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Tuning in to the *East Village Poetry Walk* (2012)

In 2016, together with colleagues from Centre for Literature Between Media, Aarhus University, I visited New York's East Village. We walked with poet and producer Pejk Malinovsky for a couple of hours. With our minds, bodies, and ears we experienced the *East Village Poetry Walk* (EVPW), an audio tour of poetry-related sites in New York City's East Village. My chapter will address this experience as well as the general phenomenon of the poetry audio walk from the following angles:

Firstly, I will discuss how this audio phenomenon can be characterized and framed across audio media genres, analyzing the poetry walk regarding its use of voices, speech, and montage principles. In this section I will include a theoretical framework dealing with audio walks as a field of practice using the narrative or aesthetic characteristics of audio formats in between different domains such as art exhibitions, literary sound production, radio montages, and cultural heritage museums. Soundwalks, a predecessor for audio walks, were developed as an ethnographic method creating "an attentive concentration on listening" (Drever 2020, 1).

Secondly, the chapter will intersect these methods with the sensory ethnography approach proposed by Sarah Pink (cf. 2015), addressing how the EVPW engages or attunes the minds and bodies of its participants. Malinovsky himself positions his work as an interactive documentary experience (cf. 2012), but my chapter will ask whether it could also be framed as poetic to some degree, outlining here a multisensory experience designed to attune the body, the mind, and the imaginative power of walking while listening.

The first part of this chapter will primarily focus on outlining the phenomenon of poetry walk as such and how it builds on and expands earlier related concepts of audio walks as well as radio documentaries, creating a genre of its own. In the second part I will re-describe how the walking body attunes to the phenomenological experience of walking in East Village.

Introducing *East Village Poetry Walk*

We meet Pejk Malinovsky on October 10, 2016 outside Veselka, a Ukrainian diner in East Village at the corner of 144 2nd Avenue between St. Parks Place and 9th Street. The tour Pejk has prepared lasts around two hours. We are a group of 16



Fig. 1: Pejk Malinovsky and colleagues from Aarhus University, New York, 2016. © Steen Bille Jørgensen.

people taking part in the walk. The tour begins with a visit to St Mark's Church, and from here we walk slowly and concentrated, listening to the voices of dead poets, the researcher Daniel Kane, and the voice-over done by Jim Jarmusch. Pejk has instructed us in advance in possible focus points and changes along the route. Occasionally, we stop for a while, listening to specific stories addressing the concrete places in East Village that we wander through. The pace is rather slow. At some point, we enter a tattoo shop. The continuous walking in silence seems to stretch out or disrupt time. It blurs the sense of present time of the East Village streets. Blocking out the busy sounds of the streets, we create our own time and space while walking. Moving ahead together in silence creates a weird simultaneous feeling of presence and distance. When we stop and listen, we feel the warmth of the October sun cutting through the moderately tall buildings of East Village.

Pejk Malinovski, the producer of *Passing Stranger – East Village Poetry Walk* (2012), is both a poet and a radio producer. Both formats are engaged in creating a strong sense of presence, and the idea of a montage consists of several elements that are layered and combined, and can be said to display a multi-stable, poetic space. The *East Village Poetry Walk* combines physical participation with the use of digital



Fig. 2: Participants walking and listening, New York, 2016; © Birgitte Stougaard Pedersen.

technologies. The MP3-file format and the use of smartphone make it possible to walk around while listening in the site-specific imaginary space that is audially described (Fig. 1–3). As a phenomenon, the poetry walk forms a mixture of the contemporary, the here-and-now, the present, the historical, the journalistic, and the aesthetics of poetry readings. According to the website, the experience is

