

Painted, spoken

edited by Richard Price

number 24

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*from Organ Music: An Anti-Masque not for
Dancing* Jeff Hilson

In any English year it doesn't matter
if I am always playing outside
like a midsummer-man
like a medicine man
lifting women & lifting men
when I was a cuckoo
loving my other name & giving it
to the pretty bird in May I didn't think
I was the only cuckoo bird
I didn't think anyone is actually listening
to my long playing records
now its June I'm playing something else
& getting very dainty in the arena

do re mi

it's nobodys gig bonjour mon coeur
the rose queen is dead in farnaby's dream
she's singing a song for anything of the dead
for the girls in farnaby's dream

I come sweet birds
magnificat sexy tony de-la-court

do re mi fa

o ye tender babes
sexy tony is giving you ear
o tony give ear
day after day thy magnificat ears
o christ tony thou hast cut us off dis-
courteously

for the girls in farnaby's dream
was my delight

now my ears are bursting forth err-
onerously

do re mi

my magnificat embarrassing body of work
is all my joy

it's called o god it's greensleeves that sings fer-
ociously

in every tree who broke thy music
miserere tony de-la-coeur
when I was a nightingale
night after night my miserere opus
is everywhere in the pines

do re mi fa

don't look now I think the pontiff is coming
I want to play for him full without the trumpet

clangorem longius resonantem

he is getting into my long forgotten boat
the babbling pontiff is not strong enough
since he is Italian since he is a Gemini

I don't want to play for him
he is still talking theoretically
he is a Venetian

it is likely he is looking to enlarge his organ
oh dear he is wearing a crown
& touching my head &

pulling & pushing it because of an error
I have flown to Tenerife with the pontiff
he loves the law & order there

I love the rugged coastline

he loves the law & order & the Church of Our Lady of
Los Remedios

I love the buses & trams

he loves the law & order & the Cathedral of la Laguna

I love the air quality & the Playa de las Americas

he loves the law & order & the Pilgrimage of Mary of
the Head

I love the nightlife here I am entering Disco Big Ben

Dick Hyman can you feel it too

the brilliant semiquaver runs of Rod Hunter

Goody Goody Syrup & BT Express

I'm so high on tambourine life I don't want to go
to the Ambassador's Reception

Jesus Chris I didn't even know it's over

the British Invasion or the Spanish conquest

caballas & cathedrals & patatas arrugadas
o girl o boy what are they to you
who are always kissing
who I love loves the law & order
I just want to spend my life
in atmosphere-free SE3
how can I tell him I have stolen his clothes
it's so cold on the ferry where I'm going
is where I am going
far?

ADRIFT IS MAYBE NOT THE WORD

Alexander Hutchison

We were all attempting to avoid
damp patches, spent matches, old
snatches that couldn't raise a smile.
We were all vainly scraping around
for scant reward. No sap, no savour.
Song and "puff" was all we had to
go on now. Plum duff or porridge
in a drawer would not sustain us.
We were all hoping for something
better, to put it frankly; something
we could all get stuck properly into:
mulch and compost, deep-cut ditches.
Fibrillators, respirators maybe not.
Flint-glance or twirling to conjure a
spark. Zygotes and teeny brain cells
brought extravagantly into play.
We were all maybe looking for
something that wasn't there, or
couldn't be touched, didn't exist.
Brisk, complex – or *uncomplicated*,
who's to say? Who's to hear?
Rope on, lighten up. Feel that? It's
whoa on the one hand: *whoa, whoa*;
on the other restive, omnivorous.

from The Syllabary

Peter McCarey

www.thesyllabary.com

24.6.4

There wasn't a beginning till the word
And there is no light until you limn it
With your belly and your limbs.

22.6.z

On a whim,
An Al-Khwarezmi,
Augrim, algorism, whim.

No whinchat, stonechat, whin.

