

Transcript: Queer Out Here Issue 05 Side A

[Pre-transcript introduction](#)

[Queer Out Here](#)

[Issue 05 Side A link](#)

[Content notes](#)

[Transcript](#)

[Opener - various contributors - 0:00:00](#)

[Introduction - Jonathan and Allysse - 0:00:38](#)

[Link - 0:02:20](#)

[Nightingales - Dru Marland - 0:02:44](#)

[Sweeper - Martha - 0:06:00](#)

[Link - 0:06:27](#)

[Rainy Day at Wahtum Lake - Kaj Jensen - 0:07:28](#)

[What Remains \(Petrichor\) - Jonathan - 0:15:34](#)

[Short Black Lives Matter discussion - Allysse and Jonathan - 0:16:33](#)

[Sweeper - Aneurin and Kermie - 0:20:35](#)

[Link - 0:21:34](#)

[Christmas Getaway - Julia - 0:22:27](#)

[Chrissy in the Desert - Chrissy - 0:32:34](#)

[Link - 0:37:25](#)

[Gabe and Lena Take to the Streets - Gabriel Coleman and Lena Greenberg - 0:38:26](#)

[Sweeper - Queer Out Here Adventures - 0:48:06](#)

[Link - 0:48:21](#)

[I Think We Got Away With It - Jenny List - 0:48:49](#)

[Conclusion - Allysse and Jonathan - 0:56:37](#)

Pre-transcript introduction

Queer Out Here

[Queer Out Here](#) is an audio zine that explores the outdoors from queer perspectives. We bring together stories and soundscapes from around the world to hear how queerness intersects with and influences people's experiences of outdoor spaces and activities. You can read more about the zine on the Queer Out Here website: <https://www.queerouthere.com>

Issue 05 Side A link

If you've somehow stumbled across this transcript and want to find the audio file, it's available here: <https://www.queerouthere.com/listen/issue-05-side-a>

Content notes

The pieces in Queer Out Here talk about many things related to being queer and the outdoors. Issue 05 Side A contains brief mentions of family estrangement, queerphobia in religious establishments, relationship breakups. There is some swearing and use of words such as 'crazy' to describe people's behaviour. Be aware that there is some wind distortion in different pieces. If you have specific anxieties or triggers, check this transcript or ask a trusted friend to listen and give you feedback. Please let us know if there is anything else we should warn for.

Transcript

Opener - various contributors - 0:00:00

[Sounds fade in: bike gear cogs spinning, footsteps, piercing birdsong]

Ailish: You're listening to Queer Out Here.

[Crowd cheering]

Lena: What do we do?

Gabriel: We take a right!

Martha: Hello -

Various: Hi -

Lena: Oh my god, let's make this light!

[Birdsong and squawking, traffic, rain on leaves, keys jingling. Voices are panned left and right but gradually converge in the centre]

Martha: London

Julia: Freiburg

Dru: Bristol

Chrissy: Vegas

Dru: Germany

Kaj: Wahtum Lake

Chrissy: Utah

Julia: Lichtenstein

Chrissy: Arizona

[Faint strains of slow music build up in the background]

Julia: I took a wrong turning.

[Birds call]

Gabriel: Wait - left! Left!

Lena: Oh!

Gabriel: Lena!

Lena: OK.

[Footsteps, music continues to swell, rain falls - sometimes blending with the sound of a rainstick]

Kaj: Hello, old friend.

Jenny: Because I grew up in this village...

Dru: Where the road winds through the hills.

Julia: The closer I'm getting to the Alps, the colder it's getting.

Chrissy: I'm a long way from home.

Lena: I don't feel like we should stop yet.

Gabriel: No.

[Faint nature sounds and a chatty bird chirping, music continues]

Kaj: I guess, sticking with the theme, this has to be the start of... something new...

[Music fades out, along with the spinning cogs of a bike, the calls of a rook or crow, and faint rain]

Introduction - Jonathan and Allysse - 0:00:38

[Woodland sounds play under the voices, featuring the calls of pigeons, corvids and small birds.]

Jonathan: This is Queer Out Here, an audio zine that explores the outdoors from queer perspectives. I'm Jonathan -

Allysse: - and I'm Allysse. Welcome to Issue 05. Or, more specifically, welcome to Issue 05, Side A.

Jonathan: Yes! We had a terrific response to our call for submissions this time around - in fact, we ended up with too many pieces to fit into one issue. So, instead of forcing ourselves to choose which pieces to accept, we decided to break Issue 05 into a Side A and a Side B.

Allysse: As we listened through the pieces, we found that many of them fell quite distinctly into two categories: those that were recorded in (or talked about) pre-lockdown times, and those that were recorded during (or mentioned) the COVID-19 lockdown. So, that's how we have curated Issue 05: Side A is mostly about outdoors adventures pre-lockdown, and Side B features much more discussion about a life in which outdoor movements is restricted right across the population.

Jonathan: As always, the pieces in Queer Out Here talk about many things related to being queer and the outdoors. Issue 05 Side A includes discussions of queerphobia in family situations and religious groups, mentions of former relationships and sensual desire, as well as some wind distortion and shouting. If you have specific anxieties or triggers, you may wish to ask a trusted friend to listen through and give you feedback. Or you can also check the transcript for particular words or phrases - you can find it linked in the show notes on our website, queerouthere.com

Allysse: Before we start, a big shoutout to Emily, who has created our cover art for Issue 05 - a piece that combines photography and embroidery, reflecting our ethos of DIY, craftiness and experimentation. And now, on with the show!

Both: Let's get Queer Out Here!

