

Fracture Mob

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*F*racture Mob (2014) was an audio mapping event that invited people across the world to ‘get lost’. Participants simultaneously listened to and walked with *The Guide To Getting Lost* (2014), an audio-walk designed with dis-orienting in mind. The Guide To Getting Lost challenges walkers to see familiar geography afresh—to give themselves up to ‘drifting’ without purpose for 35 minutes and to experience serendipitous moments where the audio-track and ‘real life’ events seem to align and make sense, a car door slamming or child talking on the audio matching up with real time events happening on the street in front of the walker.

I began working on the idea of Fracture Mob in relation to a series of drawings; *Everything Between Us*, a project that questions the map itself; specifically the paper map in a digital age. I am considering what they represent, not only geography but also history, politics, systems of governance, economy, distance - time itself. Through the drawings I want to bring to the fore the idea of maps as a temporal representation as well as a piece of geography.



Figure 1. From the series, ‘*Everything Between Us*’ 2016.

Fracture Mob was conceived in contrast to the popular form of a “flash mob”. It used the same online tools for gathering people, but the simultaneous collective action it generated happened invisibly, with participants dispersed across the globe. A Flash Mob is about a visible intervention - bodies on the street together; *Fracture Mob* was a psychic intervention - mirroring behaviour and social spaces in online contexts where you may have many people participating in an activity or event simultaneously. It highlights that the invisible connectivity of online spaces is a ‘real’ experience, despite its lack of physical presence in any one ‘place’.

The audio was constructed from walks I had recorded whilst travelling and walking in locations as far flung as Plymouth, Delhi, Copenhagen, Quebec and Marrakesh. Each time I visited a new place I would go out and record a walk, narrating my directions and capturing the sound of the local environment. When I first began recording these *Guides to Getting Lost* I was driven by a desire to try and report on a place so as to compress it and then re-conjure it elsewhere. I wanted to create a kind of walking documentary, a literal re-mapping of one place on another. However, as I sat in my studio crossing out maps, I began to think more about how landscapes are constructed in the imagination. The process of listening to audio whilst walking sets up a conversation between the gaze, the cognition of the walker and the place itself. *Fracture Mob* sought to map a constructed landscape inviting people to collectively imagine someplace that existed between the idea of this collective act, the disorientation of the audio environment and the walk itself. In previous projects I had been interested in the many variables it is possible to find in one location and how to map that multiplicity. *Fracture mob* sought to limit the variables of the work—everyone listens to the same audio—but through that limited frame imposed a temporal imaginative space that located walkers both in their physical landscape and a collective idea of an imagined landscape. The imagined landscape is different for each person, but is imagined collectively none the less.



Figure 2. From the series, *‘Everything Between Us’* 2016.