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4.48 Psychosis:
opera as music and text

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December 2016

Online version

It is ***highly*** recommended that this commentary is read online at **448psychosis.philipvenables.com**.

The online version gives all supporting materials and audio/video references embedded in the flow of the commentary. Chapters are listed in order on the left-hand menu.

Supplementary materials

Supplementary materials contain material generated during this research, and they are referenced throughout with SM.(number). A complete catalogue is given in Chapter 10.2 of this commentary. All paper-based materials can be found in the booklet of supporting materials that accompanies the commentary, catalogued accordingly.

Media materials can be viewed at: **www.448psychosis.philipvenables.com/sm**

However, if reading this commentary online, all supporting materials are embedded within the text.

The full score of the opera is provided separately. The full video of a performance (SM.1) is online.

Footnotes and references containing media.

This commentary also references other artists' work. These are referenced in the footnotes and listed in Chapter 10.3. References to audio/video media are given as links, and can be viewed at:

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Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks go to all who helped with the research, writing and production of this opera: the creative team, cast and the production team at the Royal Opera and Lyric Hammersmith, and to my supervisors Prof. Julian Philips and Dr. James Weeks, and to all of the GSMD students who participated in workshops. Especially, thanks to the following for their assistance and support:

Richard Baker, John Fulljames, Ted Huffman, Sarah Crabtree, Rachel Lerman, Kasper Holten, Mark Ravenhill, Jo McInnes, Christian Burgess, Simon Kane, Mel Kenyon, Cathy Nelson, John-Paul Gandy, Alistair Duncan, Sean Holmes, Tracey Woolley, Ben Marnitz, Cristina Delgado-Garcia, Gareth Llyr Evans, Meritxell Canela, Matthias Engler, Dr. Rick Adams, Neil Bartlett, Katie Mitchell, Claire Shovelton, Armin Zanner, Prof. Cormac Newark, Prof. Dominic Wheeler, Andy Taylor, Chris & Geoff Venables.

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1. Background

This is a practice-based research project about a new operatic adaptation of Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis* (Methuen, 2000). The opera was written and the research conducted during a three-year Doctoral Composer-in-Residence scheme with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (GSMD) and the Royal Opera House (ROH). This commentary, together with the score and supporting materials, outlines various compositional approaches to working with non-sung text in opera, supported by references to primary artistic sources – particularly music (including operas, music theatre and concert works), play texts and theatre productions – rather than secondary sources of musicology. This research expands my previous practice of working with spoken text in concert music, and places this opera in the context of that previous work and the work of other composers, theatre-makers and electronic music artists. Five specific approaches to non-sung text are discussed in detail, always with reference to the dramaturgy of Kane's text and drawing on examples from the opera: four concerned with spoken text (the 'Opera Thought-Bubble', Voiceover, Mid-phrase Switching, Tape-cutting) and one concerned with visually-presented text (Percussion Dialogues). The five approaches are evaluated in the context of the premiere performances of the opera in May 2016, and the potential for further practice-based research on this topic is discussed.

My recent compositional practice has incorporated spoken word into concert music. In the last seven years only three short chamber pieces have been written without text; the bulk of my output has included text, in the form of spoken word. Speech has been incorporated in various ways: it has been distorted into metrical rhythms in *ANIMA* (2009) and *The Revenge of Miguel Cotto* (2012); it has been recited freely as poetry alongside instrumental music in *Numbers 91–95* (2011) and *Romanticism* (2012); text has been spoken in groups, drawing on the German *Sprechchor* tradition in *Socialist Fucking Realism* (2013) and *Numbers 76–80* (2011); and text has been cut and spliced into streams of consciousness in *Illusions* (2015) and *Unleashed* (2012). Source texts for these pieces have ranged from contemporary British poetry to verbatim interview transcripts, to excerpts of Hansard to liturgical text, to footage of a drag performer's improvised rant.

The decision to develop this practice can be broken down into two steps: first, the decision to include text in musical works, and second, the decision to deliver that text through the medium of speech, rather than, for example, singing. Clearly these are interdependent decisions, but both are based on a key objective for the audience experiences that I make: immediacy. That can be applied to those two decisions as semantic immediacy (by using text) and immediacy of comprehension (by using speech). It is important to discuss these two ideas before moving onto a discussion of spoken word in opera.

Text affords semantic immediacy in a way that music alone cannot, because text can present concrete, specific ideas. If we assume that the mode of text delivery is itself immediately comprehensible (which will be discussed in the next paragraph), then these concrete ideas can be presented and digested by the audience in a split second, in real time, as the text (and music) goes by. Whether by reading or listening to speech or thinking sentences, words and their meaning can be processed immediately by an audience. In contrast, musical form is often understood retrospectively – the significance or meaning of phrases within the context of form makes sense only once we have heard the entire piece. Musical grammar and syntax often requires time to absorb, digest and interpret, and its meanings and form are, of course, not semantic, but something other. Therefore, combining text with music gives the composer a larger toolbox with which to create meaning and signpost form,

perhaps with a semantic form/language and musical form/language co-existing independently.

Given the decision to incorporate text, the second decision is how that text should be presented – the mode of delivery. The most common mode of text delivery in most musical genres is singing. However, there are good reasons for exploring alternatives to sung text. Speech or other non-sung text on stage often achieves greater semantic impact than sung text; the audience understands more of it. It is an interesting paradox that spoken text has less expressive power (as opposed to narrative power) compared to sung text: in a sung line, the complexity of the vocal line and semantic comprehension are often in direct conflict. In most cases, when the musical line becomes more complex (e.g. melismatic aria, or high *tessitura*), semantic comprehension is lost, and when semantic comprehension is favoured, vocal expressivity is usually forfeited (e.g. recitative). Not only that, but the more a text is contorted away from natural speech patterns in order to fit a complex sung line, the more destruction is wrought on any poetic meter or form in the text.

The alternative, as I have explored in previous concert works, is to present spoken text alongside music. The spoken text provides semantic immediacy and linguistic grammar/form, and the music provides expressivity and musical form. The performance of spoken text provides another sonic layer to the work, and brings with it a heritage of spoken theatre and poetry performance that can be mined for inspiration. The composer then has the opportunity to develop techniques to work with speech as compositional material in itself, and may use such tools as fragmentation, repetition, text variation, re-ordering, dynamics and performance directions, much as he/she would with musical material.

This research seeks to develop such non-sung modes of text delivery, and put them to work in opera. Opera is a music-led performance form, and as such, like other performance forms such as theatre and dance, opera seeks to tell stories. Stories can be told on stage without text, of course, such as Stockhausen's second act of *Donnerstag aus Licht* (1980) – *Michaels Reise um die Erde,* an opera without words or voice[1], or the tradition of french mime, or Stravinsky and Nijinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913)[2], or more recently, David Sawer's *Rumpelstiltskin* (2009)[3] – all stories told in movement and music. However, it is more common than not for operas to tell stories using text, and so given the presence of a text, opera makers must choose how to deliver it. Generally, the accepted consensus is that theatre chooses mainly spoken text and opera chooses mainly sung text. One is driven by the rhythm of words, one by the rhythm of music. But between these two traditions lies a whole spectrum of fertile ground for opera- and theatre-makers to cultivate: spoken-word theatre that is driven by music, music that is driven by the rhythm of text, combinations of song and speech and everything in between, the full spectrum of semantic comprehension independent of musical expressivity, text and music in a constant jostle for primacy. What defines opera apart from theatre is the dominant presence of music – everything else is up for grabs.

There are, naturally, many artists working this fertile ground, each ploughing their own particular furrows of enquiry. The most common examples of spoken text with music are found in character-narrative film and spoken theatre, whereby a speech may be given freely over the top of live or

1 Stockhausen, K. *Donnerstag aus Licht* (1980), Stockhausen Verlag. See a performance at https://youtu.be/ANA-wYfHLQk

2 Stravinsky, I. & Nijinsky, V. *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913), Boosey & Hawkes. Produced by Les Ballets Russes, Paris. See a reconstructed performance at https://youtu.be/_QZXrPJGLJ0

3 Sawer, D. *Rumpelstiltskin* (2009), Universal Edition AG.

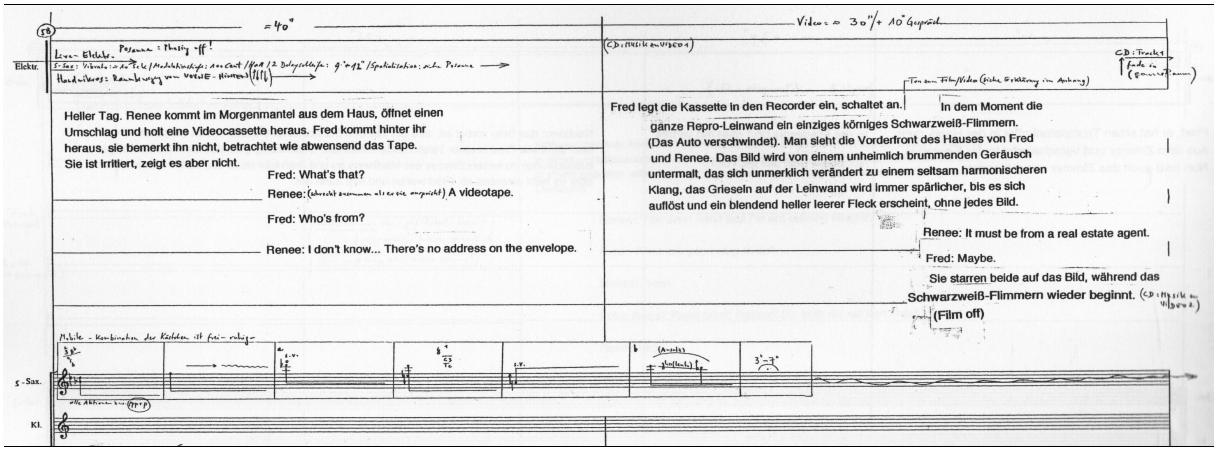


Figure 1: An excerpt of Scene 1 of Lost Highway *(2003) by Olga Neuwirth, showing freely spoken text over the top of pre-recorded and live music*

recorded music. For example, Walton's *Passacaglia* in his music for Laurence Olivier's 1944 film of Shakespeare's *Henry V* is played alongside the delivery of Henry IV's speech *I know thee not old man*, even though we see only Falstaff on screen and hear Henry IV's voice in the distance, off-screen (the distance indicated by the applied reverb on the spoken voice)[4]. In the world of opera, there are works that lightly pepper an otherwise completely sung drama with short, spoken-word interjections or interludes. Mark Anthony Turnage and Jonathan Moore's opera *Greek* (1988) does this, whereby characters deliver short spoken-word speeches free from specified musical pulse or melody, and sometimes without musical accompaniment[5]. Figure 1 shows an excerpt of Olga Neuwirth and Elfriede Jelinek's opera *Lost Highway* (2003)[6], based on the David Lynch film (1997) of the same name. This opera is scored for a mixture of actors and singers, and contains extended passages of freely-spoken text, sometimes unaccompanied and sometimes juxtaposed over music. The effect of this moves the piece more towards a theatre genre, and in this case references the spoken-word format of the original film. With a mixed cast and so much spoken word over the top of music, we could consider this a juxtaposition of theatre and opera. The proportion of spoken word versus singing is pushed even further in *Einstein on the Beach* (1976)[7] by Philip Glass and Robert Wilson, which has solo roles for actors and for singers, and entire scenes that consist of only spoken text, over a musical background. Similarly, Beat Furrer's *FAMA* (2005)[8], for actor, chorus and ensemble, features only spoken text for the actor, juxtaposed over the permanent presence of music; Furrer describes this as '*Hörtheater'* – a neologism roughly translated as 'theatre of the ears'.

4 Shakespeare, W. *Henry V*, (1944) dir. Laurence Olivier, music William Walton, produced by Two Cities Films. See the referenced scene at https://youtu.be/YhuOwp3Ds-M?t=30m9s

5 Turnage, M. A., Moore, J. *Greek* (1988) Schott Musikverlag GmbH., after Berkoff, S. *Greek* (1980). See a performance at https://youtu.be/cnZDCs6l7o8

6 Neuwirth, O., Jelinek, E. *Lost Highway* (2003) Boosey & Hawkes, after Lynch, D., Gifford, B. *Lost Highway* (1997), Ciby2000/Assymetrical Productions. Hear a performance at https://youtu.be/H9upHFYbTDE

7 Glass, P., Wilson, R. (text from Johnson, S. M., Childs, L., Knowles, C.) *Einstein on the Beach* (1976) Dunvagen Music Publishers inc. / Chester Music. See a performance at https://youtu.be/Ty76wEPL-M4

8 Furrer B. *FAMA* (2005) Bärenreiter Musikverlag GmbH, after Schnitzler, A. *Fräulein Else* (1924). Hear a performance at https://youtu.be/03nNbl4RjOg

Unlike these examples of freely-spoken text superimposed without precise coordination over a musical landscape, there are others where the speech itself is subjected to contortions of musical pulse and pitch. The rhythmicization of spoken text can be found in a simple form in William Walton and Edith Sitwell's 'entertainment' *Façade* (1951)[9], where spoken text is written in simple musical meters of mainly crotchets and quavers. The complex natural speech rhythms are contorted to fit into simple musical rhythms – simple enough to be performed frequently by untrained voices. This approach can also be applied to a '*Sprechchor*' (speaking chorus) such as the untrained voices (but musically trained brains) of an entire orchestra, who speak words and speech-like sounds/syllables in György Ligeti and Michael Meschke's *Le Grande Macabre* (1977, rev. 1996)[10], as shown in the excerpt in Figure 2. In a similar fashion, Harrison Birtwistle and David Harsent used more complex rhythms for a trained spoken chorus on stage in Scene 7 of *The Minotaur* (2008)[11]. The gang of Keres (the harpies) speak in unison in notated rhythms and repetitive patterns: *bloodshed fetches us, slaughter fetches us*, *starved for blood, ravenous for blood*. These rhythms are aligned with the musical pulse and rhythms of the orchestral writing, although they do not specify pitch.

In addition to rhythmic contortions of spoken text, other composers specify pitch patterns too. Enno Poppe's *Interzone* (2004)[12], after William Borroughs, contains a solo role for male speaker that covers everything from unaccompanied freely-spoken text in the introduction *Like Spain, I am bound to the past* to intricate indications of pitch and rhythm in spoken word at the end of Part 1 *It's Man or Monkey* (see Figure 3) that are much more complex than in *Façade*. However, even when Poppe's spoken text is most distorted from its natural rhythm and pitch, it does not quite cross the boundary into trained singing: the performer is described as an actor (although specified as a baritone), the pitch specifications are approximate, and the more specified passages still retain a feeling of strangely

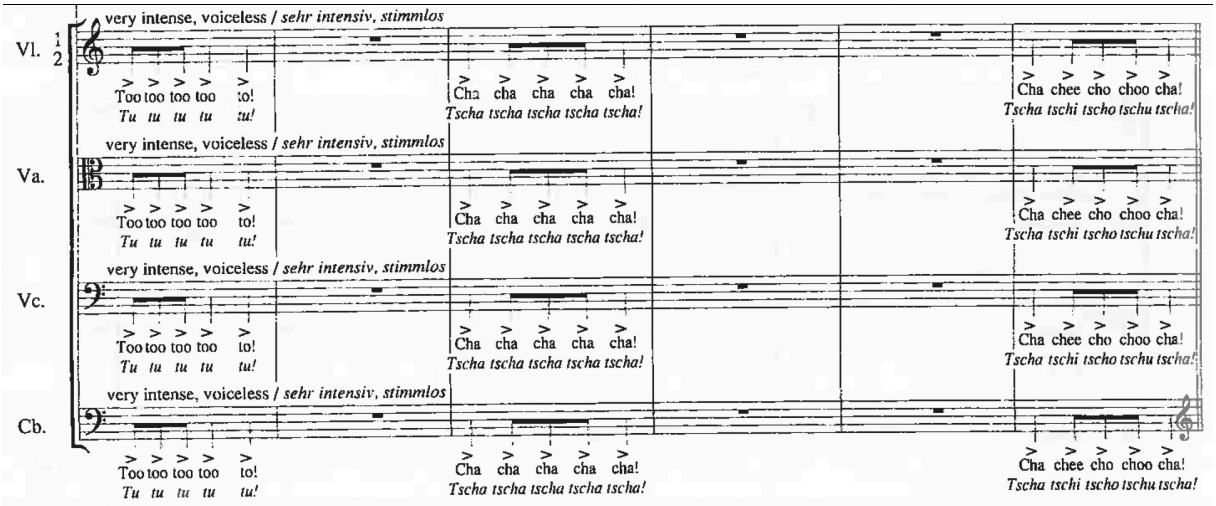


Figure 2: An excerpt from Ligeti's Le Grande Macabre *(1996) showing speech sounds delivered by string players with non-trained voices.*

9 Walton, W., Sitwell, E. *Façade – An Entertainment* (1951) Oxford University Press. See a performance excerpt at https://youtu.be/cy6fxdXuJEY

10 Ligeti, G., Meschke, M., *Le Grande Macabre* (1977, rev. 1996), Schott Musikverlag GmbH, after Ghelderode, M. de, *La balade du grand macabre* (1934). See a performance at https://youtu.be/W72pJ7Cn_WI

11 Birtwistle, H., Harsent, D., *The Minotaur* (2008) Boosey & Hawkes. See the referenced excerpt at https://youtu.be/GF_YwC3Yjbw

12 Poppe, E., Beyer, M. (text from Borroughs, W.), *Interzone* (2004) Universal Music Gmbh / Ricordi Musikverlag. Hear the referenced excerpt at https://open.spotify.com/track/3PtSibcFLSFNUWy7MWTN1l

mechanized or contorted speech, rather than 'operatic' singing[13]. However, pitch specifications for 'speech' can and do cross that boundary into trained singing. For example, the role of Moses in Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* (1932)[14] is described as a speaking role, but one in which both general pitch and specific rhythm is defined by Schoenberg, hence moving the role more towards *sprechstimme* and therefore more often performed by a trained singer using their trained voice.

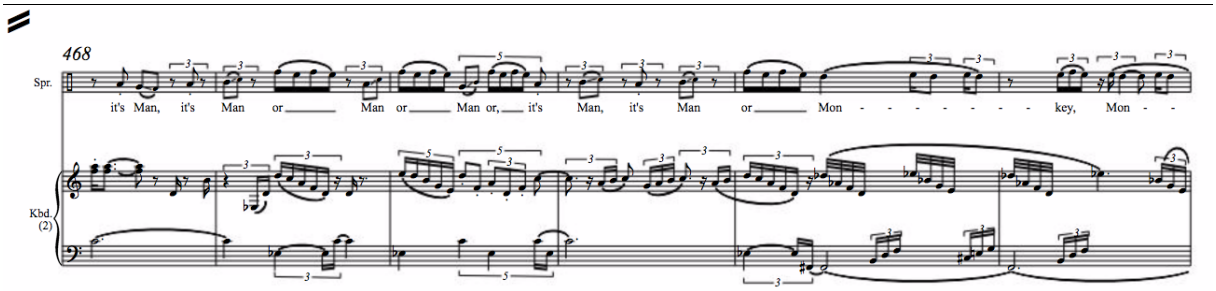



Figure 3: An excerpt of It's Man or Monkey from Enno Poppe's Interzone, showing the Speaker with complex rhythmic and pitch indications

Such techniques are not confined to material for live performance. Other artists play with pre-recorded spoken text, ranging from a simple pre-recorded voiceover without coordination with a musical layer, to finely-crafted rhythmic collages of fragments of audio material. Pre-recorded voiceover appears in another Birtwistle opera *The Mask of Orpheus* (1984)[15], where the spoken voice of Apollo is heard only on recording, played into the auditorium. Outside of conventional character-driven narrative, theatre-makers have explored pre-recorded voiceover as a way of articulating a third-party point of view, not tied to a character. For example, Katie Mitchell and Alice Birch's *Ophelias Zimmer* (2015)[16] features five interludes that use pre-recorded spoken text describing in the third person the physiological stages of drowning (this is discussed further in Chapter 5 – Voiceover).

The above examples feature spoken text that has a primarily semantic function – it is there to impart linguistic meaning, from various dramaturgical points of view. However, spoken text for live performance may also be subjected to fragmentation, repetition and re-ordering, in the same way that a composer might treat melodic material. Often, just like musical material, such operations may use spoken text to create form/shape that is independent from the linguistic shape of the text. Georges Aperghis, for example, treated text fragments to repetition and re-ordering in his *Recitations* (1978)[17] for solo voice. *Recitation 11* takes this text (fragments separated by slashes):

13 There is trained singing in *Interzone,* in the form of a quintet (SMACtB) performing chorus and solo roles.

14 Schoenberg, A., *Moses und Aron* (1932) Edition Eulenberg Verlag GmbH. Schoenberg also wrote the libretto, based on the Book of Exodus. See an excerpt of Moses' *sprechstimme* https://youtu.be/5nD36ZpRyKU?t=42m10s

15 Birtwistle, H. Zinovieff, P. *The Mask of Orpheus* (1984) Universal Edition AG.

16 Birch, A. *Ophelias Zimmer* (2015) dir. Katie Mitchell, produced by Schaubühne Berlin. After Shakespeare, W. *Hamlet*. More information: http://www.schaubuehne.de/de/produktionen/ophelias-zimmer.html

17 Aperghis, G., *Recitations* (1978), Edition Salabert / Durand Salabert Eschig. See a performance of *Recitation 11* at https://youtu.be/cgDM-pyMqxw

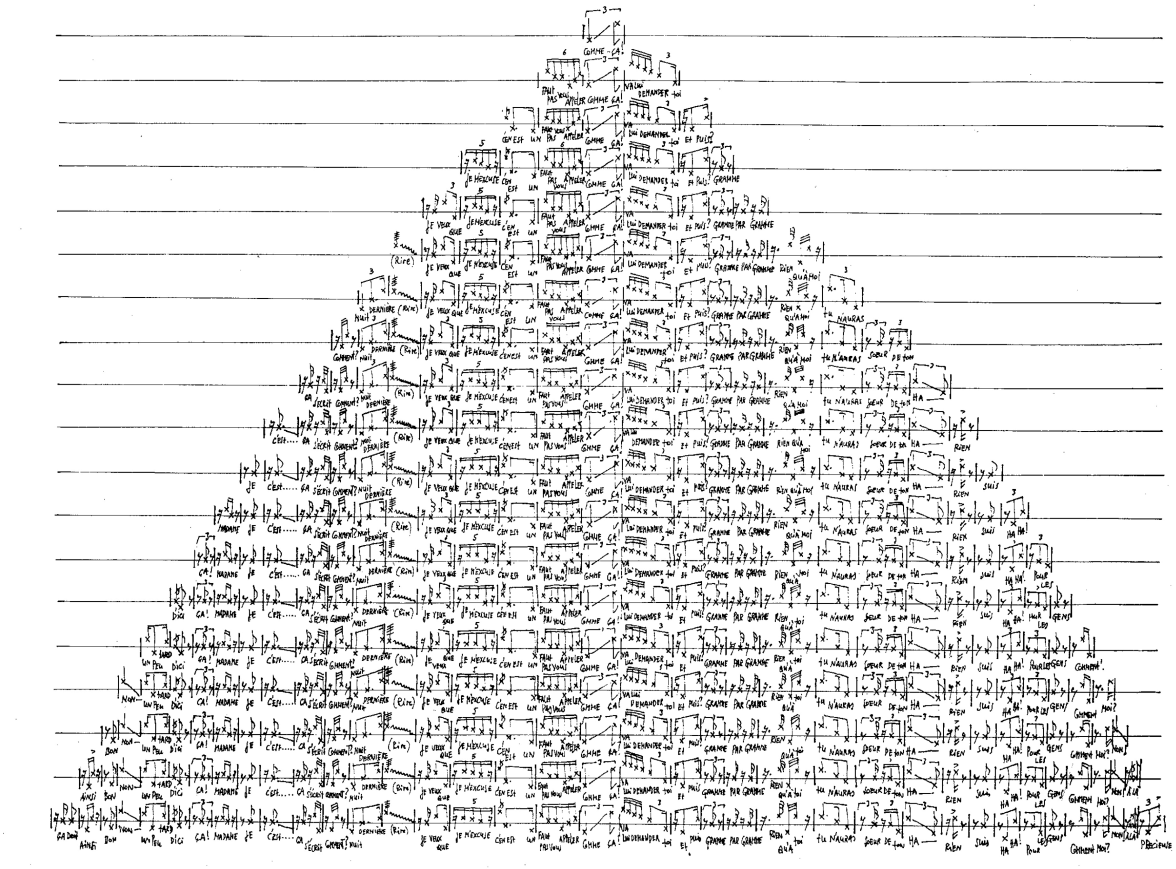


Figure 4: Recitation 11 (1978) *by Aperghis, showing the structuralist / formalistic approach to repetition and ordering.*

> *Ça doit / ainsi / bon / un peu tard / d'ici / ça! / Madame / Je / c'est / ça s'ecrit / comment? / nuit dernière /* (rire)[18] */ Je veux que / Je m'excuse / C'en est un / Faut pas vous appeler/* <u>*Comme ca!*</u> */ va lui demander toi / et puis? / gramme / par gramme / Rien qu'à moi*[19] */ tu n'auras / soeur de ton / Ha / Rien / suis / Ha Ha! / pour les / Gens / comment / Moi? / Non! / à la / precieuse*
>
> Aperghis *Recitation 11* (1978)

The 36 fragments are centred on *Comme ça!* (underlined), and around this axis the fragments are introduced two at a time either side of the central *Comme ça!*, until all 36 are performed in sequence. The score clearly illustrates this structural approach to repetition and ordering, shown in Figure 4.

A much freer approach to fragmentation to create a kind of 'stream of consciousness' can be found in the work of Beckett. This is clearly visible in *Not I* (1972)[20]. Here is the first of five sections:

> *.... out... into this world... this world... tiny little thing... before its time... in a godfor-... what?.. girl?.. yes... tiny little girl... into this... out into this... before her time... godforsaken hole called... called... no matter... parents unknown... unheard of... he having vanished... thin air... no sooner buttoned up his breeches... she similarly... eight months later... almost to the tick... so no love... spared that... no love such as normally*

18 This is a performance instruction, to laugh.

19 The word *moi* changes to *toi* mid-way through the piece.

20 Beckett, S, *Not I* (1972), Faber. Performance for BBC2 by Billie Whitelaw (1977). https://youtu.be/M4LDwfKxr-M

vented on the... speechless infant... in the home... no... nor indeed for that matter any of any kind... no love of any kind... at any subsequent stage... so typical affair... nothing of any note till coming up to sixty when-... what?.. seventy?.. good God!.. coming up to seventy... wandering in a field... looking aimlessly for cowslips... to make a ball... a few steps then stop... stare into space... then on... a few more... stop and stare again... so on... drifting around... when suddenly... gradually... all went out... all that early April morning light... and she found herself in the... what?.. who?.. no!.. she!..

The '…' indicate very short pauses or breaths. Motifs are repeated between the four sections, for example '*what?.. who?.. no!.. she!..*' finishes each section but the last. Other circumlocutions throughout the text include '*good God!'* and *'tiny little thing'* and *'April morning'* and references to the mouth and speech. The scatter-gun, stream-of-consciousness effect is clear, especially when delivered in very fast, exasperated speech (see the video link given in Footnote 20). However, the stream of consciousness is made entirely intuitively; there is no pattern to the repetition, fragmentation or ordering of phrases, unlike the Aperghis approach. In a musical analogy of Beckett's stream of consciousness, Luciano Berio's well-known third movement to *Sinfonia* (1969)[21] – *In ruhig fliessender Bewegung* – subjects excerpts of another Beckett text, his novel *The Unnamable* (1953)[22], to extensive fragmentation and collage techniques, delivered through spoken text in live performance with eight vocalists, accompanied by orchestra. This collage technique is also applied to the music, drawing in many musical references, in what is perhaps the most well-known example of a musical 'stream of consciousness'.

