

Century
(for Emily)

A piece with words to be spoken
by a solo performer

Janice Westoby

Century (for Emily)

- A piece with words to be spoken by a solo performer

- Duration: no less than 15 minutes

Performance Notes

- Lines are to be read across the page; black underlining indicates these lines.
- Boxed text, when met by the black underline, is read downwards line by line. Continue on with the following line after the completion of each box.
- In this piece, hyphens have two uses: (1) For bracketed text: In this instance, hyphens separate the syllables of incomplete words. In most cases, bracketed text with some syllable separation eventually unfurl out to present the entire word. (2) For the joining of whole words: In this second usage, hyphens join strings of whole words to create a legato, slur-like phrase.
- The use of punctuation is not arbitrary, it is to be followed as one would usually follow it.
- Artificial delivery is to be avoided - don't be too strictly faithful to the position of words along the line or the length of silences. Speak with the characterful rubato of everyday speech.
- Pauses between movements are ad. lib.

Performance Notes (continued).

- Text with a line going through it is to be read though not spoken aloud.
- Pay careful attention to the stressing of words around gaps (are they unexpected or prepared?).
- This is not a random collection of words/sounds.

I

[DIRECTION: (pp-mp), LOW, SLOW AND SOFT, INTERCESSIONAL - AS IF HAND IN HAND]

So: _____ at the _____

at-the-
-at-the-

 -centre we shall set

this (li- _____ -tle) _____ germ, our

_____ little globe, _____

whose (an-
whose (ances-
whose ancestry

 we guess at from out of

and into-
-and-into-
-and-into-

-the ages, his _____ ages;

his _____ royalty;

his blessedness; _____ his

(ca-
(casca-
cascading
cascading

 aptitudes:

we try at least to guess at his (match -

-less) (sens-
-less) (sens-

 -itivity) and closeness to

experience, our

exposed (li-

-tle) (n- -exus)- -of nerves, like an open gum, defenceless: the

size, the

pity-the-size-
-pity-the-size-
-pity-the-size-

-of

the

harm he

may-
-may-

-he-harm-he-may do

to-do-
-to-do

himself and-to

others, the dark nights

and unknowing that he is to sustain, all

prepared

and

set against the

good-and-miracle-glory-absurd glory, miracle, and good

of what he

might be and

is cheated of:
is cheated of:
is cheated of:
is cheated of:



[DIRECTION: (mp), LOW AND AVERAGE PACE, THOUGH WITH A SLIGHT TONE OF IMPLICIT (HINTED, LATENT) SERIOUSNESS]

Never

(eas-
(eas-
easing
whatsoever easing

our grasp, (how-

-ever)-faint,
-ever)-faint,
-ever)-faint,

on his-on

his

brotherly and

-ly)-stars
-ly)-stars
-terly)-stars-and
sisterly-stars-and-saints, we (mer-

-erge) his

-and-(his-
-ces)-and-(histo-
-ces)-and-(histo-
sources and histories

-(con-
-(conflu-
-confluence-

at-the- -of-our-place, our

time: how he was brought forth of a silken web and line, of

hands holding hands in an abdest of dust,

(stra- -kas) of kined
(stra- kined
kined
flesh pressed

-ther)-in-
-ther)-in-
-gether)-in-work
-together-in-work-to
-itude)-under-
-lassitude-under-a

red sun,

ignorant to their causes, to

virtues and

good conduct,

to-the-dream-
to-the-dream-
to-the-dream-

-of relief

cure, or-
cure, or-
-a-cure, or-a-
-and-a-cure, or-a-cure, saturated

in

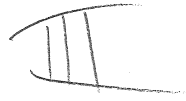
habit and

unreachable beliefs

5

the seeds they carry

were marked to begin with:



[DIRECTION: (mp-mf), MOVING FORWARD AND GENTLY ROCKING - SPEAK IN VARYING SOFT COLOURS]

And here

and-here
and-here
and-here
and-here
and-here
and-here

and-here we have two,

his-two, each
his-two,
his-two,

martyred, the one

-ther)-(mar-
-ther)-(mar-
-farther-(martyr-
-farther-(martyr-
-one-farther-martyring the other

and vice versa

upon the pale and

pleasure-
-deep-pleasure-of
-skin-deep-pleasure-of-a pallet bed, sparking

in the one's belly

a martyrdom

of (whip-
-lashed)
-lashed)
-lashed)
-lashed) pollen

to-ovule:

their creature is our (glo-

-obe,) our (li-

-ittle) (n-
-exus)-
-exus)- of nerves-
-of nerves-that-
-xus)- of nerves-that-we-
-nexus- of nerves-that-we-talk of,

~~in our gem's first moment~~ his globe is swollen around him to become his cell,

his limit,

what could have been his nation:

~~he is sprung and sprained~~

~~for labour and for (mis-~~

- application,) for an abuser, ~~by a force that without which~~

~~he would have never been made at all, for he was made like his makers were made, unconscious,~~

-ward)-
 earthward-learn-
 -vy)-earthward-learn-of-
 -heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-
 -the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-(crim-
 -to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-(crimi-
 -ence)-to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-criminal-
 -dience)-to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-criminal-(e-
 -bedience)-to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-criminal-(econ-
 -obedience-to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-criminal-(econo-
 -in-obedience-to-the-heavy-earthward-learn-of-a-criminal-economy,

~~not by the will of his makers nor even his own illusory~~

master's voice:

IV

[DIRECTION: (p-mf), AT NORMAL SPEAKING SPEED WITH A CONVERSATIONAL TONE, SLIGHTLY AMBLING - AS IF DRAWING]

Yet still towards this bondage our little germ unfurls and blooms, is atomised conclusively, carried from loam-streamed
newt road and into the gloaming; alabaster skin glossed, forearms over forehead, heels, calves and knees bodily drawn as
if shielding off the harm of a spear thrown to his cardiac plexus, he bubbles and slowly foams aloft upon his blindness and
at the balance, like the first what-a-morning, broken out in a phosphor spring and on the gladness of the air to
find himself on field's floorboards, and to find himself:

V

[DIRECTION: (pp-mp), LOW, SLOW AND SOFT, INTERCESSION/L - AS IF HAND IN HAND]

How

is he

is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

-is-he-

to know,

know-

-know-

-how should he go about knowing

all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-all-the-

-comfort that

done-

-be-done-to-

-would-be-done-to-him is but

a wound

to find himself

-esce)-
 -quiesce)-to-
 -acquiesce-to-all-
 -would-acquiesce-to-all-(good-
 -he-would-acquiesce-to-all-goodness

or favour

were it-to-be- -there though-
 -it-to-be- -though-he-
 -though-he-is without

choice, cut

off from understanding for

choice if

he could

ever have it,

without autonomy of

choice

if he had the understanding

to find

himself:

He is here, then, or here is she: we should hope

the best for them:

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