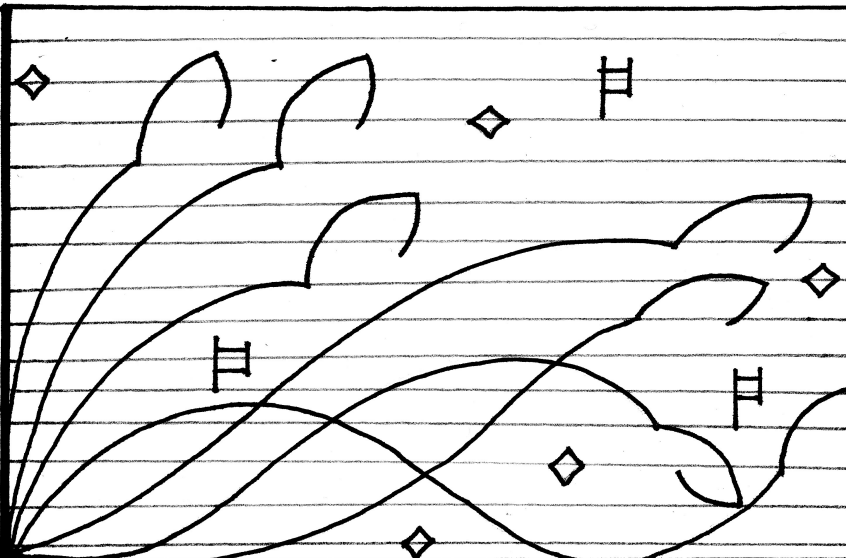
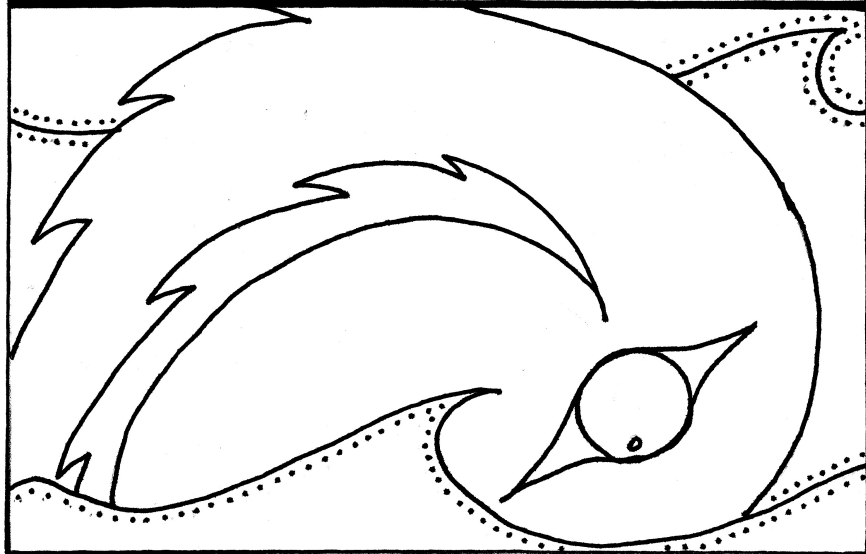


<p>i T H E Ø K T Ø P V S : ( P Ø L Y P V S ) - M A N Y F Ø Ø T E D M Ø N S T R Ø S I T Y : H Y B R I D Ø F F I S H</p>	
	<p>this is a vile fish of no value  </p> <p>therefore cook it the way you want</p> <p>whatever way you cook it  </p> <p>you will say it is bad  </p>

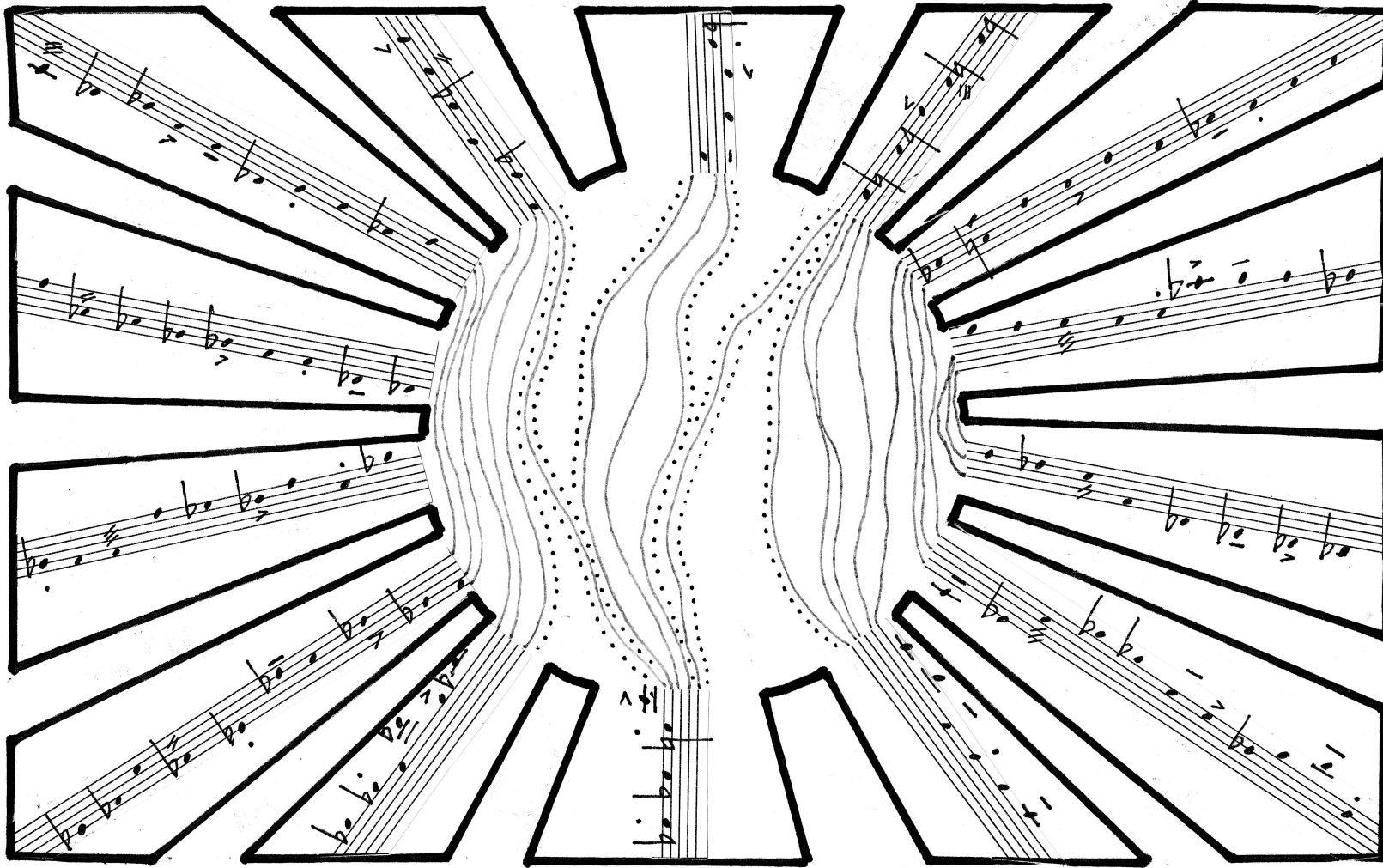
**Lauren Redhead**  
the octopus

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## 300 Word Statement



Lauren Redhead  
*the octopus*  
Music Department  
Goldsmiths, University of London

*the octopus* (2020), graphic score detail.

*the octopus* is a digital opera that presents a nonlinear narrative through a continuous 50 minute piece that combines improvised music, poetry, text and speech and draws on a series of notated and graphic preparatory materials. In 2020, this project also became a study in remote composition and studio improvisation owing to the pandemic restrictions that were in place at that time, but also extending aspects of these practices that were already previously present in my compositional work. This portfolio documents the collaborative compositional approaches that led to improvisation in the studio with my own materials and those of my collaborators. In addition, it reveals the way that extractable works used as preparatory materials for a large scale musical composition have been used to enable this new way of working. It documents how the work and its approaches can be disseminated beyond and in addition to the final piece through the performance histories of these parts, and through the creation of related materials that make the process of the piece's creation accessible in an online environment. Through this project, I have extended my iterative practices of working with source materials, documented in this portfolio through the mapping of original and compositional sources to the structure of the final digital composition. Through these methods, this project has allowed me to re-conceive how 'improvisation' can be understood in a contemporary electronic context through my collaborations with improvising musicians and the development of further solo improvisatory processes in a studio context. This allowed me to work with the materials created at a time when these processes could not be realised 'live'.