Berio has taken fragmentation, distortion and layering of spoken text to such extremes that semantic meaning is no longer comprehensible, but the work is still articulated in the form of speech sounds

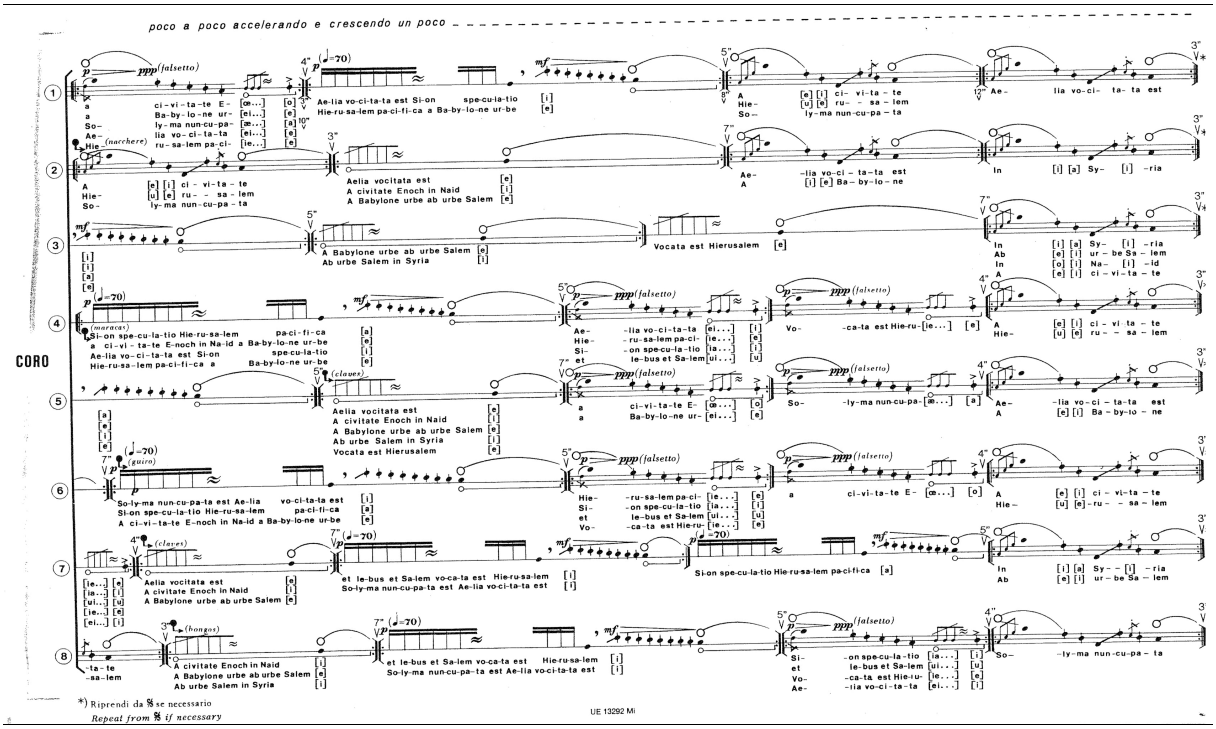


Figure 5: An excerpt of vocal writing in Berio's Laborintus II *(1965), showing layering of many speech fragments*

21 Berio, L. *Sinfonia* (1969) Universal Edition AG. See a performance of III – *In ruhig fliessender Bewegung* at https://youtu.be/9YU-V2C4ryU

22 Beckett, S. *The Unnamable* (1953) Les Éditions de Minuit.

(rather than a sung voice). In these cases, where semantic meaning is lost, the speech sounds become musical material like any other; the semantic structures and immediacy of comprehension, which were discussed earlier, are lost. This has been described as 'paralinguistic text' (Stacey, 1989)[23]. Berio pioneered such techniques, often to build highly-complex textures, in works such as *Sequenza III* (1965)[24], *Laborintus II* (1965)[25] and *A-Ronne* (1975)[26], and continued by others such as Beat Furrer in *Begehren* (2003)[27]. Figure 5 shows an excerpt of *Laborintus II,* showing a complex, rich texture made from spoken words, but so dense that individual lines are not semantically comprehensible.

Just as the examples of composers who have contorted and fragmented speech for live performance, such contortion, fragmentation and repetition can be practised also with recorded audio. A simple early example would be Steve Reich's *It's gonna rain* (1965)[28], a piece for magnetic tape that takes a piece of found material, a recording of a street preacher from San Francisco, copies it across two tape loop machines (stereo left and right) and alters both the loop length and the phase difference between the two recorders, creating shifting delay between the two loops. This creates a hocketing of the sentence 'It's gonna rain' between the two channels. Reich's work with pre-recorded speech took a step further in *Different Trains* (1988)[29], in which interviews with people about train journeys were cut up into small soundbites, and then the pitch and rhythm of the spoken phrases were transcribed into music for multiple string quartets (three pre-recorded and one live). Reich then subjected both tape material and string quartet material to a series of repetitions, syncopations and imitations; so much so that in performance it is hard to tell what is imitating what. Neither text nor music has primacy.

Techniques such as tape-cutting and looping pioneered by Reich and others later extended into DJs' work with vinyl scratching and digital editing techniques of electronic music artists. For example, *Frontier Psychiatrist,* from the debut album *Since I left you* (2000)[30] of Australian DJ quintet The Avalanches, is a virtuosic mash-up of spoken-word samples, constructing new sentences out of very short samples from a variety of different spoken-word and musical sources. They do this using a mixture of turntable techniques (scratching, stuttering, speed alteration) and digital techniques (cutting, splicing, copying, pasting). The second verse of *Frontier Psychiatrist*, beginning at 1'33", uses 19 spoken-word samples from different sources to construct the lyrics for this verse, lasting 27 seconds (discontiguous samples are here marked by a slash and the 'stuttering' is written out):

> *Avalanches above, business continues below /*
> *Did I ever tell you the story about /* [scratch]
> *Cowboys / mi–mi–midgets / and / the indians / and / Fron–Frontier Psychiatrist /*
> *I – I – I felt strangely hypnotised /* [scratch]

23 Stacey, P. F. *Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition* (Contemporary Music Review, 1989)

24 Berio, L. *Sequenza III* (1966) Universal Edition AG.

25 Berio, L. *Laborintus II* (1965) Universal Edition AG. Hear a performance at https://youtu.be/AJEfW6BGcf4

26 Berio, L. *A-Ronne* (concert version) (1975) Universal Edition AG.

27 Furrer, B *Begehren* (2003) Bärenreiter Musikverlag GmbH. See an excerpt of a performance at https://youtu.be/3tnTiSd1Yhc?t=1m11s

28 Reich, S. *It's gonna rain* (1965). Hear this at https://youtu.be/vugqRAX7xQE

29 Reich, S. *Different Trains* (1988) Boosey & Hawkes. See a performance at https://youtu.be/uyLfrQhPR5A

30 The Avalanches, *Frontier Psychiatrist* from *Since I left you* (2000), Modular Recordings. Hear this at https://youtu.be/U8BWBn26bX0?t=1m31s

I was in another world, a world of / 20–[scratch]*–20.000 girls /*
And milk! / and rectangles / to an optometrist / the man with the golden / eyeball /
And tighten your buttocks / pour juice on your chin /
I promised my girlfriend I'd / hit the violin–violin–violin–violin...

Similar sampling techniques have been used by the satirical video artist duo Cassetteboy, inspired by analogue tape-cutting techniques rather than turntable scratching. Their work consists of reconstructed speeches by one orator, constructed of samples taken from multiple speeches by that person. They may construct these artificial speeches on a musical framework, for example to make alternative lyrics for a pop song (see the example *Gettin' piggy with it*[31], a cover version of Will Smith's *Gettin' jiggy wit it*[32]). Or they construct speeches without such musical backing, but mimicking natural speech rhythms so carefully that the editing joins are sometimes undetectable (see the example *Cassetteboy remix the news* series[33]).

1.1. Research Objectives

The discussion above has outlined how my practice and the work of other artists have involved spoken word, using various techniques for both live performance and pre-recorded material. These techniques will be extended into opera – a new direction for my own practice – to address the following research objectives.

1. To explore techniques to incorporate spoken text into opera, both live and pre-recorded:
    - Voiceover techniques;
    - 'Stream-of-consciousness' – Fragmentation, repetition, re-ordering, imitation, collage;
    - To incorporate speech into sung lines.
2. To explore visually-presented text in opera, placing it within a musical framework[34].
3. To explore the dramaturgical implications of these two objectives.

These objectives ultimately contribute to the overall objective discussed at the beginning of this chapter: to make an opera that has semantic/linguistic immediacy, and where the source text is equally present alongside the music.

These research objectives guided the choice of source text for this opera, Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*[35]. Since the objectives above have an impact on dramaturgy, the next chapter will explain this choice of source text and give a brief analysis of it.

31 Cassetteboy, *Gettin' piggy with it,* (2015) Unpublished. See this at https://youtu.be/FBpQJ98rR4o

32 Smith, Will, *Gettin' jiggy wit it,* (1997), Columbia Records. Hear this at https://youtu.be/ZUcvYwdq9n0

33 Cassetteboy, *Jeremy Clarkson on the rampage and David Cameron's TV acting debut: Cassetteboy remix the news* (2015), Guardian Online. See this at https://youtu.be/m7sl-r7OW6A

34 A discussion of others' work in the field of visually-presented text and music will be discussed in Chapter 8 – Percussion Dialogues.

35 Kane, S. *4.48 Psychosis* (2000) Methuen Drama.

2. Adapting Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*

The British playwright Sarah Kane (1971–1999) finished the manuscript for *4.48 Psychosis* (Methuen, 2000) just a few days before she tragically took her own life. For this reason, *4.48 Psychosis* is in part seen as Kane's discussion and public 'outing' of her own suffering under depression and her contemplation of suicide. In it, she writes about depression, the search for love, happiness and the search for it, mortality, her relationship with her writing and his/her gender identity – themes explored more obliquely in other earlier works, but in *4.48 Psychosis* given a searingly direct and personal edge. The text ends, profoundly and prophetically, with the main character taking his/her own life.

However, *4.48 Psychosis* is so much more than autobiography. It is renowned for its openness and flexibility of form and its wide variety of text registers and styles. It has no stipulation of personnel on stage, their gender(s), how many performers there should be, their age(s), or, if there is more than one, their relationships between each other. There are no stage directions apart from occasional instruction for silence. No setting or timeframe is given or implied. For most of the play, text is not ascribed to particular individuals; only some passages indicate a dialogue between a patient and a doctor/psychotherapist, using dashes in the margins. Most of the text is in the first person, but it is also highly polyphonic, using at least seven different levels of indentation and various spacings on the page to indicate a multitude of 'voices' or points of view. However, Kane does not indicate if or how this polyphony should be achieved on stage.

The text is divided into 24 short scenes, each separated by a line of five dashes on the page. The registers of text vary widely from scene to scene, from dense, highly poetic monologues (scenes 18, 21), awash with reference and metaphor, to more colloquial dialogues (scenes 1, 6, 10, 12, 23), to abstract lists of numbers (scenes 4, 20) or words (scenes 13, 19), to lists of drugs and their symptoms (scene 14), to lists of negative (scene 3) and positive statements (scene 22), to fragmented, polyphonic verse (scenes 11, 24), to stream-of-consciousness memories (scene 5). There is both personified and non-personified text, with a range of possible points-of-view.

The narrative behind the text is only lightly implied and is open to wide interpretation. In its formal structure, it operates on multiple implied timelines and locations, suggesting both real-time events in the present tense, memories in the past tense, and combinations thereof. There is little implication in the text that scenes follow each other chronologically; they are tableaux that examine themes of love, death and sadness from different angles, at different times, mixing the inner, reflective world with the outer world of medical treatments. Kane plays with the ambiguity between historical narratives, memories and fantasy; we do not know what is external reality and what is internal imagination.

The overall structure of *4.48 Psychosis* is patchwork, episodic and formalized. Some tableaux return periodically, some are grouped around thematic content, and from the patchwork emerges a structural arc, leading towards the final scene, suicide. Most importantly, because the prose is free, the structure non-linear and without fixed characterisation, Kane's text offers a rare thing for theatre-makers: a dramaturgy that does not depend on who says what. As director Ted Huffman said *"Sarah Kane's text has a lot of room in it. She leaves room for the director. It's almost a challenge she lays down, she says 'here is this text, what will you do with it?'"*[36].

Figures 6 to 11 show images from the published edition to illustrate the wide range of text registers.

36 Interviewed by Samira Ahmed on *Front Row,* BBC Radio 4, 24th May 2016. See SM.2.

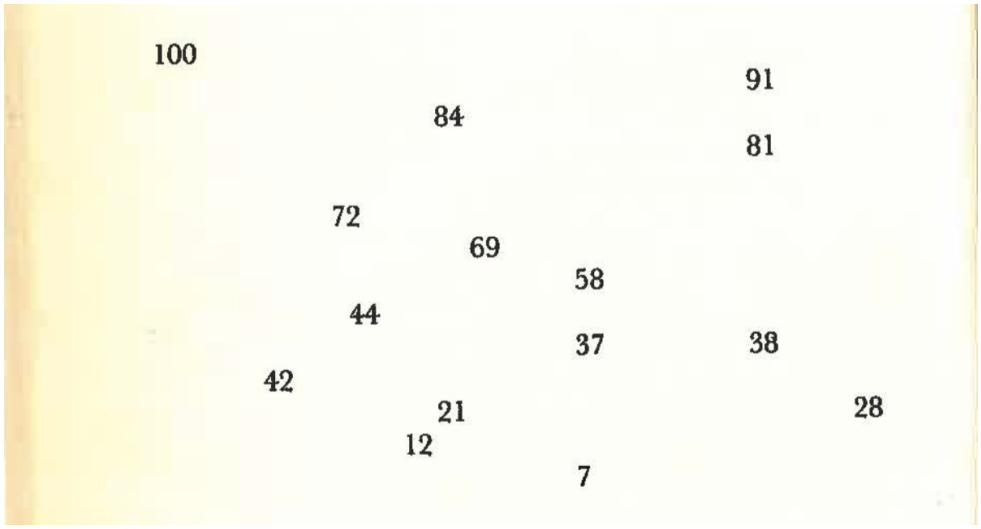


Figure 6: Scene 4 from 4.48 Psychosis showing an abstract array of numbers.

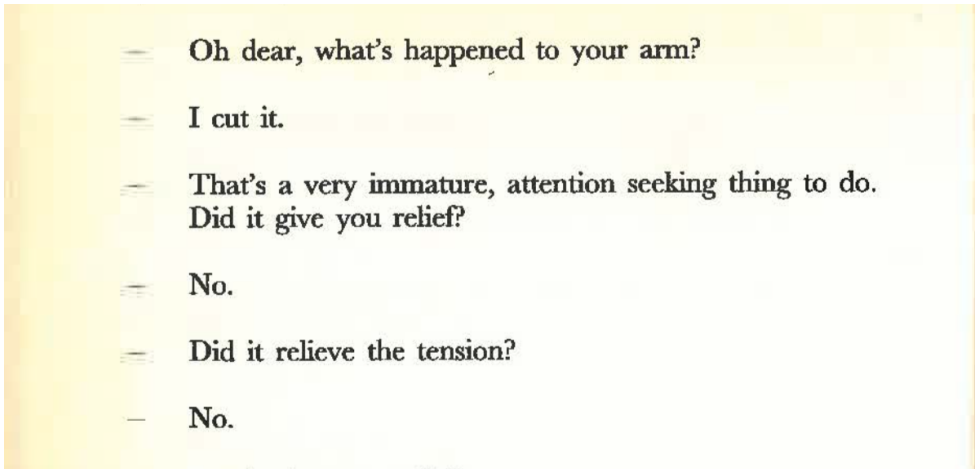


Figure 7: An excerpt from Scene 10 from 4.48 Psychosis showing a dialogue between patient and doctor/therapist.

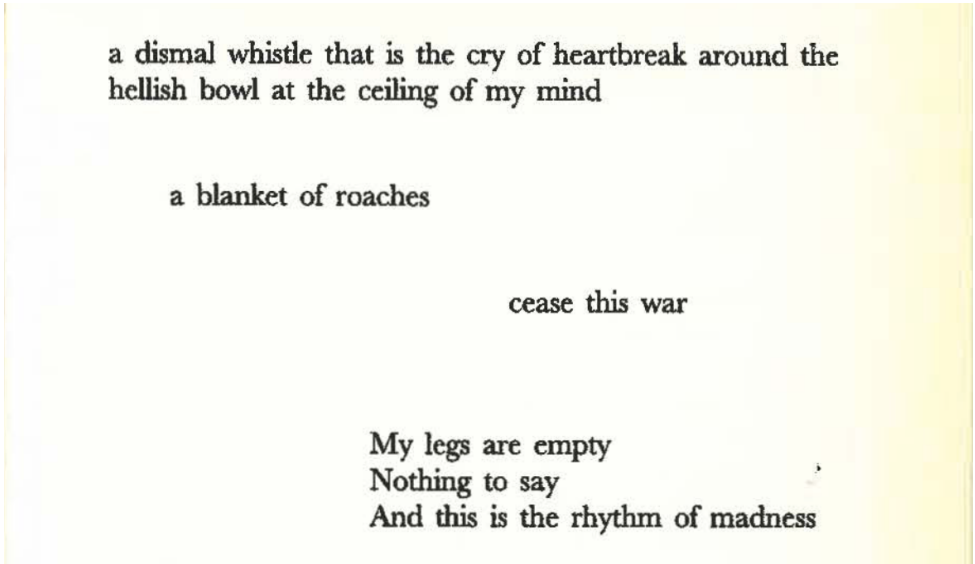
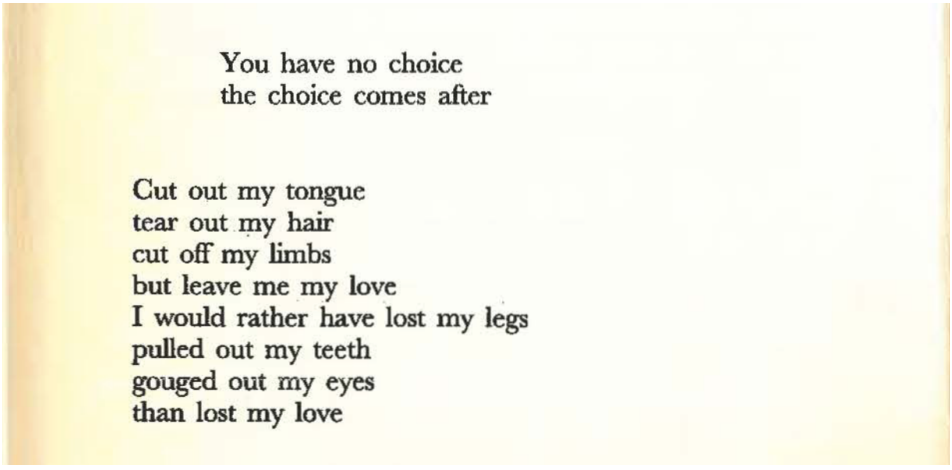


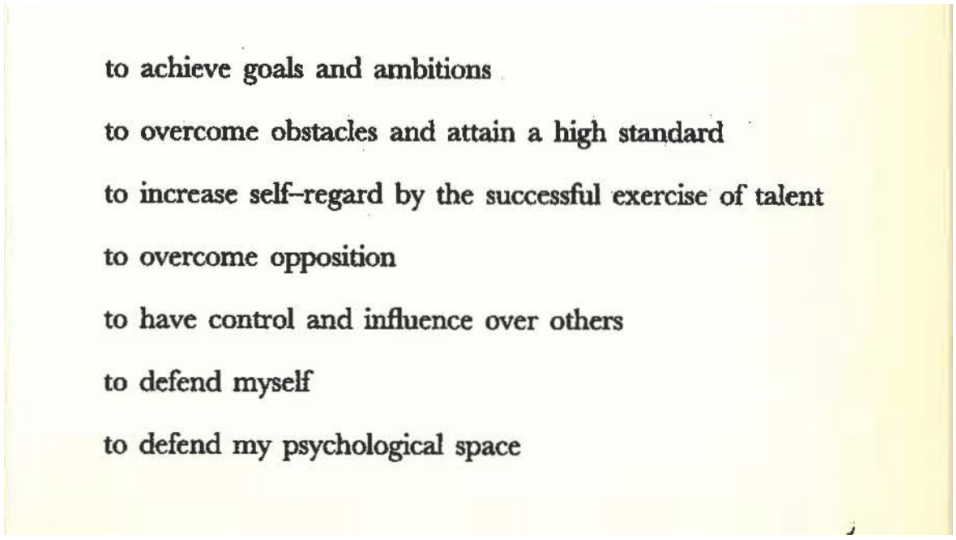
Figure 8: An excerpt from Scene 15 from 4.48 Psychosis showing free verse with varied indentation and spacing.



You have no choice
the choice comes after

Cut out my tongue
tear out my hair
cut off my limbs
but leave me my love
I would rather have lost my legs
pulled out my teeth
gouged out my eyes
than lost my love

Figure 9: An excerpt from Scene 19 from 4.48 Psychosis showing song-form verse , akin to a nursery rhyme.



to achieve goals and ambitions

to overcome obstacles and attain a high standard

to increase self-regard by the successful exercise of talent

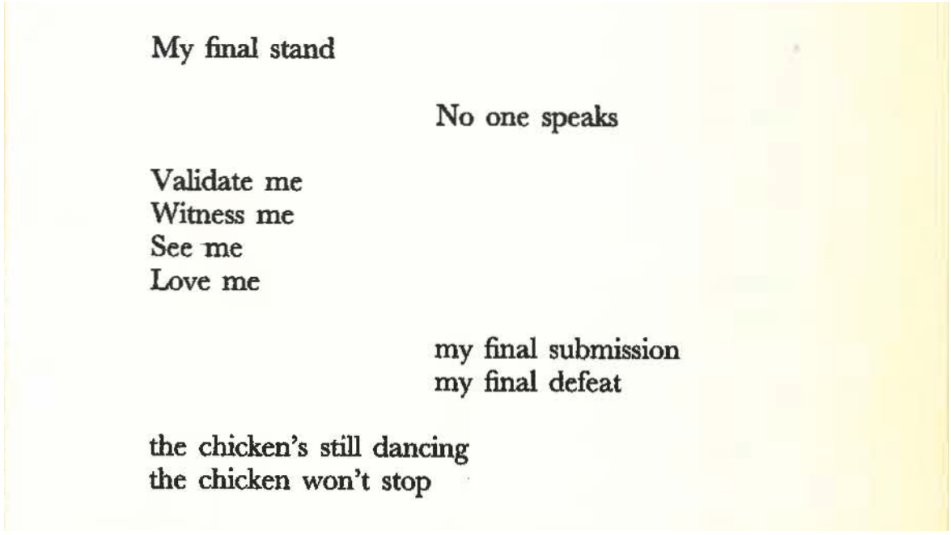
to overcome opposition

to have control and influence over others

to defend myself

to defend my psychological space

Figure 10: An excerpt from Scene 22 from 4.48 Psychosis showing a list of positive statements.



My final stand

No one speaks

Validate me
Witness me
See me
Love me

my final submission
my final defeat

the chicken's still dancing
the chicken won't stop

Figure 11: An excerpt from Scene 24 from 4.48 Psychosis, the final scene, showing antiphonal verse.

The wide range of registers, openness and interpretability of Kane's text makes it ideal source material with which to address the research objectives discussed in the previous chapter. Since the three-way relationship between text, voice and narrative is not prescribed by Kane's text, as it may be in a traditional stage-play or libretto, the composer is forced to make several fundamental choices: about dramaturgy; about how text is presented when no narrative point of view is indicated (e.g. Figure 6); and about how to distinguish inner monologue (Figures 8 and 11) from narrative realism (Figure 7). Of course, these issues present themselves to composers in many libretti, but the crucial and unusual point in this case is that none of this text is explicitly tied to characters, allowing the composer much more scope to play with disembodied voices, polyphonic inner monologues, visually presented text, abstractions, and a myriad of other devices, without the constraints of the 'who says what' relationship between performer and text.

Given these opportunities afforded to the composer by Kane's text, it must be acknowledged that the same opportunities would be afforded any composer-writer collaboration making a new text from scratch. In fact, the first year of this doctoral residency was spent trying to establish such a collaboration, with the intention of making an original opera rather than an adaptation. This hit various practical obstacles at the same time that discussions with Simon Kane indicated that rights for *4.48 Psychosis* would be forthcoming. Given this unique opportunity to make the first ever adaptation of Kane's work and the scope to explore all of the music-text relationships outlined above, the search for a writer collaboration was abandoned in favour of making an operatic adaptation of *4.48 Psychosis*.

The rights agreement with the Kane estate obliged the operatic adaptation to '*maintain the integrity and spirit of the text'*. Upon discussion with Simon Kane, in practice this meant that no significant cutting or reordering of Kane's text was allowed, nor the addition of any new text, but cutting individual lines here and there was permissible with the plea that nothing was cut simply because it was not understood. Given that there was no writer with whom to collaborate and no opportunity to significantly edit the source text, the dramaturgical challenges and opportunities discussed above could *only* be addressed through musical and dramaturgical solutions. The source text was unyielding.

This combination of freedom and constraint encourages – or forces – the composer to make dramaturgical choices about how text is used; choices which, for a composer adapting a more more traditional character-narrative libretto, are likely to have already been made by the librettist[37]. The role of composer as Auteur or Dramaturg was highlighted in a conference presentation about this operatic adaptation of *4.48 Psychosis* by Dr. Gareth Llŷr Evans[38]:

> *Significant choices regarding how the text was interpreted, utilised, and how it functioned and was incorporated within the* mise en scène *were all primarily the purview of the composer.*
>
> *I would argue the process of composing* 4.48 Psychosis *as an opera was not one of merely setting a libretto to music. The nature of the text itself and the stipulations regarding its use for this specific production, and also the absence of its author, meant that the compositional process was primarily concerned with the creation of a musical dramaturgy, rather than musical adaptation. […]*

37 Clearly, composers working in collaborations with librettists on original stories have this freedom too, but the point is made about making adaptations of existing dramatic texts.

38 Evans, G. L., 2016, *The Composer as Auteur: Sarah Kane's 4.48 Psychosis as an Opera* (Unpublished). Conference paper given June 16th 2016 at the the Music Theatre Working Group, International Federation of Theatre Research Conference: 'Presenting the Theatrical Past', Stockholm University, Sweden. See SM.3.

> *Therefore it was the composer that decided what parts of the text were to be musicalized; which were to be sung and how, which were spoken, or which to be projected. As a result of the various ways in which text was utilised, the resulting dramaturgy could be considered as one that was stratified with the text woven between instrumentalists, singers, and the scenography.*

The complete conference paper can be found in SM.3. For further reading about the role of spoken text in this opera, and more background about the Kane text in the context of this opera, see two introductory essays written by John Fallas and Cristina Delgado-Garcia, written for the programme book of the performances of this opera. These can be found in SM.4.

Type	Scene	Approx duration (mins)	First line	Projection	Click?	Surtitles?
Tape only	House open	15	-	No		No
Tape & perc	1	2	But you have friends	Doctor's screen	Yes	No
Sung (breathless)	2	2.5	I had a night in which			Maybe?
Mid-phrase switching	3	3	I am sad			No
Instrumental with projection	4	1	100, 91, 84	Front screen, large. Numbers.	Yes (cond.)	No
Opera thought-bubble	5 intro	2	It wasn't for long	No		No
Tape-cutting	5	3	Doctor This, Doctor That		Yes (cond.)	No (or just sung bits?)
Percussion dialogue	6	4	Have you made any plans?	Doctor's screen; Patient's screen	Yes (2 perc), or video trigger?	No
Vocal	7	5.5	body and soul can never be married	No		Yes
Instrumental with projection	8	0.25	RSVP ASAP	Front screen, huge		No
Mid-phrase switching	9	7	[sometimes] I turn around and catch the smell of you	No		Yes
Percussion dialogue	10	3	Oh no what happened to your arm?	Doctor's screen; Patient's screen	Yes (2 perc), or video trigger?	No
Sung & Voiceover	11	4.5	I dread the loss of her I've never touched	No		Yes
Percussion dialogue	12	3	No ifs or buts	Doctor's screen; Patient's screen	Yes (2 perc), or video trigger?	No
Sung	13	4	Abstraction to the point of	No		Yes
Instrumental & projection & Voiceover	14	4	Diagnosis: pathological grief	Front screen, large.	Yes (cond.)	No
Sung	15	5	Hatch opens, stark light. The television talks	No		Yes
Voiceover	16	1	I gassed the jews	TBC		Yes
Sung	17	5	We are anathema, pariahs of reason			
Voiceover	18	3	At 4.48 when sanity visits	No		No
Sung	19	3	Hatch opens, stark light. A table two chairs and no windows		Yes (cond.)	Maybe?
Instrumental with projection	20	1	100, 93, 86	Front screen, large. Numbers.	Yes (cond.)	No
Sung	21	3	Sanity is found at the centre...			
Sung / parlando	22	2.5	To achieve goals and ambitions			No
Percussion dialogue & sung	23	4	Have you made any plans?	Doctor's screen; Patient's screen	Yes (2 perc), or video trigger?	No
Sung	24	0.5	Fattened up, shored up, shoved out			Yes
Sung	24B	1.5	I thought it was silent		No	Yes
Sung & Voiceover	24C	2	Hatch opens, stark light and Nothing		No	Yes
Sung & Voiceover	24D	2	Hatch opens, stark light, I don't know where to look		No	Yes
Opera thought-bubble	24E	1	Please don't cut me up	Yes - text (patient)	No	No
Sung	24F	5	It is done		No	Yes
Sung / tape recorder message	24G	1.5	It is myself		No	No

Figure 12: a scene plan of 4.48 Psychosis showing treatment, duration, projection, surtitles and clicks.

