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Compositional Responses to Historical Narratives. [Composition]
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Autoethnographic Compositional Responses to Historical Narratives.

UoA 33 Multi-component Output with
contextual information

David Lancaster

2016-18



Fig. 1 Medieval Wall Painting, Pickering.

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Fig. 2 Student demonstrations at Tlatelolco, Mexico 1968

Autoethnographic Compositional Responses to Historical Narratives – 300 word statement

This submission comprises two original compositions for voice(s) and ensemble, developing important themes from recent work:

Firstly, it continues an ongoing autoethnographic study which seeks to understand the world through an exploration of older narratives, buildings, artefacts and images; secondly, it is concerned with the re-telling of narratives from the past in such a way as to create new forms and structures.

Both compositions are re-interpretations of material from historical sources; Ellis and Bochner (2000, 739) state that “autoethnographers gaze, first ... focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a ... self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations”, favouring instead the personal and subjective readings. The multi-layered nature of the poetry (in *Tlatelolco*) re-tells events from multiple perspectives, revealing ambiguities and inconsistencies in the reporting of the massacre and providing opportunities for multiple parallel musical

settings. In *Music of a Thousand Breaths* that ambiguity is provided through simultaneous visual, musical and poetic re-tellings.

In either case the overarching structure of the work is determined by an external source - the sequence of paintings around the nave of the church, or the poetic text - but linear continuity is deliberately broken by the fragmented, episodic form and a web of musical cross-referencing to create a fractured continuity which draws extensively upon techniques of analepsis and prolepsis from cinematography. In *Tlatelolco*, for example, the narrative cuts between the three voices, often rapidly, to establish a quasi-cinematic montage; transitions are sometimes smooth crossfades but in other places are harder cuts, without transition. Whilst del Rio tells the story of the events in the order they unfold, the use of multiple perspectives dramatizes that narrative and the disjunct continuity adds to the sense of bewilderment and confusion.

Research Objectives

Research objective	Evidence
To develop autoethographic responses to contrasting historical narratives.	Score, recording.
To research a network of interactions between visual art, poetic text and musical form.	Score, recording.
To research relationships between word and music when poetry delivers multiple narratives.	Score, recording.
To further my research into cinematic technique/process and musical structure to create new forms of musical narrative.	Score, recording.
To explore longer musical structures which sustain the integrity of multiple strands whilst maintaining linear continuity.	Score, recording.

Process and dissemination: *Music of a Thousand Breaths*

This work was created in response to the extensive medieval wall paintings at Pickering Church. It comprises a sequence of vocal and instrumental movements, setting poetry written for this project by Abi Curtis, interspersed with soundscapes produced by David Power.

Composed: Spring 2018

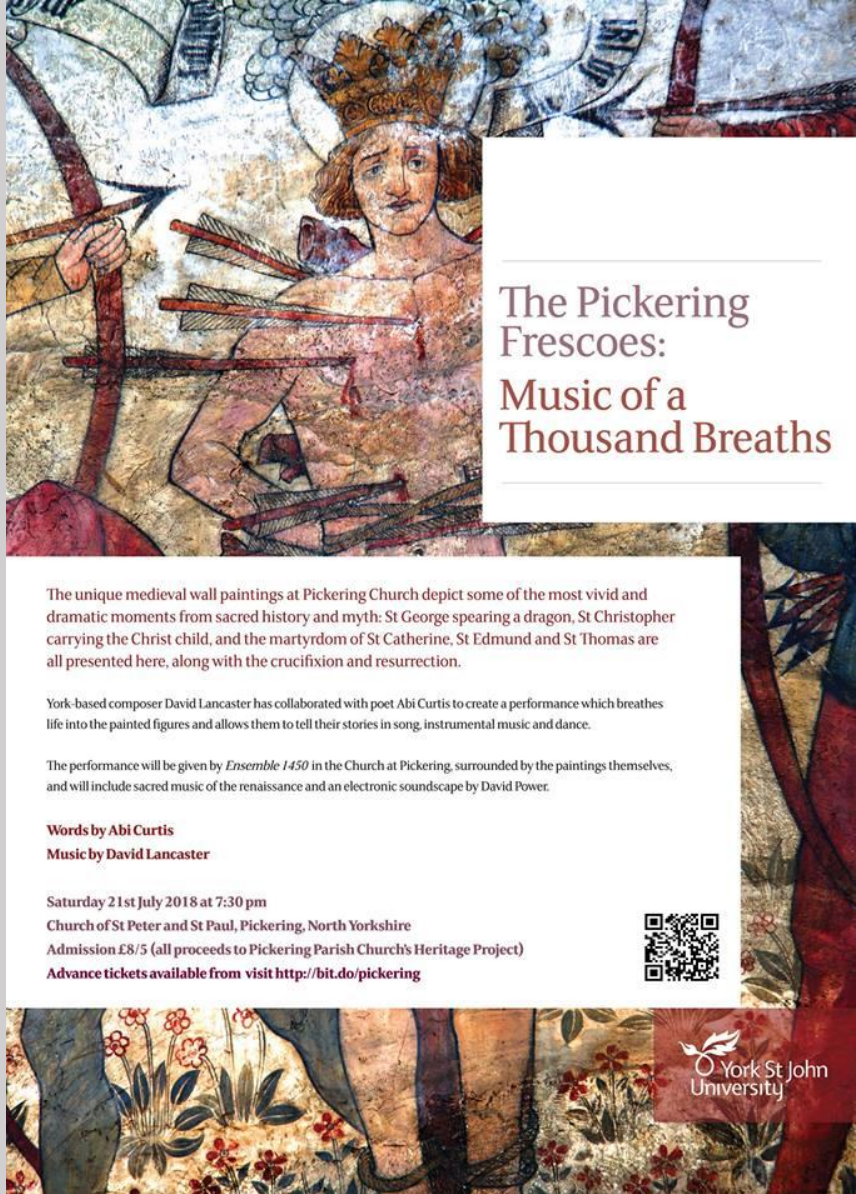
Music by David Lancaster, poetry by Abi Curtis

