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UCSC art professor presents exhibit in subways and galleries of Japan

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"Are We There Yet?" is the title of UCSC assistant art professor Dee Hibbert-Jones's new public artwork and interactive sound installation-on exhibit in Japan throughout September.

Hibbert-Jones's project is the result of an invitation she received to participate in an international festival of art, *Dislocate 08*, exploring technology and urban experience in Yokohama and Tokyo.

She describes her work (in collaboration with artist Nomi Talisman) as "an emotional map of stories" collected from passengers on Japanese subways.

"We have just spent a week collecting stories from people traveling the Yokohama Blue Subway Line, which was recently opened here," said Hibbert-Jones in an e-mail from Japan. "These stories will be edited into an audio MP3 file that can be taken onto the subway."

Visitors can check out an MP3 player from a gallery in Yokohama and then travel the subway—listening in to other travelers' personal anecdotes. As they pass through each of the 32 stations, they hear a different story.

"We have tales for example of sparrows living underground, stories of false teeth lost and found on the subway, tales of a heart broken at a certain station, and the stories of a subway cleaning worker describing what he sees each day," said Hibbert-Jones.

"This creates an 'emotional mapping' of the city, allowing the listener to inhabit other travelers' relationships to places, memories and spaces," she added.

Hibbert-Jones is also creating an interactive installation at ZAIM gallery in Yohohama where visitors can touch subway stops on a large, Plexiglas table covered with drawings of the city. Touching any stop on the subway creates a video projection that describes stories that have come from that station.

"The goal of the exhibit is to describe a city through the thoughts, feelings, and memories of its occupants—creating an audio, as well as visual, map of experiences," she noted.



Assistant art professor Dee Hibbert-Jones's "Are We There Yet?" is "an emotional map of stories" collected from passengers on a Yokohama subway. The interactive project will be on exhibit in Japan throughout September. (Photo by Dee Hibbert-Jones)

Hibbert-Jones is additionally working on a second major exhibition this summer titled "Methods of Escape." Through a series of drawings and public art works, this project explores the ways people manage emotions, struggle to feel secure, and work to escape reality--given the personal and political insecurities of the 21st century.

Drawings from this work are currently on exhibition at Galerie Califia in Horazd'ovice, in the Czech Republic through September.

Hibbert-Jones has also been commissioned to produce a public art exhibit of "Methods of Escape" for the FRED 08 Festival in the UK--Europe's largest festival of site-specific contemporary art, running Sept. 26 to Oct. 11 [FRED 08 Festival](#).

"The 'Method of Escape' drawings are reminiscent in style of 1950's instructional booklets, and they will be displayed throughout the North of England," she noted. "Britons will answer the question 'What is your method of escape?'--either by responding online at [Method of Escape](#) or by answering street surveys during FRED 08.

"I am working to translate the responses into drawings that will be exhibited on billboards, busses, phone booths, shops, tourist information centers, village notice boards, and the Manchester-Windermere railway line up and down Cumbria, UK," Hibbert-Jones added.

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