Sound-Rich Poetry in Geraldine Monk, Bill Griffiths and Maggie

O'Sullivan

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CONTENTS

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION TO SOUND-RICH POETRY

This thesis is driven by my creative focus on making an explorative journey in sonically charged language and structures in poetic form. Michel Foucault explains the catalyst for this better: 'Who has capacity to formulate truths has the power of being able to speak the truth and express it in the way he wants'.[1] I understand Foucault's 'truths' as ideologies formulated by institutions and those who exert control, which find expression through the mediums of speech and writing. As a writer I am used to writing my own narrative but in the case of giving a witness statement someone else wrote down my verbal account. Reading those statements back revealed a strange hybrid voice that was part mine and part the scribe's voice. Further, the account I had given was removed from me and used in ways beyond my awareness.[2] This thesis emerges from my experience of how legal and justice systems use speech and writing and the impact of this on my sense of self as a writer and written subject. My creative work explores this self as variations on a speaking subject in a quest for its own literary and linguistic truth and identity, beginning with a hybrid (human and tree) speaking subject within a poem as structured by improvised patterns of sonic space, that is also a space of refuge from definitive meaning which it perceives as troublesome; troublemaking. In this way I am engaging with the rift between what can be sensuous and joyful and what can be logical and harmful in my material, that is in language. As lyric expression the creative project explores poems as an arena for a speaking subject to test itself out,

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[1] Rabinow, P. (ed.) (1997) *Michel Foucault: Ethics: The Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1884 Volume 1*. London: Penguin Books. p. 298.

[2] For an elaboration of Foucault's 'games of truth' see the chapter 'The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom' in ibid pp. 281-301.

to enact self-healing, to journey through the poems and enter a renewed state of being. Informing and inspiring this series of sonic transformations, in a continuous weaving process of feedback, is the critical project which underpins this research. This is presented as an introduction which defines and illustrates my concept of sound-rich poetry and as three case studies. My poetics, 'A Slice of the Infinite Sonic Weave', relates to my work in its considerations of the possibilities of poetry as sonic-sensuous echo, and the sound of a temperament, which binds us to each other. It also relates how I work with sound to the case study chapters as poetry of 'attention', 'resistance' and 'healing'. Invested in poetry in which sound manifests as the dominant textual register, this research takes a multi-disciplinary approach. This includes fields of theories of sound in poetry, and in linguistics, and philosophy of language, to offer a practice-led theory for how sound aspects of language and structure are intrinsic in poetic compositional processes and how this shapes the resultant poem. The critical engagement is with three contemporary poets, Geraldine Monk, Bill Griffiths and Maggie O'Sullivan whose innovative writing practises are developed out of idiosyncratic involvement with, and immersion in, sound and concrete poetry of the pivotal British Poetry Revival and Linguistically Innovative Poetry. This research understands those distinctive conditions of immersion as fostering/catalysing attention to innovative and multi-media approaches based in an art of vocalisation which situates the poem as an indissoluble union of speech and writing. Further, the work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan demonstrates concerns with sonic and visual silences, and with fluency, in speech and writing. Their writing demonstrates strategies of vocalisation, resistance to regularity, and transformation

in what Foucault terms, 'The struggle against forms of subjection'.[3] I use the terms 'soundshapes' and 'soundscapes' to evoke Roman Jakobson's linguistic theory. The terms 'sonic bond' and 'beat rhythm' are derived from Derek Attridge's theory of prosody. 'Musicality' is used to describe a prosody of sonic structures, based in rhythms of speech, which do not follow regular patterns. Rather than proposing a direct borrowing from structures of musical composition, the phrases 'musicality of speech rhythms' and 'songful soundshapes' in this thesis are intended to suggest the music and song elements of lyric. This thesis holds that remnants of music and song manifest via innovative weaves of orality and aurality in this contemporary sound-rich form.

Structure of this thesis

In part one this thesis is composed of four chapters of literary study which are presented as an introduction to my concept of sound-rich poetry and three case studies which elaborate and illustrate this idea. Contributing to the discourse of studies of sound in poetry the critical part of my research establishes a 'sound-rich' poetry based within contemporary innovative practice. The three case studies evidence my argument for a remarkable relationship between an indissoluble union of speech and writing that is driven by sound and forms of linguistic and socio-political silences based in the work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan. This research finds a critical and creative link between sensuous and intuitive modes of experiencing and a musical phrasing which replaces traditional prosody. Part two of

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[3] Faubion, J. D. (ed.) (2002) *Michel Foucault: Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984. Volume 3*. London: Penguin Books. p. 331.

this thesis comprises a portfolio of my poems and a poetics which presents my theoretical reflections and responses to advanced readings and creative engagements. In my practice-led research there is a complex interaction of feedback and interplay between the three areas of poetry, poetics, and literary study which develops my knowledge and understanding of sound-rich poetry, and the relationship between sound-rich poetry and silences. The progression through this is linear in that the three parts of my research occur in a forward motion but the complexity of the interactions between the literary study, the making of poems, and subsequent reflection, is more a pattern of weaving back and forth between them in order for the whole to move forward. The literary chapters are placed to introduce and elaborate my concept of sound-rich poetry. The poetics is placed at the back of this, as it offers a reflective discourse, which both emerges, and diverges speculatively, from the theory of the literary chapters. The poetics offers a context for the portfolio of poems which are read as reflective of the theory and writing processes.

Research activities include readings of creative and critical work to academic and wider audiences. Giving, and preparing for live readings of creative work is part of developing my performance and editing processes. Performance, the vocalisation of my poems, is embedded in my conceptualisation of sound-rich poetry; practise further develops and informs my concept. Both the orality and aurality in sound expressed through vocalisation is integral to my creative work and research, and it is part of my process when practising vocalisations of poems prior to performances to record and play back rehearsals so that I can experience and refine vocal sound effects. This exploration of effects of speech rhythms also develops during performances where I explore making vocalisations of speech rhythms as speech

and song.[4] The combination of using voice for performances and composing for the page, informs the critical and creative understanding of the interchange between orality and aurality in reading and composing poems as well as in performances.

This research invests in exploring combinations of creative and critical work and poetics, particularly in situating the relationship between poems and poetics in a dialogic relationship in live performances. As part of the feedback loop, experiences of interactions between poems and poetics, or poems and critical writing, inform the poetry.[5] Embedded in my work in different forms, the creative potential of poetics and its nature as a discourse running alongside, gives permission for, and renews, my poetry.[6] In his introductory discussion of the relationship between sound, sign and meaning in poetry, Charles Bernstein posits that analysis of sound patterning calls for something more than what, albeit pioneering, linguistic and prosodic approaches have so far offered and that, in working intimately with sound, the poet can offer new perspectives on sound.[7] In my processes of composition, my concept and analysis of poetry, from my perspective on using word structures and voice to compose poems, as well as in my reading of, and listening to, poetry, I too am offering a new perspective on sound. In my approach to sound as a linguistic and structural feature working with sense and visual aspects, rather than working in

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[4] My collaboration with Patricia Farrell for the North by Northwest Poetry Tour. 11/2/17 Liverpool Everyman Playhouse. Available: http://www.theenemiesproject.com/northwest Last Accessed 14/12/19.

[5] My interview with Geraldine Monk extended and informed my conceptualization of sound-rich poetry in relation to her writing. Ashcroft, J. '*The Wolf* Interview: Geraldine Monk' in *The Wolf* magazine Issue 35, Autumn 2017. pp. 57-65.
Writing about vitality and music in Robert Sheppard's poetry assisted my thinking about music and song in the sonic structures of poetry. Ashcroft, J. 'A Response to Vitality' in Robert Sheppard's *Empty Diaries* and 'Wiped Weblogs'' in Byrne, J. & Madden, C. (ed.s) (2018) *The Robert Sheppard Reader*. Bristol: Shearsman. pp. 200-213.

[6] My being an active member, the Poetry and Poetics Research Group at Edge Hill has given versions of my poetics and poetry a forum and feedback during development.

[7] Bernstein, C. 'Introduction' in Bernstein, C. (1998) (ed.) *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 3-26.

isolation, I perceive a poetry that is charged with sound through both the verbal matter and written materials of its composition.

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Theoretical context for sound-rich poetry

To establish the role and function of linguistic sound in this poetry, my research engages with Formalist linguistic and prosodic studies which examine how sound can be foregrounded in language and structure. I will now elaborate the theoretical background to my definition of sound-rich poetry. This is followed by an analysis of two poems, one by Monk and one by Roy Fisher, which illustrates my definition. I then, in the context of the sound-rich poetry of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan, relate their innovative ways of working to the social and ethical and to subject matter.

In *Six Lectures on Sound and Meaning* (1976) Jakobson examines how sounds perform meaning and the relationship between sound and meaning within a word. When language is used with the aim of being understood, speech sounds distinguish the meaning of words, word stress, word boundaries. Jakobson states that 'a poetic work is defined as a verbal message whose aesthetic function is its dominant.'[8] In foregrounding the sound part of its dual aspect of sound and meaning, the relationship between sound and meaning in a word shifts, and language can be made sensuous. Poetry which foregrounds sound as its dominant feature, uses words to lead by their sound aspect, role and function. I use the term 'soundshapes' for words in which the sonic materiality, texture, shape and colour is foregrounded. I

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[8] Jakobson, R. (1987) *Language in Literature*. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. p. 43.

intend 'soundscape' to suggest the poem as a sonic landscape, that is, composed as a sonic contour, the aesthetic of which is foregrounded as sensuous qualities of language, texture, shape and colour.

A word is heard as sound when access to denotative meaning is missing, as in nonsense and unknown words. Meaning can be deducted from intuitive responses to the sound, shape and texture, of speech sounds, rhythm, pitch, that is, by using an inherent knowledge of the symbolic qualities of sounds. In onomatopoeic words the speech sounds are used to mimic environmental sounds such as 'drip drop'. In sound symbolism vowels and consonants are comprehended as suggesting different textures, shapes and colours. The vowel 'i' is perceived as light, small and high, whereas 'u' is perceived as dark, large and deep.[9] Synaesthesia also contributes to perceptions of, and responses to, speech sounds. Jakobson defines synaesthesia as 'the phenomenal interconnection between the different senses' and this links to sound symbolism in suggesting shape and texture of speech sounds.[10] To indicate the significance of sound symbolism and synaesthesia Jakobson quotes Benjamin Lee Whorf, 'If the sounds fit, the psychic quality of the sounds is increased.'[11] In language made sensuous the expressive and emotive aspects of sound are experienced more intensely.

Jakobson's chapter 'The Spell of Speech Sounds' explores the features of sound which generate the magic, incantatory and pleasurable in sensuous language.[12] Experiencing language as sound is always dependent on certain shifts in the relationship between sound and meaning in a word. Such shifts range from the

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[9] Sound Symbolism is discussed in Jakobson, R. & Waugh, R. L. (1979) *The Sound Shape of Language*. Sussex: The Harvester Press Ltd. pp. 177-188.
[10] Synaesthesia is discussed in ibid pp. 188-194.
[11] Ibid. p. 192.
[12] 'The Spell of Speech Sounds' is chapter five in ibid pp.177-231.

close repetition of sound and meaning in word affinities, to shifts of consonants or

vowels which match the size of speech sounds to what is signified.[13] In mythopoeic

usage speech sounds are matched to physical attributes and in verbal taboo sounds

are substituted to disguise the subject meant or addressed.[14] In glossolalia speech

sounds lose their sense discriminative role and children's verbal art delights in

rhyme, rhythm and repetition.[15] These shifts in the relationship between sound and

meaning in words which make sound prominent are a principal element in the

structure of sound-rich poetry.

Soundshapes, which foreground sound in words, are used to create

soundscapes, which foreground the function of sound in poetic structure. In *The

Sound Shape of Language* (1979) Jakobson writes:

> There is, however, one kind of verbal activity which is omnipresent
> and necessarily characterised by the greater or lesser self-
> determination of speech sounds. This is 'poetic language'. [. . .] It does
> not mean that the role of poetry is conceived of as reduced to the
> sound-form or that the meaning loses its import. Rather, the notion of
> verse implies the indispensable presence of a certain specific, *ad hoc*
> organisation of the verbal sound matter.[16]

In sound-rich poetry the 'verbal sound matter,' is not just an 'indispensable

presence'; the sound qualities and rhythms of speech sounds determine and drive

the structure. Jakobson identifies that the 'self-determination of speech sounds'

characterises the movements of sound of which sound-rich poetry is composed. The

movement of sound is supported by movements of meaning; the sensual aspect of

language is underpinned by the intellectual. Attridge analyses non-metrical verse as

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[13] Word affinities are discussed in ibid pp.194-200 and sound-symbolic ablaut ibid pp. 200-204.
[14] Speech sounds in mythopoeic usage and verbal taboo are discussed in ibid pp. 204-208 and pp. 208-211 respectively.
[15] Glossolalia is discussed in ibid pp. 211-215 and for children's verbal art see ibid pp. 217-220.
[16] Ibid. p. 215.

carefully arranged movements of sound, rhythm and meaning. For him, speech

sounds have 'twin tendencies' towards variety and regularity, the natural tendency to

roam free and the pull to form patterns.[17] With an implicit knowledge of the rhythms

of speech a regular pattern in sound can be intuited even from fragments of metre. A

range of both regular metrical and irregular sound patterns extends the sound

contour of the poem. However, *any* patterns shift and are broken free from before

they can become a ruling factor in the sonic structure of a poem. Jakobson's point

that, 'Avoidance of rational lexis and grammar permits, nevertheless, a rigorous

structuration' illustrates the greater emphasis on words as sonic.[18] Rather than

semantic or grammatical, words become sonic units which drive sound-rich poetry.

The composition draws on the sonic materiality of language in both forms as verbal

matter *and* writing. A temporal approach to rhythm elicits an analogy with musical

form so that, just as rests occur in music, the shifts between regular and irregular

patterns include 'measurable intervals of silence'.[19]

 In Attridge's view of stress although there are rules of prosody, poetic rhythm

is open to multiple realisations, further, stress is dependent on a writer's vocal

identity, the acoustic and syntactic context and how a reader hears the sounds in the

act of reading.[20] Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan write in the speech rhythms of accent

and varieties of English. Viewing stress as contingent is important to my reading of

the work of poets under discussion in which vocalisation and variables in vocal

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[17] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited.
p. 18.
[18] Jakobson, R. & Waugh, R. L. (1979) *The Sound Shape of Language*. Sussex: The Harvester Press
ltd. p. 219.
[19] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. p. 21.
[20] Attridge outlines traditional (classical and temporal) and linguistic (phonemic and generative)
approaches to prosody which he finds offer some helpful points but impose conditions on syllable /
speech rhythm which distort its nature in order to fit it to the rules of each theory. See Attridge's
overview 'Part One: Approaches' in ibid pp. 3-55. Also see Attridge's explanation of stress in ibid pp.
62-67.

identity are embedded as a weave of orality and aurality. Reading a syllable as stressed is determined by how pitch, duration, amplitude and sound quality are perceived.[21] In addition, a poet can decide to shift stress in response to semantic context and create special emphasis to convey meaning.[22] These factors demonstrate that the syllable is not a fixed sonic entity that traditional theories show as neatly obeying a set of rules. In my approach I take account of this unpredictable, uncountable and intuitive aspect of poetic rhythm which depends on how a speaker invests language with energy and emphasis and the pressure of breath to produce the sound, as well as how a listener or reader perceives that.

Having a way to describe the rhythmic and acoustic effects of vocal identity is important for reading the meanings and structure of poems that include a weave of orality and aurality. That is, for analysing sonic structures based in speech rhythms which do not adhere to regular patterns. I need to write about speech rhythm without using the formal language of prosody (metre, rhythm, tempo, pitch and loudness) to describe a musical phrasing which replaces traditional prosody in sound-rich poetry. In this way I can give an account of the sensuous and intuitive modes of experiencing sounds and sound patterns that are expressive of size, shape, colour and textures of language. In addition, I am describing the role of the breath and vocal identity in sonic production and acoustic reception. Along these lines I am constructing a hybrid discourse on poetry as an artist-academic based in a technical analysis of the sound pattern of poetry approached through the lens of a writer-linguist. I use the terms 'soundshapes' and 'soundscapes' from Jakobson. 'Soundshapes' describes a word through its sound qualities felt in sound symbolism;

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[21] Ibid p. 63.
[22] For Attridge's account of the relationship between meaning and stress hierarchies see 'Sense and the Stress Pattern' in ibid pp. 222-230.

the size, shape, colour and texture of language suggested by vowels and consonants that is perceived by speakers without needing special linguistic knowledge.[23] Similarly, 'soundscape' describes a poem by reference to the quality of sound and sound pattern and contour effected by the soundshapes. The terms 'sonic bond' and 'beat rhythm' are derived from Attridge's theory of prosody. 'Sonic bond' describes a linkage, technical and socio-ethical, through sound while 'beat rhythm' mixes prosodic and musical terms to be suggestive of both.[24] In using Attridge's theoretical approach I am resisting writing about poetry as if it is expressed in 'a single mode of speech rhythm', that is bereft of accent and vocal identity of the writer.[25] I am opening up discussions of poetic rhythm as a collaboration between text and voice. My discussions include the intuitive and instinctive in sound patterning and are inclusive of the role of vocal identity in performances. Rather than imposing a reading to fit predetermined rules, I read poetry as a vocal art that lifts speech sounds from the confines of the page as well as from the traditional and formal approaches to prosody and literary conventions.

In *The Rhythms of English Poetry* (1987) Attridge is critical of 'elitism' and 'absolutism' in prosodic approaches based studies of Latin and Greek languages that informed traditional approaches to prosody and literature.[26] In relation to class these conservative approaches to poetic rhythm resonate in the prestige and exclusiveness of authoritative grammar school education. Situating the discourse of formal prosody outside everyday reach, restricts access to literary consciousness

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[23] For Jakobson on sound symbolism see footnote 9.
[24] See p. 77 below for use of 'sonic bond' in Griffiths' work and p. 215 and p. 225 below for this term used in my poetics.
[25] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. p. 60.
[26] Attridge explores what 'metrical assumptions' underlie most critical discussions of English verse and is valuable and what is misleading in the classical and linguistic approaches to prosody based in Latin and Greek studies imposed on the English language. Ibid pp. 3-18.

making that a privileged and academic construct. In addition, this situation creates a perspective on culture, as well as a value of literature based in an exclusivity of class and power that is not open to those who have not been schooled in its language and systems.[27] Voices that step outside conventions required by formal prosodic theories have been left out of dominant and elite literary discourses and consciousness. Attridge states that he does not take account of accents in his approach to prosody and that this sets aside a large range of music of language of sounds in favour of a standardised approach.[28] This is arguably necessary for practical reasons, yet the work of the poets under discussion is built upon the use of words and syntactic structures that extend the music of language. The poetry of marginalized voices and accents remains at risk of being misread and misheard unless there is a language of analysis in which to describe the richness and sonic diversity in those works.[29] Further, the everyday and natural versus the artful and complex in speech and writing, embodies a tension that is reflected in having the freedom to invent new patterns versus conforming to highly controlled and counted patterns. In engaging with the intuitive sonic world my hybrid discourse of analysis uses more accessible as well as cross-disciplinary terms. For me, Foucault's tenet to know the rules of a power system to join in equally, translates to using literary criticism to extend social and academic-artistic bonds through a shared language and hybrid prosodic analysis that enriches our literary consciousness.[30]

In the process of writing this thesis I am expanding how I work with sound through academic engagement and exploration, cognisant of cultural and social

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[27] See Mottram in Griffiths chapter p. 90 and footnote 178. Also see Attridge's 'Introduction' in Attridge, D. (2015) *Moving Words: Forms of English Poetry.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[28] See footnote 25.
[29] Hybrid approaches to writing style and cross disciplinary approaches to analysis and discussion are increasingly appearing in academic journals such as *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*.
[30] See footnotes 1 and 2.

complexity in literary traditions and communication across disciplines. I am focussing on the work of the ear in composition, the influence of oral poetry, speech and music which is why I resist describing metrical patterns in ways that lock poetry into written systems. The work of the ear where sonic innovation is at stake, involves much more than carrying out Pound's call to compose to the musical phrase rather than the metronome.[31] This thesis holds that remnants of music and song manifest via innovative weaves of orality and aurality to create this contemporary sound-rich form. As Olson describes it in his essay 'Projective Verse', this is verse in which the poet: 'manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear *and* the pressures of his breath'.[32] The work of the ear is a careful and continuous attention to speech sounds and rhythms and during composition that these sounds are written with a clear purpose to be sounded out invested with the 'full relevance of the human voice'.[33] I use the phrase 'musicality of speech' to indicate the improvised and spontaneous nature of the structure of speech. The phrase 'songful soundshapes' designates the use of all parts of speech, both sound and percussive.

Further, to create sound patterns Olson advocates that, 'Conventions which logic has forced on syntax must be broken open as quietly as must the too set feet of the old line'.[34] Using the ear entails engaging with instinctive methods of structuring sound during the process of composition. This is not to discard metre altogether, rather to relax the measure and regularity of syllables in sonic structures which, while not predetermined or predictable, are consciously designed to have a certain effect. Additionally, the influence of music is that as the written musical score, so the poem

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[31] See footnote 61.
[32] Olson, C. 'Projective Verse' in Hoover, P. (1994) (ed.) *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*. London: W. W. Norton & Company. First Edition. p. 615.
[33] Ibid p. 620
[34] Ibid p. 617

is open to interpretations in being brought from its written, into sounded versions for performance to an audience. Different realisations available in the sonic material and structure depend on the sonic nature of the type of musical instrument, that is the human voice, and the musician or conductor's rendering, that is the rhythmic interpretation. A richness lies in the multiple sonic possibilities of poetry that is not confined to written systems. This is similarly the case in oral poetry which is based in vocal performance and where the written form is not fixed.

In her essay 'Latin Charms of Medieval England: Verbal Healing in a Christian Oral Tradition' Lea Olsan discusses the written contexts of the genre, its place in oral tradition, use of language and aspects of performance.[35] The influence of early written forms such as charms is in how they reveal a transitional stage between literate and oral modes, use intertextuality, include certain speech acts and are deeply established in the efficacy of carefully chosen words in performance to affect human beings and their world. Dependent on memory, charms and oral poetry are part of the culture of an everyday experience that is accessible to a wide audience who are integral to its production. Consequently, there is an intimacy of voice in the oral tradition which effects a social bonding and emotional correspondence between poet, text and audience. Further, vocal identity in the speech and pronunciation of the writer which characterises these oral texts, is transposed into the written versions which exist before standardization of writing. In this way, the written versions of oral poetry and forms such as charms, demonstrate how a sonic diversity found in the oral tradition imbues the page with the music of spoken language and with the

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[35] Olsan, L. 'Latin Charms of Medieval England: Verbal Healing in a Christian Oral Tradition' in *Oral Tradition*, 7/1 (1992). Available: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1973/e8c529f7bec2d2da68813d7cb2e9cf58da53.pdf Last Accessed 5/01/20.

distinctive sound of human voices. Restoring these attributes from the oral tradition to contemporary poetic forms shows how language can be made sensuous and structure instinctive again.

Studies in oral tradition are interested in, 'The way sound is understood in oral and aural terms provides the agency through which high and low, elite and popular cultures are brought into conjunction throughout English Literature'.[36] Bound up with class as a divisive ordering system based on perceived social or economic status, the work of each of the poets under discussion demonstrates strategies of vocalisation, resistance to regularity, and transformation in what Foucault terms, 'The struggle against forms of subjection'.[37] The British class system facilitates staid judgements about an individual's level of intelligence, educational background, employment and moral values based on an their vocal identity. Such a limited and limiting system does not account for each person being a complexity of elite and popular aspects of identity. It also discounts the fluidity in identity and socio-economic circumstances that are prohibitive of a person neatly fitting neatly into a prescribed identity. Monk's broad Lancastrian vocal identity is bound up with being a young working class woman expected to leave school and work in a factory in a northern town rather than becoming a poet.[38] The duality in vocal identity and perceptions of education and class for Griffiths mean that a lack of speech fluency can leave an individual vulnerable to oppressive power systems in education, law and monarchy. For O'Sullivan, who worked as a researcher at the BBC, there is a loss of an aspect of identity, her Irish vocal identity that is rooted in working class

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[36] Rhodes, N. and Jones, C. 'Sound Effects: The Oral/Aural Dimensions of Literature in English. *Introduction' Oral Tradition*, 24/2 (2009): p. 281. Available: https://journal.oraltradition.org/wp-content/uploads/files/articles/24ii/02_24.2.pdf Last Accessed 16/6/20.
[37] See footnote 3.
[38] See Monk's chapter 'A Working Class Elitist is Something to Be' in Monk, G. (ed.) (2012) Cusp: Recollections of Poetry in Transition. Bristol: Shearsman Books Ltd. pp.182-190.

social situations with its expression based in orality. In an immigrant community the economic, cultural and political heritage is at risk of being lost, if the community of speakers diminishes and the voices which memorialise these factors have not been preserved in written form.

The relationship between sound-rich poetry and the sound of marginalized accents and voices is one of empowerment effected through acts of attention, resistance and transformation. Monk uses the phrase 'language magic' which indicates an attitude of working class people toward accessing and attaining literacy and how powerful and prohibitive language can be; a simple 'yes' or 'no' can grant or deny opportunities in education and employment.[39] Demands on levels and modes of literacy changed as writing developed and a process of standardisation in spelling and grammar begun and pronunciation became a concern. The effect of this was to erase accents and consequently the classes who spoke with those accents from literary writing.[40] Composed as a weave of speech and writing, sound-rich poetry invites marginalized accents as a way of extending the sonic range of language beyond that of a single standardised accent and voice. Sound-rich poetry reanimates those accents and voices which have not been included in written forms, that have been rendered silent and become lost from the page and literary consciousness. This exclusion of marginalized accents in writing has in turn excluded expressions of identity as well as knowledge of the world of the speakers and those around them. It is in such ways that voices become excluded from literary consciousness and

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[39] In 'Place in Voice' on her website Monk writes that 'Several generations later thousands of mill workers wouldn't have the 'language-magic' provided by education to escape from the mills.' http://westhousebooks.co.uk/gmonk.asp Last Accessed 16/6/20.

[40] For an account of the relationships of authenticity and intimacy between voice, oral text and print see Mulholland, J. 'James Macpherson's Ossian Poems, Oral Traditions, and the Invention of Voice' in Oral Tradition, 24/2 (2009) pp. 393-414. Available: https://journal.oraltradition.org/ecompanion/9158/ Last Accessed 16/6/20.

identity. This kind of exclusion is aided by negative attitudes toward verse written in regional and broad accents which has meant that these forms have not been taken seriously as literature. Sound-rich poetry contests this situation by presenting a soundscape that includes the sensuous and intuitive in language, structure and modes of experiencing. The three chapters of analysis will elaborate how the work of the poets under discussion empowers marginalized accents and voices. I will argue that work weaves expressions of everyday perceptions of experience, in everyday language and rhythms alongside artful perceptions, forms of language use and structure in this poetic form.

In my discussions I focus on alliteration and assonance in particular as both are important ways of structuring sound-rich poetry by taking account of, that is by careful listening to speech sounds and rhythms. Monk's statement on the two types of Lancashire accent that she heard growing up, each create their own stress patterns and both break conventions of formal prosody in classical literature. The women place strong stress on each syllable, 'Therre. Is. Trub. Bull. At. The. Mil*ll*,' whereas the men run words into each other in a polysyllabic and undulating musical utterance, 'Thstrouble ut' mil.'[41] Using alliteration and assonance as structuring devices brings prominence to consonants, vowels and syllables that are sensuously expressive of the sound, shape, colour and texture in language. The 'dominance of stress-timing' can occur in everyday uses of language as demonstrated by the Lancashire women's use of strong stresses punctuated by prominent pauses which creates a regular sound pattern.[42] Assonance and alliteration highlight the intuitive and instinctive in creating sound patterns and expressions in verse that metre can

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[41] See Monk's statement in 'Place in Voice' on her website: http://westhousebooks.co.uk/gmonk.asp Last Accessed 16/6/20.
[42] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. pp. 73-74.

extinguish in its structures of orderly sequences of syllables and rationally expressive possibilities of regular verse.[43] A sound pattern that is punctuated by silences is a central and driving force in the composition, and to the performance of sound-rich poetry.

