is represented in respect to 1 Volt elevated to 2 (= multiplied by itself).

The visual result of this decibel scale differentiation allows the spectrogram to reveal different qualities of the audio file in question.

dBV works very well to visualize sounds which are background noise. Yet it doesn't work to well to individualize sounds. In order to see the behaviour of individualized sounds, the scale dBV<sup>2</sup> is much more successful.

In the image we can see the user interface of the software with two different displays of the same audio file.





# v)Redesign using the sound library

## \_Spectrogram Audial Reading (dBV)

**CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS:**

There there is a visualization of the spectrogram performing the audio within two different channels (top one left, bottom one right). Here there is some observations on the behaviour of sound in relation to the composition and the narrative of the scene.

1. Two different channels, one is the right and the other one the left, with this parameters the sound already feels more three dimensional.

2 . The strong interferences have been almost completely removed. Even if in the windy scenes (img3) is still a little apparent.

3 . Hiss from the wind clearer

4 . Smooth transitions. The soundtrack is now one continuous sound rather than different pieces.

5 . Synthetic sound; we can see how when the sine waves come into the soundscape the spectrogram is more monotonous. It doesn't have the irregularities we have with the recorded sounds. (as they are more complex)

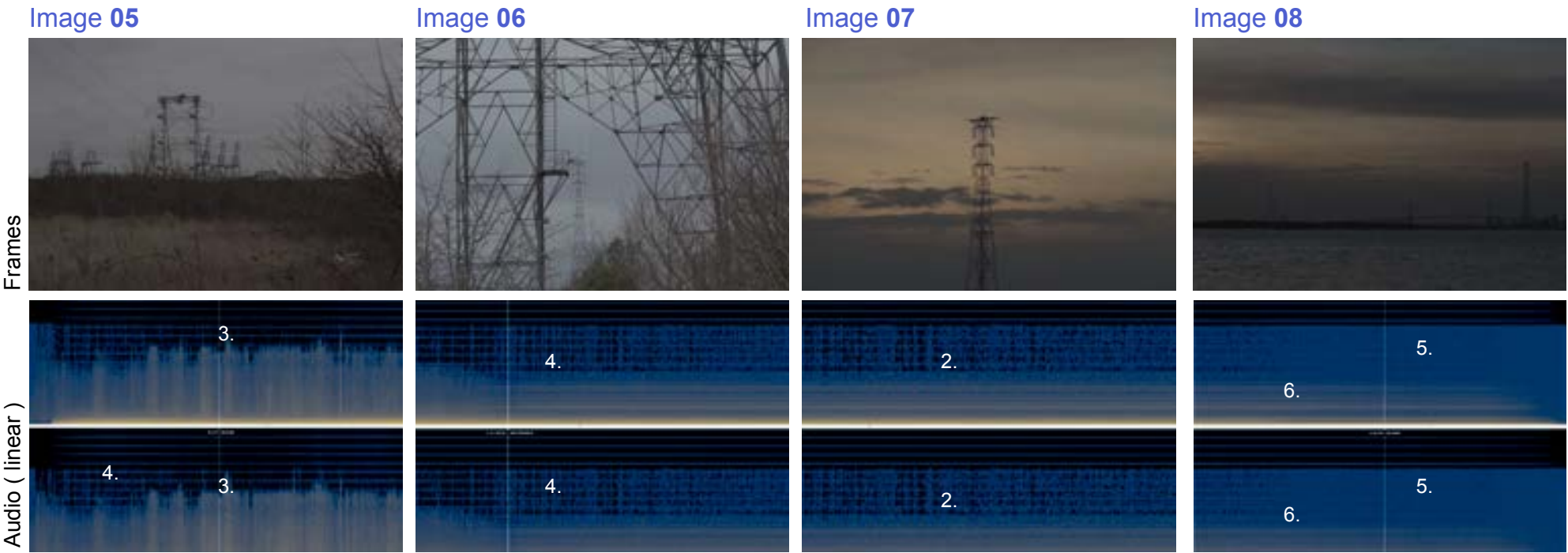
6 . Moments of destiny in separated channels. Both of the channels perform similarly, yet slightly different - this will enhance the spatial qualities of the audio.

7 . Progressive apparition of the sound, even when there is no image. For a composition to be coherent, sound comes first and the image follows.



