

# Wes Out-Loud: Stories of Place

A site-specific auditory journey



## STUDENT COLLABORATORS' NOTES

Often there's a big difference between what I see and what's before my eyes. When I walk around campus, I unconsciously relate my environment to my previous experiences and existing schemas. Our performance concerns itself with the auditory and the visual. I attempted to create my own perception of the world using the auditory, and merge it with the viewer's perception, the visual. On one level, these two components offer a fitting juxtaposition, a separation between what is heard and seen. Using this rationale, the piece reflects the ever-changing nature of the mind, that can be rigidly present in the physical world for one moment, and adrift in conceptual thought the next. On another level, the differences between the two components can emphasize their similarities. Parallels run through all human experience, whether its our constant, oft-forgotten breath, our intense, complex pain or our strange, fleeting memory. Using this foundation, my piece is an attempt to reach a common ground with another person, to see eye to eye with you.

—Nick Byers '19

In writing my narrative, I thought about why Wesleyan feels so strongly like home even though my time here is so temporary. Living situations here are transient—students only live in each place for nine months, and usually only stay on this campus for four years. Students normally arrive with no family or friends, perhaps a few acquaintances. Still, in coming here, I felt a sense of permanence. Until coming to college, I went back and forth between my divorced parents' houses almost every day. Coming to Wesleyan and being able to stay in the same bedroom every day of the week made it feel like my real base—even with the knowledge that I'd have to move out at the end of each school year. I hope after hearing my story, I hope people will further think about the permanence of Wesleyan and how a place can feel like home when our time there is so limited.

—Cecilia Cerejido-Bloche '16

Wesleyan is an intensely personal space to me. It is the place where I have experienced the most growth and had the most memorable experiences of my life thus far. Given its significance, the memories of Wesleyan are positive, negative, and everywhere in between. In writing a piece specific to Wesleyan and the space that Wesleyan occupies, I wanted to focus on those disparities between positive and negative, especially those which I often hide. I also wanted to emphasize the way that these memories take on a spatiality and transform the spaces which the original events occurred in. I hope that listening to my story, as well as everyone else's, will allow members of our Wesleyan community and beyond to question their relationships to the spaces they inhabit everyday and recognize the lasting effects that memory and space leave on their lives.

**–Jess Cummings '17**

After spending this year dealing with a really severe flare of a really severe chronic illness, I developed a new perspective on what being a college student can be like. When it came time to submit a piece for *Wes Out-Loud*, I knew that I wanted to find a way to frame this experience in a way that could be easily understood by those who do not share my experiences. As sweet and supportive as those around me were when I was sick at school, I found that not only did I not know people who shared this experience, but I also didn't really even know people who had considered this situation as one that was possible. I found out after I wrote this piece that I would be unable to return to campus this semester due to my illness. It means a lot to me that even though my body couldn't be a part of this production, my cast-mates and the *Wes Out-Loud* team made sure that my voice and story would still be heard. I hope that in listening to my story those who haven't thought about the presence of illness and disability on campus before will begin to think about these issues and that those who relate to my experience will be encouraged to share about theirs. I hope to help create the space to make the invisible more visible.

**–Maya Herbsman '17**

Memory and Trauma go together like hugs and kisses. However, when it comes to sharing traumatic experiences, language can pose a serious issue as a barrier in the process of communicating with the audience. Thankfully, performance provides an avenue in response to this issue. My piece has evolved through multiple stages into its current state, mainly because the subject matter is still impending rather than existing in a time frame in the past, which can be looked back on and investigated. In the process of developing this piece, with the generous help of the rest of the creative team, I attempted to explore the struggle of revisiting and re-experiencing trauma, along with the dilemma of sharing, the need of it, and the guilt that can follow after doing so. As for you, the audience, I invite you to observe how I perceive my experience and present you the essence of it. Finally, I believe that there is value in sharing, despite the potential guilt that may come after. After all, it is what we choose to share that shapes who we present to one another and ultimately remember.

**–Ali Jamali '17**

When submitting a piece for *Wes Out-Loud*, I tried to think of what made Wesleyan so important to me. The options became endless, and I realized that I needed to take on a different approach to my story. I began to think of what was most consistent in my day-to-day life at Wesleyan and schedule popped into my mind. Constantly living my life on a specific schedule that is entered into my calendar, I constantly find myself having inner conversations with myself throughout the day. In order to not make this a normal story about how boring my life is on a consistent basis, I remembered the day in which this VIP changed my schedule completely, turning my day into a wild goose-hunt. Though, what I have valued throughout this process is the ability to use my day-to-day schedule as a way to structure the piece. With my piece being one of the two pieces that have been split multiple times, it is nice to see how my schedule helps provide a timeline for my day, but also a general outline for allowing other stories to tie in with one another.

**–Keyonne Session '17**



ROW ONE (from left)

**Yichen Eva Lou '18**, Stage Manager

**Jess Cummings '17**, Collaborator

**Ali Jamali '17**,  
Assistant Director and Collaborator



ROW TWO (from left)

**Anthony Dean '17**, Sound

**Cecilia Cerejido-Bloche '16**, Collaborator

**Keyonne Session '17**, Collaborator



ROW THREE (from left)

**Nick Byers '19**, Collaborator

**Maya Herbsman '17**, Collaborator

**Uma Dieffenbach '17**, Collaborator