

Est.
1841

YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Lancaster, David ORCID logoORCID:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1691-4320> (2020) The Dark Gate: An Autoethographic Composition in Response to the Poetry of David Vogel. [Composition] (Unpublished)

Downloaded from: <https://ray.yorks.ac.uk/id/eprint/4599/>

Research at York St John (RaY) is an institutional repository. It supports the principles of open access by making the research outputs of the University available in digital form. Copyright of the items stored in RaY reside with the authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full text items free of charge, and may download a copy for private study or non-commercial research. For further reuse terms, see licence terms governing individual outputs. [Institutional Repository Policy Statement](#)

RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at ray@yorks.ac.uk

The Dark Gate: An Autoethnographic Composition in Response to the Poetry of David Vogel

UoA 33 Single-Component Output with
contextual information

David Lancaster

2017



Fig. 1 David Vogel

Index of Contents

300 word statement 3

Research Objectives 4

Process and dissemination 5

Concert performance & programme notes
6

Score and Recording 7

Bibliography 8

The Dark Gate – 300 word statement

Situated in my autoethnographic research as composer, this work seeks to explore and develop a response to the events of the Holocaust through a setting of words by David Vogel. In composing *The Dark Gate*, I was attempting to understand more deeply a relationship with the past, and in this case with traumatic events which were not experienced first-hand but which impact profoundly upon cultural memory, though a re-telling of the narrative in such a way as it reflects my own experiences (I translated Vogel's poetry into English and visited Auschwitz to find his name in the register of those killed). As Chang (2008, 49–50) says, "autoethnography is not about focusing on self alone, but about searching for understanding of others (culture/society) through self".

Vogel's text provides an authentic vehicle for an explorative re-telling and a framework for the five songs; although his poems

are ordered in such a way as to create a narrative which traces a path leading from notions of 'home' towards the events of the Holocaust, the musical trajectory of the songs is not directly linear; material from the opening song (the repeating high F, for example), recurs independent of the poetic structure, and there are other recurring themes and devices spanning the work to create meaning within a highly contrasted musical landscape, in effect creating a multi-layered montage. Eisenstein, who developed this cinematic technique wrote that 'the future of montage lies in musical composition'; in this work I attempt to re-present narratives and interlinked themes through the juxtaposition and superimposition of musical fragments. In this instance, the softer transitions (in which there is shared material either side of the 'cut') better satisfied the musical context, although in subsequent work I have been able to develop this technique using much harder, clearer edits.

Research Objectives

Research objective	Evidence
To develop an autoethographic response to events of the Holocaust, mediated by the text of David Vogel.	Score, recording.
To explore notions of re-telling: finding new ways to re-present existing narratives.	Score, recording.
To investigation how cinematic editing techniques might be applied to musical composition.	Score, recording.

Process and dissemination

Composed: Spring 2017

Scored for soprano voice and piano

Duration: 12 minutes, approximately.

Performance: The Dark Gate was first performed by Peyee Chen and Kate Ledger (Late Music, York, 5th August 2017) and by Jessica Summers and Jelena Makarova (Ripon Cathedral, performance postponed due to coronavirus pandemic). The recording of the premiere is available online. David Lancaster presented a talk preceding the premiere performance, and included The Dark Gate in a composer lecture at York St John University on 10th February 2020.

Publication: The Dark Gate (score) was published by University of York Music Press in January 2019.

1 On summer evenings the blue mists rise From streams, and hang trembling Among evening whispers.	4 With gentle fingers The rain is softly Playing sad melodies On the black instrument of night.
At the edges of forests Young girls sit alone Their hair hanging loose Weeping tears over nothing	Now we are sitting in darkness, Each in their own house Listening to the rain Telling our sorrow.
2 How can I see you love Standing alone Amid storms of grief Without feeling my heart shake (tremble)	For we have no more words. Our feet have been leadened By day. There is no dance Left in them.
A deep night Blacker than the blackness of your eyes Has fallen silently On the world	5 There is one last solitary coach about to leave. Let us get in and go, For it won't wait.
And is touching your hair.	I have seen young girls going softly With sad faces That look ashamed and sorry Like purple sunsets.
Come, My hand will clasp your dreaming Hand And I shall lead you between the nights, Through the pale mists of childhood.	And chubby pink children Who went simply Because they were called.
3 An autumn day will breathe. With a pale, trembling hand It will slowly strip the black dress From your sleeping village.	And I've seen men Who stepped proud and straight through the streets of the world, Far and wide, They too got in calmly And left.
In front of your white house The naked linden will stand Sadly swaying.	And we are the last. Day is declining. The last, solitary coach is about to leave. Let us too get in quietly And go, For it won't wait.
I shall return, lonely. Out of the night Bow gently to her and say: <i>Take my greeting to your mistress.</i>	
But you Will go on softly sleeping on your bed.	

Concert performance and programme notes

The Dark Gate (2017, World Premier)

This music sets five poems by David Vogel (1891-1944) which are sung without a break:

1. On Summer Evenings
2. How Can I See You Love
3. An Autumn Day will Breathe
4. With Gentle Fingers
5. There is One Last Solitary Coach about to Leave

In his work and life Vogel was always an outsider. In Vienna (during WWI) he was imprisoned as a Russian subject; he subsequently adopted Austrian nationality then emigrated to Palestine before returning to settle in Paris. At the outbreak of WWII Vogel was arrested in France as an Austrian subject; on the Nazi invasion of France he was released and then re-arrested as a Jew before being transported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered in 1944.



Living Music, Live
Unitarian Chapel, St Saviourgate
York YO1 8NQ
Programme £1



**Peyee Chen (soprano) & Kate Ledger
piano)**
**York Unitarian Chapel,
Saturday 5th August 2017 at 7.30pm**



Sponsors: John S. Cohen Foundation, Holst Foundation, RVW Trust, Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust, Galscott Foundation, Hinrichsen Foundation, The Radcliffe Trust, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, York Common Good Trust, York St John University, YorkMix and Wisteria Music Books. Registered Charity 1068924 (Soundpool)

www.latemusic.org/concerts
Registered Charity 1068924 (Soundpool)

Score and Recording

Link to recording

https://1drv.ms/u/s!AlqMggwUEbS9mFmtacwd8I_hGm8G?e=6wpk6u

Link to score

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AlqMggwUEbS9mFalA--2UHLfCLLC?e=PIYYri>

The Dark Gate
On Summer Evenings

David Vogel (1891-1944?) David Lancaster

Adagio $\text{♩} = 60$ *p* languid, distant

On sum - mer eve - nings the blue mists rise

Adagio $\text{♩} = 60$

from streams and hang trem - bling a - mong eve - ning whis - pers.

At the ed - ges of for - ests young girls sit a -

p

Bibliography

Chang, Heewon: **Autoethnography as Method**. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast, 2008

Eisenstein, S.M: **Towards a Theory of Montage**, BFI Publishing, London, 1994

Lancaster, David: **The Dark Gate** (score), UYMP, 2019

Nethanel Lilach: **David Vogel's Writing Hand: A Reflection on Writing**, Bar-Ilan University Press, 2012.