

Chapter 18: If These Walls Had Ears: Applying Sound Rhetorics Through Audio Tours

By Lance Cummings, Hannah Lane Kendrick, and Devon Peterson, University of North Carolina
Wilmington

Though we've done our best to track down the sound assets and cite them for these sample projects, we found this process very difficult. Before this project, we go over fair use, copyright, and Creative Commons. All of these projects make use of sound files found via the Creative Commons search at <https://search.creativecommons.org>, which led us to many assets (if not all) found at Freesound (freesound.org). Since this project was for experimentation purposes only, students did not keep track of these files or provide citations. That said, I recommend incorporating this element in future iterations, so that students can practice this important element of digital composing.

Most of these samples focused on remediating a video tour created by the office manager of the Latimer House, Travis Gilbert. This video summarized several of the tour's speaking points for a general audience. During client visits, students looked for ways to rework some of these ideas for different audiences and purposes. The audio remediations tended to focus on transforming this text.

4. "Restoring the Slave Quarters" by Shannon Bradburn, Hannah Lane Kendrick, Kendall C. Rogers, and Tyler L. Young

This is one of the final projects given to our client. Students visited the house museum several times to do archival research and talk with our client. The end product was a video showing the importance of preserving slave history at the Latimer.

Transcript

[Subdued music played on acoustic guitar, with occasional slide guitar melodies]

Male Narrator: The Historic Latimer House Museum . . . a doorway leading from the bustling modern world into the Victorian past. A window into the lives of three generations of the prestigious Latimer family. Commissioned by Zebulon Latimer in 1852, the success of this powerful man and his family is emblematic of what once made Wilmington North Carolina's most thriving city of the antebellum era. However, it's worth remembering that this great success was at a cost. A great historical monument was built and upheld upon the backs of a number of enslaved people whose stories and experiences are also well worth remembrance.

Listed here are just some of the many enslaved peoples of color who contributed to the Latimer household in some shape or form. Their names and legacies are also preserved by Wilmington's Lower Cape Fear Historical Society. However, there is one we are privileged to know more about than the others. And her name was Hannah.

Female Voice (actor playing Hannah): My dearest mistress. I was pleased to learn from your letter of August 24, that you and your family are all well. I hope that you have all spent a pleasant summer and are benefited from the trip. I'm sorry and hope that you do not think I was not glad to hear from you, as it has been so long since I've received your letters. Mary has been quite sick and I was not very strong and the weather so warm, then moving in a few months.

Male Narrator: Though Hannah's story is the one we know the most of, thanks to letters and documents that have survived the winds of time, she is merely one of countless other enslaved people whose legacies are only remembered and valued thanks to the work of historians like the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society in tended institutions like the Latimer House Museum.

[Music fades away]

However, there remains one more hurdle before the Latimer House can truly memorialize these people who made the house what it is today. Still standing are the quarters where many enslaved people resided. However, today its interiors no longer resemble what they once were. There is great educational potential within the renovation of the quarters' interior though it would be at a great cost. To see what the restoration could provide, we need look only at the Bellamy Mansion, another historic Wilmington site.

[Dramatic and optimistic new music on acoustic guitar]

The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society is a nonprofit corporation with money raised through memberships, donations, and events, fund educational programs and the maintenance of the archives and the Latimer House.

Your addition to the Society or your generous donation would be a vital investment into the past and a crucial step in the sowing the seeds for the future.