# Summary and Research Questions

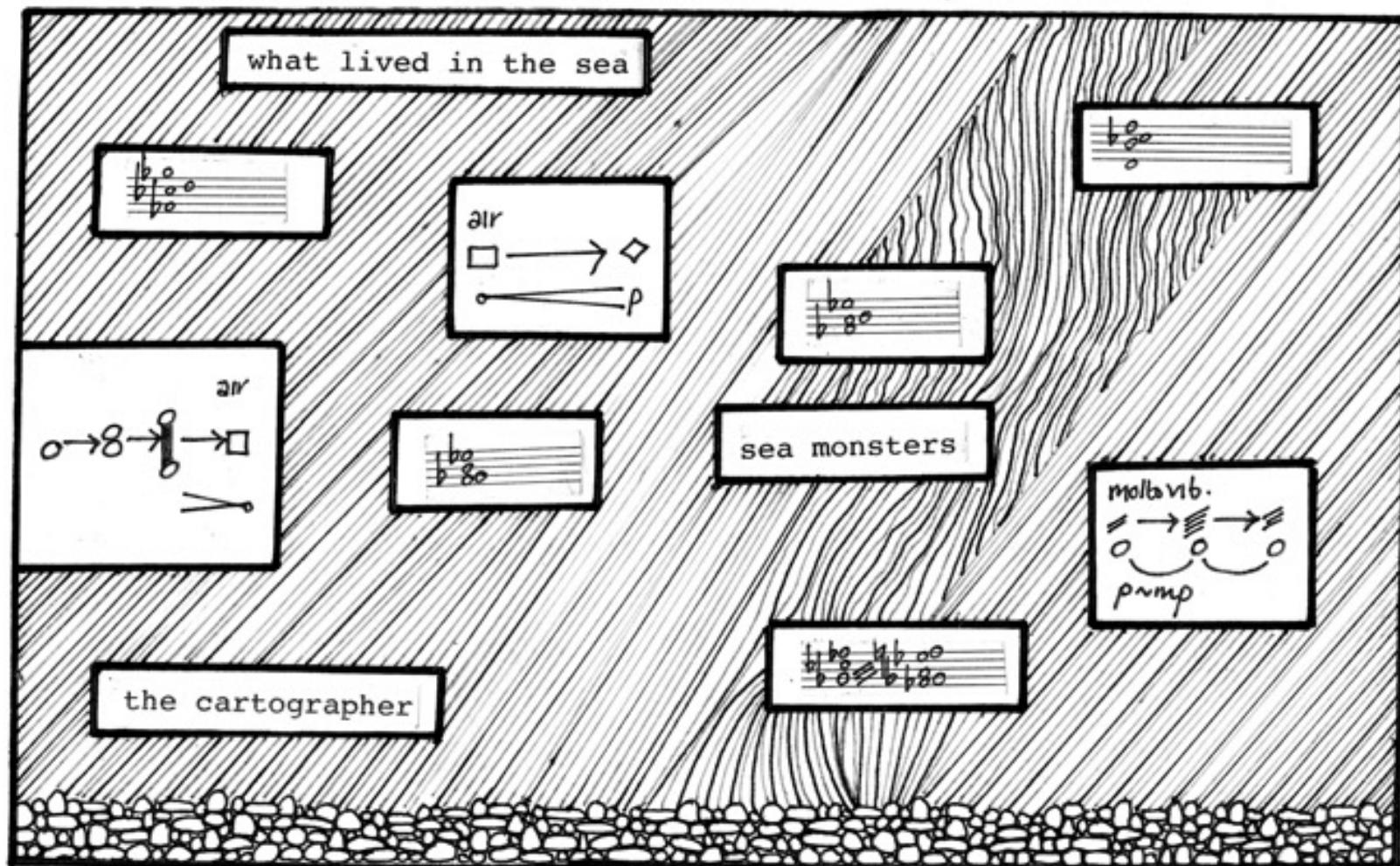
*the octopus* is a 50 minute digital opera combining notated composition, studio composition, improvisation, and poetry. Originally planned as a live performance work, during the lockdown in 2020 the music was re-conceived and composed as a digital recorded work. The piece asks questions such as:

- how improvised music can be combined with a fixed, if nonlinear, musical narrative?
- how is it possible to develop music through means of improvisation in circumstances where all of the musicians are not able to hear the 'live' contributions of their collaborators?
- how can graphic, improvised, and textual materials be combined to realise a non-linear musical narrative?
- how can 'digital opera' be

conceived as a medium to realise these ideas?

I approached this problem by the composition of fragmentary and extractable works that can themselves be considered stand-alone compositions. These compositions and their place within the overall composition of the piece are detailed and presented in this portfolio, along with aspects of the narrative of collaboration in the creation of the work. In showing how the piece developed and is still developing through various methods of online presentation, I also document how remote collaboration was possible in the case of this piece, and how that was externalised as part of the work's demonstration.





Lauren Redhead  
*the octopus*  
 Music Department  
 Goldsmiths, University of London

*the octopus* (2020), graphic score detail.

## Methods

The creation of the digital opera *the octopus* combines methods of improvisation and collaborative composition. In order to externalise these compositional processes, this work employed the creation of a series of preparatory and extractable works, treated as compositions in their own right and publicly presented. This method was used to externalise the narrative of composition and the processes used in the work.

Beyond this, the piece also became a study in remote composition owing to its final creation during the time period of the lockdown. This emphasised the use of improvisation in a studio context as part of my compositional practice, as I was required to work with improvisatory materials from collaborators who had never met or heard each other play. These processes are here documented through the presentation of the extractable works and video presentations of parts of the piece and its creative processes.

# Dissemination: Album

[the octopus, pan y rosas discos \(Chicago, 2020\) pyr299](#)

...to believe in the octopus, one must have seen it...

the octopus is a digital opera that explores the changing aesthetics of the undersea from the imagined perspective of the octopus. While climate change narratives focus most frequently on data about temperature, population numbers, or the material composition of the atmosphere and ocean, this piece 'listens' to the environment in order to contemplate the subjective experience of wildlife of their subtly changing environment. It both considers the 'alien' nature of life under the ocean, and considers the equally alien nature of life above the ocean to its protagonist.

The poet acts partly as a narrator, guiding the listener through the ocean, encountering text from Victor Hugo's 1866 novel *Les Travailleurs de la mer*, and introducing a subjective reflection on narratives of the changing ocean environment, imagining its experience, expression, and sound. The instrumental group otherwise 'explores' the alien and undersea setting of the work through improvised responses to the graphic score materials of the project. The musical environment of the undersea is further articulated through electronic sound as a layered and processed sound-sea-scape which uses instrumental and vocal sounds in unfamiliar, uncanny and unrecognisable ways.

Lauren Redhead: composition, spoken voice, piano, organ, electronic sound

Kat Peddie: poetry, spoken voice

Paul Cheneour: flutes

Maureen Wolloshin: oboe

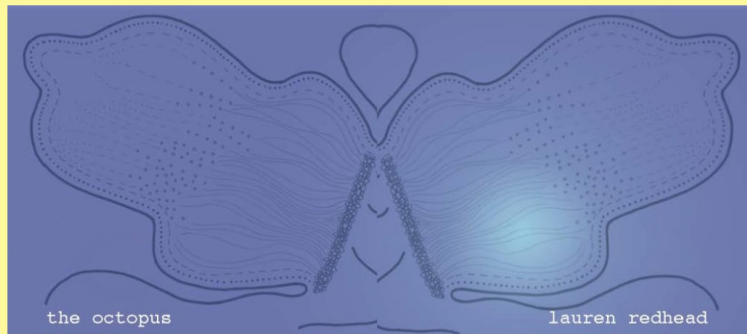
Alistair Zaldua: violin

Rebecca Hardwick: soprano



ARTISTS CATALOG NEWS ABOUT LINKS WHO WE SUPPORT

## pyr299 lauren redhead – the octopus



Note: If you would like to contribute monetarily to the artist, the artist asks that you instead contribute to the organization next to the download link. thank you.

[download mp3](#) / [download flac](#) / [donate to Catching Lives\\*](#)

the octopus

00:00 Ready



release date: December 1, 2020.

### recent releases

Cut A Lonely Figure – *ribcage/davidsongs*

pyr313 – Dirty Electronics Ensemble,  
Jon.Ogara, and Anna Xambo – *Dirty  
Dialogues*

pyr312 – Trio CZW – *Where The Wind  
Takes Us*

pyr311 – Brice Catherin, Jacques  
Demierre, Anouck Genthon, Matthias  
Klenota – *Baroque Summer*

pyr310 – Reid Karris & Clint Spotts – *Hell  
Courtesean*

pyr309 – Keith Helt – *what is what we will  
make*

pyr308 – Philip Corner – *Phoebe Dances  
With Philip*

pyr307 – Treebird – *Treebird (ep)*

pyr306 – Keith Helt – *Hollow Structures*

pyr305 – Keith Helt – *Witchy Slang*

pyr304 – Keith Helt – *loud with insects*

### recent news

Jefferson Park EXP with tay\_ploops and  
Jenna Junk – December 12, 2pm

Lauren Redhead  
the octopus  
Music Department  
Goldsmiths, University of London



# Preparatory Compositional Work

This project enacts a modular approach to the composition, at first through the creation of extractable works. This is an approach familiar to the compositions of largescale works of contemporary music: examples of similar processes can be found in the work of, e.g., Karlheinz Stockhausen (*LICHT: Die Sieben Tagen der Woche*, 1977-2003) and Richard Barrett (*resistance & vision cycle*, 2003-present). These extractable pieces represent both preparatory compositional work and individual pieces in their own right. As such they allow for dialogue between the composer and other musicians in the project, allowing them to conceive something of the whole before it has been composed, even where those collaborators are not musicians or cannot read notated music. Through the creation of these pieces I both invite the audience and my collaborators to experience the final composition before and as it is completed, and I also externalise the compositional process. This process has also been expanded through the extraction of a section of the piece (section 2: 'god made it' as a video presentation, and through the presentation of materials from a recording session with the improvising Trio CZW that was undertaken in preparation for the composition of the final piece (see page 13).

On the next three pages there is an exposition of how the text of the 'narrative' of the piece, derived from Victor Hugo's novel *Les Travailleurs de la mer* (1866), maps to the preparatory compositions, the poems that were written by Dr Kat Peddie, and contextual information about Octopuses derived primarily from popular science articles. One extractable piece, the art song *the octopus*

frames the entire piece in Rebecca Hardwick's soprano performance. The full list of extractable works is as follows:

- *the octopus* (2018): art song for soprano and piano
  - premiere performance: 26 February 2019, performed by Rebecca Hardwick, Borough New Music, London
  - recording: <https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/the-octopus>
- *sketch for low sounds* (2019): electronic composition
  - online dissemination: <https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/sketch-for-low-sounds>
- *phosphorescent* (2018): graphic score and materials for performance by organ, violin and electronics
  - see page 11 for performance history
- *pouring* (2020): organ and electronics
  - see page 12 for performance history

On pages 11-12 two of these pieces (*phosphorescent* and *pouring*) are highlighted as case study stand-alone works by their performance histories.