Link - 0:02:20

Jonathan: Our first piece is from Dru Marland, who combines poetry and personal reflection to think about how nightingales and their song appear in her life and are interpreted by musicians and other artists. "Call me an old curmudgeon, because I probably am," she writes. "But I'd rather just experience wildness directly than have it mediated through somebody else. Ironically, I suppose that is exactly what I'm doing with this nightingale song."

Nightingales - Dru Marland - 0:02:44

I always thought there was something magical about nightingale song, and looked forward to hearing it in the wilds for myself. But whenever I set out deliberately to hear them, I always failed - like in Nightingale Valley in the Avon Gorge near Bristol, where any nightingales have long gone. Twice now I've heard them sing, and both times it was travelling in France. Here's the first time.

All that June day I'd ridden south
through Brittany, then those long straight roads inland
for hours on end, ear tuned to the engine's beat;

chicaned through some strange towns,
and looped a floodlit abbey, maybe Angouleme,
the cafes closing, locals heading on

for home or who knows where. It all looked good.
But I was passing through, an unknown ghost

in towns I'd never heard of until then.

Round midnight, where the road winds through the hills
I pulled over for a rest, kicked down the stand
and killed the engine, pulled my helmet off;

and heard at once the nightingale
from somewhere in the scrub, a stream
of sweet low notes that wound around the hills.

The woods exhaled the scent of pines
the engine ticking softly now and then
as it too cooled and finally at last fell still.

[Nightingale song - a variety of sweet, piping, trilling phrases. The birdsong continues as Dru speaks.]

Beatrice Harrison played her cello to the accompaniment of a nightingale for a BBC recording in 1924. That worked pretty well for me, other musical interventions I've heard have been a bit intrusive, and I'd much rather just listen to the bird. I wrote this after an odd thing on Radio 3.

[The bird continues]

There's something about the nightingale's song
that makes folk determined to play along;
like Beatrice Harrison's cello on the BBC
and those RAF bombers on their way to Germany;
or that piano orchestration from Olivier Messiaen [pronounced MESS-ee-on]
which was musically interesting but a rotten impressiaen. [pronounced im-PRESS-ee-on]
Still, good, bad or indifferent, they all fail
to make any difference to the nightingale,
who sings for ears that aren't human at all;
if there's no-one in the forest where its song falls
does it make a sound? I'd guess
the answer to that's an enormous Yes.

[The nightingale calls, and Dru plays a few phrases of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" on what sounds like a wood or bamboo slide whistle.]

Sweeper - Martha - 0:06:00

[Footsteps crunching in leaves, birds screeching]

Martha: Hello, this is Martha. I'm in Brockwell Park in London, surrounded by parakeets! And you're listening to Queer Out Here.

[More parakeet calls]

Link - 0:06:27

Allysse: The next pieces explore the relationship between place, memory, and senses. First, we have Kaj Jensen, a repeat contributor, with their piece *Rainy Day at Wahtum Lake*. In it, Kaj reflects on their relationship to the lake, a place they return to often. Through repeated visits, the lake becomes a repository of memories, and serves as a touchstone for accessing those moments in time. This recording was made on the lands of the Kathlamet, Wasco and Wishram, Clatsop, Clackamas and other Indigenous peoples who have been caring for this place for countless generations.

Memory becomes entwined with physical sensation in Jonathan's piece, *What Remains (Petrichor)*. To make his piece, Jonathan recorded the inside of an old piano as he played, then edited out the sound of the hammer hitting the strings, leaving only the decaying sound, like the earthy scent of soil that lingers after a passing rainstorm. This piece was first published at audioplayground.xyz

First up, we have *Rainy Day at Wahtum Lake* by Kaj Jensen.

Rainy Day at Wahtum Lake - Kaj Jensen - 0:07:28

Kaj: My name is Kaj Jensen and I'm inviting you on a rainy day hike with me at Wahtum Lake. It's an important place for me because I've visited it quite a few times at different significant moments including one of my first queer dates in Portland. My first submission to *Queer Out Here*, which is in Issue 03, is a conversation with a friend of mine about nature and the city and growing up. This is a continuation of sorts as I explore the way that place can hold memories and the significance of nature in inhabiting our bodies.

[Pattering sounds, perhaps raindrops on a car roof]

Alright, so now I am at the trailhead and I'm going to get out and go for a little hike.

[Sound of keys jingling]

It's a tiny bit muddy here but not too bad. Lots of rocks and a pretty good coat of pine needles.

[Sounds of rustling and footsteps]

Cute little mushroom friend... Oh, there's Wahtum Lake. Hello old friend.

[Rain pattering]

It is quite lovely. There's, um, kind of a low mist hanging in the trees.

In a way this place kind of holds a lot of memories for me. It holds this, like, moment of, "This is really exciting. I-I've moved somewhere I wanna live for the first time ever, I'm newly, like pretty newly out. I'm dating and I'm hiking and I'm doing all these things that I wanna do and it's just a really, a moment of fresh start for me." And then [sigh] you know, the next time I came back wasn't that long after that, just a few months, but I was backpacking for the first time and I was on my own feeling really independent and really, uh, excited. And that backpacking trip really solidified that, like, my body and I are working together on something, um, that's really nourishing for my soul and empowering. And not only am I like physically capable of, of hiking fifty miles, and - I'm also mentally capable of overcoming the, like, stress of being all alone and running out of water and being all alone and getting lost and... Yeah, I learn - I learned something about myself that I didn't really know before that.

