

SOUTHWELL MINSTER – Soundscape/ Audio Project

Audioscape commission with film-maker James W. Norton [with research contributions from Allison Walker] for Southwell Minster, the Archbishop's Palace. Research also by Mario Petrucci [assisted by Marisha Horsman].

Written by **Mario Petrucci**, October 2013 onwards, for summer 2014 delivery.

This is the original script as provided, envisaged and arranged by Petrucci. It includes his directions and much material absent from the final production by Norton, whose installation at the Minster draws inspiration from the text below. All phrases and excerpts utilised in the installation were adapted and organised by Norton.

Descant

(Southwell Minster and the Archbishop's Palace)

by **Mario Petrucci**

[original script, with author's direction]

Section 1

Foundation/ Iron Age

[male 1 whisper]

*Lord's Well. Lady's Well.
Holy Well...*

[male 2 v. soft]

*... grey stone
black water
rocking*

*together –
each welling
into the other...*

[male 3 whispers...] ... *Water, Water...* [overlap 2nd 'Water' with next...]

[female...]

Water
that rose to me
as stone grows to upward vision

Drink, drink – but do not drown.

Water
as first foundation as
stone is hallowed to hollowed fountain

Fowler, Fowler – do not drown.

[male 2...]

*Keep
that leaf lone in you from furling to stone*

[‘Flower’ follows hard on heels of ‘stone’]

[male 3...]

Flower
my stone spray a fragrance
for the eye – each stern block a cell to steeple

[‘Time’ follows hard on heels of ‘steeple’]

Time
whose incense & fragment
you are : where silence incants my nine-tenths

[‘Prayer’ follows hard on heels of ‘tenths’]

Prayer

[female v. soft]

... a gout of water...

[male 1 v. soft...]

*oak
ivy
hawthorn
vine*

[female whisper]

Think. Think. But do not frown...

Section 2 Habitation/ Roman Britain

[male 2 whisper] *Each welling
into the other...*

[male 3...]

Villa

[female (said)] *limestone mudstone sandstone clay...*

later :
a cemetery
wooden scaffold

waterlogged leather

[female (said)] *[data]*

[male 3...]

before :
three cold courses in sandstone
see

[female whispers...] *data*

mute Cupid
new in his bath gnawed almost
in half

washed in
blue salt weeping Time –
the Roman design

water

those points &
squares – the flatly woven tesserae
how

alone
these bare dank floors on which at last
the solemn

bones lie down
shank to shank : skeleton lovers
shrugging shoulders

later

& how
the Roman willed through
Time beneath

the heel
through knots he tied in mind in
stone Earth's

water

fingers fumbled while his eye his
breath
welled – coolly placid with water

[echoed whisper] *water*

now gone
bone columns – blood walls
something

[at 'gone'] *data*

to build on

[pause + whisper] *later*

Section 3 Ruins/ Anglo-Saxons

[fem. whisp/ soft] *Found me a church.*

[male 1 whisp/ soft] *That stink of bog...*

[male 2 whisp/ soft] *That search for water
not far down...*

[pause (with drips as sound effect)...]

[female (said)] *Think. Think. But do not frown...*

[male 1...]

oak

ivy

hawthorn

hop...

[male 2...]

Stop

*Start that stone leaf in you unfurling
to loam*

[male 3...]

*for those to be
hurled or log-like rolled into waterlog – iron nail
hammer*

*at the ready those
steady face-down dead headlessly flailed pressed into
mudstone*

*staked in bog at
ankle at shoulder – make instead wood stammered
through flesh*

*parting
divining ribs into water's most unhewn in-
carnation :*

a human heart

[female (said)] *... Drink. Drink. But do not drown.*

Section 4

Traces/ Norman + Middle Ages

[female whisper] *Oskytel. Oskytel.
You sleep in my stone
like a fossil.*

[male 3 softly] *Sudwell. South / Well. Sewell...*

[female whisper] *Now – a Minster ...*

(Domesday) [male 1...]

