

DIAMONDS AND RUST

Performance transcript

Goldsmiths CCA, London

24 July 2022



Metallic clanging

wooden scuffs

gradually coordinate into a rhythmic beat

Chimes

Gradual, distant throbbing beats

form an irregular rhythm

Industrial croaks repeat

Gentle chiming melody

Chimes,

louder, louder

Rising surge of ethereal pads

Cold, churning, cycle of clicks and clacks...

[continues]

[Automated male voice]

In-in oth-oth-er-r words-s,

n-n-n-neither the machin-ne,

n-n-or the

m-m-ech-chanical-l-l m-mode of-f prod-d-duction

c-could be st-a-sta-bilis-s-sed and ma-maintained-d un-t-til

the social and psycho-cho-logi-c-cal processes n-n-ecessary to sustain

them ha-ad been

internali-li-s-sed by the workers.



Sudden drop

thick, metallic beat

Industrial resonant rhythm continues

Distant, discordant choral vocalisations...

*In other words,
neither the machine,
nor the mechanical mode of production
could be stabilized and maintained
until the social and psychological processes necessary to sustain them
had been internalized by the workers.**



Ticking

Rhythm quickens underneath gentle ethereal pads

Sprinkled chiming

Spattered, quick rhythm continues

Ticking...

[continues]

[Sung]

//

/

/

/

/ was

/ was

//

/ was sick

I was sick

I was sick

I I was

I was sick and tired of everything

- [SH] Okay.

Let's trade names and functions.

Okay...

If only it were that simple, he laughs.

Ha ha hahahah !

[Laughs]

What do you want me to do here?

[Laughs]

Ha ha ha!

- [FD] Er.... just um, like... ha ha ha ha ha? Maybe?
- He laughs ha ha ha ha ha.

I was

I was

I was

I was sick and tired

[FD]

**Jane is looking for something,
something stable.**

**Something full-time, permanent, and stable:
something that gives her some options.**

**She needs to keep afloat
or better still, buoyant.**

**Apart from the money –
not lots, just some,**

**just enough,
and enough now**

happens to be lots –

apart from the money,

her desire for stability doubles up as a desire for movement.

Jane wants to feel a forward feeling.



Industrial metallic rhythm

stutters and regains composure

[FD, echoes]

She's willing and able but,

as time passes

She's willing and able but,

as time passes

She's willing and able but,

as time passes

- [FD] Maybe a bit, like... more intense?
- [SH] More intense.
- Slightly more intense.

- Like that?
- Yeah, that's good.



Spare ticking beat

Lurching, ominous keys

Cascading bassy drum

Soft, upbeat piano synth melody...

[continues]

Jane is caught in a chance encounter in the supermarket:
trapped in the bits-and-bobs aisle,
face-to-face with someone she used to know well, but now barely recognises and
would rather not see,
not today,
not in this weather,
not in this t-shirt, and
not under these circumstances.

She's locked in a call-and-response of
how long it's been,
where and when it last was,
and anyway,
what are you up to these days?
This person she used to know well is
doing really well actually, yeah, and is
gosh, just
so
sorry to hear she's struggling right now but
at least she's looking well,
she seems to be holding up well.

Well now, hold on –
the person she used to know well
might actually know someone who
knows someone who knows someone who
might have something for her!

He heard there were some jobs coming up:
a few people left recently and they're looking for replacements.
Actually, it's perfect for you if you don't mind what you end up doing.
Anyway, here's the guy's details,
I heard his door is always open.



Ticking

falling in and out of time

[continues]

*I hope
I hope this
I hope this finds you
I hope this finds you well
I hope this finds you well
I hope
I hope
I hope this finds you
I hope
I hope this finds you well.*

Jane sends the guy who knows someone who
knows someone who knows someone who
she used to know well
an email
asking if he has something for her.
And he gets back quicker than expected,
a late-night missive, one word, simply
Coffee question mark
sent from his iphone.
Jane bounces back
quick and keen:
Please and when,

whenever works for you –
I'm super-flexible,
decorated with an exclamation mark and followed up with her
thanks,
many thanks,
thanks so much,
all the best,
very best,
my best, my best, my
bestest warmest wishes and
hot hot hot hot hot regards.

I would

I would

I would but

I would

I would but

I would but I would



Quick, throbbing rhythm

[continues]

Off Jane goes in her astra to café nero to
meet this guy who knows someone who
knows someone who knows someone who
knows someone who
she used to know well.

Thanks for meeting me here, he says,
I think the coffee is much better than starbucks,
it must be the Italian in me.

Jane pays for both coffees and gets an extra stamp on her loyalty card.
On her way to their table outside,
bird shit falls long and heavy from the sky
and slides over her arm.