This Sunday has been put on once too
Much on that desperate lake;
It's warped and scratched and rainy.
Whip it up and whirl again:

The ducks'll strain their necks and whirr,
The children whizz and whinge, the middle
Air – whistle and wish.
The mountains do their best to
Curtain the whiff of zilch,
But the merest which or whither and not
A whit remains, abandoned hand of whist
On a liner, ice in the sliding whisky glass.

A whig, as it turns out,
Has nothing to do with the bearded mussel:
We haven't yet succeeded in crossing
A whelk with a powdered wig.

22.5.z

Wham! But oh, you'll get your whacks
On the lang whang. Whap in the nest!
Hijo de puta!

21.5.4 Hamartia

Ham in his hammock
Next to Noah.
"What's a hamadryad, dad?"
"No-one opens that crate:
Not now, not never!"

What would you have done?

The snake escaped to India,
The ape regressed to the Great Rift Valley.
She, when they cut the tree down,
She died. It's as simple as this:
No harm, no harmony.

21.x.3

... which accounts for the Hup!
Which accounts for the Hip-hop!
Accounts for the harp on the gunwale
Which accounts for the hoop on the funnel
Which accounts for the heap for the hope for the Help!
For the hype about Cromwell and Rommel
Which accounts for the hemp on the criminal
Which accounts for the hump on the camel
And the sphinx's inscrutable smile.

Ghost Academy

James McGonigal

*Our teachers have gone back to school
to learn to spell the noise of rain,
parse rush-hour traffic, simplify
the third equation of 'again'.*

Here at the Ghost Academy
they try their best to write it right,
to wring from rote old rungs of wrong
until – at last – the bell rings

and it's out to the yard to play.
All their old teachers are here too
looking like Fifth-years – check out
Mrs McCaigney and Wee Albert
smoking behind the Techie huts.

Then back to class. There are no masters.
Sitting at different desks each day
teaches them how others think. Prayers
are led at noon by a child with hazel eyes.

Afternoons are projects. You can choose
to study anything that fits one palm.
So currently: an apricot, a kilt pin, sweet
chestnuts, a heap of salt, a grasshopper.
Your fingerprints are always part of it.

*Our teachers have gone back to school
to learn to count uses of pain,
take a new page and brighter ink
to solve the equations of 'remain'.*

Homework is writing aphorisms.
An example is given on the board:
"The rock, despite its fragility can teach us
how fragile we are." (Jeff Wall)

So: "The sea, despite its muteness can teach us how dumb we are." Or, not quite the same: "The sky, despite its azure can teach us what colour o'clock it is." The hardest thing sometimes is finding an aphoristic name.

*Our teachers have gone back to school
to study maps where landfall ends,
sing choral history in the hall
and tug the hair of their best friends.*

from ***An Alphabet for Alina: A girl's alphabet***
Frances Presley

t

t tay bull ta ble flat slab TEST for a script
this teacher this chair TEST these desks this
black board final TEST I know the 10 things
you must know another objective TEST
one tick forfeits a tried two ticks forfeit

draw long lines twist and turn them
walk around holding on to two
ropes hanging from a tree she somer
saults through three trunks
I stand inside the Major Oak

in Netherlands table is ta
full a high tea pull out the
leaf extend the leaves spread
the cloth settle the cover lay the places
under the table read the red through tassels

u

sat on a cold perch
in the outhouse undigested
sounds spilt in different ways
the word some was not sum
champion at numbers felt indefinite

the Mush hush shu dragon is cutting
his talons they were his stylus
his cuneiform his nail writing
but could not carve his ur
name

the word some was in the under
growth and did not belong in
this utterance sum one
sum thing sum times
sum day sum body

v

v was carved in England by invading
French Vikings who brought
victory at sea television
and a lovely village which
did not take long to make

an earlier invasion by the Dutch failed
to plant the letter v when f was
from and field or vice versa
in the Van Dyke nursery viol
ets are purple veined

above acute angled roofs the castle
waits for us to ask permission to
explore the wood beyond the
verge behind the lines
a hamlet a fyxen

