

# Kimberly Alidio

Four Sound Poems from *Teeter*

## “Time Study”

time study

*Of the slowdown & DING-DING!*

& its message: *on time*. One track of sampled phrases  
 the arcing pitch of the streetcar engine, the page-flipping  
 on a table, the bell resonance. One track for a looped beat  
 & rumbling undercurrent. A third for distortion counterpoint  
 Essay as drone festival on a moving train. The blur of brick  
 wall to green tree. The phone someone is shouting into, “I’m  
 in Rhinecliff!” Screeching slow down, the stop & the  
 speeding up, the motion is the sound & vice versa  
 Ongoingness marked by the no-longer. Some tracks with  
 teeth removed. A frenzy & a thickness help hear the gaps  
 a whoosh cuffs the ears. Of wind, labored breathing, dialogue  
 Footsteps keep time. The ear’s repertoire, with varied fluencies  
 composes footsteps, streetcar bells, bird calls, cicadas &  
 engines as speech modulators. One audio capture of  
 an iPhone video recording of a walk through an alley &  
 another of an iPhone video recording on Bowen Trail  
 Isolated vocalizations, bird imitations cut with laughter  
 Then graphemes suspended in negative space

## “Desk (for DDD)”

desk (for DDD)

from *Two strangers*

skirting close to a god complex, fade up into the ringing  
without the percussive start. Feet when wheeled or jarred by a knee  
Of the jolting screech pattern before the stationed hum

“I wasn’t expecting that (9 Apr 2020)”

I wasn't expecting that (9 Apr 2020)

*Arc of a moving vehicle like a spaceship*

starting up, live delay. A continuous military aircraft. Starting north on N. 1st, west on E. 2nd, south on Herbert, one of many glorious alleys east on University. A walk is linear in one sense, circular when return meets departure, still to time & place in memory. A recorded soundwalk a few weeks into quarantine. The grief of both! The vertigo of sonic memory suggests you've gone off the map. The passing of one with the name of a month. After the passing of one with a professional pronoun different from the personal. To write in word pairs one too many words. To teeter. Verbs & adjectives in noisy twos. By whose hand does an author die? J, how have you reconciled the theory of M's self-care when M is known for taking her own life? Loop by cut-&-paste every ten seconds. Reverse every duplicate. Living is an act of cession, letting it slip from grasp. To decide is lonely. To find the third. Of a walk interrupted by looking. To train the ear only to the time of each decay until the body gives out some industry. Of stations & a train for embarking & disembarking

## “You can actually say something (2011–2018)”

you can actually say something (from 2011)

*A one-sided phone conversation recorded as video*

Ongoing intonations of sympathetic complaint. Sardonic humor marks the bind of naming a violation of some sort, probably work related, now named *microaggression*. Afternoon shadows against a wall. Sun noise constantly moves through the filters of tree branch & window blind. Of disassociating from subordinate placement, which I say is normal to the person on the phone. Intimacy is having no memory of who I was talking to

*Where a person on the other end of a crisis survival phone call lacks*

a voice & name hints of shared institutional affiliation. Into that break comes another phone call, *What you do & what you will continue to do will exceed the structural violence of academia. The point of what you do is absolutely bound up with the person who rigorously & beautifully confounds the disciplinary foundations of the*

*imperial university & who is a key contributor to ending that violence*, transmitted to the edge of a former bed, by the angled narrow beam of sun ☼ suspended dust, above a noise floor

*You can make a shape, cut then paste it into a file*

isolate a certain formant or upper partial, turn speech into total tonalism. In a moment of pure listening, I once spoke over simultaneous outbursts in chorus with a cacophony of girls

*Another video posted on my social media*

account is a slow approach to an ancient live oak several years ago. The male cicada wails out of the ground of periodic dog days. Layering the phone call with intermittent whine maps a transitive noisescap from an old living room out into the greenbelt. The complaint floor gives out a laugh's short attack. Intermittent bitter release high out into the same-old

Kimberly Alidio is the author of two chapbooks and four books of poetry, including *Teeter*, an autohistoriography of felt time that arises from subversive hearing practices and the emotional prosody of a mother tongue one does not understand but activates in another poetic language. A winner of the Nightboat Poetry Prize, *Teeter* will be published in 2023. She lives on Munsee-Mohican lands along the Mahicannituck River, otherwise known as New York's Upper Hudson Valley.