2.1. General concept and team

In order to orient the reader in the coming discussions, the table in Figure 12, and the more extensive version in SM.5, shows the structure of Kane's text in 24 scenes, with notes about musical treatment, singers, pre-recorded material, instrumental ensemble and projection. On the whole, the musical treatment followed Kane's structure: when a particular text treatment returns, for example the 'serial sevens' number patterns (scenes 4 and 20) or the doctor-patient dialogues (scenes 1, 6, 10, 12, 23), the recapitulations were given the same musical treatment. Kane's patchwork structure was mapped into a dramaturgical-musical patchwork, shown by the colour-coding on the table.

Given the discussion above about the freedom from 'who says what' characterisation in *4.48 Psychosis,* our general casting concept was to create a 'hive mind' of similar voices. Using an ensemble of voices in this way enabled flexibility in terms of who sings what. No single cast member would take on a truly fixed role, with the exception, perhaps, of one person carrying some of the solo arias on behalf of the main character (the patient). The whole ensemble would at times represent the main character, at other times they would step out to play the roles of doctors, lovers, carers. The polyphonic inner voices could be mapped into real vocal polyphony, solo arias or speeches could be distributed between the cast, some parts could be left open in the score and allocated in the rehearsal room, leaving the director more flexibility with staging. And, with this fluidity of character representation, the dream-like state between reality, memory and prophecy could be better explored.

Six female singers were chosen, three sopranos and three mezzo-sopranos. They were all auditioned with spoken text excerpts as well as song, and therefore the cast were chosen with both skills in mind. They became our 'hive-mind', led by Gweneth Ann Rand who became the 'lead' of the group, carrying more of the solo arias, including in the final scene. In the absence of a character name, this commentary refers to the roles according to the first names of the cast, and these will be retained as a tribute to them in the published score: Gwen, Jen, Suzy, Clare, Emily, Lucy.

Here is the relevant personnel list. For a complete production personnel list, see SM.6:

Gwen	Soprano	Gweneth Ann Rand
Jen	Soprano	Jennifer Davies
Suzy	Soprano	Susanna Hurrell
Clare	Mezzo-soprano	Clare Presland
Emily	Mezzo-soprano	Emily Edmonds
Lucy	Mezzo-soprano	Lucy Schaufer

Director	Ted Huffman
Conductor	Richard Baker

(the composer, director and conductor are often referred to as the Creative Team in this commentary)

Chroma Ensemble, 12 players:

Alto Flute+Piccolo; 3 soprano saxophones in B flat, all doubling baritone saxophone in E flat;
Accordion; Piano+Synthesizer with MIDI organ pedal board;
2 Percussion (solo roles);
Violin+Viola; 2 Viola; Contrabass (with C extension).

Amplification on all voices and instruments.
Pre-recorded sound.

3. Methodology

As discussed in Chapter 1, our adaptation of *4.48 Psychosis* set out to explore and develop a wide range of techniques using spoken, sung and projected text, and combinations thereof. Musical, semantic/literary and theatrical aspects were taken into consideration when developing these techniques.

Whilst the opera also includes singing in many forms, this commentary focusses on non-sung text. Five varying approaches to dealing with non-sung text have been selected from the opera and will be discussed here. These five strands cover something of a taxonomy of explorations of non-sung text that appear in various guises throughout the opera, although only specific, archetypal examples of each technique are given in this commentary. These examples will be placed in the context of some of my previous work where this is helpful to illustrate the development and implementation of these techniques, and I will refer to other artists' work where it has provided a specific model.

These five strands of enquiry are:

Chapter 4: The Opera Thought-Bubble
A synchronisation of solo sung gesture and voiceover, to indicate the inner thoughts of the performer who is singing.
Examples: Scene 5A, Scene 18.

Chapter 5: Voiceover
Pre-recorded voice over music, with or without projected text.
Examples: Scene 11, Scene 14, Scene 16.

Chapter 6: Mid-phrase switching
Singers switch from sung to spoken text mid-phrase.
Simple example in Scene 3, complex example in Scene 9

Chapter 7: Tape-cutting
Implementing cut-and-splice and stuttering/scratching techniques to make stream-of-consciousness spoken text, in live-performed versions and tape versions. Notation in 'speech time' rather than musical (metric) time.
Example: Scene 5B, plus previous works *Unleashed* (2012) and *Illusions* (2015).

Chapter 8: Percussion Dialogue scenes – text without a voice
Dialogue scenes where projected text is synchronised with two percussion soloists.
Examples: Scenes 6, Scene 23, plus *Skinner Box* (2010) by Ignas Krunglevičius.

3.1. Process and Timeline

The Doctoral Composer in Residence scheme is a cooperation between the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Royal Opera House. It gives the composer three years in which to conceive, research, write and workshop a full-length opera that is then produced by both organisations and presented in the Royal Opera season. The workshop element is a crucial part of the doctoral research, in that, unlike the traditional commission-and-deliver process for making new opera, it allows

compositional issues to be explored, tested and revised. Below is a brief description of the timeline of this three-year residency, including each workshop or consultation that took place, and a brief description of which of the five strands of enquiry outlined above were affected by each workshop. Of course, some of the workshops were useful for other aspects of the opera that are not covered by this commentary, but they are listed here for completeness.

3.1.1. Year 1

The aim at the outset of the residency was to collaborate with a playwright on an original piece, as discussed on page 15. Therefore the first year was spent meeting theatre writers, producers, directors and other consultants (facilitated by the Royal Opera House), as well as seeing and reading many plays in London and Berlin. Following this period of groundwork, initial meetings with Simon Kane took place in July 2014 and the rights offer was agreed verbally in November 2014 and contractually in March 2015.

Year 1 workshops, April 2014

Three days of workshops in GSMD Silk Street Theatre, involving three singers (soprano, tenor, baritone), one viola player, one horn player and two technical theatre students on sound. In these workshops we explored techniques relating to live stream-of-consciousness tape-cutting techniques and real-time pitch-shifting using amplification on both instruments and voices. The material was a combination of newly-written music with found text and existing material from previous work. These are discussed in Chapter 7 – Tape-cutting.

3.1.2. Year 2

Most of the second year was spent preparing and researching the source text, including conversations with people who knew Sarah Kane. This included researching mental health diagnosis and treatment, literary and cultural references in Kane's text, and thorough analysis of structure, narrative and dramaturgy in the source text (various working diagrams can be found in SM.7). The composition process followed this. Year 2 was also spent appointing the team, including the Director, Conductor and Ensemble, and auditioning and contracting the cast, in collaboration with the Royal Opera.

Year 2 Theatre workshops, April 2015

Two days of workshops in GSMD Milton Court Rehearsal Room 3, led by director Jo McInnes. Jo McInnes was one of three actors in the first production of *4.48 Psychosis* at the Royal Court Theatre in 2000, and in the subsequent tour. These workshops involved seven current or former drama students from GSMD and Emily Edmonds, one of the ROH Jette Parker Young Artists who was part of the opera cast. Most of the participants had previously worked with Jo McInnes on a GSMD production of *4.48 Psychosis*, so they knew the text and her working methods prior to our workshops.

These workshops were focused on read-throughs of the whole text, exploring the emotional world of Sarah Kane's piece, and then focussing in on the dialogue scenes between Doctor and Patient (Scenes 6, 10, 12 and 23). These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

Percussion workshops, April/May 2015 and October 2015

These consisted several sessions totalling around four hours with Berlin-based new-music

percussionist Matthias Engler, mainly focussed on techniques with the orchestral bass drum (see Chapter 8) tubular bells and bowed metallic instruments (October 2015). These workshops were not documented.

Vocal workshop, May 2015

A session with Berlin-based singer Ruth Rosenfeld and sound engineer Matthias Kirschke, exploring live pitch-shift techniques, mainly applicable to Scene 17 (not discussed in this commentary). This workshop was not documented.

3.1.3. Year 3

The final year consisted of completing the composition of the opera, which was submitted scene by scene through January to March 2016, following the workshops detailed below. The vocal score and instrumental parts were prepared, and rehearsals and performances happened in April and May 2016.

Percussion workshop, October 2015

A two-hour session at GSMD with Junior Fellow George Barton, which focussed on cymbal and tam-tam techniques, particularly bowed cymbal. This workshop was not documented.

Year 3 read-through workshops, January 2016

Five days of workshops in the GSMD Milton Court Studio Theatre, led by the conductor. These workshops enabled a read-through of most of the material that was already complete from the opera. There was a full cast of six vocal students from GSMD, and for three sessions we had a complete instrumental ensemble of GSMD Students. The creative team were in attendance for some or all of the week, including director, designer, senior producer and ROH management. The workshops were recorded; recordings of each scene run-through are available in SM.8.

Over ten sessions in five days, the workshops included:

1. Five sessions with the singers on scenes 2, 3, 5A, 5B, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16 and 17. Selected workshopped scenes are discussed in Chapter 4 – The 'Opera Thought Bubble', Chapter 6 – Mid-Phrase Switching, and Chapter 7 – Tape-cutting.
2. One session with the singers and a basic sound setup (6 microphones, desk), to try out pitch-shifting ideas written in Scene 17 (not discussed in this commentary.)
3. One session with two percussionists and a projector on scenes 6, 10 and 12. This is discussed in Chapter 8 – Percussion Dialogues**.**
4. Three sessions with *tutti* cast and ensemble, to put together scenes 3, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16 and also read-through ensemble music in Scenes 4 and 20. Scenes 3 and 9 are discussed in Chapter 6 – Mid-Phrase Switching**.**
5. Presentation and Critical Response. We held a workshop presentation of scenes 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 from the opera that had been rehearsed with the GSMD students, which was attended by interested parties from ROH and GSMD, other colleagues, friends and composition students from GSMD. Following the presentation John Fulljames led a Critical Response Process with

me to gather feedback from attendees about what they had seen[39]. Feedback was collected particularly about Scene 10, which is discussed in Chapter 8 – Percussion Dialogues .

Production

Rehearsals for the opera happened in Rehearsal Room 1 at the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, London. Running up to the rehearsal period, many of the cast received individual coaching from ROH vocal coaches, from the conductor and director. Questions about the score were fielded to me via the conductor and director, and some decisions about certain interpretations were made, provisionally, at that stage. However, none of these was to do with the issues discussed in this commentary.

The rehearsal period consisted:

- One week of music rehearsals in Studio 1. During this week two days of studio recording ran alongside music rehearsals, which involved both *tutti* recording and solo recording, of spoken voice and sung material, as well as other effects required in the score such as breathing gasping, choking, whispering. These sessions are discussed more in Chapter 7 – Tape-cutting.
- Three weeks of staging rehearsals in the rehearsal room, leading to a room run of the opera on the last day, attended by ROH and GSMD artistic teams, with feedback offered afterwards.
- Tech week in the theatre, which included three Stage & Piano sessions, three sessions of Orchestra only rehearsal and one *Sitzprobe* in the rehearsal room. Following that, there were three Stage & Orchestra rehearsals and then one General (dress) rehearsal with around 100 attendees, after which we also received feedback from John Fulljames (ROH), Simon Kane and selected attendees.

There was one preview performance on 23rd May 2016, then the premiere/press night on 24th May 2016 and three subsequent performances on 26–28 May 2016.

39 Critical Response is a widely-used technique developed by Liz Lerman to illicit constructive and honest feedback from audiences and focus groups about creative work. It was initially developed for Dance Companies but is now used across theatre, music, opera and dance. More information can be found here: http://www.lizlerman.com/crpLL.html

4. The 'Opera Thought Bubble'

In this chapter, I explore a technique that I call the 'opera thought bubble'. This is an analogy of the cartoon thought bubble (as opposed to a speech bubble); see this example from *Family Guy*[40], in which we see illustrations of what each character is thinking, and the final thought bubble in the clip includes dialogue, which itself references the thought bubble. A similar technique is used in film to indicate an internal thought, a character's inner monologue: the camera lingers on a close-up of a character, while simultaneously we hear their recorded voice speaking their thoughts. Take for example this scene from Christopher Nolan's film *Memento* (2000)[41], in which the main character, Leonard, comments on what is happening in the scene in real-time. We do not see his lips move, nor does he break out of the scene to address the the viewer. These are the private thoughts of the character we see on screen, on which we are eavesdropping; this is not a narration to the audience.

Much of Kane's text in *4.48 Psychosis* is in a similar mode. Scenes 2, 5, 7, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 24 fall wholly or partly into this category. They are musings, argumentations, memories, internal dialogues. They are not direct dialogue with another character, nor declamations to the audience.

In these moments of *4.48 Psychosis*, the objective was to create some kind of equivalent to the internal monologue scenario described above in *Memento*. The audience should hear the thoughts of the body on stage, without interpreting this as narrative realism or as declamations that could be heard by the other bodies on stage. Like in *Memento,* the same voiceover technique was used, whereby we hear a recording of Gwen's voice speaking her thoughts. However, on stage there is no possibility of close-up shots or moving focus; the link must be made between the voiceover and the body in another way, to make it clear whose thoughts we are hearing.

This is the opera thought bubble – a character sings wordless musical phrases on stage and we hear their recorded voice speaking their thoughts. I will describe two examples from scenes 5A and 18, illustrating varying gestural association and synchronisation between live voice and spoken voiceover.

4.1. Scene 5A

Kane's text for the beginning of Scene 5 (Kane, 2000: 6–7) is as follows:

> *It wasn't for long. I wasn't there long. But drinking bitter black coffee I catch that medicinal smell in a cloud of ancient tobacco and something touches me in that still sobbing place and a wound from two years ago opens like a cadaver and a long buried shame roars its foul decaying grief.*

This text describes a location (*I wasn't there long*) of a past event, in the past tense; it sets the scene for a memory. The text that follows this excerpt is the memory re-lived. It is distinctly different to this opening paragraph: it is uniformly indented further into the page, it is in the present tense, it is much angrier[42]. Therefore, it made sense to divide Kane's scene into two sub-scenes, Scene 5A and Scene 5B. Scene 5A is in the timeframe that we see on stage, setting the scene for the memory that we re-live

40 Excerpt from *Family Guy* (1999–2016, created by Seth MacFarlane, 20th Century Fox) https://youtu.be/_ThkQTo8-jI

41 Excerpt from *Memento* (2000, dir. Christopher Nolan, Newmarket Films) https://youtu.be/BDkUTXDNxao?t=25s

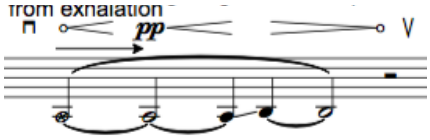
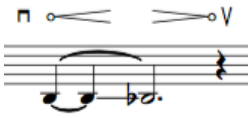
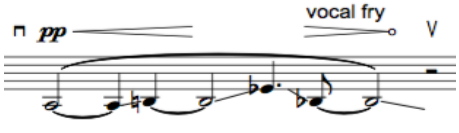
in the present tense in Scene 5B, which is discussed in the Chapter 7 – Tape-cutting.

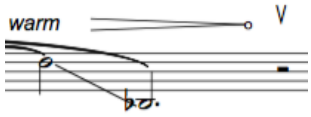
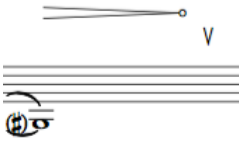
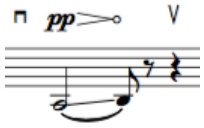
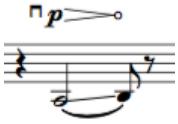
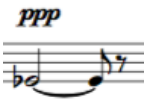
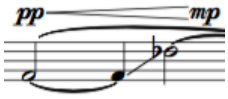
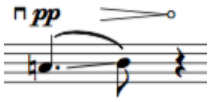
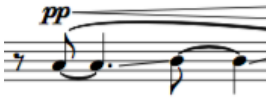
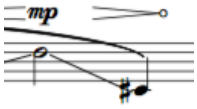
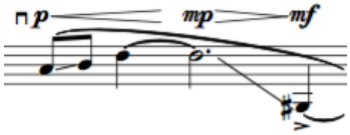
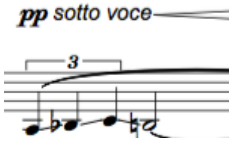
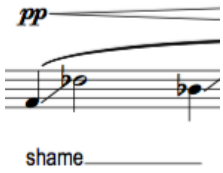
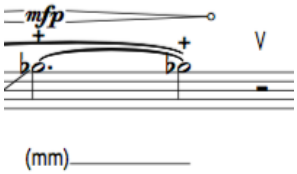
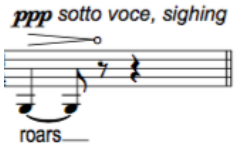
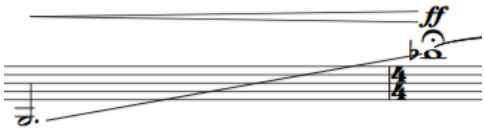
The 'opera thought bubble' was implemented in Scene 5A as a solo passage for Gwen. To do this, I parsed Kane's text into 21 short utterances:

It wasn't for long
I wasn't there long
But drinking bitter black coffee
I catch
I catch
that
medicinal smell
in a cloud of ancient tobacco
and something
something
touches
and something touches me
in that still sobbing place
and a wound
from two years ago
opens
like a
cadaver
and a long buried shame
roars
its foul decaying grief

Each fragment was recorded individually in the studio as spoken text, spoken by Gwen, and then treated to narrow-band EQ filter and light distortion to make the sound reminiscent of a small cassette recorder. These fragments constituted the voiceover part, in 21 audio cues.

Short vocal phrases, mainly hummed, were written to accompany each of these cues. The vocal phrases were to be sung live by the performer, at the same time as the pre-recorded text was played back. These phrases are shown in the table in Figure 13 and *in situ* in the score excerpt in Figure 14.

It wasn't for long	
I wasn't there long	
But drinking bitter black coffee	

42 Kane frequently uses varying levels of indentation in *4.48 Psychosis*, as a way of fragmenting the text to indicate different voices or perspectives.

I catch	
I catch	
that	
medicinal smell	
in a cloud of ancient tobacco	
and something	
something	
touches	
and something touches me	
in that still sobbing place	
and a wound	

from two years ago	
opens	
like a	[with phase above]
cadaver	
and a long buried shame	
roars	
its foul decaying grief	

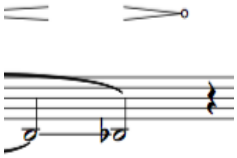
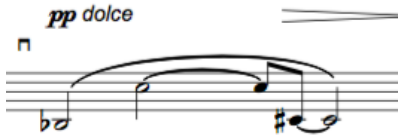



Figure 13: Table showing pre-recorded text fragments and their corresponding sung vocal phrases in Scene 5A

The vocal fragments begin very simply in the lower register and gradually become more elaborate and higher in the *tessitura* through the scene[43]. Where a word or phrase repeats, so, approximately, does the musical phrase (e.g. *I catch; something*). The vocal phrases are intercut with recorded breathing sounds, so they sound like relaxed exhalations (marked on the score as inhale (up-bow symbol) and exhale (down-bow symbol)).

One variation to this system was made: on the words *opens like a cadaver*, the single word *shame* was sung, rising to a high G-flat, the highest note in the scene and the climactic point. The closed-mouth 'm' at the end of the word was held to seamlessly merge into a return to the hummed sound.

43 See rehearsal letters 5A to 5D in the score.

Figure 14: Excerpt from Scene 5A showing Gwen's part and the pre-recorded spoken cues

The following audio cues were similarly joined by a single sung phrase, as can be seen in Figure 14:

medicinal smell – in a cloud of ancient tobacco
something – touches
and something touches me – in that still sobbing place
and a wound – from two years ago

This scene was in free tempo; the Deputy Stage Manager (DSM) cued each voiceover fragment by following Gwen *colla voce,* with help from the conductor. Despite the joined musical phrases shown above, the corresponding pre-recorded phrases remained as separate audio cues so the that DSM had maximum control over the pacing of playback. In other words, '*medicinal smell*' was a separate cue to '*in a cloud of ancient tobacco*', even though they were to be played back during a single sung phrase. Likewise for '*opens*', '*like a*', '*cadaver*'. Some time was spent rehearsing the cueing of the recordings *colla voce* with Gwen, the DSM and the conductor; it was vital that they were cued 'musically', with a sense of poise and feeling.

The audio cues were channeled through the on-stage speaker so that the sound source was as close to the performer as possible, with the aim of ensuring the audience interpreted the voiceover and the performer as connected entities. This proximity of sound source and the close synchronisation between voiceover phrase and sung phrase established clearly the mechanism of the 'opera thought bubble' in Scene 5A. This allowed a later scene, Scene 18, to develop that mechanism, attempting to break the direct synchronisation between voiceover phrase and sung phrase.

4.2. Scene 18

Having set-up the notion of 'hearing thoughts' in Scene 5A, as expressed by a direct synchronisation between a voiceover phrase and a sung phrase, in Scene 18 I attempted to break that synchronisation but still maintain the dramaturgical connection between recorded voice and live singing voice.

Kane's text for Scene 18 is as follows (Kane, 2000: 27):

– At 4.48 when sanity visits for one hour and twelve minutes I am in my right mind. When it has passed I shall be gone again, a fragmented puppet, a grotesque fool. Now I am here I can see myself but when I am charmed by vile delusions of happiness, the foul magic of this engine of sorcery, I cannot touch my essential self.

  Why do you believe me then and now?

  Remember the light and believe the light. Nothing matters more. Stop judging by appearances and make a right judgement.

– It's all right. You will get better.

– Your disbelief cures nothing.

  Look away from me.

The dashes in the left margin indicate a dialogue scene between patient and doctor, as in scenes 1, 6, 10, 12 and 23 discussed in Chapter 8 – Percussion Dialogue scenes. However, despite Kane's dashes,

most of this scene is actually monologue by the main character, and the content is very similar to Scene 2 ('*Remember the light and believe the light'*) and Scene 21 ('*At 4.48 I shall sleep*') both of which reference themes in Scene 18 with the repetition of *Remember the light and believe the light* and the refrain of *At 4.48*.

For these reasons, Kane's dashes were ignored and Scene 18 was set as a solo scene for Gwen, and re-framed as an internal monologue. The same thought-bubble technique was applied as in Scene 5A, but in contrast to that scene the spoken text was not broken into fragments. Breaks for new cues were only made where there are line breaks in Kane's text, as shown in Figure 15. One sentence was cut.

Vocal phrases were written for Gwen in a solo scene, to be hummed live, exactly as in Scene 5A. These consisted a repeated rising two-note phrase with a *glissando* in between, and treated to small variations through the scene. There was no direct synchronisation between sung phrase and pre-recorded spoken cue. Gwen's melodic line in this scene is shown in Figure 16, along with the cue points where each pre-recorded spoken text cue is triggered by the DSM. The repetitive vocal motif is established with seven iterations before the first spoken text cue is triggered. The ensemble music supporting this consists of sustained chords built on perfect fifths a third apart, in strings and piano, with strings slowly sliding between chords.

All musical phrases are hummed, with the exception of two important lines in which Gwen voices the words alongside (but not synchronised with) the pre-recorded spoken text: *Why?* (bar 28) and *Remember the light and believe the light* (bar 30). These words were chosen as the most dramaturgically important in the scene, and therefore treated differently. At these points the duplication of words across sung voice and spoken text further reinforces the dramaturgical link between the spoken voice and the sung voice – it tells the listener that we are hearing this person's thoughts. These sung phrases were further differentiated by sitting higher in the *tessitura* on pitches C and B-flat respectively, which have not previously been heard in the voice in this scene, with accompanying harmonic changes in the ensemble.

It is also interesting to note that the Doctor's sole phrase in bar 35, '*It's all right, you will get better',* is triggered in a general pause – only the accordion holds a chord from the previous bar – and the cue is not linked to a sung phrase by the performer. This spoken phrase is pre-recorded by Lucy, the

Cue 1	*At 4.48 when sanity visits for one hour and twelve minutes I am in my right mind. When it has passed I shall be gone again, a fragmented puppet, a grotesque fool. Now I am here I can see myself but when I am charmed by vile delusions of happiness, the foul magic of this engine of sorcery, I cannot touch my essential self.*
Cue 2	*Why do you believe me then and now?*
Cue 3	*Remember the light.*
Cue 4	*and believe the light*
TEXT CUT	~~Nothing matters more. Stop judging by appearances and make a right judgement.~~
Cue 5 (Doctor)	*It's all right. You will get better.*
Cue 6	*Your disbelief cures nothing.*
Cue 7	*Look away from me.*

Figure 15: Table showing the division of Kane's text for Scene 18 into seven pre-recorded spoken cues.

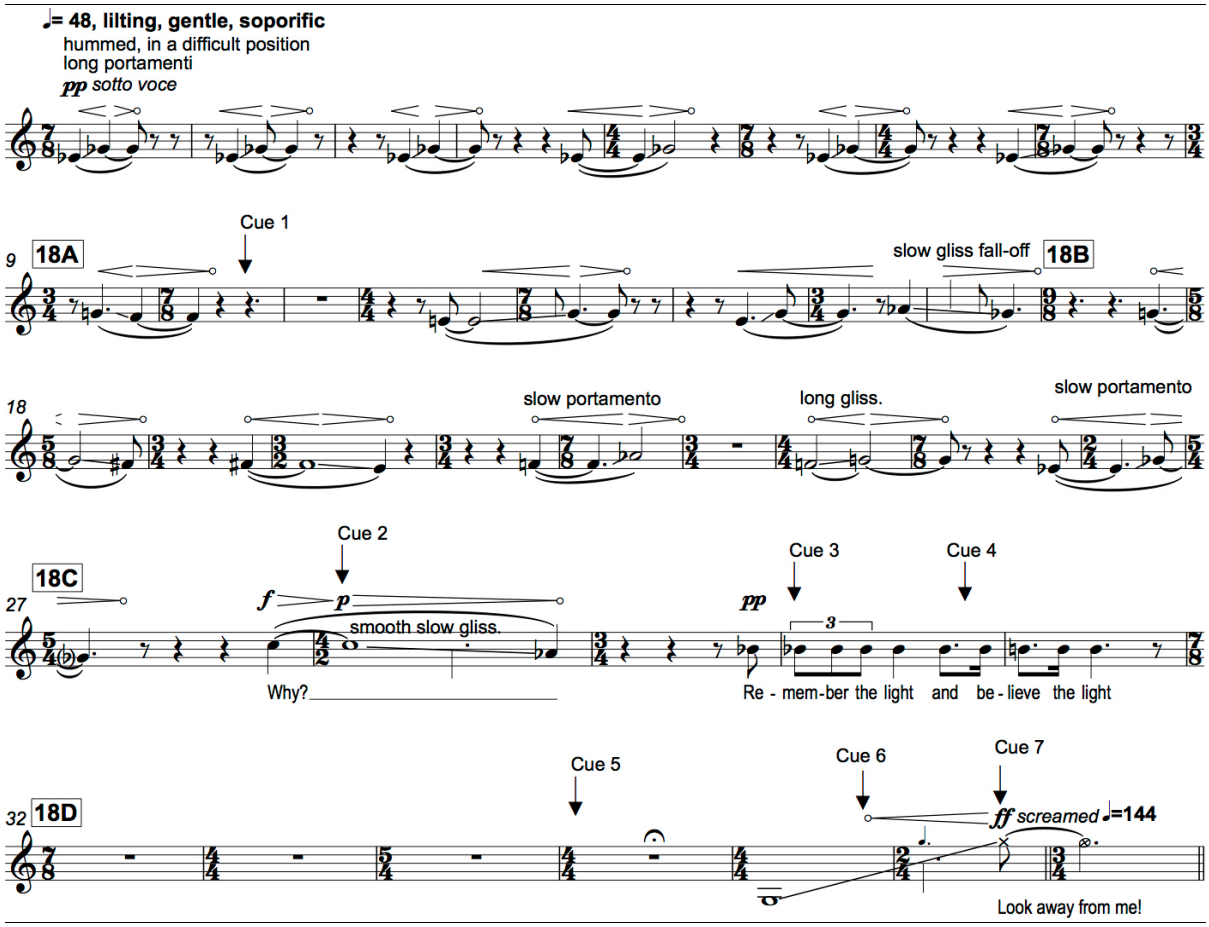


Figure 16: Gwen's vocal line in Scene 18 showing cue points for pre-recorded spoken text

character that most often plays the role of Doctor in other scenes. However, Lucy may or may not appear on stage at that point, so her pre-recorded voice may exist in reality (if she is present) or in Gwen's mind (if she is absent); this musical setting leaves that choice open for the director to address.