It misses the coffee but catches her thigh
and she knows she's lucky. She's very, very lucky.

Jane, with a white streak across her nice trousers,
wipes and dabs at herself
while the guy who knows someone
– he knows a lot of people actually –
talks into the middle distance,
leaning back so much that he's almost horizontal,
almost.

He has one leg stretched across his lap
to reveal his designer socks.

He says,

he says, he says, he says, he says,

and when he says, he always says in the collective person:

he's a people person,

he's all about the We.

He says,

he says

and then he interrupts himself to say

Anyway!

Enough about us, tell me more about you.

We actually don't have long now, so,
quickfire!

What can you offer us?

... Well,

uh,

well,

she

considers herself...

flexible and

industrious,

efficient and

manageable. Yeah.

Flexible, industrious, she's willing and able.

Jane's strength is organising.

And how do you respond to pressure?

Jane says,

Well, don't they say

pressure makes diamonds haha ha

ha

And he says, Ha ha!

That's just what we like. That's just what we want to hear actually,

let's see what you can do on Monday.

When she gets back to the car,

there's bird shit on the bonnet,

lucky me.

Bird shit is lucky and

bird shit is corrosive and

Jane needs to be careful or

the bonnet will rust.

How do you respond to pressure?

How do you respond to pressure?



Rising, optimistic melody chimes

quick, throbbing, deep rhythm

[continues]

- If you were here now, everything would feel so familiar.
Everything would feel so familiar.
Everything would feel so familiar
If you were here now,
everything would feel so familiar.



Choral warmups

Metallic ticking

Rhythm drops out.

Ominous, lurching stings

Spattered ticking beats quicken...

[continues]

Jane arrives keen and vibrant, fresh and green.

An induction:

**The guy who knows someone and wears designer socks shows her around and says
It's more like a family here really,
we like to think of it more as a home than a workplace.**

Apart from the money,

– not a lot, just enough –

apart from the money,

she's here for some stability, she's here for some routine.

**And then there's the attractive benefits package
and/or**

the voucher she can spend anywhere,

as long as it's amazon, argos or pizza express.

He says, he says,

anyways,

any problems, my door is always open.

Any problems, my door is always open

on Wednesdays, before lunch.

Oh,

and here's this book recommended by head office.

It

will

totally

change her life:

how much water she drinks,

how often she makes the bed and

the way she thinks about leadership.



Frenetic, busy, ticking rhythm...

[continues]

She's willing and able but
as time passes

She's willing and able but
as time passes

She's willing and able but
as time passes...

- For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still.
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still.
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still...

**Jane is always here to help,
she's here to please.
Jane slots into place.
Jane pours herself into the workplace culture.
She has an easy-going manner and a can-do attitude.
She doesn't know a lot about the person she replaced,
who,
incidentally,
was also called Jane.**

- For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still.
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still.
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still...

**Jane responds well to the pressure actually.
The pressure, it suits her,
and Jane makes herself valuable.
As time passes
she becomes more and more valuable –
almost irreplaceable.
Almost, nearly,**

**but not quite
irreplaceable.**

[Sung]

She's become part of the furniture

She's become part of the furniture...

**Jane becomes part of the furniture.
Jane is multi-purpose.
She is the lever on the swivel chair,
she wedges herself under a table to stop it from wobbling.
Jane lets soapy water drain from the mugs, all over her body
in the kitchenette.
Jane is absent-mindedly moulded in blu-tack
during a long phone call.
Jane drips from the coffee machine,
she grinds the beans too.
She supports the small of Sally's back,
she lifts the weight off Paul's shoulders.
Jane gets jammed in the photocopier.
Jane elevates the computer screen to the optimum height.
Jane has become part of the furniture.
Jane has soaked into the carpet.
Jane was left next to the radiator and has warped into a weird shape.
She's gone mouldy at the back of the communal fridge.
Jane is in need of some repair —
Jane is flaking off the walls,
Jane has started to rust.
Jane is so useful
she's becoming unfit for purpose.
Jane was so useful
she became unfit for purpose.**



Intermittent operatic vocalisations

Rising electronic melody

[continues]

- [SH] Does that story concern *you*, or Does that story *concern* you? Like, does it concern you or, does it -
- [FD] Concern you. Concern you.
- Does it concern you?
- Does it *concern* you. Emphasis on concern: are you concerned.
- Oh okay, cos I thought it was like, does that story concern you, like, is that story about you.
- No yeah, I know –
- Does that story concern you?
- Yeah I know –
- But you don't want that –
- Yeah no I know [Laughs] I know there's two ways, of saying it
- [Laughs] ...But you want concern.
- Concern.