And then the first person that I really fell in love with several years later um, like... the first person I, like, properly loved after coming out as genderqueer, um. Mm, that's not entirely true. They're the first person that I really thought, "Alright, like... I'm ready to give the idea of a long term commitment, I'm ready to, like, let myself feel all the feelings, even though it's scary." I just really threw my head and my heart 100% into it and I'm sad that it didn't work out. And I'm particularly sad about the way that, um, things ended. It was a really painful breakup.

[Atmosphere changes]

Oh, I don't know if you'll be able to hear this, but the trees are talking.

[Sound of rain gently falling and distant creaking. An outbreath. Rain falling. Kaj breathes in and out.]

It feels good to be here. So many of those other three times that I visited really felt like the beginnings of things. Ah, well they were the beginnings of things. It feels good to come back and maybe close out those moments and that heartache of L and I's breakup.

[Footsteps]

I guess sticking with the theme this has to be the start of something new. I guess I just don't know what it is yet.

It feels like a lot has changed since the last time I was here. I feel like I've changed a lot since the last time I was here. It's kind of nice to [audible emotion in Kaj's voice] know that this place is still pretty much the same. I guess that's part of, um [sigh] - part of what feels really important to me about connecting with nature and spending time outside is, uh... Despite a lot of changes in my life, uh, and even moving to the other side of the continental divide, where there is a really different arrangement of flora and fauna, um, there's something kind of consistent about being able to be out in the woods and the quiet. Like that part, the part of me that connects to that has been the same since I was really small.

[Rain falling softly]

This mist is just getting lower and lower and lower. [Sigh] I can see it, it's just kind of rolling over the lake. When I first got here I could see quite a bit of the trees, but I can only see maybe the,

about a hundred feet above the lake or so. Oh, perhaps I should go back to my car and head back down because if it is this misty, that road is going to be not fun to drive on in the dark. Yaeh, I think that's what I should do.

[Rain falls, then the atmosphere stops for Kaj's outro]

Thanks so much for joining me on this little hike. Special thanks to Bex who generously lent me their car so I could visit Wahtum Lake and make this recording for you.

What Remains (Petrichor) - Jonathan - 0:15:34

[Slightly atonal music, consisting of chords with soft attack and long release plays under the sound of rain showers. We know from Jonathan's statement that these are chords played on a piano, with the sound of the hammers hitting the strings edited out. There are some clunks as the sustain pedal is pushed and released. We also know that the sound of rain is actually created by a rainstick. The music gradually gets deeper as the piece progresses. At the end, a few high strings are plucked giving a chinking sound.]

Short Black Lives Matter discussion - Allysse and Jonathan - 0:16:33

Jonathan: This audio zine has a fairly long production cycle. Our submissions window is usually around three months, and then it takes another eight weeks or more for the two of us to produce and release an issue. A lot can happen in half a year. This time around, the world went into lockdown during our submissions window. And then, as we edited the issue together, protests, actions, and the weight of much of the world's attention shifted to the Black Lives Matter movement, and to the urgent and longstanding need to dismantle systems of racist oppression and violent state institutions such as prisons and the police, the need to fight racism, anti-blackness and white supremacy in all its forms.

Originally, at this point, we were going to share a beautifully produced piece about nature. But as our release date grew closer, the person who made this contribution felt it was inappropriate to put their piece into the world at this time.

We understand and support their decision.

Allysse: Rather than re-editing the whole of Side A and pretending this submission never existed, we wanted to take this opportunity to address something that we both struggle with as we produce every issue of Queer Out Here: what is our relevance in the wider world, especially given that despite our efforts to source submission from a range of people since we first started the zine, about 80-90% of our contributors are white. The fact is that this zine does not reflect the racial and cultural diversity of queer identities - not even the identities of queer English speakers in the countries where most of our pieces come from. The voices and stories you hear, that we give a platform to, are by and large voices and stories that come from a place of white privilege.

Jonathan: We've wanted to change this since our first issue, but it's clear that what we've done up until now has not been enough. We will continue to seek out contributions from queer folks who are Black, who are Indigenous and First Nations and other queer People of Colour. But we would also like to offer more support to potential contributors.

Allysse: This might mean assistance with editing, equipment research, talking through ideas, and so on. We've done this for contributors in the past, but we want to explicitly offer this to Black and Indigenous potential producers - and other queer People of Colour - for future issues. If you'd like some support with your piece, please get in touch with us by emailing queerouthere@gmail.com

Jonathan: We're also open to hearing other ideas for improving Queer Out Here. We've been thinking about how to bring on board guest editors or even community-based scouts or quote-unquote "talent recruiters". If you've got ideas about how this could work or if you'd like to get involved, please do get in touch. If you've created a piece for Queer Out Here before, please think about how you could help someone else produce something for a future issue.

Allysse: We also want to encourage our listeners - that's you! - to seek out podcasts and media produced by and featuring the voices and stories of Black people, Indigenous people, People of Colour. We've been posting links on our social media accounts, and there's a bunch of audio and video on the inspiration page of our website, but a couple of other places you could start are: Diversify Outdoors at www.diversifyoutdoors.com/resources and Melanin Base Camp at www.melaninbasecamp.com. And if you have recommendations, please let us know!

Jonathan: And finally, don't stop with media consumption. Fellow White people, especially, donate where you can. Protest where you can. Read up on the Black Lives Matter movement - and on the history of anti-racist and anti-colonial movements where you live and elsewhere around the world. Confront racism when you encounter it, and have those difficult conversations.

Allysse: Perhaps this disruption to the usual format of Queer Out Here is a bit uncomfortable for you. Deciding to use this space this way wasn't a particularly comfortable decision for us, either. But comfort in the face of racism is a privilege, and we thought it was important to discuss here.