I have discussed two examples from the opera of how pre-recorded voice can be interpretatively linked to a performer on stage by matching it up with the sung voice, either directly synchronised (Scene 5A) or not (Scene 18). This 'Opera Thought Bubble' enables us to portray the inner monologue of a character – something that Kane calls on theatre makers to do frequently in *4.48 Psychosis*. However, there are also passages of Kane's text that clearly indicate third party voices. For some of these passages I have also used voiceover techniques, which are described in the next chapter.

5. Voiceover

The previous chapter dealt with a voiceover technique that helps the audience interpret pre-recorded spoken text as the inner thoughts of a body on stage, by linking those audio cues with live sung phrases. However, in Scene 14, Kane writes about the main character in the third person, indicating a third-party voice belonging to someone other than the main character. Here, a voiceover was used that was not linked to singing, that was not to be heard as belonging to a body on stage, that is not an inner monologue. In other scenes, I used this 'de-personified' voiceover for dramaturgical reasons, such as to represent the voice of an imaginary lover in Scene 11, or for musical reasons, such as so that the recorded voice could be truly screamed (which a singer cannot do on stage) in Scene 16. These scenes will be discussed here in order: Scene 14, Scene 11, Scene 16.

5.1. Scene 14

> *Lofepramine, 70mg, increased to 140mg, then 210mg. Weight gain 12kgs. Short term memory loss. No other reaction.*
>
> *Argument with junior doctor whom she accused of treachery after which she shaved her head and cut her arms with a razor blade.*
>
> *Patient discharged into the care of the community on arrival of acutely psychotic patient in emergency clinic in greater need of a hospital bed.*
>
> *Citalopram, 20mg. Morning tremors. No other reaction.*
>
> *Lofepramine and Citalopram discontinued after patient got pissed off with side affects* [sic] *and lack of obvious improvement. Discontinuation symptoms: Dizziness and confusion. Patient kept falling over, fainting and walking out in front of cars. Delusional ideas – believes consultant is the antichrist.*
>
> (Kane, 2000: 22)

This excerpt of text from Scene 14 is in the style of medical notes about the main character. The scene documents ten different drug treatments for depression and the patient's medical response to each, ending with a description of an unsuccessful suicide attempt by overdose. The text refers to the patient in the third person, and also to other patients and medical professionals in the third person. Therefore the speaker is neither the patient nor the Doctor/Therapist who is featured in the dialogue scenes. It is the voice of a third-party observer – presumably also a medical professional.

Any voiceover applied to this scene needed to be distinct from the 'opera thought-bubble' technique described earlier. The audience must not interpret the voiceover text as belonging to a body on stage, but rather that the voice comes from outside the stage, from a body that we cannot see, and therefore removed from the action that is happening on stage.

I considered three different approaches to dealing with this third-person text:

1. The text is projected only. It is de-personified because there is no human voice element.
2. The text is pre-recorded by a voice which evidently does not belong to any body on stage. For example, a male voice.
3. The text is pre-recorded by a voice belonging to a cast member, although there is no sung

(live) voice to which the pre-recorded voiceover can be associated.

I will outline how the scene was written first using approach one, but that developments during the rehearsal process led us to try approaches two and three.

Background research for this opera found examples of all of these approaches in theatre productions that also have an indirect relationship between character, narrative and performer, similar to *4.48 Psychosis*. For example, in *Hyperion. Briefe eines Terroristen,* director/designer Romeo Castellucci projects statistics of the atomic composition of water in large typeface on a downstage scrim, synchronised with electronic beeps, forming a 3-minute interlude in the piece[44]. Similarly, director Katie Mitchell and writer Alice Birch, in their piece *Ophelias Zimmer* (2015), project text descriptions of the five stages of death-by-drowning onto the set in interludes between stage action[45]. The latter example is accompanied by a pre-recorded male voiceover and synchronised with music, while no bodies are visible on stage. Both of these examples use these interludes as blackouts, opportunities for scenic changes.

Inspired by these examples, I conceived Scene 14 as an interlude in blackout, to allow a scenic change, in line with Scenes 4, 8 and 20. Like those scenes, Scene 14 has a close synchronisation between music and projection, with the conductor on a click track and the projection exported as a video and synchronised to the click track. No voiceover or singing, either live or pre-recorded, was instructed; this was simply music and text, to be projected in large typeface, downstage, possibly on a scrim, similar to Castellucci's piece.

To achieve this, Kane's text was broken into the following fragments, using her punctuation and short turns of phrase as a guide. The absence of projected text (a blank screen) was instructed with *[blank]* and occasional punctuation was also synchronised with music (usually a *staccato* splash cymbal):

- *Lofepramine,*
- *70mg,*
- *increased to 140mg,*
- *then 210mg.*
- *Weight gain 12kgs.*
- *Short term memory loss.*
- *No other reaction.*
- [blank]
- *Argument with junior doctor whom she accused of treachery*
- *after which she shaved her head and cut her arms with a razor blade.*
- [blank]
- *Patient discharged into the care of the community on arrival of acutely psychotic patient in emergency clinic in greater need of a hospital bed.*
- [blank]
- *Citalopram,*
- *20mg*
- .

44 *Hyperion. Briefe eines Terroristen* (after Hölderlin, dir/design Romeo Castellucci, premiere March 2013). Production Schaubühne Berlin / F.I.N.D. Festival. Information: http://www.schaubuehne.de/de/produktionen/hyperion-briefe-eines-terroristen.html/m=315

45 *Ophelias Zimmer* (text: Alice Birch, dir. Katie Mitchell, premiere December 2015). Co-production Schaubühne, Berlin and Royal Court Theatre, London. Information: http://www.schaubuehne.de/de/produktionen/ophelias-zimmer.html/m=331

- *Morning tremors.*
- *No other reaction.*
- [blank]

The synchronised projection was indicated in the score simply with the position of the each new projection slide; rests are simply for ease of reading, they do not imply a blank screen. Figure 17 shows the projection cue line in an excerpt from the score. The three-line projection stave indicates three different projection positions on the stage: stage left and right positions described in Chapter 8 – Percussion Dialogues, and the central position on the central stave line.

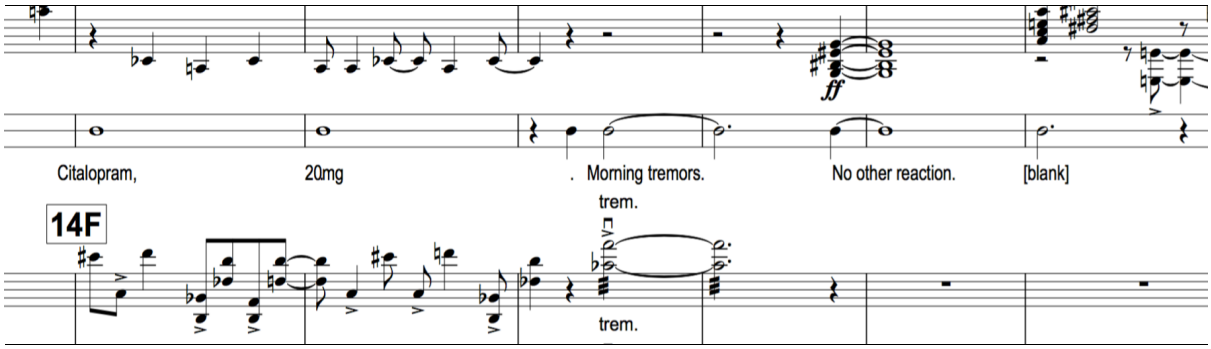


Figure 17: An excerpt of the score for Scene 14, showing the projection cue line, indicating the timing of each projected text fragment.

The excerpt of text above also illustrates Kane's wry, dark humour, evident in this scene and in the scenes discussed in Chapter 8. This humour tends always to be associated with Kane's descriptions of the medical profession, the NHS, treatment, the clinical-mechanistic approach to depression. Perhaps this wry sarcasm indicates a cynicism at the medical profession and their approach to treatment for depression. In Scene 14 this humour is best illustrated by the closing paragraph (Kane, 2000: 23):

> *100 aspirin and one bottle of Bulgarian Cabernet Sauvignon, 1986. Patient woke in a pool of vomit and said 'Sleep with a dog and rise full of fleas.' Severe stomach pain. No other reaction.*

This pantomime of medical treatments deserved a comic musical setting. Musical material was borrowed from the 'numbers scenes', 4 and 20, which also functioned as blackout interludes and featured large downstage projection (see the example of Kane's text for Scene 4 in Figure 6 on page 13). This music features three baritone saxophones supported by bass, piano left hand and accordion in unison syncopated basslines, against an angular syncopated melody in upper strings, piccolo, piano right hand and accordion. Since the piano and accordion carry both lines, the piano part in Figure 18 provides a good example.

This musical material is employed for most of the scene. However, specific situations described in the text are treated with comic word painting; here are some examples:

- Three references to weight gain or loss are accompanied by rising or falling string, accordion and piano *glissandi* with a slide whistle. See bars 17–18, 60–61, 120–121.
- Two references to sleeping are accompanied by a very high and quiet held chord in accordion and string harmonics, with a toy piano playing the tune of 'rockabye baby' in a slower metre. See bars 29–31, 137–143.

- The description of the patient "*falling over, fainting and walking out in front of cars"* is accompanied by wide, one-finger trills in upper strings, a long descending *glissando* in the bass and baritone saxophones playing short, downwards, glissandi gestures on high cluster chords, reminiscent of cartoon depictions of swerving cars, beeping horns, and the Doppler Effect as cars whizz by. See bars 99–105 and Figure 19.

In summary, Scene 14 was conceived as described, with projected text, downstage in blackout, text references supported by word painting in the music, without human voice heard or body seen, just like the Castellucci interlude. However, by the time of production it was clear that it was impossible to stage the scene this way, so the rehearsal process led to changes in approach.

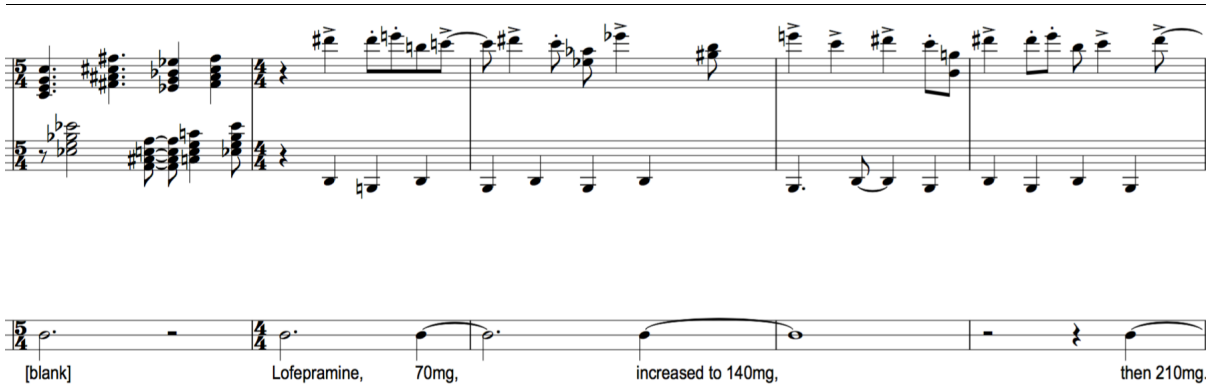



Figure 18: A excerpt of the piano part from the score for Scene 14, showing the two-part counterpoint employed for most of the scene and the projection cues to which it is aligned.

Changing approach during rehearsals

The staging concept of this production of *4.48 Psychosis* involved the whole 6-member cast being on stage almost for the entire show, regardless of whether they were singing of not. In addition, there was no house curtain used nor scrim at the front of the stage; all projection was done onto the white walls of the set. Total blackout was also not possible because of stray light from the band music stands and the high visibility of the white walls. See Figure 20, a production photograph from Scene 14, which shows the set, a hive of fast activity around one static performer, Gwen, the projections on the upstage wall of the set, and the upstage position of the band above the set.

As the set was always visible and performers were always on stage, the Director felt it important to use this musical interlude to stage a fast, choreographed movement scene. We discussed approaches 2 and 3 above (see page 30), and agreed to try a recorded voiceover to better support the loud, lively music and the flurry of physical activity on stage, and to reinforce the use of voiceover, which was part of the style and language of the production. We tried both options: a male voice (approach 2), and a female voice from the cast (approach 3). During the rehearsal process we used MIDI mock-up tracks of the instrumental music with overdubbed voiceovers to test out both options.

The male voice was provided by Christian Burgess, Head of Drama at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, a professional actor and director. His voice is particularly distinctive as 'posh', received pronunciation, rich and husky – suitable to represent the clichés of medical consultants. The female voice from the cast was Susanna Hurrell (Suzy) – also a clear voice with received pronunciation, and

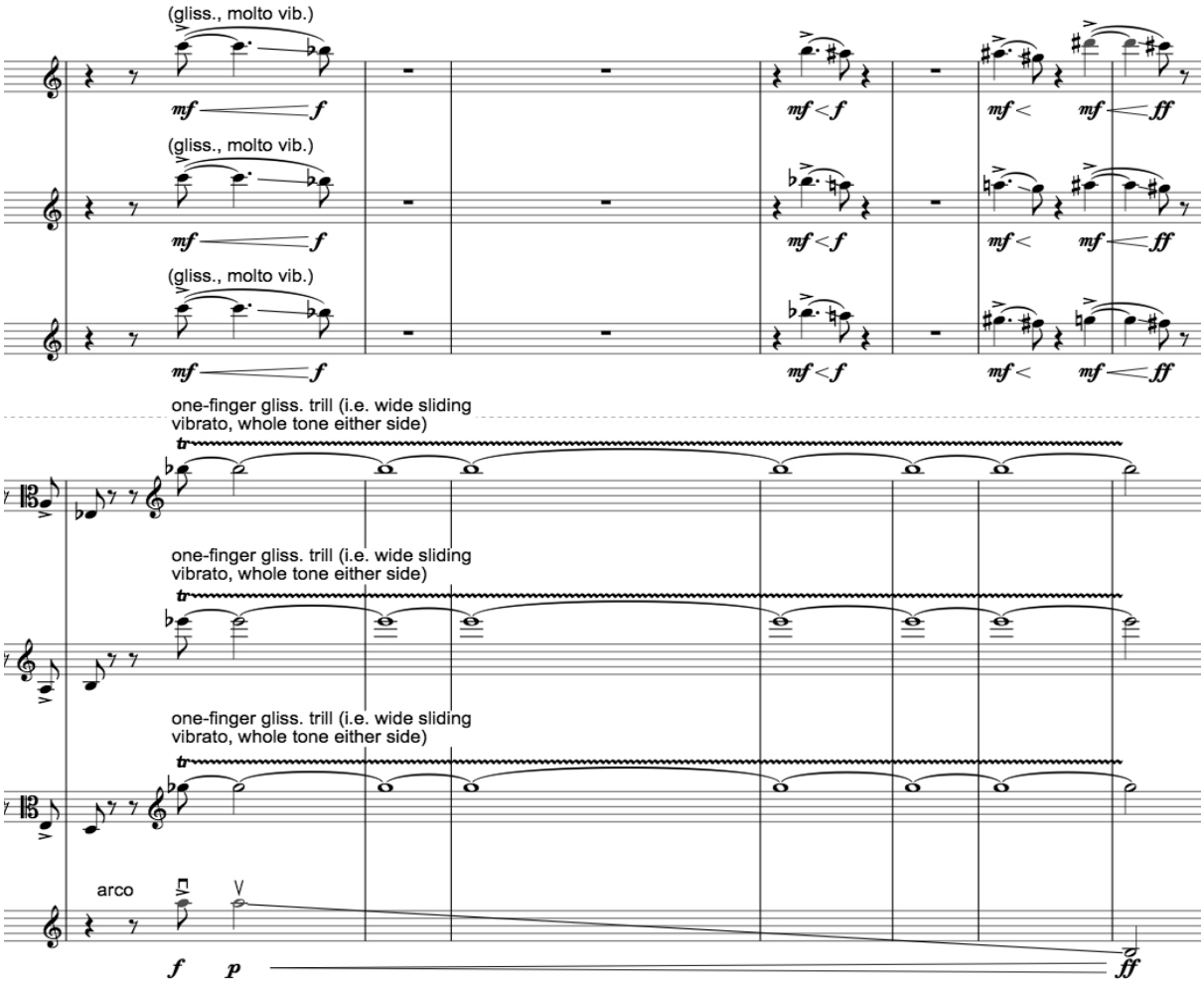



Figure 19: An excerpt of the score for Scene 14 showing baritone saxophone and string accompaniment to the phrase "Patient kept falling over, fainting and walking out in front of cars"

Figure 20: Photo of the opening of Scene 14 in this production of 4.48 Psychosis. Photo © Stephen Cummiskey

who provided the main voiceover for Scene 5B (see Chapter 7) that also describes the main character's experiences with doctors.

In both cases, the voiceover was synchronised with the click track and the projected text, and both mock-ups were tried in staging rehearsals with the cast. Both voice recordings are available in SM.9.

A choice between the two had to be made. The male voice clearly signifies a voice that is other to the all-female cast, and therefore other to any physical representation of the patient on stage. However, as the only occurrence of the male identity in this production, this voice introduced gender problems. The male voice could suggest a patriarchal relationship between the patient and a/the doctor. It could also confuse the role of Lucy, who at several points in the production stepped out of the hive-mind cast to play the role of the doctor, either in a sung role in Scenes 2, 17 and 23, a voiceover role in Scene 18, or as a mime in Scenes 6, 10, 12 and 21. How would this distinctively male voice relate to the female doctor appearing in certain scenes on stage? There could be no ambiguity with a male voice; this voice could not be interpreted as part of a fantasy, a memory or a projection within the patient's mind. It was too real.

The female voice from the cast allowed us to live within the hermetically-sealed hive-mind world we had created, without introducing a voice that was so clearly 'other'. The ambiguity between real and fantasy, present and past, with which this production played in other scenes, would be maintained by using Suzy's voice for the voiceover. The decision was made – approach 3 from the list.

The grammar of Kane's text is clearly third person, but to support further the third-party point of view, the choreography of the scene did not single out a single body on stage to whom this voiceover could belong. It was very clearly outside of the stage action to the extent that the audience would not interpret this as 'hearing inner thoughts' in the way the Opera Thought-Bubble did in scenes 5A and 18. So, after trying three approaches and some experimentation during the rehearsal room, we settled on a solution that suited this production. Future productions may make different decisions, of course, such as reverting to the Castellucci-style text-only blackout scene. The score leaves these possibilities open, as discussed in Chapter 9.2.3 – Different directors.

5.2. Scene 16

The development of Scene 16 followed a similar path to the development of Scene 14, in the sense that they arrived at the same final treatment (voiceover with projected text) by the time of the premiere. However, Scene 16 was originally written as a rhythmically-complex chorus of live *parlando* voices with a soprano duet descant. No voiceover was conceived, but a live sung-spoken performance. I will discuss how this change towards voiceover and projection happened as a solution to practical problems exposed by workshops.

The first part of Kane's text for Scene 16 is given here, clearly indicating the prevailing anger of the scene through historical references, descriptions of violence, swearing, use of capitals:

– *I gassed the Jews, I killed the Kurds, I bombed the Arabs, I fucked small children while they begged for mercy, the killing fields are mine, everyone left the party because of me, I'll suck your fucking eyes out sent them to your mother in a box and when I die I'm going to be reincarnated as your child only fifty times worse and as mad as all fuck I'm going to make your life a living fucking hell I REFUSE I REFUSE I REFUSE LOOK AWAY FROM ME*

(Kane 2000: 25)

An example of the original scoring of Scene 16 is shown in Figure 21. The pattern of this vocal writing for the lower four voices follows the same pattern as in Scene 3: the '*I*' of each phrase is sung in metre and the remaining text is spoken in free rhythm (see also the discussion in Chapter 6.1– Scene 3). Figure 21 shows that the piccolo and snare drum players were also required to articulate these free speech rhythms, in approximate synchronisation with the four voices.

This version of Scene 16 was rehearsed with singers and ensemble in the Year 3 Read-through workshops in January 2016. The full score for this version and a recording of this workshop run-through is given in SM.10 and SM.8.9 respectively. The workshops made clear:

- the ensemble and two descant sopranos overpowered the spoken chorus
- the vocal lines lacked the biting anger of Kane's text, because the voices sounded too controlled, and the singers were avoiding proper shouting.
- the harmony and orchestration in the ensemble was mis-judged and sounded too derivative of bombastic, superficial drama.
- A rehearsal process would necessitate rhythms for spoken text being decided and learnt, negating the freedom in the original writing.
- Singing this scene was exhausting for the cast. If a non-live version of this scene were made, it would give the singers a valuable rest during an opera that already required great stamina.

Given these problems, the director, conductor and I agreed that this scene would be best without live voice but with projection only. This decision thereby changed the relationship between performer, text and voice: rather than expressing the anger of this scene through live vocal performance, anger would remain in the projected words only, and could be supported physically through staging. In the new version, the ensemble music would stay roughly the same, with some corrections to harmony and orchestration, and the rhythms for piccolo and snare drum would be written out to address the problems described above.

This projection-only version was tested in rehearsals, but was found to be not fully effective in fully delivering the anger of the scene against the loud music and the stage action. The unbridled shouting / screaming that is suggested by Kane's use of capitals was lacking, and the Director and I felt that the scene could benefit from a voiceover recording of the text.

We could not ask singers to scream and shout, so Sarah Fahie, our movement director, offered to give an impassioned performance of the text at full volume screaming. This was recorded in the studio and played as a voiceover with the music and projection. Unlike the original version of this score, which synchronised the live shouted/sung text and the music, this pre-recorded voiceover was not synchronised. The projections were cued manually by the DSM in sync with the pre-recorded voice

Figure 21: First page of the original version of Scene 16, showing a sung chorus with descant and text-rhythms for snare drum and piccolo.

rather than the music, so the link between text rhythm and musical rhythm was lost[46]. The projections appeared more like surtitles to a pre-recorded shouted text. See SM.11 for the audio of the voiceover.

The unsynchronisation led to the interesting ramification that the voiceover finished about six seconds after the music, when played at the indicated tempo. The words *I REFUSE I REFUSE LOOK AWAY FROM ME* overspilled and were accompanied only by the fading air-raid siren that continues after the ensemble has stopped playing (see Score: 16C). This 'untidiness' seemed appropriate to combat the problem of music and voice sounding too controlled, too 'composed', in this scene.

The overall result was a text-voice-projection relationship similar to that of Scene 14, except that in Scene 16 the synchronised projection and voice were not synchronised with the music. However, the routes to these two solutions were very different, but both involved trial and error experimentation. In the case of Scene 16, practical issues came into play, and the voiceover was added because it enabled us to achieve a vocal quality that would not be possible with a trained singer, neither live nor pre-recorded. The finalised score, however, retains the synchronised projection cues and only a performance note that a voiceover may be included, at the discretion of the director. Further discussion of such issues are discussed in Chapter 9 – Evaluation.

5.3. Scene 11

Scene 11 shows an example of voiceover without projected text. The scene setting is constructed of three independent strands, shown in Figure 22. Kane's text in this scene was divided into three groups accordingly, colour-coded as shown in Figure 23, and showing cut text. Gwen and Jen do not sing, and the strands are dramaturgically, musically and temporally independent.

1. Red: The primary strand features a stand-alone love song for Clare accompanying herself on a small keyboard, reminiscent of a familiar scene – the teenager sitting alone in their bedroom indulging adolescent depression by playing / singing pop songs[47].
2. Blue: Emily, Lucy, Suzy singing short repeated phrases.
3. Green: Spoken voiceover *In ten years time.*

The point of view of the green voiceover text is ambiguous. It is unclear whether 'she' refers to the main character in the third person, or to an imaginary lover. In other words, whether this voice is that of the main character or the voice of a third party, a lover. To play with that ambiguity, we decided to remove this text from the live stage action and instead place it in voiceover, but to record the text with Gwen's voice, who is most established throughout the opera as the lead proponent of the main character 'hive-mind' and whose spoken voice we have heard most of through the opera. Therefore the voice could be ambiguously heard as external/third-party (because it is outside of the stage action) or as the main character (because it is Gwen's voice). As Gwen does not sing in this scene at all (although in this production she was on stage and involved in physical action in this scene), her voice is not

46 Automation of this cueing could be done, since the timing of the voiceover recording is fixed. We may do this in the 2018 revival.

47 That was the dramaturgical conceit for this scene, although in the production the keyboard part was recorded rather than played live. The director, conductor and I have agreed to try to reinstate the live keyboard part in the scheduled revival in 2018.

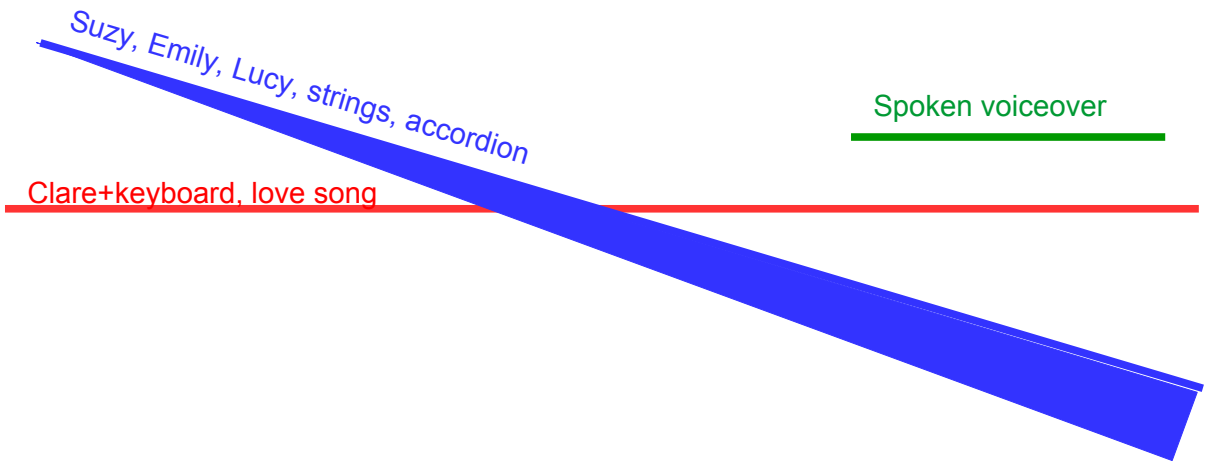


Figure 22: Diagram showing the three independent strands of Scene 11, with relative pitch and volume

associated with a singing action, and therefore is not to be read as an inner monologue of a singing character on stage. In other productions she could be absent from the stage altogether.

In this chapter I have discussed voiceover techniques distinct from the thought-bubble technique described in the previous chapter. Scene 11 uses a more traditional voiceover, unsynchronised to any musical metre, live sung gestures, nor projected text. In contrast, Scenes 14 and 16, after a period of workshops and rehearsal changes, arrived at a similar construction of a voiceover synchronised with projected text and, in the case of Scene 14, also with music. Having dealt with two dramaturgically different kinds of voiceover in these two chapters, I will now move on to spoken text delivered in live performance.

I dread the loss of her I've never touched
love keeps me a slave in a cage of tears
I gnaw my tongue with which to her I can never speak
I miss a woman who was never born
I kiss a woman across the years that say we shall never meet

Everything passes
Everything perishes
Everything palls

~~*my thought walks away with a killing smile*~~
~~*leaving discordant anxiety*~~
~~*which roars in my soul*~~

No hope No hope No hope No hope No hope No hope No hope

A song for my loved one, touching her absence
the flux of her heart, the splash of her smile

In ten years time she'll still be dead. When I'm living with it, dealing with it, when a few days pass when I don't even think of it, she'll still be dead. When I'm an old lady living on the street forgetting my name she'll still be dead, she'll still be dead, she'll still be dead, it's just
fucking
over

and I must stand alone

My love, my love, why have you forsaken me?