Light xylophone rhythm

Choral fragments

Pace gathers

The development of Muzak in the early 1920s is radically linked to questions of the workplace, and the feverish reality of labour disputes and union aggression. Following the developments of radio and telephone technology, the possibility to wire in sound from a central control led to a systematic appraisal of music's effect on labour and the psychology of the worker.

It was found that the tasks of work could be better supported by providing background music in the workplace, giving workers an auditory frame through which bodily rhythms, the repetition of physical tasks, and the often-monotonous passing of time could be eased.

The effects of music were generally recognized to increase metabolism, strengthen or modify mood, and importantly, to “increase not only the intensity of sudden effort, but also, the duration of sustained effort and the power of renewing it.”

*The muscular expenditure of energy finds a literal source of support with the presence of music, giving subliminal nourishment to lessening the fatigue of the workday. The sheer quantity of output rose as music allowed workers a sense of distraction to the banality of their surroundings, while also reducing the level of conversation occurring between workers.**



Deep bassy beat and xylophone rhythm gather

Energetic, uplifting instrumental

Breaks back down into spare ticking, metallic rhythm

- Wheels, walls, windows...
Vibrate in unison.
Vibrate in unison.

I would
I would but
I would
I would
I
would but,
I would but I
I would but I would prefer
not to.

I would

I would but...

Jane is functioning but
less and less efficiently.

She hasn't had time to read that book yet.

She often uses the toilet on the other side of the building, to stretch her legs.

She stays in there a long time.

Jane is always popping out for milk and biscuits,
she always has something to go out and post.

Mark invites Jane to join him outside for a cigarette.

She doesn't light up herself,

but matches the rhythm of his inhalations

and watches the rollie balance elegantly on his bottom lip

as she learns that in his other life,

Mark is a dog handler.

He's doing so well at the local shows that he's looking to compete nationally
with his dog Good Boy,

Good Boy

is just a silly mutt really, he says, but

he's decent company and he's obedient,

and once he's got the hang of them,

he's brilliant at the tricks.

Jane finds a new routine to reclaim her time.

She takes her regular cigarette breaks with Mark
and they invite the others to join them too.

And what happens in the cigarette break

stays in the cigarette break

until one day,

everyone

is out front

on an extended cigarette break,

well – everyone except for Sharon.

And only Mark is smoking.
And no-one's read that book yet.



High sustained pads

Deep repetitive bass

Echoes of previous melody, downbeat

Fragments of voice fall out of sync

She's willing she's willing she's willing and able but
as time passes...

I would prefer not to
I would prefer not to

She's willing she's willing she's willing and
As time passes...

I would prefer not to
I would prefer not to
I would prefer not to
I would prefer not to...



Metallic rhythm returns

Ticking returns

Melancholic chord

[Clears throat]

**Now, the company has introduced a
No Smoking Policy.**

**Now the company has introduced a No Smoking Policy
and Jane has wedged herself back under the table.**

**Mark has suddenly stopped coming in.
He disappeared into the cigarette break.
There's another version of Mark now,
fresh and green,
but Jane doesn't know him because he
works remotely.**

- For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still
For the moment, for the hour, for this day, still

**Jane barely recognises Mark when she bumps into him
in the bits-and-bobs aisle at the supermarket.
She asks him how long it's been and
where and when they last were.
He says, he says he's
doing really well actually,
he's doing really well.**

- If you were here now, everything would feel so familiar.

[Sung]

*There's a poster up in the kitchenette,
reminding us to smile.*



Erratic choral vocalisations

Laughter

Tapping

Irregular chords

Intermittent ticking

[continues]

- [SH] Okay. How's it going in terms of this, cos again like, there are so many ways this could go.
- [FD] It's going fine. Like, I really have no expectations.
- [Laughs]



Scattered resonant beats

Disharmonious chimes

Discordant, eclectic sounds continue stubbornly, persistently, intermittently

A low, bassy riff repeats

...fades to silence.

[END]

DIAMONDS AND RUST

by Freya Dooley

Six-channel sound installation with live reading, 35 mins

Performed at Goldsmiths CCA, London on Sunday 24 July 2022

Staged within and programmed as part of Virginia Overton's solo exhibition *Animal Magnetism*

CREDITS

Written and performed by Freya Dooley

Sound composed and mix engineered by Freya Dooley

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- Sam Hasler
- Freya Dooley

Richard Bowers

Chapter Singers Choir

Alice Burrows

**Excerpts from Brandon La Belle, Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance, MIT Press, 2012. [Read by the Adobe Reader auto-dictate function]*

♪ [additional improvised synths by Jon Ruddick]

[field recordings from *Untitled (chime for Caro)* by Virginia Overton installed at Goldsmiths CCA recorded by Christy O'Beirne and Sasha Shevchenko]

[sample of Anna Magnani laughing as *Mamma Roma*, dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962]

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