W

w w what wat lips push for
ward disturb the Latin bond
with a bilabial want uu
it's akwork I didn't spell
wrong it turned awk
ward

we went down to the cross
where the village used to meet
blood on the stump
gloss red Wellingore
these ghosts haunt
the stop

disturb water
records diary
worst deeds
find ways
down river
Witham

Chap-venture

Gavin Selerie

You can ryde a barrell,
you can hang from a rayle,
you can digge a tonnell

spinne a top,
floate on a bladder,
playe the devill chained

throwe huckle bones,
runne the figure of eight,
tag another in hud-man blinde,

filop a toad,
toss stones at cherrie-pit,
chase and tutch in pryson-base

All is how the worlde goes at *eye-slip*,
as we steppe on, spellbound, our actes
springing from outer skie
(some prettie quest lit like bubbles
blowne through a hoop)

at hazard in purpose you twirl
a whirlietrill, swag on a rope
to shoggy-shoo, druggie draw

this by that by
fiddledy-diddledy
a cove may teach you
to jumpe over the moone

I'd change my Absee for Sir Bevis
(mise and rattes and suche smal dere)
but we are horned in steppes
that we sho'd not turne babes again

petra, mineralis . est
arbor, vitalis . est · vivit
equus, sensualis . est · vivit · sentit
homo, studiosus . est · vivit · sentit · intelligit

So rap out nownes & pronouns,
swear through eight parts of speach
in the Accedence, *Cato* construe
(let's take this instant by the toppe)
and in easie measure
that dyalog imbed for to morrow

where/when doo . . . an ympe in Non-age
followe the itch of upstart desire?

I'll not be Tom-farthing but Tom-tell-truth,
not Tom-Noddy nor Tom-Tumbler
but brave Tom Piper

Learnings quick atome
wakes a litle slippe in raw disportes

as ungoverned you governe,
watch fabulisticke
to get a pleasinge splash
before *Euclid*
forces anie reason

Shave a peece of ash or elm, goe with the curve
toward bluff bows, hollow the hart
to make boyent, tack leade to the base,
cut a slot in the sterne for a rother-blade
and last—by hazel strippes—
add a sparre and rigge

push out in the pool or stream
to get under weigh
a frigot light as a Lark

squilge
by water-plant
leaves
in swaily weave

glide
sheeney
over drinke-spill
zodiake
ruffles

little landsman
pitched
fore-ward
with fantome crew

a first gliffe
of green montaines
scattered spray

sea-twine
of jutting capes

Any plot here is big
below names rudely cutte:
a fizgig maine imbancked,
a foame circle, bobbing
twigges or strigges

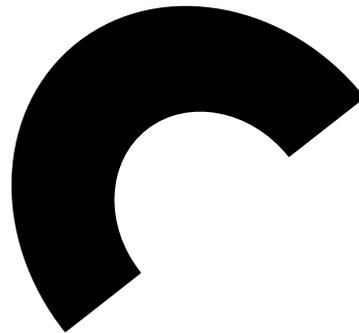
O the captain is a duck
quack—quack, don't you see
at veere and tourne
that fancie jacket on his back?

PSSSST

shiii

pssss

tuh

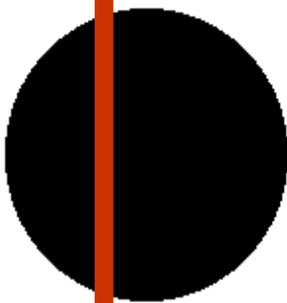


Punkt
Twig
No
punct-
u/ation .

recumbent Fold

IN

dots
of
flint



punkt und linie zu fläche

[point and line to surface]

Confluence

Fluvial

Inter-
locking

spur

shift.