~~*She is the couching place where I never shall lie*~~
~~*and there's no meaning to life in the light of my loss*~~

~~*Built to be lonely*~~
~~*to love the absent*~~

Find me
Free me
from this

~~*corrosive doubt*~~
~~*futile despair*~~

~~*horror in repose*~~

I can fill my space
fill my time
but nothing can fill this void in my heart

~~*The vital need for which I would die*~~

Breakdown

Figure 23: Kane's text for Scene 11, showing attribution of lines to three independent musical strands, and cuts.

6. Mid-Phrase Switching

I use the term 'mid-phrase switching' to refer to a performer in live performance switching or alternating between spoken and sung voice mid-way through a phrase. This technique was used in a number of scenes, but I will look at two examples: Scene 3, featuring a simple pattern of switching, and Scene 9 featuring a more complex pattern and layering of these phrases in the vocal ensemble. A number of potential problems with mid-phrase switching will be discussed, such as vocal projection/clarity, dealing with amplification and textural balance in an ensemble.

6.1. Scene 3

Kane's text for Scene 3 is a list of negative statements in the first person. They are taken from, or inspired by, the Beck Depression Inventory, which is a widely-used, self-reporting, multiple-choice questionnaire used to diagnose clinical depression in adults. It was designed by Aaron Beck in the 1961 and subsequently updated in 1978 (BDI-I) and 1996 (BDI-II)[48]. It is likely that Sarah Kane had direct experience of BDI-I and/or BDI-II. An excerpt of Scene 3 is given here:

> *I am sad*
>
> *I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve*
>
> *I am bored and dissatisfied with everything*
>
> *I am a complete failure as a person*
>
> *I am guilty, I am being punished*
>
> *I would like to kill myself*
>
> *I used to be able to cry but now I am beyond tears*
>
> *I have lost interest in other people*
>
> *I can't make decisions*
>
> (Kane, 2000: 4)

The scene contains 33 statements beginning with the word 'I', mostly as isolated statements, sometimes with two statements joined in one sentence by a conjunctive. The musical treatment involved singing the initial word 'I' and speaking the rest of the phrase in free-rhythm, indicated by a crossed notehead. Strings, tubular bells and synthesiser doubled and articulated only the sung notes in unison with the singers. The music was barred, in a consistent tempo of crotchet 92; the time allowed for the spoken portions was estimated in this tempo and indicated with blank staves. An example of the notation is given in Figure 24.

Sung notes were kept in a middle *tessitura*. Most of the phrases were for single voice, but some were for combinations of two, three or four singers, for example *I am being punished* in Figure 24 for Jen and Clare together. Some rehearsal was needed to keep the spoken words together in these moments, but the notation was found to be straightforward.

Once this pattern had been established, some other sentences were sung in a musical metre for

48 For more information about the Beck Depression Inventory and the Beck Institute, see https://www.beckinstitute.org/about-beck/ and http://cps.nova.edu/~cpphelp/BDI.html

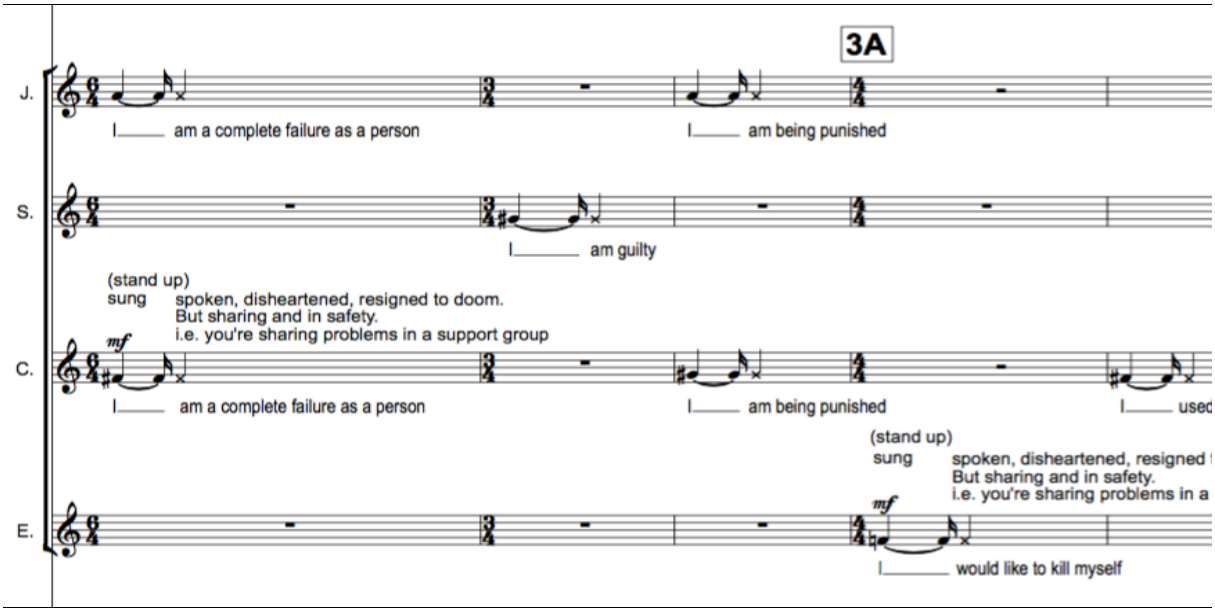


Figure 24: An excerpt of vocal writing in Scene 3, showing sung 'I' and spoken phrases

dramatic effect. For example, *I cannot love* (see Figure 25). Other, subsequent sentences were layered, overlapping each other between the four singers in the scene. As phrases were predominantly spoken rather than sung, this overlapping did not significantly reduce the clarity and audience comprehension. Figure 26 shows the ends of spoken phrases (*eat, sleep, think*) overlapping with the sung entries.

One significant problem was encountered with mid-phrase switching – the natural volume difference between the trained sung voice and the relatively untrained spoken voice. The cast were amplified and a light digital compression was applied to the signal, giving a volume boost to quieter sounds, but this can compensate only minimally for natural volume differences. There is the danger with too much digital correction that sung notes also become amplified, thereby negating any benefit in balance between singing and speaking. In this scene, the solution to this problem was to enable the singers to have maximum control over the volume of their own sung voices, therefore allowing them to balance spoken and sung volumes themselves. Factors at play include:

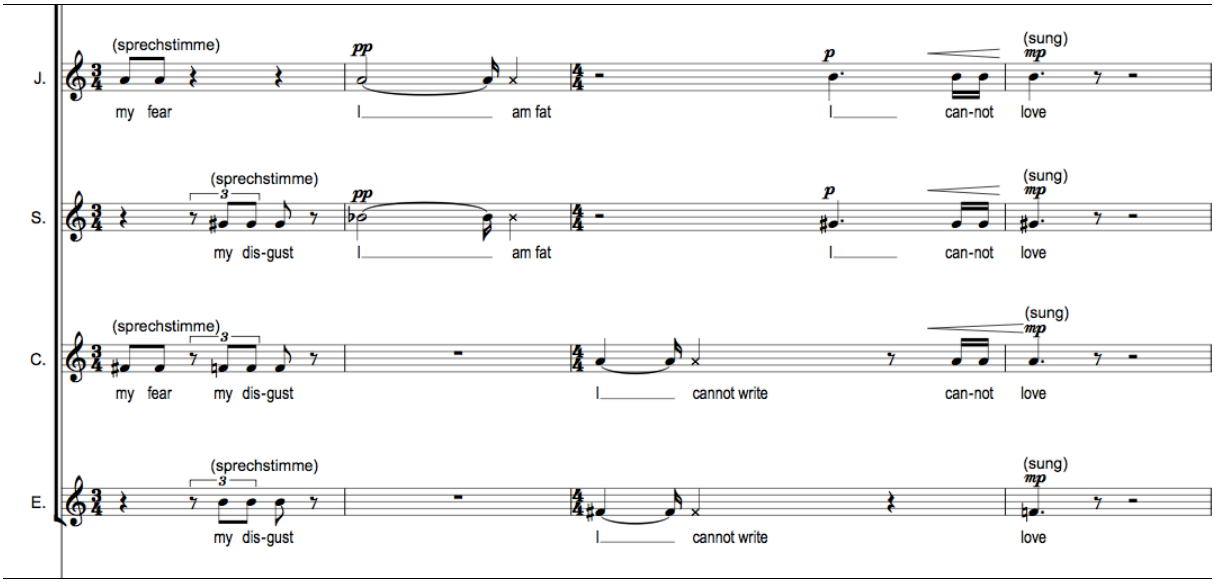


Figure 25: An excerpt of vocal writing in Scene 3 showing rhythmically-notated sung phrases.

- Sung notes in mid-range *tessitura* allow singers to sing softly with maximum control at a volume that matches their spoken voice.
- Minimal instrumental scoring and no instrumental articulation during spoken passages allows words to project through the texture easily. See Figure 26 for an example of this.
- Rehearsal to help singers project their spoken voices, a skill which not all opera singers often have the opportunity to develop.

These solutions worked by allowing the spoken text to be heard easily in a simple musical texture, with relatively low-level, natural-sounding amplification. However, these solutions limited the possibilities of both instrumental and vocal writing. In contrast, Scene 9 featured mid-phrase switching in a much more complex texture of six voices and full instrumental ensemble, which presented similar problems of balance and clarity, but which were solved differently.

Figure 26: An excerpt from Scene 3 showing overlapping vocal phrases and instrumental scoring

6.2. Scene 9

Scene 9 is a scene about sex, rejection and an impossible search for love, in the first person. Kane tells this narrative in a series of short tableaux, separated on the page by *(Silence.)*. This scene was drafted with a more complex layering of vocal lines containing mid-phrase switching. A workshop process exposed problems of balance and clarity in this draft that were addressed by compositional changes in a final draft, and which are discussed here.

The musical setting of Scene 9 used the full cast of singers and *tutti* ensemble, with the short tableaux separated by short bursts of white noise and pseudo-blackouts. The musical concept of each tableau involved clustered harmony, singers' pitches sliding over and against one another on overlapping long notes forming a cloud of creeping dissonance interrupted by bursts of spoken text. My original staging concept involved the singers in close physical contact with each other, as a writhing mass of bodies – the harmony was to be a mirror of the physical action[49].

As in Scene 3, most phrases in this scene begin with 'I', although in this case many are joined with conjunctives to form compound sentences. The first tableau is:

> *Sometimes I turn around and catch the smell of you and I cannot go on I cannot fucking go on without expressing this terrible so fucking awful physical aching fucking longing I have for you. And I cannot believe that I can feel this for you and you feel nothing. Do you feel nothing?*
>
> (Kane, 2000: 12)

The principle of Scene 3 was applied here also: 'I' was sung, and the rest of the phrase after that was spoken. Auxiliary words before 'I' were sung as an anacrusis. Sung words are indicated here in bold.

> ***I** turn around*
>
> ***and** catch the smell of you*
>
> ***and I** cannot go on*
>
> ***I** cannot fucking go on without expressing this terrible so fucking awful physical aching fucking **longing** I have for you*
>
> ***And I** cannot believe*
>
> ***that I** can feel this for **you***
>
> ***and you** feel nothing*

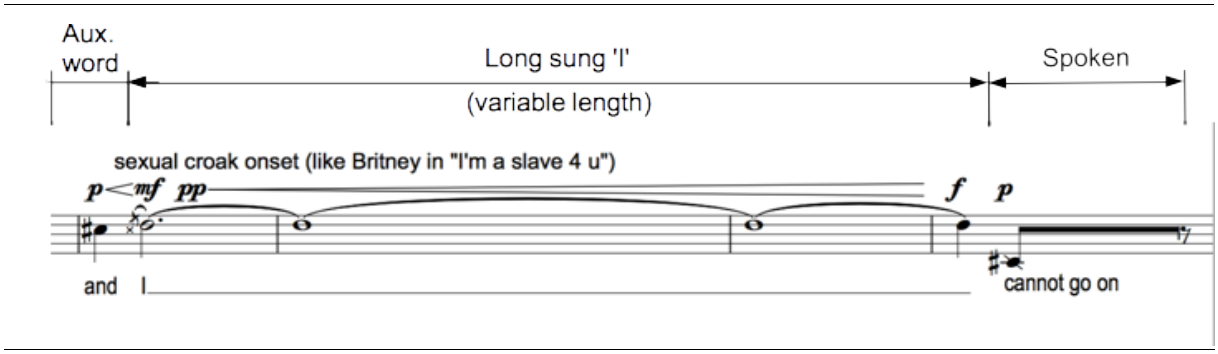


Figure 27: Excerpt from Scene 9 (draft version, b.9, Clare) showing the archetypal phrase structure for this scene.

49 This staging concept was not adopted in the production, but may be explored in the forthcoming revival.

The archetypal musical phrase for this setting can be illustrated by Clare's first entry in the scene (see SM.12: Scene 9 draft version, bar 9), shown here in Figure 27. The duration of spoken words was indicated with an extended beam, and the spoken text was *parlando*, on a pitch, with short vowels and normal (speech) elocution. The short text phrases were all set according to this archetype, although there was much variation and elaboration on this construction, particularly later in the scene. Figure 28 shows the phrases layered across the vocal ensemble, starting and ending at different points to create complete, compound sentences emerging from the cloud of cluster harmony. The phrases were arranged carefully to create a continuous flow of spoken text, hocketing between singers so that the complete text became apparent to the audience from the amalgamated ensemble. Some of this spoken text was for solo performers (Figure 28: *turn around; catch the smell of you*), some of it was doubled. Some of the spoken text 'echoed' around the ensemble (Figure 28, *cannot go on*).

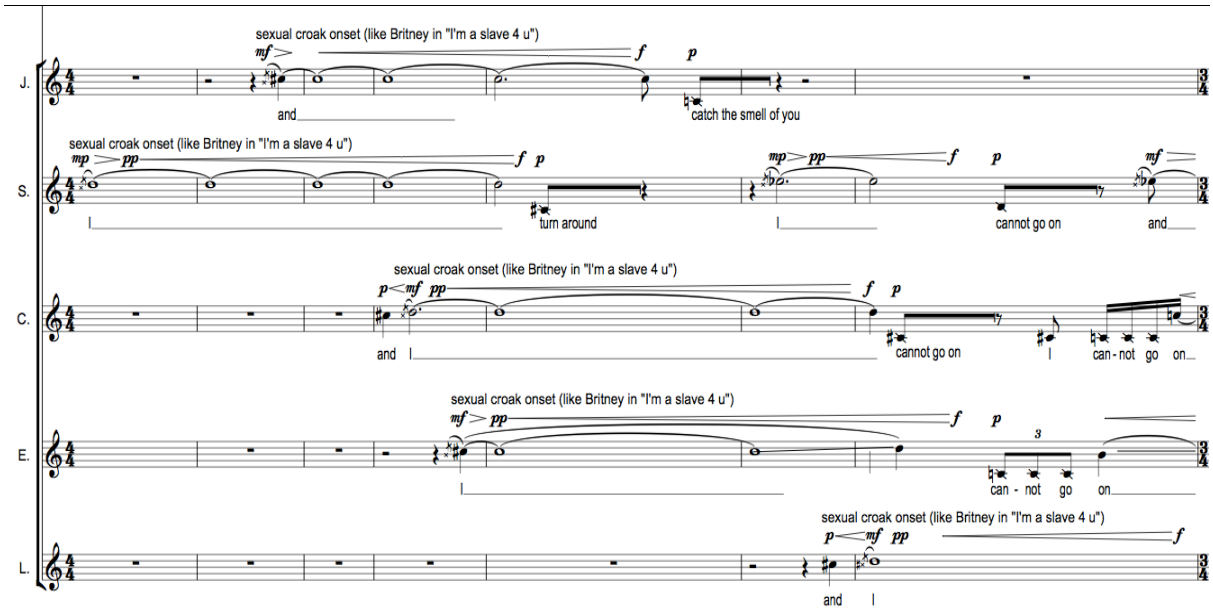



Figure 28: Excerpt from Scene 9, first draft, showing the overlapping layering of phrases.

As discussed earlier, the volume balance between sung and spoken words in Scene 3 was easy to manage because of light scoring and a simple texture. However, in Scene 9, with a *tutti* ensemble and a thicker, more complex vocal texture, there was a greater risk that spoken words would not be heard clearly. As in Scene 3, amplification would provide only minimal help.

The original version of Scene 9 was tested in the Year 3 Workshops with a full cast and ensemble, although without amplification (see SM.8.5 for a recording and SM.12 for a full score of this version). As suspected, these workshops established that both the vocal cluster chords and the instrumental texture were too thick, overpowering the spoken words. The singers verged on shouting the words to be heard, with limited success. Re-scoring a new version was required, with the following aims:

- To thin out the number of long held notes in the vocal ensemble
- To thin out some of the saxophone orchestration
- To delay all *crescendi* in vocal and instrumental parts to just the ends of long notes, so that the overall texture of long notes was kept at a lower dynamic.
- To double more of the spoken words across multiple singers and to thin out some of the echoing / non-unison spoken text.

- To sit the long notes in a more central *tessitura*, giving singers more dynamic control over these notes
- To set spoken text pitches lower, towards the natural speaking range, allowing better spoken projection.
- To reassign parts so that, for each tableau, one singer had majority spoken text and no long held notes. i.e. to remove mid-phrase switching for one singer.

The final point is the crucial one. By re-allocating lines and words, one singer in each tableau could take almost all of the spoken text as a 'thread' woven through the texture, onto which other singers could double spoken text. This performer could be amplified louder than the others because there would no longer be the problem of balancing their spoken text against their singing voice. As the short tableaux were separated by white noise and blackouts, there was ample opportunity for amplification settings to be pre-programmed and quickly switched in blackouts, so that each tableau could have a different singer providing the 'spoken thread'.

To illustrate these changes, Figure 29 shows the final version of the score for the corresponding section of the first version of the score shown in Figure 28. Comparing them:

- Gwen has been added as the 'spoken thread' in this tableau, with only spoken words. Her amplification is higher.
- This section has been transposed down a minor third. Singers' long, held notes are in a more comfortable range; spoken text now lies on pitches closer to a natural speaking pitch.
- All spoken words are now doubled in at least two voices.
- *Crescendo* hairpins have been delayed to the ends of notes.

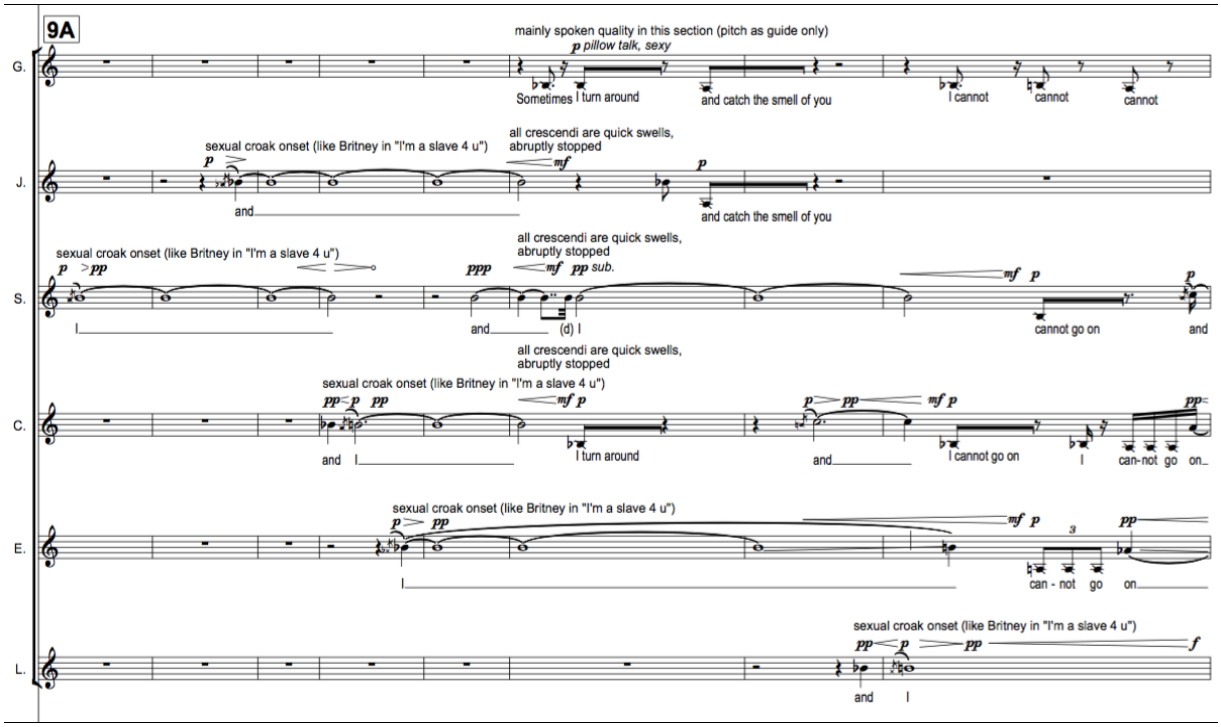


Figure 29: An excerpt of the final version of Scene 9, b.11–18, showing amendments to the original version that improve comprehension of spoken text.

The 'before and after' examples in Figures 28 and 29 do not show a changed number or density of long notes, but such changes were made at other points in the scene when textures became thicker and more complex. Similar changes were also made in the instrumental writing: care was taken to thin out the texture without changing the quality and harmonic density of the cluster chords.

One may ask why the quiet dynamics of the spoken words was unchanged between these two versions, given that spoken-word projection was a problem. To answer that, I argue that a key concern was the quality of spoken voice used in this scene: the spoken voice should always be intimate, sensual, befitting the subject matter of the scene – hence the performance instruction "*pillow talk, sexy*". Declamatory spoken text would not feel right here. Therefore the dynamic indications are qualitative rather than quantitative. The rehearsal process managed to find a balance between a well-projected, louder, spoken voice but which stayed low in the chest register, maintaining a sultry rather than shouted quality.

All of these solutions together achieved spoken text that was audible and comprehensible in performance. There remained a few passages that were still a little overpowered by the musical texture, but these tended to be climactic moments in which I felt musical concerns outweighed text concerns and where any more thinning of the texture would have compromised the musical shape. Therefore no further changes to the score will be made for future performances.

7. Tape-cutting

The previous three chapters discussed uses of pre-recorded and live spoken text where that text was kept relatively intact semantically, according to Kane's source text. This chapter moves on to 'tape-cutting' techniques, where bits of text are cut up, fragmented and treated more like musical material from which a sonic texture can be made.

As discussed in Chapter 1 – Background, the inspiration for this work comes from techniques of tape-cutting and vinyl scratching found in electronic music, with analogies in the theatre such as Beckett's stream-of-consciousness piece *Not I*[50]. In this chapter, I outline research in two earlier works, *Unleashed* and *Illusions,* and go on to explain how these were developed in Scene 5B of *4.48 Psychosis* and then tested in two rounds of workshops. I will discuss how learning points from these workshops and the earlier works informed a U-turn in compositional approach in writing this scene, whilst striving to retain the original concept and spirit of the scene.

7.1. Unleashed

Unleashed (2012)[51] is a short music theatre piece based on verbatim transcripts of interviews with gay men about their sex lives. The first scene of *Unleashed* illustrates my early experimentations with tape-cutting techniques, mimicking those of Cassetteboy, The Avalanches and Beckett. However, *Unleashed* did not work with recorded material but rather applied similar principles to a score: a cut-and-spliced text collage to be performed live by a group of actors and one singer. To illustrate this, here is an excerpt from the original verbatim text from one of the source interviews:

> *I've had this with friends before and I have like a sad I don't have one memory where I'm like yes that's like my pinnacle, I don't think I've had my pinnacle, or i hope not. I hope I've not reached that point where it's all downhill, I'm hoping for something slightly better that I've not had yet.*

Many 'samples' (very short excerpts) were taken from this text and re-ordered/repeated to create a 'stream of consciousness':

> ***I've*** *had this with friends* ***I've*** *had this* ***I've*** *had this with friends* ***I've*** *had this with friends before* ***and I*** *have like a sad* ***I*** *don't have one memory sad sad a sad* ***I*** *don't have one memory* ***I've*** *had this with friends where* ***I'm like*** *yes that's* ***like*** *my pinnacle,* ***and I*** *have like a sad* ***I*** *don't have one* ***I've*** *had this with friends before* ***and I*** *have* ***like*** *a sad* ***I*** *don't have one memory where* ***I'm like*** *yes yes yes yes yes yes yes that's my pinnacle. Yes that's* ***like*** *my pinnacle* ***I*** *don't think I've had my pinnacle,* ***I*** *don't think* ***I*** *don't think* ***I*** *don't think* ***I've*** *had my pinnacle or* ***I*** *hope not.* ***I*** *hope* ***I've*** *not reached that point where it's all* ***I've*** *had this* ***I've*** *had this with friends* ***I've*** *had this* ***I*** *don't have one memory where that's my pinnacle with friends* ***yes*** *with friends yes sad yes sad* ***I*** *have* ***like*** *a sad memory where* ***I'm like*** *yes yes yes that's my pinnacle.* ***I*** *don't think* ***I've*** *had my pinnacle. or* ***I*** *hope not* ***I*** *hope not.* ***I*** *hope* ***I've*** *not reached that point where it's all downhill all downhill sad* ***yes,*** ***I'm*** *hoping for something slightly better that* ***I've*** *not had yet.*

50 Beckett, S. *Not I* (1973) Faber.

51 *Unleashed*, music: Philip Venables, direction: Nick Blackburn, self-produced for Tête-à-Tête Opera Festival, Grimeborne Festival and Sound Scotland, 2012

This text was separated between a singer and a speaker, so that a singer and two viola players memorised musical motifs for the words *I've/I*, *like*, *and* (see Figure 30), and sung/played only these words from the text, highlighted above in red. The black text was spoken by an actor, the pace of which dictated the tempo and flow of the music, without pulse or barlines. Underlined text indicates the words that should be spoken by the whole chorus of actors. Figure 31 shows an excerpt from the performing score with the sung text raised onto a line above for ease of reading; the upper line is the singer's part, the lower line the actors'. Notated fragments for the violas are only given where they differ from the memorised key. A score of Scene 1 of *Unleashed* and a video of this passage from a work-in-progress presentation is given in SM.13 and SM.14[52].

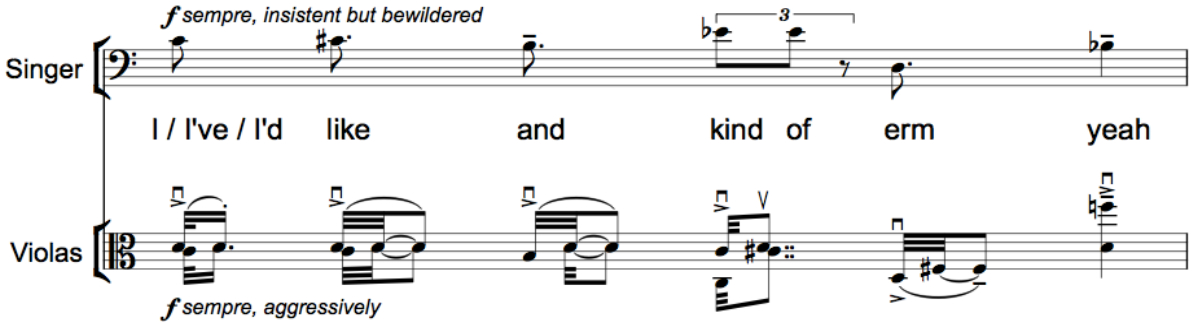


Figure 30: The key used for the first section of Unleashed, to be memorised by singer and viola players.