Performance: July 2018 at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church, Pickering, North Yorkshire.

Scored for five solo voices (soprano, 2 x mezzo soprano, tenor and bass) and brass quartet (flugelhorn and three trombones) with dancer and fixed electronic media.

Duration 45 minutes.

Link to full programme, including text: https://yorks-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/d_lancaster_yorks.ac.uk/Ec3zwxwYi1xDjb8_yMw2-DYB0RsA1cP3t7p7SM7B3k2CPA?e=AChJia



The Pickering Frescoes:
Music of a Thousand Breaths



The unique medieval wall paintings at Pickering Church depict some of the most vivid and dramatic moments from sacred history and myth: St George spearing a dragon, St Christopher carrying the Christ child, and the martyrdom of St Catherine, St Edmund and St Thomas are all presented here, along with the crucifixion and resurrection.

York-based composer David Lancaster has collaborated with poet Abi Curtis to create a performance which breathes life into the painted figures and allows them to tell their stories in song, instrumental music and dance.

The performance will be given by *Ensemble 1450* in the Church at Pickering, surrounded by the paintings themselves, and will include sacred music of the renaissance and an electronic soundscape by David Power.

Words by Abi Curtis
Music by David Lancaster

Saturday 21st July 2018 at 7:30 pm
Church of St Peter and St Paul, Pickering, North Yorkshire
Admission £8/5 (all proceeds to Pickering Parish Church's Heritage Project)
Advance tickets available from visit <http://bit.do/pickering>



Process and dissemination: *Tlatelolco: A Song for Three Voices*

Composed: Spring 2016

Music by David Lancaster, text by Marcela Del Rio (English translation by Victoria Carpenter).

Performances: June 2016 (York Festival of Ideas) and October 2018 (Late Music concert series).

Scored for soprano voice, cor anglais, bass trombone and marimba.

Duration 45 minutes.

This monodrama for soprano and ensemble sets a powerful text which documents the 1960 massacre at Tlatelolco, Mexico, through three distinct narrative voices:

- a third person narrative about a poet being witness to the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre (this text is spoken, accompanied by marimba),
- her internal monologue, possibly the poem she is writing (this text is sung arioso, accompanied by marimba and cor anglais),
- quotations from *Manuscrito de Tlatelolco*, a 16th century account of the fall of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan (this is more dramatic song, accompanied by full ensemble).

Link to full programme, including text:

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AlqMggwUEbS9mF8uugDmxX2CQR6d?e=knggVj>

late music
CONCERTS

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

Tlatelolco (Song for Three Voices)
York Unitarian Chapel,
Saturday 6th October 2018, 1-00pm

LOTTERY FUNDED

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

Scores and Recordings

Link to recording: Music of a Thousand Breaths

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rswCzgZnY9s>

Link to score: Music of a Thousand Breaths

https://yorks-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/d_lancaster_yorks_jac_uk/Ebp2RBZ1TltMj3_fBT1x96oBAAtY-quETQ_2Fu-MkYgKWug?e=d2vsnL

Link to recording: Tlatelolco

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AlqMggwUEbS9mGE3PVwhZ7cxlq6j?e=y02kS8>

Link to score: Tlatelolco

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AlqMggwUEbS9mF1uJTxpTWgigLc4?e=L2NaUZ>

Tlatelolco
A Song for Three Voices

Marcela del Rio
Translated by Victoria Carpenter
David Lancaster

Grave ♩=36

Cor Anglais

Bass Trombone

Soprano Solo
Spoken: To them, the dead, the imprisoned.

Grave ♩=36

Marimba
pp

=

Andante ♩=60

C. A.
mp

B. Tbn.

S. Solo
mp
I need to write a song of my an-ces-tors, long gone. Of those who be-queathed to

Andante ♩=60

Mar.
mp

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