Section	Narration	Materials	Contextual Materials	Duration
Intro				3'
I	To believe in the octopus, one must have seen it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: <i>"it is possible..."</i></li> <li>Graphic score: "title page"</li> <li>Electronic materials: 'low sounds' sketch: <a href="https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/sketch-for-low-sounds">https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/sketch-for-low-sounds</a></li> </ul>	<p>Changes in ocean temperature and octopuses:  <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/may/23/octopuses-squid-cuttlefish-warming-oceans-climate-change">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/may/23/octopuses-squid-cuttlefish-warming-oceans-climate-change</a></p> <p>Medieval recipes for octopus:  <a href="https://www.medievalists.net/2016/05/the-medieval-way-of-cooking-octopus/">https://www.medievalists.net/2016/05/the-medieval-way-of-cooking-octopus/</a></p>	4.5'
II	Orpheus, Homer, Hesiod only made the Chimera; God made the octopus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: <i>The Chambered Nautilus</i></li> <li>Graphic score: catalogue/taxonomy</li> </ul>	<p>Sea animals including polypus in medieval maps:  <a href="https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-enchanted-sea-monsters-on-medieval-maps-1805646/">https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-enchanted-sea-monsters-on-medieval-maps-1805646/</a></p>	4.5'
III	<p>If terror be the object, the octopus is a masterpiece. It's most terrible quality is its softness. A glutinous mass possessed of a will, what more frightful?</p> <p>Glue filled with hatred.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: <i>A Brief History of Time of</i></li> <li>Graphic score: aquarium</li> </ul>	<p>Contrasting information: 'Other Minds':  <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/15/other-minds-peter-godfrey-smith-review-octopus-philip-hoare">https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/15/other-minds-peter-godfrey-smith-review-octopus-philip-hoare</a></p>	4.5'

Section	Narration	Materials	Contextual Materials	Duration
IV	It is phosphorescent, it awaits the nuptial hour, it adorns itself, it lights up, it illuminates itself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: <i>Do Cuttlefish Dream of Freudian Psychoanalysis</i></li> <li>Graphic score: phosphorescent</li> <li>'phosphorescent':  <a href="https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/phosphorescent">https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/phosphorescent</a> </li> </ul>		4.5'
Interlude	(awaits, adorns, lights up, illuminates, irradiates, superimposes, dreams, devours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Score: 'awaits, adorns, dreams, devours'</li> </ul>		4'
V	In shadowy depths, spread out in pallid irradiation; a spectre sun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: 'what, when it emerges...'</li> <li>Graphic score:</li> <li>'low sounds' sketch:  <a href="https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/sketch-for-low-sounds">https://soundcloud.com/laurenredhead/sketch-for-low-sounds</a> </li> </ul>		4.5'
VI	It has no bones, it has no blood, it has no flesh, it is flabby, there is nothing in it, it is a skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocal fragments</li> <li>Kat Peddie: 'if fear were an octopus...'</li> <li>Graphic score: chorale</li> </ul>	Octopus and blindness: <a href="https://www.newscientist.com/article/2201598-climate-change-may-turn-octopuses-partially-blind-from-lack-of-oxygen/">https://www.newscientist.com/article/2201598-climate-change-may-turn-octopuses-partially-blind-from-lack-of-oxygen/</a>	4.5'

Section	Narration	Materials	Contextual Materials	Duration
VII	It superimposes itself upon you by a thousand mouths: hydra with man, man with hydra, you form but one	Vocal fragments Kat Peddie: <i>Nervous System</i> Graphic score: collage 'pouring': <a href="https://automatronic.bandcamp.com/track/lau-ren-redhead-pouring">https://automatronic.bandcamp.com/track/lau-ren-redhead-pouring</a>		4.5'
VIII	This dream is upon you: the tiger can only devour you. The octopus - oh! Horror! - breathes you in	Text fragments Kat Peddie: <i>Flight of the Argonauts</i> Graphic score: octopus Electronic sounds from 'pouring' and ecstatic music from interlude	Octopus dreaming: <a href="https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/animals/a29231749/dreaming-octopus-changes-color/">https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/animals/a29231749/dreaming-octopus-changes-color/</a>	4.5'
Coda		'pouring' music: <a href="https://automatronic.bandcamp.com/track/lau-ren-redhead-pouring">https://automatronic.bandcamp.com/track/lau-ren-redhead-pouring</a>		2'





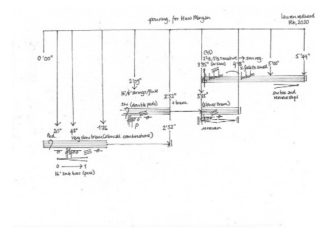
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## pouring

\$15.00

By Lauren Redhead. Music for organ and fixed electronic soundtrack. Digital performance media will be sent separately.



Above: pouring (2020) in the Firehead Organ Works Catalogue

Right: concert programme by Graeme Shields

Lauren Redhead  
the octopus  
Music Department  
Goldsmiths, University of London

## DOUBLE ADVENT

PROGRAM  
Church of St. Peter  
4 December 2021

GOD REST YOU MERRY.....trad., arr. Graeme Shields  
from *circle-dances* (2016-2021)

pouring (2020).....Lauren Redhead  
\*organ and electronics

excerpts from *circle-dances*  
i. 0. prelude - Shields  
ii. 0. MANGER SONG [prelude] - Murray/Kirkpatrick  
ii. 4. IL EST NÉ - trad.  
ii. 7. THE FIRST NOWELL - trad., arr. Stainer

léopcwide (2016).....Lauren Redhead  
\*organ and electronics

O Antiphon Preludes (2010).....Nico Muhly  
O Sapientia  
O Adonai  
O Radix Jesse  
O Clavis David  
O Oriens  
O Rex Gentium  
O Emmanuel

O Come, Emmanuel (Variations on an Advent Hymn) (1995).....Daniel Pinkham



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[www.AmericanCenterofChurchMusic.org](http://www.AmericanCenterofChurchMusic.org)

pouring

### Performance History:

2 December 2021: performed by Graeme Shields, First Christian Reformed Church, Sioux Center, IA

15 February 2020: pouring, performed by Huw Morgan, St Stephen's Church, Bristol, UK. World Premiere.

Recording of Huw Morgan's performance in Bristol:

<https://automatronic.bandcamp.com/track/lauren-redhead-pouring>

### Publication:

This score is published by *Firehead Organ Works*:

<https://fireheadorganworks.com/product/pouring/>

# Discussion and Further Presentation

*the octopus* and its extractable works have been discussed at several events; these have mostly taken place online owing to the time of the piece's composition.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, to coincide with the release of the digital opera, a discussion and launch event was held at the University of Kent's 'Creative Writing Series', with presentations by Lauren Redhead and Kat Peddie on the respective composition of the music and poems in the piece, and on their collaboration.

On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021, Lauren Redhead discussed the piece *phosphorescent* with Kate Molleson as part of a 'Meet the Artist' interview for the 2021 BBCSO Tectonics Festival. This Interview was made available online continuously for 28 days.

On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2021 I presented a research seminar at TU Dublin where I contextualised this work in terms of my

material compositional practices and presented a preview video. Preview videos of the piece are linked on page 14 and extracts from these slides are presented in the appendix of this portfolio. This event also took place online.

*the octopus* is reviewed here at the website: Avant Music News:  
<https://avantmusicnews.com/2020/12/03/amn-reviews-lauren-redhead-the-octopus-2020-pan-y-rosas/>

Lauren Redhead  
*the octopus*  
Music Department  
Goldsmiths, University of London

Above: 'Meet the Artists' interview for  
BBCSO Tectonics Festival

Right: Launch Event at the University  
of Kent

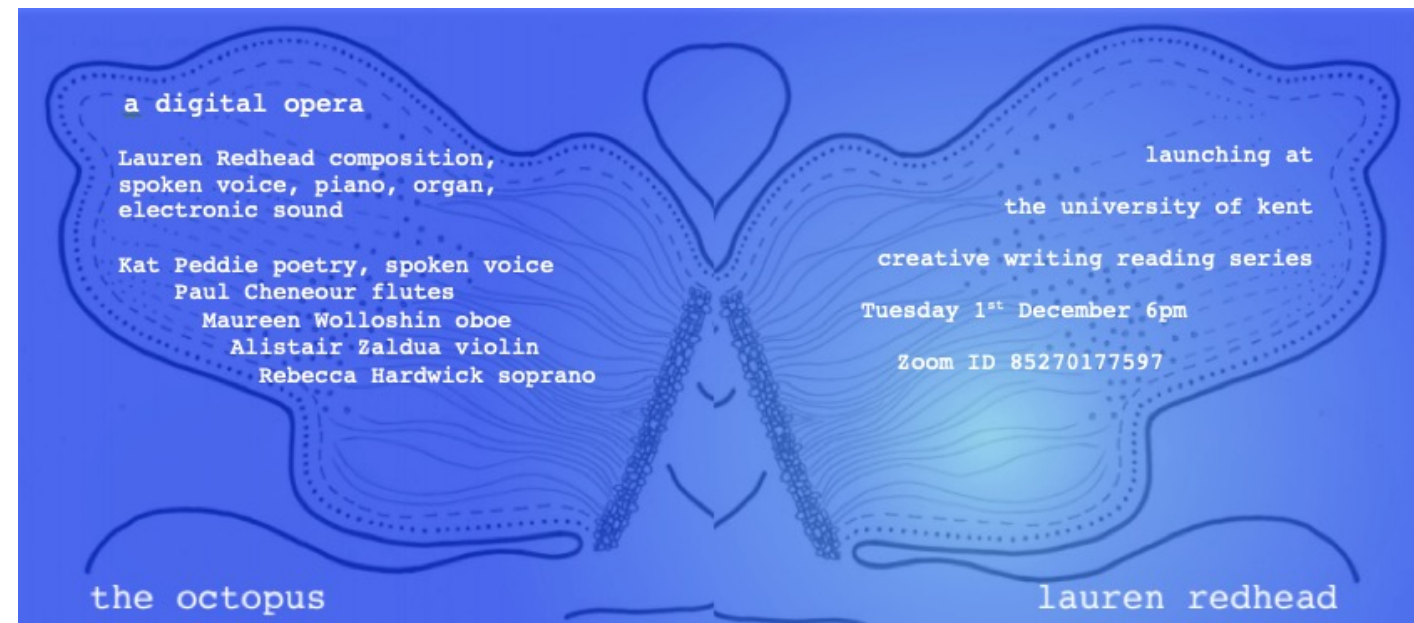
## Meet The Artists Day 2



Sorry, this clip is not currently available

### Meet The Artists Day 2

Kate Molleson chats to artists on Day 2 of Tectonics 2021.





## Preview Videos

Two preview videos were created for online presentation and discussion of the final piece, its methods and collaboration.

The video 'recording 'the octopus' with Trio CZW' combines video images from a live recording session with the improvising group at the Purifier Building in Faversham, owned by the Faversham Creek Trust (a heritage building related to the boat building industry) and audio recordings from the same session.