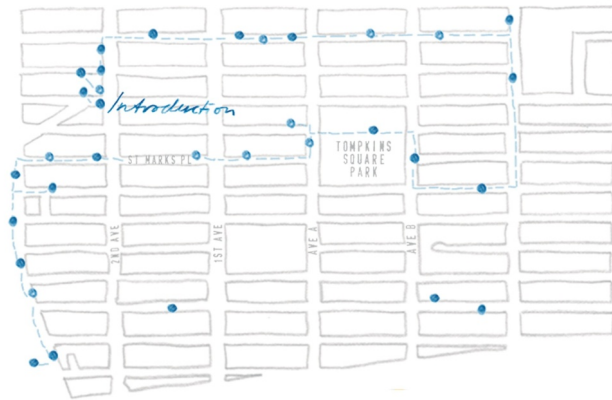
an audio tour of poetry related sites in New York City's East Village. It is produced by Pejk Malinowski, with support from The Poetry Foundation. The interactive documentary experience was created in collaboration with Zeega. The audio file [. . .] and map outlining the route [. . .] allow the user to take the tour using their own mp3 player. The tour is about 2 miles and 95 minutes long. The main focus is on poetry and poets from the 1950s to the present. The tour does not provide a linear or concise history, but rather, like a walk, an anecdotal, digressive tapestry of the poetry that lived and continues to live in the neighborhood. (Malinovsky 2012, n.p.)

The first part of my chapter will be dedicated to framing this audio object with regard to different formats – the audio walk, the radio montage – with an eye to analyzing the use of voices, speech, and montage principles. For a complementary perspective on EWPW as a public poetry phenomenon, please consult Claudia Benthien and Norbert Gestring thorough analysis on this matter (cf. 2023, 102–108).

PASSING STRANGER THE EAST VILLAGE POETRY WALK

Passing Stranger is a sound-rich chronicle of poets and poetry associated with the East Village. Narrated by filmmaker Jim Jarmusch, it contains site-specific poetry, interviews with poets, archival recordings and music by John Zorn.

Click on the blue dots to explore the virtual version or download the walking tour and go to the East Village for the ultimate experience.



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Fig. 3: Pejk Malinovsky. Map of the *East Village Poetry Walk* (2012). Screenshot from Webpage. © Pejk Malinovsky.

Walking with Audio

The idea of *soundwalks*, the precursor of audio walks, originates from acoustic ecology and soundscape studies. Acoustic ecology or ecoacoustics emerged in Canada in the 1970s as a sonic methodology, an exploration of auditory interactions with environments, often leading to new perceptions and understandings of space (cf. Drever, 2020). The soundwalk entails specific value connotations in terms of promoting certain notions of qualitatively good versus bad sound aspects of environments. Soundscape theories, with R. Murray Schaefer as a key figure, thus emphasize our ability to listen as “an exercise of ‘ear cleaning’” (Drever 2020, 6); that is, a method designed to open the listener’s ears to sounds that they do not normally pay attention to. Soundwalks understood as a special listening activity to the prevailing sound environment are still used as a method in fields such as acoustic engineering, architecture, city planning, artistic practice, and social sciences (cf. Drever 2020, 1; see also Westerkamp 2007; McCartney 2014). Acoustic ecology soundwalks are characterized by a genuine openness to the serendipity of the surroundings – an open yet qualitatively normative methodological approach. The EVPW is not a soundwalk in this strict sense; it is an audio

walk using mp3 technology, replacing the sound of the surroundings with the sound of voices, music, and sound effects in your in-ear headphones.

The audio walk as a genre thus originates in the practices of soundwalking. The term *audio walks* has historically been used to describe narrative or aesthetic experiences designed for a specific space or along a predetermined route (cf. Bradley 2012, 100). In cities or museums, audio guides often serve a supporting role, or, as the name suggests, a guiding role for a person whose attention is primarily directed toward the objects and buildings in the vicinity. Audio guides are thus produced for knowledge dissemination where aesthetic means can support communication but are not the primary focus of attention. Audio walks, however, appear in several contexts and with different stated purposes, and they are also used outside museums as part of site-specific artworks or to perform oral history (cf. Bradley 2012). Thus, audio walks can be considered a subgenre within the arts that integrates elements of performance art and locative media technology, bringing forth “perceptual re-tuning, via the deployment of a dramaturgy of situated attentiveness” (Abrantes 2021, 31).