Spectrogram Parameters  
\_Colour; cividis  
\_Scale; dBV  
\_Resolution; 1024/50%/1x  
\_Bins; All bins  
\_Scale; Linear scale

Respective sound ( spectrogram: linear scale, cividis colour pallet, dB V scale )



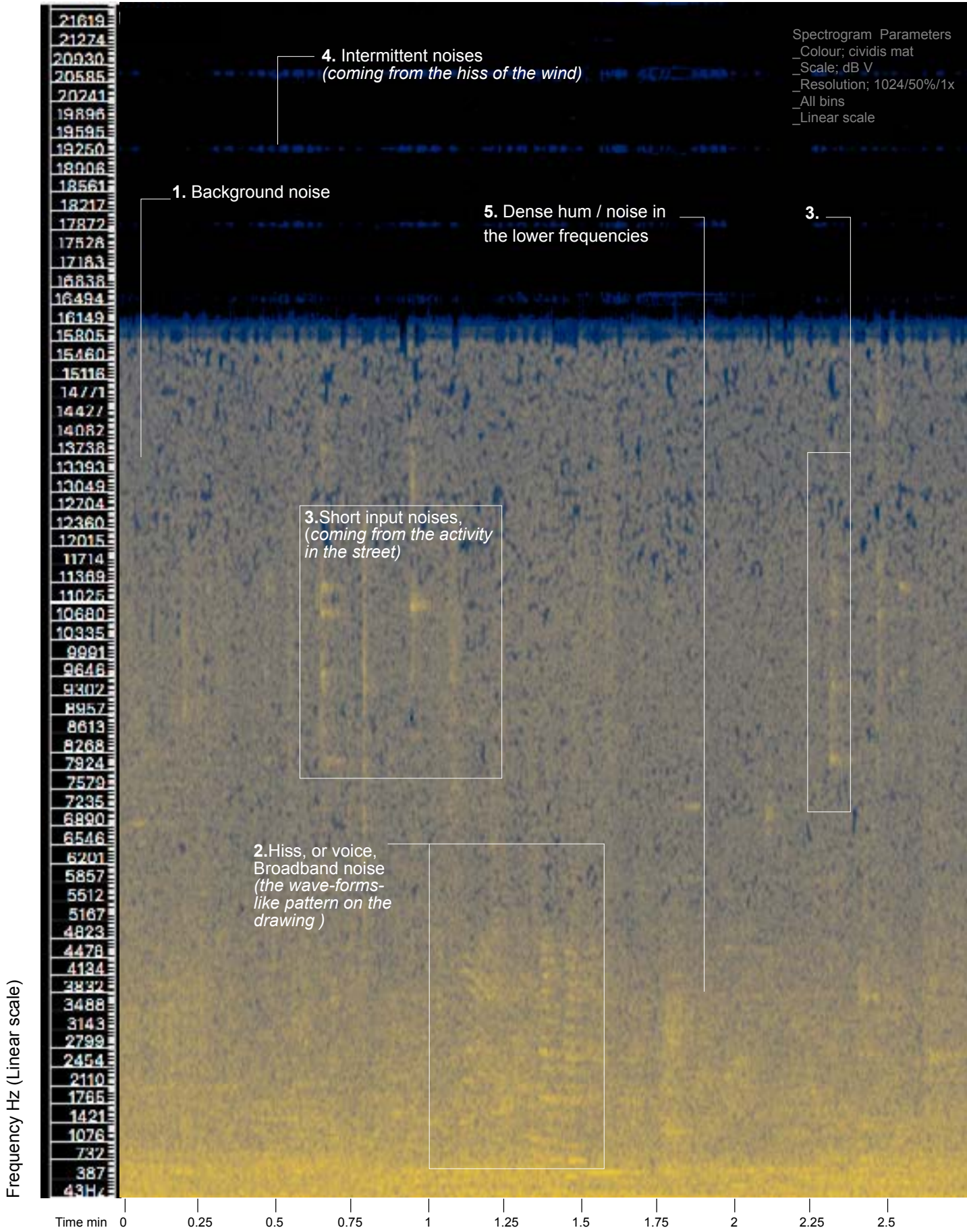
Spectrogram Parameters  
\_Colour; cividis  
\_Scale; dBV  
\_Resolution;1024/50%/1x  
\_Bins; All bins  
\_Scale; Linear scale

Respective sound ( spectrogram: linear scale, cividis colour pallet, dB V scale )