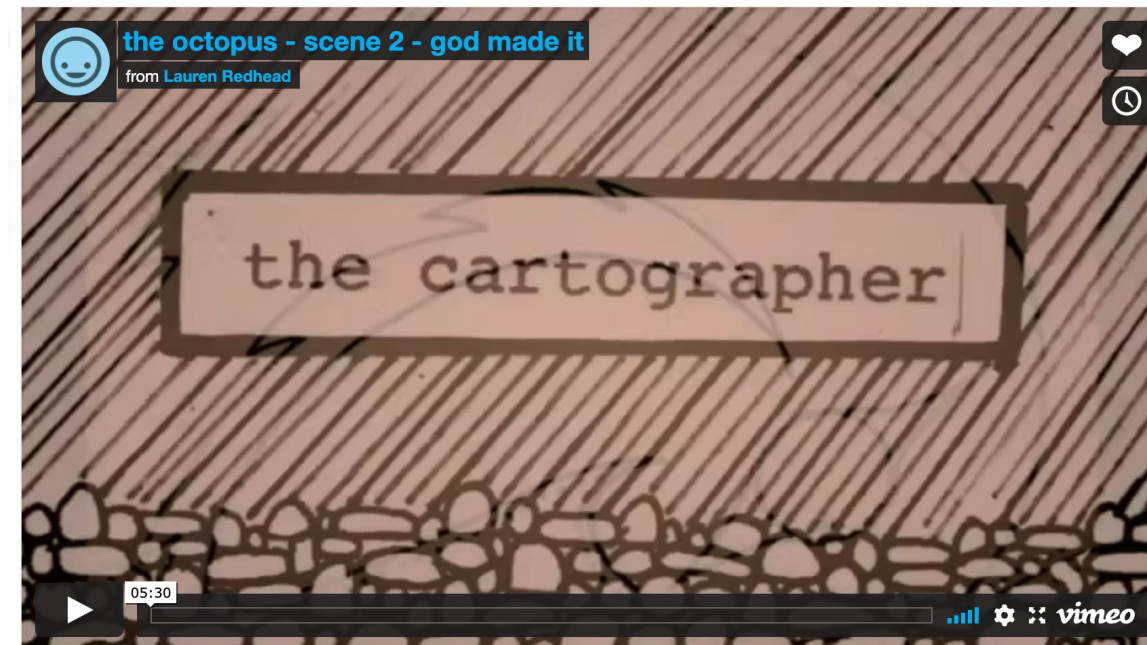
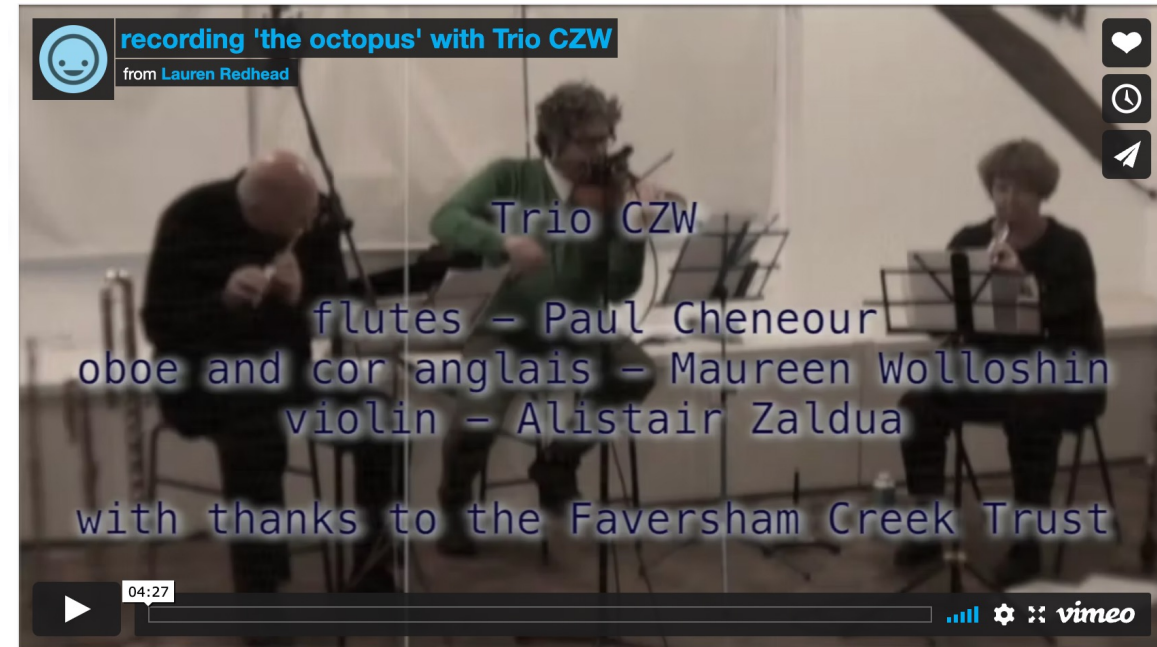
It can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/476384352>

The video 'the octopus – scene 2 – god made it' combines the audio of that section with images from the score using compositional processes that mirror those of the audio.

It can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/481183754>

Password: octopus2

Lauren Redhead  
the octopus  
Music Department  
Goldsmiths, University of London



## Appendix

2018 Art Song Score

---

Graphic Score and  
Recording Instructions

---

Vocal Fragments and  
Recording Instructions

---

Extracts from TU Dublin  
Presentation (slides)

---

the octopus  
2018  
soprano and piano  
lauren redhead  
for Rebecca Hardwick

the octopus

lauren redhead 2018

very slow, accel. to  $\text{♩} \approx 48-60$  slightly more rhythmic  
sotto voce: conspiratorial

Handwritten musical score for "The Octopus" by John Williams. The score is for Soprano and Piano. The Soprano part has lyrics: "to be-lieve in the oc-to-pus - one must have seen it", "or - phe - us, Ho - mer He - si - od o - nly made the chi-me-ra", and "God made the oc-to-pus". The Piano part includes a "shimmer" effect and a "let each ring" section. The score is marked with dynamics like p, pp, mf, and sfz, and includes performance instructions like "following soprano" and "let each ring".

quasi-recit,  $\text{♩} \approx 60-72$   
 mf, more authoritative, some vibrato

if te-rror be the ob-ject — the oc-to-pus

r/h with soprano; l/h may be slightly behind

*(pp)* *(3)* *p* *pp*

is a ma-ster-piece —

repeat as desired:

"rumble"

wait for resonance to die

its most te-rr-ble — qua-a-ty

*(p)* *mf* *(3)* *pp* *p*

is its soft-ness

"rumble"

wait for resonance to die

f: more vib.

a glu-ti-nous mass

*p* *pp* *pump*



*f* cresc. *mf*, conspiratorial

po-ssessed of a will what more fright-ful?

wait for resonance to die

*ppp* "rumble" *p*

(p) *xn*

\*

*f*, voice very dark

glue filled with ha-bred

*mp* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf*

*xn* *xn* *x2*

*p* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf*

*sffz*

\*

*mf*, composed

It is phos-phor-e-scent

*rubato*

bell-like

*f*

*p*

senza rubato, becoming more animated

mf  
it a - woks the nu - ptial hour

mf  
rubato

senza rubato  
more nb, very animated

f  
it a - dorns

mp  
pp

ff  
p

\*

ff  
it self it lights up it i - lu - mi - nates it self

half-spoken

rubato

ff  
p

\*

senza rubato

mf  
in shi - do - wy depths spread out in ps - ued i - ra - di - a - tion

f

3

3

p  
pp

mf  
a spe - cre sun

rubato

f

$\text{♩} = 72$

mp: strict, even

\* una corda

rubato

p sfz p sfz p

each ^ different; pno and soprano progress independently

$\text{♩} = 60$  f, declamatory

suddenly slow;  $\text{♩} = 48$

segno

pp

f

mp

(mp)

(mp)

\* una corda

It has no bones It has no blood It has no flesh

Slower, more chorale-like

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mp*

*mf, grave* *a tempo (x60)*

It is fo- bby

*f*

there is no - thing in it

*mf, dark*

It is a skun

*mf* *pp* *p*

*♩ ≈ 72, quicker, quasi-recit.*

It su- per-im-po- ses it-self u-pon you by a thousand months

rubato

"rumble"

ppp

wait for resonance to die!

senza rubato  
vib.  
f

hy - dra with man man with hy - dra

xn

\*

rubato

"rumble"

ppp

wait for resonance to die

senza rubato  
vib.  
f

you form but one

xn

\*

mf, less vib.

quasi spoken

port

this dream is u-pon you

mp

chorale-like

$\approx 60$  mp mf, grave  
sotto voce, dark

the bi-ger can o- nly de-vour you

bell-like

sim.

$p$   $mp$   $p$   $mp$   $p$

$\approx 48$

breathing in

the o-o-o-pus oh!

ff poss.

$mf$   $f$

$p$   $sfz$   $p$   $sfz$   $p$   $sfz$

$mp$

fff (breathing in)

ho-mor breathes you in

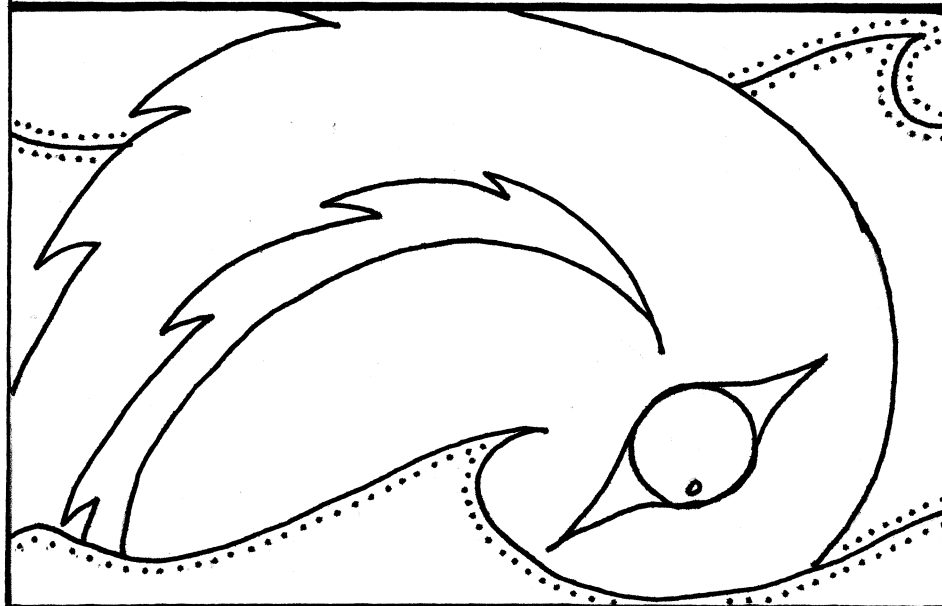
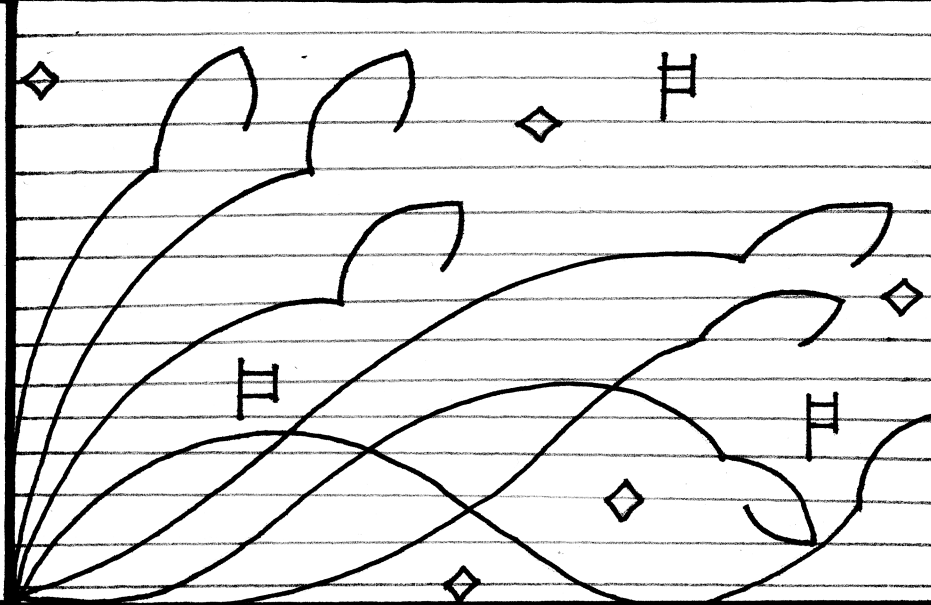
$f$   $mp$