*In Southwell
Archbishop Thomas has
10 ploughs in demesne*

There are:

*6 knights
3 clerks
2 Englishmen*

[fade male 1]

*2 mills
a fishpond
a ferry*

*To Southwell belong
188 acres of meadow*

*Woodland pasture
8 leagues long*

arable land...

(The Archbishop's Letter) [male 2...]

... To the parishioners of Nottinghamshire,
we pray for you as we would our sons
that you will give alms to build St. Mary.

Give – and you shall partake, each blessed
one, in every prayer we make, till the Lord's
Kingdom come. And to ensure that your hearts

yield willingly – that you run into the arms
of a heaven-fed generosity – hear how your
Processions need not come so far to kneel

in the north: walk, instead, to Saint Mary
of Southwell, to receive there the same salvation
you would have done in York. Farewell...

[female softly] *First breath of light:
to Southwell I walk...*

[male 1 whisper] *... to Eden
to meet Death
in a garden...* [Bishop Gerard]

[female softly] *... first breath, under stars –
those distant spurs of knights...*

[male 1 whisper] *... last breath
in a garden – to die
addicted to stars...* [Bishop Gerard]

[male 2 softly] *... Brother, sister –
Come inside...* [Thomas]

*

[female...]

light is
what they wished us
here

light as love as first thing
Said
a white-gloved hand through

lancet meshes
fresh bouquets hurled with rice
-rays : sheer

weddings of it forever young that
photon shoot We
make it

those few volts bent with tungsten
what dies
deep in galaxies in dust maelstroms

bold sight
that blinks & thrusts through space
unfolding

each cold crease in cosmos till light
-headed we shoulder
light a moment so the moment can

happen : keep the shutter closed &
stubborn till
the linked rooms of a heart mark

how they wished for us a little
dark

*

[male 1 whisper] ... *To die*
among the leaves of a book... [Bishop Gerard]

[male 2...]

could such leaves
so set in grey these
leaves unfrayed

[male 1 whisper] ... *oak ivy hawthorn vine...*

move us so
if not carved
with the grain

of love that lies
in rock that makes
each waiting

heart whose
saint fasting &
poet feasting

see nature wise –
her green eyes
everlasting

*

[male 1 whisper] *To die in an orchard*
under planetary apples... [Bishop Gerard]

[male 3...]

your light shows
through you as dusk
where you turn

[female softly] *The Bramley apple...*

rusted in sunset
as though you wore
gauze of being here

more lightly when
one yearns through
you for light

[female softly] *Without you...* [on 'through you' + 2 'yous' said in unison]

beyond you : yet
we learn the firmest
sight can hold onto

[female softly] ... *I am stone* [on 'beyond you' + 'for light' kept clear]

is your shaping &
shaped-by almost-here
stone-coloured

dress

[female softly] *You sleep in my stone*
like a fossil...

[male 1 whisper] *Ah to live inside*
the forbidden apple...

Section 5 Metamorphosis/ Tudors

[Cardinal Wolsey...] [Wolsey] + [Henry] = [male 1 + 2]

[male 3...]

Wolsey: the hand
that rocks the Throne...
ipse rex...

[fem *whisp*] ... *Your ambitious finger...* [Wolsey] To Southwell I bring a library,
an arch – a park...

Wolsey: the Archbishop of York
who never came to York...

[female] You are bound for a City
you shall never reach...

Wolsey and Parliament:
worse than flea to hound...

[Wolsey] Their speechless eyes neither see
my peerless person nor faculties...

Wolsey: seven times the Pope...

[female] Pope Adrian –
not Pope Wolsey...

[Wolsey] My stealthy God,
my swooning Hope...

[female] Pope Clement –
never Pope Wolsey...

[Wolsey] Ever am I joyous for him
as if it had fortun'd upon myself...

[female] But see how Henry
leans on your shoulder...

[Henry] Wolsey! My boldest Sword!

[Wolsey] Most magnificent Lord!

[Henry] O Wolsey – quiet
of my conscience wounded...

He could grasp the Little
as well as the Great...

[female] You Holy Fox. You Wolfpack
in a single man...

England's hunger
he abated with grain...

[female] Your holy hat you stamped
on Henry's coin...

[Henry] I could not lose Wolsey
for ten thousand pounds...