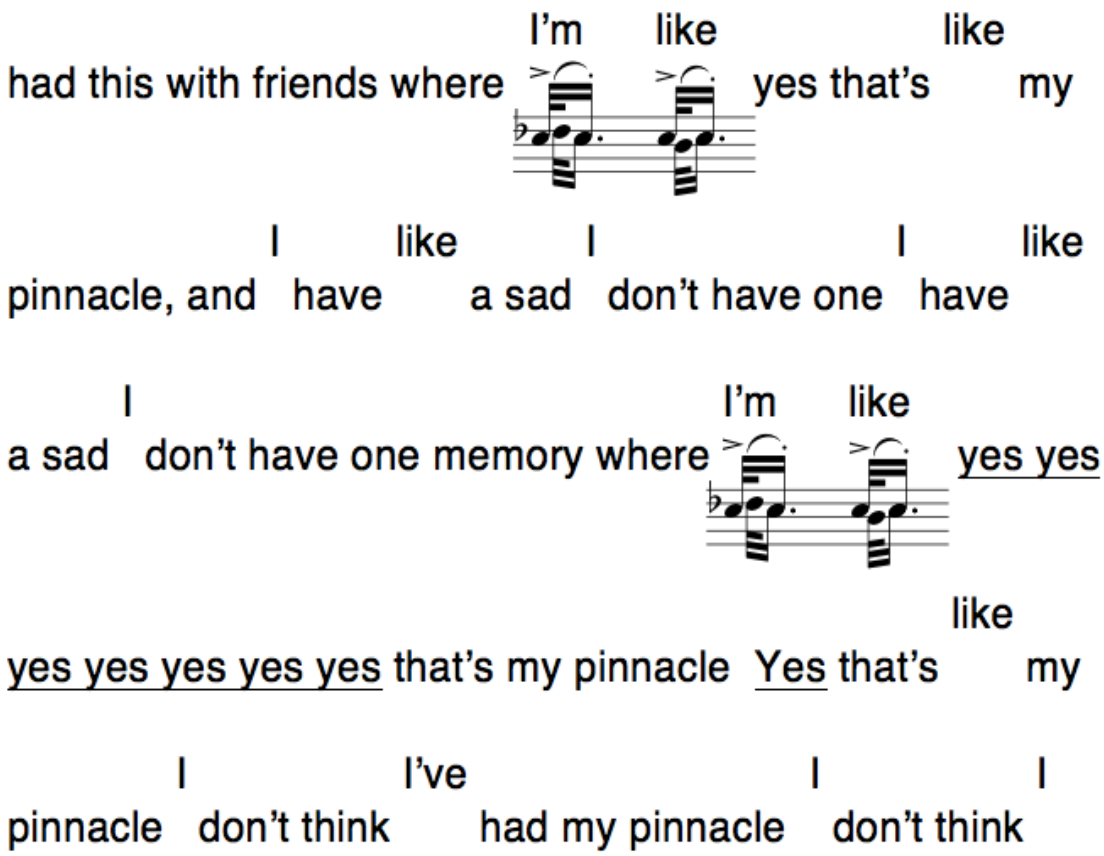


Figure 31: excerpt of the final score of Unleashed *showing the raised, sung words and some viola variations from the Key.*

52 *Unleashed,* Philip Venables, dir. Nick Blackburn. Workshop showing of work in progress, Arcola Theatre, London, 1st Sept. 2012. https://www.youtube.com/embed/GfNAKaB1lE4?start=218&end=456

The rehearsal process for this scene exposed the following problems:

- Intense rehearsal was required to maintain a constant flow without hesitation or mistakes by the performers
- Memorising the stream-of-consciousness text was extremely difficult, almost impossible.
- It was not robust: if any of the vocal performers made a mistake, the performance would likely fall apart because there were so few cue or anchor points on which to reunite.

Despite the rehearsal difficulties, the performances demonstrated that this tape-cutting technique brought out a sense of anger, confusion and uncertainty. The circumlocutions, repeated hesitations and superfluous conjunctive words brought out the vulnerability of the source text, and the hocketing between performers gave a sense of 'common experience'. One personal story was being told but across a number of performers, indicating that this was a shared story, a common experience, possibly happening in multiple, similar iterations in many different lives.

This sense of anger and confusion was important to bear in mind when it came to dealing with *4.48 Psychosis.* The techniques developed in *Unleashed* were used developed further in Scene 5B, as I will discuss later. But first it is important to illustrate another collage technique that laid the groundwork for Scene 5B, this time using recorded rather than live material, like the work of The Avalanches and Cassetteboy. A good example is found in *Illusions,* written a year before *4.48 Psychosis.*

7.2. Illusions

In March 2015, whilst sketching *4.48 Psychosis*, I wrote *Illusions*, a short collaboration with performance artist David Hoyle for live ensemble with video projection, commissioned by the London Sinfonietta as a 'Note to the new Government' and to be premiered at the Southbank Centre two days after the UK General Election 2015.

We filmed David's Hoyle's 'stream of consciousness' improvised rant based on our chosen themes of democracy and gender. This provided two hours of audio-visual source material to which I applied the same sampling techniques as in *Unleashed*, except this time sampling recorded video material rather than text transcriptions. Around 3% of the footage was used for the seven minute piece. The resulting, re-assembled video was put on a click track, and the ensemble music composed in such a way as to mimic the sampling and stuttering techniques of the video material: chords were repeated where words were repeated, as if the live musical soundtrack had been cut and spliced at the same points as the video. To illustrate, four discontiguous excerpts from the unedited footage provided material for a passage of the final piece:

> *Take. Acid.*
>
> *Gender is an illusion. Yeah. Some of us wee-wee out of a fleshy tube, some of us sit down. I do not believe that genitals mirror a gender, because I don't believe in male and female, masculine feminine.*
>
> *Fleshy tube or no fleshy tube. To me, yes, there may be biological differences between two people. So what! The idea that you incubate a very separate way of thinking based on one's genitals. The idea that genitals dictate gender, when there is no such thing as*

gender. You're either a cunt or you're not. The fleshy tube. The idea that the humanoids who wee-wee out of a fleshy tube should have more power than those that don't.

It's cunt eat cunt. It's dog eat dog. It's vile. It's nuclear ridden. It's full of deceit. And we're all complicit in that.

Underlining indicates samples that were cut from this material and reassembled to form the final collage (See SM.15: *Illusions,* b.123–168)[53]:

fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy tube so what fleshy tube fleshy tube or no no fleshy tube some of us wee-wee out of a fleshy tube y-y-y-y-yes some of us sit down so what y-y-yes the idea that the humanoids who wee-wee out of a fleshy tube should have more power than those that don't it's vile vile vile vile vile gender it's vile let's get real gender masculine is an illusion we're all gonna die feminine so what take acid I don't believe vile vile yes there may be biological differences so what you're gonna die fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy fleshy tube[54]

See SM.16 for a video of this section (SM.16.1) and the full piece (SM.16.2). The rehearsal of *Illusions*, in comparison to the difficulties of *Unleashed*, was much more straightforward. The live ensemble music matched the video easily and required little rehearsal, because everything was absolutely repeatable and synchronised using the click track. All of the effects of tape-cutting techniques such as juxtaposition, stuttering, rapid repetition, were far more effective using recorded material than attempting to recreate these in live performance.

The live approach in *Unleashed* and the studio approach in *Illusions* provide the background to discussing how both of these approaches were tried and tested in the writing, workshopping and rehearsal of Scene 5B of the opera.

7.3. Scene 5B

Scene 5B retrospectively tells a story about the main character's experiences of institutionalised mental health treatment. It is a first person, past tense, montage sequence about many visits to doctors and hospitals over a long period of time. The tone is a barbed, bitter retort to one particular doctor, with whom the main character develops a special relationship through the opera. Here is an example of Kane's text from this scene:

Inscrutable doctors, sensible doctors, way-out doctors, doctors you'd think were fucking patients if you weren't shown proof otherwise, ask the same questions, put words in my mouth, offer chemical cures for congenital anguish and cover each other's arses until I want to scream for you, the only doctor who ever touched me voluntarily, who looked me in the eye, who laughed at my gallows humour spoken in the voice from the newly-dug grave, who took the piss when I shaved my head, who lied and said it was nice to see me.
(Kane, 2000: 7)

We conducted test readings of this scene during auditions in November 2014 – March 2015. Although many different interpretations of this scene can be justified, the readings that most struck me were those that were uncontrolled, angry, fast-paced, confused. For this reason, I felt that the white-hot anger could best be expressed using techniques similar to those I used in *Unleashed* and *Illusions* – both of which successfully manifested anger and/or confusion. Therefore this stream-of-consciousness

53 Venables, P. *Illusions* (2015) unpublished.

54 Underlined *'fleshy'* indicates a different sample of the word than the non-underlined sample.

tape-cutting approach was decided as the general concept for Scene 5B. However, the techniques developed in *Unleashed* and *Illusions* would need to be expanded to a much larger ensemble of six voices and twelve players.

Given that the rehearsal issues experienced in *Unleashed* would be magnified in a larger ensemble setting, a series of workshops in the first year of the residency were designed to do some more exploratory problem-solving around the rehearsal issues with using tape-cutting techniques in live performance. These workshops used some originally-composed material and some leftover material from *Unleashed* to explore how live performance might be made more practical, such as:

1. Having one performer perform both sung and spoken parts together.
2. Sampling sung fragments and allowing a performer to trigger these samples while only performing spoken text live.
3. Using live electronics to make one instrumentalist or singer sound more like a whole ensemble. For example, adding octave doublings with a digital pitch shift unit, or using digital chorus effects and reverb to enlarge the sound.

All these approaches yielded limited results. Method 1 was not possible because such rapid and continuous switching between spoken and sung voice is very difficult and tiring, and in a continuous stream-of-consciousness, allows no time for breathing. Method 2 was open to performer error in the sample triggering, since vocal performers are not trained with this skill. The development of this dextrous skill took just as long as it did to rehearse the performer to perform the material live, without the triggered samples. Method 3 did achieve a larger sound, but there was significant latency in an acoustic where the audience received as much live sound direct from the performer as they did processed sound from the speakers. On instruments, octave doublings to the lower octave tended to have a slightly granular sound, whereas pitch-shifting on voices was successful within a range of around a third or fourth up or down, but became more obviously artificial outside of that range.

Although these workshops did not produce satisfactory solutions to the problems posed by *Unleashed*, I continued to write a first draft of this scene for a completely live performance, since there was an opportunity to workshop a full draft in the Year Three Workshops. It was important to focus on the musical intention before being too concerned with practical solutions, which could be addressed after another round of workshops on a completed draft.

7.3.1. First draft – a live version

The text was given the same fragmentation and repetition treatment as *Unleashed* and *Illusions*. To illustrate this, the excerpt of Kane's text shown above was cut up and spliced to create the following stream-of-consciousness, to be spoken by a solo speaker:

> *Inscrutable **doctors**, sensible **doctors**, way-out **doctors**, **doctors you'd** think were fucking fucking patients if **you** Inscrutable sensible **you you** inscrutable **doctors** fucking patients **you'd** think think **you'd** think were fucking patients if **you** weren't shown proof otherwise anguish ask the same same anguish same ask the same questions, put w w w words in **my** mouth w words **my** mouth, offer chemical **you'd** think were fucking the same questions offer chemical cures for con-genital **my** mouth genital anguish cover each other's arses until **I** want **I I** want to con con **doctors and** cover each other's arses*

*until **I I** want to scream for you the only **doctor you** the only **you** touched touched only who ever touched ever touched **me** voluntarily **you** who looked **me** in the **eye**, who laughed at **my my** gallows humour spoken spoken in the voice from the newly-dug grave, who took the piss when **I I** shaved who took the piss when **I** shaved my head, who lied **and** said **and** said it was nice to Who lied. And said it was nice to see me.*

This was scored out for all six singers, using similar principles to *Unleashed*: free rhythm without barlines, the flow and tempo dictated by the fast-spoken text. Suzy was given the solo spoken text and the other cast members had the sung material (in bold red) and spoken chorus (underlined) distributed between them, all hanging off Suzy's central, spoken thread. An example of the score is shown in Figure 33; the cue line shown in the score was included in every instrumental and vocal part[55], and the bold and underlined key system was kept in the score to add more information to the cue line. The score of this draft is given in SM.17.1, along with sample vocal (SM.17.2) and instrumental parts (SM.17.3) .

Using similar notational practices developed in *Unleashed* and in the Year 1 workshops, pitches were sustained with extended beams through passages of text. The instrumental ensemble (*tutti* except percussion) worked primarily in chordal blocks of quartal and diatonic chords, aligned with particular sung words. Some short text phrases were given sung choral gestures in rhythmic notation, barred out, and to which the suggested tempo at the beginning of the scene applied. For example, *I gape in horror at the world*, shown in Figure 32.

As in *Unleashed,* pitches for the short sung words (*I*, *and*, *me*, etc) were generally fixed through each section, and raised by semitone steps at various intervals, the structural pacing and location of these transpositions determined intuitively. These short sung words were associated with particular chords in the instrumental ensemble, for example the E minor chord on *you'd/you* (see Figure 33). The instrumental harmony was also transposed by semitone steps on the same basis as the voices.

Sung words were alternated freely between singers, with a broad rationale of giving particular words to particular singers (e.g. Jen sings *and;* Clare and Lucy sing *me/my*), although this was by no means dogmatic. The word *I* was distributed through the cast to make clear to the audience the dramaturgy of

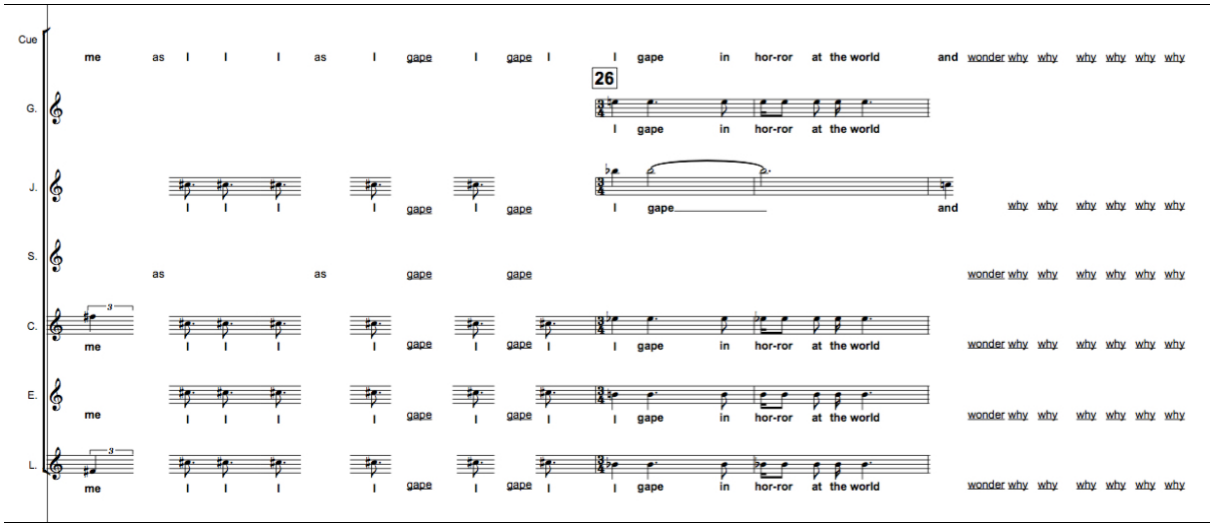


Figure 32: An excerpt from Scene 5B, vocal parts, showing two measured bars interrupting the stream-of-consciousness flow

55 Individual vocal parts were made for this version of Scene 5B, due to the fast pace and visual confusion of the full vocal score.

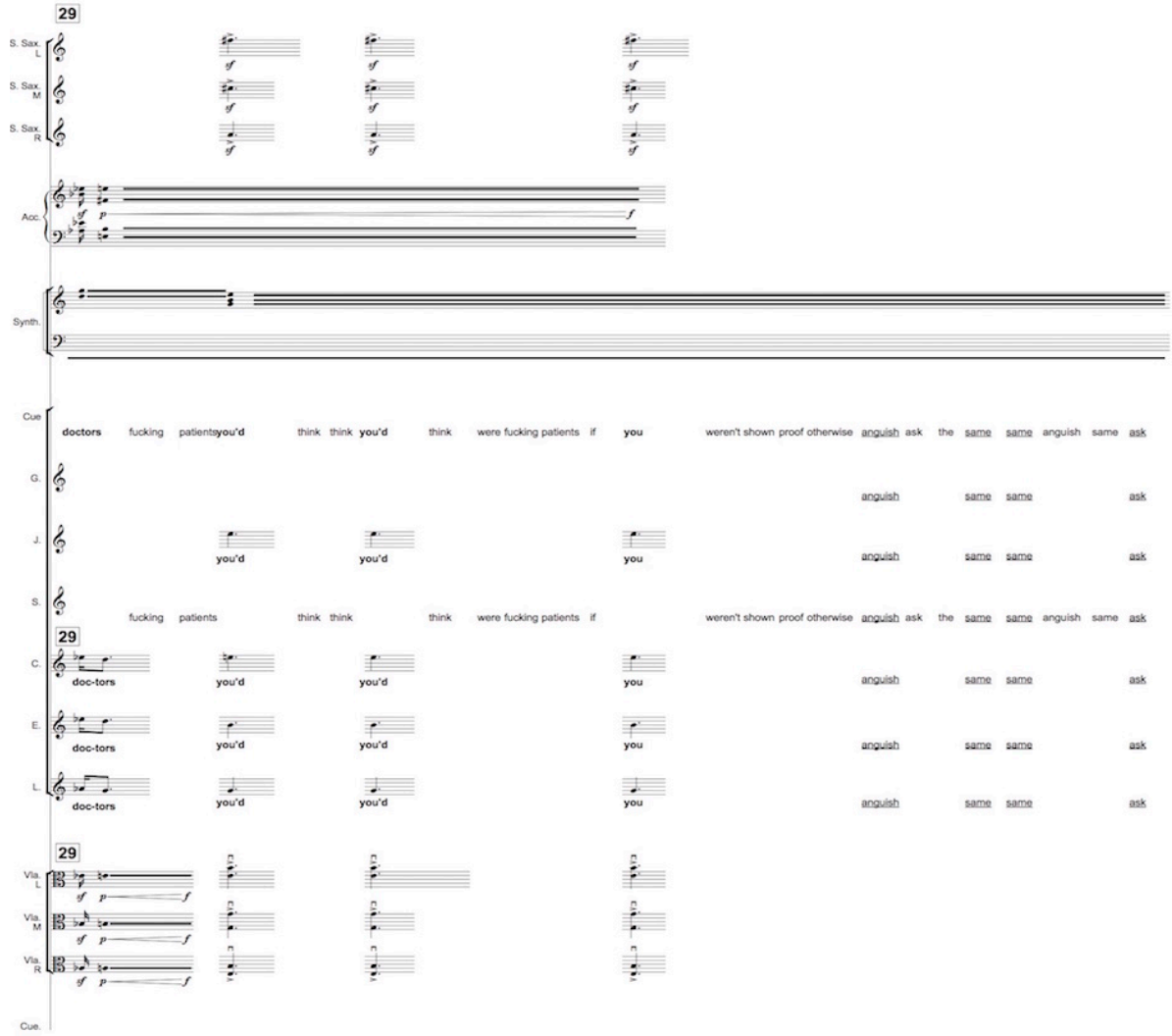


Figure 33: An excerpt of the first draft of Scene 5B, showing the text-based vocal score with instrumental parts coordinated with the spoken text cue line

the hive-mind; every performer is the first person. Suzy was given all the solo spoken text to provide a character thread through the scene for staging reasons, and to allow for easier rehearsal and memorisation. The significant burden of memorising this scene was balanced against the relatively lighter load that the role of Suzy has through the rest of the opera.

The whole scene was treated in a similar way according to these basic principles illustrated above. With this draft score completed, the next step was to test it in the Year 3 Workshops.

7.3.2. Year 3 workshops

During the read-through workshops in Year 3 we rehearsed an excerpt of Scene 5B between rehearsal figures 24–27 (SM.17.1: pages 14-19). Singers were rehearsed first alone, then *tutti* with the band. The workshops exposed the following difficulties:

- Singers found it difficult to anticipate their entries, in the absence of a pulse or rhythmic notation. In addition, speech rhythms and timings varied between several run-throughs, so repeated rehearsal did not necessarily improve the accuracy of performers' entries.
- Similar problems were experienced by the instrumental ensemble, leading to great difficulty in maintaining rhythmic precision, both between instruments and singers and between individual players in the band.
- Memorisation of the text was extremely difficult because of the circumlocutions in the text and lack of patterns in the repetitions.

These problems were, predictably, similar to those encountered in *Unleashed* and in the exploratory Year 1 workshops. Although more rehearsal would have significantly improved performance, as it had for *Unleashed*, the creative team concluded that this version of Scene 5B would be unfeasible in the context of the production constraints of this opera:

- This scene would require so much rehearsal time that it would compromise the performance standards and staging of the rest of the opera. Significant rehearsal time would also be needed with the band, which would not be available.
- This material would not be resilient to mistakes in performance, risking the overall performance quality and consistency expected by paying audience, and placing huge stresses on the performers.

In light of these considerations, I took the decision to change approach from a live performance version to the method that I had used successfully in *Illusions* – a tape version. A recording of all of the vocal material in the 'live' score would be made, and then edited into a collage using the same tape-cutting techniques as *Illusions*. Just like in that piece, the instrumental music would be re-written entirely and mapped onto this tape part, synchronised with a click track, so the final version of Scene 5B would consist of a recorded vocal collage with live instrumental music.

7.3.3. Making a tape version

Given the decision to now make a tape version of this scene, using the 'live' version as a template score, there were now other potential advantages that could be exploited:

- The tape could take advantage of surround-sound dispersion in the hall to give a more immersive sonic experience to the audience.
- Recorded voice samples could be accurately treated to a variety of sound processing such as reverb, distortion and EQ.
- Clarity and balance of text and music could be more carefully controlled, and there would also be no conflicts between amplified sound and live in the auditorium. Close studio-recording of spoken text would give maximum clarity.
- Hocketing between solo and chorus, sung and spoken text could be more rapid and intricate on tape than in live performance, making the texture more energetic, disrupted, stuttered.

- A much more intricate instrumental texture could be written, because the band would now be written in barred, regular metre.
- The memorisation load on the singers would be significantly lightened, thus saving rehearsal time and performance stress.

For these reasons, it was not satisfactory simply to make a pre-recorded version of the live score. To take full advantage of these new possibilities, the scene needed to be completely re-composed, using only the live score as a rough framework. Whilst a tape version afforded many advantages such as clarity and repeatability, it might also make performances 'flat', lacking in the energy that a live vocal performance normally has on stage.

The recording of vocal material took place in the first week of the rehearsal period. The material was recorded exactly as indicated in the live score, stem by stem, resulting in a huge palette of materials that were then assembled intuitively in editing software, using the live score only as a very rough guide. Rhythms were changed, scratching/stuttering techniques were used more extensively and generally a denser, more polyphonic texture was created. Sung material was significantly reduced in the new version compared with the live score. For example, many of the measured, sung phrases were cut from the live score entirely and replaced by spoken text. This left mostly only the short words being sung (*I, me/my, and, you/your/you'd*), although even the frequency of repetitions of these was greatly reduced compared to the live score, with most changed to spoken/shouted words.

The shift away from recorded sung material towards spoken material helped with the following issues:

- It kept a fast 'machine gun'-like stream of text flowing.
- It improved text comprehension. Sung words tended to be less intelligible on recording in the *tessitura* in which they had been written.
- It felt more angry and less controlled, closer to the initial audition readings of Kane's text that had informed my original concept for this scene.

The finished tape parts were then tested in the rehearsal room, alongside MIDI mock-ups of the instrumental music that had been written to match. As a result of these tests, the Director had concerns about text clarity in particular passages of the tape. As a result, new mixes of each tape part were made with the following adjustments. These can be seen by comparing the screenshots from Logic Pro X, given in SM.18.1:

- passages of many overlapping layers of text were thinned out by muting many of the layered tracks (visible in the screenshots as muted (greyed out) segments);
- left-right and front-rear panning was used more extensively to spatially separate different voices;
- more of the sung layers were muted to reduce obscuration of the spoken text;
- levels were adjusted to push non-important layers into the background;
- 'cassette' distortion effects and EQ filters were reduced in some passages.

The final version of the tape part alone for scene 5B can be found in SM.18.2.

To summarize, the treatment of Scene 5B was a development of techniques first developed in two earlier works, one using a live approach to tape-cutting and one a recorded approach. The live approach was first applied to this scene, but many practical problems forced a change to the recorded approach. However, the change of approach afforded many benefits, both musical and practical. In rehearsal the new, tape version of the scene was straightforward to put together, and in performances it was effective in immersing the audience in loud, clear, fast-moving text – perhaps best summed up by a reviewer's comment that Kane's text "*seems to emanate from everywhere*"[56] (see Chapter 9.1 – Critical and public response).

The significant use of pre-recorded material and the complex and intuitive editing stage that was required to make these tape parts throws up issues for future productions with different casts. These questions will be addressed in the Evaluation, Chapter 9.2.1 – Different casts.

56 Financial Times review of 4.48 Psychosis, https://www.ft.com/content/42c64b3e-2259-11e6-9d4d-c11776a5124d#axzz4AoNJahqD

8. Percussion Dialogue scenes – text without a voice

The previous four chapters have dealt with various forms of vocal delivery of text, whether live or pre-recorded. This chapter deals with visual presentation of text without accompanying vocals – a form of 'creative surtitling' – that was applied to one particular type of scene in Kane's text, the Doctor–Patient dialogue scenes.

There are four extended scenes in Kane's text, scenes 6, 10, 12 and 23, which use character-to-character dialogue in the style of a traditional character–narrative stageplay[57]. These scenes are clearly marked as two individuals by dashes in the margin, although with no character names given. From the text of these scenes we assume that one person is a doctor/therapist, the other a patient. Only in these scenes is Kane's language colloquial, conversational, prosaic, direct question-and-answer. There is also humour in these scenes – wry, witty retorts by the patient to the doctor's blunt questions. An excerpt from the opening of Scene 6 is here:

- *Have you made any plans?*
- *Take an overdose, slash my wrists then hang myself.*
- *All those things together?*
- *It couldn't possibly by misconstrued as a cry for help.*
  (Silence.)
- *It wouldn't work.*
- *Of course it would.*
- *It wouldn't work. You'd start to feel sleepy from the overdose and wouldn't have the energy to cut your wrists.*
  (Silence.)
- *I'd be standing on a chair with a noose around my neck.*
  (Silence.)

(Kane, 2000: 8–9)

The dry humour and prosaic tone of this dialogue is clear from the example above, as is Kane's intention that these scenes follow a natural conversational rhythm (implied also by her stipulation of where silences should fall). The emotional intensity of her writing in these scenes depends on an absolute dryness of delivery. There is little distress written into the text, even though the subject of discussion is very distressing; in other words the content (profound) is distanced from the style (banal), and therein lies the success of these scenes. This line from Scene 12 sums up that dark humour *"I dreamt I went to the doctor's and she gave me eight minutes to live. I'd been sitting in the fucking waiting room half an hour."* (Kane, 2000: 19). Spoken-word theatre productions of *4.48 Psychosis* often struggle with delivering dry performances of these scenes. Acting can get in the way.

In dealing with this text, the aim was to produce a very distanced, abstracted setting that allowed Kane's emotional dryness and dark, laconic wit to speak for itself. A narrative-realist, spoken-word or sung treatment was avoided because it would too easily allow acting and/or music to get in the way.

57 Scenes 1, 16 and 18 also use this dash convention to indicate dialogue. These are much shorter, and in 16 and 18 consist mainly of monologue by the patient followed by a very brief exchange with the doctor. These scenes were subjected to different musical treatments than that described in this chapter.

Rather, the chosen concept stripped away pitch/harmony, orchestration, aria and recitative. The driest delivery of this text would be the text alone, without a human voice. The inspiration for this distanced, abstract concept came from Lithuanian-Norwegian artist Ignas Krunglevičius – particularly his work *Skinner Box*.

8.1. Krunglevičius' *Skinner Box*

Ignas Krunglevičius' makes work involving visually-presented text. His concept is simple: a combination of crotchet beats articulated by instruments and synchronised to projections of words. That principle underpins many of his works, including *Skinner Box* (2010), *Deviance* (2011) and *Gradients* (2012). *Skinner Box* takes a verbatim transcript of a group therapy session, documented by the Scottish psychiatrist R.D. Laing, involving the therapist, a teenage girl and her mother and father[58]. The text is projected onto four screens, triggered by four instrumentalists, each player-projector pair corresponding to the four characters. Each percussion strike or instrumental beat triggers a projection cue, with text projected either word-by-word or line-by-line. The score specifies only the number of crotchet beats, the text for each performer and occasional single-colour frames[59]. Additional musical layers were developed in workshops with the composer and performers, such live sound processing controlled by effects pedals, tempo, rhythm, the lengths of pauses between 'bars', dynamics, which instruments to use, pitches, and there is also drone tape part not featured in the score. Figure 34 shows an excerpt of the score and Figure 35 a photo of the corresponding excerpt with performance annotations. For a full score see SM.19.1 and for two videos of *Skinner Box* see SM.19.2 (excerpt) and SM.19.3 (complete).

