

## EA(P) - NOTES ON THE PROGRAM + TEXTS

*"They Wash Their Ambassadors in Citrus and Fennel (1994) is based on a poem by Robert Gregory and is dedicated to Joan La Barbara, who commissioned the work. The composition's incorporation of a variety of extended vocal techniques is inspired by La Barbara's use of the voice. Its formal structure is greatly influenced by both the larger design and internal form of Gregory's poem. This poem is of special interest to me because of its many internal cross-references. These recurring referential structures are similar to musical ideas that I have explored in recent works. The computer-generated tape was created in Sweden's national Electronic Music Studios (EMS) where I was in residence as a Guggenheim Fellow in the fall of 1994. Much of the material on the tape is derived from Joan La Barbara's voice. I am indebted to her for providing me with rich source material. I thank Robert Gregory for allowing me to set his poem. I am also grateful to the Guggenheim Foundation and EMS for providing me with the necessary resources to realize this composition."* – Jon Christopher Nelson

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*"The inspiration for Vous, l'inaccessible came to me years before the piece was actually written. I first heard the Medieval virelai Douce Dame Jolie in an introductory music history class at Ohio University in the fall of 2005. I was immediately taken by the beauty of the vocal melody and within months became fascinated with the idea of doing a modern setting of the melody. In the winter of 2012, I began talking with soprano Liz Pearse about the idea of writing her a piece for solo voice and live electronics. I thought it would be a good opportunity to merge the two projects and create a setting of Douce Dame Jolie with fixed and live electronics. I have included the use of a separate text by an anonymous author at the end of the piece – a kind of modern take on the theme of unattainable love.*

*The end result is a piece containing three layers of evolution: 1. Electronic accompaniment as opposed to the traditional acoustic accompaniment. 2. Evolution of singing style from chant-like to a quotation of the melody followed by deconstruction of the melody into fragmented distortions of the melody, and 3. The use of the Medieval text against the modern text, both drawing similar themes, the latter a modern take on the former."* – Jon Fielder

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*"now our grief is put away uses the poem titled Khao Lak Paradise Resort by Anne Shaw in her book, Undertow. I found Anne after searching for poets I wanted to set for a different project. This poem leapt off the page with its vivid imagery and haunting descriptions of the tsunami that occurred on December 24, 2004 in the Southeast Pacific which included Thailand, the setting for this poem. Due to its length and singularity of subject, I decided to not include this poem in what would eventually become Transit for soprano, vibraphone, and double bass but rather set the work as its own piece. The poem is filled with Anne's own description of her experience in the relief efforts, sayings from Thai culture, and descriptions from survivors of the tsunami. Shaw writes, 'Thai culture allows a mourning period of 100 days, after which the soul of the departed - and the lives of the living - must move on,' as a description for the line, now our grief is put away.*

*In setting the work, I did not want to try and take the audience to the places described but rather give them snapshots of moments or resurfacing memories they might have if they experienced this horrific event. The reader of the spoken text in the electronics is Anne Shaw who, kindly, lent her voice to this project. "* – Robert McClure

*“The title Lonh, meaning ‘far away’ or ‘distant’, comes from Occitan, the Old Provençal language in which the text is sung. The text itself, a poem about love from afar, famous among scholars of medieval poetry, is attributed to the medieval troubadour Jaufré Rudel.*

*The work loosely follows the form of the poem in structure, and is divided into nine sections. Symmetrical and repeating elements may be found in the solo soprano part, which uses fragments from the original poem quite freely, so that the resulting text is really a collage based on Rudel’s song.*

*In the electronic part, the text may be heard in three languages: Occitan, French and English. The texts in Occitan were read by the poet Jacques Roubaud – who has studied the poem extensively, and also translated it into French – and also by Julie Parsillé, a young French girl. The Modern French version was read by Jean-Baptiste Barrière, and the English text by Dawn Upshaw, whose recorded singing voice is also included in the sound material heard in the electronic part.*

*This vocal material, together with various concrete sounds of, for example, birds, wind and rain, was processed using a variety of IRCAM transformation programs, such as resonant filters (Chant programme), cross-synthesis and stretching with the phase-vocoder (AudioSculpt programme), etc. After a preliminary mixing with ProTools, the sound materials were projected into a virtual acoustic, and moved through a three-dimensional space (Spatialisateur programme on the IRCAM Musica Workstation). The electronic part was realised at IRCAM with the assistance of Gilbert Nouno, and with the help and supervision of Jean-Baptiste Barrière.” – Kaija Saariaho*

