

Kate Carr

I Ended Out Moving To Brixton

Flaming Pines CD/DL

There is almost nothing more engrossing when you are alone, out and about, than to listen to the sound of the city. It can be a haunting, calming and reflective, or uplifting experience – or, usually, a mixture of all of these and several others. Your moods are imprinted on your surroundings and the world projects its sounds back into you, in an ever-shifting mosaic of voices, sounds, rumbles, sirens, prerecorded noises, radio broadcasts and, hopefully, even the odd bird song and dog bark. In 2013's *Listening Publics: The Politics And Experience Of Listening In The Media Age*, Kate Lacey points out that “it is the association of listening with passivity and with the private sphere that has surely hindered it being properly attended to either as a critical public disposition or as a political action”. Listening is an art available to everyone who can hear, and the most democratic of all, perhaps.

Australian artist Kate Carr's 30 minute

piece combines thoughtful ambient underlay with sounds recorded around Brixton. It is a kind and respectful work, in that it avoids putting too much pressure on any one sound, be it traffic, human voices, sirens, or Carr's own backdrops. It captures well the sound of South London in a slow, gentle, careful and occasionally hypnotic way. A lone voice sings in the distance, another calls out again and again “*justice for the victim*”: we remember that outside Brixton police station there is a shrine to the people killed there and to those who have died after coming into contact with Brixton police. Carr introduces a critical distance to the recordings by virtue of their subtlety, but there is a love and situatedness here that goes a long way to getting to grips with the antagonisms and complexities of areas that remain both poor and gentrifying, lively and lonely.

Nina Power