yet tung

pokes

curiosity

sift. in

through bit

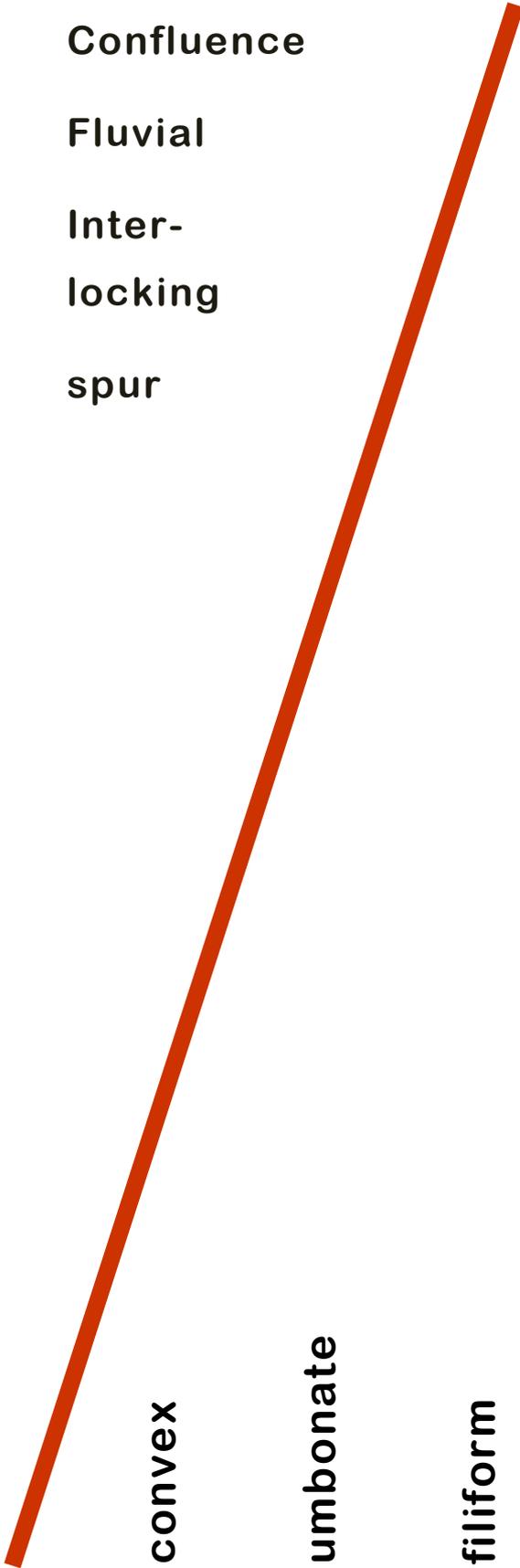
idle pocket

debris

sensed

mit

aggregation



convex

umbonate

filiform

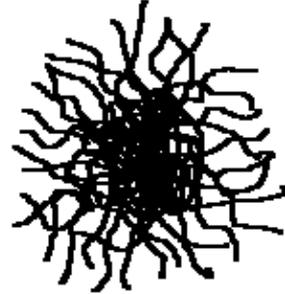
lobate



Fragment
ye are,
but aint it
tho



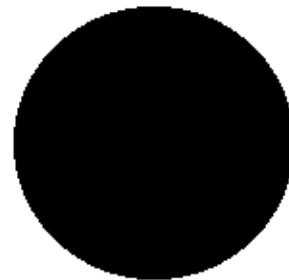
Practice yr
glottals



November
is only a
spt LIKE



how he
called his
Lud vig



where
is not the
same as
Bt fr
instance

TIGHTLY

BOUND

SILT .

IN .

SLITS

GO

MUD .

CHUTE . TO

LIME .

