



YOU DON'T KNOW

Episode 4: The Courtyard

Read by Lizzy Turner – **LT**; '**Charlotte**', '**Hunnie**' and '**Gary**'.

Produced by David Turner – **DT**

Transcription by Christabel Smith (intro and outro) and Lizzy Turner (sound descriptions).

Intro:

DT: Hello. Welcome to episode four of You Don't Know. I am David Turner and lounging on the grass in Lloyd Park in front of me is Lizzy Turner, my collaborative partner on this series. This episode is called The Courtyard. Firstly, welcome back to regular listeners and secondly, hello to any new listeners that have downloaded this episode, because it is part of this year's E17 Art Trail.

This episode took as its starting point the idea or technique of audio collage, which manifested itself in me interviewing three of our neighbours, handing the audio to Lizzy for her to cut up and reassemble and also write in response to. The recording you are about to listen to is Lizzy's reinterpretation of those conversations. As always, the episode is accompanied by a limited-edition print publication.

In the three previous episodes, I kept forgetting to mention something that is probably extra important in this recording, due to local interest, but 10% of all our webshop sales this year go to the Eat or Heat food bank here in Walthamstow. Head to our website, youdontknow.uk, or follow the link in the episode description to buy the artwork or to download a full episode transcript.

Finally, an enormous thank-you to our neighbours for speaking to me so openly and agreeing to be part of this episode. In order of appearance, they are Charlotte, Hunnie and Gary. As always, we will be back after the recording to discuss the project, episode and print publication, so we'll see you on the other side in about 25 minutes.

The Courtyard:

[00:02:08]

[Note: The three speakers, aside from Lizzy and David, who can be heard throughout this track are (in order of appearance) Charlotte, Hunnie and Gary.]

[Track begins with general sounds of an outdoor space, including birdsong and distant traffic. The sound of footsteps walking on paving slabs can be heard, followed by the sounds of somebody letting themselves in through a secure gate – the jangle of a key being taken out, the beep of a secure fob pad, and the clang of the gate closing.

The footsteps continue down a paved passageway, and can then be heard walking around an outdoor courtyard. The outdoor sounds, footsteps and beeps from the secure gate continue as a bed beneath most of the track, with various changes and additions as highlighted throughout this transcript.]

[00:02:43]

Charlotte: Errr, God, I lose track of time. I would say about nine years. But I lived in one of the apartments over there, facing the car park, and then I moved down to this one about six years ago.

[The sound of a child calling can be heard. The sound of a person eating cereal from a ceramic bowl can be heard, through their open window.]

This apartment was empty. So I then asked for a transfer, you see. So that's how come I managed to move here, which- I'm incredibly lucky because I have my patio and the garden and the courtyard.

Hunnie: I'm from the area, so I watched these all be built.

Gary: And then... all these new faces started appearing. But yeah, I think it was over a few months before it started sort of filling up properly.

Hunnie: So when I moved in, this part of the area had already been built. Erm, but they were still building, you know the- when you go down the little alleyway, and the park area? They were still building up there. And then they started on the blocks further down, which they're still, I think, building now actually.

This area was pretty much dead. There was like, nothing else, there was just massive... like, people used to just dump things here [laughs] Basically! And it pretty much was built for like, the kids that couldn't go to Lloyd Park, to go to the skate park. So they'd build their own mini skate park around here, so this was known as like, the industrial skate park, of the kids.

Gary: Ooh, well we have in highrises before. Er, Walthamstow, Boundary Road, we lived on the twentieth floor. All the three towerblocks there now have been demolished and put into flats, or houses.

Charlotte: Err, yeah, so the courtyard is, it's a secure courtyard, and there is a number of wooden sleepers. So I've got what I think is quite a large patio, and then what is partly my own flowerbed, that we've been encouraged- those who have the sleepers, and the plants have already died there, we've been encouraged to put our own in, which has worked out really well because a couple of other neighbours have been doing it.