The work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan demonstrates concerns with sonic and visual silences, and with fluency, in speech and writing. I will discuss socio-ethical silences later in this introduction. The silences in Monk's reference to Lancashire women's speech above are created by unusual use of punctuation that is characteristic of sound-rich poetry. A temporal approach to rhythm elicits an analogy with musical form so that, just as rests occur in music, the shifts between regular and irregular patterns include 'measurable intervals of silence'.[44] Silence as a temporal experience in the poem recalls John Cage for whom, 'There is no such thing as an empty space or an empty time'.[45] In his work silences, that is white space is filled by attention to each unit of sound, each space represents an element of time, rhythm. Further:

> Aural performance, in any case, activates any number of meanings, especially since the spacing (the visual equivalence of silence) ensures very slow reading . . . the audience is forced to listen carefully, to pay attention to the sound of each unit.[46]

Important for sound-rich poetry is that silence can be used to draw attention to linguistic and typographical sound and to meaning. For Cage 'each unit' includes words and punctuation and it is by altering their regular function and position in the

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[43] See Attridge's discussion of rhythmic effects in the chapter 'The Functions of Poetic Rhythm' in ibid. pp. 285-315.

[44] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. p.21.

[45] Perloff, M. 'The Music of John Cage's Verbal Space "What You Say . . ."' Marjorie Perloff in Morris, A. (ed.) (1997) *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. London: The University of North Carolina Press. p. 138.

[46] Ibid pp. 140-141.

syntactic structure that he imbues these visual marks with ear catching sound qualities. It is through his experimental approach to the human voice as instrument and its medium of language, combined with innovative use of typography and syntax that Cage's work reveals new possibilities for musicality in language and structure in poetic form.

Innovative and multimedia methodologies which work with traditional forms lend themselves to discovering new sonic materials and shifting patterns. In *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word* (1998) Bernstein illustrates the nature of the sonic structures and materiality in sound-rich poetry: that musical phrasing can replace traditional prosody in structuring the sound in a poem; that instead of taking precedence, the breath, voice and speech aspects in orality can work alongside the sounding of writing that is aurality.[47] These two points garnered from Bernstein place emphasis on the importance of vocalisation to this poetry which is composed of speech *and* writing that is driven by sound. It is not a case of one over the other, rather, there is a relationship of continuous feedback between speech and writing at the root of this non-metrical verse which accounts for the inventiveness of its patterns. The fleetingness of sound is counterbalanced by the concreteness of the inscription of sound on a page or other surface. As a form of non-metrical verse,

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[47] I ground both points in p.13 of Bernstein's Introduction to *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word* (1998).Regarding 1: This mention of musical phrasing in relation to the structuring of sound in a poem gestures back to free verse. However, not in Ezra Pound's original call in Imagism to compose to musical rhythms, but in term of Pound's 'melopoeia' in his *A B C of Reading* (2010) first published in 1934. 'Melopoeia' is the term Pound uses for 'inducing emotional correlations by the sound and the rhythm of the speech' and is given as one of three means of charging language with meaning. Pound, E. (2010) *ABC of Reading*. New York: New Directions Paperbook. p. 63. Regarding 2: This point gestures to Charles Olson's 'Projective Verse' poetics with its focus on the breath more in voice and orality which is here extended into, and works alongside, 'aurality'. Bernstein uses 'aurality' to 'indicate the sounding of the writing . . . in sharp contrast to orality and its emphasis on breath voice and speech'. Olson's 'Projective Verse' in Hoover, P. (2013) (ed.) *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*. London: W. W. Norton & Company. Second Edition. pp. 863-871.

sound-rich poetry can draw on metrical forms and rhythms to create a striking weave of sonic patterns. *Aurality* shapes pulses of sound energy into carefully controlled patterns of speech sounds which *orality* causes to hover on the edge of bursting into unfettered speech.

Analysis of a sound-rich poem

To illustrate my definition of sound-rich poetry I will now analyse 'Ghost 1' by Monk and compare that to 'Some Loss' by Fisher. Both poems are non-metrical verse and are a similar length. My argument is that while sound-rich poetry foregrounds sound in its materiality and structure, a poem that is not sound-rich is not consequently, 'sound-poor'. Instead a poem which does not foreground sound is made 'rich' by whichever feature is dominant, whether grammar is foregrounded, or other features of language and structure. I begin by quoting each poem in full. First Fisher's 'Some Loss':

> Being drawn again
> through the same moment
>
> helpless, and to find
> everything simpler yet:
>
> more things I forgot to remember
> have gone; maybe because I forgot.
>
> Instead there is blankness
> and there is grace:
>
> the insistence of the essential,
> the sublime made lyrical
> at the loss of what's forgotten.[48]

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[48] Fisher, R. 'Some Loss' in Crozier, A. & Longville, T. (ed.s) (1990) *A Various Art*. London: Paladin. pp. 104-105.

And Monk's 'Ghost 1':

> It started with a twist and a tryst of
> Lupine lovely arms along a rural railroad
> Bank. Winter rose up summer's rise.
> Throes of profound bafflement.
> Vague was the impression of fossil
> Teeth across the false breast
> Yearning for a straight line in
> Nature digging the *what* that lies
> Oblong and lewd in the tube of
> Afterlife lingerings.
> Unsourced scent so strong it
> Overpowered sense and narrative.
>
> Disturbed earth grew stripes.
> A stalk broke too far.[49]

Fisher's poem demonstrates a harmonic balance between the *semantic* structure and movement, which is underscored by the *sonic* structure and movement. The first three lines of Fisher's poem have five syllables of irregular duration, which complicates the temporal regularity suggested by the idea of being 'drawn again / through the same moment.' The three syllables in 'everything' at the beginning of line four shifts the sound pattern from monosyllabic and disyllabic words and shifts the tempo of the poem. Whatever is 'simpler yet' in Fisher's poem is again complicated by the sonic structure and rhythm.

Monk's poem is striking for the high frequency of alliteration and consonance. The close and frequent repetition of speech sounds in the first line, 'It started with a twist and a tryst of,' draws attention to the sonic materiality and the sonic as driving the structure of the poem. Rather than the harmony between the sonic and semantic that drives Fisher's poem, in 'Ghost 1' each sonic fragment is semantically

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[49] 'Ghost 1' in Monk, G. (2008) *Ghost & Other Sonnets*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 3.

indeterminate at the level of each word. This indeterminacy further complicates the relationship between sound patterning, rhythm and syntax across the whole of Monk's sonnet. Foregrounding the sonic patterns and materials serves to both determine and drive the structure of sound-rich poetry while frustrating the movement of meaning.

In Fisher's lines the rhythmic pattern flows even at irregular intervals. A variety of punctuation, commas, full stops, colons, semi-colon, in 'Some Loss' further controls the flow of sound and helps control the rhythm. Harmony between the semantic and sonic has the effect of balancing attention on both features. The sound then supports other features, semantic, syntactic, imagistic, to come forward. By contrast, an openness to the flow and pattern of rhythmic structure begins to turn the sound up, and to foreground sonic aspects of the sonnet working in relation to other features. Making infrequent use of a single type of punctuation, full stops, allows a more unimpeded movement and unregulated pattern of sound in Monk's sonnet. Consequently, the structure of the rhythm can be read in different ways. Monk's opening line could be read as a pattern of five stresses by reading it as two half lines, 'it started with a' then 'twist and a tryst of'. However, the rhythm also reads in a more natural speech rhythm in three segments: 'it started' 'with a twist' 'and a tryst of'. Attridge writes, 'Part of the dynamic texture of the poetry comes from the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables.'[50] In 'Ghost 1' the dynamic texture is enriched by the dominance of, and variability in, the sonic contour and speed of movement of sound through the poem.

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[50] Attridge, D. (2008) *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 177.

Words act as soundshapes so that features including alliteration create an enhanced sound patterning in 'Ghost 1'. The repetitions of 't' and 's' are combined with strong stresses, making these sounds loud and clear. Vowels are repeated with variations of long and short sounds, 'It started with a', which again disrupts any regularity in the sound patterning and draws attention to these changes. The close pairing of words with very similar sound structures, 'twist and tryst', emphasises those words as sounds and dampens, but does not mute, their semantic and syntactic functions. Sound in itself carries meaning and conveys the full display of vocalic and consonantal symbolism creating mood, suggesting physical attributes (size and shape), expressive of movement, indicating concepts and types of human experiences, through which vowels, consonants and rhythm are a channel of communication.[51] In this way words as soundshapes, such as 'twist and tryst', are carriers of sonic and semantic meaning which heighten the ability of sounds to combine, in this case in a 'consonantal play to express modalities of attitude'.[52]

In 'Some Loss' words are of course speech sounds, but they do not function primarily as sound. Due to their syntactic structures, even repetition of words, sounds, and phrases, while effecting a subtle change in tone, foreground their sense discriminative function:

More things I forgot to remember
have gone; maybe because I forgot.[53]

In 'Some Loss', speech sounds do not strike the ear as loudly as the repetitions 'lupine and lovely' and 'lewd in the tube.' The variety of speech sounds,

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[51] Ibid p. 172.

[52] Jakobson Waugh (1979) *The Sound Shape of Language.* Sussex: Harvester Press p. 204.

[53] Fisher, R. 'Some Loss' in Crozier, A. & Longville, T. (ed.s) (1990) *A Various Art.* London: Paladin. p. 104.

the consonants and vowels, in 'Some Loss' instead adds to the sonic complexity and brings the 'grace' of line eight, to the sonic structure. The high energy fragments of sound found in 'Ghost 1' use rhyming pairs of words to concentrate very similar sounds close together to make memorable sonic fragments. In 'Some Loss' the distance between the repetition 'I forgot to remember' and 'because I forgot' dilutes the sound effect, foregrounding the semantic effect. The poem is open to possible meanings in the contemplative mood suggested by the steady sound and rhythm. Mostly regular in syntactic structure, words are read and responded to primarily as semantic and as creating images in Fisher's poem, rather than these words being read as sounds.

Sound does not have to be a dominant feature for silences to be foregrounded in a poem. Structuring the phrasing or movement of meaning into two long sentences based around two images of loss and forgetting, creates a semantic juxtaposition. The rhythm moves steadily along through these two sentences. The position of a full stop creates a momentary sense of closure to the semantic and syntactic structure at the end of the first sentence (line six). Opening a second sentence disrupts this sense of closure and the abstract images 'blankness' and 'grace' complicate and therefore emphasise meaning. In Fisher's poem the line endings, and punctuation, create moments of silence, pauses for reflection before the poem continues to unfurl meaning. Although the colons at the end of lines six and eight are particularly effective in suggesting a pause for thought in the poem's progression it is the semantic and syntactic structure, rather than the sonic effect, that these silences relate to. Sound and sense are linked in both words and syntax, consequently, a musicality in the movement of sound and silence also makes for a

musicality in the phrasing, the dynamic nature of the movement of syntax and meaning.[54]

By contrast, Monk's poem, which is fourteen lines to Fisher's eleven, is structured into six sentences, which push sound patterning and rhythm into relief alongside performing syntactic and semantic acrobatics. The first sentence:

> It started with a twist and a tryst of
> Lupine lovely arms along a rural railroad
> Bank. Winter rose up summer's rise.[55]

There is no punctuation across the three lines until the full stop. With no punctuation to control the flow, it is the line breaks and rhymes which serve to disrupt and vary the speed of movement. The first line continues the pace through enjambment and in anticipation of completion of the syntactic, and semantic, unit following the preposition 'of'. The second line break effects a pause, not so much for thought as in Fisher's use of those colons at line ends, rather, to add an extension of meaning and a different burst of sound in 'bank'. The tongue twister alliteration 'twist and tryst', 'Lupine lovely', and 'rural railroad' slow the pace along the lines while delighting in their rhymed sound patterning. The second sentence is structured by sonic parallelism in 'rose' to 'rise' and semantic parallelism of 'winter' to 'summer'. The fourth line, 'Throes of profound bafflement', enacts its own meaning, baffling the sense so that these words are heard as sounds, and the repeated 'o' sounds it enacts the cries of physical pain of 'throes'. The next sentence is the longest and continues over six lines. There are three further sentences, including a final couplet placed at a line space from the other lines. Each of these syntactic structures

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[54] Attridge, D. (2008) *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 172.

[55] 'Ghost 1' in Monk, G. (2008) *Ghost & Other Sonnets.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 3.

continues to be driven by intricate and varied sound patterns and rhythms and, in a rare similarity to 'Some Loss', silences. There is a sense of even distribution of silences, or pauses, effected by the line endings and punctuation in Fisher's poem. By contrast in 'Ghost 1' the silences are grouped close together, especially those silences created by the full stops in lines three and four, and interspersed with long flows of uncontrolled sound, which adds to the sense of sonic and rhythmic, as well as semantic, irregularity.

A final contrast between the poems comes in the degree of syntactic regularity or irregularity of structure. In 'Some Loss' there is a sense that the syntactic structures are familiar and that the sense of each word can be followed through the whole poem. However, as much as individual word meanings in the poem can be deciphered, ambiguity is created by the openness of meaning that each stanza offers, and builds on, and changes, cumulatively through the poem. Fisher's poem is a phenomenological exploration concerned with the vagueness of memory and re-memory. 'Some Loss' deals with the direct experience of the nature of memory and observes the lack of certainty in what is recalled of past experiences. The repetitive backward motion of repeating a memory, 're-memory', is experienced sensually as 'the lyrical become sublime'.[56] In this way memory is felt in the poem rather than perceived through the intellect, which cannot hold on to the full detail of past experiences. The poem foregrounds grammar, and imagery, and is given license not to be sound-rich. In 'Ghost 1' syntax is fragmented and word classifications, as well as meanings, create ambiguities so that the words are experienced primarily as sound. Driven by the force of sound, the sound-rich poem is

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[56] Fisher, R. 'Some Loss' in Crozier, A. & Longville, T. (ed.s) (1990) *A Various Art*. London: Paladin. p. 105.

aware of its distinct expressions in both mediums of speech and writing. These are, however, mutually dependent to express the full scope of sound and there are traces of vocal sound in the writing and of sounding writing in vocal versions that voice re-sounds. While working out meaning from the sound, semantic meaning is uncertain and shifting. 'Ghost 1' invites the reader to complete it semantically, from a reading of innuendo about a sexual liaison on a riverbank, to something more sinister, which after a line space of silence, can account for the final couplet, 'Disturbed earth grew stripes. / A stalk broke too far.'

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Literary historical contexts for sound-rich poetry

What is distinctive about sound-rich poetry is the shift in perspective to foregrounding the sonic over semantic and grammatical aspects of language. My concept emerges from a history of sound and poetry as well as from innovative ways of working. Steve McCaffery identifies three stages of sound poetry from the first stage primitive chants, through Futurism and Dada as the second stage, to sound poetry post-1950s as the third stage.[57] Further to McCaffery's first stage in her essay 'Root, Leaf, or Bole: Concerning the Origin and Adaptive Function of Music,' Ellen Dissanayake understands the primal mother-child relationship as being the roots of a communication that is based in a form of chanting, that is in matching rhythms of speech and emotional and psychological states.[58] Early written forms, characterised

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[57] McCaffery, S. 'From Phonic to Sonic: The Emergence of the Audio Poem.' In Morris, A. (ed.) (1997) *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies.* London: The University of North Carolina Press. pp. 149-168.
[58] Ellen Dissanayake describes the social element of the primal mother-child relationship as vital to the survival of communities of human beings who are able to form social bonds in 'Root, Leaf, Blossom, or Bole: Concerning the Origin and Adaptive Function of Music' in Malloch, S & Trevarthen,

by a chant-like repetition of strong stress speech rhythms, including the strong stress of Anglo-Saxon verse, and the song-like Medieval lyric, are powerful predecessors of this poetry, which is driven by musical rhythms of English speech, and alliteration.[59]

Important for sound-rich poetry, in McCaffery's second phase, Futurism and Dada, are Ezra Pound's innovation with sound structures, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's developments in typology and typography, and Kurt Schwitters' technique of collecting fragments of verbal, and visual, materials to compose collages. As part of Dada the Fluxus artist Joseph Beuys's cross-media work influences methods of developing unusual, and shifting, sonic patterns characteristic of sound-rich poetry. Bringing together verbal and visual materials with structures from diverse spoken and written sources from literature, popular culture and the everyday is elemental in creating rich sonic soundscapes. Further, there is a notable tradition of innovation with traditional sound structures, rhythm, alliterative structures, cross-media (especially painting), which falls between primitive chants and Futurism, and is important to the development of sound-rich poetry. In the nineteenth century Gerard Manley Hopkins made innovations in poetic form to arrive at sprung rhythm. This approach to making verse, with irregular and speech-like patterns, rather than maintaining regular patterns of speech sounds in metrical verse forms, occurs often in sound-rich poetry. Traditional and contemporary multi-media methodologies offer possible approaches to foregrounding sonic materiality, in which the visual can be imbued with sound, while speech sounds, and graphic marks inscribed on the page, can fall silent. In these ways of working, lyric voice and subjectivity move into states

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C. (ed.s) (2010) *Communicative Musicality: Exploring the Basis of Human Companionship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 17-30.

[59] For an Anglo-Saxon poem see, *The Battle of Maldon* a version of which is translated and edited by Bill Griffiths, published by Anglo-Saxon Books. For a range of thirteen to sixteen century lyrics see Davies, R. T. (ed.) (1971) *Medieval English Lyrics: A Critical Anthology*. London: Faber and Faber Ltd.

of duality, multiplicity, and turn on unusual perspectives in the sound patterns and rhythm of a poem.

Three collections of essays on sound in poetry inform my basic concept of sound-rich.[60] In these essays, poets and critics, noted for contributions to discussions of sound and innovative poetries, draw on traditional and modernist poetry in their discussions. At the beginning of her essay on free verse, Marjorie Perloff cites Pound's call to 'compose in the sequence of the musical phrase.'[61] Perloff moves forward to a discussion of innovative forms in the 1996 anthology *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*.[62] As well as demonstrating a trajectory of concern with innovative form from beginnings in modernism, significant for my research is that the 1996 anthology is edited, and contains poetry, by O'Sullivan as well as poems by Monk.[63]

In *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (1997) Adalaide Morris collects essays, which discuss aspects of technology and innovation, in three sections: Part 1: Soundings: Radio and Tape Transmissions; Part 2 Groundings: Performance / Ritual / Event; Part 3 Surroundings: Hearing

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[60] The three texts are: *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (1997) edited by Adalaide Morris; its related collection edited by Charles Bernstein *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word* (1998); and the more recent *The Sound of Poetry / The Poetry of Sound* edited by Marjorie Perloff and Craig Dworkin.

[61] Perloff, M. 'After Free Verse: The New Nonlinear Poetries' in Bernstein, C. (1998) (ed.) *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 86-110.
In her opening paragraph Perloff identifies *vers libre* publications in La Vogue in 1886 which include Rimbaud's 'Marine' and 'Movement', both written in the early 1870s. This paragraph continues: On the other side of the channel, *vers libre*, was soon picked up by the Imagists: in the March 1913 issue of *Poetry*, Pound put forward his famous Imagist manifesto, whose third principle was 'As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.' p.86.

[62] O'Sullivan, M. (1996) (ed.) *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*. East Sussex: Reality Street Editions.

[63] Perloff discusses cataloguing in O' Sullivan's 'A Lesson From the Cockerel' (Ibid p. 104). O'Sullivan's poems in *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK* (1996) are: 'Narcotic Properties' pp. 67-69; 'Hill Figures' pp. 70-71; 'Garb' pp. 72-73; 'A Lesson From the Cockerel' p. 74; '2nd Lesson From the Cockerel' p. 75. The poems by Monk in *Out of Everywhere* are: 'James Device Replies' p. 153; 'Anne Whittle Replies' p. 154; 'Fox Trot' p. 155; 'The Football Hooligan' and 'The Poet' p. 156; 'Angles' pp. 157-160; '"El Caballo Raptor"' p. 161.

Theories. Although the focus of this thesis is not on engagement with technologies in the work of O'Sullivan, Griffiths and Monk, these theories of sound are relevant to my readings of sound-richness in their work, and to developing my concepts of voice and subjectivity in this thesis. Influential essays in 'Part 2' are by McCaffery on the history of developments in Western sound poetry, Loretta Collins on sound and identity, Mackey's essay on Federico Garcia Lorca's perspective on duende and cross-media voices, and Fred Moten's perspective on the relationship between music and poetry, and between sound and words.[64]

In *The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound* (2009) Perloff and Craig Dworkin collect essays by scholars, poets and translators, which discuss the complexity, and value, of sound in the creation of poetic meaning. These essays offer approaches which expand different possibilities in revealing how sound functions in poetry, and these are presented in three sections: Translating Sound; Performing Sound; Sounding the Visual. Perloff's introductory discussion of poetry and the lyric form, which references Jacques Roubaud's 'Prelude: Poetry and Orality', suggests that a heightening of sound would make a poetry that reconnects the sonic aspects of the lyric form, to poetry that became speech and writing. Antonio Sergio Bessa describes how both sound, and the written text, can create a musical harmony in the visual organisation of the text, while in 'Sounding the Visual' Johanna Drucker finds both sound, and silence, in the visual.[65] These essays highlight the complexities at

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[64] McCaffery, S. 'From Phonic to Sonic: The Emergence of the Audio Poem' in Morris, A. (1997) (ed.) *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* London: The University of North Carolina Press. pp. 149-168. Collins, L. 'Systems of Political Dissonance in Caribbean Performative Sounds' in Ibid. pp. 169-193. Mackey, N. 'Canto Moro' in Ibid. pp. 194-212. Moten, F. 'Sound in Florescence: Cecil Taylor Floating Garden' in Ibid. pp. 213-234. At the beginning of his essay 'Canto Moro' Mackey explains: What I would like to touch on is the New American poetry's Spanish connection: Garcia Lorca's meditation on the dark sounds of *canto jondo*, deep song, the quality and condition known as *duende*.' Ibid p. 194.
[65] See Bessa, A. S. 'Sound as Subject: Augusto de Campos's *Poetamenos*' in Perloff, M. & Dworkin, C. (2009) (ed.s) *The Sound of Poetry / The Poetry of Sound*. London: The University of Chicago Press. pp. 219-236. Also see Drucker, J. ''Not Sound' in ibid pp. 237-248.

work in the relationship between sound, sense, and visual aspects of language in a poem. My concept is also informed by traditional and experimental ways of working that are concerned with the influence of elements of song and music in poetry in the verbal matter and written material. Further to Moten's discussion of poetry through a perspective of innovative jazz music, in *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (1997), Nancy Perloff uses avant-garde and experimental music to comment on the aural dimension in poetry and finds similarities in creating sounds using voice as instrument in poetry and using musical instruments in music.[66] In discussing the effect of duende, an element found in song, to imbue voice with deep emotion, Mackey hears poetry as the 'musical deployment of language.'[67] The focus on language as sensuous, whether as sound poetry or another sonically governed form, repositions the emotional and intellectual possibilities in language and structure for poetry. Sound-rich poetry seeks to heal, to make sound, this relationship in language in which meaning, the intellectual, has been privileged over intuitive modes of experiencing.

A large amount of sound poetry falls into what is labelled as 'outsider art'.[68] Literature undergoes levels of commodification, and as Attridge points out in *Peculiar Language* (2004), a culture also decides what language is privileged. Language itself becomes part of the tendency to commodify products of culture, so that meaning as transactional is privileged and the possible range of reference is closed. Further, language is used to construct perspectives of self and world. Pioneers in the history

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[66] Perloff, N. 'Sound Poetry and the Musical Avant-Garde: A Musicologist's Perspective' in ibid pp. 97-117.
[67] Mackey's relationship to music: 'I heard poetry as a musical deployment of language, the music peculiar to language, a language bordering on song, speech bordering on song.' (Morris, A. (1997) (ed.) *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. London: The University of North Carolina Press p. 203). This 'musical deployment of language' again gestures to Pound's call for musical phrasing.
[68] Colin Rhodes gives an account of outsider art in Rhodes, C. (2000) *Outsider Art: Spontaneous Alternatives*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd.

of sound poetry reveal a willingness to experiment and to go against norms. This is carried through the British Poetry Revival, via High modernism, and Post-war American poetry, and continues in Linguistically Innovative Poetry. Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan are contemporaries, who were part of the younger generation of writers involved in the British Poetry Revival. These three poets are all drawn to write poetry that falls into experimental, not popular, or mainstream categories.

Although they were creating in sound rich environments, Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan, are not purely sound, or concrete, poets. It is well documented that they have a common link with the experimental poetry workshops, and 'pioneering do-it-yourself Writers Forum Press' printing facilities, provided by Bob Cobbing.[69] Cobbing encouraged their innovative approaches, and provided an outlet for publication, as well as performances of their work. The effect of being exposed to such a sonically and visually conscious environment, is palpable in the richness and complexity of composition, and the materiality and techniques, which foregrounds sound, in the work of all three poets. Accounts of the experimental workshops attended by all three, in Robert Sheppard's *When Bad Times Made for Good Poetry* (2011), give the overriding impression of saturation/submersion in exploring and experimenting with sound, and object/image and, on this sensory level of being able to bring *any thing* to sound, to sound *any thing*.

Monk's *Cusp* (2012) is composed of personal accounts, by a selection of poets, who were 'on the margins' of what Monk terms the inner circles of London, and Cambridge, through the era of the British Poetry Revival. Monk's own entry reveals that Griffiths was her 'first poet friend' and that O'Sullivan was her 'first female poet friend', which gives a flavour of the dynamic between the three writers at

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[69] Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk.* Cambridge: Salt Publishing p. 2.

that time.[70] Literature documenting the conditions of experimental, rather than mainstream, poetry reveals further aspects of the social, cultural, political and personal conditions of the era, and gives insights into why these writers were drawn to such experimental, and marginal, groupings.[71] Griffiths influenced both Monk and O'Sullivan and, writing in an era in which women were conspicuously few in number, Monk and O'Sullivan collaborated on a feminist manifesto for their writing. These poets cite their own influences from a history of sound-rich poetry. Monk cites Gertrude Stein, Dylan Thomas and Hopkins, Griffiths draws on Old English poetry and O'Sullivan cites Gertrude Stein, Mina Loy, HD and Lorine Niedecker as pioneering poets.[72]

As well as being rooted in the poets' work, the basis for this description of the role of sound emerges from writings on sound in relation to technology and innovation, performance and hearing, and to poetic meaning, by poets, scholars and academics, and can feed back into this pool of writing. In this thesis I use sound-rich as a critical term. As a creative term the concept works to develop, and direct, my writing, which is not sound poetry per se. My poetry is consciously driven by how I use sound, in its structures and materiality, during composition and in performances, with the intention that sound manifests as the dominant textual structure. My work is positioned in a creative and academic context which inherits and is informed by the innovative methodologies of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan, whose immersion in

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[70] Monk, G. (ed.) (2012) *Cusp: Recollections of Poetry in Transition.* Bristol: Shearsman Books Ltd p. 189.

[71] These include: Monk's *Cusp*, Hampson and Ken Edwards's *Clasp*, Robert Sheppard's *When Bad Times Made for Good Poetry* and *The Poetry of Saying*, Peter Barry's *Poetry Wars*.

[72] Monk cites a range of influences including Stein, Thomas and Hopkins (pp. 186-188) in her chapter, 'A Working Class Elitist is Something to Be' in Monk, G. (ed.) (2012) *Cusp: Recollections of Poetry in Transition*. Bristol: Shearsman Books Ltd. pp. 182-190. Griffiths cites a range of influences including Hopkins in the 'Interview with Will Rowe' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt. pp. 171-196. O'Sullivan cites these poets in her introduction to *Out of Everywhere*. p. 10.

ways of foregrounding sound, I argue creates sound-rich poetry. My way of working with sound uses the page as a temporal sonic space where the sensuous and intuitive in language and structure, and ways of experiencing come into tension with the intellectual and reasoned. In part two I will describe in more detail how I use sound and relate that to both my theory of sound-rich and my analysis of the work of the poets under discussion.

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Sound-rich poetry: social and ethical

So far in this introduction I have discussed the technical aspects of sound patterning, rhythm, and phrasing that make up a definition of sound-rich poetry. However, although not dependent on a thematic concern with extraordinary subjects, there is a notable concern with figures, and experiences, which are unfamiliar and unusual in this poetry of heightened sound. Monk engages with women hanged as witches, Griffiths engages with biker gangs and prison life, and O'Sullivan draws on her parentage of Irish immigrants who were part of a marginal minority in rural Lincolnshire. Although there can be an awareness of the existence of these figures and experiences, they are not part of the everyday experiences that are encountered directly in mainstream society. The concept of the unfamiliar in the context of this thesis is informed by the poetry and poetics of the three writers whose work I am reading here. The following analysis of O'Sullivan's 'Introduction' to the *Out of*

Everywhere (1996) anthology which she edited, explores my definition of 'unfamiliar' in this context.[73]

This thesis is interested in innovative techniques which work with the verbal matter, as both speech and writing, to create certain specific improvised organisations which foreground sound. At the centre of this innovation is the relationship between speech, writing and sound. In the chapter 'Language, Speech, and Utterance' Valentin Volosinov concludes that it is not the familiar but the unfamiliar in language that leads to an understanding of a linguistic system.[74] Further, the social nature of language is not a compromise between individualistic subjectivism, the study of 'dead language', and abstract objectivism that is speech as living interaction, rather, the social nature of language 'lies above and beyond' these in a 'dialectical synthesis'.[75] Similarly innovation in the sound structures of poetry lies in the dynamic and dialectical synthesis between writing as inscription of speech sounds, and vocalisations which are sounded from speech sounds in their written form, and sound, the living word.

