



On Thursday, December 6th, the KRTS Youth Media Project participants convened in the back of the Marfa Public Radio Studios for their first workshop. Over the course of 8 weeks, ten Marfa High School 9th and 10th graders will pitch, record and produce their own radio stories, culminating in a community listening event and a special program to be aired on 93.5FM in February.

Acting as general production assistants are 10 mentors, members of the Marfa community who will go on this radio quest alongside the students.

The theme of our first workshop was “Introduction to the Space of Sound”. When we are looking to create radio, the first thing we need to understand is the idea of a sound-only environment. What are the possibilities in this space? The limitations?

First things first, we started touching equipment. Step one for any beginning radio maker is to not be intimidated by fancy recording technology!



To get us acquainted with a sound-only space, the students, along with their mentors, were led in one of my favorite radio games – “Sound Walking”. In this activity, two people work together as a team to help each other experience sound without sight. One partner dons the headphones, turns on the recorder and blindfolds him or herself. The other partner leads the blindfolded partner around the space (in our case, the crunchy gravel under the Shade Structure) by the shoulders, being sure to communicate steps, divets or turns clearly.



It was the consensus of the group that this exercise was equally about trust, as much as it was about sound. Students identified sounds they heard that they normally wouldn't have paid attention to: crunchy gravel, car tires on the road, wind and their own breath. We discussed how these are all sounds that can be used in a radio story – in fact, most radio stories aren't just people talking! They have multiple layers of sound to create a feeling or tone.

Back at the Studios, we listened to two stories produced by students in WNYC's Radio Rookies program.

One story focused on a mother and daughter who decided not to evacuate Zone A during Hurricane Sandy. Listen to the program here: <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/rookies/articles/radio-rookies/2012/nov/01/staying-flood-zone-despite-warnings/>

In the second story, Radio Rookies took a look at the Stop and Frisk law and how it disproportionately affects low-income neighborhoods. The Radio Rookies team even interviewed NYC Police Commissioner Ray Kelly. Listen here: <http://www.wnyc.org/shows/rookies/articles/radio-rookies/2012/aug/31/radio-rookies-kelly/>

We looked to these stories as examples of great radio work done by high school students and to get inspiration for our own stories.

Listening to these stories from NYC prompted these questions: Can we think of stories that can only be told from Marfa? What are the stories that only we can tell, either because of who we know, our perspective or the community we belong to?

At-home work from this workshop was to think of 5-7 stories that only we could tell.

Next week, we'll be focusing on the interview process, with a special visit from KRTS' Programming and Production Manager Rachel Osier Lindley, and talking more about stories in general.