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Lancaster, David ORCID logoORCID:  
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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](https://yorks-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/d_lancaster_yorks.ac.uk/Ec3zwxwYi1xDjb8_yMw2-DYB0RsA1cP3t7p7SM7B3k2CPA?e=AChJia)

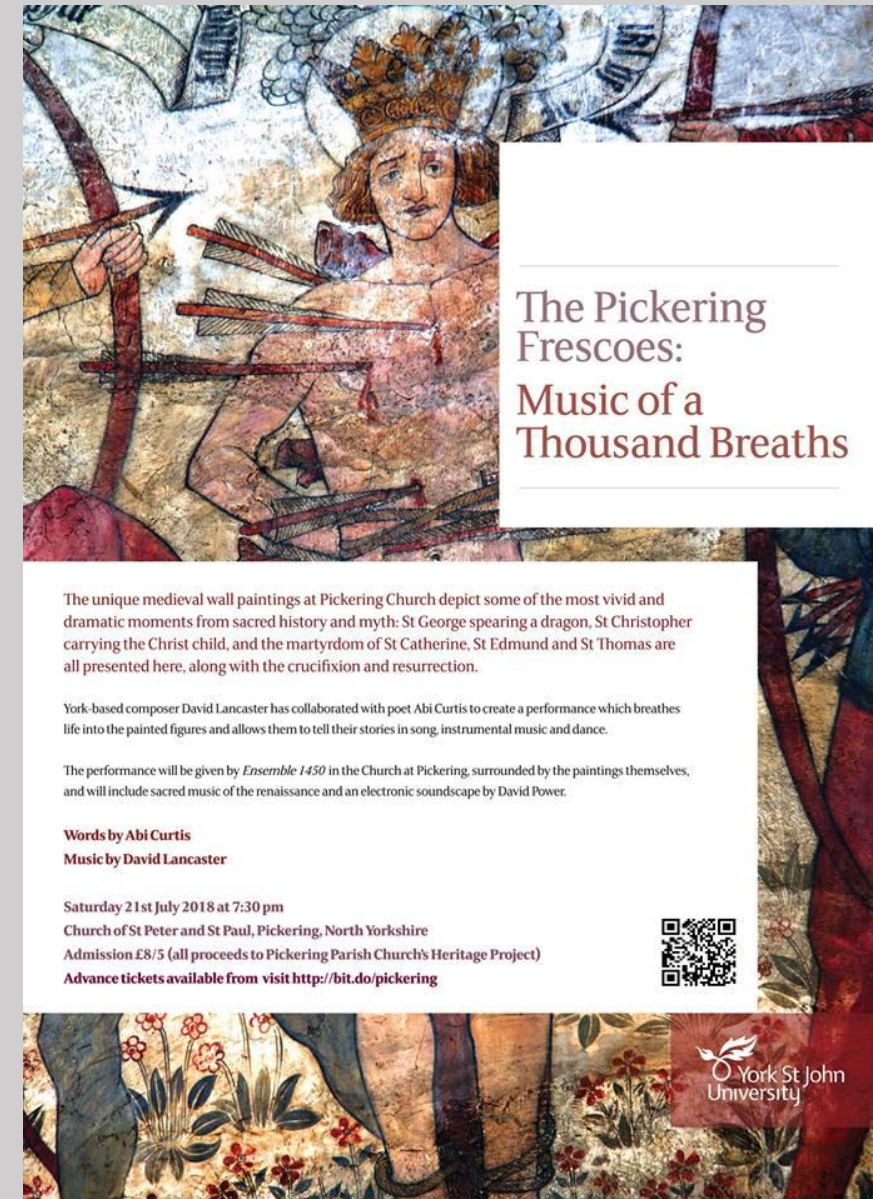


Fig. 3 Performance Flier, Music of A Thousand Breaths, 2018. 5

# 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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>



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



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



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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\\_jacuk/Ebp2RBZ1TltMj3\\_fBT1x96oBAtY-guETQ\\_2Fu-MkYGKWug?e=d2vsnL](https://yorks-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/d_lancaster_yorks_jacuk/Ebp2RBZ1TltMj3_fBT1x96oBAtY-guETQ_2Fu-MkYGKWug?e=d2vsnL)

Link to recording: Tlatelolco

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AlgMggwUEbS9mGE3PVwhZ7cxlg6j?e=y02kS8>

Link to score: Tlatelolco

<https://1drv.ms/b/s!AlgMggwUEbS9mF1uJTxpTWgigLc4?e=L2NaUZ>

Marcela del Rio  
Translated by Victoria Carpenter

Tlatelolco  
A Song for Three Voices

David Lancaster

Grave  $\text{♩} = 36$

Cor Anglais

Bass Trombone

Soprano Solo

*Spoken: To them, the dead, the imprisoned.*

Marimba

*mp*

7 Andante  $\text{♩} = 60$

C. A.

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  $\text{♩} = 60$

Mar.

*mp*

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