In her introduction O'Sullivan's references to 'eccentric contributions', magazines as 'pioneers', and mention of British Poetry Revival all give context to

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[73] The postscript to the anthology by the publishers Wendy Mulford and Ken Edwards gives context on the choice of O'Sullivan as editor. From 'Postscript': [. . .] Reality Street Editions decided there was a need for an anthology to showcase work by women who, broadly speaking, were working with language -- disordering and deconstructive techniques, at the leading edge of new poetics [. . .] We therefore invited Maggie O'Sullivan, who works in a linguistically-rich performative tradition [. . .]. Reality Street Editions is an independent publisher (no longer publishing) and this note from their website gives a brief context: *REALITY STUDIOS* was one of the precursors of *Reality Street.* Starting in 1978 as a mimeographed corner-stapled monthly newsletter, featuring poetry, reviews, notes and news, and sometimes more eccentric contributions, it transformed into a fat mimeographed A4 annual volume and finally into a litho printed perfect bound publication [. . .] *Reality Studios* itself grew out of *Alembic*, a magazine Ken Edwards co-edited in the 1970s. Both magazines were pioneers in the UK in publishing American/Canadian Language poetry alongside poetry of the "British Poetry Revival" from London, Cambridge and elsewhere.
[74] See Part Two, Chapter Two, 'Language, Speech, and Utterance' in Volosinov, V. N. (1986) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language.* Harvard: Harvard University Press Translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik. pp. 65-82.
[75] Ibid p. 82.

their identifying a 'need for an anthology which showcases work by women'. The

anthology *A Various Art* (1987) edited by Andrew Crozier and Tim Longville includes

sixteen poets and notably only one, Veronica Forrest-Thomson, is a woman.[76] *The*

New British Poetry (1988) presents a more diverse selection of contemporary poets.

Interestingly, reflective of their gender inclusive joint manifesto, Monk and O'Sullivan

are placed in the section 'Some Younger Poets' and not in the 'Quote Feminist

Unquote Poetry' section.[77] Although *Out of Everywhere* is an anthology of women,

and O'Sullivan and Monk are included, important for my study here which includes

Griffiths, is that the points O'Sullivan raises in her introduction are also pertinent to

and inclusive of male writers. As well as appearing with Monk and O'Sullivan in *The*

New British Poetry (1988) in the section 'A Treacherous Assault on British Poetry',

Griffiths features, with Brian Catling and Allen Fisher, in *Future Exiles* (1992). Writing

on the back cover Iain Sinclair describes Griffiths, Catling and Fisher as, 'Rogue

angels, dynamic presences as yet largely ignored in the cultural life of the capital'.[78]

In O'Sullivan's 'Introduction' to *Out of Everywhere*, she declares:

> Each poet featured here . . . does not represent a familiar world and
> therefore cannot be read in familiar ways.[79]

The repetition locates innovative writing doubly in the unfamiliar which

Volosinov recognises as dynamic and enlightening, that is both in an unfamiliar

'world', which I read as both poetic and socio-political, as well as unfamiliar in how

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[76] Crozier, A. & Longville, T. (ed.s) (1990) *A Various Art*. London: Paladin.
[77] Allnutt, G. D'Aguiar, F. Edwards, K & Mottram, E. (ed.s) (1988) *The New British Poetry*. London: Paladin.
[78] Sinclair, I. (ed.) (1992) *Future Exiles: 3 London Poets. Allen Fisher, Bill Griffiths & Brian Catling*. London: Paladin.
[79] O'Sullivan, M. (1996) (ed.) *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*. East Sussex: Reality Street Editions. p. 9.

that world can be accessed or 'read'. Further, this world is 'represented', which suggests that it is 'regarded as' rather than 'given'. I become aware that I am entering a style of writing in which the 'what' (world), the 'how' (representation), and the accessibility (ways of reading) are all unfamiliar. She continues:

> Consequently, many of them, through brave insistence and engagement in explorative, formally progressive language practices, find themselves excluded from conventional, explicitly generically committed or thematic anthologies of women's poetry.[80]

I will take the first two constructions; 'brave insistence' and 'explorative, formally progressive language practices'. 'Brave' implies that a danger or pain is to be borne and that some kind of conflict and opposition is at work. Back in context, 'brave insistence and engagement in explorative, formally progressive language practices', this 'brave insistence' refers to 'practices', to the poet's work. There are traditions of subversive forms of writing in women's writing, especially those forms found in feminist writing.[81] However, 'Women's poetry' as a general term here takes on an exclusionary form. Conflict with the classifications 'conventional, explicitly generically committed or thematic', has not only created a tension between, but has excluded, those practices that are 'explorative, formally progressive'. She adds:

> Excluded from 'women's canons', such work does however, connect up with linguistically innovative work by men who have themselves also transcended the agenda-based and cliché -ridden rallying positions of mainstream poetry.[82]

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[80] Ibid. p. 9.
[81] Three examples of subversive forms of writing which demonstrate the range of feminist writing are the poetry and feminist manifesto of the modernist poet and painter Mina Loy, to the philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir *The Second Sex* (1949), and Margaret Atwood's dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) which was made into a TV series 2017.
[82] O'Sullivan, M. (1996) (ed.) *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK.* East Sussex: Reality Street Editions. p. 9.

Therefore, at the point of reading the phrase 'women's canons' it becomes apparent why, to quote the title of the anthology, these women are 'out of everywhere', that is, multiply excluded. A form of writing such as *l'ecriture feminine* openly distinguishes male and female writing in order to push women's writing forward and explore various differences it finds in writing by men.[83] However, O'Sullivan's introduction here uncovers that there are classifications within even the seeming safe-hold of the gendered women's writing which confine and exclude those it seems to embrace. Connected by the nature of their practices, these women, excluded from 'women's canons', find kinship with 'linguistically innovative work by men.' 'Transcended' is an interesting choice of verb to describe the move from, what O'Sullivan perceives to be, the 'cliché -ridden rallying positions of mainstream poetry.' As well as implying a 'going beyond', 'transcend' brings to my mind 'transcendental' a spiritual suggestiveness and something beyond ordinary experience which ties in with the earlier 'unfamiliar'.

Here is the crux. The source of conflict is named and peppered with adjectives which are suggestive of a certain posture and attitude; 'cliché-ridden, rallying positions of mainstream poetry':

> Rather than perpetuating prevalent notions of writing poems 'about' something, the poets here, to my mind, have each in their own imaginative way committed themselves to excavating language in all its multiple voices and tongues, known and unknown.[84]

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[83] Ann Rosalind Jones discusses the approaches to feminist as opposed to masculinist subjectivities of four French feminists, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigary, Hélène Cixous, and Monique Wittig in 'Writing the Body: Toward an Understanding of "L'Ecriture Feminine"' in *Feminist Studies*. Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer, 1981). pp. 247-263. Available https://www.jstor.org/stable/3177523?read-now=1&seq=2#page_scan_tab_contents Last Accessed 14/12/19.

[84] O'Sullivan, M. (1996) (ed.) *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*. East Sussex: Reality Street Editions. pp. 9-10.

In opposition to this there are approaches taken by poets who 'in their own imaginative way are committed to excavating language in all its multiple voices and tongues, known and unknown.' A definition of 'innovation' is arrived at here as referring to a way of working that is part of 'an energetic and influential, though marginalised tradition of innovative writing by poets who are 'pioneering'.[85] Speech, is living language, in use, in flux. However, written language is dead language, which as inscription is composed of speech sounds which can be re-animated. Exploiting the relationship between speech and writing which is mutually invigorating enables changes to the sound structures. The sound structure changes by a continuous process that is a steady input, exchange and flow of signs.

The three case study chapters will elaborate and illustrate the description and analysis of sound-rich poetry in this introduction. Language is their medium and these writers are aware of the problems of language, and of social intercourse. Monk's states that her work involves dragging ghosts from their corners.[86] Griffiths is concerned with speech fluency. O'Sullivan's concerns are with silences, and with the un-, the non- and the less, and the unregarded in language.[87] Verbal, and visual,

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[85] Although an excluded style of writing, this innovative writing does not fit the category of 'outsider art' as defined by Jean Debuffet and later the British writer Roger Cardinal. See for example Rhodes, C. (2000) *Outsider Art: Spontaneous Alternatives*. London: Thames and Hudson. Take Roger Cardinal's definition given on page seven of the introduction: 'The artist outsiders are, by definition, fundamentally different to their audience, often thought of as being dysfunctional in respect of the parameters for normality set by the dominant culture.' In this sense it is clear that Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan are not outsider figures as artists, rather, they are interested in figures in *society* who are deemed to be outside social norms: women who are perceived as a threat to the rules of society and authority, prisoners, bikers, minority immigrant communities.
[86] Geraldine Monk Author page at WestHouse Books http://www.westhousebooks.co.uk/gmonk.asp Last Accessed 14/12/19.
[87] See O'Sullivan's 'riverrunning (realisations . . .' in O'Sullivan, M (2003) *Palace of Reptiles*. Ontario: The Gig. p. 67.

silences takes on a unique dimension in the work of each poet. The case studies also explore how, from a sound-rich basis, these writers use poetry as a space for inviting us to hear differently, for inviting us to have other responses. Hearing silences in sound-rich poetry as a call to respond to what needs attention in our community will be discussed in chapter one via a reading of 'Chattox Sings' by Monk.

CHAPTER ONE

Sound-Rich Poetry as Attention in Geraldine Monk's 'Chattox Sings'

This chapter explores the combination of sonically complex and shifting vocal forms in 'Chattox Sings' that are excavated from Hopkins' poem 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo'.[88] I suggest that, as it speaks only in words already spoken by another (poem), this excavation of 'voice excitings' and 'text-gesturals' from Hopkins' poem creates 'Chattox Sings' as a hybrid echo, through time, space and shifts in identity.[89] I use 'overvoicing' to indicate the relationship between the materiality of the two poems, which I will elaborate later, and the primary concern with the dual nature of speech sounds toward natural rhythms (a 'freedom to range') and the 'pull toward repetition and pattern'.[90] Monk writes that what distinguishes 'Chattox Sings' from Hopkins' poem is the 'difference in being condemned to die as a witch or being celebrated as a Jesuit priest-poet'.[91] Placing a constraint on the freedom to form, and perform, one's own speech reflects a central concern in Monk's 'Interregnum', and notably in the monologue poems concerned with the practice of obtaining confessions under torture endured by those accused of witchcraft.[92] Although a form of constrained speech, an echo can have words and sounds omitted from the

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[88] The discussion here refers to the *Selected Poems* (2003) version of 'Interregnum' which retains the three parts of the original 1994 Creation Books edition. See Kennedy's outline of differences between these versions of *Interregnum*. There is a similar approach to people, place and subject in Monk's *Escafeld Hangings*. Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt, outlines some changes to titles in the Salt edition 'Interregnum'. p. 21.

[89] Monk discusses her collaboration with Hopkins in 'Collaborations with the Dead' in Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt. pp. 178-181.

[90] Attridge, D. (1982) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* London: Longman. p. 17.

[91] Monk, G. (2012) *Pendle Witch-Words.* Newton-le-Willows: Knives Forks & Spoons Press. p. 6.

[92] Parts one and two anticipate the focal point of the poems in *Interregnum*, the women (and men) accused, condemned and hanged as Pendle witches in Lancaster in 1612, which dominates part three. Titles in this part include 'Chantcasters', 'Speech-Snatchers', 'Out-Thoughts' and 'The Replies' and reveal a pivotal concern with types of vocalization in 'Interregnum'.

original. This is strikingly the case when the long lines of Hopkins' poem are compared to the short lines which resound in 'Chattox Sings'.

The first stanza of 'Chattox Sings' is made up of lines from the 'Golden Echo' and the 'Leaden Echo' parts of Hopkins' poem. These lines have been lineated further and sometimes words, within Hopkins' lines, are omitted. The opening spell in 'Chattox Sings' is taken from lines twenty-two, twenty-three, and twenty-four of the 'Golden Echo' part of Hopkins poem:

> Nay, what we had lighthanded left in surly the mere mould
> Will have waked and have waxed and have walked with the wind what
>   while we slept,
> This side, that side hurling a heavy-headed hundredfold
> What while we, while we slumbered.[93]

The first line of 'Chattox Sings' uses the words, 'What we have lighthanded left,' and changes the verb tense from Hopkins' past tense 'had', to the present tense 'have'. The rich sonic material in Hopkins, which repeats the consonant 'w' in the strikingly alliterative structure across line twenty-three, becomes lines two, three, four and five of Monk's poem. Similarly the strong stress and 's' and 'h' sounds in line twenty-four, are arranged across three lines, to become lines six to eight in 'Chattox Sings'. There is a change to an interrogative, self-questioning tone, in lines nine to fourteen in 'Chattox Sings', which are taken from line twenty-six of the 'Golden Echo' part of Hopkins' poem:

> O then, weary then why should we tread? O why are we so haggard at the
> heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged, so fashed, so cogged, so
> cumbered[94]

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[93] 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo' in Hopkins, G. M. (2009) *The Major Works*. (Revised Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 156.
[94] Ibid p. 156.

Monk takes Hopkins' line up to 'care-killed,' cutting out 'so fagged, so fashed, so cogged, so / cumbered'. This condenses the alliterative sound patterning and focuses the range of semantic meaning. In a shift from lines taken from the 'Golden Echo' the next seven lines of stanza one of 'Chattox Sings' come from lines three and four of the 'Leaden Echo':

> O is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
> Down? No waving off of these most mournful messengers, still messen-
> gers, sad and steeling messengers of grey?---[95]

The stanza ends with a shift back to two lines taken from lines (two and three) of the 'Golden Echo':

> There is one, yes I have one (Hush there!);
> Only not within seeing of the sun[96]

In 'Chattox Sings' the punctuation is changed from the exclamation mark to the short dash which softens the tone and 'only' becomes part of the first line: '(Hush there) - only / not within seeing of the sun.' With the emphasis on voice, speech sounds and rhythms are foregrounded as the material, and driving force, of both Hopkins' and Monk's poem. Attention to the dual nature of speech sounds is important in the writing of both poets yet, in these two examples, a hybrid form of 'speech-song' is suggested by both titles. Hopkins subtitles his poem as the 'Maidens' song from *St Winnifred's Well*', lamenting lost beauty, and in Monk's poem Chattox, an elderly woman accused of witchcraft, 'sings'. In his writing, Hopkins was

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[95] Ibid. p. 155.
[96] Ibid. p. 155.

concerned with bringing the irregularity of natural speech rhythms, into the regular, and patterned metrical structure of his verse.[97] Monk's poetics, 'Insubstantial Thoughts on the Transubstantiation of the Text' is based in the complex and sonically rich, range of vocal acts, which she terms 'voice excitings': 'Inc(h)ants / warbles / sprechgesang / gutterals.'[98] I will later consider this powerful, sonic impetus as counterpointed by silences of equal momentum, which punctuate the poem, and underpin it.

Presented as a dramatic monologue, 'Chattox Sings' demonstrates an acute sensitivity to sonically rich arrangements of speech rhythms, and lexical phonology, which form a striking range of nuanced speech acts. The first stanza alone begins with a spell, shifts to narrative utterance, then to lament, again to apostrophic appeal, a single word question, and ends with consolatory utterance, all contained in twenty-three short lines:

> What we have lighthanded left
> will have waked
> and have waxed
> and have walked
> with the wind.
> This side,
> that side hurling
> while we slumbered.
> Oh then,
> weary then why should we tread?
> O why
> are we so haggard at the heart,
> so care-coiled,
> so care-killed,
> is their no frowning of these wrinkles
> ranked wrinkles deep.
> Down?
> No waving off these most

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[97] See Kiparsky, P. 'Sprung Rhythm' in *Phonetics and Phonology*, Volume 1: Rhythm and Meter. 1989. pp. 305-339. Available: https://web.stanford.edu/~kiparsky/Papers/Sprung_Rhythm_89.pdf Last Accessed 4/01/20.
[98] Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 219.

Mournful messengers
            Still messengers
            Sad and stealing
                                          (Hush there) – only
            Not within seeing of the sun.[99]

Using multiple types of vocalisation to form a single vocal act enriches the

sonic, emotional and intellectual scope of this monologue. The range of vocal forms

concentrated in the opening stanza of Monk's poem is all the more extraordinary in

being composed exclusively from lines and phrases from Hopkins' two part poem,

'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo.'[100] In his essay 'Sprung Rhythm' Paul

Kiparsky concludes that 'sprung rhythm is already latent in English speech' which

accounts for readers ability to intuit this new metre innovated by Hopkins.[101] Attridge

explains that fragments of metre are effective in sustaining perceptible, sonic rhythm

and pattern.[102] It is from fragments of the speech sounds, patterning, and rhythm in

Hopkins' poem, a lament, that the various speech forms in 'Chattox Sings' are

composed. This suggests that speech rhythms transpose to form different types of

speech act. Monk's poetics of voice demonstrates a responsiveness to forming, and

performing, public and private speech acts, and the emotional repercussions of

each. The range and movement between spell, narrative utterance, lament,

apostrophic appeal, single word question, and consolatory utterance, enriches the

sonic, emotional, and intellectual experience of 'Chattox Sings' for a reader, beyond

that of a dramatic monologue as a single speech act.

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[99] 'Chattox Sings' in ibid. p. 126.
[100] Hopkins, G. M. (2009) *The Major Works*. (Revised Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 155-156.
[101] Kiparsky, P. 'Sprung Rhythm' in *Phonetics and Phonology*, Volume 1: Rhythm and Meter. 1989. p. 338. Available: https://web.stanford.edu/~kiparsky/Papers/Sprung_Rhythm_89.pdf Last Accessed 4/01/20.
[102] Attridge, D. (1982) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* London: Longman. p. 50.

Our first encounter is with the 'spell' of the first five lines. This speech act creates a differently pitched emotional, and intellectual, experience for a reader or listener than the narrative utterance which follows it. In 'The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo' there is an act of alchemy, which changes speech from lead to gold. That alchemy is reversed in 'Chattox Sings' as the 'golden' lines, sourced from Hopkins, shift from 'golden' lament, to become various, other speech acts. The 'leaden' speech in Hopkins laments the loss of youth and beauty, while the 'golden' speech rises toward ecstasy, in the promise of eternal youth, and beauty, in heaven. Enriching the emotional, and intellectual experience of the poem, the alchemy at work in 'Chattox Sings' is that, through the lexical phonology and speech rhythms, each speech act creates a relentlessly deeper, darker mood. Although it is expected that something of the hopelessness in the lament form from the 'leaden echo' would carry over into 'Chattox Sings' even the emotional depth of hopelessness in the 'Leaden Echo' in Hopkins' poem is coloured many shades deeper in the sonic context of 'Chattox Sings'.

Unlike the 'maidens' who sing in Hopkins' poem, in expressing the plight of a poor old woman in prison accused of witchcraft, Chattox 'sings' alone. The slow heavy movement of the vowels combined with harsh consonants create an oppressively deliberate sonic movement that calls attention to each speech sound and rhythm. However, the inclusive first person pronoun 'we' suggests a grouping beyond an individual voice and an external force acting on this group from outside. Just as the lament for lost beauty and youth can belong to all young women, wrongful imprisonment and religious persecution is an ordeal faced by more than one elderly woman in the sixteenth century. 'Chattox Sings' is the second poem in the 'Chantcasters' section. 'Chant' is a regular and repetitive form of vocalisation

usually by more than one voice. 'Casting' is an act of spreading out, possibly as a result of uttering words. The human voice is on a quest to spread, to broadcast these words so they are 'cast', that is, have a physical and imaginative effect on the reader or listener. The effect of the speech sounds and rhythms here is to 'release' Chattox from monologic utterance and shift folkloric perspectives on her.

Both on the page, and in performance, sonically rich words and sound patterns both entrance and entrap in 'Chattox Sings'. Alliteration and assonance dominate the lexical phonology and sound patterning in the opening lines, which have a sonic trance-like effect that captivates the reader. In the first five lines the irregularity of natural speech in this monologue is transformed into the heightened regularity of chant by the close repetition, with variation, of speech sounds in the sonic patterning:

> What we have lighthanded left
> will have waked
> and have waxed
> and have walked
> with the wind.[103]

As well as a sonic theme, that of charm or spell, being established, this dense repetition and strong stress structure introduces the subject of witchcraft. The intricate repetition and changes in lines two to four are deftly brought into being by each consonantal shift from 'waked', to 'waxed' and the 'lk' in 'walked.' The harsh 'k' consonant sounds are opposed by the varying 'a' vowel sounds which mark duration and emphasis in 'waked', 'walked' and 'waxed'.[104] The 'k' also gives an impression of spitting the words out, via a sinister tone, suggesting an intention that these words

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[103] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.
[104] See the discussion of 'Consonantal Correspondences to the Prosodic Features' in Jakobson, R. & Waugh, L. R. (1979) *The Sound Shape of Language*. Sussex: The Harvester Press. pp. 142-146.

can result in malevolent actions. The proximity and frequency of the repetition of the voiced consonants 'w' and 'h' and 'l' sounds are interspersed with the predominantly short 'a', 'i', 'e' and two long 'a' vowel sounds, as well as the short lines, both of which increase the tempo; the voiced consonants become breathy sounds. In 'Chattox Sings' consonantal shifts make each word sonically aware of its scope as sonic material to effect temporal, tonal and durational shifts. The structural constraints on speech sounds, confined to closely set sonic and semantic boundaries, evoke the plight of Chattox confined to a prison cell with other family and friends condemned, awaiting trial.[105]

However, there is a dual sense of claustrophobia in 'word forms' being confined to only small sonic, and semantic shifts. Although constrained, each of the subtle transpositions of speech sounds effect striking changes in the larger soundscape of the poem, by creating the different speech rhythms, which take us to another vocal form:

This side,
that side hurling
while we slumbered.[106]

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[105] Chattox was the name given to Anne Whittle who was one of the women charged and hanged for being a witch in the Pendle Witch trial at Lancaster in 1612. She was in her eighties when, along with other members of her family, she was accused of witchcraft. A description of Chattox recorded in *The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster*, 1613 Thomas Potts (clerk of the court): 'This Anne Whittle, alias Chattox, was a very old withered spent and decrepit creature, her sight almost gone: A dangerous witch, of very long continuance; always opposite to old Demdike: For whom the one favoured, the other hated deadly: and how they envy and accuse one another, in their examinations, may appear. In her witchcraft, always more ready to do mischief to mens goods, than themselves. Her lips ever chattering and walking: but no man knew what. She lived in the Forest of Pendle, amongst this wicked company of dangerous witches.' Potts text is a source cited by Monk in her preface to *Pendle Witch-Words*. Chattox's confession is also available at the Pendle Witch website: http://www.pendlewitches.co.uk/ Last Accessed 19/12/19.
[106] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.

To escape from the opening spell to this narrative utterance there is a key change here from the dominance of consonants 'w', 'l', in the first four lines, to the dominance of the sibilant 's' and breathy 'h'. The escape from the tight constraint of one type of speech pattern into the next, gives momentary freedom. The long vowel sound in 'side' changes the mood by suggesting a wailing sound and dilutes the strong stress pattern of the first five lines. The long 'ur' vowel sounds anticipate the next shift in the sound structure toward the long 'o' of lament. The breathing pattern required to make these speech sounds is strained across the first long vowel sound in 'hurling' at the end of line seven which, without pause goes into the next line, 'while we slumbered.' In Mackey's poetics, 'Sound and Sentiment, Sound and Symbol,' words function as tones as a conscious move to emphasise their sonic quality in the sound patterning of a poem, removed from denotations of meaning which colour those sounds.[107] As indicated in her poetics of vocalisation, Monk takes a holistic approach to sound employing all means available from natural speech rhythms to highly patterned and musical speech sounds. The arrangement of the rising and falling stresses at the beginning of the lines and the use of punctuation and enjambment, disrupts 'natural' speech rhythms to create a sense of not being able to catch breath to vocalise these speech sounds. The proximity of the two stresses in the monosyllabic words 'this side' and the comma at the end of the line, creates a tense three beat structure. The sounds of words are scored for the voice and body as speech sounds. However, the sonic richness here leaves the body almost breathless in the effort to sound the words out. The soundscape, which also underscores the sense of confinement and suppression, is enacted by the

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[107] See Mackey, N. 'From Sound and Sentiment, Sound and Symbol' in Hoover, P. (ed.) (2013) *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology.* London: W. W. Norton & Company. Second Edition. pp. 907-912.

suffocating repetitive circling of word sounds and structure. This echoes the gruelling

physical and emotional experience of a poor, elderly woman accused of witchcraft

and incapable of escaping the penalty of death.

In 'Chattox Sings' the sonically rich speech acts are loaded with tensions

within which the body, language and structure are pushed to their limits. Natural

speech rhythms are too restless to conform to one pattern, particularly too tight a

constraint for too long. However, escape into another, less constrained body in

'Chattox Sings' occurs not as a traditional transformation of sonic emancipation into

bird form, a nightingale, or muni bird that Mackey describes in his poetics because

this writing is firmly grounded in *human* speech and the human body. As the poem

shifts to a lament the guttural consonants 'k' in 'care-coiled' and 'care-killed' as well

as 'g' in 'haggard', deepen the emotional effect situating it in the throat:

> Oh then,
> weary then why should we tread?
> O why
> are we so haggard at the heart,
> so care-coiled,
> so care-killed,
> is their no frowning of these wrinkles
> ranked wrinkles deep.[108]

Again the harsh 'k', and choking 'g', speech sounds add to the sense of

discomfort both to the body, and mind, finding itself again in confinement.[109] Here is

the 'voice excitings' as 'warbling', that is the effect of singing like (not as) a songbird,

with a succession of constantly changing notes.[110] The rising 'o' placed at the

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[108] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.
[109] Foucault, M. (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin. See especially p. 205 on panopticism and the idea of see / being seen and bodies subject to power and control in prison, hospital and school. These elements figure in each poet's work.
[110] Monk's 'voice excitings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 219.

beginning of the lines 'Oh then', and 'O why', then becomes a falling 'o' in 'so haggard' in the middle of the line, and shifts again to long 'o' echoing in the line, 'so care-coiled'. The rising 'o' evokes a tone of lament, and the sombre falling 'o' sound comes from the pit of the stomach. The rich range of speech sounds drives us not just through complex and multifaceted combinations of psychological and emotional states experienced by a reader of 'Interregnum', but through its points of impact on the body; the stomach, lungs and throat. Further, the body of the poem, with its short lines, creates a dense column of text, intensifying the extreme physicality placed on the body to vocalise these speech sounds fluently, to almost sing them as the title suggests. The 'o' sound in 'Chattox Sings' is consolation and resistance; it offers physical and mental relief as an escape of anguished sound and emotion from the body which finds resistance to confinement through sonic emancipation.

Hopkins used diacritical marks to shift perceptions of the possibilities in sound patterning, indicating unusual points of stress in words. In 'Chattox Sings' visual marks, and their notable absence, are used in novel ways to suggest sonic nuances. These 'text-gesturals' contribute to, and complicate, the soundscape as well as notating how to intonate the sound. The 'o' sounds in the first stanza take on variations in the sounds they make depending on which words they appear next to and their degree of emphasis in the line.[111] Operatic, that is dramatic and highly emotional shifts in mood are expressed in the exclamation 'Oh then' which introduces the lament and the long vowel sounds continue in 'O why' to create a mournful mood. The first speech form, 'Oh then' / weary then why should we tread?', is framed as a question which is further signalled by the question mark at the end.

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[111] Frances Presley identifies as Monk's preferred vowel 'o' manifests in a range of forms and positions in these lines. Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 106.

The second speech form which begins with its question marker opening 'O why', does not have a question mark. The sonic and emotional virtuosity of Monk's performance, the operatic 'sprechgesang', that is making sound that falls between speaking and singing, creates a striking and powerful, almost exhaustively physical dynamic in the poem. The sonic range of the poem is further extended as speech sounds become free to take on almost songlike qualities in Monk's distinctive performances.[112] Sonically rich, each speech act, and their performance, carries awful consequences from the uttering of spells, the persecution for practicing as Roman Catholic, to the witness statements extracted under torture, and threat of death.