Now, if you're like us, there are probably a few actions you've been meaning to take - articles to read, petitions to sign, donations to make. So, why not do that now? We'll return you to the rest of Issue 05 Side A very soon.

Sweeper - Aneurin and Kermie - 0:20:35

[A gate opens on the sounds of a valley filled with birdsong, farm animals, faint voices, and a hint of cityscape]

Aneurin and Kermie: Hi! [Laughter]

Aneurin: I'm Aneurin -

Kermie: And I'm Kermie -

Aneurin: And that's Fly the dog, being very quiet. [People shuffle by] Oh, good girl, Fly.

[Some sheep bleat. A pig snuffles up close, against a metal fence]

Kermie: Who's the pig?

Aneurin: Oh! The pig's name is Maybelle, according to the sign, on the paddock.

[Maybelle huffs a few times]

Kermie: Thank you, Maybelle.

Aneurin: And we are all at Collingwood Children's Farm. [Tapping on wooden fence. In the background a farmer calls, "Myrtle!"] And it's Queer Out Here.

[The farmer calls Myrtle again and whistles, a young child speaks in a similar rhythm to the farmer. The birdsong grows louder. Another bleat. A voice comes faintly over a walkie-talkie: "Hey Bridget, did you get the chance to have a look at..." Sound fades out and in.]

Kermie: I turned around and walked into a goat who was right behind me and was all snuggly.

[Goat scratching sounds, interrupted by a lumpy, throaty sound]

Kermie: That was a goat swallow.

[More goat-scratches, fade out.]

Link - 0:21:34

Allysse: We now enter a section focused on travel in which our contributors take us along their trips.

First, we join Julia as she goes on a Christmas cycle adventure up the Rhine. With no family to spend the holiday season with, Julia was free to use the time off to explore, letting the movement of a journey take her mind off the expected social norms of the holiday season.

After that, we follow Chrissy and her family as they wander the desert of the USA.

All of the pieces you are going to hear were recorded in a pre-lockdown world when we could move more freely across the globe. As we entered lockdown, travel changed meaning. Wandering through a never explored street close to home became a new kind of journey, the only one that was allowed. Lockdown is slowly being lifted in a lot of countries but travel is still restricted. How will our experiences have changed our approach to travel? Maybe this is a topic you could explore for the next issue of Queer Out Here...

Christmas Getaway - Julia - 0:22:27

[The whirring sound of a bicycle wheel and chain fades in.]

Julia: Greetings from Mainz in Germany. Ah, I've just arrived at a hotel after what turned out to be a 170 kilometre bike ride along the Rhine. Which is a pretty damn good way to spend Christmas Day.

For many, Christmas is synonymous with family. Going home to your parents, with siblings, other relatives. A chance to eat far too much, argue over Monopoly, that sort of thing. But for many in the queer community, that's not an option. Some of us are fortunate enough that family are completely accepting of who we are. But unfortunately for many, that's not the case. We are, at best, left in a situation where we may have to sit at the table with some homophobic relative or if we're not out, sit there listening to someone ranting, cringing to ourselves inside. And for those of us that are out, we might have to endure not being able to go home at all.

Unfortunately, I'm in that latter position. And the first few years were quite tough and... For a couple of years, I tried to do a waifs and gays Christmas dinner, but didn't really work. But the last few years, I think I've found a solution. And it's my bike. So this morning, I woke up in a hotel in Cologne in Germany and I spent the day cycling along the Rhine. Tomorrow, Boxing Day, I'm going to get up and continue my journey. The final destination is Lichtenstein - and I'm hoping to cycle the whole way but if the weather's crap or I'm not feeling up to it, I can always hop on the train for part of the route. It's my way of dealing with Christmas and society's expectations that we spend it with family when not everybody has a family to spend it with.

[Whirring of bicycle wheel and chain.]

Hello! Greetings from just outside Freiburg in southwestern Germany. It's, ah, now the 27th of December and it's been an interesting couple of days.

Yesterday it was a slow start and I really struggled to find anywhere that was open for food. Um, in the end I had breakfast in a gas station because it was the only place open, wasted too much time cycling around trying to find somewhere for lunch. I was too slow with too much effort going in for not enough forward movement. So, I took a, a jump forward with a train to shave off about 50 kilometres and, just to make some progress towards the hotel I had booked. Part of me is annoyed at having to use a train. But at the same time it's a useful lesson: this is my holiday and it's a trip where I'm not against a clock, I'm not racing, it's just supposed to be fun and relaxing. And I need to remind myself that sometimes, the correct thing to do is, you know, if it's not fun, don't do it. That was yesterday.

Today was a complete contrast. Um, within about 15 kilometres of leaving the hotel this morning, I took a wrong turning and by chance, a hundred metres up the road, I came across a bike shop. They let me use their compressor to pump up the pressure in my tyres and it was like I had a whole new bike. My speed went up by 4 kilometres an hour for the same effort and everything became much, much more fun. It was great! And I think it's, it's a useful lesson to learn, to remind

myself that if it's not fun, if it's too hard, maybe just stop and check the pressures, check that everything is how it should be, check the bike, coz you never know, you might have just made a simple mistake.

I'm now in Freiburg. I've got two more days of riding. Hopefully tomorrow I'm gonna cross into Switzerland. From there it's a simple run-in along the Zürichsee down to Lichtenstein. The closer I'm getting to the Alps, the colder it's getting, but today was fun again. I hope tomorrow is fun too.

[Whirring of bicycle wheel and chain.]