## Graphic Score Instructions for Recording

There are 8 graphic scores. Not all scores need to be recorded. But please record any realisations as below:

- There is no minimum or maximum duration for each score
- Fragments or continuous realisations may be recorded
- Any voice, instrument or sound recordings may be created
- Please record each score separately and label/announce each score in the recording
- You may record any score more than once if you wish

I THE ØKTØP  
 VS: (PØLYP V  
 S) - MANY F  
 ØØTED MONST  
 RØSITY: HYB  
 RID ØF FISH



this is a vile fish of no value

therefore cook it the way you want

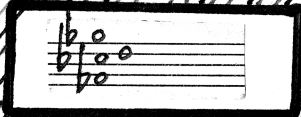
whatever way you cook it

you will say it is bad

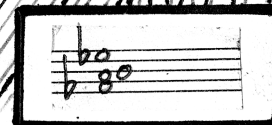
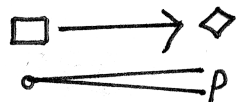


						
sea pig	holothuroides	synaptidae	octopus	tehuatlchus	scorpaeniformes	glaucus
						
scotoplanes	echinodermata	apocida	octopodidae	robsanella	actinopterygus	psychrolutes
						
eliptidae	elasipodida	benthodyte	octopoda	enuptiastes eximia	isopod	psychropote
						
globosa	peniagone	aspidochirotda	cephalopoda	enterectopus	paradoxus	kiwa himata
						
sea cucumber	pelagothuria	psolidae	mollusca	pallidus	phricus	tunicate

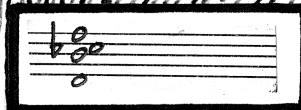
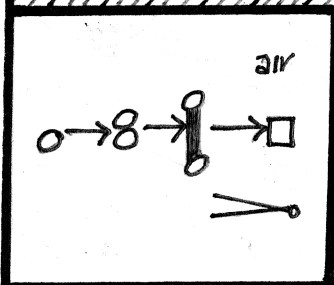
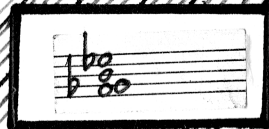
what lived in the sea



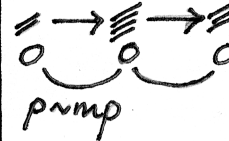
air



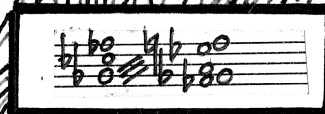
sea monsters

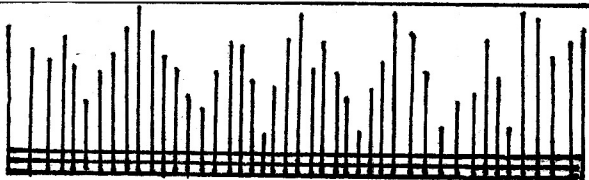


molto vib.





the cartographer



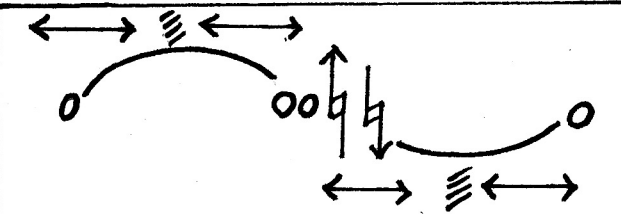


... lights up ... adorns ...  
illuminates ... spread out ...  
... adorns ... spreads ...  
... adorns ... spreads ...





col legno / half hair

133



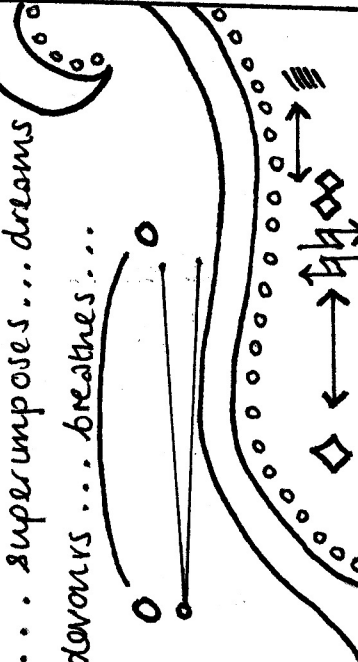
8ul tasto ← → more extreme



8ul pont → ← more extreme



... superimposes ... dreams  
dovours ... breathes ...

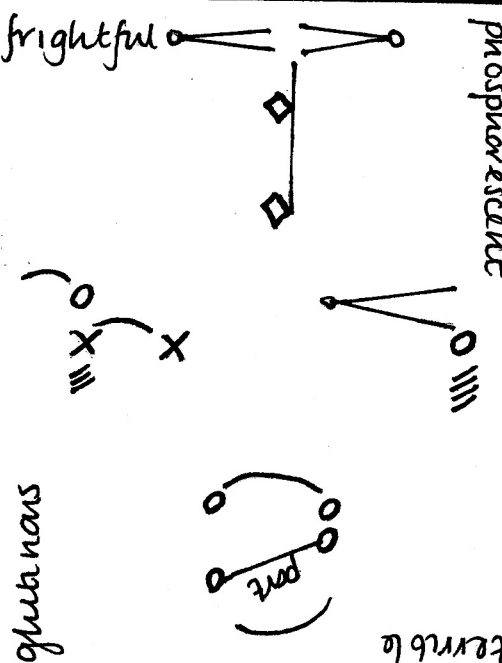


frightful

phosphorescent

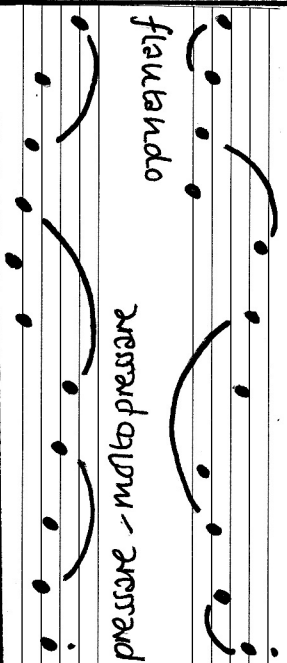
glutinous

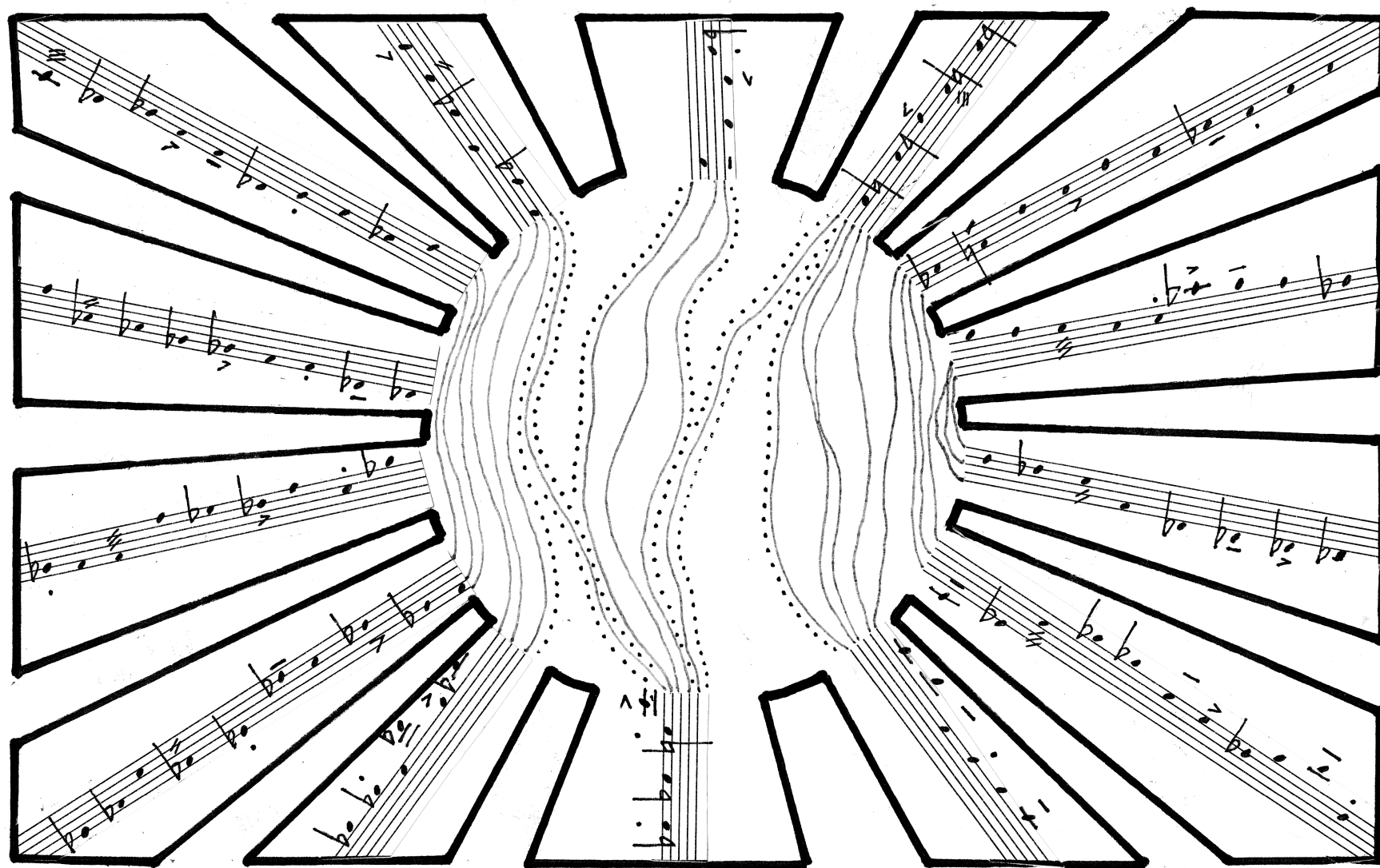
terrible



flautando

pressure - molto pressure





Handwritten musical score consisting of six staves. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Staff 1: Treble clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *mp ~ p*.