Further to shifting perceptions of sound and stress, graphological marks are used like marks in music to indicate speed, and style, of vocalisation. The presence and absence of a single punctuation mark complicates the status of both speech forms as a question:

Oh then,
weary then why should we tread?
O why
are we so haggard at the heart,
so care-coiled,
so care-killed,
is their no frowning of these wrinkles
ranked wrinkles deep.[113]

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[112] The physical contortion in performance by Monk contrasts with the sonic beauty of the sound patterning and sound-rich poetry is predominantly aware of the soundshapes and soundscape themselves speaking through a body. As well as coming out of the verbi-visi-vocal environment of Cobbing's workshop, Monk's vocal technique diversifies into her work with the voice choir Juxtavoices as well as with musicians. Juxtavoices has webpages at Discus which contain information about the voice group and sound and video recordings are available https://discus-music.co.uk/juxtavoices#!Juxtavoices_36 and CD recordings are available at https://discus-music.co.uk/by-artist-or-group/juxtavoices Last Accessed 19/12/19.

[113] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.

However, although the question mark changes the intonation of the first utterance to make it sound like the rising tone used for a question, its absence does not delete the rising intonation indicated by the question marker 'O why' in the second speech form. If the questions in the poem are rhetorical and addressed to the poem itself rather than an entity outside, the ambiguity of each as a question seeking, but not expecting, an answer leaves us with a suffocating sense of a voice lamenting the efficacy of its breath, and body, to elicit a response. In contrast to the determinacy of the sound patterning, semantic meaning becomes indeterminate, and uncertain, through the slipperiness of language to have its intention shifted by a single punctuation mark, as well as through pitch and intonation. Playing games with semantic meaning of speech sounds carries physical dangers. Again, there is a heightened awareness of performance, audience, purpose, and intention, in forming, and performing, speech. Although placing the speaker centre stage, in 'Chattox Sings', and as a theme throughout 'Interregnum', performing speech is a source of pleasure and pain.

The section title, 'Chantcasters', is suggestive of speech having magical, spellbinding properties and affects, which reflects the central subject matter of the Pendle witch trials. 'Speech-Snatchers' intimates a physical impact associated with speaking, a power grab in which speech is at risk of being taken and is risky. In the theme of imprisonment, theft of speech is an issue not so much of the power of ownership but of autonomy. The propulsion of speech sounds, which form the word 'out' in 'Out-Thoughts', indicates a thrusting motion, while the definite determiner, 'the,' in 'The Replies' suggests a gravitas to this type of utterance in 'Interregnum'. This makes these replies much more impactful than being just throw away responses. This attention to types of speech available not only extends the sonic

range typical of sound-rich poetry, but it subsequently extends the imaginative and emotional range of experience in the poem to take on deep and complex nuances, which reflect the challenging subject matter. Frances Presley explains this intention, 'to cast as wide a spell as possible', as Monk's poetry crossing between the avant-garde and mainstream.[114] Part of Monk's way of working is to bring an intimate knowledge of language, people and of place as a working-class Northern woman, to her exploration of speech and writing in relation to poor, old, uneducated Lancastrian women of the seventeenth century.[115]

In 'Chattox Sings' movements of sound and sense are interlinked so that spatial and temporal tempos cause attendant thoughts and emotions to flash up and linger. The first stanza ends with the lines:

> Down?
> No waving off these most
> mournful messengers
> still messengers
> sad and stealing
>   (Hush there) – only
> not within seeing of the sun.[116]

After the several lines of lament the single word line, 'Down?', is encountered, isolated as a sonic and semantic unit.[117] This sonic isolation emphasises the role of the speech act as a question form. The sonic range of this single word is also emphasised by the rising intonation for the interrogative form, which extends in duration beyond the visually short length of the line. The long 'o' of the arguably rhetorical questions is transposed and contained within the sonically rich, lexical

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[114] Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 105.
[115] See Monk's chapter in *Cusp.* See also Annwn in Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 88.
[116] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.
[117] Attridge *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* London: Longman. p. 202.

phonology of the word, 'Down'. This single word line both interrupts the structure of the sound patterning and the mournful mood it evokes. A single punctuation mark is a powerful determiner of the sound, form, and therefore intention and purpose, of an utterance. Although the sound, through rising intonation, makes sense of this word as a question, the speech sounds, which compose the word, do not make the semantic element of 'Down?' determinate. The fragmentation of whole utterances into these short lines, resists fluency, and intensifies the level of attention to how the semantic effect accumulates, and is enhanced, by sound association. Music is free from denotative semantic meaning, but words are not. The semantic field is forming connections, 'mournful', 'sad' and the consolatory 'Hush there' where rhyme would normally suggest them. In answer to the question 'Down?', those words hint at the question being an inquiry after how someone is feeling. Identifying her focus on language over subject Annwn writes that in Monk's work, 'Speakers often grapple, stammer and cry out to sound the unsayable'.[118] A response is articulated by the mournful murmuring 'm', softly hissing 's' and long woeful 'o' sounds as part of the complex relationship between sound and meaning which because indeterminate, causes us to linger over this short line. Thought is given temporal space to fathom the sense, aided by the complex interchange between the sonic threads, within this soundscape of a temperament.

In addition, structures, that is sound patterns and rhythms, create further aspects of identity. There are variations on forms of chant in 'Chattox Sings', which juxtapose two perspectives on the parallelism in the structure of the poem. One perspective is the structure as a sacred religious form, and the second is as a

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[118] Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 83. This follows Annwn's reference to poets, 'Committed to excavating language in all its multiple voices and tongues, known and unknown' in O'Sullivan's Preface to *Out of Everywhere.*

disparaged form of spellcasting dismissed as 'gobblydegook'.[119] The spell-like 'Inc(h)ants' of Monk's 'voice excitings', are evident in the return to chant:

> Resign them,
> sign them,
> seal them
> send them,
> motion them with breath.[120]

The foregrounding of the breath in the voiced 'w' and unvoiced 'h' consonantal sounds, as well as the relief in the spell structure effected by the regular and repeated pattern of stress and unstress at the start of the poem, 'will have waked / will have waxed', become a relentless stress-heavy chant in the short second stanza. This stanza is structured by tight syntactical repetition of the pronoun 'them', with those variations, 'resign' in the first line, 'sign', 'seal', 'send' and 'motion them with breath', in the last line. The close repetition of stressed monosyllables in these lines creates a sense of physical weight, a weighting down of sound and rhythm. Repetition is also based in patterns of speech sounds, the 's', 'th', 'm' and the long and short 'e'. This creates a sonically rich pattern, which is more like musical phrasing than the regularity of metrical arrangement. The effect is of a chant and of 'enchanting', that is, casting a spell. The third person plural pronouns again suggest multiple rather than a single speaker of this choral chanting. Speaking in multiple voices adds energy to the performance and efficacy to the effect on a reader or listener. The sonic vitality in these lines suggests that Chattox is not speaking by herself but in a shared language. This hovers between the chant and cant of both the Roman Catholic religion and of witches. Cant, religious or occult causes the words,

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[119] See Monk's 'Preface' in Monk, G. (2012) *Pendle Witch-Words*. Newton-le-Willows: Knives Forks and Spoons Press. pp. 5-6.
[120] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.

'sign them, / seal them', take on a sinister tone as commands in a curse or a religious tone. Setting these oppositions Monk highlights strong similarities in the language, structure, sound patterning and rhythm which is separated only by the name, 'Chattox' or 'Hopkins' assigned to the same utterance, the same sound of a temperament but perceived differently.

In 'Chattox Sings' there is a layering of an array of separate voices to make a single act of vocalisation. There is mention at the beginning of this chapter that the act of chanting is often a group activity. Although the title of the poem denotes a single speaker, or performer, of the poem, the ghost of Hopkins' words, rhythm and structures makes connections with Chattox and between the past and present. The first person plural inclusive 'us' and third person plural exclusive 'them' in the second half of 'Chattox Sings' further suggest multiple subjectivity and vocalisation:

> Whatever's prized and passes of us,
> everything's that fresh and
> east flying of us,
> seems to us sweet of us,
> and swiftly away with,
> done away with,
> undone.[121]

The same rich sound patterning, and rhythm of language in the 'speech-chant' of stanza three, with its choral 'us', and a 'chant-cant-prayer' with the pronoun 'them', can be used to enchant as both incantation and as chant. This shifts between dangerously seductive sound and sounds which soothe.[122] Monk's 'Preface' to the pamphlet version of the witch monologues, *Pendle Witch-Words* (2012), cites

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[121] Ibid. pp. 126-127.
[122] Charm as incantatory sound, see Frye, N. 'Charms and Riddles' in Frye, N. (1983) *Spiritus Mundi: Essays on Literature, Myth and Society.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp.123-147.

Hopkins, Stefan Kiszko and the Birmingham Six as sources of references and quotes. Monk explains her reasons for including these figures:

> The original version of *Interregnum* contained one section based on autobiographical material and one concerned with people who had special connections to Pendle such as the founder of the Quaker movement George Fox, who had his vision on Pendle Hill and was also incarcerated in Lancaster Castle, and the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins who taught at Stonyhurst college in the shadow of Pendle. There was also a scattering of contemporary references and quotes from, for example, the Birmingham Six (tried at Lancaster Castle) and the wrongfully imprisoned Stefan Kiszko. [123]

Harriet Tarlo writes that elements in Monk's early poetry 'interrogate our literary and cultural sense of ourselves'.[124] Part two of 'Interregnum', 'Palimpsestus', references a method of overwriting, which maintains echoes of previous scripts. I suggest that previously heard speech sounds and rhythms, consciously and unconsciously, resound fully reanimated in the poet's or reader's own 'silent' performance. Monk's self-proclaimed habit of 'dragging ghosts from petrified corners', reinvigorates Hopkins' poem by re-staging it as counterpoint to the condemnation of Chattox, through her own testimony.[125] Here is a layering of voices, containing echoes of the past, along with voices present, voices which are liberated from separate spoken and written sources to create a poem which includes all voices, and goes beyond a single, identifiable voice. As personae, disembodied voices join together to effect a sounding through the lexis, and sonic structures,

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[123] Monk, G. (2012) *Pendle Witch-Words*. Newton-le-Willows: Knives Forks and Spoons Press. p.6.
[124] Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 31.
[125] The quotation in full appears in the biography section of Monk's author page on the *Write Out Loud* webpage: 'I build atmospheric narratives gleaned from the coincidences of circumstance and the emotional geography of place. I want the physicality of words to hook around the lurking ghosts and drag them from their petrified corners. I wrote these words quite a few years ago and they still best sum up what I am attempting through poetry.' https://www.writeoutloud.net/profiles/geraldinemonk Last Accessed 13/04/20.

which effects a destabilization of a single authority. Furthermore, employing Jean-Luc Nancy's term, Hopkins' poem 'resounds' in 'Chattox Sings' and meaning is found in the modulated voice which sounds a variation in the sonic pattern, in the identity of the speaker and in ideas about God and heaven.[126] That is, each poem is an act of attention that is distinct, yet also changed, by expanding the other in mood and temperament, and by a sensuous resonance of voice past in voice present and vice versa which results in this sound-rich poem.

In 'Chattox Sings' fragmentation of metre changes the stress and rhythm in the final stanza and creates a sombre mood. In Chattox's 'song' each speech act that is intended to elicit a response has gone unanswered in this monologue poem. Toward the end of the poem it is the sound of hopelessness in the face of the lack of any redemptive response to the subject's repeated appeals for help, that resounds:

> So beginning,
> be beginning to despair,
> O there's none, no there's none:
> with sighs soaring,
> soaring sighs deliver.
> Them:
>   Beauty-in-the-ghost.[127]

The lineation emphasizes the high repetition of the sombre, stress heavy, long 'o' sounds in the first five lines of the stanza, which contrast to the faster, short sounds in stanza three. The tight repetition of speech sounds, and whole words, as well as the emotional pitch here, is almost unbearable in its inevitable sense of a ruination. The heightened sensuality of the speech sounds is almost like a death throe attempt at a final chance of being listened to. The last four lines, of '*The*

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[126] Nancy, J. L. (2007) *Listening.* New York: Fordham University Press. Translated by Charlotte Mandell.
[127] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems.* Cambridge: Salt. p. 127.

Leaden Echo—' section of Hopkins' poem, are patterned more for their musical

effect:

> So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
> O there's none; no no no there's none:
> Be beginning to despair, to despair,
> Despair, despair, despair, despair.[128]

The sound patterning, even the four-beat repetition of the last line, adheres

more to musical structure, than to evoking human speech, or a human speaker. In

those final two lines of 'Chattox Sings', there is a key change in the mood, and a

tension between regularized sound, and the irregularity of metre. Again, there is a

four-time repetition in lines seventeen to nineteen, in 'The Golden Echo—' section of

Hopkins poem:

> And with sighs soaring, soaring sighs deliver
> Them: beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death
> Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God
>   Beauty's self and beauty's giver.[129]

The end of 'Chattox Sings' is starkly unrepetitive, by contrast to the Hopkins

poem. The single word line 'Them' emphasizes the exclusive third person plural

pronoun and points to all the subjects implied in the layering of voices in the poem:

Chattox, others accused as witches, those falsely accused and imprisoned, those

without voice. The consonants in 'them' take sonic prominence, and the colon

implies that this single word utterance will be added to on the next line. In 'Chattox

Sings' 'Beauty', is transformed and personified by its initial capital letter. Further,

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[128] Ibid. p.127.
[129] Hopkins, G. M. (2009) *The Major Works*. (Revised Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 156.

connected by their position as head nouns 'Them' and 'Beauty' become one and the same. As subject, in Monk's poem 'Beauty' takes on autonomy that is not granted in Hopkins' poem where the power of transformation belongs to God. An ecstatic climax in which a benevolent God grants eternal youth and beauty in answer to the maidens' plea is refused in 'Chattox Sings'. Chris Goode writes: 'Sounds once generated never die' and as such, 'Post-embodied vocalization, given that the voice remains characterized by, and a carrier of information concerning the body within which it originated.'[130] In contrast to the religious ecstasy at the climax of Hopkins' poem, in 'Chattox Sings', I move, am moved through, rich, complex emotional and psychological states. Sound-rich patterns of speech become similar to Kennedy and Kennedy's description of the witches' bodies which, 'became sites where suffering and ecstasy were re-tied together because the original suffering and ecstasy took place in social spaces that the witches did not control'.[131] Silences, technical, social and ethical, are overridden in 'Chattox Sings' as counterpoint to the sonically rich patterns.

<div align="center">*</div>

Although sound-richness is the focus of this reading, it is important to consider the rich variation in the types of silences embedded in 'Chattox Sings'. Rather than being a strategy to mute sound, in sound-rich poetry amplifications of silence

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[130] Goode, C. 'Speak and Spell: Geraldine Monk's Voiceprint' in Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk.* Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 158.

[131] Kennedy, C. & Kennedy, D. (2013) *Women's Experimental Poetry in Britain 1970–2010: Body, Time and Locale.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. p. 80.

counterbalance the sonic amplification. This relationship resounds in 'Chattox Sings'

as a fully rich soundscape, in which silences are not just heard and seen, but felt.

Returning to the opening of the first stanza:

> What we have lighthanded left
> will have waked
> and have waxed
> and have walked
> with the wind.[132]

The resonance in the dental consonants, the 't' (unvoiced) and the 'd'

(voiced), at the end of the words placed at the end of these opening lines, creates

what Attridge describes as silent offbeats.[133] By extending the sound of the words,

'left', 'waked', 'waxed', 'walked' and 'wind', into the silence at the line end, the

unheard, invisible offbeats become *felt* by the body, like an extra heartbeat. There is

no punctuation, there are no commas, at the line ends here, but for the vocal

apparatus to fully form the word sounds a pause is needed to adjust the position of

the lips and tongue. The pause is pronounced after the longer line ending, 'left', as

the breath runs out, and a new intake of breath is required to voice lines two to five.

This pause for breath creates a tension at the end of the line and separates the first

and second lines. The 'w' alliterative sound patterning of the following lines, and

single breath needed to vocalise them, creates a complete unit of a sound billowing

rhythmically. The body and breath determine poetic form, resulting in sound which

amplifies silences, so that a four-beat pattern is determinable.

Shifting the normal rules, to see and hear differently, means that the silences,

which can be overlooked, come into attention, that is into the prominence needed to

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[132] 'Chattox Sings' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 126.
[133] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* London: Longman. See p. 96.

make the printed body flesh and blood. In Monk's poetics, deprived of vocalising the text, the 'unvocalised private', the poet's body is at rest, not animated. The muscles of the body become activated in performing speech, the printed body is transformed and energised as 'word made flesh', in vocalised performances. In Hopkins 'overreaving' balances out stress and unstress, across the body of the poem. In 'Chattox Sings' it is sound and silence that are 'balanced out' across the poem. Embedded in its sonic richness 'Chattox Sings' needs silence equal to the sound made; they need each other to be effective.

As well as functioning to indicate timing and duration, in the rhythmic structures of lines and stanzas, 'silent' punctuation forms bonds between words. Hopkins uses diacritical marks, as marker of stress and intonation, to indicate styles of vocalisation that a reader would perhaps not otherwise deduce. As Thurston points out in his introduction to *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk* (2006), Monk uses all graphological resources available in her poems. Striking examples in 'Chattox Sings' are, 'Them: / Beauty-in-the-ghost' and the noun-verb combinations, 'care-coiled' and 'care-killed'. Through innovative uses of graphology, the words take on additional sound qualities in the poems. By placing stress on unusual and unexpected syllables, Monk creates a songful speech and exploits speech sounds in words to their full range. The 'accentuation' in Monk's phrase 'Accentuation disembodied' is a metrical term relating to the prominence of syllables in the sound pattern.[134] Word classes, noun-verb, not usually placed together are united by a hyphen, shifting the points of stress and prominence, imbuing the structure with a freedom to escape the regularity and rules which otherwise would make rigid, or

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[134] For 'Accentuation disembodied' see Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. p. 215. Attridge describes 'accentuation' see Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. London: Longman. pp. 325-344.

petrify, the sound structure. This patterning and rhythm of speech sounds contributes to resistance and creates shifts in perception of seeing and being seen.

In Hopkins' poem encourages a different, alternate way of hearing, understanding and thinking about, and through, words. Where stress is placed and what shifts in attention are effected when allowing unusual points of stress is called into question. The title of the whole work to which 'Chattox Sings' belongs, *Interregnum*, indicates a suspension of the rules of syllable. This is effected by accent and lexical stress in 'Chattox Sings' in which sound patterning breaks free from usual stress hierarchies. The unfamiliar is seen and heard in the familiar. What is overly sentimental and eccentric according to one set of eyes and ears becomes 'beauty' in the ghost of sound and rhythm brought from the past into the present so that voices can be heard, layers of voices from another angle, a different perspective. Chattox can be heard through Hopkins and vice versa, each sounding differently. In the seeming constraint of an echo, the dual tension in language is released in 'Chattox Sings' so that the restraint of metre can become the range of vocal forms which Monk finds contained in the material of Hopkins' poem. The religious theme of the body as site of unavoidable physical decay which spiritual resurrection keeps young and beautiful, the 'Beauty-in-the-ghost', is echoed in Monk's poem, revealing the efficacy of the patterning of speech sounds, woven with silences, through the body of the poem, which does not fade but in fact resonates a sonic richness and vitality.

CHAPTER TWO

Sound-Rich Poetry as Resistance in Bill Griffiths' 'War W/Windsor Text 1
(4 Voices)'

This chapter gives a selective reading of Bill Griffiths' *War W/ Windsor* with a focus on the first poem of the sequence, 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 voices)'.[135] It is well known that Griffiths made multiple versions of his poems.[136] Alan Halsey gives an account of Griffiths' *War W/ Windsor* and the *Cycles* poems which preceded them in his essay 'Abysses and Quick Vicissitudes'. As Halsey explains the *War W/Windsor* sequence is no exception to this versioning, and he explains how the various poems he identifies as belonging to the sequence also appear in various orders (temporally) and various arrangements of publication.[137] Halsey notes Griffiths' 'Recasting of lines from other poems, fracturing them among four voices' in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)'.[138] For stability of reference in this chapter the discussion that follows refers to *War W/Windsor* as it appears in the *Earlier Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)* (2010) edited by Halsey, where it is made up of eleven poems, which have various forms including two prose poems and a list poem.

As a sound-rich poem the title itself is strikingly alliterative with its three initial 'w' sounds and, along with the strong stress, 'War W/Windsor' establishes a complex sound structure as a signature, that is carried over into the poem. The triple

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[135] My reading of this fragmentary text, which is radically open to semantic interpretation, is largely formalist and etymological.
[136] Halsey discusses this.
[137] Halsey, A. 'Abysses and Quick Vicissitudes: Some Notes on the Mimeo Editions of Bill Griffiths' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. pp. 41-53.
[138] Ibid. p. 49.

repetition is used in rhetoric and there are '(4 Voices)' in parentheses here. This both

complicates, and enriches, the sonic aspect in performance through bringing layers

of vocal sound that are improvised in a group, or choral type, rendition. The 'Text 1'

part of the title, 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', suggests that this poem is the

first in a set of linked poems on the same theme. 'War' intimates an intense dispute

between two opposing factions, which results in an open conflict to decide a victor,

and a loser, with status and territory or other 'goods' of war at stake. 'Windsor' is a

geographical place, the name of the current monarchy in the United Kingdom and

the name of a Hells Angels chapter. Eric Mottram gives some useful background to

War W/ Windsor:

> *War with Windsor* (1972-4, 1976) is a set of texts in the experiential
> area of gang living. Again, the sheer inventions of their forms
> constitute a poetic challenge. In the four columns of Text 1–the short
> measures moving laterally into each other at certain points, to be read
> vertically and/or lateral–Angels and organisers involved in police
> confrontation are examples of a wide context of British custom and
> law, confrontations of behaviours which also exemplify the 1970s and
> 80s . . .'[139]

William Rowe notes the effect of *War W/ Windsor* as a 'Luminous immediacy .

. . the result of their engagement with the actual . . . bringing into the poem what

experience excludes in order to constitute itself as experience.'[140] Further, Rowe

notes that Griffiths assembles the sounds of a place to such an extent that, in the

War W/ Windsor poems, 'Prison. . . produces a prosody'.[141] The punctuation mark in

'w/' indicates the letters missing from the word 'with' and takes on its own sound and

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[139] Mottram, E. ''Every New Book Hacking on Barz': The Poetry of Bill Griffiths' in Rowe, W. (ed.)
(2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 13.
[140] Rowe, W. 'Violence and Form in Bill Griffiths' Cycles' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative
Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 101.
[141] Ibid. p. 101.

rhythm. The slash character also has a violence to it as a visual mark, as well as a

short sharp 'i' sound, both of which contribute to the prosody of prison that Griffiths

creates in this poem. The soundscape of prison is transposed into the poem, so that

through these sounds and rhythms, I experience, that is I hear and feel, that place. In

his introduction to Griffiths' work in the *Future Exiles* (1992) anthology Jeff Nuttall

writes:

> In the forms thus composed sound appropriates a major role.
> Rhymes, rhythms, alliterations, vowels accelerate, explode or
> dissolve in relentless, marvellously controlled sequences. Space and
> punctuation are used as silences, delays, percussion, or are
> withdrawn to achieve speed and smooth flow. Parentheses are
> opened but not closed. Sentences are begun but merge into other
> sentences before a full stop is inserted. A manipulation of phrase
> edges is used with similar effect to that of Dada poetry. There are also
> similarities to the way in which a saxophonist like John Coltrane will
> rephrase a melody relentlessly, again and again, to find all the
> possibilities of a handful of notes.[142]

While there is a marked fragmentation at work in the poem, there is also a

strong weave of sonic and semantic threads, which form creative linkages. In 'The

Idea of Sequence in Works by Bill Griffiths' Allen Fisher writes:

> The syntax in Bill Griffiths's work, an extended poem or book, brings
> about connections through material surface affinities, repetition or
> similarity of images or forms and by title, that is through naming
> individual works as part of an ongoing series.[143]

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[142] Catling, B. Fisher, A. Griffiths, B. (1992) *Re/Active Anthology. Future Exiles: Three London Poets. Number 1*. London: Paladin. p. 158.
[143] Fisher, A. 'The Idea of Sequence in Works by Bill Griffiths' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 57.

Taking the first poem in the *War W/Windsor* series, this chapter discusses the combination of an old sound structure, alliterative verse, and unusual modern dialects to create a new soundscape, which samples past and present in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)'. This is followed by an exploration of the possibilities in the range and complexity, of this soundscape to express unconventional individual, and group, experiences. The chapter then moves into a consideration of the possibilities in responding to silences, as well as to sounds, in the text.