HOUSE . CUT



AH

work in progress

AH

Glossary of terms

AH

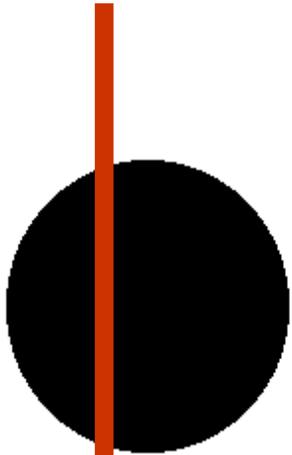
convergence or precipitation

AH

Fundamental Niche without

AH

fect



Das is nicht devoto

This is

Urgent

HOWK

neoclits on

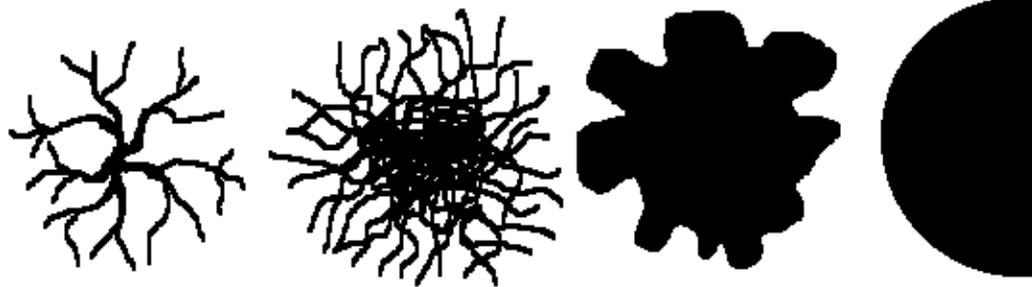
testosterone

HOWK

collective violence re

constitutes

HOWK



[point and line to surface]

SHTTTT

dots of twigs

Punkte twigs no

Punkt uation

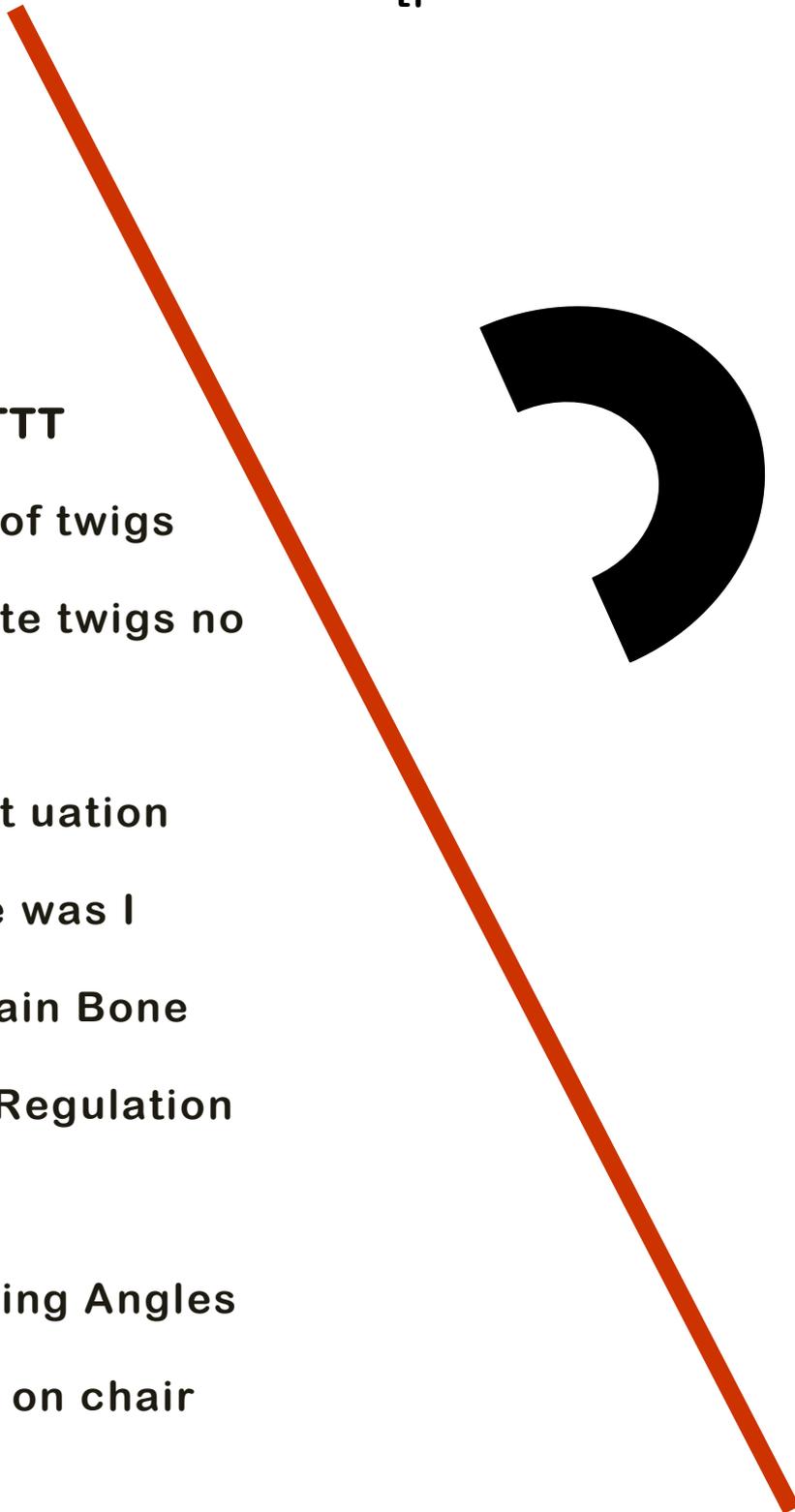
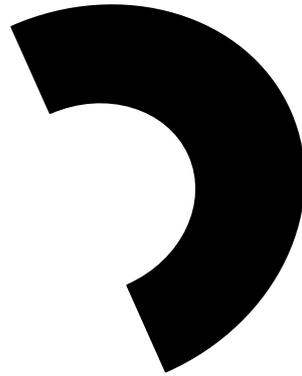
there was I