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*“La fabbrica illuminata is a composition for voice and four-track magnetic tape dedicated to the factory workers at the Italsider steel plant in Genoa-Cornigliano, with texts by (and elaborated by) Giuliano Scabia and a fragment of Due poesie a T. by Cesare Pavese. Although it was written expressly for the opening concert of the Prix Italia 1964, it was not performed on that occasion because the administration of the Rai found the strong political bias of the texts to be offensive to the Italian government. The first public performance consequently took place in Venice on 15 September 1964, during the XXVII International Festival of Contemporary Music – La Biennale, with mezzo-soprano Carla Henius as soloist and Luigi Nono as sound director...*

*In May 1964 Nono...went to the Italsider steel plant in Genoa to collect material on the working and living conditions of the laborers there. They recorded industrial noises and sounds of the men at work, while Scabia wrote down some of the words, orders, and factory slang he heard and came away with union publications that would be useful for assembling the text...For the tape Nono used selections of music sung by the chorus of the Rai of Milan directed by Giulio Bertola, ‘thematic’ improvisations sung by mezzo-soprano Carla Henius, voices and noises from the Italsider plant, and synthesized sounds. All this material was elaborated at the Rai Studio of Musical Phonology in Milan, where it was combined and electronically modified often beyond recognition. Nono described it thus: ‘No camouflage, no mirror images. No industrial arcadia. No popular or populist naturalism’. The live solo voice then intersects with the tape during performance to create a dialogue with the recorded text.*

*La fabbrica illuminata consists of four episodes:*

- 1. Coro iniziale (Opening chorus) [Corale I, II, III and IV]*
- 2. Solo tape*
- 3. Giro del letto (Circling the Bed)*
- 4. Tutta la città (All of the City) + Finale”*

*- Luca Cossettini, from the critical edition*

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*I wish to thank a few folks: **Jon Fielder**, for making countless Logic sessions and making this recital run; **Dr. Jane Schoonmaker Rodgers**, my lovely and patient teacher; **Dr. Lillios**, the wizard of all things electronic, **Mark Bunce**; my doctoral committee – **Dr. Vincent Kantorski**, **Dr. Andrew Pelletier**, and **Dr. Ron Scherer**; my ever-supportive BG family, my parents and siblings; and Gary, without whom I would know nothing about electronic music.*

*They Wash Their Ambassadors in Citrus and Fennel* - Robert Gregory

*you who reject the shadow  
it's nothing but noise in here sometimes:  
shouts, alarms, singing  
it can alter the depth of the shining they say  
of the luminous membrane in which the mind is wrapped*

*la curandera she told me: go close to the only hot shadow  
that's how to cure a longing from a long time back  
as long as human time can be, which suffers no diminishing  
nor doubts which form to take and takes form as dust  
to gather on the skin there where the two become one,  
like a tree that bears large silent flowers*

*when I was small I would get myself outside somehow  
(it's difficult to be inside sometimes)  
I would walk a long way just to be silent and to be in motion*

*here where inside and outside are nearly the same  
you can walk only at night; otherwise you'll burn yourself,  
you'll let death into your skin  
and at night there are voices to help you  
the people who sit outside on balconies  
on chairs saved from the trash  
will talk about you in a language you don't understand yet  
telling stories about your famous journeys  
and your secret sorrows; and everywhere  
cats keep an eye on reality so that it will continue;  
and in the torn interiors  
of uninhabitable structures they gather to look at each other*

*how can this feeling be broken?  
maybe no one really knows  
they say it's a road or just what it is, that's all  
or say: the broken heart, the burning child  
the life that slowly tightens*

*therefore what's loose as a shadow in a high wind  
what's beautiful with three secret flaws  
let cunning drop away  
come curve against me*

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Gregory, Robert. *Boy Picked Up By The Wind*. Emporia, Kansas: Bluestem Press, 1992.

## ***Vous, l'Inaccessible – 2 texts***

### ***Douce Dame Jolie – Guillaume de Machaut***

*Douce dame jolie,  
Pour dieu ne pensés mie  
Que nulle ait signorie  
Seur moy fors vous seulement.*

Sweet, lovely lady  
for god's sake do not think  
that any has sovereignty  
over my heart, but you alone.

*Qu'adès sans tricherie  
Chierie  
Vous ay et humblement  
Tous les jours de ma vie  
Servie  
Sans villain pensement.  
Helas! et je mendie  
D'esperance et d'aïe;  
Dont ma joie est fenie,  
Se pitié ne vous en prent.  
Douce dame jolie.*

For always, without treachery  
Cherished  
Have I you, and humbly  
All the days of my life  
Served  
Without base thoughts.  
Alas, I am left begging  
For hope and relief;  
For my joy is at its end  
Without your compassion.  
Sweet, lovely lady....