Staff 2: Treble clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *mp ~ p*.

Staff 3: Bass clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *mp ~ p*.

Staff 4: Bass clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *mp ~ p*.

Staff 5: Bass clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *p ~ pp*.

Staff 6: Treble clef, notes with flats, dynamic marking *pp*. Below the staff are complex chordal structures with multiple notes and flats.

therefore

you will say it is bad

reflect an effort  
reflect

most of the  
accurate  
no value

in

whatever way

the cartographer

of

the way you want

most of the sea monsters

in

depiction

of

to be accurate

cook it

the depiction

on the part of  
of what  
on the part of

an effort

the

cook it

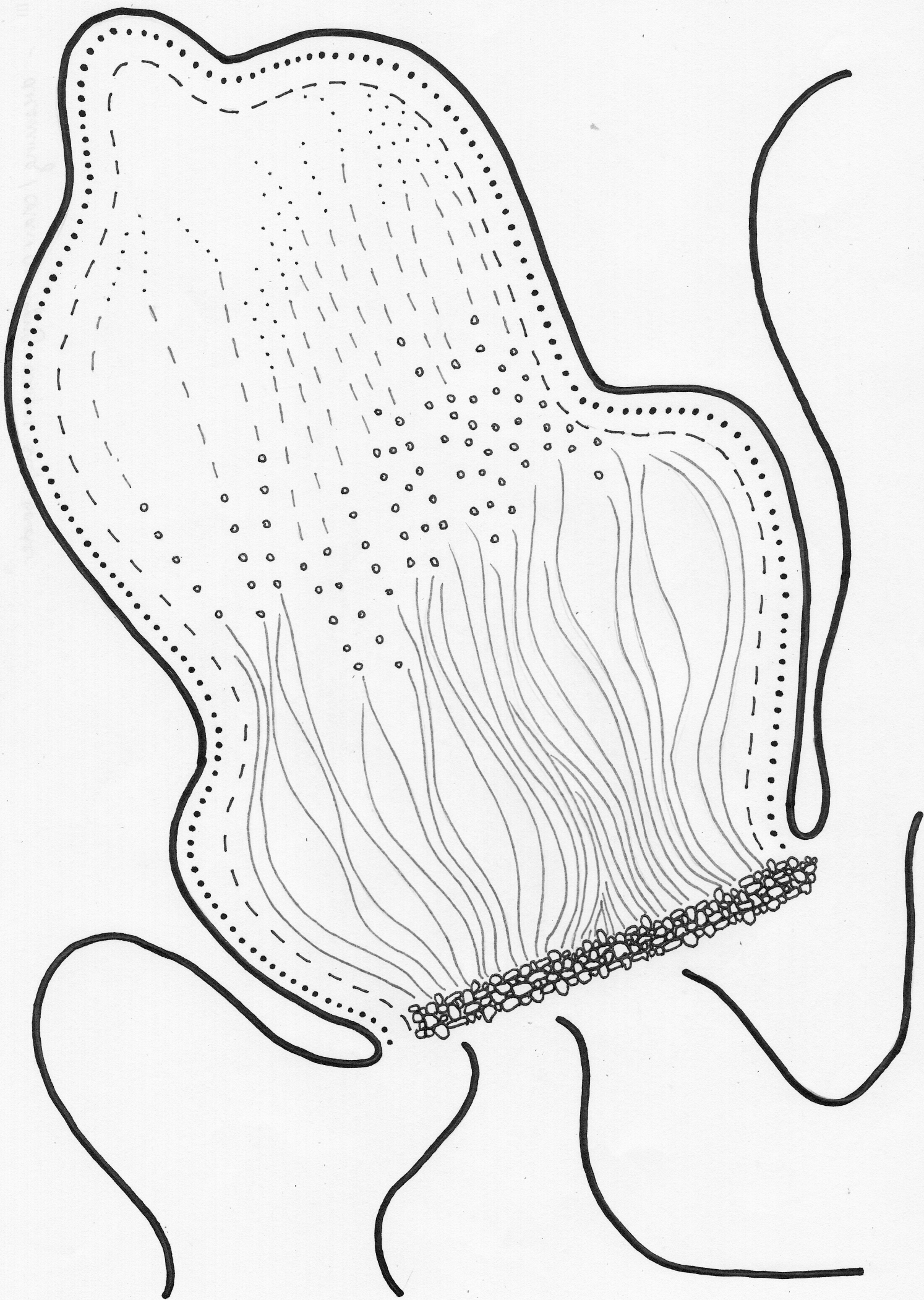
you

lived in the sea

this is a vile fish

to be





the octopus  
narration vocal fragments

Instructions for recording:

- if possible, record each section separately
- of most importance are the shape and register of each fragment; of least importance are the absolute notated pitches
- rubato may be employed in each of them; an overall slow tempo should be the reference point
- as desired repetitions or slight variations may also be recorded, either of the full fragments or of parts of them



Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring lyrics and musical symbols.

The lyrics are: to be-ieve in the oc-to-pus one must have seen it

Handwritten musical notation includes:

- A treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb).
- A dynamic marking *p* (piano) above the first note.
- A slur over the first four notes.
- A slur over the next four notes, with a circled *7* above the first note of this group.
- A triplet of eighth notes marked with a *3* above them.
- A slur over the next four notes, with an accent (^) above the first note of this group.
- A final note with an accent (^) above it.
- Vertical bar lines separating the groups of notes.
- Handwritten musical symbols below the staff, including a double bar line with repeat dots and a final double bar line with repeat dots.

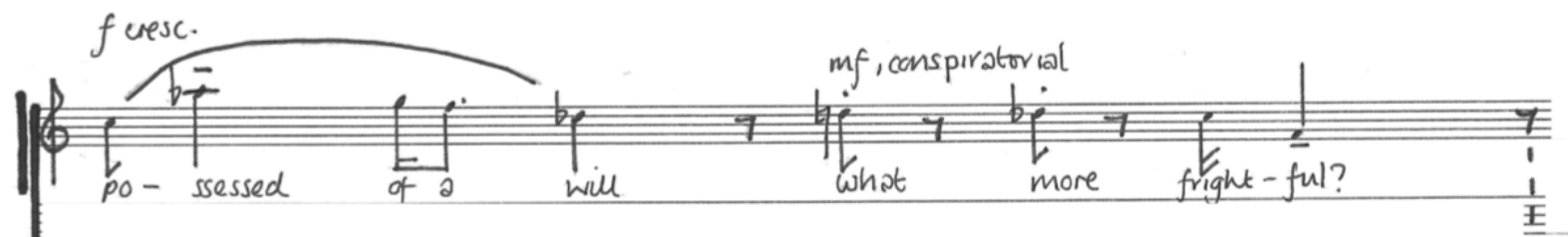
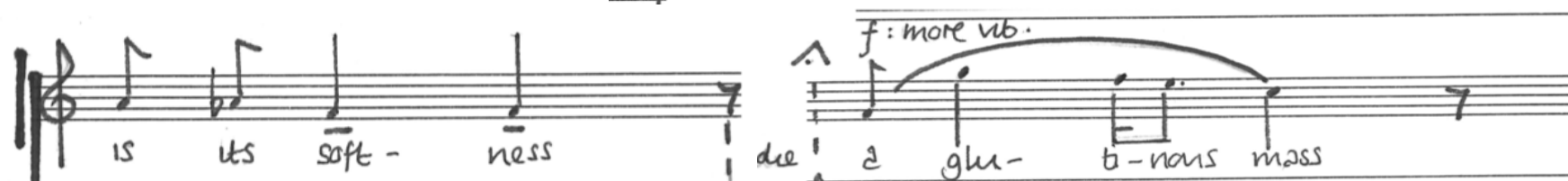
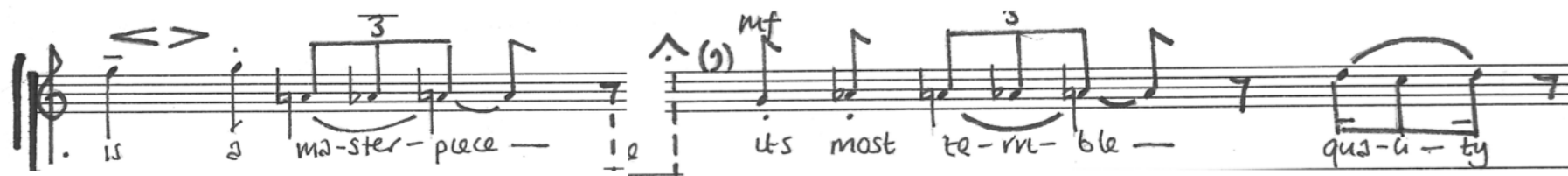
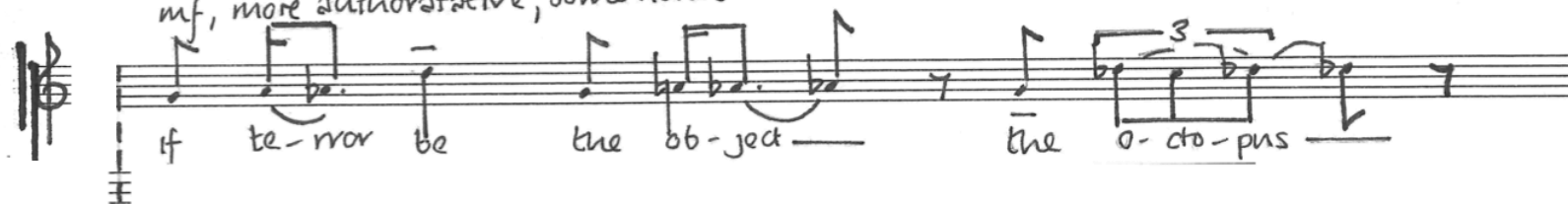
Handwritten musical score for the first line of a song. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are: "or - phe - us, Ho - mer He - si - od o - nly made the chi - me - ra". The music features a piano (p) dynamic at the beginning, a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic for the phrase "He - si - od", and a piano (p) dynamic for the final phrase. There are triplet markings over the notes for "or - phe - us" and "He - si - od". The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

or - phe - us, Ho - mer He - si - od o - nly made the chi - me - ra

Handwritten musical score for the second line of a song. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are: "God made the o - cto - pus". The music features a piano (p) dynamic at the beginning, a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic for the phrase "God made the", and a piano (p) dynamic for the final phrase. There are triplet markings over the notes for "God" and "o - cto - pus". The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