Simon Bradley, in his article “History to Go: Oral History, Audio Walks and Mobile Media” (2012), analyzes some of the production techniques of two specific history audio walks, underscoring that “[t]he short history of oral history audio walks is intimately bound up with a parallel history of technological development” (2012, 99). This point about technology’s importance for the development of combining audio with walking is also emphasized by Toby Butler in his article on memoryscapes (cf. 2007). Memoryscape is a soundwalk concept that invites one to experience the history of a place by listening to the memories of inhabitants, both historical and contemporary, while walking through it (cf. Butler 2007), and in that sense has a lot in common with the EVPW. In the article, Butler writes:

The popularity of MP3 players and a crash in the price of the equipment and software necessary to record and edit professional quality sound and voice has opened up new realms of opportunity for people to narrate, layer and intervene in the experience of moving through places. (2007, 361)

Bradley’s approach to audio walks combines technology with the use of fragmented narrative techniques and the intersection with the affordances of complex layering of audio material – language, sound effects, music. He defines an audio walk as “a series of sound files designed to be listened to through headphones at various points or sections along a pre-defined route” (Bradley 2012, 100). Audio walks perform oral history in a way that involves the listeners’ mobility, often supported by the technological possibilities of the MP3 audio format and portable players, like the iPod, or smartphones as well as, sometimes, locative media’s option of using GPS-based technology. Bradley points to the potential of the

audio walk as a “deepening of sense of place,” revealing the “transitory and flux-like nature of memory, identity, and place” (2012, 105).

This place, consisting of the combination of audio input and mobility through walking, makes the audio walk as an object of analysis hard to conceptualize and retain. The sense of mobility has preoccupied cultural geographers when analyzing places. According to Butler,

many geographers have been exploring more active, sensory, self-reflective and embodied methodologies. These ideas can be used in progressive and liberating ways, although as Cresswell suggests, the metaphors of mobility are not without their own limitations and politics. (2007, 367)

This is in keeping with Sarah Pink, to whom I will return in the second part of this article to further explore how to employ walking as a sensory, analytical ethnographic method. The present chapter argues the need to develop methods to combine audio walks with sensory ethnography from an aesthetic point of view; however, I build on and evolve Bradley’s as well as Butler’s arguments of framing audio walks as genuinely technology-driven. It does not make sense to leave out the technological perspective. I am therefore aligned with Bradley in enhancing the technology-driven aspect of the development of the audio walk, while the analysis, in continuation of a post-phenomenological approach (cf. Ihde 2012, Ch. 10), appears phenomenological – focusing in particular on how walking in combination with technologically mediated sound brings history and poetic experiences to life.

Playing with Genre

The *East Village Poetry Walk* has the character of an assemblage in its use of recordings from poetry readings, both historical and contemporary, including Frank O’Hara, T. S. Eliot, Walt Whitman, Diana Di Prima, John Ashbery, and many more. These recordings are used to create a patchwork of voices, making the genre of the radio montage present as the auditive role model and conceptual grid of the audio walk. Malinovsky appears to be hugely inspired by the Danish radio pioneers in this field. The Danish Broadcast Radio of the 1960s and 1970s, which Ib Poulsen has analyzed thoroughly, developed the radio montage as a highly esteemed genre. The montage creates an imaginary space for the listener, using sound to produce a mix of aesthetic and semiotic means of communication (cf. Poulsen 2006, 127). The radio montage’s auditory semiotic aspects relate to its indexical use of, for instance, documentary sounds. Radio montage analysis inevi-

tably also addresses the role of the speaker's voice, and how voices both create relations to the listener and create an aesthetic space for listening. Historically, due to its popularity in a Danish context, according to sound studies scholar Jacob Kreutzfeldt, the radio montage to some extent developed a genre-specific auditory idiom, or auditive grammar, that derives from a documentary, mostly urban, genre-specific point of view (cf. Kreutzfeldt 2015, 45).¹

The use of the montage principle has had a great impact on a number of art forms, including sound poetry and spoken word albums, where both the use of multiple sound layers and the assemblage character are prevalent features (cf. Matter 2025; Stougaard Pedersen 2025). The montage principles are present in the EVPW, combining several different historical times, voices, sounds, and music, however not very often using sound indexically via, for instance, documentary recordings pointing to specific places. The poetry walk, in contrast to the radio montage, adds the walking activity as an interactive mode of perception inherent in the objects' affordances. The walking activity attunes the body as well as the mind, which genuinely changes the object of analysis to include the activity of the listener. It creates what Tim Edensor would conceptualize as a *mobile sense of place*, produced by "regular rhythms of mobility" (2010, 6) which form a certain non-stationary feeling of a place in itself.