*Mais vo douce maistrie  
Maistrie  
Mon cuer si durement  
Qu'elle le contralie  
Et lie  
En amour tellement  
Qu'il n'a de riens envie  
Fors d'estre en vo baillie;  
Et se ne li ottrie  
Vos cuers nul aligement.  
Douce dame jolie.*

But your sweet mastery  
Masters  
My heart so harshly,  
Tormenting it  
And binding  
In unbearable love,  
[My heart] desires nothing  
but to be in your power.  
And still, your own heart  
renders it no relief.  
Sweet, lovely lady....

*Et quant ma maladie  
Garie  
Ne sera nullement  
Sans vous, douce anemie,  
Qui lie  
Estes de mon tourment,  
A jointes mains deprie  
Vo cuer, puis qu'il m'oublie,  
Que temprement m'ocie,  
Car trop languis longuement.*

And since my malady  
Will not  
Be annulled  
Without you, Sweet Enemy,  
Who takes  
Delight of my torment  
With clasped hands I beseech  
Your heart, that forgets me,  
That it mercifully kill me  
For too long have I languished.

### **Translation of the second, anonymous text:**

*"It comes to this, two lovers who conduct themselves like perfect strangers. How has this come to pass? I can ask myself this question again and again, and I think of thousands of solutions to the same problem. I continue to try to find solutions that justify your point of view, justify my point of view. Was it me who offended you? Is it that I'm not busy enough? Is it that I work too much? Was it the disorder of your emotions that I caused, or your reluctance to be open to emotion? I can ask these questions again and again. In the end, however, there is only one reason we have reached this impasse. In the end, I love you, and I will always love you. It is you who does not love me."*

*now our grief is put away* – Anne Shaw

Khao lak paradise resort

*Thailand, 2006*

She scrubs the courtyard with a ragged broom  
as red ants climb and bite. In the morning,  
every morning, there is rain.

Something tourists look at. Something to consume.

Bottles of amber gasoline  
ranged on a roadside stand.  
Blue plastic funnel swinging in the wind.

How to compass a country: my glasses  
smeared with sweat.

*Now our grief is put away—*

Green loops of jungle overtake red road.

\*

Papaya trees and bo trees,  
corrugated metal on the sand.  
On the shoreline, mattresses,

bottles. Bookbags. Clumps of string  
where the ocean, having eaten  
recedes to chew its cud—

\*

Later, we ride in trucks  
past boats that ploughed ashore  
*Orange Devil and Blue Angel*  
propellers sunk deep in the clay.

Everywhere, framed faces of the dead.  
As if they have yet to discover.  
As if a *when* existed,

as if a *where*.

\*

The sun is a finger pushing through  
the plastic sheet of sky.

\*

Skin of the morning breaks  
her body the color of teak  
she scrubs the courtyard with a ragged broom

as a shrimp farmer checking his crop  
holds a jar of water  
to the light.

Through the jar  
there are people running.  
Through the jar, a wall of black sea.

*Then there was not one bird sound. Not one dog.*

\*

*I heard the water coming, the sound of breaking  
glass—*

*Trees and roots were stuck across a door.*

*I said to myself, Patrice, you have to break your leg.*

*To become one with the water, not to fight.*

*I took a breath of water.  
I began to kick and die.*

*At first it was very painful in my body  
then it was very beautiful  
sound and light*

\*

*Mei dei, she says, could not  
the child swept from her arms—  
A yellow gecko ripples down the wall.*

\*

*On the razor-wire fence  
their bodies sliced like soap—*

\*

As if to enumerate. As if to begin.  
But the bag of salt I carry in my sack  
cannot suffice

for her body the color of teakwood,  
for the gold and sodden color  
of her name.

\*

*When we washed up, we were naked.  
I hung by my foot from a tree.*

*Smell of fish and sewer, salt and mud.*

\*

A night sky filled with birds  
*op op grip grip* of frogs.  
In the hall, our sandals wet with sand,  
green jungle and red earth.

The one white thread that binds us all  
held in the hands of the monks.

*And the tree had yellow flowers.*

A leaf embossed with rain  
scent of onion  
crushed in the soiled air.

\*

from *Undertow*, by Anne Shaw, Persea Books 2008

*Months after, on the beach,  
someone asked him for a cigarette.  
When he turned there was no one there*

*but he felt a thump on his chest.*

*Then he spoke in English for an hour  
—this is verified—then he said  
in English, I want to go home.*

\*

New houses  
calamine-lotion pink  
but we paint the child's room white

The ocean offers one blue palm  
as if to show it's empty  
then spits up a bone—

\*

How to compass a country. How else  
to begin. *Evil spirits bent the tree  
on which the ocean rests—*

As the child framed by muddy road  
waves to our passing truck  
recites from her father's arms

*hello bye bye*

## **Lonh – Jaufré Rudel**

*Lanqand li jorn son lonc en mai  
m'es bels douz chans d'auzels de loing  
e qand me sui partitz de lai  
remembra-m d'un'amor de loing  
vauc de talan enbroncs e clis  
si que chans ni flors d'albespis  
no-m platz plus que l'inverns gelatz.*