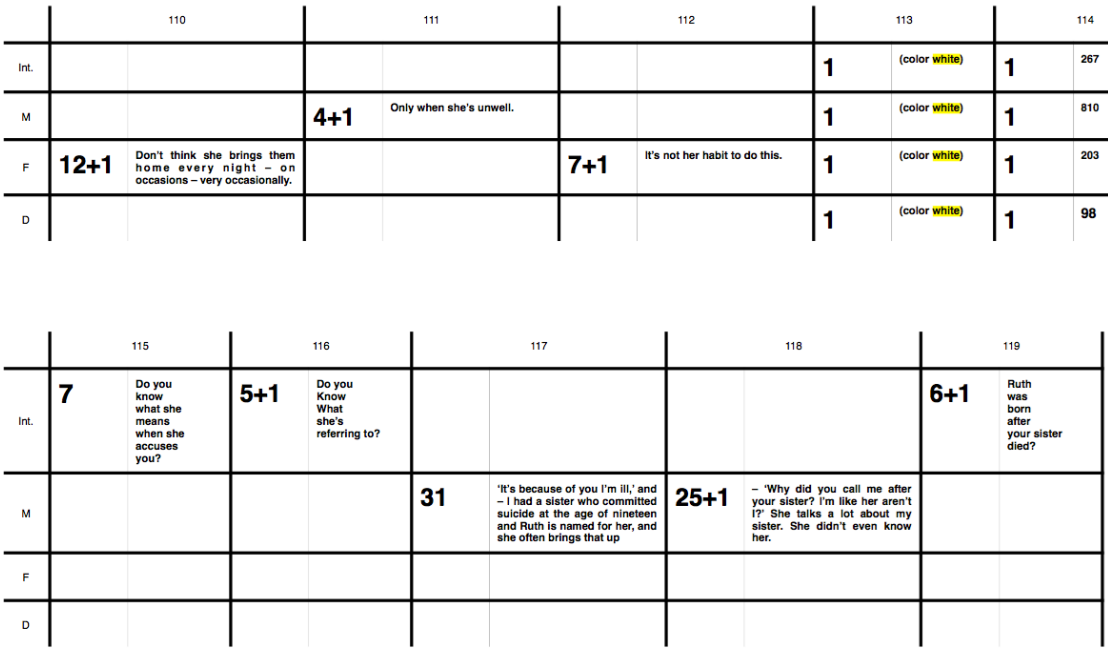


Figure 34: An excerpt (page 12) of the score for Skinner Box *(Krunglevičius, 2010)*

58 Email correspondence with Ignas Krunglevičius, 23 March 2015.

59 Krunglevičius, I. *Skinner Box* (2010) score, unpublished. See SM.19.1.

The success of Krunglevičius' technique is the distance it creates between the mode of presentation and the emotional content of the text. The conversation is profound, psychological, full of pain, but the way the text is presented, stripped of a human voice, in a removed, almost robotic rhythm and sound, allows the emotions in the text to come to the fore. No acting, no music, no singing, no speaking gets in between the audience and the text.

That distancing, and the resultant directness and simplicity, appealed, as an excellent solution to similar problems proposed by the Doctor–Patient scenes in *4.48 Psychosis*. Using Krunglevičius as the model, I will discuss the methodology of the making of these dialogue scenes, which involved workshops, transcriptions of audio recordings, and a subsequent compositional phase. Finally, I will illustrate how this process worked using Scene 6 as a case study. But first, a brief explanation of the intended stage set-up, instrumentation and background music used for these scenes.

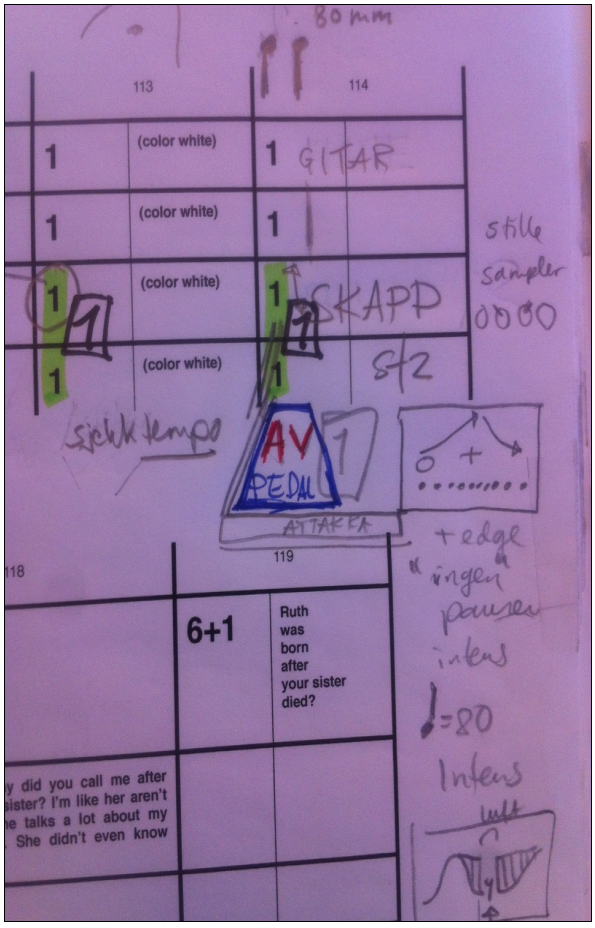


Figure 35: A photo showing annotations on the score of Skinner Box *(Krunglevičius, 2010)*

8.2. Stage set-up, instrumentation and framing

These scenes were set up in a similar way to the Krunglevičius pieces: one percussionist stage right played the Doctor and one percussionist stage left played the Patient. The text for each role was projected onto the upstage white wall of the set stage right and left respectively, close to the location of the performers, who were in the corresponding left and right positions on the raised gantry. The left-right spatialisation helped make the dialogue aspect clearer, and highlighted the adversarial nature of the characters' relationship in these scenes. Figure 36 shows this layout in use in Scene 10, with a line from the Doctor (stage right) projected.

Several technological solutions for linking sound and projection were tested during instrumental workshops in January 2016 (see Chapter 3.1 – Process and Timeline). The three options were:

1. A noise-gate triggering system similar to that used by Krunglevičius, taking a signal from the microphone on each instrument. A noise-gate triggers a signal to the projection computer to trigger the next image.
2. Another performer, e.g. the synth player, triggering the projections manually, and rehearsing with the percussionists and conductor to get rhythmic accuracy.
3. The projection for each scene synchronised to a click track and exported as a video file, with which the percussionists play on a click track.

Figure 36: A photo from Scene 10 showing the stage right (doctor) and left (patient) positions of the two percussionists and the stage right projection location in use. Photo © Stephen Cummiskey

Solutions two and three were tested in the workshops; we did not have the resources to design, build and test option one. The synchronised click-track solution was chosen, as it was the simplest and quickest to set up, test and rehearse during the production process.

Therefore click tracks were made for Scenes 1, 6, 10, 12 and 23, and the percussionists had these in-ear, so that these scenes could be performed without conductor. The scenes were performed from memory, and, as each had an independent click-track feed, the performers were able to record verbal notes, memory aides, performance notes, count-ins and excerpts of the script on top of the metronome click. An example of one of these is given in SM.20. The click track solution worked effectively in providing a perfect synchronisation between performance and projection.

The instrumentation for all of these scenes is shown in shown in Figure 37. These were chosen to reflect the roles and personalities of the two characters in these scenes. The Patient's dialogue is relatively unchanging through these scenes: an honest and resonant voice of humanity, albeit in deep

	Doctor (stage right)	**Patient (stage left)**
Scene 1	Bass drum	N/A
Scene 6	Metal scaffolding pole, counter bell	Bass drum
Scene 10	Toy drum / snare drum, counter bell	Bass drum, counter bell
Scene 12	Wood saw on piece of wood, counter bell	Bass drum, counter bell
Scene 23	Bass drum	Bass drum, paired with voices

Figure 37: A table showing the instrumentation for the Percussion Dialogue scenes

pain, remaining steadfast and unprovoked by the Doctor's questions. They are represented therefore by a large orchestral bass drum, an instrument with depth, resonance and a large variety of sounds. In contrast, in scenes 6, 10 and 12 the doctor is mainly an antagonistic force, whose comments are essentially banal and inconsequential to the patient. The doctor interferes, annoys, niggles, often with trite or ridiculous questions. Instruments were chosen to reflect this, for example with the penetrating, invasive sound of metal scaffolding hit with metal-headed hammers (Scene 6), or the comic effect of sawing a piece of wood with heavy amplification applied (Scene 12). Only in Scene 23, when the Doctor finally shows her own humanity, flaws, emotions and vulnerabilities, does the Doctor also play the orchestral bass drum. The Doctor is now on the same emotional (and instrumental) plane as the patient; for the first time they seem to understand each other.

The Percussion Dialogue scenes were all accompanied by very quiet 'elevator muzak' emanating from the on-stage speaker. The muzak was different for each scene, but generally all synthesised bossanova tracks taken from rights-free sample libraries. This muzak provided a framing device for the scenes, suggesting a doctor's waiting room, an element of banality juxtaposed against the profound content of the dialogue. It constituted another tool to distance the presentation of these scenes from the meaning of the text; distancing that I had so admired in *Skinner Box*. See SM.21 for an example muzak track.

8.3. Transcription process

Krunglevičius' concept was taken as a model for the treatment of Scenes 1, 6, 10, 12 and 23, with one major difference: I would retain some element of natural speech rhythms in the projection and percussion rhythms. This decision was made partly to help Kane's jokes land with good timing and partly to speed up the rate of text flow in the scenes to keep each scene under three minutes[60].

Incorporating speech rhythms required a rigorous process to generate, record, and then compose these speech rhythms and implement them in the scenes. This process centred on the Year Two Theatre Workshops (see Chapter 3.1 – Process and Timeline), and involved:

- Workshop pre-planning with Jo McInnes and Philip Venables
- Two days of workshops in which spoken-theatre readings of Scenes 6, 10, 12 and 23 were explored, performed and audio recorded.
- Selecting one recording of each scene, and transcribing into rhythmic notation the speech rhythms of the performance from the audio recording.
- Using the transcriptions as a basis for the rhythmical composition of each scene.

Jo McInnes' approach to performing *4.48 Psychosis* is to 'stop acting' – to avoid the controlled, performative skill of acting. She used a range of techniques with the actors to try to prevent them from 'acting' and instead try to deliver the text more honestly, from the gut. Her philosophy is that the brutal honesty and emotional depth of Kane's text is lost when it is 'performed' demonstratively, in the way that actors are usually trained to do. In *4.48 Psychosis* the actor is not playing a character, she argued, but simply any human being. Her approach – to remove performative layers and allow the text to 'speak' directly – therefore aligns with the Krunglevičius model of musical distancing from the

60 It was a important target that the whole opera not last more than 90 minutes, so every scene was scrutinised for 'spare time'.

text, ensuring some consistency between our approaches in our planned process of workshop performance to transcription to composition.

From the numerous recorded takes of each scene from the workshops, I alone selected the take to use for transcription. Transcriptions of these four audio recordings were then made, choosing tempi that best fit the pace of the speech. These audio recordings and the transcriptions, both handwritten and in rough typeset versions, are available in SM.22.

8.4. From transcription to composition

The speech transcriptions provided a loose framework and reference point for the composition of the scene, but questions still remained that needed to be solved in the compositional process. The following discussion outlines these questions and makes references to the score to illustrate the principles applied to their solution.

1. Would dialogue be projected syllable by syllable, word by word, or phrase by phrase?
2. How to balance percussion writing between abstract rhythm and natural speech rhythm?
3. How to balance percussion writing between musical phrasing and syntactical phrasing?
4. How to pace tempo and pauses in the translation from a speech recording to a visual format?

Of course, all of these questions are interdependent and the solutions to them relied heavily on compositional intuition, a gut instinct. The approach to these issues in one phrase could be the opposite of the approach taken in another phrase. Always, decisions about these issues had to balance musical and theatrical/semantic concerns, and the aim was to marry the two as much as possible, so that no conflict between music and text was felt by the audience. The percussionist and the projected text must appear to come from one and the same source, as 'naturally' as possible, since the percussion instrument is a metaphor for the voice of the character.

Broadly the following principles were adopted to solve these problems (with references to the score):

Question 1 was addressed differently for each phrase, and a wide range of possibilities were used across the four main scenes (6, 10, 12, 23). Some phrases were articulated syllable by syllable (e.g. Scene 10 entire doctor's part), some word by word (Scene 6, b.1–10,) and some whole phrases appearing at once with a single percussion strike (e.g. Scene 10, b.59–67; Scene 12, b.61–63).

Question 2. Likewise, some phrases were pulled away from natural speech rhythms to a more abstracted rhythm (e.g. Scene 10, b.71–73 and b.80–83, Scene 12, b.39–41), and some phrases mirrored the transcribed speech rhythms more accurately (e.g. Scene 10, b.1–9).

Question 3 in a sense is another way of thinking about the two problems above, and here the emotional content of each phrase usually played a role. Phrases with emotional or dramatic importance in the scene tended to be written with more emphasis on musical articulation (e.g. "*I KNOW"* Scene 12, b.42–43; "*Because it feels fucking great, because it feels fucking amazing"* Scene 10, b.90–96). Sentences with less emotional weight – a laconic, wry quality – tended to prioritise syntactic articulation (e.g. *"I thought you might do this, lots of people do, it relieves the tension"* Scene 10, b.47–56; *"Take an overdose, slash my wrists then hang myself. It couldn't possibly be misconstrued as a cry for help"* Scene 6, b.6–14).

Question 4, the issue of pacing, changed radically through the process of writing and staging the opera. The long silences in the audio recordings from the theatre workshops were pregnant with

anticipation, meaning, and the collective feeling in the room. In live theatre, the tension was held through these pauses. However, when the human body and voice and its inherent emotion is removed, when the delivery of lines is abstracted to a drum and some projected text, when the feeling of the scenes is more that of wry humour than deep pain, then those long pauses could not sustain the tension through to the next phrase. Conversely, phrases articulated syllable by syllable often resulted in very quick musical rhythms, which. as a spoken rhythm sound normal, often relaxed, but which as percussion playing seemed quick, frantic, rushed; not necessarily in keeping with the sentiments of the text, but just re-contextualising an artefact of speech.

Given these issues with pacing and pauses, there were good reasons to elongate the rhythms of some of the percussion phrases and shorten the lengths of most of the pauses between phrases. This shortening process was iteratively done, both after the Year Three Workshops, where we presented Scene 10 to an audience in a Critical Response Process, and then again during the production process, when pauses were shortened even further to keep the drama and suspense moving and the conversations feeling lively. The effects of this shortening are clearly seen by comparing the durations of each scene. In the production, Scenes 6, 10 and 12 were all under three minutes long, but the audio recordings of the theatre workshops ranged from 3 minutes to over 7 minutes.

Having outlined the universal concerns that applied to the transcription & composition process for all four Percussion Dialogue scenes, I will move on to a case study in closer detail: Scene 6.

8.5. Case study: Scene 6

The composition of Scene 6 provides a good example of the process outlined above that was followed for scenes 6, 10 and 12. To illustrate this in more detail, we can compare and contrast bars from Scene 6 with the corresponding transcription to see what changes were made in the composition process. The following pages (Figures 38 to 41) show the transcription on the left hand page and the final scene on the right hand page, for easy comparison.

1. **Rhythms have been made more regular.** For example, triplet crotchets in the transcription *Have you made any plans?* (transcription b.2) and *then hang myself* (b.9) and *cry for help* (b.16) were replaced by quavers or crotchets (Scene 6, bars 3, 7, 13 respectively).
2. **Missing words were re-inserted.** Some words were inaudible in the recordings and therefore absent from the transcriptions, but were re-inserted. For example *it couldn't possibly be* (Scene 6, b.12) and *of course it would* (Scene 6, b.17).
3. **Many speech rhythms were kept intact**. For example, *I'd be standing on a chair with a noose around my neck* (Scene 6, b.25) is very similar to the transcription except that two-syllable words *standing* and *around* were only one strike each, and *noose* was elongated from a quaver in the transcription to a crotchet in the score.
4. **Pauses have been shortened.** For example in *If you were alone* [pause] *do you think you might harm yourself* (Scene 6, b.29–32) the pause of 7.5 beats in the transcription has been completely removed, forming one single run-one sentence. The five-bar pauses at b.17–21 and b.32–37 of the transcription were reduced to one bar (Scene 6, b.11 and b.24).
5. **Tempi have been changed**. Generally, tempi in score are considerably slower than in the transcription, for the reasons described in the responses to Question 4 above. The tempo of the opening of Scene 6 is half the tempo of the transcription. Tempi of the doctor and patient were made sometimes independent from one another, which kept a free feeling to the scene,

obscuring any sense of regular pulse. For example, at the opening of the scene the Patient is at 132 and Doctor at 104. The huge *rallentando* (Scene 6, b.43–49) has a significant musical effect, underpinning the drama of the line ending with *I'm tired of life and my mind wants to die*. Clearly this *rallentando* is entirely artificial and is not present in the transcription.

6. **Some punctuation is articulated separately**. Punctuation, such as question marks, are not articulated in speech in a rhythmic sense but rather with tone of voice and inflection. However, with such melodic devices stripped away from this setting, there was an opportunity to articulate punctuation rhythmically. For example, in b.58–65, *You are not eighty years old. Are you? Are you? Or are you?,* the final question mark is articulated with a counter-top bell (Scene 6, b.65) – a traditionally comic instrument that highlights the banality of the Doctor's question and her mocking of the Patient.

This case study illustrates the compositional process used to adapt spoken-word transcriptions into musical percussion-projection dialogues. Many examples of similar adaptations can be found in Scenes 6, 10, 12 and 23; see the section SM.22 for the transcriptions, for comparison with the corresponding scenes in the full score. An evaluation of the success of these scenes, and the other text–composition techniques discussed in the previous four chapters, will be discussed in the next chapter.

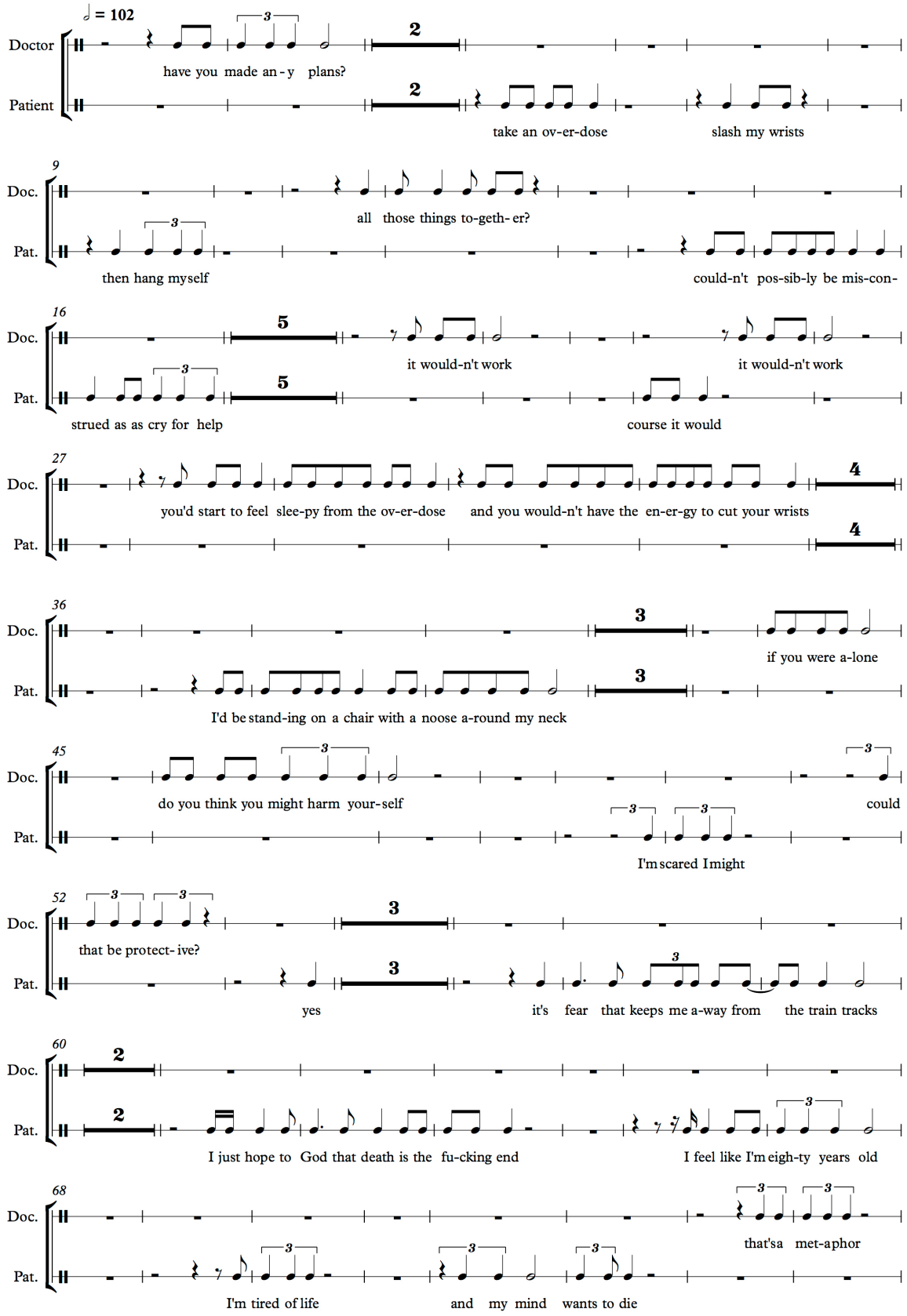



Figure 38: Transcription of scene 6, page 1.

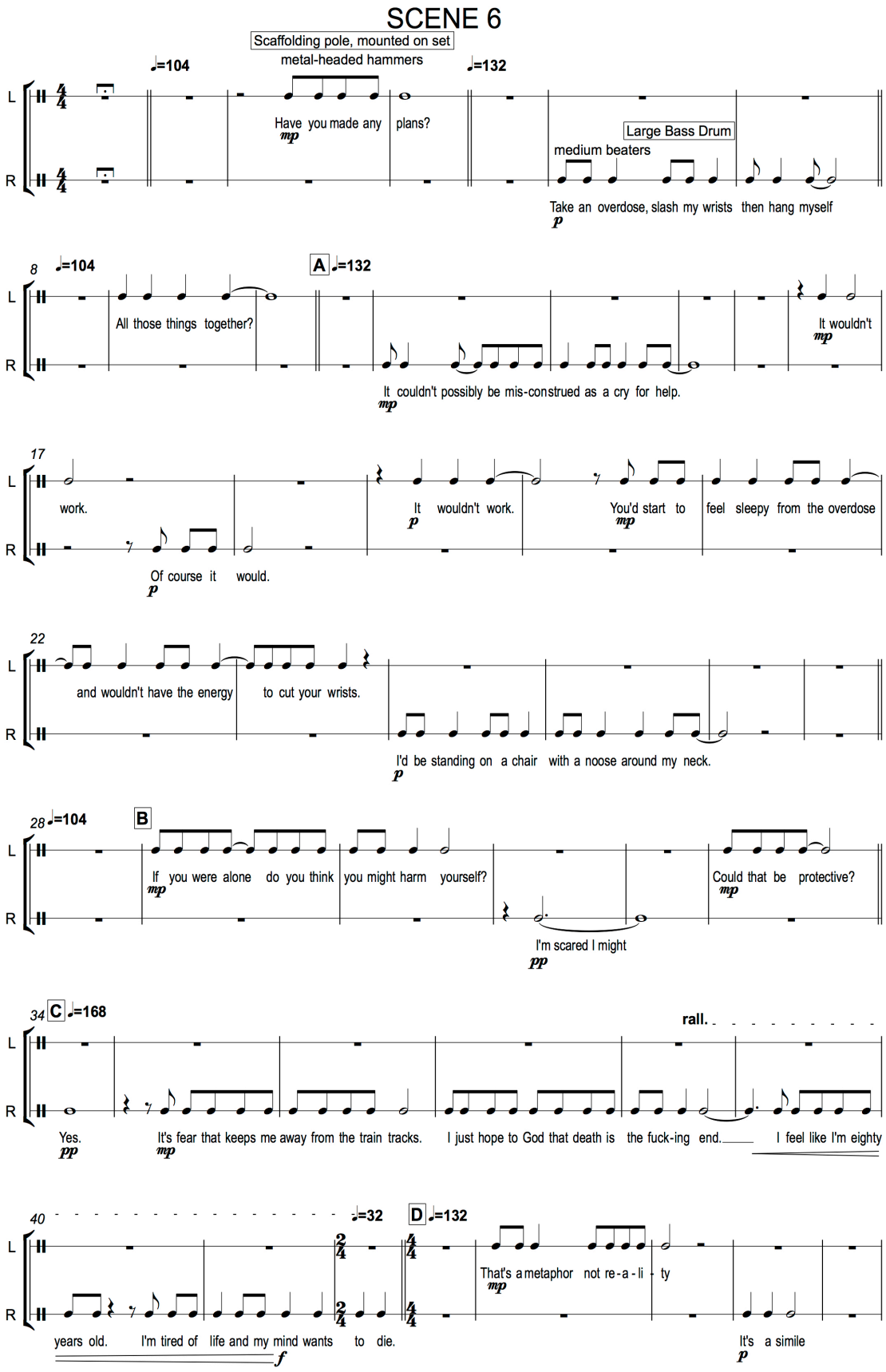



Figure 39: Scene 6 final version (percussion parts only), page 1

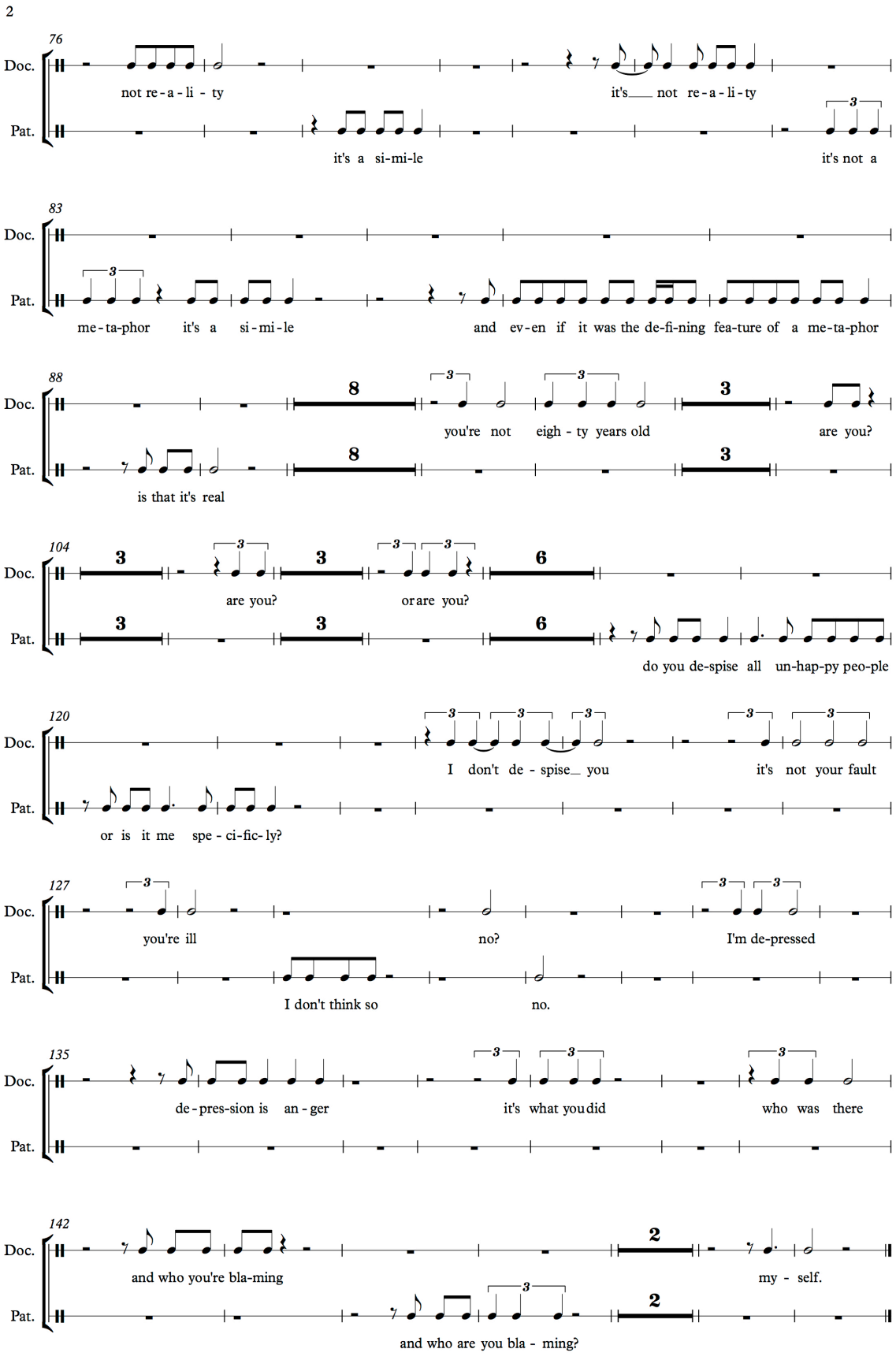


Figure 40: Transcription of scene 6, page 2.