The *East Village Poetry Walk* thus mixes previously known genres. According to Malinovsky, the poetry walk is aesthetically inspired by the assemblage style of Radiolab – a broadcast program and podcast produced by the public radio station WNYC. It is multilayered, fading elegantly in and out of the historical material and present speakers. The journalistic aspects consist of recordings of historical persons, audio clips from poetry reading events, and the literary historical insights into the poetic identity of East Village.

Voices of the *East Village Poetry Walk*

The voiceover of the EVPW is done by the famous independent film director Jim Jarmusch, which colors the walk with a certain atmosphere, adding a contemporary voice to the documentary material. The slow and minimalist style of Jar-

¹ "Auditory grammar thus denotes the rules governing meaningful auditory communication. We know from everyday speech the idea of a *figurative language*, expressed in the way in which elements in a picture surface or a sequence of pictures is organized. The interest in an auditory grammar can similarly focus on the auditory language that operates in sound productions" (Kreutzfeldt 2015, 53).

musch's voice acting creates a certain contemplative tone and not least adds a sense of authenticity to the experience. Doubtlessly, to the listeners familiar with Jarmusch, his voice will also refer to his oeuvre as a film director, and this will affect the experience in a different way, possibly adding an aesthetic "Jarmusch feel" to the overall atmosphere of the walking activity. The music by John Zorn, an important figure for the music scene and record label history of East Village, is used to create an ambient atmosphere and bridge different parts of the walk, for instance, the interruptions, during which the gentle female voice of Kaari Pitkin guides listeners through the walking instructions. "Watch out for cars, they come in two directions here," she says, all the way through taking care of the person walking. This feature, the deictic function of the concrete guiding instructions, creates a bond between past and present, between imaginaries and the walking body. "Are you there?", she asks, suddenly reaching out for you, the walking listener, echoing the phatic language function in Jakobson's sense (cf. 1960, 53–57).

The literary researcher Daniel Kane has written and presents several academic texts that introduce us to the historical aspects of the different schools and poetic practices that were born created in East Village. We learn that both the New York school and the Beat Poets thought that "poetry should be funny and immediate" (Kane in Malinowski 2012). We also learn that the writing cultures of the 1950s and the 1960s had very different practices and habits of writing, the Beat Poets writing solitarily but working with musicians while the New York School poets turned writing into a collective act.

These historical sections are regularly interspersed by poetry performances, all of which have different roles in the montage and feature highly diverse reading styles. Some poets are reading in a calm and measured way, others are screaming. Some poems are recited in a vocal manner that aspires to singing while others are performed in a quiet voice; however, all poetry readings appear rhythmically distinct. Most voices belong to men, although of different ethnicities and different generations. The technical quality of the poetry readings varies due to their historical age. A voice tapestry could sound as follows:

Pejk Malinovsky says welcome in a light tone of voice, congenially introducing the walk and taking care of the walking listener. Jim Jarmusch takes over in a deep, sonorous, and slightly guttural tone, presenting himself as a big fan of poetry and welcoming us to the East Village universe. "Let us go then, you and I," T. S. Eliot interrupts, reciting his poem in a nearly song-like style and fades out again. Kaari Pitkin, speaking in a friendly voice, interjects frequently – "are you on the top of the stairs?", trying to stay close to the walking listener.

As this description shows, the audio walk is constructed within an extremely complex structure that is far easier to experience and take part in than to describe.

One of the central audio clips deals with the nineteenth-century American national poet Walt Whitman. We hear Whitman himself reading the poem that has inspired the EVPW's name. The poem is called "To a stranger" and must be the oldest sound recording of the walk. I call it central to the EVPW because this is the only instance when Malinovsky uses technological doubling of voices. While Whitman is heard reciting his poem, Jarmusch is suddenly reciting synchronously with him, followed by several amateurs reading one line each. Whitman fades out, the amateurs take over. These lines are rhythmically displaced, appearing cacophonous and polyphonic.