Captain Bone

Self-Regulation

marking Angles

hand on chair



Composé / improviser: poésies en mouvement 3. An event at Le Contretemps, Geneva. Richard Price

A year in the planning, the third *poésies en mouvement* from macaronic.ch presented nine separate works, the first two being the installation 'passi' by Viola Pfister and 'insectuino' by Pierre Dunand Filliol and Alexander Chan A.

Pfister's soundscape, field recordings of the wind re-rendered to a marching rhythm, was activated randomly as visitors surveyed the many poems, in Swiss Italian, with a few translated into French. These Pfister had delicately written out on cards on a hanging device which was half-tree and half-wire fence. There were also blank cards on the structure for visitors to add to their own works, in the spirit of the improvisation of the event – the offer was taken up in gentle eddies of activity by the audience over the length of the evening.

The 'insectuino' is a robot beetle devised by Infolipo artists. It's about the size of a bag of flour. Its two front feet terminate in little crayons. This little motorised creature entered into the improvisational spirit of the evening by drawing randomly on the paper beneath him (he or she appears to be influenced by Cy Twombly in his gentle para-inscriptions phase – and is a delight).

The first performance of the evening was conceived and performed by the choreographer Nathalie Corthay, accompanied by the dancer Nagi Gianni. They began as the audience were still filing in and mulling around in the vicinity of the installations. 'Railroad' is a work adapted to the tiny cave of a place that is the Contretemps, a little like London's 100 Club, but smaller. The couple begin in the curious box created by a transparent emergency door and a further door one pace behind it. Are they in intimate relation to each other, are they suffocating each other? Soon Gianni is lifting, pulling, tugging Corthay through the crowd and into the second room where the night's performances are scheduled to take place. She is reading what might be letters – the kerfuffle and my slow French are inhibitors of comprehension but I'm told later that the text is about the trains of the piece's title (Corthay is also being 'railroaded' by Gianni).

The strange struggle continues. The extraordinary physicality of this piece – it is a work of stylised violence – is played hard against Corthay's purity of concentration as she determines to read her text, almost *be* her text, a harbour wall against the angry male sea. I think of earlier images in art of women contemplating the written word, the world, for example, held at bay by the poise of Vermeer's concentrating, absorbed women. Corthay's work is both a continuation of that theme and an acknowledgement that the world, on the contrary, is brutally incursive and, as a defence

against it, the word is almost as desperate a recourse as any other.