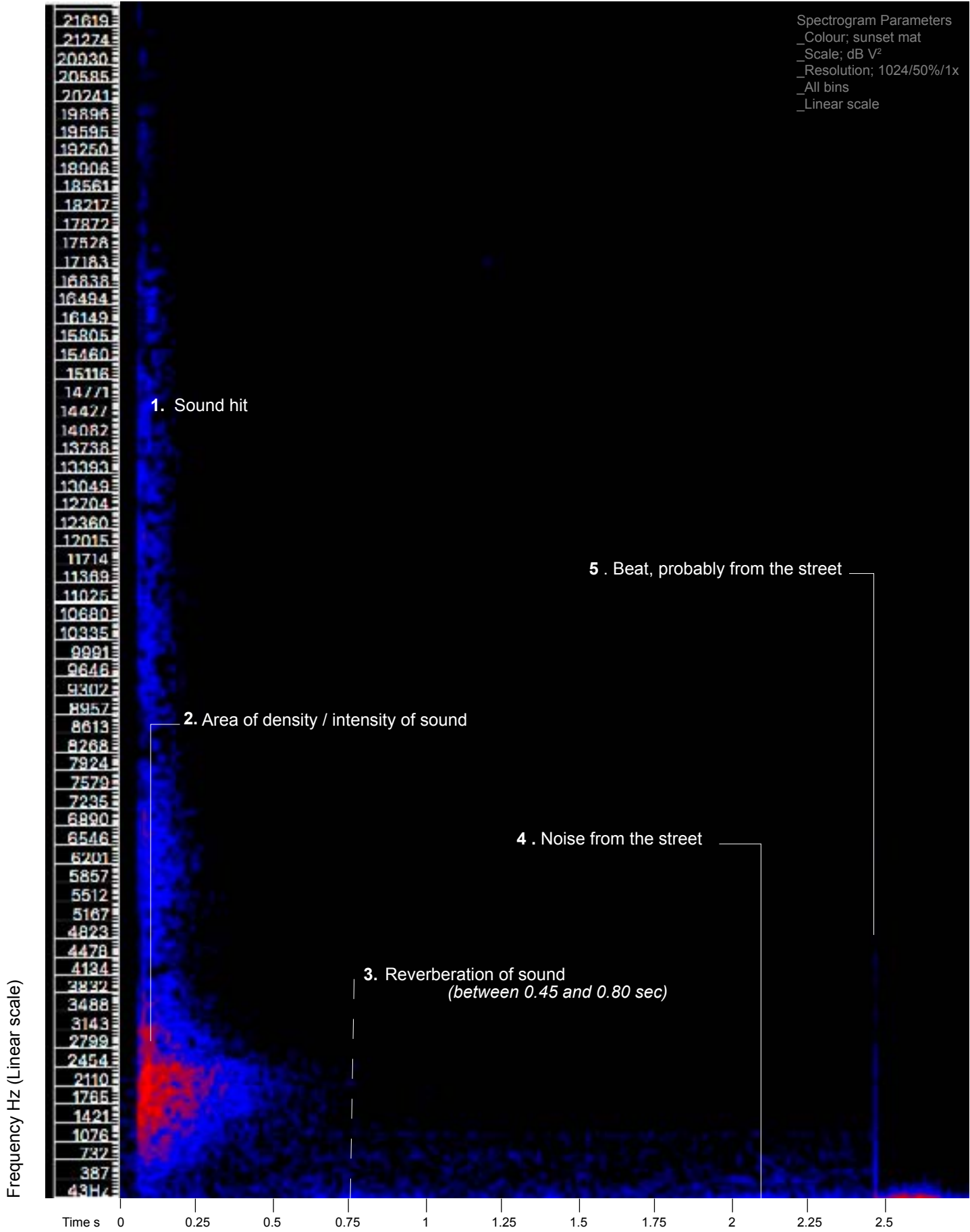


iii)Comparative Analysis ( Scale  $\text{dBV}^2$  + Scale  $\text{dBV}$  )  
Space 04

