

walk 2:

the asta trail, silvertown: trains, planes & graffiti walls

Commentary by Jo Thomas and Toby Butler

“ The Asta trail was written in the summer of 2007 with the young people at the Asta Centre youth club. The idea was to encourage the young people to express personal narratives and narratives of place through sound and music. After a number of group walkabouts the young people chose areas that were important to them, wrote lyrics around the chosen locations and spent two weeks in the summer mixing their words with their own beats.

This commission was especially exciting to work on in regards to the distribution of music via mp3 technology. Many of the young people had mobile phones and were very adept at using them. Some chose to save their music onto their phones and listen and share what they had created. The music they wrote became mobile within Silvertown before the project was actually finished. This mobility of sound through the phones in people's pockets happily echoed the idea of a sound walk.

The young people were given mp3 players at the end of their project so they all could play the music they had written along with other music of their own choice. They also visited the music studios and the design laboratories of the University of East London and had a chance to work with the facilities there. This gave them the opportunity to find out what happens on the new campus that is on their doorstep, and discover some of the more exciting aspects of university life.

With some professional guidance and tuition from a trained journalist on how to record interviews, small groups of young people armed with a digital recorder also went on visits to question people that had important roles in their community. These ranged from the local shopkeeper to Lord Mawson (responsible for the future development of the area adjacent to Silvertown, near Pontoon Dock).

These interviews didn't just give the participants the chance to gain some confidence in oral skills (many spoke English as a second language); it also gave the interviewees a chance to meet and really engage with some members of the next generation of Silvertown residents. ”



Toby Butler



Toby Butler

1: song, voice and beats

Malcolm; Sydney; Brenda; young people from the Asta Centre

2: up and coming area

Malcolm, young people from Asta Centre, Mr Sriramamoorthy

3: silver is as good as gold

Malcolm, Kathy Taylor (North Woolwich Old Station Museum), Toby Butler, young people from Asta Centre

4: pink hazes of sugar

Toby Butler, Kathy Taylor, young people from the Asta Centre

5: vast skies of venture

Victoria Jeeves (London City Airport); Toby Butler; young people from the Asta Centre

Music was composed by the young people from the Asta Centre, Silvertown and arranged by Jo Thomas

walk 2: the asta trail, silvertown: trains, planes & graffiti walls

1: song, voice and beats

Use the map to find the Asta Centre on the corner of Drew Road. This trail was made in the studio inside. Stand outside and play track 1.

2: up and coming area

Go through the alley way to get to the precinct and shops on Constance St. Opposite the grocers shop play track 2.

3: silver is good as gold

Cross at the zebra crossing on Albert Rd. You will see a pedestrian bridge over the railway. Go up on to the bridge and face the Tate and Lyle sugar factory. Play track 3.

4: pink hazes of sugar

On the corner of Albert Road and Whythes Rd you will find a bench in a grassy area. Sit down opposite the Tate and Lyle factory and play track 4.

5: vast skies of venture

Pass the primary school and head for City Airport. If it is open, cross the check in hall and go up the escalators.

Walk to you left. Look down over the hall and play track 5.