God made the o - cto - pus

quasi-recit,  $\text{♩} \approx 60-72$   
 mf, more authoritative, some vibrato



*mf, composed*  
 tempo  $\approx 72$   
 It is phos-phor-e-scent — E

*senza rubato, becoming more animated*  
*mf*  
 It a-waits the nu-ptial hour — *mf*

*senza rubato*  
*more vib, very animated*  
*f*  
 It a-dorns —

*ff*  
 It self It lights up It i-llu-minates — half-spoken  
 It self

## Interlude

(see attached score)

### Performance instructions:

- if possible, record in a single text
- of most importance are the shape and register of the music; of least importance are the absolute notated pitches
- rubato may be employed, but a generally quick tempo speeding up/lowing down and remaining quite rhythmic as notated is preferred
- as desired repetitions or slight variations of some of the fragments within the score may also be recorded separately
- the overall feel of the interlude is ecstatic, exclamatory, perhaps somewhat breathless in places; variation in vocal timbre to express this may also be experimented with at the expense of pitch

V

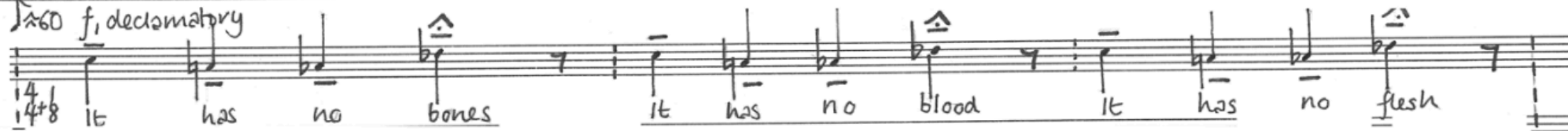
senza rubato

Handwritten musical score for voice, first system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked senza rubato. The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). The lyrics are: "in sho- do- wy depths spread out in po- uld i- no- di- a- tion". The melody features a slur over the first four notes, a slur over the next four notes, and a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure.

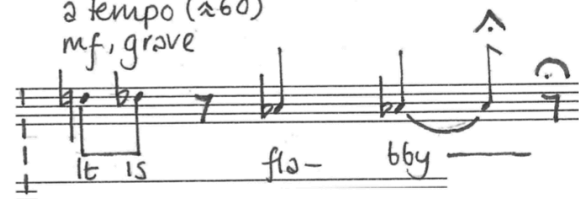
Handwritten musical score for voice, second system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The dynamics are *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics are: "a spe- cre sun". The melody features a slur over the first four notes.

each  $\uparrow$  different; pno and soprano progress independently

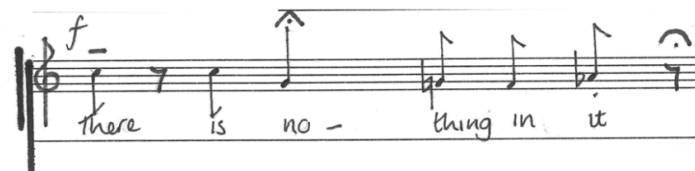
$\text{♩} \approx 60$  f, declamatory



a tempo ( $\approx 60$ )  
mf, grave



||



mf, dark





$\text{♩} \approx 72$ , quicker, quasi-recit.

Handwritten musical score for the first system. The melody is marked *mf* and includes a long slur. The lyrics are: it su-per-im-po-ses it-self u-pon you by a thousand months. There are two measures with a fermata, each marked with (3) above the note.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. The melody is marked *ff* and includes a slur. The lyrics are: hy-dra with man man with hy-dra. There is a measure with a fermata marked with (3) above the note.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. The melody is marked *f* and includes a slur. The lyrics are: you form but one. There is a measure with a fermata marked with 7 above the note.

## VIII

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo and dynamics are marked as *mf, less vib.*. The lyrics are "this dream is u- pon you". The melody features a half note for "this", a quarter note for "dream", a half note for "is", and a half note for "u-". The phrase "pon you" is written under a slur, with "pon" on a half note and "you" on a half note. Above the final note of "you", there is a bracketed section marked *quasi-spoken* and *port*, containing a quarter note and a half note. A *bx* (bassoon) part is indicated below the staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The tempo and dynamics are marked as *mp mf, grave* and *sotto voce, dark*. The lyrics are "the ti- ger can o- nly de- vor you". The melody features a half note for "the", a half note for "ti-", a half note for "ger", a half note for "can", a half note for "o-", a half note for "nly", and a half note for "de-". The phrase "vor you" is written under a slur, with "vor" on a half note and "you" on a half note. Above the final note of "you", there is a triplet of eighth notes marked *3*.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The tempo and dynamics are marked as *mf* and *f*. The lyrics are "the o- do- pus on!". The melody features a half note for "the", a half note for "o-", a half note for "do-", a half note for "pus", and a half note for "on!". Above the final note of "on!", there is a triplet of eighth notes marked *3* and *ff pass.*

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The tempo and dynamics are marked as *ff* and *mp*. The lyrics are "ho- nor breathes you in". The melody features a half note for "ho-", a half note for "nor", a half note for "breathes", a half note for "you", and a half note for "in". Above the final note of "in", there is a triplet of eighth notes marked *3 mp*. A *bx* (bassoon) part is indicated below the staff.

# awaits, adorns, dreams, devours

♩ = 72

Lauren Redhead

Deliberate, with some rubato.

*p* *mp* *f*

a - waits, a - dorns, li - i - ights u - up, i -

6

lu - mi - nates, i - rra - a - di - a - a - ates, su - per,

10

*mf* *mp*

su - per - im - po - o - o - ses, drea - ms,

♩ = 80

Slight quickening, more rhythmic

14

*p* *mf* *f*

de - vou-rs. a - waits, a - do-rns, li-ghts up, i - llu -

18

*mf* *mp* *p* *mp*

- mi - nates, mi - nates, i - rra - di - ates, dreams,

♩ = 96

With a much greater sense of movement

22

*pp* *mf*

drea-ms, de - vours. a - waits, a - dorns, a-dorns, li - i - ights

26 *mp* *p* *f*

up, lights, up, i - llu - mi-nates, i - llu - mi - nates,

31 *mf* *mp* *pp*

mi - nates, mi - na - ates, drea - eams, de - vours.

$\text{♩} = 112$   
Now hurried

34 *mp* *f* *ff* *mf*

a - dorns, a - dorns, li - i - ights u-up, li - i - ights up,

39 *f* *ff*

i - rra - di - ates, i - rra - di - ates, di - ates, - di - a -

$\text{♩} = 124$

A sense of breathlessness

43 *mf* *mp* *pp* *mf*

- tes, drea-ms, de - vou-rs, de - vours. a - waits, a - waits,

48 *ff* *f*

a-waits, a - do - rns, a - do - rns, lights up, lights u -

52 *mf* *mp* *p*

up, lights up, lights up, li - ights up, drea - ms, dreams,

♩ = 72

A tempo; grave

57

Musical notation for measures 57-60. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 9/8, then to 6/8, and finally to 7/8. The lyrics are: de-vours, de vours. a - waits, a - waits, a - dorns, a -

*pp* *mf* *mp*

de-vours, de vours. a - waits, a - waits, a - dorns, a -

60

Musical notation for measures 61-64. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The time signature changes from 7/8 to 2/4, then to 5/8, then to 4/8, and finally to 3/8. The lyrics are: - a - a - dorns, dreams, dreams, drea-ms, de - vou - ou - ours.

*p* *pp* *ppp*

- a - a - dorns, dreams, dreams, drea-ms, de - vou - ou - ours.



# The Octopus

- ◆ Most recent work: also changed during the lockdown
- ◆ Preparatory pieces as an art song, two pieces for organ and electronics, and an electronic sketch
- ◆ Originally intended as a live staged work, now produced as a digital opera, for release on pan y rosas discos on 1st December 2020
- ◆ Graphic score materials and a collaboration with a poet



*the octopus* is a digital opera that explores the changing aesthetics of the undersea from the imagined perspective of the octopus. While climate change narratives focus most frequently on data about temperature, population numbers, or the material composition of the atmosphere and ocean, this piece 'listens' to the environment in order to contemplate the subjective experience of wildlife of their subtly changing environment. It both considers the 'alien' nature of life under the ocean, and considers the equally alien nature of life above the ocean to its protagonist. The poet acts partly as a narrator, guiding the listener through the ocean, encountering text from Victor Hugo's 1866 novel *les travailleurs de la mer*, and introducing a subjective reflection on narratives of the changing ocean environment, imagining its experience, expression, and sound. The instrumental group otherwise 'explore' the alien and undersea setting of the work through improvised responses to the graphic score materials of the project. The musical environment of the undersea is further articulated through electronic sound as a layered and processed sound-sea-scape which uses instrumental and vocal sounds in unfamiliar, uncanny and unrecognisable ways.