[Wolsey] Most gracious, most Merciful Lord!

[fem *whisp*] ... *How your pride peeps
through each part of you...*

[Henry] Twenty thousand pounds
to keep my Wolsey...

[Wolsey] Gracious, O gracious –
most Gracious Lord...

Handsome Wolsey –
so vast in eloquence...

[female] Elegant Cardinal – your hand atremble...

Queen Katharine: a golden chain
twenty years about Henry's neck...

[Henry] Boleyn. Boleyn! Fairest hand
I ever held fast!

[Wolsey] Wreck... Ruin...

Anne Boleyn –
the Queen's own creature...

[Henry] Anne. Such slender fingers...

[Wolsey] How ruin leaps behind her...

[Henry] Meekest hand. Sharpest lash...

[Wolsey] How unabashed – how
sleekly wanton in every Vision...

This buzzing woman –
Katharine undone...

[Wolsey] How un-French!

This hot coal of a wench
between Katharine and King...

[Henry] A son, a son! My Queen for a son...

This hot-coaled woman
between the King and his Man...

[Henry] A thousand Wolseys for a single Anne...

[Wolsey] My doom heaps
in Henry's frown...

[Henry] Wolsey... that Giant traitor!

[male + Wolsey: the commons
female] wish you fathoms down...

Wolsey... bites his lip – stops
in most sudden postures against the moon...

[Wolsey] As a wanton child
that swims on bladders
I ventured the swell...

How he steers to himself
a fresh Hell...

[Wolsey] My drowned life...

[Henry] A host of Woleseys
for one new wife...

[Wolsey] In the Kingly eye, a frost –
A keen and killing frost...

[female] Wolsey: your unclean opinion
was your Law...

[Wolsey] I fall
confounded in my evening:
a bright exhalation...

[female] You leech of unbounded stomach...

[Wolsey] Give me a little earth!
One stubbled square of earth...

[female] Ever double in speech and prayer...

[Wolsey] If I had served God as diligently
as I have done the King,
He would not have given me over
in my gray hairs...

[male + A flock of sins
female] flown overhead...

[Wolsey] Had I but served my God
with half the zeal I served my King...

To any that sought him
he was sweetest season...

[Wolsey] My summer unsown
was barer Treason...

Stealing hand that rocked the Throne...

[Wolsey] How cruel their April!
This body unmanned!

That trembling hand...

[Wolsey] God willing, I'll repair
to Southwell.

[fem whisper] ... *O feel that
blessedness
in being little.*

[the shoemaker's dream...] **[Charles I]**

[male 1...] **[female whispers...]** *Southwell slept him his final freedom...* **[pause...]**

I dreamed a man
of noble flower
– his foot overlarge
in the glass shoe of power.

Charles...

I observed the carriage
of a fated fellow –
midnight eyes
in a pumpkin brow.

A light stammer – weak ankles...

I saw his head upon
a coin. The white skin.
He had a hole within.
I did not serve him.

Treason... Murder...

Shoemaker sleeping: give him a sole...

I may be a dreamer
but I can make things.
And I am a shoemaker
who dreams of kings.

The severing of his head.

*

[Roundheads...]

[male 2...]

& did
Cromwell stable here?
able men

who broke
a nose in stone or two passing
through – no

ass to grace
this nave but horses half-depraved
champing

vapour over
bales inside – the groom too far from
folk & home

stooped at
a flank unsaved – pale foam stale on
its croup &

warm bay
rumps nudged to smudged Norman
walls as one

torch stokes
the colt's cream coronets & cold
hands touch

then stroke
tensely shadowed forms bold
droppings

steam
as if earth's incense
rose

*

[male 1...]

*A King three-quarters dead
might have grown old peering
through Southwell glass.*

*But I grow cold
and staring – held fast
behind it...*

[Charles I]

*

[male 3...]

lightning

bonfire night 1711
under black sandals of cloud
the south-spire ball heaven-struck

to roman candle : how
that liquid-pagan slick flicked & spread
till dragoned stone below

grew hot again with rocket
breath & yellow flags cracked & flapped
in orange blood while bells

drooped to caramel then
dripped – that gusty heat blown through
organ pipes eerily off

-key as if Lucifer
himself had spat his low few notes
falling through

each splitting flute

*

[ark...]

