

‘Specters of Cascadilla Falls’
Hauntological Music for a Lonesome Walker
area specific instructions for a walker

composed for Music 1202: Classical Music from 1750 to the Present
taught by Prof. Rebecca Harris-Warrick at Cornell University

Can Bilir

10-15 minutes
Ithaca, NY
2017

Start walking according to the route shown in the maps and pictures found below. Read the instructions in advance.

Movement I. the Cemetery

starts from the corner of the historical Ithaca City cemetery on Cornell Avenue/Stewart Avenue, and ends at the gate with the stop sign. Two movements are attacca

Movement II. the Waterfall

starts right there at the gate of the cemetery. As you arrive, the sound of the waterfall starts to get louder. Keep following the trail adjacent to the Cascadilla Park Road. You can stop and the look at the river for a while. The movement ends before the last turn downhill, before seeing University Avenue.

Warning: Walk on the sidewalk when it is possible. Always keep an eye on the traffic and surroundings. Avoid going other places besides the main road and trail.

Instructions

Keep a certain walking tempo. Every step should be comfortable and in a relatively consistent tempo, which will make the walker feel neither so slow or so fast. No extra large steps should be used than how you normally walk, and no running. Wear comfortable shoes and clothes.

Ideal condition for this piece is moderate weather with no snow, thunderstorms, rain, or any other extreme condition. The wind should be weak. If there is wind (even just more than 2-3 knots), when the wind is coming directly towards your ears it creates a very distinctive sound. You should be aware of it. Additionally, weather conditions can affect the precipitation of the sound. If a strong wind is coming from the south, that might bring the waterfall sound to your ears earlier than it is expected. The listening ability is central here, all the other senses are secondary.

The walk should be done when the mind is fresh and active, and it should be done during daytime, between sunrise and sunset; and keep in mind, both times will create a different precipitation of sound and human perception. You should spend at least some time inside of a building prior to the walk.

When you arrive to the point of movement I, your body should already be ready to walk and listen. You can regard it such as going to a concert; when the concert starts, our minds create a

different understanding of time and space such as the actual flow of time stops, and the music conquers the moment. Same principle is happening in this piece.

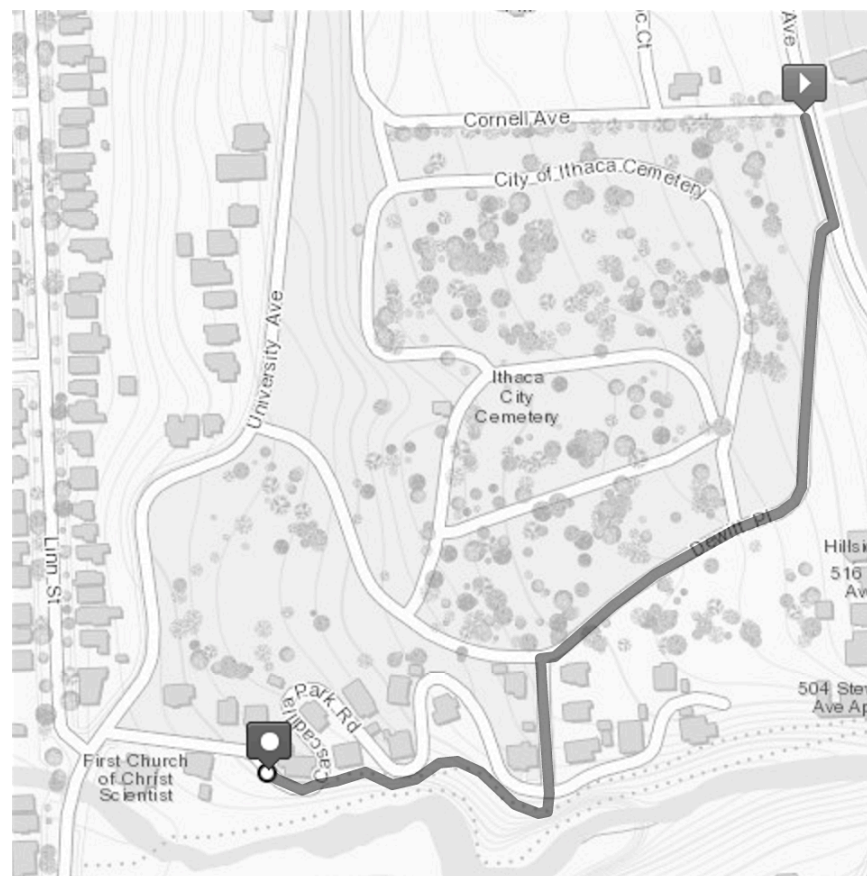
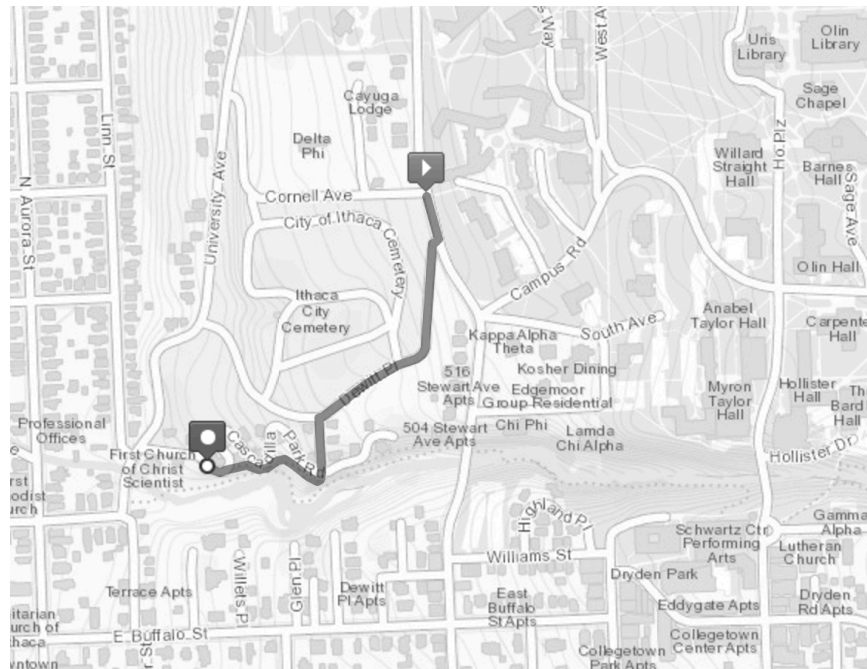
Walking from downtown would change the entire experience because of spending more effort to walk up hill; if one prefers to return in the same direction one should keep this difference in one's mind.