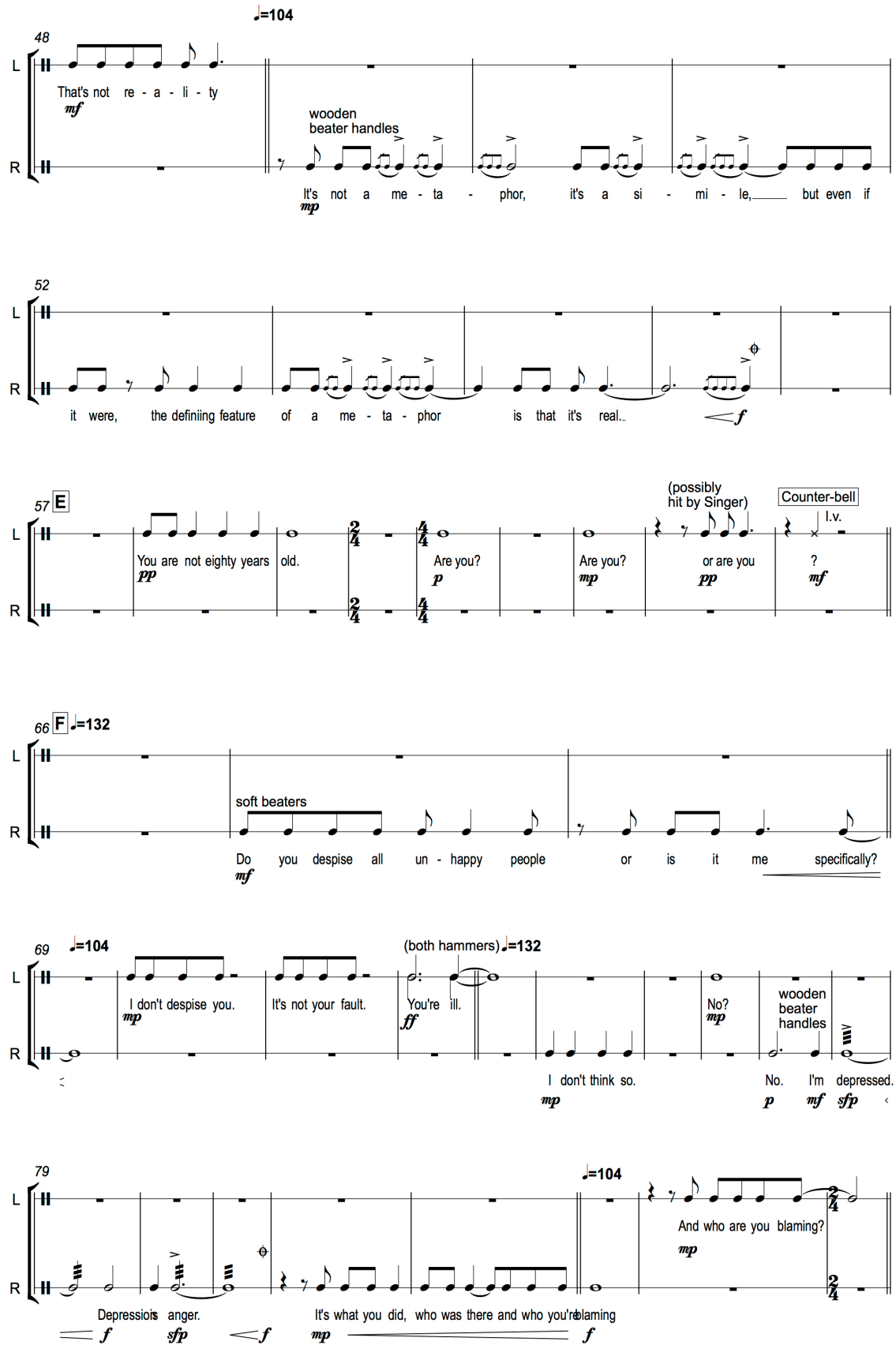



Figure 41: Scene 6 final version (percussion parts only), page 2.

9. Evaluation

The research objectives outlined in Chapter 1.1 were as follows:

1. To explore techniques to incorporate spoken text into opera, both live and pre-recorded:
    - Voiceover techniques;
    - 'Stream-of-consciousness' – Fragmentation, repetition, re-ordering, imitation, collage;
    - To incorporate speech into sung lines.
2. To explore visually-presented text in opera, placing it within a musical framework.
3. To explore the dramaturgical implications of these two objectives.

As discussed in Chapter 1, these objectives contributed to the overall aim to make an opera that evoked some sense of spoken-word theatre, with semantic/linguistic immediacy; an opera in which Kane's text was equally present alongside the music.

In terms of this practice-led research, the success of the operatic adaptation of *4.48 Psychosis* must be measured against these objectives. To that end, Chapters 4 to 8 discussed five specific approaches to non-sung text (notwithstanding other objectives and approaches that appear in the opera but which lie outside this research commentary). These included spoken-word techniques: 'the opera thought-bubble', voiceover, mid-phrase switching and tape-cutting techniques, and one approach to visually-presented text in the percussion dialogue scenes. The dramaturgical implications of each technique were discussed, showing that such dramaturgy often became the decisive factor when modifying compositional approaches as a result of workshops, rehearsal or discussions with the creative team. I will summarise each objective in turn.

Voiceover techniques were covered in Chapter 4 – 'the Opera Thought-Bubble' and Chapter 5 – Voiceover. The former looked at a voiceover technique that attempts to articulate the inner monologue of a performer on stage by juxtaposing that performer's pre-recorded spoken voice with their live sung voice. The necessary synchronization of the spoken and sung components was established in Scene 5A and then countered in Scene 18, which tested what level of synchronicity was required for the effect to work. Chapter 5 looked at voiceover techniques that may be more commonly associated with the 'third-party narrator' seen in films or theatre, whereby the pre-recorded spoken voice is not connected to a live vocal performance on stage. This was useful to deal with the difficult dramaturgy of Scene 14, which was written from a third-party viewpoint and therefore problematic to portray live with a member of the 'hive-mind' cast. Voiceover techniques also solved practical problems of vocal delivery in Scene 16, where a non-singer was able to record a screamed/shouted version of the text. In Scene 11, voiceover was used to reinforce a sense of ambiguity of point-of-view – was the voice that of the main character or a lover?

Chapter 7 discussed a 'stream-of-consciousness' effect, following earlier work in *Unleashed* and *Illusions,* achieved by collaging techniques (fragmentation, repetition and re-ordering) with Kane's text in Scene 5B. This was attempted first in a live form, but following a series of workshops was re-made using tape-cutting techniques applied to pre-recorded speech. This enabled us to create an immersive surround-sound experience with greater rhythmic and contrapuntal texture than could be

achieved live, and with much tighter synchronisation with the instrumental ensemble. Dramaturgically, the tape version freed the cast from an almost impossible task of memorisation in performance, allowing the Director to stage a fast-moving choreography for the scene.

The combination of sung and spoken text in a single vocal line was explored in Chapter 6 – Mid-phrase switching. This was first implemented simply in Scene 3, with sparse underscoring and an easy *tessitura* to successfully mitigate any problems of balance between sung and spoken text. In Scene 9, these problems required workshops to test the limits of text comprehension in a more complex texture of sung, spoken and instrumental layers. As a result the scene was re-scored so that one performer delivered most of the spoken text, as a central thread around which the others delivered the sung-spoken texture. That central thread was then amplified above the others, allowing more effective text comprehension. Density of scoring and *tessitura* was also adjusted, following the example in Scene 3.

Text presented visually without the voice was explored in a series of dialogues between patient and doctor, discussed in Chapter 8. The aim was to retain the timing and wry humour of Kane's text, and to distance the style of delivery from the emotional weight of the dialogue. The work of Ignas Krunglevičius provided a model, which achieves such distancing in similar patient-counsellor dialogues. These scenes in *4.48 Psychosis* were developed through recordings of theatre workshop performances of the scenes, of which rhythmic transcriptions were used as the basis for the composition of the percussion duos. Technical issues around the synchronisation of percussion performance and text projection were investigated in workshops, resulting in a click-track solution.

As discussed in each chapter, structured workshops and development time on the Doctoral Composer-in-Residence scheme was invaluable to allow the testing and subsequent re-working of material to improve and adjust compositional approaches according to the objectives described above. That development allowed for a constant process of evaluation and adjustment for the creative team.

9.1. Critical and public response

The response to the opera was overwhelmingly positive. The opera was awarded the UK Theatre Award for Achievement in Opera in October 2016. In addition, conversations are in progress about a revival and tour of this production – another indicator of a positive public reception. Critical reception was also very good: all broadsheet and trade magazine reviews of the opera ranged from three to five stars, with the majority at four stars. Of particular relevance to this research, however, were some specific observations made by critics about the role and mode of text delivery. A full collection of broadsheet reviews is given in SM.23; specific observations are given here:

> *With a score ranging guilelessly from motoric arrhythmia to wispy renaissance, director Ted Huffman and team attempt neither dramatic adornment nor explanation but allow the text to breathe within a kaleidoscope of inner-outer conflict.*
>
> Steph Power, The Independent (5 stars)[61]

61 http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/448-psychosis-lyric-hammersmith-review-sarah-kane-s-final-play-about-her-suicidal-depression-a7049726.html

[two percussionists] duel and duet above the singers' heads as unsung passages are streamed across its walls.[...] The rhythms of Kane's words are battered out by drums, hammers, whips, even a saw cutting through wood

Tim Ashley, The Guardian (4 stars)[62]

[the ensemble's] voices overlap in a sequence of first-person histories broken by patient-doctor dialogues in which Kane's words are projected on the walls and "voiced" by the percussionists Sarah Hatch and Genevieve Wilkins.

Is it OK to laugh? Yes. Doctor This, Doctor That and Doctor Whatsit are a snare drum, a saw and metal bars. Kane — or her depression — is a big bass drum. Question marks are indicated by the trite ping of a typewriter bell. Underscoring it is the cheesy, sexless, samba-rhythm shimmy of lift-music.

[…] Every self-harming syllable of the text is clear.

Anna Picard, The Times (4 stars)[63]

Venables has shown himself to be a remarkable composer for words. It is therefore little surprise to see him tackle the challenges of 4.48 Psychosis in several imaginative ways, while remaining entirely respectful of the text itself. [...]

The best moments were the scenes with the doctor. Here, Kane's pitch-black humour is essential, and timing is everything. Brilliantly, Venables silences all the voices at this point, leaving the projected text to be ventriloquised by two percussionists. [...]

I cannot re- call having been as powerfully moved by an opera as this, much of it watched with my hand clasped over my mouth. Kane's play was the star, but Venables's opera did it justice. […] Venables has composed a sort of musicalised theatre, in which the music is frequently allowed to do just enough to convey the text [...]

Tim Rutherford-Johnsson, Tempo Magazine[64]

[Philip Venables] challenges the conventions of opera. Via an array of resources he ambushes and refreshes an old art form. His technique is that of a collagist. Text is variously spoken, projected, amplified, conveyed rhythmically with percussion and sung, often in aria-like lament or chorale outburst.

Fiona Maddocks, The Observer (4 stars)[65]

[Philip Venables] bends over backwards to preserve the spirit of Kane's text. As in the play, there is little sense of narrative, or characters' identities, or anything that would keep us grounded. Six identically costumed female singers work as what Venables calls "a hive mind", sharing the parts of the therapist and the patient, who descends into suicidal depression. Meanwhile Kane's text is spoken, sung and projected on screens: it seems to emanate from everywhere.

In the exchanges between patient and therapist, two percussionists thrash out rhythmic speech patterns as the text appears on screens beneath them. Then, when the din fades away, we're left with the indifferent tinkle of elevator music. It's unhinged and chilling, albeit laced with Kane's trademark humour. Most of all, it is dizzyingly colourful.

Hannah Nepil, The Financial Times (4 stars)[66]

62 https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/may/25/448-psychosis-review-sarah-kane-philip-venables-opera

63 http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/4-48-psychosis-at-the-lyric-hammersmith-w6-q7b7h6c56

64 Rutherford-Johnson, T. Review: 4.48 Psychosis. Tempo Magazine, Autumn 2016 pp 90–91.

65 https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/may/29/oedipe-448-psychosis-sarah-kane-die-meistersinger-barbiere-di-siviglia-review-glyndebourne

66 https://www.ft.com/content/42c64b3e-2259-11e6-9d4d-c11776a5124d#axzz4AoNJahqD

Conversations between the central character and her doctor, for example, are rendered – in a brilliant bit of musical inspiration – by percussion. Text appears, projected in Ted Huffman's production onto the white walls of the set, and is "spoken" rhythmically by pairs of untuned percussion characters – a bass drum and a side drum, for example. The effect of these wordless exchanges is gloriously bathetic. There's whimsy here but also sharper-edged wit[...]

Alexandra Coghlan, The Arts Desk (4 stars)[67]

The spoken word has regularly been one of Venables' preoccupations, and here passages are not only sung or spoken but also chanted by members of the cast as a group, or even just whispered or shouted.

Venables' most startling technical innovation occurs when a doctor/patient conversation is projected on to the set while also being performed purely in speech rhythm by two percussionists. At such moments, the surprising humour hidden in Kane's text is brilliantly underlined.

George Hall, The Stage (4 stars)[68]

For a truly original take on the troubled mind in troubled times, look instead to Philip Venables' reworking of Sarah Kane's 4.48 Psychosis […] Experimentation in the service of absolute emotional precision: Venables' economical work is one of the most exhilarating operas in years, even while it gives voice to some of the darkest thoughts imaginable.

Igor Toronyi-Lalic, The Spectator[69]

While this 4.48 Psychosis undoubtedly constitutes an opera, the music is best understood as a contributory component to a sensory experience that is also created through word, setting, gesture, movement and sound in the widest sense of the word.

Sam Smith, Music OMH[70]

Comparing these reviews, some common themes emerge:

1. Kane's text was very present in the audience experience, and the 'personality' of Kane's text was clearly perceived through the musical texture.
2. A wide variety of modes of text delivery were successfully perceived.
3. Kane's humour was successfully rendered in the Percussion Dialogue scenes. These scenes were noted in every review.
4. The hive-mind concept was successfully portrayed.
5. The opera's approach to the text was considered to be imaginative / experimental / colourful.

Critics' observations were echoed in audience responses. Whilst we did not conduct any formal process to gather audience responses, we were able to observe some opinions on social media. Searches on Twitter for the hashtags #448psychosis and #4.48psychosis and handles @RoyalOperaHouse and @LyricHammer yielded many results in the weeks following the performances. However, tagged tweets may be positively biased (people wanting to post negative

67 http://www.theartsdesk.com/opera/448-psychosis-royal-opera-lyric-hammersmith

68 https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2016/4-48-psychosis-review-lyric-hammersmith-startling-immensely-moving/

69 http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/08/thomas-ades-bottles-it-in-his-new-opera-the-exterminating-angel-reviewed/

70 http://www.musicomh.com/classical/reviews-classical/4-48-psychosis-lyric-hammersmith-london

opinions do not necessarily want to tag them with the producer's handle or hashtag), so text phrases '4.48 Psychosis', '448 Psychosis', '4:48 Psychosis' were also searched using TweetDeck software. The results showed that almost all tweets about the opera were positive, with a small number vehemently negative, mainly commenting on the opera's staging. Like the critics' reviews, many tweets mentioned the setting of text and imagination/invention. Here are a few representative examples:

> *#448Psychosis is a tough watch, but the text-setting is inspiringly direct & inventive.* @josephmbates
>
> *Cannot throw enough adjectives at #448Psychosis. Not so much opera as visceral musical experience.* @abigailchantal
>
> *#448Psychosis at @LyricHammer last night was ceaselessly inventive with surprising moments of humour.* @alexgroves_

9.2. Issues for future productions

The text-based approach that I have taken to making *4.48 Psychosis* throws up some issues for future productions of the opera, whether that be a revival of the Royal Opera production or a new production. These can be categorised as follows, and will be discussed in order.

1. Making the opera with a different cast.
2. Making the opera in a different language.
3. Making the opera with a different director.

9.2.1. Different casts

In order for the opera to have a long life in the repertoire, it will need be re-made in the future with different casts. Generally, the opera was written for and cast with singers who also have good skills in delivering spoken text. The auditions for this production included an excerpt of Scene 5B to be performed as spoken word, as discussed in Chapter 7.3. This enabled us to find singers who were confident in delivering spoken-word performance, which is crucial for the success of this opera.

As there is so much pre-recorded speech in the opera, the question is whether all of this pre-recorded material should be re-recorded using the voices of a new cast. With the exception of one scene, all of this text is detailed in the score, showing what should be spoken, how it should be divided into separate audio cues and when it should be cued. There would be no problem for a technician or sound designer to follow these instructions with a new cast and produce a new set of audio cues for the show.

However, Scene 5B presents more difficult problems. The compositional process for this scene, as discussed in Chapter 7, was such that the tape collage was made intuitively from spoken-word samples of the cast. It used the previous live version of the score for Scene 5B as a very approximate guide, but the new instrumental music was written onto the dimensions and timings of the tape part. The notation used in the score describes only important cue points that align with the instrumental music; it does not capture the full complexity of the tape part.

In order to avoid re-writing the instrumental material, any new version of this tape would need to keep the same tempo frame, the notated cue positions of spoken phrases and stutters, and overall duration of each of the three tape sections. However, it may not be possible to construct a new tape part in exactly the same way using new speech recordings by a different cast – especially not if it were in a different language, as discussed in the next section. Therefore notating the current tape part in more detail –

producing an exact map of it – would not be useful if the audio source material were different.

In response to this issue, my final position is that Scene 5B should allow sound designers the opportunity to create new tape versions. The notation in the score gives a framework that should be followed that aligns with the existing instrumental music, avoiding any need to re-score. However, a sound designer is afforded plenty of freedom with density/layering, EQ, effects, surround-sound/panning, number of voices and distribution, cutting and stuttering techniques and mastering. One would hope that a good sound designer would take inspiration from the original tapes, of course, but this additional freedom may yield unexpected and interesting results, perhaps according to a different set of dramaturgical conceits that would be given by a new staging and a different director.

9.2.2. Different languages

Chapter 1 outlined a desire to make opera that was semantically immediate, that could be understood by the audience immediately – a form of 'music-led spoken theatre'. However, one problem of internationally-touring opera is the convention for opera to be performed in the language of its creators rather than the language of its audience. If *4.48 Psychosis* is performed to audiences who are not fluent English-speakers, the core objective of semantic immediacy will fail.

This is a complex issue, and in the case of this opera, the problems that this issue throws up have not yet been addressed. Resolving these problems lies outside of this research, but it is a necessary consideration for the future life of this opera, and could form the basis for further research. Opera translators usually work with composers to find the best text translations to fit the rhythm and pitch of the music, so that stresses and intonation of the new text fit with the music. However, due to the licensing of rights from the Kane Estate, any foreign-language version of the opera would need to use the approved translation of Kane's text, and so this model of translation would work in the other direction – the music would need to be made to fit the existing (approved) text. Given these complications, there needs to be a discussion about whether any of the music should be 'translated', if so what proportion of it, and how new performance materials are made.

My view is that as much as possible should be in the native language of the audience. However, given that resources, producers and even audiences may allow only a partial solution, the tasks of translation would be broken down as follows:

1. **Live spoken word.** The new text can be substituted in the score easily and performed in the new language.
2. **Pre-recorded spoken word.** The new text can be substituted in the score easily and re-recorded in the new language, as would be required with any new cast, even in English (see 9.2.1 – Different casts)
3. **Scene 5B, tape collage.** The new text can be substituted in the score and new audio stems could be recorded in the new language, and a new tape part made, as discussed in 9.2.1 – Different casts. However, a re-scoring of the instrumental music would be required to address changes in sentence structure of the text in the new tape part (e.g. which words should be stuttered / underscored).
4. **Surtitles / other projection.** These would be remade in the new language as they would for any foreign-language opera.
5. **Percussion Dialogues** would need to be completely re-written in the new language and new

projection videos made. Speech rhythms and emphasis would be different, requiring all of the percussion duos to be rewritten, and possibly new click tracks to be made.

6. **Sung text/aria.** All passages of song would need to be re-arranged with the new text, such as rhythmic variations and adjustments for different emphasis/stress/grammar.

Points 2 and 3 would not require significantly more labour than that required to re-record material with a new cast in English (see 9.2.1 – Different casts). Point 4 would be done anyway for foreign-language performances of opera. Therefore only points 5 and 6 are those that require significantly more resources. Of those two, the Percussion Dialogues would be a much higher priority for translation than the sung material, because these are scenes that focus so clearly on the semantic immediacy that this commentary has described. The effectiveness of these scenes would suffer much more by being in a foreign language than any of the sung scenes. I would be inclined to insist that these scenes be re-written in other languages where required; this could be done either by myself (with the assistance of a language coach) or by an arranger who could make new versions to be approved, by following the transcription methodology described in Chapter 8.

9.2.3. Different directors

Another objective of this operatic adaptation, although not the focus of this research commentary, was to create musical and dramaturgical frameworks within the score that allow the director more space to make dramaturgical decisions than might be possible in operas where everything is precisely scored. Some passages in the opera were written with a modular construction, for example, or vocal lines were not assigned to particular voices, choices between live performance and pre-recording were left open. Within the hive-mind, inner-monologue concept of the opera, all of these choices were possible from a dramaturgical point of view.

This particular production, of course, made decisions about all of these questions. Lines were assigned to singers, it was decided which spoken text and sung lines should be pre-recorded and which delivered live (e.g. Scenes 2, 11, 15, 23), and likewise which music should be performed live or be pre-recorded (e.g. the solo keyboard part in Scene 11, hummed chorus in Scene 23, the Bach fragments in Scene 17). These decisions, however, should not determine the choices of any future productions – they should remain open for a new director to approach afresh. A different staging concept may produce considerably different outcomes.

Such 'open' passages and others like them will therefore remain open in the score. This includes whether voiceovers should be delivered live or be pre-recorded, some optional orchestrations, and some sung passages and many spoken passages open to be freely assigned to performers as staging and dramaturgy require.

9.3. Further research

In closing, I will briefly outline potential further experimentation with non-sung text, particularly (but not only) in theatrical settings. Some of these research avenues were at some stage on a list of ideas for this opera, and others have come to light since the production. Some are personal research targets to develop my own practice and others are more generally applicable to opera and its evolution:

1. **Studio Techniques.** A development of more sophisticated studio techniques and live electronics to modify, layer and texturise the spoken voice within musical contexts. This area was touched on very lightly in the Year 1 workshops with pitch-shifting and chorus/reverb

effects, but my practice needs more development. This is currently being addressed in several new projects and grant applications.

2. **Lip-syncing.** There are a number of excellent lip-sync artists such as Dickie Beau, and as a performance art, lip-syncing would have a role in opera. It has potential implications for devices such as voice-body split, off-stage voiceovers, vocal gender-switching and much more. A recent production *Putting words in your mouth* (2016)[71] by the artist Scottee uses this to great effect and could provide fertile ground for adapting techniques to opera.

3. **Video in live performance.** Further work can be done with editing techniques for audio-video material, including methods for interaction with live performance. For example, a character on stage interacting with themselves on video. Live video relay would also be fertile ground for development. I am currently in discussion with Katie Mitchell, a director who uses live video extensively, about a potential collaboration in this area.

4. **Click tracks.** Click tracks were used in very simple ways in *4.48 Psychosis*, but they have the potential to create impressive and intricate effects, especially when different performers have independent click tracks. Recently *Le Premier Meurtre* (2016)[72] by Arthur Lavandier and Frederico Flamminio explored such techniques and could stimulate further research.

5. **Text sources.** Future projects could attempt to widen the variety of text–dramaturgy–music relationships by gathering a greater range of source texts with varying points of view. Possible texts could include found text, media text (online, television, newspapers), verbatim interview transcripts, eavesdropping private conservations, online chat or whatsapp conversations, literary text and non-fiction text.

6. **Participatory opera / Outreach opera.** I will be working on several audience-interactive projects in the near future, including live and pre-recorded video interviews. How can these text techniques be implemented in this kind of format, and how might they function in pieces where material is generated by the audience? Likewise, could these techniques be adapted for outreach operas with children?

This list is not exhaustive: all good practice-led research should throw up more avenues for potential investigation than questions it answers. However, most of the points above assume the possibility of a healthy research methodology. The making of *4.48 Psychosis* benefitted enormously from a structured research process: workshopping, experimentation and trial-and-error was necessary to pursue the practice-led research objectives. This is the crucial difference between a research process and a commission-and-deliver process. Therefore, one final point of potential future research is a practical one: how can non-sung text in opera be developed further without a structured development process in place and the resources to support it? That is an open question, but the necessity of that question highlights – both in absolute research terms, and to opera-makers, producers and audiences – the value of a structured research and production process, such as this Royal Opera and Guildhall Doctoral Composer-in-Residence scheme.

71 Scottee, *Putting words in your mouth* (2016). Produced by The Roundhouse, London. Premiere run 22 Nov–3 Dec 2016. Review: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2016/nov/27/putting-words-in-your-mouth-review

72 Lavandier, A., Flamminio, F. *Le Premier Meurtre* (2016). Co-production by Lille Opera and Le Balcon. More information: https://www.opera-lille.fr/fr/archives/bdd/cat/opera/sid/99620_le-premier-meurtre

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10.2. Catalogue of Supporting Materials

Media materials can be found online at **www.448psychosis.philipvenables.com/sm**

All paper-based materials can be found in the accompanying booklet of supporting materials.

SM.1 **ONLINE:** Video of the performance of *4.48 Psychosis,* Saturday 28th May 2016, Lyric Theatre Hammersmith.

SM.2 **ONLINE:** Interview with Ted Huffman and Philip Venables by Samira Ahmed on *Front Row,* BBC Radio 4, 24th May 2016.

SM.3 Evans, G. L., 2016, *The Composer as Auteur: Sarah Kane's 4.48 Psychosis as an Opera* (Unpublished). Conference paper given June 16th 2016 at the the Music Theatre Working Group, International Federation of Theatre Research Conference: *'Presenting the Theatrical Past'*, Stockholm University, Sweden.

SM.4 Two articles written for the programme book for the production of the opera.

- SM.4.1 Delgado-Garcia, C., *Sing without hope, tender with trust.*
- SM.4.2 Fallas, J. *A new kind of opera.*

SM.5 A detailed version of the scene plan of 4.48 Psychosis. This was a working document for the composer during the composition process and a useful summary for the production team during rehearsals.

SM.6 A complete personnel list for the production.

SM.7 Selected working diagrams related to pre-compositional analysis of structure, narrative and dramaturgy in the source text

SM.8 ONLINE: Audio recordings of each scene in Year 3 workshops.

- SM.8.1 Scene 3
- SM.8.2 Scene 4
- SM.8.3 Scenes 7 & 8
- SM.8.4 Scene 9
- SM.8.5 Scene 10
- SM.8.6 Scene 13
- SM.8.7 Scene 15
- SM.8.8 Scene 16

SM.9 **ONLINE:** Recordings of the two voiceover options in Scene 14

- SM.9.1 Christian Burgess (male voice)
- SM.9.2 Susanna Hurrell (cast member, female voice)

SM.10 The full score for the first version of Scene 16

SM.11 **ONLINE:** The voiceover recording of Sarah Fahie screaming the text of Scene 16.

SM.12 The full score for the first version of Scene 9

SM.13 The full score for Scene 1 of *Unleashed* (Philip Venables & Nick Blackburn, 2012, unpublished)

SM.14 **ONLINE:** A video of an excerpt of Scene 1 of *Unleashed*.

SM.15 The full score of *Illusions* (2015, University of York Music Press Ltd., reprinted with permission)

SM.16 **ONLINE:** Videos of *Illusions* – Philip Venables & David Hoyle, London Sinfonietta & Sound Intermedia

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- SM.22.6 **ONLINE:** Scene 12 – audio of theatre workshop performance
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- SM.22.8 Scene 12 – typeset transcription (draft)
- SM.22.9 **ONLINE:** Scene 23 – audio of theatre workshop performance
- SM.22.10 Scene 23 – handwritten transcription
- SM.22.11 Scene 23 – typeset transcription (draft)

SM.23 Broadsheet and trade magazine reviews of the opera.

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