This vocal polyphony of the *East Village Poetry Walk* as a whole, the poetry readings, the interviews, as well as Jim Jarmusch's voiceover and Pitkin's instructive voice create an oral attention toward the environment – a vocal tapestry that attunes the movements and thoughts of the listener to a general poetic mode. At a traditional poetry reading event, you will know who the poetic voice belongs to and only hear one voice reciting. Conversely, in the EVPW, the frequent change of voices speaking can make it a bit hard to orientate – to know who is presently speaking. It might, however, be the deliberate communicative strategy of the piece. We do not necessarily know who speaks, but we meet and traverse the neighborhood through a patchwork of voices that together takes us into East Village as a poetic place.

Apart from the voices, the EVPW also makes use of ambient sounds, Zorn's background music, and indexical signs like, for instance, the sounds of church bells when we pass a church. However, compared to a more classic radio documentary montage, ambient sounds are downplayed. The ongoing use of music clips serves both to underpin the general atmosphere of the pieces and to conjure up a historical, period-specific acoustic context – for instance Charlie Parker's saxophone solo, or the musical use of bongo drums, or historical recordings of 1950s Puerto Rican salsa – supporting the story *and* providing it with continuity from one passage to the next.

The walk also introduces a more metaphorical concept of voice, for instance when an interviewed resident of the neighborhood talks about the "voice" of the village and how it has changed from a more industrial atmosphere, where the smell from the factory producing bird seed dominated, through gentrification toward a more well-off group of inhabitants and a different, gentrified, atmosphere. You could call the aim of the entire piece EVPW an effort to create a metaphorical documentation of the voice belonging to East Village.

Before I move on to the analytical framework of the sensory walking experience of the EVPW, I will sum up my observations so far that were based on the audio production combined with the framework of audio walks, oral history, and radio montage with a view to what characterizes this piece. One central question

is whether this specific composition of voices, background sound, and music – obviously leaving out the actual walking – communicates primarily via aesthetic or documentary means. Both, I would suggest, to fully grasp the complexity of the EVPW. To expand this argument: the audio walk produces oral history while performing a sound portrait of a neighbourhood. This is done via the montage genre features. The title “Passing strangers” – strangers who become known to us through their locality – refers both to a poem by Whitman, “To a stranger,” and to a popular song performed by Billy Eckstine, Hal Mooney, and Sarah Vaughan in 1957. It is thus a poetry memorial, giving both a documentary and an aesthetic voice to past nameless inhabitants and to poets living or having lived in East Village. The ephemeral experience of voices of the past is reinscribed in the specific buildings and streets, evoking the atmosphere of the neighborhood.

This, furthermore, raises the question: Which communicative strategies does the audio walk use to create this affect? Once again, I will point to the complexity of the enunciation: Which and whose perspective is prevalent in this piece? The audio walk produces sociological encounters when presenting cultural history knowledge, situating poetry as an important player in the development and atmosphere of East Village. It also represents political voices in dealing with the social roles of the poetry and artists in the neighbourhood’s life, as well as the social conditions and gentrification of East Village. The walk portrays the social situation people were living in.

Relational encounters occur when the walk builds a certain shared identity between the past and present inhabitants of East Village. The poetry and different voices create a community-building link between past and present, for instance via the interplay between the recorded speaking voices and the contemporary listener, whose walking body attunes to the surroundings through listening to the voices. In that sense, the piece significantly resembles a radio documentary, however filtered through refined aesthetic modes of communication. Listening to poetry, mediated and sometimes doubled voices, background sound design, and music continuously experienced through the embodied activity of walking – a kind of sensory ethnography or imaginative encounter – produces a meeting between history, poetry, body, and movement (cf. Pink 2015). As such, the EVPW can be seen as part of what has been termed a return of the oral aspects of storytelling – something which the audiobook as well as podcast culture are part of (cf. Have and Stougaard Pedersen 2016, 129). It renegotiates the established boundaries between aesthetic and journalistic communication at the same time as it nudges sensory hierarchies in new directions, to some degree maybe even questioning the unequivocally dominant status of language connected to writing by juxtaposing writing with writing for sound. By walking this tour, a poetic auditory grammar is created, an auditory sensitivity, sensory attention, to one’s surround-

ings. The audio file creates immersive environments by guiding participants through physical spaces with synchronized audio narratives, often provoking deeper emotional and intellectual responses to the surroundings. As the next part of this chapter will show, the *activity of walking* adds to this deepening of response.