When any sound is heard and starts to occupy your mind, other than the silence in the movement I and the waterfall in the movement II, a car sound, wind sound, rain, or any images in your mind such as the beauty of the clouds, the colors, or other activities and your daily life responsibilities etc. this is an interruption. If any outside source interrupts the flow of your experience and thinking process, the experience is undone. However, one should not worry about it during the walk; one can immediately return back to continue to experience the piece. It is impossible to create a purely isolated sound space without those unintended sounds, however the sounds are supposed to stay in the background. You can experience this performance again and again, as much as you want. Memories, daydreams, thoughts, and feelings of living in the moment are a necessary part of this piece.

In the first movement, you will hear many sounds from the environment. However, the actual sound of the thing that we named as 'cemetery' is in complete silence. First, there is constantly movement around and this creates subtle sounds everywhere. That is why no silence exists as we think. Second, besides the physical reality of the impossibility of the ultimate silence, the echoes of the past, the memories, the specters are still making a lot of noise; they continue to exist in our minds. Our perception is not merely based on the so-called physical facts. Therefore, the music transcends the physicality.

In the second movement you will hear the gradually increasing noise of the waterfall. When you are on the trail, the noise will become more stable and reach its loudest point. Still there will be some subtle fluctuations in the sound itself, due to the changes in the flow of the river. You will realize that the more you walk downhill, this noise will reduce at first, and increase again because you will be traveling away from the first waterfall and then getting closer to another one. Two times you will hear the waterfall sounds' distinctive fluctuation. Furthermore, if you focus on the tempo of your steps, you will hear that the waterfall sounds will be interrupted by your steps and you will start to hear beats in the waterfall sound. On the other hand, if you disregard your steps, you will not hear these beats. Moreover, the actual reality of the waterfall depends on the altitude, water and its motion, rather than a pure form of a waterfall. This is why its form is the same as the non-physical silence in the first movement. Thus, neither the physical silence, physical lack of identifiable sound, nor the silent sound which our perception makes us to hear in our minds at the same time coming from our memories are different beings than the so-called physical being, such as the waterfall. The form of everything exists in our minds. An existence dependent on the perception.

Maps:



Start: Stewart Av. to the cemetery



Keep going



Turn left from the sign; Mov.II



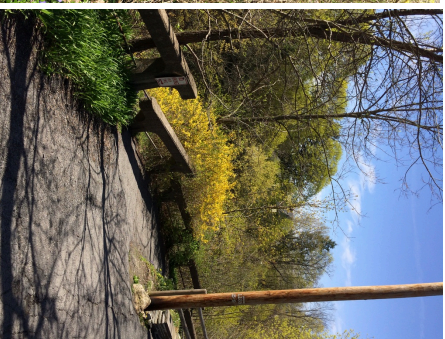
To the end, turn right



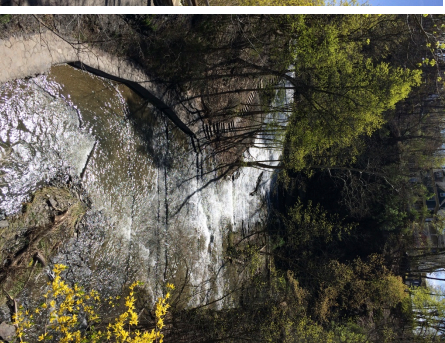
The trail



Keep going



Wait (10"-2)



Keep going



The End: after the house



