

No one will be watching us Mix
Alex Kotch
2006

No one will be watching us is a sound-art installation I've put up twice in galleries. I've always been fascinated by all kinds of graffiti, and in 2006, I decided to write down all the bathroom graffiti I could find at my college. Then I recorded friends who vocalized the graffiti and played the sound clips through eight channels in an enclosed room. Visitors could use a variety of markers, paint pens, and crayons to graffiti on the walls of the gallery while they listened to the transformed bathroom graffiti.

There is a lot of interesting sociological theory surrounding graffiti, which I've written about in my blog, but probably most artistically exciting about it are the ideas of anonymity and collaboration. People tag the walls in seclusion, so they write or draw what they really want to write, unselfconsciously. People often add to existing graffiti – a disjointed collaboration. I can identify with this phenomenon as a composer who, like virtually all other artists, borrows from other artists, in my acoustic and electronic music.

I put together this mix to represent the sonic experience within the gallery, but of course, stereo audio cannot replace eight channels. This is also a “clean” version, without any of the numerous expletives and rampant mature content that constitutes a large part of the installation. Composing this mix was a lot of fun because I was able to approach it just like I approach writing any other music.