Toward a Multisensory Poetic Experience

The second part of this chapter addresses how the *East Village Poetry Walk* engages or attunes the minds and bodies of its participants. Malinovsky himself positions his work as an interactive documentary experience, but I approach it rather as a poetic experience, outlining a multisensory reading practice designed to attune the body as a whole.

According to Steven High, the audio tour as an oral history format forces us to confront the singular historical event in a listening mode that is driven by fixating or slowing down the pace of experiencing via pre-designed soundtrack, in addition to its capacity to present a co-existence of different times and places (cf. 2013). In EVPW, the interplay between the time-bound soundtrack and the ongoing orientation taking place while walking creates a walking-listening activity that can be framed as a certain kind of meaning production – or what Sarah Pink denotes “sensory ethnography” (2015). Pink’s notion of sensory ethnography deals with how humans enter into relations and experience their surroundings in ongoing processes between presence, past, and future. To Pink, ethnography “is a reflexive and experiential process through which academic and applied understanding, knowing and knowledge are produced” (2015, 4). This type of knowledge might not be presented in established academic forms – Pink herself uses video documentation or walking as knowledge-producing formats. What I take from Pink’s approach is primarily a profound attention to the senses and the importance of embodiment in ethnographic work: “that the researcher learns and knows through her or his whole experiencing body” (2015, 27). The body takes part in and becomes itself a producer of meaning. Not only hearing or seeing, not involving one sense hierarchically positioned above the other, but the body as a whole, and, in this example, a body on the move. As Tim Ingold puts it, “the eyes and ears should not be understood as separate keyboards for the registration of sensation but as organs of the body as a whole, in whose movement, within an environment, the activity of perception consists” (2000, 268).

Combining this situated body with the place – as in this case East Village – Ingold talks about the environment as a “zone of entanglement” (2008, 1797). This

notion emphasizes how places are never simply places, but also ways of living in relation to environments. What interests me here, calling for a methodology that takes the interplay of factors into account, is how Ingold's ideas are embedded in Pink's sensory ethnography. I propose the audio walking activity as a concrete way to conceptualize such a zone of entanglement – displaying an interplay between the poetic voices of the EVPW and the experience of the surrounding city (cf. Pink 2015, 37). This forms a triadic analytical position that is genuinely both multisensory and multistable, to borrow a concept from Don Ihde (cf. 2012, 17). Multistability points to singular situations in which technology and relations to technology form our experience of the world, transforming “this immediately experienced environment” (Ihde 2012, 17). In dialogue with Pink's processual and situated concept of knowledge in her sensory ethnography, the notion of multistability might be what we need to develop: a vocabulary to theorize the complex meaning-making processes across time, mobile place, and individual experiences of walking in East Village.

According to Pink, sensory ethnography is project-specific. Walking in East Village means combining the stories of the voices in your ear and the movements of your body while maybe occasionally losing your sense of direction and needing reorientation. Analyzing this requires a process-oriented approach focusing on the complex grid of cognitive and physical movements working together in a multisensory manner, hereby creating the poetic attunement (cf. Koldkær Højlund 2017, 49) toward the surroundings, combining listening via technology and following the instructions of the guiding voice. The tour takes about an hour and a half, which also affects the interplay between listening, body movements, technology, and urban environment: the listeners have to stay tuned and concentrated for quite some time, which may present a challenge to the experience. You can become tired, you can get lost, the surroundings might have changed, etc. My point is that the distribution of body movements and time becomes a crucial part of creating the poetic experience.