Hello from Lichtenstein! I've made it. It's, ah, I didn't cycle as much of the whole route as I intended. The, the weather the last couple of days has been a little bit problematic. As it's got much, much colder towards the end of the day I've had to be worried about ice - but it's still good. I did, ah, 90 something kilometres today, I think it was, and 70 or 80 yesterday. It's, ah, it's all starting to blur a bit so I'm not totally sure.

Today was beautiful. Glorious, sunny conditions, and I cycled the length of the Zürichsee. And the roads were pretty quiet, beautiful blue skies, and the snow capped mountains, and it was just amazing. Absolutely brilliant. I had to take the train at the end of the day because the, the small roads I was using were icing up. But the final bit, I had a 10k ride across the Rhine and into Lichtenstein. It's such a weird little country. It's a population of about 37,000 people. It's, ah, and yet it's the world's largest exporter of false teeth. (Useless, weird trivia they mention.) Crossing the Rhine to get into the country as the sun was setting was absolutely amazing. The, the feeling of having arrived.

This trip wasn't necessarily the adventure I set out to have but it's been the adventure that I needed to have, and... yeah. I know for many, the idea of riding 900 kilometres or 700 or however many I've done, in conditions floating around zero degrees, a lot of it in the dark, doesn't appeal. But, maybe you can go for a, a long hike, maybe you could take your bike somewhere warmer. Just remember there are options out there that don't involve having to endure family. The great outdoors can be our family, it can be where we feel safe. It can help us avoid the whole crap this time of year can bring. So yeah, I've made it to Lichtenstein. Happy Christmas. Ride strong. Auf wiedersehen.

[The whirring sound of a bicycle wheel and chain fades out.]

Chrissy in the Desert - Chrissy - 0:32:34

[Crunchy footsteps, wind, indistinct background sounds of people talking, birds twittering.]

Voice 1: Yeah the trails aren't marked on Google Maps so you can't see [indiscernible] so you could just walk for ages and not [indiscernible]

Voice 2: Yeah. Alright.

[Voices fade out under the sound of rushing water. More birds. Slight wind distortion and footsteps as Chrissy begins to speak.]

Chrissy: Hi, this is Chrissy, and I'm a long way from home, which is normally on the south coast of England. But I'm currently walking through Snow Canyon in the Mojave Desert in Utah. And I'm here with my two kids who are in their twenties and my, their mum, my ex-wife, and we've always had family holidays despite kind of going our separate ways fourteen, fifteen years ago, but we all get on as a kind of dysfunctional, happy family, I guess. And anyway, we're in the wilderness.

It's just amazing. I can see lava formations, lots of amazing coloured orange rock - you can tell I'm a geologist! But it's just fun. And this is day two of a holiday in April 2019, a road trip, basically, where... Fly in, this time to Vegas, which is anything but the wilderness, though it's pretty wild and unsavoury for all manner of reasons, which I won't go into now! But [deep breath] we've now moved on, we're on our walk, our way to a place called Page, where we're gonna stay for few nights tonight. We've just had an amazing picnic [wind distortion] in the middle of nowhere, and now we're just walking, and you may hear some birdsong.

[Wind distortion, crunchy footsteps, twittering birdsong, background voices.]

Chrissy: OK, so it's the next day and we're now on the Hanging Garden trail which is in Page which itself is in Arizona. More Martian landscapes. I think in another twenty years when they fake the f- man or woman's first landing on Mars, this is where they'll actually film it. It's just this barren desert of deep red rock. Probably looks darker than it is through my sunglasses, but it's still pretty impressive.

[Footsteps, wind, very faint background voices.]

Chrissy: And walking in the wilderness, whether it's two miles from your house or two thousand miles from your house, just gives you that inner peace. Sense of proportion. And it's a, a lovely warm early morning. Desert flowers in bloom - if only I knew what I was seeing, but I've got a friend back home who can identify them, I'm sure!

[Wind distortion, faint background voices, mic handling noises. A couple of footsteps. Wind. Fading in of new atmosphere (sounds like a sheltered space), murmuring voices, an animal squeaks, a person says, "Ooh!".]

Voice 3: If you wait to one side...

[Whispering, animal squeaks again, footsteps, squeak. Fade into outside atmosphere with footsteps and wind distortion again.]

Voice 4: Um... I don't know [indiscernible] just coz you have rusty rocks doesn't mean you have, like, iron ore deposits. I don't really know how that works. Um, so I would still guess copper, but I'm not [indiscernible].

[Footsteps and the white noise sound of running water fades in. Birds tweet. Fade out.]

Link - 0:37:25

Jonathan: As Allysse mentioned earlier, patterns of international human movement have changed drastically from last year to this year. But as Chrissy says, time in the outdoors can offer a sense of being grounded and connected to the world, no matter where we are.

Our next piece takes us through the streets of New York, on Lenape territory, as Gabriel Coleman and Lena Greenberg cycle along the route of the NYC Marathon. This is part of an annual, unsanctioned bike tour of the route, which takes place after the streets are closed to cars but before the runners come through. Listening to this piece, I feel exhilaration as the cyclists race along this narrow strip of liminal time, bringing me into a space that is created only once a year, and which disappears ahead and behind. The piece is recorded in stereo, with Gabriel in the left channel and Lena in the right. I love how this allows the story to diverge as the two cyclists separate and come together over the course of the ride.

A quick note, there is a significant amount of wind distortion, especially in the left channel, which might make for an uncomfortable listening experience on some devices.

Gabe and Lena Take to the Streets - Gabriel Coleman and Lena Greenberg - 0:38:26

[Wind distortion and the sound of bikes gliding along a smooth road. In the following piece, Gabriel's voice and recording comes through the left speaker/channel and Lena's through the right. Occasionally there is a slight echo in the voices as one of the recordings plays a split second after the other.]