*Ja mais d'amor no-m gauzirai  
si no-m gau d'est'amor de loing  
que gensor ni meillor non sai  
vas nuilla part ni pres ni loing  
tant es sos pretz verais e fis  
que lai el renc dels sarrazis  
fos eu per lieis chaitius clamatz.*

*Iratz e gauzens m'en partrai  
qan veirai cest'amor de loing  
mas non sai coras la-m veirai  
car trop son nostras terras loing  
assatz i a portz e camis  
e per aisso non sui devis  
mas tot sia cum a Dieu platz.*

*Be-m parrai jois qan li qerrai  
per amor Dieu l'amor de loing  
e s'a lieis plai albergarai  
pres de lieis si be-m sui de loing  
adoncs parra-l parlamens fis  
qand drutz loindas er tant vezis  
c'ab bels digz jauzirai solatz.*

*Ben tenc lo Seignor per verai  
per q'ieu veirai l'amor de loing  
mas per un ben que m'en eschai  
n'ai dos mals car tant m'es de loing  
ai car me fos lai peleris  
si que mos fustz e mos tapis  
fos pelz sieus bels huoills remiratz.*

*Dieus qe fetz tot qant ve ni vai  
e fermet cest'amor de loing  
me don poder qe-l core eu n'ai  
q'en breu veia l'amor de loing  
veraiamen en locs aizis  
si qe la cambra e-l jardis  
mi resembles totz temps palatz.*

*Ver ditz qui m'apella lechai  
ni desiran d'amor de loing  
car nuills autre jois tant no-m plai  
cum jauzimens d'amor de loing  
mas so q'eu vuoill m'es tant ahis  
q'enaissi-m fadet mos pairis  
q'ieu ames e non fos amatz.*

When the days are long in May  
The sweet song of birds from afar seems lovely to me  
And when I have left there  
I remember a distant love  
I walk bent and bowed with desire  
So much so that neither song nor Hawthorn flower  
Please me more than the icy winter.

Never will I enjoy love  
If I do not enjoy this distant love  
For a nobler or better one I do not know  
Anywhere, neither near nor far  
So high is its true, real price  
That there, in the kingdom of the Saracens  
I wish to be proclaimed her captive.

Sad and joyous, I will separate from her  
When I see that distant love  
But I know not when I will see her  
For our lands are too far away  
There are so many passages and paths  
And in this I am no seer  
But let everything be according to God's will.

I will feel joy for sure when I ask her  
For the love of God the distant love  
And if it pleases her I will live  
Near her even if I am from far away  
Then will come our faithful meeting  
When I, the faraway lover, will be so near  
That I will console myself with her beautiful words.

I really trust in the Lord  
Through whom I will see the distant love  
But for something that fails me  
I have two sorrows for she is so far away  
Ah, if only I were a pilgrim there  
So that my stick and my bundle  
Could be seen by her lovely eyes!

God who made everything that comes and goes  
And formed this distant love  
Grant me the power of my heart  
Soon to see the distant love  
Truly in a propitious place  
And that the room and garden  
Always appear as palaces to me.

He speaks true who says I am avid  
And longing for the distant love  
For no joy gives me pleasure  
Like the pleasure of the distant love  
But what I want is forbidden to me  
So may my godfather be cursed  
Who made me not to be loved.

**La Fabbrica Illuminata** - sources:

1. Workers at the Italsider-Genoa plant, union contracts (elaborated by Giuliano Scabia);
2. Giuliano Scabia (development of the second fragment of the scene scene of *Un diario italiano*, entitled *Sogno incubo. 5 donne*);
3. Cesare Pavese (fragment from "Due poesie a T.")

*The lines and phrases for the soloist are highlighted in boldface type.*

1.

**factory of death they called it**

workers' exposure

to burns

to toxic fumes

to massive batches of molten steel

workers' exposure

to blistering heat

**for eight hours the worker only gets paid for two**

workers' exposure

to flying debris

**"human relations" to accelerate production**

workers' exposure

to accidental falls

to blinding light

to high-voltage current

**how many MAN-MINUTES to die?**

2.

**and they don't stop**

HANDS

**attacking**

RELENTLESS

how empty the hours

to the BODY

**naked they grab**

dials faces

and they don't stop

they stare THEY STARE eyes immobile eyes hands

evening circling the bed

all my nights

but barren orgasms

**ALL of the city**

**from the dead**

LIVING

we

**continually**

PROTESTS

the crowd gathers, they talk of the DEAD MAN

the cab they call the TOMB

production times are compressed

factory like a concentration camp

KILLED

3.

**the mornings will pass**

**the anguish will fade**

**it will not be this way forever**

**you will recover something**