Following Pink, I obviously should have documented the textures of the actual experience to meet the criteria for a sensory ethnographic analysis. How can I recall and recap across oceans and an eight-year timespan? I have tried to reenact the walk in my Danish environment, walking not in East Village but in suburban Denmark. Thus, for this analysis I have only listened on the move in order to encounter the bodily experience of moving while listening, creating a mobile sense of place which, of course, is not comparable to the original experience but has acted as a substitute for the analytic purposes. When I walk in a different landscape, listening to the poetic voices of Ron Padget, T. S. Eliot, and Jim Jarmusch, a different kind of mobile sense of place is produced. The walk is dis-

placed from its origin, but I can still experience an interplay between my body walking, poetic voices, and the surroundings.

When I walk, following the edges of the fields in suburban Denmark, I see a winter-green landscape in front of me instead of the vibrant East Village. I do not have to watch out for pedestrians or cars but can establish my own walking rhythm while listening to stories of poets, poetry, and buildings in New York. The instructions for walking are missing their indexical meaning, in a sense they become fictive, as if I am wandering around the landscape of a dream or a novel. However, I still get the sense of poetry, of a poetic mode or atmosphere. In a way, the poems are left hanging in the trees around my neighborhood. The context for walking and listening is changed, but they still activate poetic engagement.

In that sense, the EVPW creates a context-dependent multistability (Verbeek 2000, 118). Every walk becomes new by creating a displaced poetic situation that offers situation-specific relations between technology, place, and the person walking, emphasizing the situational aspect of experiencing literature that becomes increasingly important when discussing a digital literary landscape (cf. Engberg and Stougaard Pedersen 2023).

A Poetic Sense of Place

Toby Butler and Simon Bradley both emphasize the audio walk's capacity to evoke a deepened sense of place. My contribution to this is stretching their argument to ask how the EVPW not only gives us access to knowledge on the literary history and enhances our understanding of cultural and historical contexts, but also attunes us to East Village as a poetic place: the act of walking produces a poetic sense of place.

To recall Kane's statement in the EVPW, "poetry should be funny and immediate." As a recapitulation this could be linked to how Jonathan Culler describes poetry as part of our reality – not being "the creation of a fictional world but the simple event of establishing itself, constituting itself as a lyric" (2015, 131). Culler conceptualizes poetry performance by its ability to convince, move, and grab our attention (cf. 2015, 130), and this performative, poetic mode of language can, according to Louise Mønster in continuation of Culler, "persuade and move us, [. . .] make us act" (2022, 19; trans. BSP). This is, I argue, what takes place during the poetry walk. The listeners adopt a different mood in relation to our surroundings, direct their attention toward the buildings, streets, smells, and people around them in new manners. They move and are moved. The poetic walk facilitates an

encounter between the audio production and the walking listener, forming a certain poetic mode of language via the voices used, and by maintaining the listener's attention when walking through the city. This takes place via the participation of the moving body and is enabled through digital technology, although always caught in a singular, situated event – not only by being a route representing a place but also via the relationality producing this place (cf. Saunders and Moles 2016).

The *East Village Poetry Walk* can be seen as an example of poetry dissemination in the era of podcasts, where reading experiences are shifted from books to site-specific and corporeally engaging sonic poetic situations, displaying a strong bodily materiality as well as a fragile, immaterial ephemerality (cf. Stougaard Pedersen 2023). By fragile, I mean that digital formats are sensitive to obsolescence, for instance due to updates in operating systems, meaning that digital literary formats have limited operational time. Ephemeral should also be understood in the sense that cities change and that you can listen to the audio file somewhere other than NYC. When we walked the tour in 2016, several buildings had already changed – for instance, a specific place during the walk where there used to be a church was now a construction field.

All these different aspects affect the experience of the space created by the poetry walk. It is a space of imaginative force, using the embodied experience to create resonance with the historical and physical space – as Malinovsky himself calls it, a digressive tapestry of the poetry that lived and continues to live in the neighborhood – also when we walk through it today taking into account the co-existence of different times and places. I argue that this imaginative force gives rise to a poetic attunement toward the environment across historical distances, forming East Village as a poetic, eternally emergent place. It develops a poetic way of knowing that emerges through the process of listening and walking. The senses are thus part of this production of space that exceeds the notion of audio walks as representing oral history in the way Bradley and others have described it. Not only does the poetry audio walk represent historical knowledge, it also generates a poetic mode. We are being moved while moving physically or mentally through East Village.

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