dBV scale - noise analysis



dB  $\text{V}^2$  scale - isolated sound analysis



red - audio source  
blue - reverberation



iv)Library of isolated sounds; Detailed Audial Analysis

Site 1

Audio Analysis

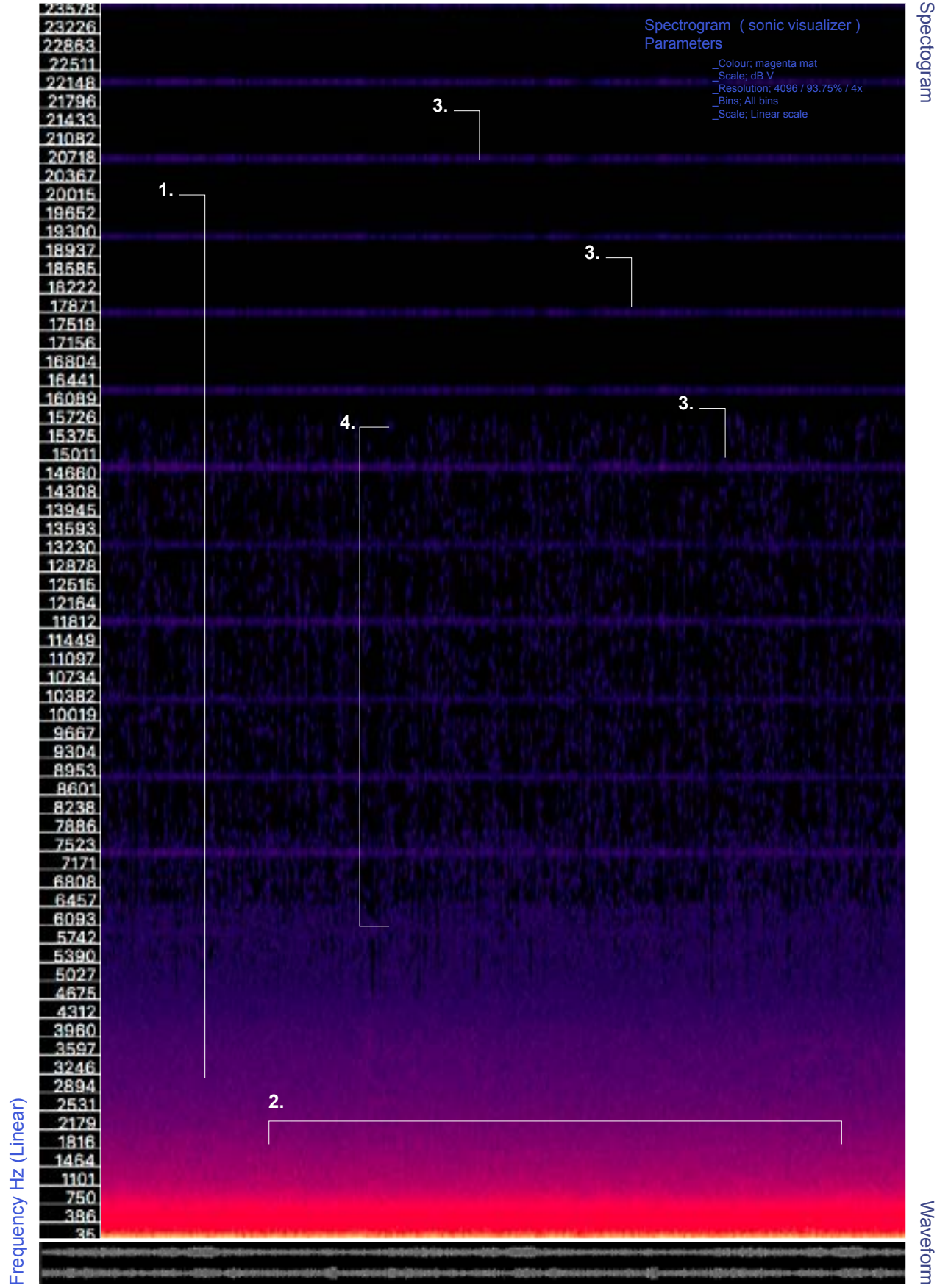
- 1 . Gradient of densities. This shows that the sound is quite clear, and not as dense as the original sound.
- 2 . The base of the wind is the denser (loudest) element of the recording. The audio will be lowest from 0-539Hz. The wind can be used as a base to homogenize the audiovisual piece.
- 3 . Horizontal lines represent the intermittent noises, probably coming from the hiss of the wind itself. The separation indicates the frequencies they are in. In this recording the wind is very direct, meaning that it remains within the same tone and doesn't vary.
- 4 . Area of medium density. Here we can see the amount of "impact" the shield has been exposed to, and managed to protect the microphones from. Nevertheless in the image the trace of diluted impacts is imprinted in the oscillation of the pattern from about 6000Hz to 15600 Hz

Film Analysis (through audio)

By isolating the sound of the wind we can implement the same sound on the back of every image of the scene, in order to give continuity. The wind is what all of the images have in common inside this scene. This audio file will behave as a foundation for the design of the audiovisual piece.