Lena: So now... what do we do?

Gabriel: We take a right onto Lafayette.

Lena: Cool.

Both: Yeah! Yay! Woohoo! [Laughter]

Gabriel: Mile nine.

Both: Yesss! [Screaming] Yes! So exciting! Ahh! Wow!

Lena: So, if I take a picture will it fuck it up?

Gabriel: I don't know, probably.

Lena: Okay. So we're not going to take any pictures the whole time?

Gabriel: I didn't really think this through.

Lena: I guess this is an exercise in using audio as a sufficient form of record keeping.

Gabriel: As a - yeah, exactly.

Lena: So we don't have to stop at - do we decide to stop at the lights?

Gabriel: Yeah, I think so.

Lena: That might slow us down a little bit.

[Sounds of bikes and wind. Gabriel sings as they ride.]

Lena: Oh, cars. Can you just...

Gabriel: Chill?

Lena: Go away.

[Laughter, slight sound of traffic, sometimes a car passes.]

Lena: My dad is obsessed with this podcast. And by obsessed with this podcast, I mean obsessed with the idea of this podcast, which is called [The War on Cars](#), that is a Streetsblog - oh my god! Let's make this light!

[Faint laughter, you can hear the bikes speeding up and the wind distortion increasing as Lena and Gabriel pedal harder.]

Gabriel: Wait - left! Left!

Lena: Oh.

Gabriel: Lena! [Laughter]

Lena: OK. I went the wrong way.

[The background sounds diverge in each channel as the two of them take separate routes for a while.]

Lena: Now let's play 'merge through traffic'. Keep goin'!

Gabriel: 'K.

[Cars pass.]

Lena: I hate cars. Get out of my way.

Gabriel: So, Lena is across Bradford [?] from me. And... apparently the streets are not blocked off yet, because as you can hear we've got some cars that we're hanging out with.

[Wind, wind, wind!]

Gabriel: Holy shit. Just people being rude. [Giggle] OK!

Lena: Hi!

Gabriel: So we're not late enough apparently.

Lena: Because there are still cars on the road?

Gabriel: Yeah.

Lena: Well, if that means we need to stop and have a bagel, god damn it, we'll do it.

Gabriel: We could do that.

Lena: I don't feel like we should stop yet.

Gabriel: No.

Lena: Coz we've gone like what, half a mile?

Gabriel: Yeah, and it's still fun, it's still more open.

Lena: Yeah.

Gabriel: There's, no one's parked.

Lena: Also, if we get hit by a car, look at all these cops. Coz, you know, they're here to protect us. [Sarcastic] I feel safer. Don't you?

Voice: [shouting] Watch where you're going!

Lena: Wow.

[They speak simultaneously]

Gabriel: That was my fault. I was distracted.

Lena: Crazy angry runner in the other direction.

[Heavy breathing, wind distortion, background traffic and voices.]

Gabriel: So we're in the middle of the Queensboro Bridge. About to cross over the East River and...

[Background voices.]

Gabriel: ...we were relegated to the bike path.

[We can still hear Lena breathing as they pedal, there is significant wind distortion.]

Gabriel: Lena is somewhere behind me. And here's Roosevelt Island below us. It is still nice and the bike path has better views than the bridge, so I'm not exactly mad about it.

Lena: OK. Over the top.

[Cheers in the left channel.]

Lena: Passing Roosevelt Island. [Panting] East River looking sexy! I don't see Gabe. Gabe is too fast for me.

[People cheering continues under the following.]

Gabriel: Alright.

[Bike cogs spin.]

Lena: [Indistinguishable] trying to slow down.

Gabriel: Heya, how's it going!

Voice: Do you know my husband Scott?

Gabriel: No, hi, Gabriel, nice to meet you.

[Many people speaking]

Lena: Must be like flying.

[People cheer and whoop]

Gabriel: My hands are really cold.

[People cheering for the runners, clapping, sound of bikes coasting, music in the background, mostly cuts out under the next discussion.]

Lena: Hi!

Gabriel: Hi! How was your ride?

Lena: It was fine. Just like a good example of everybody thinking they know better than everybody else about how to do that.

Gabriel: Yeah.

Lena: It's so telling how little practice big groups of bicyclists have.

Gabriel: Yeah.

Lena: Coz we never get to do that coz the roads are built to split us up.

Gabriel: Right.

[Wind, voices]

Gabriel: Oh this is nice.

Lena: Oh, yeah. Where are we?

Gabriel: Ah, we're on First Avenue.

Lena: Fuck yeah.

Gabriel: In Manhattan.

Lena: Which is usually, like, as bike routes north go, pretty... as good as it gets.

Gabriel: Yeah.

Lena: And this is so much better.

Gabriel: Yeah. Um.

[Car passes.]

Gabriel: My understanding is this is one of the best points of Manhattan. Coz you like - like the bridge is super quiet.

Lena: Uh huh.

Gabriel: Coz no one's on it to cheer, and then you just get off and it's just like...

Lena: And it's just...

Both: Wow, woah!

Lena: I hadn't thought about that at all. Yeah [Poland Spring](#). [Sarcastic] You privatise those public resources, fuck yeah. Oh my god.

[Laughter]

Gabriel: Good old Poland Spring. One of the things that's like so New York but like no one ever really talks about it.

Lena: Uh huh.

Gabriel: Like an unspoken thing - that's very cute [indecipherable] -

Lena: Yeah.

Gabriel: - for her to be 'on your left' when we have so much space.