Hunnie: It's really pretty. They've built it up really well, around that area. Especially with all the new-builds going up.

Gary: It is, it is quite nice, innit? I think it's quite peaceful. You have your odd little disturbance now and again, but erm... I think you'll get that anywhere.

Lizzy: I lose track of time Because I live alone
To have someone literally next door,
I mean, we've all said
Because it's the one that's most local
It makes you think, doesn't it?
I think it's quite peaceful
It has been different, but I'm glad it's getting better now
And you're not on your own
I think it gets used more by the animals
that we've got coming round here
We were pretty much just stuck to our four walls
Beautiful, on the grass, all in front of our houses
I've never experienced that before
in places that I've lived

[00:06:12]

[The footsteps and key jangling can be heard, moving down the passageway. The sound of someone letting themselves in through a heavy door to the inside can be heard. The door creaks as it closes behind the person. The footsteps can be heard walking up carpeted stairs. The sound of a second door can be heard, squeaking loudly as it opens and closes. The person can be heard unlocking the front door of a flat and walking inside, before closing and locking the door.

The sound of them wiping and removing their shoes and then walking through the flat can be heard. Gordon Brown and Dan Walker can be heard speaking on the TV as they move past it, and out through an open doorway onto a wooden balcony. Birdsong, traffic and children's voices can be heard again outside.]

[00:08:02]

Gary: So when we moved here we found it very, very hard to sleep for, it must have been a good four, five weeks, because we'd never heard silence before. Even out here you can hear the birds. You know, is it quite nice.

Charlotte: You know, I live in a flat, if I had a spare room... The computer's always here, I hate that, it looks messy in my flat which is something I can't bear, and I don't like the fact that as soon as I come out of my bedroom it's the first thing I do, and it's still on last thing at night. And if there's been a hectic day, maybe a bit of a tense day at work, or just a heavy-going day at work, it can hang in the air.

Gary: Well, at one time it was, it was very, very silent. And then, yeah it really did feel weird. But then, I think that was the time when you started sort of seeing neighbours that you never seen- well, you seen them before, but never really interacted with them.

And erm, it's probably the same as yourself really, I don't think we would've been talking as we are now if it wasn't really for the lockdown, as we don't really see you on a regular basis, it's just when you're out on your balcony and we're out here. But yeah...

Hunnie: I've lived in East London most of my life. I wasn't born in London, I was born in the Midlands, and then I got moved down to London when I was about one. Council, never had my own place, so we got bounced around a lot. So I've lived in a lot of parts of, different parts of East London.

So I've seen a lot of change in Waltham Forest alone, as I've grown up. Some things haven't changed, like some things are die-hard and they haven't moved [laughs] as long as I've lived here at least, in London. But, Walthamstow has changed a lot.

Gary: As a communal area this is, absolutely fantastic. You know, you see people out here now, sort of running, training, the yoga class that goes on, and yeah I think it's, it has been good.

Charlotte: And then there's the other aspect as well; because I live alone, I was very limited, and if it wasn't for my neighbours...

Gary: Now it's always a 'hello, good afternoon, or good morning'!

Charlotte: So, it's the interaction, you know, just the laughs, the banter.

[00:10:52]

[The sounds of a person making a cup of tea can be heard, beginning with taking the lid off and filling a stainless steel kettle. The sounds continue beneath the speakers' following dialogue until 00:15:50, and include a cup being taken from a cupboard and placed onto a work surface, the kettle boiling, the person moving around the kitchen, opening and closing a fridge and a drawer, pouring water into the cup, stirring the tea, adding milk, and dropping the teaspoon into a stainless steel sink. The outdoor sounds can be heard simultaneously at various points.]

Charlotte: Making cups of tea... Just getting up and down as well, from- Because I've had to start seeing a physiotherapist [laughs] just because there's constant sitting.

