

I made comments on the road surfaces I passed by daily.

*Surface/1/* lies at the intersection right outside my apartment. Many of my days start with walking past this stretch of road. For reasons I cannot quite explain, the excessive undulations here always evoke a slight sense of gloom, fleeting as it may be. Thick, irregular streams of asphalt overlap each other, while a thin layer of off-white powder lends these ripples the appearance of a still, dark grey beach, making this patch strangely unique.

*Surface/2/* lies at the corner where a side street meets a main road, sharply geometric. Perhaps it's the 'Give Way' triangle symbol, faded into fragmented lines, or the inherent challenge of merging onto the busy thoroughfare—but cars at this particular corner rarely yield to pedestrians.

*Surface/3/* is along my weekly route to the supermarket. This spot often hosts flocks of pigeons, which fly abruptly to the sidewalks as vehicles approach. Black frames with star-shaped corners mark the road surface of this spot. Later, through some research, I learned that these markings are caused by loop sensors buried beneath the surface, designed to detect the presence of vehicles.

*Surface/4/* bears the word "STOP" painted across it. When I stopped to take a photo of it, one driver mistook my hesitation as an intention to cross the road, so they tapped their brake right over the letters. At first, I thought

the freshly painted sections were laid right on top of newly paved surfaces, but upon closer look, they weren't. Were the touch-ups simply random, or was there some working habit the road repairers were following that resulted in leaving the letters incomplete?

*Surface/5/* is near a three-way junction beside a blue-sign wine shop close to my flat. Here, residents often cut diagonally across the road to enter the side street leading to their flats. They drag their shopping carts, which clatter noisily over the cracks and patches. This kind of radiating fissures and irregular repairs on this surface are quite common in Islington.

*Surface/6/* is a yellow box grid, mismatched with the previous faded one, as though the later painter disagreed with the earlier painter's angles and methods of using the roller.

*Surface/7/* is a place I've passed is a spot I've passed over and over again in the past year since moving to my second place in London. This stretch has been under repair for just as long. Roadblocks claim what would otherwise be space for outdoor tables and chairs, forcing pedestrians to step aside for one another. Sometimes it serves as a makeshift garbage dump; other times, it becomes a shallow pool of rainwater.

*Surface/8/* is a common type of sight — plants pushing through concrete, through construction. At a glance, this one looks like a coat left half-buttoned, with the inside layers of fabric exposed unevenly. Tree roots push

upwards from beneath, forcing sand, asphalt, and bricks to squeeze into proximity, as they always do. So, as I imagine, the council needs to repeatedly fill the area around the tree roots with updated materials.

I came across *Surface/9/* while running, stepping right over it to protect my ankle. Two decisive patches were placed in the concave part of the stone pavement. Clearly, consistency wasn't a concern during repairs. It's likely due to the weight of vehicles, stones once neatly arranged have shifted askew, creating two dents. I recently learned that on the GOV.UK website, citizens can report potholes and request repairs.

*Surface/10/* is, by my own aesthetic judgment, a personal favorite. It is raw yet symmetrical, chaotic yet orderly. The surface is lifted and patched, lifted and patched again, yet the layers are seamlessly bridged.