Lena: When we have four lanes of car space and there are four cyclists. I'm into it. OK, let's continue [possibly - not easily decipherable]

[Sounds change a little, more traffic, bikes spinning, wind distortion.]

Gabriel: Just street shit.

Lena: What are we doing about these street sweepers?

Gabriel: Should we pass them? OK.

Lena: I'm not going in between.

[The sound of the street sweeping machines hissing increases to an almost painful level as they pass, Lena is humming, breathing hard as they pedal.]

Gabriel: Keep your eyes peeled for front runners.

Lena: Yeah.

Gabriel: [Calling to someone] Nice legs!

Person: Hey, thank you.

Lena: [To another person] Thank you.

Person: Hey Gabriel!

Gabriel: Hi!

Lena: Adorable, you're famous. I love you, you're my idol.

[Gabriel giggles, sounds of a cheering crowd, someone MCing the event, music pumping.]

Lena: OK, what are we gonna eat?

[Through the crowd noise we catch a riff from Guns N' Roses 'Sweet Child of Mine'.]

Event MC: Runners, how you feeling out there!?

[Fade out]

Sweeper - Queer Out Here Adventures - 0:48:06

Multiple voices: Hi, we're in the Hope Valley!

Single voice: And we've just finished a w-, a seven-mile walk from Hope Station up to Hope Cross, and, 13 of us, and we're a queer hiking group called Queer Out Here Adventures. And you're listening to Queer Out Here.

Link - 0:48:21

Allysse: We are closing Side A of Issue 05 with a piece from Jenny List. Jenny took Jonathan and Dan on a tour of her tiny village, along path and into buildings Jenny helps maintain. Footpaths are an important part of any local environment, both as a physical memory of human movement and as a way to access the outdoors in our daily lives. This is the case whether we are in a world put on hold by COVID-19 or rushing to and from daily routines of work, shop, school, and home.

I Think We Got Away With It - Jenny List - 0:48:49

[Footsteps fade in]

Jenny: We had a massive puddle out front, which I've dug all sorts of channels for -

Jonathan: Uh huh.

Jenny: - but, ah, the trouble is they've, um, this is actually part of the road, but back in the day they used to, um, surface it, and they've stopped. So this is slowly disintegrating. At some point I've got to get random, ah, neighbours and things interested in fixing it.

[Footsteps, faint squeak of a gate]

Jonathan: Thank you.

[Footsteps stop]

Jenny: Right. There we go. Well, I took this on about two years ago because, um, where we're standing, the path, was about six inches deep in leaf litter - it was that neglected. [Footsteps start up again] And so, ah, I, ah, first thing I did was, ah, spend a summer every sort of few days with a

shovel and a wheelbarrow just barrowing it all away. I've actually got to brush it now coz it's got [indiscernible, maybe: quite a lot of stuff on it].

[Keys jingle]

Jenny: If we just pop inside for a minute, um, just to check that there's no water coming in [indiscernible]

Jonathan: Yep.

[Clunks and jingles as Jenny unlocks a door. Echoey atmosphere as she pushes it open and everyone walks inside. Jenny sighs.]

Jonathan: Is it still in use, then?

Jenny: Yes, it's still very much in use. Um, ah, about six, eight services a year. I mean, it's a tiny church. Oh yes, please sign the visitor's book! Because -

Jonathan: Heh. What, what's the date today?

Dan: Eighteenth.

Jenny: Eighteenth, OK. The reason to sign the visitor's book is because, ah, it's part of my metrics. [Quiet chuckles] I mean, as a walker I've probably walked into hundreds of, ah, village churches. And, you know, you wander around, have a look, chuck a couple of quid in the box or whatever. [Dan laughs] Don't worry, you don't have to! Um. And walk away. And it's only after becoming a church warden I realised signing the book is important! So... [laughs]

Dan: Jonathan always signs the guest book.

[Jingle of keys]

Jenny: Exactly, yeah.

Jonathan: Yeah, Let's have a look. So f- first, first signed in - oh my goodness!

Jenny: Eighties, I think.

Jonathan: It really is!

Jenny: Yeah, I mean, not many people visit, it's a small church -

Jonathan: Twenty first of May 1981 - before I was born!

[Jenny laughs]

Dan: Only just!

Jenny: Part of, part of the thing with this church is that it's been locked.

Jonthan: Yeah.

Jenny: Because in the seventies there was a spate of thefts from churches. But I think they overreacted. I'm working to get this place so it's open, because it's a way of reconnecting it with the village. When a church has lost - a building has lost its connection with the village, it's on a fast track downwards. And so that's a way of getting it back. Um, I mean, as to the church, this is a very sort of austere, whitewashed box inside. It's, other ch- other, other church wardens get towering, mediaeval masterpieces, this is actually Georgian.

[Jonathan and Dan make background acknowledgement noises as Jenny continues to speak: Mm hm, yeah.]

Jenny: And - unfortunately it's Gothicised, so it's got pointy windows - in Georgian times it would have had bigger, um, rectangular windows. But the thing it has got, which a lot of Georgian churches have, is a gallery. And generations of kids in this village have, ah, enjoyed themselves playing in that gallery. Ah, I think it's so the peasants could be shuffled up there while Squire sat down here!

Jonathan: It's a nice roof.

Jenny: I'm very happy with this roof, because it was re-done in 1905, so it's got no lead for people to steal and, more to the point, it's a 20th Century roof. So whenever I talk to the English Heritage or whatever like that, "Oh, it's a 20th Century roof!" [Everyone laughs] Doesn't matter that it's over a hundred years old! Um yeah, but this is, I, I grew up in this village, this is the church I was baptised in.