Hunnie: Err, I got given my own council flat. Not that I actually chose this place [laughs] I was on the bidding system. And they were like, you don't get to choose what you want in a house! [Laughs] And I was like, that's not fair! Okay? I have to live here permanently, goddammit! So, yeah, I was fussy about it and they were like, you have to take it, and I was like, fine, so I took the flat and... nah, this is home.

Charlotte: Why don't I, erm... go for a walk first thing on a morning, and it's like, it's just not gonna happen. Yeah? It's just not gonna happen. I took a picture today of the first ducklings, with the geese. And that made me think, oh, it really is a year.

Lizzy: I'm incredibly lucky
What is partly my own flowerbed
It's the interaction, just the laughs
I've been ok, but I think I would've felt-
All three tower blocks there now have been demolished
When we moved here we found it very, very hard to sleep
We'd never heard silence before
It makes you feel better and brighter
but there are times
At one time I had nothing good to say whatsoever
Some things haven't changed
Being in a block of flats, it's very interesting to see how
That balcony, especially because over the summer
No matter what, I feel like anyone that has
a balcony facing onto here

Hunnie: And I wasn't exactly working, I was volunteering, so it was just as simple as them paying for my lunch and stuff. That majorly affected the amount of money I could spend in my home. And then, friends-wise... To be honest, I think friends-wise, at least the community within the blocks, we got a lot closer.

Luckily we have the community that we do have, because I feel like a lot of people who did live by themselves, or do, didn't really get to interact with their neighbours, 'cause different households. But being in a block of flats, it doesn't feel like you're in a different household, it just feels like, that person's just living in the next room, next to you [laughs]

So it kind of became like a... like a saving grace in a way, because I couldn't really see my actual friends, in that sense, the ones that I would normally hang around with, and spend my time with, so my dynamic of interactions with people very much changed. I've become very much more homely, if that makes sense? I don't know how to explain that, like I was very outgoing, I would travel round London and stuff.

Charlotte: Really it started last summer, spring-summer time, a bit of nice weather, popping out, you know, having a coffee or whatever, and then it just kind of progressed from there. Certainly the friendship with these particular neighbours.

No it changed a lot, because before it was just like a hi, and a bit of a chat, and this, that and the other, but now it's completely different. We've all got each other's numbers.

Gary: Erm yeah, I think the weather also helps as well, you know, and... It makes you feel better and brighter, but there are times- It has been quite tough on me at times, erm...

David: Do you mind talking about that?

Gary: Erm... Yeah, I was getting very, very down.

David: Yeah.

Gary: To the point where I didn't really want to see anybody, talk to anybody. At one time I had nothing good to say whatsoever, so I said nothing. You know, I would rather be in a corner of a dark room, rather than being outgoing as I generally am really. And yeah, but that happened a few times over the last year or so.

Everyone was offering me help and advice but, although I was taking it in, I wasn't taking no notice of it. I felt like I could do it on my own, rather than help and advice and support. But it was the good people around us that, you know, was always sending me a text message or phoning me up, and that sort of brings you out a little bit, thinking that people do care about you and you're not on your own, so...

Charlotte: The fact that I know that I've got neighbours, just literally there, and I've got some neighbours upstairs, and I'm friends with the lady across the road as well, so it's not just these. But it has made a massive difference. Massive. Because it's okay having friends, you know, not that far away, but we can't see each other anyway. So to have someone just literally next door, for whatever reason, is really nice.

Lizzy: It can hang in the air
It's that inability to leave it, shut the door

[00:17:09]

[The majority of the background outdoor sound cuts out with the words 'shut the door'. The birdsong continues beneath the following section of speech, until the background sound fades back in at 00:17:17.]

It's okay having friends
That sounds really extreme
So I said nothing

[00:17:25]

[The sound of a large vehicle driving past can be heard, as well as the sound of a bird flying past and cooing, and another vehicle sounding its horn. The traffic sounds are heavier during the next section of speech.]

Hunnie: That balcony, especially because over the summer, you hear the kids running around and all of that, and it just becomes part of your home noise. And it becomes part of your life. Which basically, no matter what, I feel like anyone that has a balcony facing onto here... are somehow involved with whatever's going on around here. Which is really nice, 'cause I've never experienced that before.