The piece ends in silence, with Corthay abandoned in a corner, a projector merely stamping the symbol of light – a torch – on the lower part of the wall where she lies, its flicker making her face all the more pale.

The work by Marina Salzmänn and Alexa Montani finds Montani improvising stark, infrequent notes at the upright piano (sometimes reaching into its carcass to strike its bones directly). Salzmänn stands as if transfixed, centre stage. Behind her, to her left, a projection of skaters on ice appears intermittently. Montani improvises to Salzmänn's improvisations and vice versa: the tone is an expectation of rapture, or a memory that is frustrated by its inability to articulate such pleasure.

A change of tone entirely for the next piece. Have you had your manicure, yet? If so, you may now proceed to play the gramophone record, using each brightly-red-varnished nail as a stylus. Olivia Adatte, accompanied by Nathalie Corthay working the levels, carries out live scratching on vinyl records. She creates sonic surfscapes from the crackle and static, with transducer wires from her finger tips out to the public address system.

Next is the piece by the poets Peter McCarey and Richard Price and electronica musician Pierre Dunand Filliol (whose robot co-creation we've seen earlier). 'Drones', as introduced by McCarey, uses a four-mood structure to offer a 'drone' that, rather than being a machine of summary execution, is musical and expressive (though a sinister tone is never far from the performance, and the weapon returns right at the end of the piece).

Four poems from McCarey's monumental syllabary project, backed by Filliol's at times ethereal analogue Moog, highlight both the gravel in McCarey's voice and the uncanny precision of his Scots English lexis. In a shock development Price appears to have finally both raised his volume at readings and mastered the microphone (not least, one suspects, because of the work by Thierry Simonot, more often a sound poet in his own right but tonight the engineer holding everything in place). Price observes the four-part structure with a combination of lyricized but fragmented narrative, mimicry of domestic communications – "There's a call for you!" he sings out - , a short riff on non-verbal exclamations of disappointment ("Aw-aw!") and the final account of what must be the drone-led killing of two children in 'occupied territory'.

The two poets finish the piece stock still for a whole minute as Filliol reprises the sounds of military aircraft and heavenly jangle

(a cicada? a buzzsaw? or the tinnitus of angels described in McCarey's prefatory piece?).

Colette and Günther Ruch's "Blätterteig" places each at a separate card table, facing each other. Between them, but set back, is a projection. The theme is cards and the sort of cup and ball game you still sometimes see played in the street, onlookers gambling on what cup conceals the ball. Either performer may call out a number and when they do this seems to change the direction of the performance. As with so many of the evening's pieces a system does not seem to obliterate the human scale: rather, there is a polarisation, a 'parallel foregrounding', even a valorisation of both. In this way, when, early on in the piece, the projection hiccups and this is not apparently intended, Colette Ruch's equally unplanned exclamation – "Problème" – seems in keeping with it all. The performance is soon back on track, with a terrifically clicky sound texture for the cups as they are being placed on the pingpong balls.

Yvan Borin and Pierre Thoma's work also positions two performers at tables facing each other. This time the tension of the game is gone altogether – this is the transaction of tedium, almost a Beckett of the office.

Finally Pierre Audétat's three short video works plunder YouTube for multiscreen antics. Perhaps the most achieved is an affectionate homage to orchestra conductors and even M. Moog himself, with some witty sugar icing in the shape of a one-note appearance by piano-ham Richard Clayderman.

This was a fascinating and stimulating evening. In conception the closest I know is the PolyPly programme of text-based performances (<http://polyply.wordpress.com/>), run under the auspices of Royal Holloway, University of London, and also some of the performances within Jeff Hilson's Xing [ie Crossing] the Line reading series, again, London-based.

Painted, spoken

Jeff Hilson
Alexander Hutchison
James McGonigal
Peter McCarey
Frances Presley
Gavin Selerie
Linus Slug

Richard Price reports on
Composé/improviser, Geneva

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