Now Let’s Take a Listening Walk

to ‘Many voices, all of them loved’

ascending the sound of the spiral then

The Divine Ear must be dissolved. Divinity is… the ponderability that compounds the inequitable and measures out breath in disposable cups. Divinity is… the missionary’s boot, the microbial symphony on the soles of his boot. Divinity is… all those lifeforms without eyes and mouths that comb and branch inconceivable.

like, we really feel whales because we can hear them, because we can imitate their song and think them mimics, we want to save them they help us focus and sleep

we want to save them they prosecute whiteness surfacing smile, like

whale mouth berthing
upon ear sea
cleaver
brought to waxy
pasture endures ‘chemical
cloud-mould of
audition’
number crunch
inner incinerator screeves

or, spirals disrupted, a heap of eyelashes on the pavement, crushed shells, is the family drama and these somatised drawings and sound maps, is how I tried to describe it

R quoted Joyce’s ‘strandentwining cable of all flesh’ in a chat about navel-gazing as contemplation of the celestial placenta into which we’re all plugged

around the same time we walked around time,
time’s pass

we walked to Ladywell and back giving way to dogs enjoying the patter-bounce-echo of paws on the spiral bridge, like

a group exhibition of atoms, interim, stars

festooned sub flowers spill

ahhh an opening

out

doors and doors and doors prob gallery closed

sheets raised one knot
one knot to **bhṛ**, to bear

spores grow beards to bear, bring repeatedly

up on

hither, thither horn on earth **ahhh**

to groan in bits after the sesh

 **loathes** I of mind shuttering it’s

mortify sediment me **hah-hah-hah**

letting loose affords frowny

for constellations turned upside the

future-filling balls

brought against waves sky is of
eggshells, the firmament a boat
cilia sails or

suckers or nodes departing since there’s no help

**ah-ah-ah** – **< kṣa!** for a field or its defender the world as its own destruction

**nah-nah-nah** **bhṛ** – >reactionary spaghettify your children’s children

in the gravitational field of your bow down your doors / phonemical

your doors / transcribable

your doors / ventriloquize

do sensors detect

art – – – poodles

in face as body does horripilate

this piece makes me skOOsh this sled-dog chorus

placed just so macro concerns made ~  międz ~  międz ~  międz ~

submerge to touch

voice pores alveolate congenital

self-kissing entity

scoop one-one up keep busy the bench of appreciation

wheen, squee, rhepe cornucopious

the unknowability of love’s scales, nonbarbarism deliver us nightly
the beyond of teaching teacher voice

TEACHER: You may begin.

SOME MISSIONARY: Why not then worship my boot?

TANTRIC METAPHYSICIST: Boot is body. Body is boat. Why not then sail through bliss; why not then tune your body to the interruptions swimming below, the disruptions blowing above? You pave paradise and walk ungrounded.

SOME MISSIONARY: Why not then worship my boot?

TANTRIC METAPHYSICIST: Sound is deathless; the gramophone of the universe is never at rest. Science must invoke the analemmic swan!

SOME MISSIONARY: Why not then worship my boot?

TANTRIC METAPHYSICIST: …

TEACHER (off-stage, from above): Two hours and twenty lightyears later, the Tantric Metaphysicist is still alive and swimming strongly. Sharks attracted by the smell of fresh blood flowering in water gather round. The exam was over.

when spelunking forgotten dreams

Stop just before the entrance, the sheet of running water or loamy smell. This is the last sunlit station; the rest is groove. The architecture of the cave helps people and animals sync up with space-time as well as with each other, like the internet shapes our built and social environments and is shaped by them. The finest paintings are far from the entrance, but no one controls the buzzer, you can call your way in. Call then; utter any silent sound or informational noise, the cave will respond. A little away, a little away; come close, come close. You can trust this voice, can you? You can hear your way to belief, the deeper you move in its stuff. Brush fingers, sticks, and bones against stalactites, compare the effects to xylophones or soundbars or whatever feels right to your sonic context. Stamp your muddy handprints on the walls, ceding your subjectivity to speleothem. Feel your way into millions of years of drip, flow, gush – never dry, never still – even if you cannot perceive the wetness and movement with your fingers, ears, nose – you can, you can. A shimmering carpet of crystals; an assemblage of golden eagles, porcelain skulls, bio-glitter, lip melt, flute, fur. Every sound in the history of space-time still resounds; every sound ever made leaves a scratch in the field; the field is the recording, every sound ever made reproducible. The air swathes warmer here, breath ripples further than you intended to go or thought possible. Maybe you’ll ignite a torch to signal reciprocity; maybe you’ll awake surrounded by bear scratches, horses, birdcages, shapeshifters, or by bears, artists, ceremonies, spirits. Will you dance, will you boggle, will you enter another kind of sleep? Here you are folded in; you cannot see or be seen, you are out of the state’s earshot, beyond cannons and espionage. Here you can sleep for millions of years; borne by your secrets which will never be mined. You are the matter in which splendour is hidden; you are the sculptor who shrouds their work.
inside the long string instrument we vibe

In a footnote to *Synthetic Philosophy of Contemporary Mathematics* (2012), Fernando Zalamea writes: ‘The images of decantation, transfusion and distillation that recur throughout this work indicate those creative gestures by way of which, as we shall see, mathematical ideas or structures are “poured” – sometimes with the help of others, as “filters” – from one register to another, often leaving behind, as a kind of “sediment,” features previously thought to be integral to them.’ This footnote is the soul of this walk, which is conducted by Ellen Fullman’s performance-lecture ‘Constructing a Musical Phrase from the Ground Up’ (2013).