There's more people around you than you realise. And I feel like the community, we got a lot closer because of that, like... Don't get me wrong, we were always there for each other beforehand, it was... But we didn't do as much together. And I'm actually really appreciative of that, because I don't really have family, so it pretty much became my family.

Charlotte: But for me, I guess it's kind of remained pretty much the same, apart from the fact that I have got more friendly with that side. I do know a couple of the ladies over there, and also the lady with the grey cat [laughs] And the friendships that side have kind of remained the same, it's this side that it's got more... much, much, much more friendly.

I mean, we've all said, that the WhatsApp group has been really, really just... It's been a lifesaver, and that sounds really extreme, but it's- I'd put it there as my top support, because it's the one that's most local. You know, there's no point, you don't want to burden friends who live miles away or anything like that, it's just very comforting.

Gary: Yeah when you're ready to talk they're there to listen to ya. I never thought I'd be getting in that way when we moved here, but erm, I don't think it matters where you live, who you are, it can affect absolutely anybody and everybody. But you know, it's sort of a sore subject, as such.

You know, 'cause people have got it, and people don't like talking about it, and I think other people see it in you, if they know ya, without saying anything, so... I think that's another good thing, that other people can notice if you are going downhill and they can sort of give you the heads-up and say, you know, are you sure you're okay? And we always say yes when we're not. So... But yeah that's, you know, just another little bit of comfort I suppose.

Hunnie: We all didn't know what to do, we were all just sitting at home. We all knew that there was enough space, as long as we didn't kind of expand it more than us lot, that we could keep the distance and still have fun.

And yeah, it was really nice, I ended up- Quite a few of the ladies from the other flats that looked onto the courtyard were like, oh, so you're teaching yoga now? I wanna join! This is great! But obviously, by the time we'd actually got to the point where it was good enough to go, it got cold again [laughs] My family's literally downstairs [laughs] which is really nice!

[00:21:06]

[The sound of a couple of crows flying overhead and cawing loudly can be heard during the following single section of speech.]

Gary: It is nice to be out in the open, as such. And, you know, even if I am in a bad mood, I'll always, if I see someone outside, I'll always come out and just give a wave or a hello, and then you can go back in again, but...

Charlotte: I definitely would- I think definitely, without that little group, and neighbours, and saying hello, and like I say, other neighbours as well, that aren't in the group but who I know, have got telephone numbers for, I think I would have felt... I've been okay, but I think I would have felt pretty isolated. Because my close friends, like I say, live a bit of a- well, not local. And then my even closer friends, some live abroad. And my mother, she lives in the North. So, it's been really, really important for me.

[00:21:43]

[The sound of a person typing rapidly on a laptop keyboard fades in, and continues beneath the next section of speech, until 00:22:25 when it fades back out. The outdoor sounds can still be heard simultaneously, with people talking to each other in the background.]

Lizzy: I used to travel to Southwark
There's a lot that I miss
Why don't I go for a walk first thing on a morning?
Just getting up and down, making cups of tea
for whatever reason, is really nice
It really is a year
Even out here you can hear the birds
It has been quite tough on me at times
And we always say yes when we're not

Charlotte: You know, this is most unlikely to happen but this is what I've said all along, 'cause I've been part of residents' groups and things like that, especially when I first moved here – there should be a children's area. So there should be a, you know, whether it's a hoop net or whatever, just somewhere for the kids to play.

I cannot understand why, when these flats, and through there as well, were all built for families; yes, you've got your one-bedrooms and you know, but they are three-bedrooms, two-bedrooms, obviously they're meant for children, so why they haven't accommodated them, I just do not know.

Hunnie: And then maybe even extend the grass bit outwards, take most of this paving out where they've made it, and make it more grassy, so the kids have more area to play. Because I feel like, there's not much area over there, so all the kids are coming over here. So I feel like, if they did change a bit about it, they could just add a bit more green to it.