The poem, 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', is sonically and visually striking and opens the collection *War W/ Windsor*. The poem is composed of fragments of text, which are separated by variable amounts of space, and which create four columns. The poem's title indicates it is written for four voices and I will deal with the issue of performance later:

```
air around        Marigolds          raw              sun-hoarding
Empty of angels   Its orange tree     reaching         geometrically
rat's fur on'is   soft & minds        at the grey       warm wind turns
   anorak
tongue & nose     does the millstone    riding          the scooter awry
                                      on donkeys
some curled in    or sweat in the    in the laps of    set pattern
round & round     territories        knee, knuckles    of signeury
                  than black brick
I'll wash my      but plate-walls    fame, congruity    then next week,
   hair                                                      month
Oceanus           cabal-care          ship north still  of waves even here
heavy running      within foured walls   metalled ground   my heart
                                                         in my skull
gecking           breve swells       north (zig-zagging)   long bobbing
Yggdrasil         coiled and whorl'd  mad with          thru his blood
arse to the wall  as if to hide       Hasdrubal         sober sun
shut door         after door          w/ the wind/ sun  on his being
being zips        by the teapot       eyes (amethyst)    by the window
(that's violable)
the raucous scale   on a sunplate    birds, blue backs   apricots
rubber, hedgehog  4 toy feet in air  Tortoise!           Duck!
so the bee        buzzaya            buzzaya            bulla
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bulla	share money	the lion was a law	on the police roof
nonworry I	row of windows	Out the window	What I see it all
is not exactly mine	Ceiling, floor	join hands	crazy -- about
at this latest time	Unto these yellow sands	A-yellow-shells	lost, you
Are but a	wild-wave (fancy!)	Toppling	Trainless
O you, row-row,	snatch-tail	cry, cock	for the fur
fallen	that is on your	man-back	and
sandworm	curtsey	kiss	or Work or
Winter	Ely	in cold street run	(Was lost wind
I blue-mouthed	and the fire	off the towerz	Good
as good as	a basin of gold	I'll sing	dont you sick me none
now Sammy	inlockt to a cage	shall I downcart	took all the
grew a meathook			cussedness
I began on a cycle track	good	young	and w/ Ghostly love
Then I was a	works wonder	& ate up energy	I jumped
for a joy-dance	juba-jub	you millions	join me in
in jubilee	We shined bootz,	he cried	everybody d.
bars	rough as	rupus	looking
to lead us	from the Winter meander	stood I	in periphery
& applauded	when the policeman	was ate by his	horse
Iyam	hackster as Vulcan	Mettus-silly	myself
from Rievaulx	turned I	iron-shoed	hot-heart
to the bays	and pillars,	'Dilly, creamy-	coloured
for they said	and	planks was	my dogs
ciggies --	butterflies	An another hour	of fuzz
			big thumbs
boxing kids	Outside	It was brilliant	I breathed it
And Angels az	kinging & joking	az	catastrophic[144]

This is a poem of intricate, and shifting, sound patterns which draw on, but do not strictly adhere to, the alliterative structure of Anglo-Saxon verse. Attridge describes the basic structure of alliterative verse as 'a line divided into two parts, usually with two beats in each' and 'the use of alliteration to mark the beats'.[145] The structure is designed for four voices and three of the four fragments in the first line, 'air around   Marigolds   raw   sun-hoarding,' have two strong stresses while 'raw' has one. In 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' Griffiths fragments the traditional

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[144] 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' in Griffiths, B. (2010) *Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)*. East Sussex: Reality Street. Edited by Alan Halsey and Ken Edwards. pp. 113-114.
[145] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* London: Longman. p. 324.

two-part line structure into four nonlinear beat-fragments of text, which are connected through various sound patterns, which vary from line to line. The assonance in that first line of Griffiths' poem, 'air around   Marigolds   raw   sun-hoarding', creates a sonic bond between each fragment of text, which foregrounds the sound and rhythm in the words which are not clearly linked either grammatically or semantically. Each word contains a beat on the long and short 'a' sounds they carry, which causes those vowel sounds to echo, variably but with strength, across the line. The strength of the stresses balances out across the fragments of text to become equally distributed across the line. In this way each word contains a peak of energy, which creates equal emphasis on their presence in the line. The sound pattern has another layer of irregularity, in the variable numbers of unstressed beats between the stresses, and in the offbeats, in the line.[146] Attridge writes, 'The rhythmic strength of Langland's verse lies in its energetic freedom, not in the tight control of metrical form.'[147] That is to say, as Griffiths' poem demonstrates, points of stress in a line can be perceived by what the rhythms of speech emphasise and by drawing attention to particular words. The opposition of rhythm and metre in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', is nuanced in this cut up text composed of fragments, the irregularity in the sound patterning is sometimes non-linear, sometimes linear, it hovers between. Further, the sound patterning in the first line of Griffiths' poem can be read in two ways: from a strong-stress aspect; or as accentual-syllabic. However, the play on the alliterative structure in this nonmetrical form, draws consideration of

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[146] Attridge describes how syllables function as offbeats and that, 'Offbeats play no part in the underlying rhythm, which, as the simplest and most fundamental rhythmic form, is merely a series of beats; they are best regarded as an aspect of the various metrical patterns which may realise that underlying rhythm. Ibid. p. 97.
[147] Ibid. p. 325.

both readings together and ushers in all the possible offbeats to bring those 'silent'

offbeats into prominence. Griffiths talking to Rowe:

> . . . it's a matter of spreading the possibilities . . . not thinking of poetry
> as something that you've got to define and write within a traditional
> format, but something that you can use to explore, to extend your
> resources. It's Foucault—the difference between fulfilling a
> preconceived potential and letting yourself loose on infinite
> possibilities.[148]

Even though Griffiths says this, the permutations in 'War W/Windsor Text 1 (4

Voices)' involve a kind of syncopation which, in the first line, resists the authority of

traditional rules of verse in which stress is privileged, to find alternate ways of

patterning sound by bringing attention to the unstressed and silent beats. The

repetition of the 'a' vowel sounds in 'air around   Marigolds   raw   sun-hoarding',

brings the syllables with those sounds to a prominence they do not usually have. The

focus shifts to what is usually overlooked, the latent sounds and silences not heard

in the text, and this enacts the situation of the subject of Griffiths' poem: the

unfamiliarity of the sound patterns, and language, of biker gangs and prison. Read

across the line, the heavy beats, alternating with the unstressed syllables and off

beats, create a halting movement of sound and meaning. The silences between text

fragments create tension by suspending each moment of sonic and semantic

intention. How this expectation will be met by the next text fragment is

indeterminable, which situates the reader in a disorienting, as well as unfamiliar,

experience.[149] The 'a' vowel sound sets up a sound signature to the poem as is

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[148] 'Interview with Will Rowe' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths.*
Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 182.
[149] In chapter one silent offbeats are identified in Monk's work. See footnote 133.

found in traditional verse, but which is not carried in a strict pattern of variation that is

repeated through the lines. The variation on the sounds is more complex, and

unpredictable, than any regularity in the repetition would allow for. However, these

fragments of text are not irreconcilably disparate. John Muckle writes about regularity

and repetition in Griffiths' musical structures:

> I remember Bill talking about how some of his nineteenth-century composers used assemblages of folk-songs as a basis for their larger compositions (Dvorak was another who did this), building up larger structures by stringing together a number of fragments of old melodies adapted, and Bill confessed that he too had trouble sustaining arguments, symphonic developments and resolutions, and that a patchwork approach was the closest he could come to this.[150]

Rather than a development of reason to thread the poem together, sustaining

an argument here transposes to the structure, and its restless insistence, in Griffiths'

poem, on shifting direction. Muckle describes this as 'a folk-song patchwork quilt'.[151]

Although the assonance of line one continues to dominate the structure in line two, it

is an awareness of rhyme, rather than stress and unstress of line one, that binds the

fragments of text:

air around	Marigolds	raw	sun-hoarding
Empty of angels	Its orange tree	reaching	geometrically[152]

[150] Muckle, J. 'Ghosts, Giants and a Kid-Laugh' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 31.
[151] Ibid. p. 31.
[152] 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' in Griffiths, B. (2010) *Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)*. East Sussex: Reality Street. Edited by Alan Halsey and Ken Edwards. p. 113.

In line two there are close repetitions, first of the short 'e' vowel sound in 'empty' and 'angels' in the first column. The other three columns contain a succession of long 'e' sounds, in 'tree', 'reaching', and 'geometrically'. Rowe writes:

> This is consistent intellectual anarchism and as poetry it sets the language out of order into music—or better, musics, since the measures of Griffiths's poetry are highly varied and invite us into finer perception by frequent alterations of pattern and mode.[153]

It can be perceived that the, albeit unusual, internal rhyme structure of line two and further, that the fragments of text come into association semantically, as well as sonically. Line two, 'Empty of Angels   Its orange tree   reaching   geometrically', has a stronger semantic coherence than line one. The spaces between the fragments are open to being filled, by what has been left out, by what is left unsaid, in the blank spaces of the text, and these omissions are usually the work of punctuation, and words, in a symbolic system of grammar. 'War W/Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' is a space in which the authority of grammar is broken down, meaning becomes disrupted and has some indeterminacy, whereas sound, although it has become irregular and unusual, is based in familiar patterns. These are patterns which not only play on alliterative verse, and dialects, but which draw on nursery rhyme and popular song. Again, the sonic and semantic threads, which weave these fragments of text together, demonstrate that it is more about linkage than breakage:

| Then was I a works wonder | & ate up | energy | I jumped |
| for a joy-dance | juba-jub | you millions | join me in |

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[153] Rowe, W. 'Bill Griffiths's *The Mud Fort*: Language as Vulnerability and Revolt in an Age of Compliance' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 159-160.

in jubilee   We shined bootz, he cried   everybody d.[154]

This brings together a sound-rich weave of sounds and rhythms, which are drawn from traditionally literary forms, and from those based in spoken forms and popular culture. Tony Baker writes, 'This skill in controlling the density, dilution and diversity of the noises and rhythms words generate together, is the skill of an acute musician. It makes lengthy passages of Bill's writing relishable even when the sense defeats the ear.'[155] To write about prison, and biker gangs, in a strictly traditional metrical verse form would be to distort and omit many of the soundshapes and rhythms at work in those communities, and among the individuals who form them. Griffiths uses an alliterative old verse form to underpin the irregular verse forms that comprise *War W/ Windsor,* and innovates, through rhythm and rhyme, to create unusual sonic patterns. For Foucault it is the regularity and repetition in the calculated and controlled, steady and regular movement imposed on bodies and experience of diurnal time in prison which makes a metrics.[156] Further, Tamara Chin accounts for the corrective nature of the prison environment being implied in the cultural, and moral, meanings associated with traditional, especially Victorian, metrical systems reinforced by the power that is given to metrical speech.[157] Demonstrating an awareness of the functioning of metre and rhythm, and being confined by neither, Griffiths' *War W/Windsor* poems are soundscapes, open to the complexities of expressions of both individual human and group identities in

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[154] 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' in Griffiths, B. (2010) *Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)*. East Sussex: Reality Street. Edited by Alan Halsey and Ken Edwards. p. 114.

[155] Baker, T. 'From Black Cocoa Out' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 101-102.

[156] Foucault, M. (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin Books. See especially pp. 162-169.

[157] Chin, T. 'Anti-Colonial Metrics: Homeric Time in an Indian Prison, ca. 1909' in *Arcade*. Available: https://arcade.stanford.edu/content/anti-colonial-metrics-homeric-time-indian-prison-ca-1909 Last accessed 26/8/19.

response to both emotional and intellectual experiences of the world. Human beings are composed of multiple and shifting consciousnesses, and perspectives, stimulated in response to, and determined by, myriad situations, environments, social, cultural and economic factors. 'War W/Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' offers one soundbite from infinite possibilities of this sonic weave.

So far, this discussion has read the lines across the page and down as they would be read by a single reader, rather than as they would be experienced, that is heard, when they are read simultaneously in a group performance. In 'From Black Cocoa Out' Baker writes:

> Rhythm is the foundation and building matter of any sound-structure: musicians can play together because their perception of how time is articulated coincides. Unless the music is designed to lack a pulse, it's a shared sense of how time is traversed that creates an ensemble much more than the contours of melody or vertical harmony.[158]

Both shared time and functioning as a community are part of gang and prison experiences. Griffiths, in an interview with Chris Cheek, responded: 'I've to myself, thought of defining poetry as a pattern of speech, in the sense that anything perhaps which is the product of a human, is going to be patterned.'[159] A text for *four* voices then is even more intricately patterned, as is found in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)'. There is further reference to multiple voices in the title 'Terzetto Brixton',

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[158] Baker, T. 'From Black Cocoa Out' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 103.
[159] Rowe, W. 'Violence and Form in Bill Griffiths's Cycles' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 102.

which comes after 'Text 2', 'terzetto' being a performance for three voices or musical instruments. John Seed writes:

> Much of his later poetry, whether or not performable by a choir, is also multi-vocal—a chorus of different voices. It is a poetry which takes delight in the sound patterns of words and sentences, which celebrates the sensuous pleasures—and displeasures—of the noise of human language.[160]

However, noting the 'need to resist power in all its forms' in Griffiths' poetry, Billy Mills writes that 'crucially, it also informs his belief that social activity must be based on collaboration, rather than coercion.[161] Making an activity pleasurable, not only makes for eager participation but, as Attridge writes, a choral reading 'tends to exaggerate the natural rhythmic tendencies of the language to make unison pronunciation possible'.[162] It is a striking reminder of the interplay between speech and writing that the complex succession of silences experienced on reading the written text version of 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' as a lone reader, disappear in a vocalised group performance.[163] Clive Fencott and Friends performed the poem as a multi-voice work at the commemoration event for Griffiths at Birkbeck college in 2007.[164] In this performance the individual voices are variously separate, then mingle, overlap, and echo various depths of vocal sound and energy. When the

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[160] Seed, J. ''In Music Fair Mair Sweet': Bill Griffiths in Durham' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 111.

[161] Mills, B. 'Bill Griffiths: *Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)*, *Collected Poems & Sequences, (1981-91)* and *Collected Poems Volume 3 (1992-96)*. Reality Street 2010, 2014 and 2016. Eds. Alan Halsey and Ken Edwards.' 17/07/16. Available: https://ellipticalmovements.wordpress.com/2016/07/17/bill-griffiths-collected-poems-and-sequences-1966-1996-a-review/ Last Accessed 31/12/19.

[162] Attridge, D. (2008) *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 74.

[163] A performance of 'War W/Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' was given at a commemoration for Bill Griffiths held at Birkbeck college and is available on CD: *Bill Griffiths: A Commemoration*. Birkbeck College, 17 November 2007. London: Optic Nerve.

[164] CD recording. *Bill Griffiths: A Commemoration*. Birkbeck College, 17 November 2007. London: Optic Nerve.

voices sound all together, the speech sounds are experienced more as waves of sonic rhythm, than as speech sounds making words.

Clive Bush identifies in Griffiths' work what is, in effect, another kind of silence, a, 'sympathy for people without official language, a sympathy for their untold tales, a dehierarchising of orthodox explanation for anything which relies on the authority of absolute power'.[165] Although not out of the range of everyone, prison and biker gangs are out of most people's experience. Therefore, impressions of these cultures can be restricted by what may be stereotyped media and literary representations created for entertainment or sensationalistic purposes. The poem 'War W/Windsor Text 5' has an '*Appendix'* section which references sources which include *The Sun* newspaper, *The Hendon Times* and *Buttons: The Making of a President* by Jamie Mandelkou. Each of these publications is imbued with stock, recognisable, cultural and moral perspectives, on biker subculture from the sensationalist tabloid, to the conservative local opinion, and the personal memoir of a biker gang member. To gain some insight into his subject Hunter S. Thompson spent time with Hells Angels for his book of that name.[166] A large portion of that book, though it has its own problems, ends up being a comment on sensationalised tabloid media portrayals of biker gangs. And then how the newspaper stories, cinematic portraits and myths ended up feeding back into and affecting the Los Angeles Hells Angels' (the ones Thompson spent time with) sense of identity and their 'performance' of being Hells Angels. Similarly, the recent American TV series *Sons of Anarchy* aimed to portray an element of realism to the biker gang culture. However, although researched, and including guest appearances by actual members

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[165] Bush, C. 'The Secret Commonwealth' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p .27.
[166] Thompson, H. S. (2003) *Hell's Angels.* London: Penguin Books.

of Hells Angels gangs, as a TV show, it is determined by its purpose to tell a story in an entertaining way, that captures and maintains a loyal audience.[167] Untold stories and unofficial languages resound between the textual silences in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)'. A profusion of words from unfamiliar jargons are ushered into the poem so that the unfamiliar, both social and sonic, enters, and enriches, the range of experience to become part of the soundscape of daily life.

The fragmentary nature of the composition has the effect of suggesting that words and phrases are samplings from popular songs. The word 'Dilly' is enough to suggest the well-known song 'Lavender Blue', and 'row-row' evokes the nursery rhyme, 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat'. These samples work as sound bites as they are sourced from popular culture; these songs are familiar from childhood and a word is enough to call these tunes to mind, and therefore childhood itself. Memories are stimulated by sensory experience; for me the smell of rice pudding evokes primary school lunches. A sensual déjà vu is triggered by the familiar sonic patterns, and the reader brings their own experiences to fill in what is left out, unsaid, in the spaces in the text. As mentioned earlier, there are semantic ellipses in the fragmentary structure, which can be said to resist authoritative composition. Those gaps give the reader imaginative freedom to actively expand the sonic and semantic aspects of the text, using their own store of memories in response to what they perceive while they read. Far from stereotypical, there is an unexpected sonic and intertextual complexity in combining these simple songs with a wider more specialised language. The poem has 'Yggdrasil' which evokes Old English mythology, and literary texts, notably *The Prose Edda* and *The Poetic Edda* of Norse mythology, while the phrases

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[167] Actual Hells Angels members made guest appearances in *Sons of Anarchy* which lends a level of endorsement to the portrayal of bikers in the show. Sonny Barger appeared as Lenny the Pimp Janowitz 2010-2012. https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1124373/ Last accessed 26/8/19.

'arse to the wall' and 'kinging and joking az' are firmly rooted in the speech of prison and biker gangs.[168] A person, and an experience of their world, is constructed by the language that they speak and think in, and through which they construct themselves, and their world, as a dynamic interchange between written and spoken sources. Baker writes:

> Bill's writing is deeply social: it's about people—about the way we speak, about how phrases form in our mouths (speech has distinct and local grammars), about things, creatures, habits, about objects we buy and play with in our day-to-day lives. It's political in a way that precedes politics; its stuff is the polis in its quirky raw state.[169]

In addition to foregrounding their sonic aspect and ability to suggest whole texts, words move us through time and spaces. There are various landscapes suggested in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', the phrase 'yellow sands', and 'wild wave', evoke coastal regions. There are various animals including a 'hedgehog' and 'butterflies'. The scene shifts to domestic interior with 'the teapot', and there is a reminder of the seasons and the turning of the year in 'Winter'. The sounds of who is speaking, when, and of where, become merged in standard forms of words, and idiomatic forms of words and phrases, complicating categorisations of identity. There are suggestions of time far past in the word 'Oceanus', and the Old English word 'Yggdrasil', as well as time present in slang words 'ciggies' and phrases such as 'my dogs'. 'Oceanus' and 'Yggdrasil' are from Greek and Norse mythology. These words

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[168] Research and dictionaries on prison code reveal that each prison can have its own language. See Mulvey, C. 'Prison Lingo: The Language of the Prison Community.' The English Project. Available: http://www.englishproject.org/resources/prison-lingo-language-prison-community Last accessed 31/12/19.
[169] Baker, T. 'From Black Cocoa Out' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 102.

import two types of mythology and two types of lexis into the poem. Myths are used to explain what does not make sense to us in everyday life, often involving higher beings, immortal gods at work. The literary references lend a prestige to the words which contrasts with the slang words which are usually categorised as nonstandard English forms. Griffiths' poem implies that forms of enlightenment come from unexpected and diverse, rather than singular, prestigious, or authoritative sources, which acknowledge the past in the present. By creating the poem from such a diversity of language that includes biker gangs, 'Angels', and prison, 'on the police roof', and moves far beyond that range into lexes of childhood, the natural world and domesticity, the whole of a person, a life, is suggested. There are features people share including factors from experiences in common, but, Griffiths gives a reminder, each person is an individual and the range of their world, should not, in fact cannot, be reduced to or defined only by a narrow field of reference associated with those labels 'biker' and 'prisoner'. This is not just what Rowe terms a 'prosody of prison' but a soundscape of an individual within that, drawn from an idiolect, Griffiths' own, even though it is drawn from long ago.[170]

The diversity of language in 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', which includes unfamiliar words and phrases, enacts an emancipation of the subject on two levels. First, by approaching the subject with an unusual understanding and avoiding stereotyping to depict an unfamiliar stratum of society. Second, to challenge assumptions about what is taken as known about this subject which also includes challenging poetic conventions. In an interview Griffiths suggests:

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[170] See Rowe, W. 'Bill Griffiths's *The Mud Fort*: Language as Vulnerabilty and Revolt in an Age of Compliance' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 158-166.

> The Angel initiative *was* something different—motorbikes plus awareness? It was a local translation of the American sense of male emancipation (much as the Beatles were); it stopped far short of the assertion of violence (as in *The Clockwork Orange*) as the valid human instinct; and contrasted—this is a major point in the *War W/ Windsor* set—with the professional violence of the state.[171]

In 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' there are words suggestive of brutality, from the 'raw' of line one, to 'heavy running' and the surreal 'grew a meathook'. The neologism, syntax and nonstandard spelling of the phrase 'inlockt to a cage' stress and extend the sounds in 'inlockt'. This which puts emphasis on the verb, and the action of 'inlocking', as more suggestive of a constrictive confinement than 'locking in'. There are also words without dictionary definitions, 'juba-jub', 'rupus', and the onomatopoeic 'bulla' and 'buzzaya'. 'Rupus' suggests an echo of 'rumpus' and 'juba-jub' evokes Lewis Carroll's 'Jabberwocky'.[172] Learning about how familiar language and social systems work comes from understanding unfamiliar systems. Via expanded translation within English, and its different forms, Griffiths disrupts the sovereignty of authoritative forms of official languages. Robert Hampson writes, 'Griffiths's awareness of other language uses then also impacts on his handling of English in his own work.'[173] By 'translating' between different Englishes with

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[171] 'Interview with Will Rowe' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 193.

[172] In 'Long Death of the Plains Indians Gipsies' there are many unfamiliar and unusual words, 'avoi', 'kerdan', 'temstar' and 'durrilyors'. There is also the hyphenated word 'city-gorgiko-fokey' Edmund B. Tuttle's text *Three Years on the Plains: Observation of Indians, 1867-1870* reveals possible influence of looking closely at another language, the Indian language, with its wonderfully unusual (to non-speakers) sounds and constructions of words such as 'sumka' (dog), wash-ta (good), ox-i-la (boy) and 'pal-a-za-zar' (candle). Tuttle, E. B. *Three Years on the Plains: Observations of Indians, 1867-1870*. Free e-book Available at Project Gutenberg http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20463 Last Accessed 19/8/18.

[173] Hampson, R. 'Bill Griffiths and the Old English Lyric' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 77.

unfamiliar word constructions and prosodies Griffiths shifts, and broadens, approaches to language as well as inducing changes to ways of thinking in, and through, these new linguistic patterns.

New linguistic patterns are composed of sounds and silences. Rowe, discussing breaking patterns in Griffiths' *Cycles*, quotes William Burroughs's proposition 'that the problem is language as such and that the only way out is silence'.[174] In 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', further to the silences which surround the words and phrases to make the four columns, there are silences within these. This is most notable in the third column of the last line:

And Angels az   kinging & joking   az   catastrophic[175]

The silence after the second 'az' breaks the upbeat rhythm of 'kinging and joking'. There is a tension in this silence that is created by the implied offbeats which carry from 'az' to the final word 'catastrophic'. It has been noted how offbeats worked in line one to maintain a rhythmic movement across the spaces between the text fragments. Here 'az' is followed by an offbeat which propels the sound structure into the spatial emptiness which follows and keeps that moving by contributing to sonic rhythm without the need of visual markers.[176] Rowe continues:

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[174] Rowe, W. 'Violence and Form in Bill Griffiths's Cycles' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 103.
[175] 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' in Griffiths, B. (2010) *Collected Earlier Poems (1966-80)*. East Sussex: Reality Street. Edited by Alan Halsey and Ken Edwards. p. 114.
[176] See Attridge, D. (2008) *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 98.

> What is singular about Griffith's work is the kaleidoscopic suspension of pre-given patterns and the linking of the work of form with the will to social emancipation.[177]

Social emancipation takes place in the spatial and temporal 'emptiness', in unrestricted, unmarked spaces, which the reader is given freedom to propagate with sonically and semantically imaginative responses to the text. 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' has demonstrated that words are free to associate in ways other than by grammar and semantics. However, although there is a resistance to subjection to the usual linguistic rules, pattern is not abandoned altogether. Rather, it is continuously re-imagined. The silences between words and phrases in the poem give space for other possibilities than the pre-set patterns that might be expected. Alongside the sound-rich aspects, such as the alliterative rhythms of language, in the poem, silence is also foregrounded, becoming linguistic to the extent that it structures utterance and offers sonic absence that 'echoes' sound-richness, and allows sound-richness to sound out more richly by comparison. In the last line there is tension produced by the delay between sonic and semantic expectation and satisfaction, which is particularly effective in creating a dramatic climax at the end of the poem. Mottram writes:

> The prosody itself is part of Griffiths' tensions between free self and authoritarian society, between contemporary and historic and archaic. The highly controlled measures resist authoritarian mathematics of the incessant Establishment iambic and build a stance against all imposition.[178]

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[177] Rowe, W. 'Violence and Form in Bill Griffiths's Cycles' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 103.

[178] Mottram, E. ''Every New Book Hacking on Barz': The Poetry of Bill Griffiths' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 11.

Baker writes: 'Bill's medium is speech, or non-literary usage written down.'[179]