# The Octopus

- ◆ Different stages of recording: recording sessions with Alistair Zaldua (violin) and separately trio CZW (flutes, oboe, violin): improvising and devising responses to the notation
- ◆ Kat Peddie (poetry) produced and recorded text derived from her impressions of my score and research materials
- ◆ Work in the studio to compose the opera from these materials
- ◆ Role for the soprano was diminished because of COVID: therefore drawing on other traditions of opera (e.g. Robert Ashley)

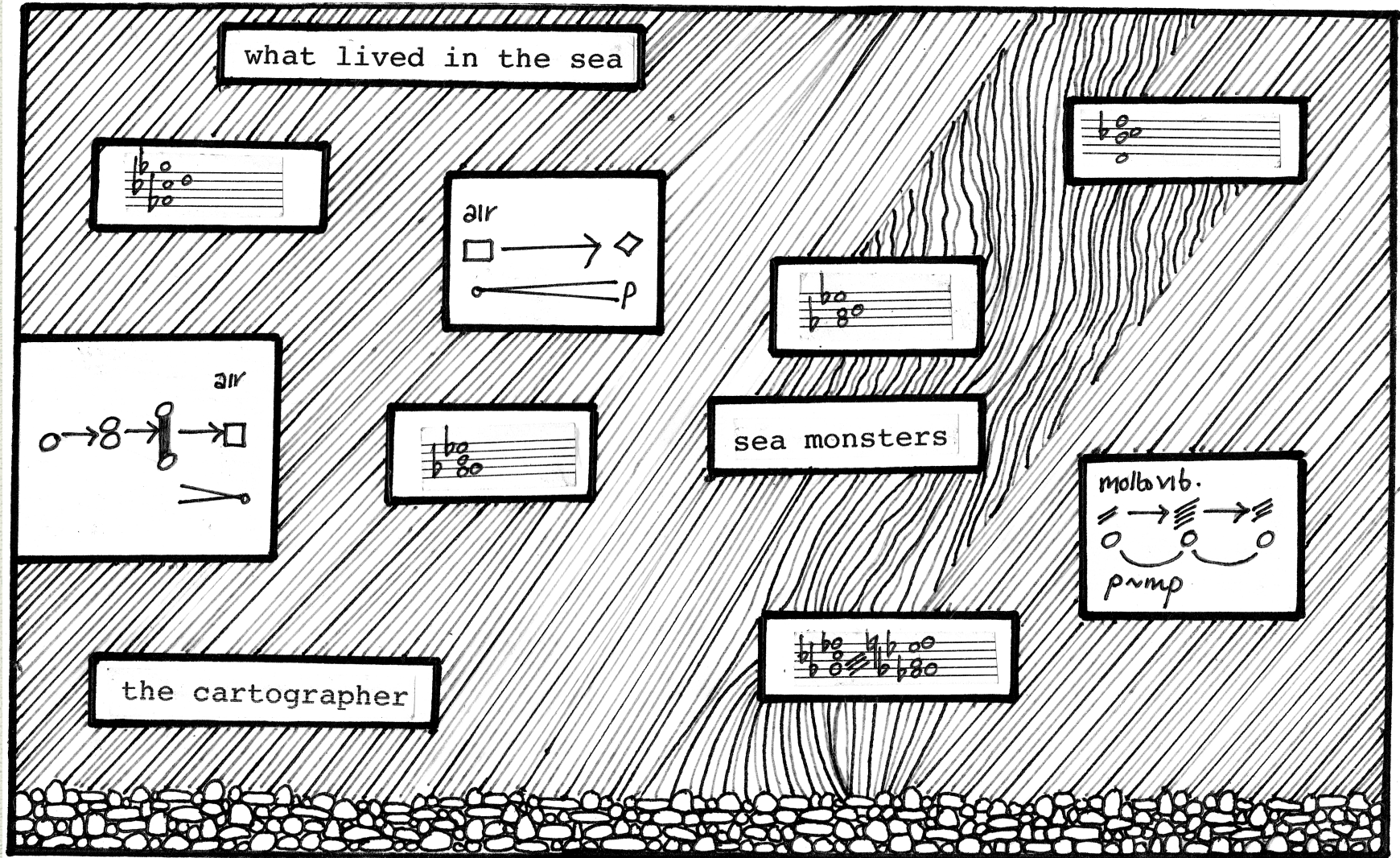


# The Octopus

						
sea pig	holothuroides	synaptidae	octopus	tehuatlchus	scorpaeniformes	glaucus
						
scotoplanes	echinodermata	apocida	octopodidae	robsonella	actinopterygus	psychrolutes
						
eliptidae	elasipocida	benthodyte	octopoda	eniptastes eximia	isopod	psychropote
						
globosa	peniagone	aspidochirobata	cephalopoda	enterectopus	paradoxus	king himsta
						
sea cucumber	pelagothuria	psolidae	mollusca	pallidus	phricus	tunicate

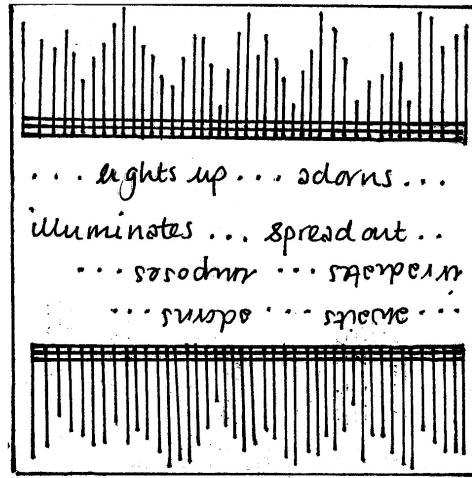


# The Octopus

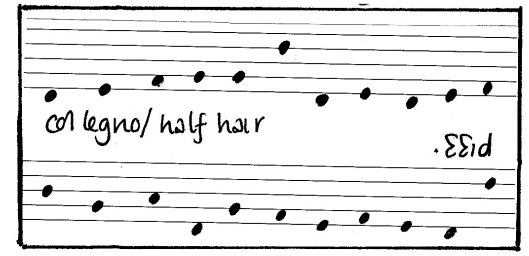




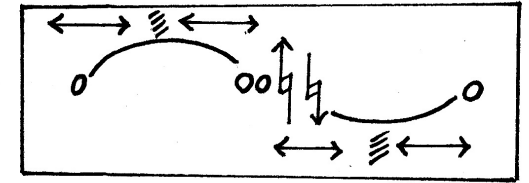
# The Octopus



... lights up ... adorns ...  
illuminates ... spread out ...  
... superimposes ... breathes ...  
... adorns ... breathes ...

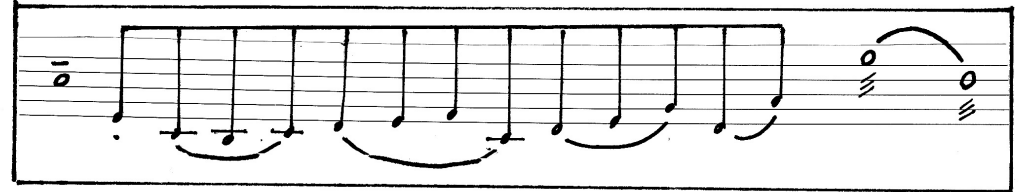
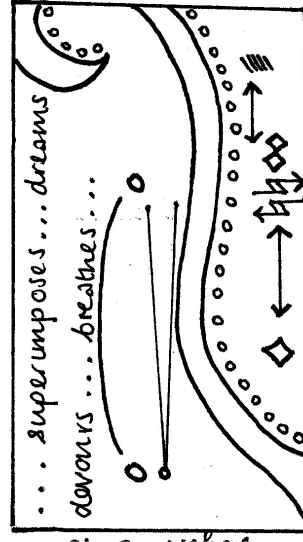


on legno/ half hair

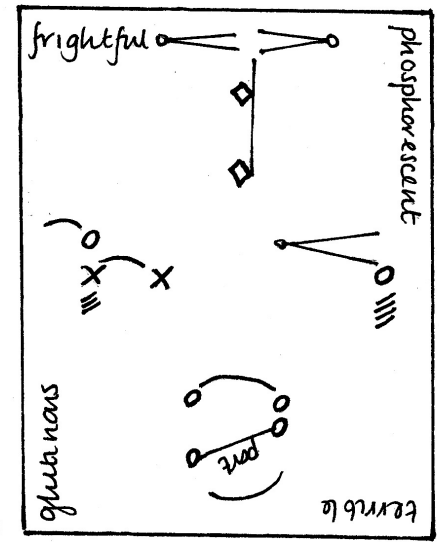



sul tasto ← more extreme

← more extreme sul pont

... superimposes ... dreams  
adorns ... breathes ...

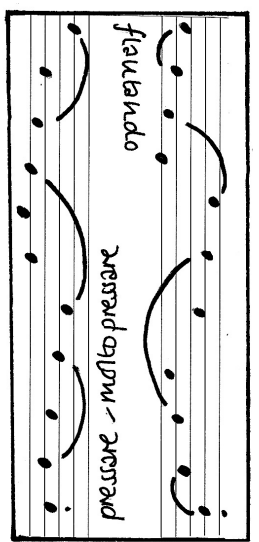


frightful

phosphorescent

glutinous

terrific



fiatens

pressure - mid to pressure



# Video



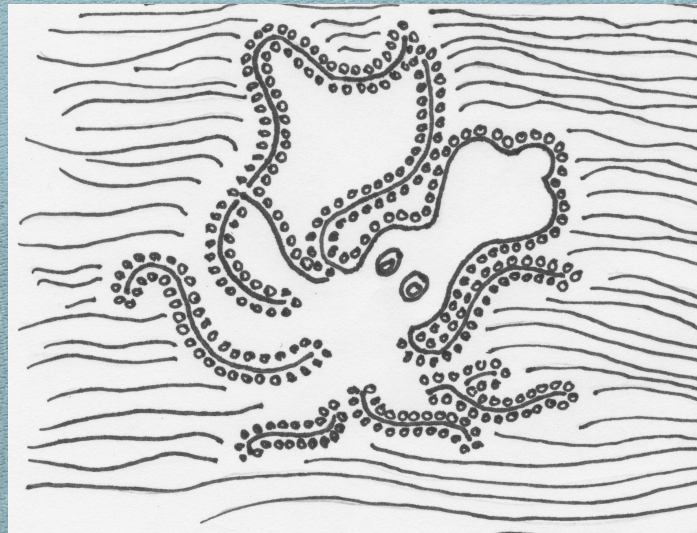


# Conclusions

- ◆ This has become a way of working for me that is still changing and developing
- ◆ The material practice of notation that I have developed has also become a stepping stone to an idiosyncratic practice of improvisation and studio composition with trusted collaborators
- ◆ Two pieces pending: *the narwhal* and *the four hundred year old shark*, drawing further on medieval documents and this process
- ◆ ‘mythology’ as practice of creating your own tradition (perhaps more identifiable than ‘voice’)



# Composition and Material Processes



Dr Lauren Redhead  
TU Dublin  
20.II.2020