I mean like, I'm not one for coming out and playing, but I really do enjoy hearing the kids have fun out here. 'Cause, reality is, a lot of kids don't really get diversity in their life. And the only way they really get it is if they go to a diverse school. And a lot of schools in this area are very much one way [laughs] As much as they like to say diversity, very much one way.

So, it's nice to be able to have these kids interact with a bunch of people all the time. It's not just the kids. The kids like to say hello to everyone, they like to be nice to everyone, and I think they deserve a better place for them to actually play.

Charlotte: I mean yeah, it makes you think doesn't it, how these kids have managed with what little they've got. Erm... yeah, yeah it does.

Gary: I suppose if you could do it seasonal, summertime you could have a, where the grass is over there, you could perhaps put in a swimming pool. And maybe, in the winter months, sort of have a cover over it, and then turn it into a sort of winter wonderland or something for the winter. Erm... yeah, I think we could do a bit more. Yeah.

Lizzy: When you're ready to talk they're there to listen to you
And then you can go back in again
There's more people around you than you realise
Collectively, which is really nice
It pretty much became my family

[00:25:38]

[The footsteps can be heard again, walking around the courtyard and eventually back down the passageway to the security gate. Various other sounds can be heard simultaneously, including traffic, a bird flapping past, doors creaking, security door beeps and children shrieking in the distance. The person walking can then be heard opening and leaving through the gate, and walking away, past some traffic and people talking, until the sound fades out at 00:28:17.]

Outro:

[00:28:30]

[Background sound of an outdoor park fades in. The sounds of people moving past and talking, children playing, and dogs running past can be heard throughout the outro discussion, as background noise.]

DT: That was The Courtyard, and that was Charlotte, Hunnie, Gary and Lizzy. We're going to start this discussion part with Lizzy giving a breakdown of how the project started.

LT: So the process began with David interviewing the aforementioned neighbours of ours. He interviewed them all individually, asking questions mainly around their experiences within the courtyard where we all live, during the last year. So the focus was on lockdown and how

everyone has coped within that space. I think I'm right in saying we didn't want it to be too explicit in talking about that subject.

We definitely wanted the focus to be on the personal experiences of those people. Even though I think, David, you asked them all the same questions, they talked about similar things, but they did all approach it from a different perspective.

DT: Sort of. I didn't ask them any questions, really, I just asked them to talk to me about the previous year. The basic idea was to have a conversation about what it was like to have lived through the pandemic, without really talking about the pandemic too much, and with the theme of the Art Trail being 'Possible Futures', we wanted to focus on what the previous 12 months had meant, and what it might mean to the next 12 months, 5 years, 10 years of people's lives.

LT: Yeah. Perhaps we both had it in our minds that there would be a lot of artistic responses coming out post-Covid, or post-lockdown. It's the way we often like to approach things, I think we preferred to have our response come through the voices of other people.

DT: Even though there are a lot of individual... I say a lot of individual, that's a silly thing to say. We've all had our individual experiences through the pandemic and through lockdowns, but essentially, we've all had a massive communal experience. Not only locally, but nationwide and globally, and it's affected everyone in very different ways, depending on what your underlying health was like previously, and what your financial situation was and what your living situation was, but we've all had the same overall set of pressures put upon us.

There was one question that I asked everybody, I sprung it on all of them at the end, and that was, if you could imagine a possible future or some changes made to the courtyard, and it was a bit unfair to spring a question on people like that and not give them a chance to think, but I wanted to see what that response elicited. I was going to cut it out if people couldn't think of anything, but their answers were all so great and so community-spirited that they all got left in, and that's the final section of the recording.

When Gary is brilliantly talking about a winter wonderland, which for someone who initially didn't have any idea of what he might do in the courtyard, to come up with the idea of a swimming pool in the summer and a winter wonderland in the winter was pretty genius. Personally, I wanted to have the chance to return to interviewing people. For those that don't know, I ran the Lunar Poetry Podcasts series for six years. I founded that and handed it on to new producers last autumn. I was lucky enough to interview over 100 poets and writers about their work and I really miss that side of things.