Jonathan: Uh huh.

Jenny: And, ah, it's kinda weird, sort of decades later to end up being its custodian. But ah -

[Key jingle.]

Dan: What's the congregation size?

Jenny: We would normally get fifteen or twenty people, um, because people come from some of the surrounding villages.

[Quiet atmosphere, a few shuffling sounds.]

Jenny: But the idea is to reconnect it with the village, try to use it more for village events and that kind of thing. Like, we have [HS2](#) coming through and HS2 come here and do their meetings. You know, they give their PR fluff and pull out their maps and what have you! [Jonathan chuckles] Um, ah, and we have our village meetings in here and things like that. So... yeah! I'll pop the lights off.

[Switch sounds, jingling keys.]

Jonathan: Thanks.

Jenny: Now we've just got to wander round.

[Atmosphere changes to a more outdoor, but still slightly sheltered, space. Clunks and jingles as Jenny closes and locks the door while she talks.]

Jenny: There's a weird thing, it's almost a superstition, that, I don't - I was told by somebody that it comes from Celtic folklore -

[Move to a completely outside atmosphere].

Jenny: - that one goes around a church clockwise. And apparently it's horrible bad luck to go round the other way. It's one of those things I was told when I was a kid and have never quite shaken.

[Laughter, footsteps in grass.]

Jenny: So [indiscernible] we're going around the church clockwise. Um, I can't see any tiles on the ground, coz was it, what was it, Storm Dennis?

Jonathan and Dan: Dennis.

Jonathan: Dennis the Menace.

Jenny: Yeah. [Bird twitters] Storm Dennis, ah, has just passed over and, like any church warden, I'm worried about my roof!

Jonathan: Yeah.

Jenny: Um. Coz at some point I'm going to have to get up there with some scaffolding and replace a few broken tiles. As you can see, it's, it's showing its age.

Jonathan: Yeah.

[Footsteps in grass]

Jenny: There's usually bits of tile on the ground if one's come down. You can see a few bits there that have come down in a previous year.

[Footsteps]

Jenny: But, ah, I think we got away with it!

[Everyone laughs, footsteps continue, Dan says something in the background]

Jenny: Yes that, that's, ah, bowed with the heat over the years, the window, yeah. But it's been like that since I was a kid, so it's not getting worse.

[Chuckles, footsteps, a jingling key.]

Jenny: I mean, that is actually one of the things about this, that... There aren't - unfortunately a previous church warden, a few decades ago, took out some headstones when he probably shouldn't have. Unfortunately. But you're surrounded by basically everybody who has lived in this village for, getting on for a thousand years. And so, in here is every other church warden [laughs] and you know, you think, "Are they watching?!"

[Laughter, footsteps picking up pace.]

Jenny [faintly]: ...um, the point is to make it good as possible.

[Footsteps, sound of gate clanking open and closed as Jenny speaks.]

Jenny: As to being a, um, as to being a trans person being a church warden it hasn't been an issue. Ah, I mean the benefice have been very, very welcoming. I actually brought, um - In Oxford there is a, um, LGBT Christian outreach at the United Reform church, it's called [First Sunday](#) (firstsunday dot info) - and I brought them here for their summer outing. So basically I brought an extra congregation and an extra service, ah, for which the benefice are very pleased! And they've been very welcoming. So I've actually been very pleased about that, because some Christian denominations have a reputation for being less friendly.

[Footsteps on gravel.]

Jenny: And. I'm in this because I grew up in this village and am wanting to take care of the, the church, and I find that the, the Church - the organisation - I'm very pleased to find them to be welcoming. Because we've all met people who aren't, obviously!

[Footsteps, pigeons cooing]

Jenny: We've had quite a lot of flooding here, isn't there? I mean, we may, on our walk today we may get, um, sidetracked by flooding...

[Footsteps fade out]

Conclusion - Allysse and Jonathan - 0:56:37

[Sounds of woodland birds and insects plays under the voices]

Jonathan: Thanks again to Jenny for taking us around this little church in a tiny village at the end of the road in the English countryside. For me, this is quite a poignant place to end Side A, because this conversation took place during the last holiday my partner and I went on before the UK went into lockdown. Looking back on my recordings from that trip - this conversation with Jenny, a train station and crowded train ride in Birmingham, a hailstorm beating down on the car windscreen as we crept along the motorway - I think about the movement that we took for granted

and I wonder at how much life has changed, how much our everyday interactions with outdoor spaces have changed... and that's a theme we'll explore further in Side B.

Allysse: For now, a big thank you to everyone who sent us their pieces featured in Issue 05, Side A: Dru, Kaj, Jonathan, Julia, Chrissy, Gabriel, Lena and Jenny. Thanks also to Martha, Aneurin, Kermie and the fabulous folks at Queer Out Here Adventures for the sweepers.

Jonathan: If you'd like to find out more about any of our contributors or their pieces, please make sure to pop over to our website queerouthere.com. There you'll find show notes, Emily's wonderful cover art and a full transcript. We'd love it if you let us or our contributors know what you enjoyed about this issue, so please do get in touch on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#), or send us an email at [queerouthere at gmail dot com](mailto:queerouthere@gmail.com).

Allysse: And that's it for Queer Out Here Issue 05 Side A. We hope you've enjoyed this reminder of pre-COVID life, and we look forward to meeting you again in Side B, with the sounds of lockdown. Until then from me, Allysse -

Jonathan: - and me, Jonathan -

Both: Goodbye!

Jonathan: See ya later, alligator!

[Woodland sounds fade out.]