

# WHEN THE WORLD BECAME QUIET

Exploring imaginary landscapes through  
sound & text with artist Alice Mahoney  
PDF Guide + Audio Soundscape

July 2020

NEWLYN  
ART GALLERY  
& THE  
EXCHANGE

## EXPLORING IMAGINARY LANDSCAPES THROUGH SOUND & TEXT

With no aeroplanes, fewer cars, less heavy industry and fewer people during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a brief moment when the world appeared to go quiet. But as we tuned into this new reality we realised that there was the low hum of lost sounds, of insects, birds and other animals.

In these activities, we will use soundscapes and text as the inspiration for creating landscapes.

We can draw from memory and use our imagination to conjure the colours and atmosphere within the landscape. You could think about your own experiences of when lockdown first started or you could create a fantasy or surreal landscape inspired by this.



Empty Market Jew Street in Penzance on Easter Bank Holiday Monday Photo Greg Martin/ Cornwall Live

You will need:

- A4 or A3 paper, old magazines if you want to try collage
- scissors
- pencils, pens, paints

If you do not have access to art materials at home, be adventurous and inventive and find things around the house that may work instead.

## ACTIVITY ONE

Read the text below to inspire and set the mood.

"A picnic. Picture a forest, a country road, a meadow. Cars drive off the country road into the meadow, a group of young people get out carrying bottles, baskets of food, transistor radios, and cameras. They light fires, pitch tents, turn on the music. In the morning they leave. The animals, birds, and insects that watched in horror through the long night creep out from their hiding places. And what do they see? Old spark plugs and old filters strewn around... Rags, burnt-out bulbs, and a monkey wrench left behind... And of course, the usual mess — apple cores, candy wrappers, charred remains of the campfire, cans, bottles, somebody's handkerchief, somebody's penknife, torn newspapers, coins, faded flowers picked in another meadow."

*Roadside Picnic* by Arkady Strugatsky

Listen to [Soundscape I](#)

- Decide if this a cityscape or rural landscape.
- Whether it's real or fantasy.
- What colours do you see?

Draw what you imagine.

Soundscape: <https://soundcloud.com/newlynexchange/when-the-world-became-quiet-soundscape-i>

## ACTIVITY TWO

Now read the following text below from director Andrei Tarkovsky's film *Stalker*. This film is loosely based on Arkady Strugatsky's sci-fi book *Roadside Picnic* and is about a guide (Stalker) who takes a writer and professor to a mysterious restricted place known simply as the "Zone". There are no people to be seen and nature has taken over.

After a long journey on the railway work car. Writer dozes, Professor is solemn and calm, Stalker intensely gazes at the surroundings.

The railway work car stops on a high slope (everything turns from black and white to colour).

STALKER: Here we are... Now we're home.

PROFESSOR: How quiet!

STALKER: It's the quietest place in the world. You'll see it for yourself later. It's so beautiful here! There isn't a soul here...

WRITER: But we are here!

STALKER: Well, three people cannot ruin everything here in one day.

WRITER: Why can't they? They can.

Listen to [Soundscape II](#)

Imagine a landscape with buildings that have been taken over by plants and nature, but perhaps there is something strange and mysterious about this place. Imagine that there are no animals this time - only plants in this landscape.

Really think about what colours might be in this landscape. Is it strange and mysterious? What kind colour is the sky?

Draw what you imagine.



## ACTIVITY THREE

Listen to [Soundscape III](#). Draw any landscape that comes to mind. Perhaps create some animals to add to this final landscape.

Soundscape: <https://soundcloud.com/newlynexchange/when-the-world-became-quiet-soundscape-iii>

NEWLYN  
ART GALLERY  
& THE  
EXCHANGE



If you are on social media, feel free to share your work and tag us: @newlynexchange on Twitter and Instagram #ChildrensArtWeek  
[www.newlynartgallery.co.uk](http://www.newlynartgallery.co.uk)

We hope you have enjoyed these exercises and join again for the next workshop!



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



providing funding