I think what I learnt from doing those interviews was, if you probe people enough just asking them about the present, they will automatically reflect on the past and project into the future. Without getting too heavily into this, as you're talking about the present it is quickly becoming the past, and you are always travelling into the future whilst talking about the present, so to manipulate the conversation into possible futures, I felt was quite an easy thing to do, even though I had to shoehorn it in and be quite heavy-handed towards the end.

LT: But everyone's mindset naturally was desperately looking towards the future, wasn't it, at that time? Well, it is at this time.

DT: Well, there's a dual thing, isn't there? There's a past that people were clinging on to. I suppose in a lot of ways, people are hoping that things will just go back to as they were and there's this conflict that we're hoping for a brighter future, always, but currently we're hoping that that brighter future isn't exactly the same as the past we left, before we were all told to start washing our hands to the tune of Happy Birthday. Twice. Don't forget to do it twice, kids.

Mechanically, I just sat down with the neighbours for 20 minutes and started asking them to give me their reflections, and what was important to me, I don't know if it comes through necessarily in the recordings, but I chose our neighbours... Basically, we all face onto the same side of the courtyard, and what interested me most was, just as an idea, a starting point, because sometimes for something that could just ramble on in every direction, it's useful to have just a small starting point or a seed, and that seed was that we all had the same view onto the courtyard.

Some of us are at a higher elevation, we've got balconies. Gary and Charlotte are both on the ground floor and have patios, but all of our flats open onto the same courtyard, on the same side, and I was interested to see, without pushing people too much into it, how the architecture of the place affected people. I was just really interested to see how people's relationship to this physical space changed as, by law, it was the only outside space we were allowed to use.

LT: Yeah it was an aspect I really enjoyed, listening to the interviews, knowing where everyone is. Like you say, we're all on the same side and we have a very similar perspective onto the Courtyard, but we're all in a slightly different relation to it, and to the gateway. You can hear those subtle differences in the way people talked about how they respond to everyone else in the space.

DT: So what were your initial ideas when I gave you the audio to start cutting up? Actually, one final thing on my part was that I thought it was quite an interesting idea to give you the challenge, because I know you like collage so much, to give you the task or challenge of producing an audio collage, to see whether that manifested itself physically or just theoretically.

LT: It's quite a natural process for me, collaging. I do really enjoy vox pops, so I think it did feel right to me anyway that I would do some sort of mix-up arrangement with the three interviews. It's the way that I like to approach all the kinds of collaging I do. I don't throw things together, but I do try to work at a bit of a speed, and I've heard people saying that this is their approach to putting poetry collections together as well. You do it at speed and I suppose you hope that your subconscious will help you out.

So I went through quite quickly and where I had typed out the bits of interview that I had selected, I arranged them in a way that I felt would make sense, and then obviously we listened through just to check that it did work, but one part that I enjoy most about that

process is just seeing what little coincidences come out and how the arrangement fits together, and then tweak it afterwards.

DT: Because my life always rushes past in a blur, I can't really remember the last couple of weeks properly, but you started with the visual artwork, didn't you, before you started chopping up too much? You listened through to all of the conversations.

LT: Yeah, I listened through and then the first thing I did was pick out all my favourite bits or bits which moved me in some way, or I just liked the sound of, and then spliced those together for the visuals, which as you'll see from the artwork, I wrote out by hand. So when it came to putting the audio together, I took some of those bits and different parts and put them in a different order, and there are some differences in what I chose.

DT: When we started this series, we had a few ideas of stuff that we wanted to make and one thing we really wanted to make was a hand-bound, hardback-cover book. There's something coming out in the future which I don't want to talk about now because we'll give the game away, but we also wanted to make a fold-out broadsheet, didn't we, and it seemed naturally to fit the format of the conversation. Essentially, there are four speakers in the recording, so to have a large square format, so the print is 60cm square, which we've then folded down into a smaller, 15cm square and hand-made some little covers or boxes for those prints to go into.