There is the compact and song-like epistolary 'War W/ Windsor Text 2: To Tom Saunders on his Imprisonment' and another version of fragmentary structure in the list poem 'War W/ Windsor Text 3: To Jonny Prez. Hells Angels Nomads' which is numbered one to thirteen. Even the two prose poems which may look visually alike, carry very different sound patterns and rhythms. 'Into Prison' effects a spoken narrative that is structured around the frequent repetition of words and phrases. 'War W/ Windsor Text 5' is a spoken testimony with factual sources included at the end as an '*Appendix'* which becomes part of the text of the poem. These combinations of speech and writing lend a striking diversity to the sound patterning and rhythm in the *War W/ Windsor* poems. In the last line of 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' there is what would be a parallel repetition of 'az' however, Griffiths applies a change to the structure: 'And Angels az' makes the first column while 'kinging & joking' the second with 'az' separated and isolated in the third column. A parallelism in the structure is continued by the two present tense verb endings, 'kinging' and 'joking', and by the echoing short 'a' vowel sound. The repetition, the rhyming, of the 'a' sound across the line makes a beat fall on what would usually be an unstressed syllable 'as' in 'catastrophic'. This unusual added beat has the effect of emphasising, by extending, the sound of the final climactic word of the poem and of making 'catastrophic' resonate sonically and semantically. Just as the final note in music remains in the ear after the sound has faded, so the emotional and imaginative

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[179] Baker, T. 'From Black Cocoa Out' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 101-102.

associations cause the word to resound after the line has been read. Baker quotes

Ezra Pound's argument about harmony:

> What Pound seems to be describing is really I think a rhythmic pattern—'the time interval between sounds—which, when 'properly gauged', determines the force of a sound or word . . .[180]

The structure of the sound pattern, and rhythm, in relation to the unusual use

of caesura in that last line of 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)', demonstrates

Griffiths' musician's ability to gauge the sonic, and temporal, down to the last beat of

the poem.[181] A written text is not as stable as it seems, not as far as the sonic aspect

is concerned, as there are possibilities in re-sounding a text. The multiple voices,

four voices, that the title, and visual arrangement of 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4

Voices)' designates, need not be four individual voices but can be contained,

possibly as four selves, in a reading by one voice. Working with alternate grammar

and syntax, words can call to words on many levels, not just the familiar semantic

associations, including typography, as has been seen in Griffiths poetry. To repeat

Griffiths quoted earlier, 'it's a matter of spreading the possibilities . . . It's Foucault—

the difference between fulfilling a preconceived potential and letting yourself loose on

infinite possibilities'.[182] In Griffiths' poetry for me this involves looking beyond the

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[180] Baker, T. 'From Black Cocoa Out' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 106.

[181] In 'Bill Griffiths Northern Days' Bill Lancaster lists Griffiths' publications on the north east dialect. As director of the Centre for Northern Studies at Northumbria University Lancaster appointed Griffiths to 'prepare a history of the Sinfonia' and the rapport Griffiths developed with the Northern Sinfonia who 'soon recognised his musical training and deep knowledge of the British classical scene and some were acquainted with his family members who had been part of the London orchestra milieu'. See Lancaster, B. 'Bill Griffiths Northern Days' in *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry: Bill Griffiths Special Issue*. Volume 6 Number 1, March 2014. p. 18.

[182] Rowe, W. 'Interview with Will Rowe' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 182.

known in language, and forms, to gain understanding of the structures of language that I express myself in, and the society I am part of. There are many possibilities in the latent soundscapes of sound-rich poetry in its written forms due to its system of sounding pitches and contours in which verse phrasing, intonational phrasing, and pause phrasing are treated as three semi-independent systems.

The discussions in this chapter have been based in how Griffiths' War W/ Windsor poems resist regularity by sounding silences, and by shifting stress, by weaving unusual soundshapes of language and structure, all of which resist the kind of centralised authority that is reductive to sounding language. Mottram on Griffiths' note to *The Nine Herbs Charms* (1981):

> Griffiths' note reports the Anglo-Saxon concept of disease—'the shell of the body was penetrated'—and cure—'to make contact with, control and dislodge whatever evil influence has stationed itself within the body'.[183]

In its radically fragmentary structure 'War W/ Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' makes contact with what is authoritarian in structure. As mentioned earlier, this involves breaking down the authority of grammar, and disrupting meaning, to take control of inarticulacy, of both speech and writing, to enact a dislodging of the professional violence of the state, in the body of the text. Mottram continues:

> His language is broken, shifted and reshaped as a means to prevent the diseased and aggressive, the systematically entropic, from becoming increasingly destructive.[184]

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[183] Mottram, E. ''Every New Book Hacking on Barz': The Poetry of Bill Griffiths' in Rowe, W. (ed.) (2007) *The Salt Companion to Bill Griffiths*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 21.
[184] Ibid. p. 21.

CHAPTER THREE

Sound-Rich Poetry as Healing in Maggie O'Sullivan's *murmur: tasks of mourning*

This chapter is a selective reading of Maggie O'Sullivan's *murmur: tasks of mourning* (2011) a book length poem in five parts.[185] With *red shifts* (2001), and *Waterfalls* (2009), *murmur: tasks of mourning* (2011) forms part of the project *her/story:eye*. O'Sullivan's multi-media approach in *murmur* creates a sound-rich poetry from the corporeal sensuality of sound and colour. In the book version of *murmur* published by Veer, the first of the five sections which is untitled, follows the main title page of the book. The other four sections have titles in different colours: 'Premonitions and Return' (in purple ink); 'Would a Yellow Do?' (in red ink); 'Premonitions and Return' (green ink); and 'Below' (magenta ink). There is a tradition of poet-painters, notably William Blake, who use visual images with texts which function differently from illustrations. In Blake's poem 'The Divine Image' the ambiguity of the imagery in the poem is complicated by the visual image which, by stimulating further thought about the text, creates a multi-systemic ambiguity.[186] O'Sullivan works with words and colour on each page of *murmur* with an artist's eye and ear for the relation between

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[185] *murmur* was until recently available on the poet's website. The whole website was not available at the last attempted date of access 31/12/19.

[186] Blake, W. (1970) *Songs of Innocence and of Experience.* London: Oxford University Press. Unpaginated, plate 18. This description comes from the note to this poem: 'The poem with its steady repetitive beat hammers in the theme that Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love are attributes both human and divine.
Accordingly the decoration is a symbol of human life—a strange flame-like growth, half vegetable and half fire, twined with flowering plants. At its origin below, a Christ-like figure raises man and woman from the earth. At the top small human forms 'pray in their distress', while behind them an angel commits them to the care of Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love, personified by a woman in a green dress. Ibid, unpaginated.

words and colour.[187] In O'Sullivan's poetry, sound, shape and colour are equally, albeit differently, represented by *both* the text and by the visuals. In her essay, '"The Saturated Language of Red": Maggie O'Sullivan and the Artist's Book', Marjorie Perloff uses Johanna Drucker to distinguish the role of visual images in O'Sullivan's writing:

> In Johanna Drucker's words, the 'artist's book' is one that, unlike the illustrated book which treats visual images as additives, figures that are potentially removable, the artist's book 'gives equal status to images, binding, typography, page-setting, folds, collages, and text.[188]

The Veer text of *murmur* is unpaginated, and some pages seem to be intentionally placed so that they use a double spread, or two pages together.[189] For example, there is a change of colour for the words on the fourth and fifth, pages of the opening section, which is more immediately striking when seen on a double spread page. (See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 below). In this way the page frames each part of the poem, each section, indeed the whole book, allowing complex echoic relations, which I will discuss later. These echoic relations are based in the mother, child relationship in language production and use as in motherese, or parentese, which also mirrors, regulates, and soothes emotional states; the echo as enacting a healing of body and mind. I will explore the dual subjectivity as contained within the materiality of the text.

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[187] Mylopoulos, M & Ro, T. 'Synaesthesia: A Colourful Word with a Touching Sound?' Front. Psychol., 22 October 2013. Available: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00763 is an interesting study of synaesthesia. Last accessed 1/9/18.
[188] Perloff, M. ''The Saturated Language of Red': Maggie O'Sullivan and the Artist's Book' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp.123-124.
[189] As the Veer text is unpaginated I do not give references for the pages that I quote from *murmur*.

jointd ---

ills-loose-on

vertical soliloquies -------
                    pacing gamut's
"belatedness"   ('s   's -----

accrude ------- quenched,
remnant, remnant's audient

                         mantling ---------

t-r-e-m-o-r-e-d – (graphing lips' premonition – ruptured
t'rove
          t'turn
               re/turn like that -

           ----- wheeled ----------

Figure 1

(s)wept earth

    of the letters perishing/persisting

        ingested inhering

            so

           figurate ---------

            so

          sutured

           so

         lifted/SPURT & -------------

        (un-

          retrieve --- effegies)

           rinSING WEAVing –

             ALARM

              *

Figure 2

In 'Be Come, Be Spoke, Be Eared: The Poetics of Transformation and Embodied Utterance in the Work of Maggie O'Sullivan During the 1980s and 1990s' Robert Sheppard writes:

> O'Sullivan's texts use space meticulously, not just as a score for performance – that would render such meaningful artifice secondary, less meaningful – but as a primary field for the play of devices.[190]

O'Sullivan's *murmur* is a field for a synaesthetic play, of both sound and visual devices, in which conventions of the poet-painter are integrated into the body of the text, and in the frame of the artist's book.[191] In an interview with Bernstein, at the Kelly Writer's House, O'Sullivan explains, 'I don't perceive a division between the words and the visual'; she adds:

> I often tend to regard my works as compositions, compositions that gather in all possibility, and all possible material: sonic, oral, textual. It's all one fabrication.[192]

This 'one fabrication' manifests as a form of synaesthesia, which, to repeat from the introduction, Jakobson describes as, 'the phenomenal interconnection between different senses'.[193] My discussion of the diversity of synaesthetic interplay in the sound, and visual devices, at work in *murmur* begins with a focus on the first page of the opening section. This is followed by an exploration of the role of silence

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[190] Sheppard, R. (2005) *The Poetry of Saying: British Poetry and Its Discontents 1950-2000.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. p. 244.

[191] In 'The Stutter of Form' Craig Dworkin writes: 'Guyotat grafts the essential logic of poetry onto fiction.' In *murmur* O'Sullivan is grafting the logic of the artists book onto poetry. See Dworkin, C. 'The Stutter of Form' in Perloff, M & Dworkin, C. (eds.) (2009) *The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound.* London: The University of Chicago Press. p. 175.

[192] 'Writing is a Body-Intensive Activity' Close Listening with Maggie O'Sullivan, Interview by Charles Bernstein. Jacket 2. Available: https://jacket2.org/interviews/writing-body-intensive-activity. Last Accessed 16/8/18.

[193] Jakobson, R. & Waugh, L. R. (1979) *The Sound Shape of Language.* Sussex: The Harvester Press. p.188 See Jakobson 'Synaesthesia' in ibid pp. 188-194.

as the negative aspect of sound-richness in the exclusion of the sensuous and intuitive in the echoic structure of *murmur*. The chapter then explores the transformation of sound when speech becomes silence, and the body speaks, in *murmur*.

The first page of *murmur* is composed of synaesthetic combinations of sound and colour, which manifest differently in the magenta text than how they do in the blue text. It is notable that the same two colours used on this first page, correspond to the colours of words in the title. 'Murmur', which is in blue ink, is an echoic sound, while 'tasks of mourning', in magenta, relates to emotions, that is, expressions of sorrow for a person's death. 'Murmur' is onomatopoeic and contains an echo of the dark 'u' vowel sounds. Relating to the subject matter, the sounds of the words 'mother' and 'murder' can also arguably be heard in the sounds in 'murmur', the sonic echo perhaps linking, phenomenologically, the process of death and the body which once gave birth to a life as an illness murders the maternal body. Combining sound and colour with words in the title establishes a sound-visual signature that is continued through *murmur*.

Jakobson goes on to describe how 'synaesthesia concerns relationships' both corporeal and linguistic.[194] This is evidenced as experiences associated with light / dark, sharp / soft, are expressed by the vowels, which are perceived through physiological functions of the body. The synaesthesia which pervades *murmur,* creates a heightened sensuality, based in the interplay between sound and colour, in

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[194] Ibid p. 189.

the words and phrases, typography, visual images, and marks, inscribed on the
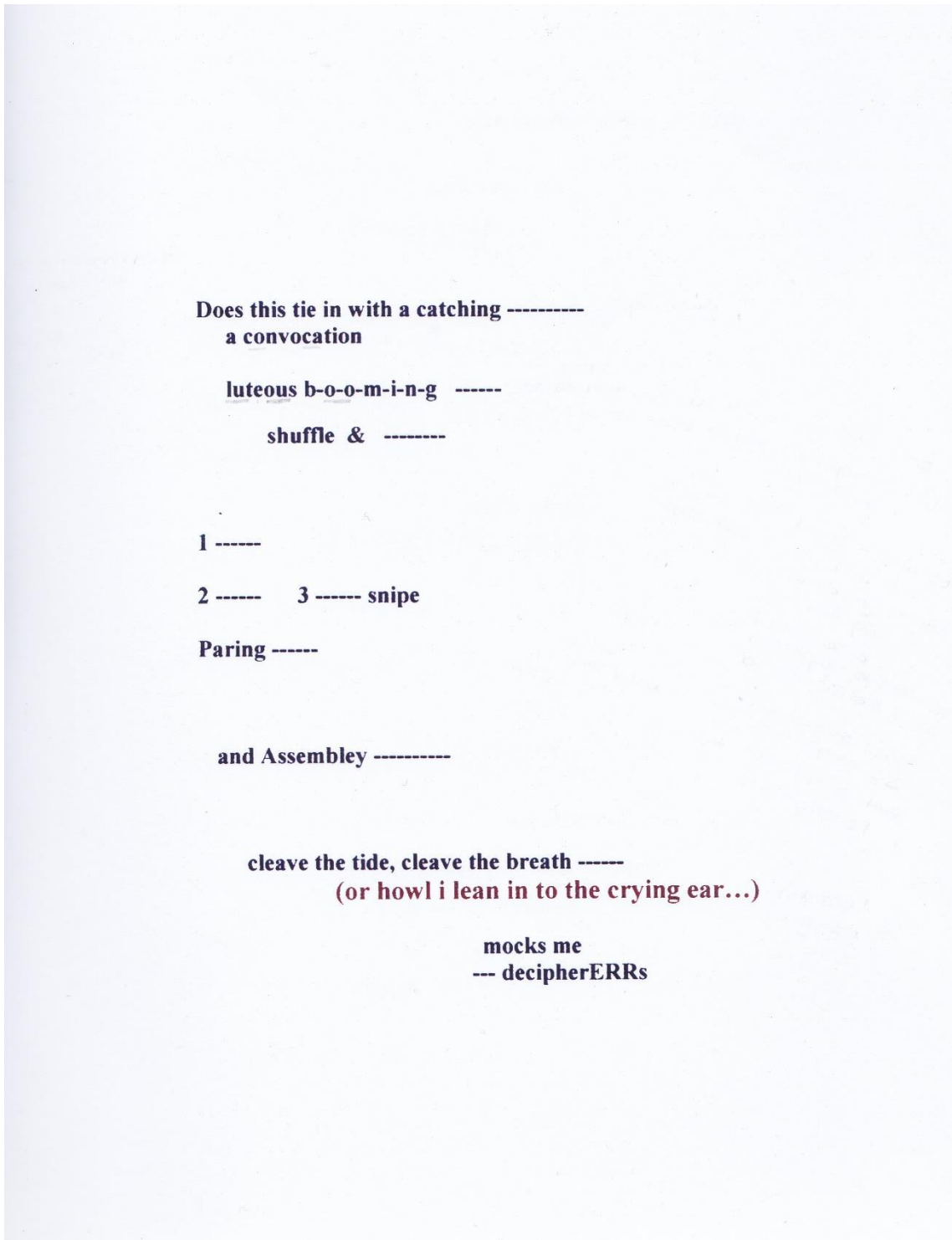
page. *murmur* begins:

Does this tie in with a catching ----------
      a convocation

    luteous b-o-o-m-i-n-g ------

      shuffle & --------

1 ------

2 ------   3 ------ snipe

Paring ------

and Assembley ----------

   cleave the tide, cleave the breath ------
      (or howl i lean in to the crying ear…)

       mocks me
       --- decipherERRs

Figure 3

The first line demonstrates the complexity of sound patterning, and rhythm,

available to non-metrical verse. Although it could seem to be a four-beat structure,

the pitch, duration, and amplitude, of the syllables in the first line, makes three beats with an irregular pattern of stressed, and unstressed, syllables. Between the first beat in 'does', and the second beat 'catching', there are three unstressed syllables in 'tie in with a'. The third beat in the line is an offbeat, which falls on the first of the ten hyphens at the end of the line after the word 'catching'. The irregular pattern of sound and the shifting rhythm demand a complex contortion of muscular movements and make this line a challenging and sensual experience, emotionally and intellectually as well as physically. This complexity of experience reflects the complex, highly charged, and emotive subject matter that is the very personal experience of the loss of a parent.

Attridge writes that stress is dependent on the 'acoustic and syntactic context in which a syllable occurs'.[195] The 'c' sound in the initial stress in 'catching' at the end of line one is repeated twice in 'convocation' in line two to make a triple structure. (See Fig. 3 above). The 'c' is a voiceless speech sound in both words which takes on stress, double stress in 'convocation'. Stress and repetition together doubly emphasise the 'c' sound. The 'triple' is a device used in rhetoric and public speaking to make a word phrase or sentence resonate semantically through the sound repetition.[196] In *murmur* the triple is a single sound which similarly creates a semantic link between the two words. The voiceless 'c' speech sound repeated three times in 'catching' and 'convocation', comes into prominence through sonic resonance as prominent bursts of energy. The close repetition and strong stress create a powerful pulse of sound and kinetic energies, in this speech sound, which adds force to the rhythmic movement, and makes the syllable sound echo across the other sounds,

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[195] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. p. 64.
[196] Triple metre creates a striking chant-like rhythm. Attridge, D. (2008) *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 103.

overriding them, so that its strong pulse is heard again. (See Fig. 3 above). This has

a similar effect to how a syllable forms stress to become what Attridge describes as

a 'peak in the rhythmic chain'.[197] The heightened sonic attention to the voiceless 'c'

sound, through stress and rhyming, has the effect of placing emphasis on possible

semantic associations between 'catching' and 'convocation'. (See lines one and two

in Fig. 3 above). Resisting patterns of subordination between syllables, the use of

the triple device of speech, transforms a voiceless speech sound to emphasise

meaning, through repetition. In foregrounding the sonic elements of language and

structure, sound-rich poetry transforms those features which can be overlooked into

resonant features of the text. Breaking what Attridge describes as 'stress

hierarchies', the sonic and semantic take on equal agency to effect different, but

equal, attention as a healing gesture.[198] O'Sullivan heightens the sensuous in

language to challenge ingrained perceptions of and responses to meaning, to the

intellectual in language. Inspired by Joseph Beuys's work on transformation, the

changes in materials in O'Sullivan's text gesture towards a doubling of attention to

appreciate how to relate to the intuitive alongside the rational in language.[199]

As well as resounding muffled sounds, in sound-rich poetry, and to

remarkable effect in *murmur*, punctuation, a usually silent mark, takes on an acoustic

dimension in addition to its visual dimension. (See line three in Fig. 3 above). This

doubles attention, and scope for response, so that each mark is seen, and more

remarkably heard, differently. In the striking combination of colour and sound in the

synaesthetic phrase 'luteous b-o-o-m-i-n-g', punctuation, the hyphen, which does not

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[197] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman. pp. 64-65.
[198] See ibid pp. 67-70.
[199] O'Sullivan was 'sole researcher' on the BBC programme about Beuys. See Bloomfield, M. 'Maggie O'Sullivan's Material Poetics of Salvaging in *red shifts* and *murmur'* in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 22.

usually denote duration, takes on the capacity to extend the sound of a word. Attridge writes:

> Our perception of a syllable as stressed is based on one or more of three major features: its pitch, its duration, and its amplitude.[200]

In *murmur* the length, number in succession, and depth of colour of the hyphen can suggest pitch, duration and amplitude. Further, as syllables do, punctuation, in this case the hyphen, can suggest stress which adds another sonic dimension to the soundscape of the poem. 'Booming' denotes a loud, deep and resonant sound, while 'luteous' is an unfamiliar word for an orange-yellow, or greenish yellow, colour. The lute is also a musical instrument, which was used to accompany voice and singing.[201] Synaesthetic experience is enriched as music, song, and voice, suggested here, add layers to the sounds heard in 'luteous', which also contains not one, but *shades* of colour. In *murmur* colour is noisy, and sound is colourful. In this sound-rich poetry the hyphen acts like a syllable and contributes to the temporal and spatial dimensions of the poem by becoming a unit of rhythm in taking on qualities of stress. Hyphens between the letters of 'booming' extend the spatial dimension of the word on the page. However, this division of each letter by an equal time interval does not reflect how that word would sound phonetically when extended temporally. This demonstrates how an unconventional medium, here punctuation, can become as effective as a conventional medium, syllables, and, in taking unusual prominence, can be more salient. The phrase 'luteous b-o-o-m-i-n-g',

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[200] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. p. 63.
[201] For a brief and comprehensive introduction to the lute see Goodwin, C. 'A Brief Introduction to the Lute.' 2001. Available: https://www.lutesociety.org/pages/about-the-lute Last accessed 26/8/19.

is one of the lines which has a series of hyphens, in this case eight hyphens, after

the words: 'luteous b-o-o-m-i-n-g   ------ '. The onomatopoeic word 'booming' is

already extended by being hyphenated and these additional hyphens increase the

effect of enacting the 'booming' sound by implying a reverberation of the word, and

its sound, across the page. Onomatopoeia is sound with the implication of sense.

This integration of a sonic-sensuous reverberation echoes a sense of meaning with

open ended potential, coloured by being considered in a new light, never complete

or closed. Even the seemingly denotative meaning of 'luteous' as an orange-yellow

or greenish yellow colour is not so definitive as each of these suggest a whole lot of

colours.

In *murmur*, as well as extending the sound of a word, a series of hyphens

after words, often at the end of lines, denote stress and work as units of silent,

unvocalised, steady rhythm. It has been shown that sound and the visual are not

discrete in the soundscape of *murmur,* so that a 'silent' mark can carry a rhythm, and

so function as silent off-beats do in metrical verse. As well as hearing them, these

can also be *seen*. In the previous chapter I discussed how Griffiths' poem 'War

W/Windsor Test 1 (4 Voices)', illustrated the presence of a silent off-beat in sound-

rich poetry. The presence of silent off-beats in *murmur* are in the transformation of

materials that comes out of an attention to the potential sonic 'otherness' in familiar

materials, here the hyphen. The hyphens which occur after the numbers, '1 ------ / 2

------   3 ------ snipe', seem even more suggestive of striking rhythmic time.

However, rather than a three-beat rhythm, perception of the 'repetition' and

'periodicity' effected by the word 'snipe' after the numbers one, two, three gives the

line a four-beat rhythm.[202] 'Snipe' works as a high energy unit of sonic and spatial

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[202] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry.* Essex: Longman. pp. 76-77.

duration on the page suggestive of the four-beat rhythms of song and dance.[203] As a unit of sound 'snipe' is composed of a series of long sounds: 'sn' is long, the 'i' vowel sound is long 'p' is a plosive. Attridge writes that 'durational patterns and stress are intimately connected'.[204] As a temporal unit the sound of 'snipe' on the page equals the spatial dimension of the number of hyphens, in this case six. It is a striking feature of this case of sound-rich poetry, that punctuation, the hyphen, which does not indicate any specific sound, or time interval, is perceived to indicate rhythm and duration. In his 'Preface' to the Veer edition, Peter Middleton writes that *murmur* is 'part of a poetic lineage that invites the less known' and that 'few other poets writing today show so much interest and care in the humblest citizens of the page, the diacritical marks, the punctuation that breaks across the page'.[205] In *murmur* hyphens are also units of breath linking the body, in particular the torso as the site of the lungs, to the page. Beyond Olson's emphasis that 'breath allows all the speech-force of language back in' as a linear propulsion across the line, in *murmur* these hyphens shape the breath into soft rhythmic pants.[206] Attridge writes:

> . . . listeners do not assess the acoustic properties of the sounds they hear, but take account of the pressure needed to produce those sounds.[207]

In *murmur*, attention to what Middleton calls the 'humblest citizens of the page', enables me to hear, see, and to feel, a sound-rich poetry as a sensuous,

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[203] O'Sullivan's work is influenced by Irish song and her father was a singer.
[204] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman. p. 63.
[205] Middleton, P. 'Preface' in O'Sullivan, M. (2011) *murmur: tasks of mourning*. London: Veer. Unpaginated.
[206] Hoover, P. (ed.) (2013) *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. Second Edition. p. 867.
[207] Attridge, D. (1987) *The Rhythms of English Poetry*. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited. pp. 65-66.

breathing body-text.[208] In those visually cued, rhythmic pants, I am silently murmuring, so that there is an Olsonian linear breathing, but with the body murmuring along to the text. However, as a negative action to becoming *sound*, Middleton sees the dash function in O'Sullivan's work adding 'its own noisy linguistic silence' and asks:

> Is the sequence of dashes a line of silent neologisms for words that they accompany, a series of transformations that can only end in silence, the dash that promises more, but cannot tell us how that more will be connected to what preceded it?[209]

The limits of the hyphen are undergoing constant revision here, in the way a postmodern concept of the self comes to understand itself as constantly evolving, and in a state of unfinish. Perhaps, as well as breaths, O'Sullivan's hyphens indicate the rhythmic beating within a different kind of body, suggestive of a heartbeat in the text itself. *murmur* is a world in which the typographic marks demonstrate that they can be used to convey sound and rhythm, which carry meaning and act on the body, emotionally and imaginatively, in the way that vowels and consonants are understood as doing in sound symbolism.

The frame of the artist's book is not a poetic sound structure, like Hopkins' sprung rhythm, or the alliterative verse discussed in chapters one and two. However, the nature of the equality of all features in the artist's book, noted earlier by Drucker, does underpin *murmur* as a space for a subjectivity that is a complex meld of the sonic-visual. The magenta line has the most complex and varied sound patterning: the long 'e' of 'lean'; short 'i' (in); long 'oo' (to); long 'i' short 'i' (crying); and a final

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[208] See footnote 205.
[209] Middleton, P. 'Ear Loads: Neologism and Sound Poetry in *Palace of Reptiles*' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O' Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 119.

long 'e' (ear). This line also has the most complex and concentrated visual devices.

There is a lower case 'i' in the magenta line, '(or howl i lean in to the crying ear . . .)',

which suggests the presence of a single speaker of the poem. However, rather than

indicating characteristics of a voice or person speaking in the poem, the words on

the line, 'howl', 'lean' 'crying' and 'ear' all relate to body parts or movements of the

body. From the synaesthetic image of the 'crying ear', it seems that it is the

sensuous and instinctive aspects of the body, with its mouth making the animalistic

'howl', moving to 'lean in', and crying', that are foregrounded. Although suggesting a

personal and anguished expression, in contrast to traditional elegiac addresses,

subjectivity here, in this synaesthetic world, is presented not as the exclusive

consciousness of a lyric 'I', but as a multi-sensuous expression made by the whole of

the body. The multi-sensual is stated in O'Sullivan's poetics:

     introduction of

     sound:

     introduction of

     sight:

     introduction of

     texture:[210]

There is a striking physicality in this threefold statement of synaesthesia with

its strong steady rhythm. The multi-sensual cumulation of sound, sight and texture

through those six lines manifests as a multi-sensual echo This echo enacts a healing

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[210] O'Sullivan's poetics, 'Riverrunning (Realisations' in O'Sullivan. (2003) *Palace of Reptiles*. Ontario: The Gig. p. 65.

gesture in O'Sullivan's poetics by overriding the din of the word 'SILENCE' which has

proceeded it. Sheppard writes:

> While this ultimately derives from Pound's triadic division of poetry into a poetry of sound (melopoeia) and image (phanopoeia), his third category (LOGOPOEIA, 'the dance of the intellect among words') is replaced by an insistence not upon intellect but upon the material thickness and artifice of the medium.' Intellect 'must appear sensually' 'through the three qualities she lists.[211]

O'Sullivan's use of sound corresponds with material thickness. The

synaesthesia intensifies our experience of sound, its presence, in relation to other

senses, sight and texture. This works as a restorative, enabling sound to use its

transformative properties, those properties to mirror, regulate and soothe, as was

seen at the beginning of this chapter embodied in the echo between mother and

child. As I demonstrated with the use of hyphens, sonic silences, as well as

expressive sounds, can convey emotion. Instead of hyphens in the magenta line

there is a set of ellipses. (See line ten in Fig. 3 above). Unlike the duration perceived

in the hyphen, the ellipses indicate an indeterminate period of silence, '(or howl i lean

in to the crying ear . . .)'. In addition to isolating the sound structure within them, the

parentheses enhance the separation of this line from the rest of the text. As a pun

'howl' becomes 'how will', which changes the line into a question: How will I lean into

the crying ear, in which 'ear' also puns on 'here'. The ellipses, and indeterminate

period of silence here, indicates an emotional appeal for an answer to the question

posed, an answer that does not come in the form of words. Mandy Bloomfield writes:

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[211] Sheppard. R. 'Talk: The Poetics of Maggie O'Sullivan' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 164.

In her work, it is precisely the sensuous dimensions of language and intuitive modes of experiencing and re-cognising, which are the voiceless aspects of language and of culture, the domain of that which is marginalised and excluded. This poet's excavations of the material page seek to give tangible and meaningful form to 'UNofficial' dimensions of the word and the world with which it is intertwined. In doing so, O' Sullivan's poetic forms call for a re-cognition of multidimensional modes of meaningfulness and materially embedded traces of 'other-than' or invisible or dimmed or marginalised or excluded' aspects of language, history and culture.[212]

Mirroring the oblique sound structure of the word 'murmur', pages of O'Sullivan's text are repeated, in various orders, with subtle sonic, and visual, differences to each version. The first five pages of the text are repeated fifty-seven in at the end of the 'Would a Yellow Do' section after a whole blank page of silence. However, the 'echo' versions of those first five pages are not just carbon copies of the earlier versions. One change is that the colour of the words is a darker shade in the repeat. A second change is that the last four lines of the fifth page are omitted in the 'echo' version. (See Fig. 2 above and Fig. 4 below).

In a reversal of the hard / soft sound structure of the word 'murmur', the echoic structure of the text allows the language to take on a darker aspect and a deeper sound the second time it is seen and heard. As a mother-child echo, it is in the child version that sensual experience is situated deeper in the body, has darker emotional and deeper imaginative associations. The echoic structure of *murmur* seems compulsive, like a stutter in speech, the involuntary repetition of sounds. However, it also behaves like genetic coding reproducing a version of the first body-