[female...]

Glance
again at what arches above
at hull

& stern
– discern how my Palace might be
a ship adrift

on sky where
you could slip easily inside not knowing
yourself

a stowaway
upended thinking up down & down up nor
how history's

rains can fall
from below to quell & flood : yet in Southwell
my bright ark

survives
buoyed by downwards light to lap a wake wide
through blood

-tinted deeds
through fathomless Dark unheeding – perhaps
through you

[male 2 whisper/ soft]

*Without you
she is stone*

**Section 7 Transformation/
Victorian + World Wars + Modern Britain**

[all 4 voices, taking turns...] *A very respectable seminary for young ladies...* [1797-1818]
A beached fish – spewed out by an earthquake:
A smart shock... [March 17, 1816]
A violent flood spewing up a beached hound... [Good Fri., April 12, 1816]
A magistrate’s court... [Victorian times]
1884: Cathedral status ...
A Great Sleep...

*

[Morris dancers...]

[male 1...]

That hop, skip & handkerchief –
ribbon, sash & bell-people

Bells shrunk onto the shin
from out of the steeple –

Immaculate trouser
Sinless shirt –

a handkerchief
over & again to

thresh & to fan
any hurt to vapour...

[female (quietly)...]

*... For the grace
of men – ah for that
fertile man...*

[male 1...]

Green Men

[choral interlude at each shift of voice ...]

[female (said)...]

*go
back – return inside from stone
zigging*

*the worldly zag
with each stride breathless – widdershins
then : not that yearn-push*

[female hands over after ‘breathless’ to m 3 (‘widdershins’...)]

local greens make
towards less-than-universal sun
but each verdant woman those emerald men who

uprightly gag across aeons agog on greenest love or
monies grinning against gravities
versus death

witnessed in
fallen-apple days or snow-sprung
springs : the rag faces gargoyled up this pillared canopy

[m 3 hands over after ‘days’ to m 2 (‘or snow’...)]

that pinnacles here
both weathered & weather to stone
trees high on their brows whose beginnings close-up

[m 2 hands over after ‘stone’ to m 3 (repeats ‘stone’)]

form a visage unclear
with wear & wearing though eyes
riddled in a round-plate face unmasked from vine

or oak break up
through their pond to squint free
at last from croaking fate to gaze on heaven

[m 3 hands over after 'fate' to m 2 ('to gaze'...)]

to send a
breath – such watered
breath to time-held streets so modern

beyond
their far-off bark & static leaves
grown darkly

vivid with the sudden

*

[choristers...]

[female (said)...]

&
how your notes
rise in me as though they were

water
in throats of birds : this pact of longing
made

between
stone & human that floats me up unheavy
&

you
with me towards what is unheard or barely
heard

beyond the song

*

[Names...] [... fade IN over end of previous...]

[male 1 (very soft) ...]

*Allen, Alvey, Arnold, Bell
Cooling, Cooling, Copson, Croome
Deeley, Donson, Donson, Frow
Gilbert, Gilbert, Goulder, Hall*

[female whisper] *oak ivy hawthorn vine...*

*Handley, Hopewell, Horsley, Jones
Kirkby, Lester, Merrin, Sharpe
Stanley, Stephenson, Terry, Twells
Vickers, Watson, Whitworth, Wyles*

[... fade OUT over start of next...]

*

[Pass it On...]

[female (said)...]

Without you I am stone

I am
limestone plaster lead glass

I am pepperpot
but You are cast as salt –

[male 1 (v. soft)]

limestone mudstone sandstone clay...

Be my palace or
Time will condemn me

for there is no story
without You and

without You
I have no

memory

[male 1 (v. soft)]

water...

Coda

[male 2 / female... (softly)]

(interleave/ delay/ come back together in some way...)

[Blessing...]

May the stone in you
made numb in you
be knelt in you
be felt : be
home and stair
and well for you

And may that star
so cold in you
unfold :
climb high
grow goldly warm
for you – shelter you

<< END >>