The voices or the handwriting, which I suppose, the handwriting is the voices, sort of echoes... The recordings are very much informed by what we can hear as we've got our doors open onto the courtyard, snippets of conversation floating up. The handwriting or the voices from all four sides sort of descends or cascades into the centre of the print, which I suppose represents the courtyard, the void in the centre of the print. Once you had that finished, how did that influence the way you then thought about cutting up the speech?

LT: I think I've mentioned it before in another one of these chats, but I really enjoy processes where there are lots and lots of stages. It's partly why I'm having to think a lot in order to remember exactly what I did and in what order. I'm thinking of it as collages within collages. I spliced together all the bits I wanted for the visual, wrote them all out, it's all three interviews mixed up, and at that point I wasn't 100% sure whether I would do that with the audio in the same way.

But I think seeing all the different parts together, it made sense then to me that we would do that, even though the words were not exactly the same. I really liked the thought of taking this initial collage, mixing it up again, and then editing that down again and doing the same thing over and over, so it's made up mostly of the same parts, but we've still got two very different outcomes.

DT: And that's been the whole point of You Don't Know all along, it's to produce the audio to sit alongside and compliment the print publications, but both should sit alone or stand alone as a work by itself. Before I forget, I just want to thank Panopus Printing in Islington, North London, who are really helpful. They've got large format scanners and printing

capabilities and they've done a really good job of reproducing the original artwork that Lizzy painstakingly sat down and wrote out.

So we got this idea, you started off with this visual image, of these four-sided conversations sort of falling into a central void and then we've spoken about how you then decided to chop up the conversations and lace them within each other, and then you created a found poem from sections, which you read out during the recording. How then did you start to think about the, I was going to say background noises, but that's not the case, they are more like atmospheric soundscapes?

LT: I don't know if it comes down to the fact that we're making more audio tracks and so this is happening more, but I was listening through your first edit of the audio collage as I'd picked it out, and then I'd just started to hear a soundbed or imagine a soundbed and I think all along it felt like it would make sense to have ambient noise from the courtyard itself, even though that's quite a simple idea, and perhaps quite an obvious idea, I was thinking about how the past year that this is all based on, it has been a very mundane time.

We've all been in that space and that is exactly how it has sounded, the whole time, and it is perhaps quite a simplified and cliché-sounding thing to say, but I think it's reflective also in the conversations or in the interviews. It's all quite repetitive and quite simple, but there is always depth and detail and profound things to be found within that. And that is just how it has been, this past year, so I didn't want to over-complicate it.

So I think we both came to the agreement that we would have these ambient sounds from the courtyard, and then as I was listening particularly to Charlotte, about working from home and how she has felt during that time, I then started to think about my own experience of doing the same, and what other sounds do I hear every day at home, so you can hear me walking around the Courtyard, coming in, coming up the stairs, making a cup of tea. You can hear the TV, you can hear other people chatting in the courtyard, you eating cereal.

In the same way I approached the collaging instinctively, I was sort of hoping that incidental sounds would come out in a nice way, which they did. Unfortunately, the pigeons which you can hear flying around are quite a massive part of our life in the courtyard. In that way, the identity of the courtyard really comes through, there's all these tiny, subtle idiosyncrasies, but at the same time, it could be anywhere.

DT: Yeah and also I think there's the element of, because the three of them were so open and honest, and honest to a level I didn't expect, I expected the conversations to be just on the surface, talking about like a clichéd idea of what it is to be in lockdown. And even though clichés are appropriate to being in lockdown, because it is very repetitive and that's the whole problem, but particularly Charlotte being so open about how it's not been great working from home, but also Gary talking about his mental health, which was a complete shock, but I really appreciate his trust in talking about that, especially as someone like myself, who has spent time in psychiatric institutions, and I've struggled a lot in my life with mental health problems.