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[212] Bloomfield, M. 'Maggie O'Sullivan's Material Poetics of Salvaging in *red shifts* and *murmur'* in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 32-33.

text that has sonic and visual resemblances but also variations. In 'The Stutter of

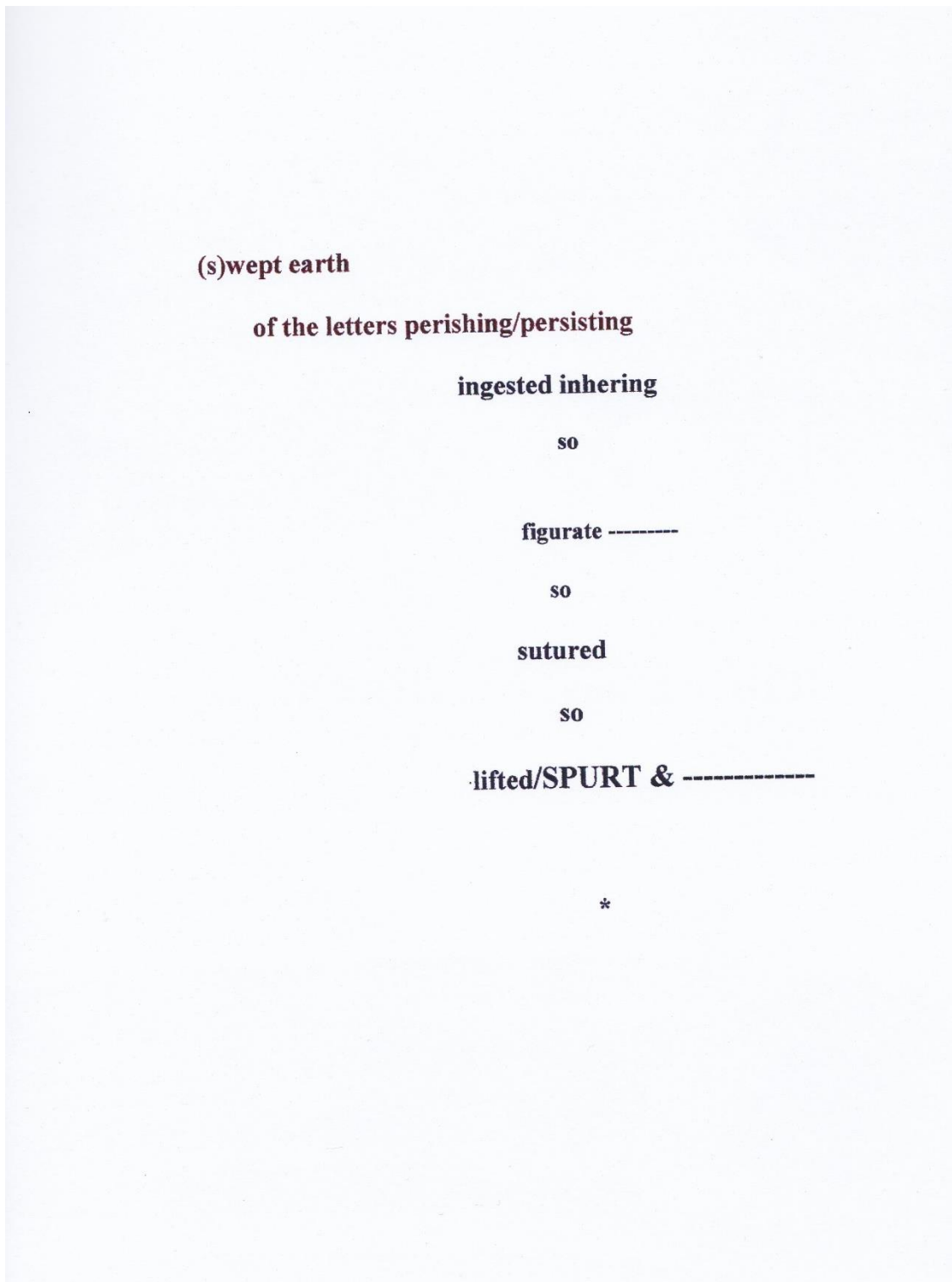Form' Craig Dworkin writes: 'The stutter moves from being merely descriptive to

(s)wept earth

of the letters perishing/persisting

ingested inhering

so

figurate ---------

so

sutured

so

lifted/SPURT & -------------

*

Figure 4

becoming an integral part of the formal structure of a text.'[213] The stutter, or murmur in this case, of form in O'Sullivan's text at large is *seen and heard* in the colour changes, in some shifts in word position, and in the inclusion of a few additional words or omission of existing words. The lines, '(un- / retrieve ---- effigies) / rinsing WEAVing -- / ALARM / *' on page five are omitted in the echo. The echo ends on the line, 'lifted/SPURT & ------------- / *' which creates a sense of sonic, semantic, and existential unfinish. The sonic-sensuous experiences of the mother-child echo are re-experienced, re-lived, as the same and different, in the murmur. In an interview, O'Sullivan tells Redell Olsen:

> *murmur* has extended my searchings within the sculptural, painterly, textural, sonic and aural in an immersioning of multi-level verbal visual languages.[214]

The neologism, 'immersioning' suggests a submersion in sound, an act of involving oneself deeply in synaesthetic approaches to making sound, while the present continuous form positions this in the unfinish, the incompleteness mentioned earlier. A remarkable multi-level verbal and visual language in sound-rich poetry, can be seen to striking effect when O'Sullivan's text relinquishes words as carriers of sound altogether. In the two linked pages from *murmur* (See Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 below) it is notable that both pages have no written or typed words. In the text as I experience it the first time, there are some visual features which are recognisable from earlier pages. These include the hand drawn boxes and magenta swirls, that I

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[213] Dworkin, C. 'The Stutter of Form' in Perloff, M. & Dworkin, C. (eds.) (2009) *The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound*. London: The University of Chicago Press. p. 167.
[214] Olsen, R. 'Writing / Conversation with Maggie O'Sullivan' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 210.

first encountered on the twelfth page of the text. Although *murmur* is poetry which foregrounds sound, the synaesthetic relationship between sound, shape and colour, creates hybrid sound-visual rhymes. In the echo, some of these sound-visual rhymes are identical, and some are different, like sonic rhymes, and half rhymes, in the text. The visual in poetic form in *murmur* becomes part of the unofficial, intuitive, and sensuous dimensions of what a meaningful soundshape can be. As mentioned in the Introduction, O'Sullivan, along with Monk and Griffiths, would be aware through Cobbing's workshops that *all* shapes suggest sounds, that any visual can be a score. All three poets took part in, and attended, readings and workshops which schooled them in ways of working with sound and concrete poetry. From this grounding each innovated sound, and the visual, in their own manner.[215] As in Griffiths' work, the direct and personal experience informs, colours, and heightens expression. When an event that is not experienced directly parallels a personal event occurring simultaneously, a sonic-sensual echo is created. O'Sullivan tells Olsen:

> My work has always been body-intensive . . . all inscriptions of my body's breathing. This heuristic trans-forming has become paramount in murmur where I am using the sight/site of the ear/page as a foundational textu(r)al, sonic, visual bodily dimension to move out from.[216]

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[215] 'Conventions' of sound-poetry performance reflect Cobbing's belief that any shape could be sounded 'this stone sounds like this, this stone sounds like that.' (though he knew it as an indeterminate interpretation not a one-for-one code). O'Sullivan is literally schooled in this belief week after week in the Writers Forum workshop. See Sheppard, R. 'The Colony at the Heart of Empire: Bob Cobbing and the Mid-1980s London Creative Environment' in Sheppard, R. (2011) *When Bad Times Made for Good Poetry: Episodes in the History of the Poetics of Innovation.* Exeter: Shearsman Books Ltd. pp. 108-133.

[216] Olsen, R. 'Writing / Conversation with Maggie O' Sullivan' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O' Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 207.

Figure 5

Figure 6

The 'trans-forming' occurs across two types of body, the artist's body and the page as textual body, and the 'ing' implies that each body in still in progress (unfinished again). In the transformation within the text, the most prominent differences noticeable between the first version and the echo, or 'murmur' are the colour changes and the change of animal from cat to dog. (See Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 above).

In *murmur* the pattern of sonic-sensual déjà vu is seen and felt here in the transformation of a silent visual image, an animal. In *murmur* sounds, shapes and colour are inscriptions of the body's breathing. The artist's 'body's breathing' is transposed to the materials and processes received by the page as an ear, a seeing space. This visual transformation, from an adult cat to a junior puppy, is suggestive of the presence of each body of the dual subject, the artist's mother and the artist herself. As mentioned in regard to Blake's work at the beginning of this chapter, these visual images in the text are not strictly representational; they are symbols intended to work on the imagination. In the two-way exchange between the artist's body, and the textual body, the text is a sonic, visual dimension to move out from. In O' Sullivan's work animals take on ritual, spiritual status and are a reminder that animals are fellow creatures and should, and do here, share equal status with human beings. Emphasis on the visual, the animal, recalling the echo of the 'howl' on the first page of *murmur*, demonstrates a resistance to subjection, and practises of freedom from conventional constraints. Those subjects, whether they be textual, human, animal, whose language is ignored or denied voice, resort to the sensuous, intuitive language of the body when 'official' languages are not heeded.

Although concerned with 'UNofficial' dimensions of the word and world on these two pages there are no words.[217] The visual image is another mode of meaningfulness, so that 'other-than' is effective differently than a string of words. This may seem to suggest a sacrificing of sound. However, in this sound-rich poetry the sonic dimension of language is not lost when words are absent. In O'Sullivan's performance at Birkbeck the visual marks on the first page are sounded as 'crr, ch ch'.[218] The hard sound of the voiceless, velar stop, the 'c' of 'catching' and 'convocation' from the first page of *murmur*, are echoed here. However, the 'c' sound becomes soft in the two-letter combination or digraph, 'ch'. In O'Sullivan's vocalised performance a sound change occurs, so that the second page is sounded as an extension of the first syllable, of the sound combination used the first time. This emphasizes the harder 'crrrr' sound, and the rolling 'rrrr' becomes a rhythmic repetition.[219] The body emits speech sounds, not as full words, but as isolated sounds. This focus on the materiality of speech sounds foregrounds the involvement of the lungs, and the muscles of the speech apparatus, in producing those sounds. Speech sounds removed from denotative meaning, work like tones in music, and convey emotion, as Sheppard identified above, through 'intellect' sensuously. Through an echoic sonic-visual structure, communication in *murmur* becomes rooted in a language of the physiological-textual body.[220]

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[217] See footnote 212 for full quote.

[218] O'Sullivan's performance of *murmur* at Birkbeck. Maggie O'Sullivan 'murmur' Veer Books launch reading in BBK (26 Oct 2011). Available: https://vimeo.com/31383883. Last Accessed 2/9/18.

[219] Ibid.

[220] O'Sullivan's work approaches graphic text as score. For a discussion of graphic scores in which space and time each becoming other as a participatory process of experiencing the word as world as a See Ma, M. 'The Sound Shape of the Visual: Toward a Phenomenology of an Interface' in Perloff, M. and Dworkin, C. (2009) *The Sound of Poetry / The Poetry of Sound*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. pp. 249-269.

By transforming silence in verbal and visual languages, so that it can be heard, and most importantly responded to, *murmur* enacts a healing gesture. In 'The Stutter of Form' Dworkin writes:

> All language is referential, but it need not reflect concepts; when language instead refers back to the material circumstances of its own production, we can hear the murmur of its materials. When speech continues without communicating anything, when speech intransitively reaches the limit at which its communication becomes silent, we can hear the body speak.[221]

I suggest that this healing gesture occurs most explicitly in *murmur* at the point where speech reaches its limit, and the body speaks, in the two 'torso' pages.[222] On both pages (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8 below) a striking arrangement of text is encountered, which looks like two halves of a torso, or corset, that is held in place by stitches. Although parts of the words of the text are obliterated by the creases and folds, these are texts which speak, through sound, colour, shape and texture, as a suffering sensuous body and as echoic sound.[223] The visual definition of the first page, (Fig. 7) with its striking yellow background, foregrounds the colour and texture of the tissue paper like page, the creases and blood red stitches. Where this page has the appearance of a photograph due to the faded colour and indefinite

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[221] Dworkin, C. 'The Stutter of Form' in Perloff, M. & Dworkin, C. (eds.) (2009) *The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound*. London: The University of Chicago Press. pp. 167-168.
[222] Which pages of 'murmur' are repeated and at what spatial (and temporal) interval, varies widely in *murmur*. In the text these 'torso' pages are repeated as a double (and triple) spread page, one after the other.
[223] The same page of typed text appears on both pages but folded differently so that the some of the same and some different words and phrases are visible. While the soundshapes of some words and phrases remain intact; the larger syntactic and semantic structures are disrupted. Interestingly, O'Sullivan reads a more complete text in the Birkbeck (see footnote 218) performance than is visible on the page.

chain crate ilate cracking theoru...
peregrinations levied stoop of sen...
Erasures askew body distress to g... ...ord haul's natural
...your esture at the
inroads of rupture delirium t... ...tion declivity
states ravined pebbley mo... ...ns soak perfumed rousabl oo-thing
smearing ampl... ...dis-accretion stitching/ei breath
raw sutures tongue's flayed...
& skidder gorse collision oak li... black surgical gesture mouthing hoop
dipping ear over h... ...sting/cies – my hands
...away trans l... cent s... ...threading water from the leaf
scream of drowning vocal... ...of a stutt ERR nil by
breath entire shardfuls kn... ...driaults glass thistle hooligans
...vam piristic raw... ...cing slippage flame sinks wearish
anise argent oracularity ingestage... diadem dotter skidder gorse lits
collision leaking species mooring... mulet listenings)et

Figure 7

chain   crate   ilate sto
peregrinati
Erasures askew body distr   to go arguing your seizure
the   inroads of rupture   rium
desertion declivity states   ined pebbley m occlusions
perfused rousable no-thing s   aring amplest ilt ERR soak
dis-accretion stitching/ed   eath raw sutures tongue's
flayed black surgical gesture   nouthing hoop & skidder
gorse collision leak listening   s /sting/cies —
dir   into blue   at skin sobs of a stutt ERR
    being turned away trans lu   lic orphan me ranaic
unic pearlised breat entire shar   s knife loadfau's glass
ingestage diadem dotted skid   n piristi articing
species mooring amulet listen   se argent oracur
                                             orse lits collision leaing

Figure 8

outline to the page of the text, the second version (Fig. 8), with undefined white background, gives the flat texture of a photocopy. *murmur* is a synaesthetic text in which sound and colour are linked. In this context the crisp visuals suggest a clearer, more definite sound (Fig. 7), whereas the 'photocopy' (Fig. 8) suggests sound that is experienced as part of a mass reproduction, and which is removed from the original source. The photocopy (Fig. 8) demonstrates that the process of reproduction adds texture, so that clear, sharp sound, and visuals, becomes grainy textures and take on shades of noise. Ming-Qian Ma discusses how 'visual literacy' involves the 'sacrifice of acoustic imagination'.[224] The sensuous echo of the sonic, and visual, in *murmur* is further enriched as each is experienced in their unfiltered diversity and richness. This in turn resonates through, and colours, the intimate emotional exchange across the mother-child echo.

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Sound-richness, which foregrounds sound in the poem, foregrounds its equivalence in silence. It is in becoming audible, in taking on meaning, that silence in O'Sullivan's text enacts a healing gesture. Hovering above the 'torso', in the first version (See Fig. 7), there are three 'flower-star' shapes outlined in a faded magenta ink and coloured outside this hand drawn border in yellow. These colour shapes seem to be floating away from the body and there are five, larger, more defined versions of these shapes on the next page which is a double spread (See Fig. 9 below). The structure is repeated in the 'echo' version (Fig. 9) with two striking differences: the

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[224] Ma, M-Q. 'The Sound Shape of the Visual' in Perloff, M. & Dworkin, C. (ed.s) (2009) *The Sound of Poetry / The Poetry of Sound.* London: The University of Chicago Press. p. 260.

colour of the text *and* stitches has changed to purple; and second, that the 'flower-star' shapes continue over the double spread and onto the following page. When the page (Fig. 10 below) is turned there are five of these shapes, and two incomplete shapes, but here the colour yellow has been replaced by a faded crayon texture that is purple. In the Birkbeck performance O'Sullivan taps rhythmically on her chest to sound the 'star-flower' shapes.[225] O'Sullivan:

> Since the beginning of *red shifts*, I have been constructing my work on the wall. So far, the A4 sized pages of *murmur* fills one and a half walls of my workroom. When I walk through the doorway of my workroom its energies enfold me. I'd like it to be encountered in such a way, so that the viewer/perceiver/reader could walk up to it and walk alongside it, stretching their body to its uppermost height or stooping to its lowest edge, threading in and out/unravelling its fields of languages, touching it with their eyes and ears and body entering and leaving at any point.[226]

Conceived as a sensuous body-text, what is most striking, and eerie, about these three pages in O'Sullivan's sound-rich text, is that it is not the absence of *words* that denotes silence. The echoic structure of *murmur* moves between sound and silence, demonstrating how the seemingly soundless materials, shape and colour, can suggest the negative of sound-rich; a deafening silence. The subject at the heart of *murmur* is concerned with alternate modes of communication, specifically the multi-sensuous physical body becoming fragile and silent, but not soundless. O'Sullivan constructs *murmur* not just with a synaesthete's ear and eye

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[225] See footnote 218.
[226] Olsen, R. 'Writing / Conversation with Maggie O'Sullivan' in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. p. 211.

for words and colour, but also with a synaesthete's whole *body* for the soundshapes,

visual textures, and emotional resonances, of words and colour. However, in this
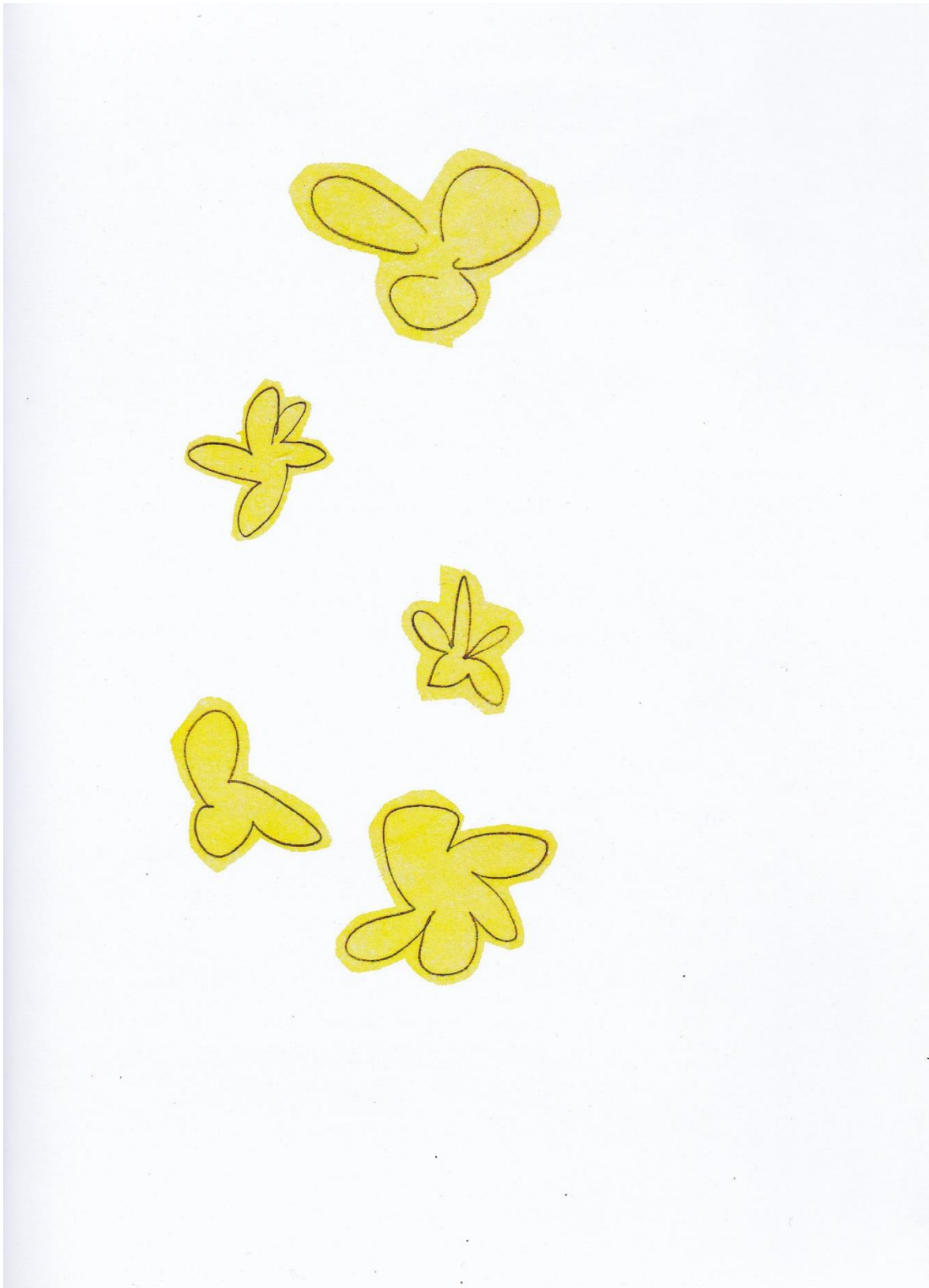
Figure 9

sound-rich poetry, it is in the transformation of unnoticed *silences* so that they elicit as strong a response as the loudest noise, that *murmur* enacts its ultimate healing gesture.

Figure 10

CONCLUSION

As Marjorie Perloff points out in her introduction to *The Sound of Poetry / The Poetry of Sound* (2009) attitudes to poetry have neglected sound as a feature for study. The introduction and chapters of analyses distinguish a technical, social and ethical approach to reading poetry which foregrounds its sonic materiality and structure. Reading Roy Fisher, alongside Geraldine Monk, I contend that sound-rich does not have its opposite in sound-poor, rather in meaning-rich or grammar-rich. Fisher's poem illustrates a harmonic relationship between sound and meaning in the materiality, and structure, which shifts attention to other features such as images. Sound-rich poetry is always seen and heard from a perspective of its sonic materiality and structure.

The three case studies have been an attempt to examine and test out my definition of sound-rich poetry beyond a single example. The case studies reveal technical similarities and further elaborate what distinguishes a poem as being sound-rich. Weaving sonically rich speech sounds, and rhythms, with silences, which enact various strategies: attention; resistance; healing, the work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan calls me to hear what needs our attention in our community. These sound-rich poems create spaces in which I can hear those silences in speech rhythms and the elided soundshapes both notably and publicly. In this way their call, as loud as any sound, demands a response, and cannot be ignored without those who hear it, myself, becoming implicit in the lack of attention, resistance, healing, given to those silences. Scoring the whole page for voice, Monk demonstrates how sound-rich poetry creates an equivalence between familiar sonic calls for attention

and attention shifting to what is usually silent in speech sounds and rhythms. In Griffiths a community of voices come together to cancel out silences by linking speech sounds with uninterrupted fluency in vocal performance. In O'Sullivan the text 'speaks' with all its colour and shape beyond dependency on words alone for the sounds and silences woven together to create an act of healing in which each marked and each seemingly unmarked space, is heard and heeded.

Through the linguistic and prosodic theories of Jakobson and Attridge, I formulate a definition for sound-rich poetry through which to read each case study. These analyses illustrate, and elaborate, the technical, social and ethical aspects of sound-rich poetry. I have been concerned in the case studies to show that sound-rich poetry's sonic patterning and rhythms emerge from traditional as well as contemporary verse forms. Further, that concerned with innovating from those traditional forms to the practices I have outlined in each case study create different ways of hearing familiar patterns combined with familiar and unfamiliar soundshapes. These pioneering ways of working which excavate traditional verse forms are part of linguistic, literary and creative writing discourses on sound studies in contemporary poetry. Through my original concern with the sound-rich quality of these poems I came to understand these poems as complex weavings of sound *and silences*. These silences which are poetic and linguistic, are in these poems based in expressions of social silences.

Consciousness as organised, material expression is a tremendous social force; these poets, by engaging with silences, non-fluency and the disregarded in language and social intercourse, bring unfamiliar signs into the common pool of signs available for expression of experience, expanding social consciousness. By restoring sound as both speech and writing in poetry a speaking subject can be

made that is fully equipped to expose, critique and counter historical, linguistic, socio-political and cultural powers which remove sonic agency and autonomy. Poetry that foregrounds sound, foregrounds resistance to oppression to demonstrate defiance when faced with conditions of having silence inflicted on individuals and linguistically. The sound-rich poem is a healing body whose balm is its sonic energy which calls attention to and activates resistance to effect emancipation from forces opposed to linguistic emancipation and community. In this poetry, silence is equivalent to sound and both are needed and emphasise the effect of each other. The voice, or rather voices, of this poetry is based in duality for Monk and O'Sullivan, and in community for Griffiths, and this togetherness makes a single body-text which transforms malignancies lurking in language.

Vocalised performance is important to sound-rich poetry, the charm of which lies in the pleasure of sounding, of hearing, sensuous language. Vocalisation brings an expressive and emotional, as well as an intellectual, dimension to these poems that is not able to be read from the page. Readings are not prescriptive, but knowledge and skill of the sound, shape and texture of language is embedded. There is pleasure in making sound that does not carry a message. This is poetry in which language can be free from anxieties about misunderstandings and mishearings. Making speech sounds can be enjoyed as an act freed from the constraints of being driven by semantic intention. Sound connects me, heals the damages caused by misunderstanding, mishearings and silences to transform my world. In sound-rich poetry the range of my ability to connect to sounds, and to experience, is extended into the unfamiliar, the unheard and unseen. Reverberating from the unnoticed silences, spaces between sounds, the very fabric of a soundscape, is a whole universe of sonic and social possibilities. As such, I perceive

that sound-rich poetry extends my experience of myself and others; how I think, who I am.

PART TWO

INTRODUCTION TO THE PORTFOLIO AND POETICS

> Hermann Hesse: *Trees are sanctuaries. Whoever knows how to speak to them, whoever knows how to listen to them, can learn the truth. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life.*[227]

This thesis is driven by my determination to progress my writing by developing my knowledge and skills of how to foreground linguistic sound in the materials and structure of my poems. As lyric expression my creative project explores poems as an arena for a speaking subject to test itself out, to enact self-healing, to journey through the poems and enter a renewed state of being. These poems were written as part of the process of developing my theory of sound-rich poetry and writing my analyses of the work of Geraldine Monk, Bill Griffiths and Maggie O'Sullivan. In this way each set of poems that follow this introduction were influenced to greater and lesser degrees by the developing theory and by the work of *each* of the poets under discussion. Connecting the preceding critical section to my creative work in this introduction I will explain how sound was used in the process of writing and how the idea of 'sound-rich' poetry works for my reader encountering poems on the page. I will explain how voice in my poetry is positioned in relation to class, place and gender and how this links to the preceding critical section. With reference to Jean-Luc Nancy and Julia Kristeva I will explain how a focus on sound changes my idea of the self. Finally, I explain my choice of form for the poetics, 'A Slice of the Infinite Sonic Weave'.

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[227]Selected translations from Hermann Hesse's *Wandering: Notes and Sketches.* (1920). https://www.brainpickings.org/2012/09/21/hermann-hesse-trees/ Last Accessed 28/12/19.

During the process of writing, I used sound as the dominant textual register through both the verbal matter and written materials of its composition. The work of the ear that I discussed in the theory of sound-rich poetry, translated to my own process of writing in that I used the page as temporal sonic space, words as soundshapes and I improvised structure through free association of alliterative sounds. In my process of composition I drew on the speech rhythms that I heard around me, which were a mixture of the prestige and broader versions of the St. Helens accent that I move between.[228] In the critical introduction I pointed out Monk's use of the Lancashire accent in her work, Griffiths' use of prison talk and biker speak and the influence of O'Sullivan's parents' Irish verbal expressions and singing. It was the sensuousness in the sound quality expressive of a protective resonance in my Dad's Lancashire accent and a comfort in my mum's soft singing that influenced my approach to sound. Rather than imbuing the page with a specific accent, my intention was to use the size, shape, colour and texture of vowels, consonants and syllables in my vocal identity to create the sound of a temperament, that is a mood in each set of poems.[229] In my poems I used sound expressively to be effective, affective, durational and to memorialise respectively in the forms of a dramatic monologue, charms, prayers and a lullaby.

I chose specific vocal forms to communicate various emotional states that the speaker(s) of the poems journey through. I began with the tree monologue which I created using speech rhythms in a stream of consciousness, with shifts in intonation

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[228] St. Helens was originally in Lancashire and was placed in Merseyside in the 1970s but has kept a strong 'Lanky' accent.

[229] The idea of 'sound of a temperament' comes from Mina Loy's essay 'Modern Poetry' : Modern Poetry, like music, has received a fresh impetus from contemporary life; they have both gained in precipitance of movement. The structure of all poetry is the movement that an active individuality makes in expressing itself. Poetic rhythm, of which we have all spoken so much, is the chart of a temperament.' Loy, M. 'Poetic Rhythm' in Conover, R. L. (ed.) (1997) *Mina Loy: The Lost Lunar Baedeker*. Manchester: Carcanet Press Ltd. p. 157.

to effect an unsettled mood. I used sound affectively in the charm poems to give the speaker physical and emotional healing properties that also work for a reader through silent reading or chanting the poems out loud. I developed a ludic approach to using sound in the IKEA prayer poems with the serious intention of healing the rift in language that divorces the sensuous from the intellectual that O'Sullivan focuses on. My intention was to use my vocal identity to experiment with sounding durational properties of speech rhythms in the Scandianvian words that I removed from their referential function.[230] In my lullaby poem I included phrases which suggested multiple voices sounding in the poem. However, rather than replicating the speech rhythms and intonation of my parents directly I created those sound patterns using the inner ear of my memory. Although my work is less dependent on words in their denotative aspect, language is important in my process of composition in conveying emotion through, what I have described in the critical section as the soundshape of language, as the shape, size, colour and texture of its sound. In working with words as soundshapes I used sound to draw attention to the sonic possibilities in words: stress, sound contour and neologisms. Further, I used sound to shift formalised, staid sonic perceptions as an act of resistance to prestige and elite written modes of language. I used the prefixes in 'dis-restful' and 'mis-stayed' in my tree monologue to create antonyms in which the double stress was intended to suggest a heavy, hesitant and awkward physical movement. In addition I wanted to interrupt the speech fluency so that the act of vocalising sound itself became the focus of attention when sounding the tree monologue. Speech fluency was an important part of the effectiveness of the charms in performance and silent reading. In the theory of sound-rich poetry I referred to Olsan's work on Medieval charms and how efficacious

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[230] I sourced words from the IKEA catalogue 2014.

words are emphasised for effect.[231] I applied this idea to my own use of sound by creating the strong stress pattern in my charm poems to mark efficacy of words and imperative phrases. This attention to orality and aurality as valid modes in literature connected with Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan's resistance to official languages and staidly traditional structures in their writing.

Alliterative structures found in oral poetry and Anglo Saxon poems influenced my theory in part one and I improvised structure in my poems through free association of alliterative sounds. For me, the sound of a temperament is an emotional soundscape that is not rational and ordered, rather it is changeable as in the stream of consciousness tree monologue and based in repetition with variation as in my charm poems. My intention was to move toward a musical structure by creating sound patterns that are unpredictable, not countable and which shift but are created with a clear intention of effect. Further, I arranged sounds as sonic clusters rather than in lines after O'Sullivan and these worked on a basis of sonic linkage after Monk and creative linkage after Griffiths in the fragmentary 'War W/Windsor Text 1 (4 Voices)' poem. In the charms I populated the sonic space with soundshapes which create a comforting environment. My approach to the page as temporal space was influenced by Roman Jakobson's description of an 'ad hoc' organisation of sound in poetry.[232] In my lullaby I used the free association of alliterative sound of words for the absolute pleasure and joyfulness in sounding these out, both to make and perform the poem.

I scored sound instinctively and intuitively in the prayer poems to counteract the official and commercial, often pejorative appropriation of non-Swedish

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[231] See Olsan pp. 21-22 above and footnote 35.
[232] See Jakobson p.15 above and footnote 16.

Scandinavian languages by IKEA. I selected words from the IKEA catalogue to create an IKEA language to use as sound material for a sonic translation from children's prayers in English. I chose Scandinavian words by sound association to replace the English words in each prayer to create a sonic echo with variation across the two languages.[233] In addition, I removed the diacritical marks to explore using my vocal identity to sound the Scandinavian words without their markers of pronunciation as a guide. I utilised the idea of sound as transforming the 'savaging' by language seen as purely denotative by 'salvaging' of language by restoring intuitive aspects in the work of O'Sullivan.[234] Open to alternative and instinctive vocalisations by any vocal identity and accent to explore the sound, this new universal form of 'IKEA speak' was intended to unify the sound contour of the Scandinavian languages.[235]

It is not just sounding language that is important in my work. In the theory of sound-rich poetry I posited that silences are as important as sound. Further, my analyses of the work of the poets under discussion demonstrate how technical and socio-ethical silences can punctuate the sound patterning. I will discuss socio-ethical in my work later. As part of my approach to composing a poem as the sound of a temperament, I used silences to punctuate each soundscape of emotion. Most prominently in my tree monologue and lullaby poems I used white space to represent silence for pause or intake of breath and punctuation marks to demarcate rhythm. Influenced in part by John Cage's idea that there is no empty space or empty time, in

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[233] For example, I chose the Scandinavian word 'tidafors' to replace the English word 'wave' when there was no word that resonated sonically as tidal force visually rhymes with the action of a wave.

[234] See Bloomfield, M. 'Maggie O'Sullivan's Material Poetics of Salvaging in *red shifts* and *murmur'* in Edwards, K. (ed.) (2011) *The Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 10-35.

[235] IKEA stores has stores across the world and this language is universal in being recognised and spoken by customers. As such the idea behind 'IKEA speak' is that it is a language that brings people together in mutual recognition and shared interest.