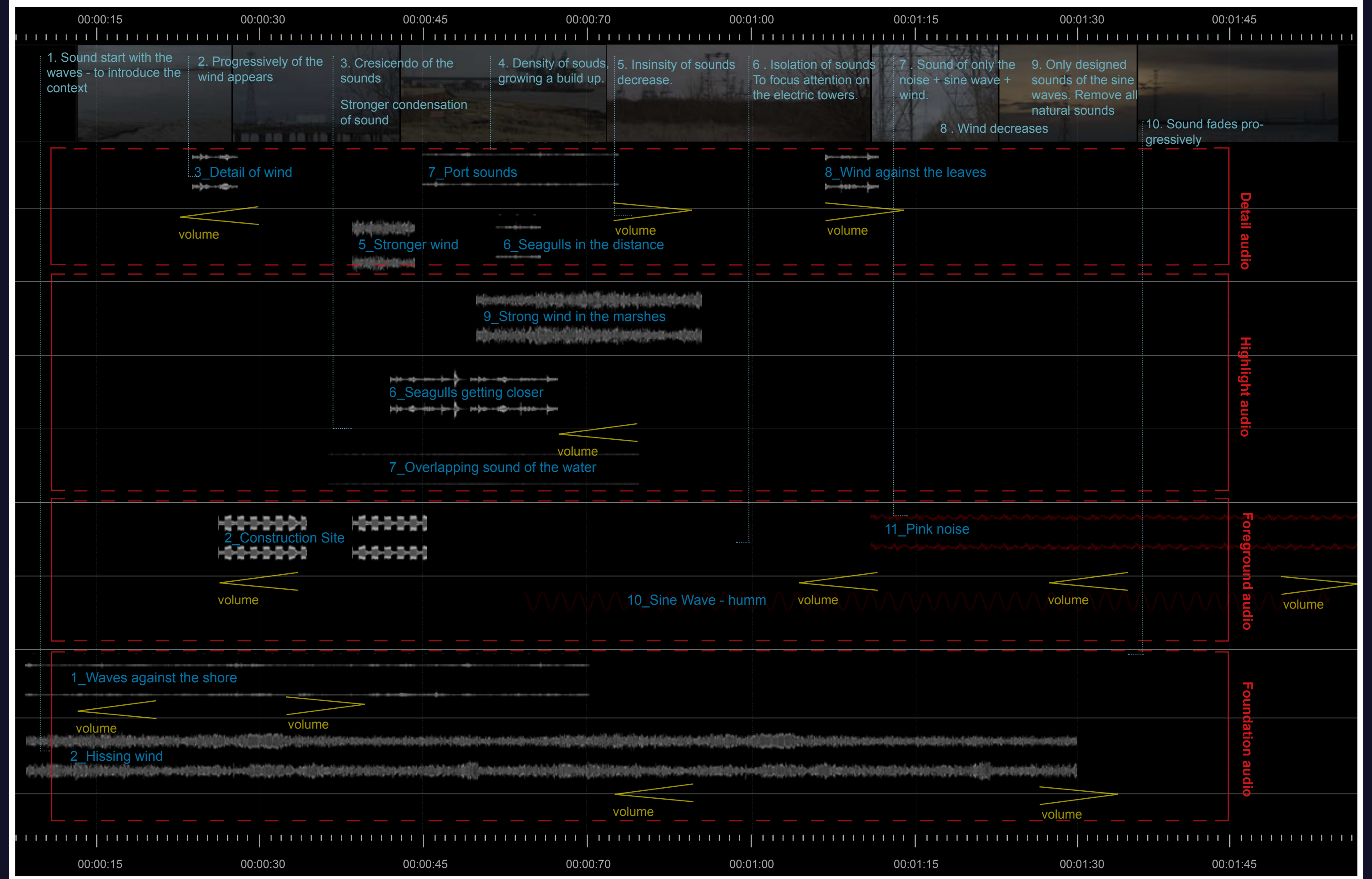
Audio 2

Linear scale + dB V scale





v)Redesign using the sound library: Sound map Design Annotations





**Thank you**