I think it would have been really disrespectful to start laying over the stupid funny noises that we record, and sampling. It just felt more natural to have a more realistic soundtrack, even if

it's a completely contrived version of reality, because we selected sounds that we... recordings are not real at all, especially when you start editing things together. You are controlling reality, but that felt much more natural than to start playing around with synth noises or sound effects.

LT: You're right. I think that's what I was approaching in talking about the profound elements. They all talked about really similar themes, but then each of them has a really unique story within that, and I did have quite an emotional response to the interviews the first time I listened to them because I could obviously relate to all of them, as many people will who listen to them. Also, with listening through a few times, when you're really listening to people, you hear more and more every time. That was also something I kept in mind, I wanted the listeners to really hear what everyone was saying, even though you could probably guess a lot of what people would say on this subject.

DT: It's funny you mention hearing more and more in people's voices because I feel like the way you edited the conversations together, and the way that you did the visual artwork reflects a lot on, probably not on this series, but we have spoken a lot about the books you liked as a child, the illustrated ones where there's detail on every single millimetre of the page, and how a lot of kids love those books because every time you come back there's something new to see. I think the way your handwriting works in the artwork, every time people revisit that, there will be new phrases and new combinations, a bit like when you look at a large crossword or something, there will be the ability or possibility to see new connections within the writing.

LT: It's funny you say that. Yeah, all my favourite books I'm thinking of now from my childhood were like that.

DT: I am extremely perceptive.

LT: Very perceptive, you know me so well.

DT: I just wanted to finish off because we recently did a recording with Wes from Colliding Lines for his radio show on Resonance Extra. Just in case people haven't had a chance to listen to that, we'll put a link to that in the episode description as well. But the first episode we did, we talked about how this collaboration might work and Lizzy confessed that she was a bit nervous talking to me in this setting, and I found it a bit odd because we've been together for seven years now.

I just hadn't anticipated that might be the cause of nervousness. We're over halfway through this year and these planned six episodes, and I just wondered whether it's got any easier, not the talking necessarily, I mean the collaboration. I don't mean talking on microphone, but how's the collaboration developed now? Do you feel like you've got more control over your element of it?

LT: I've never felt like I didn't have control over my half. It does feel to me like when we come to similar decisions, it happens much more quickly and we have more of a natural meeting of minds when we're considering how to respond and approach each project. It feels

like there's less that needs to be said between us and we do fall naturally into our roles with each one and they are always changing, I think.

DT: That was deliberate, wasn't it, that we would change roles throughout?

LT: Yeah, but I think it happens more on its own now.

DT: Yeah. Anyway, that's more than enough waffling about this episode. We will be back in September with Episode 5, which is intriguingly entitled Unnecessary Roughness and it's probably the episode we're both most excited about because it's responding to a new season of American football. We are enormous NFL fans. It's good, isn't it?

LT: Yeah, it's awesome.

DT: I think it's going to be good, the print publication is done and it looks great. That means the writing is all done and it's an enormous relief because we're in June and we're quite far ahead with that. It's just the recording and the fun bits next because as we all know, writing isn't fun.

LT: It's also our longest bit of writing for this project.

DT: Yeah, prepare yourselves. Anyway, that will be in September. If you enjoyed this or anything, another episode, shout about it, do tell your friends. It's impossible now, with all these celebrity podcasters, to get anyone to take any notice of anything you do, such is the plight of the weird experimental podcaster and collaborative duo.

Don't forget, if you do buy a copy of the print publication, which is very, very nice and printed expertly by Panopus in Islington, 10% of all sales for that and everything we make as part of the series will go to Eat or Heat food bank in Walthamstow. Supporting causes like that is very, very important to both of us. I'm not going to get into that too much because it's really, really upsetting the organisation has to exist in the first place, but they do really fantastic work locally, and as I said before, all links are in the episode description. So bye for now, innit?

LT: Yeah, let's enjoy the sunshine.

DT: The sun has just come out.

End of transcript.