*  

eroto-magnetic shockular  
merrying that mode  
of bumping  
to music whilst  
walking of riffing on  
poem-machines  
anti-grave  
licence universal  
all one has to do is dream  

we’ll track each other  
over Rajasthani  
quilts two  
aliens exploring  
ice sheets in concert mind  
speech travelling  
circumlunar  
creating spectacular  
lay finespun under solidus  

most harmonic lattice  
lined filter beds  
read as music  
meander through  
these bars or moveable  
nuts granite tune  
temperament  
whilst playing with  
them magic fingers free  

time is all about walking  
in the intervals  
covering  
each other skirts  
seams burst paroxysmic  
space is finding  
definition  
inside lines poeticle
showboats spectrum in earnest

**blood-roarer, via body’s sympathetic**

don’t need to visit to says this cave you don’t need to visit to
ha begin no need of your many entrance
am you already inside when you
say how do you know how do you prove you
knew
am sonospheric collapse spinal cord-wards
ha after particle hailstorm leaves pinprick
tunnels too many to count your centre
sa a tottering column of sea urchins
am lighten antennae impinge from inside
ha out you are alone in your own body
am illuminated by the fountain of
sa fire now listless now luring drollery
a bh whoop bloody whoop bloody whoop bloody whoop
ha bloody bloody whoop bloody whoop bloody home
am to your adventure your wonderland your
ha river snakes swim up amber bubble bong
cars ring your vital forces eddying
sa the stethoscopist hears your heartbeat not
a bh your effluvius infrastructure not
ha your unsounded deluge meta-woofers
am compensate for vasculotoxic care
sa his auscultation drawing a sonic
a bh colour line around fugacity which
ha might mean brownian black voices noises
am which might sign the zap of semiotic
sa gap the well pronounced sound that produces
a bh law otherwise latent in the nameless
ha dread attending onomatopoeia

**paths to enlightenment drawn in sand**

CHILD *(holding a stick)*: How many worlds may be seen in the desert?

ARTHUR AVALON: Let us suppose, he said *(holding forth)*, that man’s body is a vessel filled with oil which is the passions.

CHILD: If centres proliferate, what formula shows the blizzard’s role in the poetics of relation?

ARTHUR AVALON: If you simply empty it and do nothing more, fresh oil will take its place issuing from the Source of Desire which you have left undestroyed.

CHILD: If the beach is burning, what of the adulterous woman’s name?
ARTHUR AVALON: If, however, into the vessel there is dropped by slow degrees the Water of Knowledge (Jñana), it will, as being behaviour than oil, descend to the bottom of the vessel and will then expel an equal quantity of oil.

CHILD: Who confers innocence to the potting mix homunculus, to repossess its shit?

ARTHUR AVALON: In this way all the oil of passion is gradually expelled and no more can re-enter, for the water of Jñana will then have wholly taken its place.

CHILD: What is so unabolishable about hierarchy, confinement, destitution, death?

ARTHUR AVALON: As the Latins said, ‘If you attempt to expel nature with a pitchfork it will come back again’.

CHILD: What if there’s no more nature, either because it’s over or because everything is?

Notes on References

‘ascending the sound of the spiral then’: Patrick Farmer, Azimuth: The Ecology of an Ear (Oxford: Sonic Art Research Unit, 2019), p. 47. Paul Simon and Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s ‘Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes’ (1986); Invisibilia podcast’s ‘Two Heartbeats A Minute’ (April 2020); Herman Melville’s Moby Dick: or, the White Whale (1851); James Joyce’s Ulysses (1922) are additional references.

‘a group exhibition of atoms, interim, stars’: Fritjof Capra’s The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism (2010); N. K. Jemison’s Broken Earth Trilogy (2015-2017); Octavia Butler’s Lilith’s Brood Trilogy (1987-1989); and various Star Trek episodes and movies are references.


‘when spelunking forgotten dreams’: Werner Herzog’s Cave of Forgotten Dreams (2010); Phantom Power podcast’s ‘City of Voices with Shannon Mattern’ (March 2018); David Hendy’s radio programme ‘Noise: A Human History: Echoes in the Dark’ (May 2019) are references.


‘blood-roarer, via body’s sympathetic’: Matt Parker’s unpublished thesis ‘Vibrating the Web: Sonospheric Studies of Media Infrastructure Ecologies’ (April 2019); Phantom Power podcast’s ‘Ears Racing with Jennifer Lynn Stoever’ (May 2018); Mack Hagood’s Hush: Media and Sonic Self-Control (2019) are references.

Acknowledgements

An eternally resounding thank you to Sarah Hayden for inviting me to be poet-in-residence at the exhibition *Many voices, all of them loved* and its accompanying ‘ Interruptions/Disruptions’ programme, and for providing so much kindness, encouragement, and inspiration. Thank you to John Hansard Gallery and especially to Dianna Djokey for steadfastly supporting the project and enabling it to continue online after the pandemic and lockdown changed everything. Thank you to everyone who participated in the Disruptions workshops, whether once or multiple times, for sharing such wonderful ideas and responses to the artworks and attendant questions of voice, sound, and poetry. Thanks also to the ‘Playtime’ online reading group and to Leah Jun Colborne.