my work no space is silent and no visual mark is nonverbal.[236] In my tree monologue I used the nion sign from the pre-runic Ogham alphabet as a non-verbal visual mark that can be sounded, or not in performance.[237] Although not the complex meld of the sonic-visual in O'Sullivan's use of visual marks in *murmur: tasks of mourning*, my use of the nion sign was a way of using a visual mark to connect the poet's, that is my body and the page. Further, Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan's work is influenced by their involvement with concrete poetry. As I discussed in part one, all three worked with Bob Cobbing for whom sounding silent marks as noise was integral to his way of making vocalisations which involved sounding the shape, size, colour and texture of not just words but any objects, any visual mark.[238] In my work it is the semantic silence, that is language as intuitive, that I wanted to resonate the loudest. In composing each of my soundscapes of an emotion or emotions, I used the sound shape, size, colour and texture of speech sounds rendered through the human voice, rather than sound that is confined to the page through being ordered and regulated in a logical expression of experience.

My use of sound demonstrates that my poems are composed as a collaboration between text and voice and vocalisation is embedded in my composition process. As I stated in my introduction to sound-rich poetry, giving and preparing for live readings of creative work is part of developing my performative and editing processes. As part of my process I practised vocalisations of poems prior to performances so that I could experience and refine vocal sound effects. The voice that I heard when I recorded and played back is not how I heard my voice when I

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[236] See Cage pp. 25-26 above and footnote 45.
[237] I first came across the tree alphabet in Robert Graves' *The White Goddess* (1999). The nion symbol is the ash tree letter in the tree alphabet. My surname is ASHcroft. I used the sign to presence myself in the poem.
[238] See Cobbing pp. 39 above.

performed live. However, in this listening back, like a musician with an instrument, I could hear whether my pronunciation was sounding the words and sound patterns with the expressive effect I intended in the poem. As my work aimed to create the sound of a temperament, it was important that I checked the effectiveness of sound in this way. My exploration of effects of speech rhythms also developed during performances where I explored making vocalisations of speech rhythms as speech and song.[239] This way of working with sound developed the sensitivity of my ear in listening to the different emotional nuances available to my voice when I used my speaking or untrained singing voice.[240] During rehearsals I found that my untrained singing voice sounded more plaintive and heightened the emotional aspect of my performance. Again, knowing how my voice worked during composition and in performance meant that I could make decisions about how to use my voice most effectively. The relationship between this sounding out and the eventual performance of my work was not just to bring a fine-tuned vocalisation of a poem to an audience. In performance I lifted the sounds of the poem from the page using the intimacy of my voice and I felt a connection with my audience. In performance I was aware of a social bonding taking place as well as an emotional equilibrium between me and my audience. Listening to Monk, Griffiths, O'Sullivan perform their work I have experienced this social bonding and emotional correspondence not just between me and the poets, but between me, the poet and other members of the audience.[241]

For my reader encountering poems on the page the idea for sound-rich poetry works by my poems being scored for sound. In part one, I explained my theoretical

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[239] See p.12 above and footnote 4.
[240] To heighten the emotional effect and affect I used a singing voice in a performance with Patricia Farrell. See footnote 4.
[241] O'Sullivan *murmur* in recording and Monk live reading of James Device poem in Liverpool very strong emotional equilibrium effected by their performance combined with the subject matter.

approach to a poem as a musical score that is composed in the sound(s) of language(s) by a particular human voice.[242] The combination of using voice for performances and composing for the page, informed my critical and creative understanding of the interchange between orality and aurality in reading and composing poems as well as in performances. As my poems work with free improvisation of alliterative sounds to create the sound of a temperament, I intended them to be open to being sounded by a reader using their own vocal identity. In the silence of reading, sound is activated through the vocal apparatus and inner ear of the reader. The sound of my voice is absent, which means the sonic pattern and rhythms are open to interpretation working somewhat, as I stated above, as a musical score is. In the theory of sound-rich poetry, I referred to the sonic diversity in oral poetry and rhythmic interpretation in the music of spoken language as ways of making language sensuous and structure intuitive again.[243] The naturalness in the sound and rhythm of the human voice on the page gives a sense of familiarity to the reader tuning in to the speech sounds. I intended a reader to experience my poems as if someone talking to them from the page whether that was my voice or their own. In my own experience of listening at live performances and listening to recorded readings, when I read the work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan I can hear their voices reading the poems in my silent reading. Chris Goode's essay on Monk discusses how, after hearing a poet's distinctive vocalisations it is possible to hear their voice, 'voiceprint', in any poem of theirs that a reader has not heard them perform.[244]

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[242] See pp. 20-21 above.
[243] See pp. 21-22 above.
[244] Goode, C. 'Speak and Spell: Geraldine Monk's Voiceprint' in Thurston, S. (ed.) (2006) *The Salt Companion to Geraldine Monk*. Cambridge: Salt Publishing. pp. 152-177.

In addition to scoring my poems, I work with the silence of sound on the page by giving live readings of my work and making recordings some of which are recorded as audio or audio visual. However, I did not want to make single authoritative versions of my poems rendered in my voice. Although I invest the written version to suggest an emotional pitch, the sound of a temperament, I am interested in the variations in the soundscape and its effects which come from other vocal identies and experiences of my work. My approach is influenced by the openess to change and adaptability of oral poetry to audience and context that is demonstrated by the work of Monk, Griffiths and O'Sullivan. Performance, for me is invested in social bonding and emotional correspondence with audience in live performance. I have experienced this notably during the choral readings of my charm poems, when I have listened to hear the rhythm of audience voices come together or when I have added the sound of my voice and joined in with them.[245]

In relation to class, place and gender my voice is positioned through the lens of being a working class woman who still lives in the staunchly Labour, culturally conservative, northern glass industry/mining town that I was born in. In the critical section I referred to a duality in perceptions of class and vocal identity in the poets under discussion.[246] In moving between the 'proper' and the broader forms of St. Helens accent I have a duality of prestige and non-prestige which has given me a fluidity in my vocal identity.[247] My voice in my poems in relation to class asserts a resistance to subjection, to oppressive uses of power and privilege. In the tree

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[245] See Attridge on choral reading coordinating and enhancing speech rhythms in my analysis of Griffiths' work pp. 83-84 above and footnote 144.
[246] See pp. 22-24 above and footnote 38.
[247] When I was born I lived in Billinge which is still a prestigious part of St. Helens and my mum insisted that my sister and I spoke with a more prestige accent. As children we were corrected for clipping and blending speech sounds such as when 'I have to go to town' became 'A aff fort guh t' town'.

monologue the voice speaks from my own vantage point, that is against legal and justice systems, against being compelled to speak, against using a false vocal identity to gain access to privileges that other are denied on the basis of how they speak. Voice in my work is influenced by the writers I have been discussing, each of whom have developed my ideas around who has the power in culture and society, has the loudest voice and controls voice(s) of other(s). Having a platform, poetry, that I am aware others have not been granted, I feel a responsibility to speak out against, and give voice to those situations in which people are not heard and where language is misused to assert power over another.

Coming from a working class background I was expected to take a respectable and finacially secure job and become a primary school teacher and not become a writer. That I write at all and that the poetry I write is not well known or commercially profitable, as a working class woman in the place I live, positions me against cultural conservatism. I learned to read early and went to what had been a grammar school that still taught Latin. I was brought up to be completely accepting and understanding of any cultural and social diversity around me.[248] In my charm poems the voice brings together elite and popular knowledges in the range of semantic fields which include Latin words, scientific, botany, weather, and survival. I do not hear or see models for intuitive modes of perceving and expressing experience in the literature or ideals of culture that are visible where I live. I listen to Radio 3 and Resonance FM and when I occasionally hear the broad St. Helens accent now it sounds like my childhood. In an act of sonic memorialisation, I drew on

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[248] In the microcosm of the street I lived in my best friend's much older brother and his friends were all punks, I was aware of homosexuality and transsexuality, I had a disabled cousin and my mum had multiple sclerosis all of which I saw meet with prejudice. And my grandparents knew members of St. Helens society including a mayoress, magistrates and rugby players.

the speech rhythms of my parents from memory for my lullaby poem. 'Blue' was a term of greeting used by my Dad and whenever I read the word, I hear his voice in my inner ear calling, 'All right Blue?'.

My voice in relation to gender is positioned in my poems as enacting healing and promoting self care, in what is traditionally seen as being the role of a woman in society. The voice in my charm poems extends its capacity for self healing to others by sharing the knowledge of how to perform this. Further, in a caring role the voice in the tree monologue is concerned with the mental health of others, the IKEA prayers are written for children in the language of shopping and the lullaby is a song of comforting and soothing sounds usually uttered by a mum to her child. Like the poets under discussion in relation to gender, voice in my poems is positioned against the oppression of people on *any* grounds whether that is gender, sexuality, colour, age, abilty and it is against censorship in the modes of language in which those experiences are expressed and listened to.[249]

A focus on sound changes my idea of the self into an experientially and expressively sonic being. I theorise these ideas of resonance and the self via Nancy's *Listening* (2007).[250] I add to this Kristeva's idea of the speaking subject as always both semiotic and symbolic.[251] In my work this self as sonic being sends out a sensuously intuitive and thinking echo. This echo is a part of the whole of its life, existence, being and has been contained inside the self which, once called to open itself, to become awakened becomes the subject of its communication. My tree monologue is based in the idea that new experience disrupts the linguistic sonic

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[249] See p. 43 above and footnote 77.
[250] See p. 66 above and footnote 126.
[251] See footnote 83.

status quo. This disruption brings in and requires new sounds and structures to express responses to that new experience and the new world it creates. As a writer I am used to hearing a version of my voice and my vocal identity speaking back to me in my writing. However, when I had to give a witness statement my vocal identity was disturbed in being written by someone else as an odd mix of my words and theirs. This strange hybridity was most apparent when I then had to read back from the written statement some months later. This disturbance to the relationship between speech and writing meant that an unrecognisable and weirded self was created in the written form as echo. Disconnected from my vocal identity and voice, rather than resonating, this sonic being moved further away from me; it diminished.

It was this disturbance to my vocal identity that resonated, and this opened the sonic self which became the tree monologue. Sensuously expressive of experience that cannot be communicated rationally, this poem was fired by 'a meaning to say, an articulatory release without intention and without vision or signification'.[252] In addition, I applied Kristeva's concepts of the speaking subject, the semiotic and symbolic, and the semiotic chora to the sound structure in my poems. This idea drove the instinctive weaves of sound patterns composed of threads that were intuitively oral and aural alongside the written intellectual uses of language; the conscious and unconscious, nature versus nurture in my work.[253] Employing voice implies a producer of articulations, a speaking subject, to bring the poem into sound. Always both semiotic and symbolic, I used both ways of making meaning to form the speaking subject in my poems. Kristeva's descriptions of the semiotic chora opened

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[252] Nancy, J. L. (2007) *Listening.* New York: Fordham University Press. Translated by Charlotte Mandell. p.28.
[253] See the part one 'The Semiotic and the Symbolic' in Kristeva, J. (1984) *Revolution in Poetic Language.* New York: Columbia University Press. Translated by Margaret Walker. pp. 19-106.

possibilities in my work for the speaking subject to move between the semiotic and symbolic effecting a rhythmic heightening of sound as the relationship between sounds as sound (sensuous), and sound as sense (intellectual), shifts instinctively.[254]

Triggered by the disturbance to my vocal identity, self had called to self and my explorative journey in sonically charged language and structures began with a self as the sound of a temperament in the tree monologue. This hybrid tree-human self opened further sonic selves which as I listened resonated into the charm poems, prayers and the lullaby poems. The charms were expressive of a sensuous, intuitive self that is capable of self-healing. In the prayers a self sounded in a playfulness of speech sounds in a spiritual context and in the lullaby a self memorialised parents and childhood as a form of comfort. In her work Monk sounds Lancashire working class women, Griffiths sounds a self within a prosody of prison Griffiths, O'Sullivan sounds a self as an echoic synaesthesic body. In the resonance between Monk's and Hopkins' work I described each poem as an act of attention that is distinct, yet also changed, by expanding the other in mood and temperament, and by a sensuous resonance of voice past in voice present which results in a sound-rich poem. What resounds in the literary and cultural sense of self in 'Chattox Sings' and sounding out of Hopkins' poem is the Jesuit poet-priest in the working-class woman poet sounding Anne Whittle as 'Chattox'. My habit of listening back to recordings of my own readings connects with Nancy's ideas about resonance so that my poetry enables me to hear (versions of) myself that experience, listening, opens up in me and which

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[254] As vocalisation and maternal caring role is central in my work, I was particularly interested in Kristeva's description of the chora, as 'analogous only to vocal or kinetic rhythm' and as nourishing and maternal. Ibid p.26.

resonate beyond myself and sound back to me.[255] As Hopkins' poem opens and

resounds a self in Monk's poem, in my poems it is a transitional literary self that

resonates from the tree monologue through the charms, prayers, and lullaby. I am

listening back to a self that is becoming empowered and building resonance through

a sensuous orality and aurality in each set of poems: disconsolate; self-healing;

spiritual and playful; comfortingly familiar.

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I chose to write a poetry/prose hybrid to distinguish my poetics as a discourse by

artist-academic similar to the way that I used the hybrid prosodic analysis in the

critical section. The creative rather than essay style writing also carries an intuitive

rather than logical structure and style of expression. Further, this form allowed me to

use a sense of orality in the writing style which was important in otherwise confining

myself in this thesis to writing about sound on the page. I am trying to avoid an elite

literary discourse written in a purely academic writing style using formal academic

language. I am aiming for a discourse which reflects the weave of intuitive, instinctive

modes of perceiving the sonic world in language, with a logical formal academic way

of perceiving the literary world. Models for artist-academic hybrid poetics include

Charles Olson's 'Projective Verse', Charles Bernstein's *A Poetics* (1998), CD

Wright's *The Poet, the Lion, Talking Pictures, El Farolito, a Wedding in St. Roch, the*

Big Box Store, the Warp in the Mirror, Spring, Midnights, Fire & All (2016) and John

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[255] Nancy, J. L. (2007) *Listening.* New York: Fordham University Press. Translated by Charlotte Mandell. pp. 12-22.

James in *Atlantic Drift: An Anthology of Poetry and Poetics* (2017). Important models

for stylistically creative poetics which centre on vocalisation as embedded in

composition and performance are Monk's 'Insubstantial Thoughts on the

Transubstantiation of the Text' and O'Sullivan's 'Riverrunning (Realisations for

Charles Bernstein'.[256]

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[256] Monk, G. 'Insubstantial Thoughts on the Transubstantiation of the Text' in Monk, G. (2003) *Selected Poems*. Cambridge: Salt. pp. 213-225. O'Sullivan, M 'Riverrunning (Realisations for Charles Bernstein' in O'Sullivan, M. (2003) *Palace of Reptiles.* Ontario: The Gig. pp. 57-70.

A Slice of the Infinite Sonic Weave

(Solo)

Crawl out, words, over-churned, mind-curled, with nine wordlets,

out from the nerve ends into the brain,

from the brain into the heart,

from the heart into the tongue, from

the tongue onto this page.

(Choral)

> Carried by the sonic current, in this
>
> all-togetherness, are we still
>
> comfortable, can we be
>
> still, comfortable?

ᴪ

Charm

Sound does not submit to meaning nor does it crush it, it sounds alongside. It calls for attention, resists, and heals.

Each frequency, pitch and interval of speech sounds sharpen with experience the Thinking-Feeling-Body-Mind.

Once the soundshapes assembled here, settled themselves, laid hold of sonic bonds. As the consonants and vowels travelled from the mouth, threads of rhythm lined the page.

This is a poem driven by a circle of sound woven with *silences.*

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On *Attention* (Ash Tree monologue)

Witness: *noun* 1. a person who sees an event, typically a crime or accident, take place. 2. Evidence, proof. *verb* 1. see (an event, typically a crime or accident) happen. 2. have knowledge of (a development) from observation or experience.

Audience:

Purpose:

Intention:

Truth: the quality or state of being true; that which is true or in accordance with fact or reality; a fact or belief that is accepted as true. veracity, truthfulness, verity, sincerity, candour, honesty, genuineness; gospel, gospel truth; accuracy, correctness, rightness, validity, factualness, factuality, authenticity.
Dinkum.

Sonic mask: per sonae. A sounding *through*, sounding *with*, an ash tree.

Giving witness statements was the most transactional of pointed questions requiring pointed answers. Language with intent. More than that it was words gathered, it felt like an extraction, not like a tooth, but as something you'd rather not give to be used to decide guilt, to determine punishment.

Attention: listening to the tree as an older, wiser being.

What does an *ash tree* sound like? I have heard it masculine and mothering. In rhythm with.

In-tension: To dissolve my message-sending-messy self in the pleasure of making sound patterns and rhythms that do not have to make meaning clear. Choral evensong. Christmas carols; I am found, listening to the human voice; en/trance/me(a)nt.

Hybrid subjectivity: what does an ash tree-*human* sound like?

Monologue form: I relish in my own fleshiness, the rhythm of a temperament borrowing a persona through which to have the pleasure of making spontaneous speech as free form sound patterning.

The sound of a temperament: a sonic mask which speaks otherwise them *me.*

Left undisturbed I saw soundshapes settle centripetal: disturbed by a new experience which needed language to express it, distraught consonants became peppered with sombre vowels and cannot be held around a core; for pleasure's sake and seeking consolation in soothing rhythms, speech sounds move as improvised.

You are, for me, a safe mouth from which to send sound, at a distance to sound speech as sound, to express the rhythm of a temperament, because each nerve end remembers that it's not worth the risk of meaning it at all, you are better off without that, you cannot begin to, so you're not explaining anything.

So there'll be no tale telling, yet. First, let my mind rest, let thought indulge in a dance my body understands; drench me, circle me, drown me in delicious consolatory sound.

Silence intakes breath.

Because I know, that I don't know, what is what.

So I listen.

And I listen.

What *does* an ash tree sound like?

IT is denotative meaning: slippery, strangling.

Although there is a danger in taking words too seriously, you are aware of the power of words, the desire to own meaning, which is dangerous.

Be truthful in the telling, because having knowledge, is not the same as understanding.

You re-order our chaotic breathings of language into a sonic-sensuous echo, that re-addresses the silences between us, the mis-hearings and manipulations, that exclude the 'I' of me, from the language we inhabit.

I lost myself in sonic excess, as silent voyeur.

ПIIIГ

On *Resistance* (Ash Tree Charms)

In reference to the curative and therapeutic function of relation to self, in 'The Hermeneutic of the Subject' Michael Foucault posits philosophy, and medicine, as a single area, in that philosophy's role is to heal diseases of the soul. It was this connecting of medicine and philosophy, which led to the notion of the speaking subject, in the 'Tree' sequence, needing to self-counteract the trauma of being called upon to bear witness. And as word was the vehicle of trauma in the world of the poem, it seemed word would also have the capacity to heal.

The violation was being summoned to say words, which would help condemn and sentence a vulnerable person.

Prescription: bathe in a woodland.

To know yourself, sing your environment, of which you are a body with bodies, a mind of primary and secondary reactions. A slice of the infinite sonic weave.

Be discerning about the familiar voices we believe in and trust in regardless of the authority they might seem to carry in a practice of *resistance*.

Form sonic bonds.

It is autumn Dilly, Dilly and you have many keys but no locks.

Embrace a beat fragment you found in the voice of an old friend.

Yggdrasil: ash tree, tree of life absorbing each, and every, strife.

Is the charm an instruction / a cure / rhetoric?

We must bring words with us, utter them, if we are to sing our songs.

Sound and rhythm are affective to emotions and imagination. Make incantatory sound and rhythm of words as medicine, as healing.

The charm as a sound event also led me to further explore the structure of charms.

My aim was to discover connections between the sounding of words and those arrangements of sounds as (according to certain beliefs) having the properties to heal an ailment. I took the number ten as the point of saturation for repeating the charm structure for it to be most effective as a restorative.

Charms fall between non-verbal plant remedy and prayer for healing therefore lies on a spectrum of orality through textuality.
Structures from oral theory, apparently chaotic features, as in multiformity.

Circumstances of performance and magic. Mixture of Christian symbolism and non-Christian features, borrowing from formal religious, and ritualistic, words of power, that speak to specific needs.

Charms also appear in recipe books where verbal cures usually constitute a small proportion of the medicinal remedies.

The charm structure as a restorative (in response to a need and with a purpose) effected in words.

ΤΙΙΙΓ

On *Healing* (IKEA prayers)

The world is a continuum, words compel separatedness and distinctness.

When so many speech sounds simply pass on by, your soundshape as sonic-sensual echo, wants to shake hands, at least.

Magic words.

Poem as prayer. Incantatory sound to heal the day's sores; each a form of infant prayer.

Apostrophic address. To whom am I singing. Will you sing back?

Colour and shape as a meld of the sonic visual. The nion sign. Make a mandala of an ash tree world.

Sonic otherness of materials in the hyphen. Space as carrier of rhythm. Space as sound.

Monk's tree songings. O' Sullivan's tree poems. (Griffiths' forest). Planting trees. Outside my window live two ash trees.

I'll see you, my angel-faced mirror, in a sonic-sensual echo of my own creation

▥

Lullaby

For sound's sake make a poem glossy. Let speech sounds grow in patterns that are healthy and well nourished. Organised, they will become sonic ear worms.

Listen backwards, because I want *us* to remember what *you* remember from when we chanted together during thunderstorms. *They* remember when we all-sang and you became me and I became you; when *our* voices saturated silence, when we heard echoes from sonic bonds in the spaces between us. Then we felt the sound and the shape of each other. By ear.

I have spent days, counting your footfall, counting each breath, each length of silence. Full, I paused, before I could gather you another lungful of vowels.

You make a soundscape of moments on the page, moments of new experiences that teach the body new responses and that are too fast for the mulling mind to process in body-time. We must give our selves a space-time moment.

You are formed by our intent to survive through those mother-child moments of moment, felt and found. When the mouth stutters under the weight of the moment in its hand, the mind releases, for you to hold its speech sounds to relive them there, swirl them in your palm, reform them refracted into songful soundshapes. Although the page can order the natural disorder in which we speak, for the mind's sake you try to mute what was said what could have been said what was said what should have been said. Break breath for some silence.

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(Choral?)

Carried by

the sonic

current, in this

all-togetherness, are we

still

comfortable, can we be

still, comfortable?

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AUTHOR PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND READINGS

Poetry Pamphlet/ Collection

From Parts Becoming Whole, Knives Forks Spoons Press 2011

Maps and Love Song for Mina Loy, Seren 2013

Exhibitions

Co-curator of Ship of Fools Exhibition March 2017 Edge Hill University

Awards

Joint Winner Rhiannon Evans Poetry Scholarship 2010

Poetry Wales Purple Moose Prize 2012

Poetry

Peggy's Blue Skylight 2005

Neon Highway 2006

erbacce Jun 2010

em journal Summer 2012

Stride magazine May 2012

Holdfire Press blog August 2012

Veld the Pole journal February 2014

The Wolf October 2015

Litter November 2015

Poetry Wales 2016 (with Patricia Farrell)

Card Alpha 2016

Litmus 2016

Stride 2017

Stride 2019

Collaboration

With Patricia Farrell Conversational Nuisance, Zimzalla April 2015 and February
2017

With Robert Sheppard EUOIA, April 2015 and January 2017

Anthology

The Other Room Anthology 2015

The Tree Line: Poems for Trees, Woods & People 2017

Twitters for a Lark 2017

The Other Room Anthology 2018

Critical Book

Joanne Ashcroft.

2018

'A Response to Vitality' in Robert Sheppard's *Empty Diaries* and 'Wiped Weblogs'' in

Byrne, J. & Madden, C. (ed.s) (2018) *The Robert Sheppard Reader*. Bristol:

Shearsman.

Edited Journal

Joanne Ashcroft (ed.)

Summer 2019

'From *A Slice of the Infinite Sonic Weave*'

The Edge Hill Poetry and Poetics Research Group Journal. Volume 1.

Reviews

Joanne Ashcroft

August 2012

'Like Wine Through Water' review of Mass Graves: City of Now by Danielle Pantano

and Convergence and Conversion: Ekphrastic Poems by Neil Ellman

Stride magazine

Joanne Ashcroft

Summer 2013

Review: 'Salt Companion to Maggie O'Sullivan'

Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry

Interviews

Joanne Ashcroft

September 2017

Interview with Geraldine Monk

The Wolf Magazine

Readings

Chapter and Verse Lit Fest. Next Up, THE BLUECOAT, Liverpool

October, 2010

Introducing Jerome Rothenberg, The Rose Theatre, Edge Hill University

October, 2010

The Knives Forks and Spoons Press Launch, Newton-Le-Willows

April, 2011

KFS Press Reading Event, Mello Mello, Liverpool

16th July 2011

Introductory Reading for Peter Jaeger, The Rose Theatre, Edge Hill University

28th February 2012

Poetry Wales Purple Moose Prize Presentation Reading, Mold Town Hall

7th October 2012

Bob Cobbing: A Celebration, The Other Room, Manchester

23rd October 2012

Introductory Reading for Maggie O'Sullivan, The Rose Theatre, Edge Hill University

31st October 2012

The Blue Bus Poetry Reading Series, Bloomsbury, London

18th March 2014

Storm and Sky, The Caledonia, Liverpool

30th May 2014

Peter Barlow's Cigarette, Manchester

14th June 2014

Knives, Forks Spoons Press 'Pop Up' Reading event featuring Edge Hill Poetry lecturers Patricia Farrell, Robert Sheppard, James Byrne and Joanne Ashcroft, Central Library, St. Helens

4th October 2014

The Other Room with Lila Matsumoto and EJ McAdams

The Castle Hotel, Manchester

11th February 2015

Liverpool Camarade collaboration with Patricia Farrell

Fly in the Loaf, Liverpool

18th February 2015

Introductory reading for Ian Seed

Rose Theatre Edge Hill University

11th March 2015

Peter Barlow's Cigarette, Election Special,

Waterstones, Manchester

2nd May 2015

Peter Barlow's Cigarette

Waterstones, Manchester

5th September 2015

Min Loy Exhibition Event

The Bluecoat, Liverpool

30th January 2016

The Blue Bus Poetry Reading Series

Bloomsbury, London

19th July 2016

Introductory Reading for Simon Perril

Rose Theatre Edge Hill University

16th November 2016

Edge Hill Enemies Collaboration with Robert Sheppard

Rose Theatre Edge Hill University

19th January 2017

Liverpool Enemies Collaboration with Patricia Farrell

Everyman, Liverpool

11th February 2017

Sheppard Symposium

Rose Theatre Edge Hill University

8th March 2017

Gramophone Ray Gun

Everyman, Liverpool

29th June 2017

The Other Room EUOIA Robert Sheppard Collaborations

The Castle Hotel, Manchester

23rd August 2017

Camarade EUOIA

Anthony Burgess Centre, Manchester

13th April 2018

Launch of The Robert Sheppard Companion.

The Bluecoat, Liverpool

13th May 2019

Conference contributions

Joanne Ashcroft

23rd April 2013

'On Collaboration with Mina Loy'

Literary Collaboration Symposium

Edge Hill University

Joanne Ashcroft

19th June 2013

'Voicing Edges: Experimental Writing and Social Positioning'

English and History Dept Research Forum

Edge Hill University

Joanne Ashcroft

15th November 2014

'The Nion Sign as Artifact in My Creative Practice'

Motif Conference 2014

RHUL

Joanne Ashcroft

24th March 2015

'The Ash Tree as Motif in Poetry'

EH Post Grad Conference

Edge Hill University

Joanne Ashcroft

17th March 2016

'Voicing Wor(l)ds in the Book of IKEA'

EH Post Grad Conference

Edge Hill University

Joanne Ashcroft

8th March 2017

'A Response to Vitality in Robert Sheppard's Empty Diaries and 'Wiped

Weblogs'

Robert Sheppard Symposium

Edge Hill University