

**SIMON EMMERSON**

**SENTENCES**

**(soprano and live electronics)**

**(1990/91)**

**VERSION 1.0 JANUARY 1991**

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NOTES

Notation

x - speech : x+ - heightened speech : @ - whisper  
| - absolutely unaspirated, enunciated entirely in the vocal cavity and hence merely 'coloured' consonants

These symbols once given apply until contradicted.

All accidentals apply only to the individual notes they precede.

— - longer notes held according to the horizontal line  
| - shorter, but not very short  
↑ - very short but always clearly articulated, not hurried.  
Groups of these notes stand outside the time points indicated above the stave.

Time scale indications: at all times the indications are to be interpreted freely; the soprano always leads, the electronics operator follows. The indications above the stave are 'very approximate seconds' to be freely interpreted.

— - a cresc/dim (sfzp) within a held note

L/C/R : Left, centre and right microphones. When not indicated the use of the L and R mic.s should be free, theatrical but not over histrionic.

(:L-R:) etc. : repeat left/right movement

Performance

Song 1

Speak clearly and rhythmically, rather like an early American circus presenter but perhaps not quite so 'salesman'. Address the audience directly, interpret the rhythmic notation freely without appearing constrained by it in any way.

NB. 'mirages': as in French, lose the 'e', pronounce as singular; the American 'butte' is virtually as the colloquial English 'beaut', the shortened form of 'beauty'.

Song 2

Lyrical and sustained, increasingly melismatic setting. Distinguish between the syllabic | and the melismatic [TT].

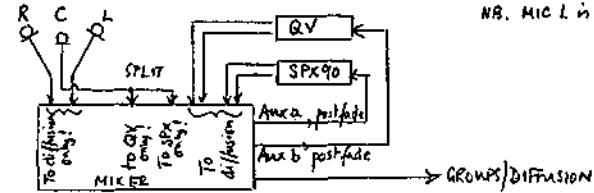
Song 3

Light and dark! Changing mood from light (senza vib.) to a heavier bel canto, to whisper etc. with great agility. Final vocalise very whistful and distant.

Song 4

Theatre but no story: words struggle to be heard, from voiced fragments to unvoiced sentences. Spit out unvoiced consonants (to trigger effects!).

Technical Notes



1. Set up the circuit as shown, positioning the Quadraverb and the SPX90 such that programme advance controls are within easy reach, the pedal controller should be beneath the mixer for ease of use while moving fader levels, and the Modulation Wheel within easy reach.

2. Route the stereo pair of mic.s (1 and 2) as indicated to the main diffusion and set fader to some convenient set level and adjust the master rotary gains appropriately. The 3rd central mic is split as indicated and neither input channel should be routed to any diffusion! The left channel feeds the Quadraverb, the right the SPX90. Set both faders to the 'zero' mark and adjust rotary pots to a reasonable gain; then adjust each of the QV's and SPX's own input control levels for saturation at an ff singing level. This established 'zero' level on the fader movement then represents the 'maximum' line as indicated in the score.

3. In turn, adjust the QV and SPX output return levels with mf material. These should be altered only minimally in performance - the most important variable is the input. (As in 2 above.)

4. Carefully check each programme on the QV and SPX individually; details of each are given below. Most especially those which involve trigger levels: these may need to be adjusted, or more likely the input level to the device overall. (The trigger level on the QV cannot be adjusted - check very carefully that the input level is sufficient.)

5. Details of the QV and SPX patches are given in the numerical order in which they occur in the score. The performer must enter the specific memory location numbers for these on the machines in question on the score as a check. Suggested names are given though these need not be entered.

6. The score: this is notated on four lines: two for the input levels to the Quadraverb and SPX90 (marked 'QV' and 'SPX'), one for general information on programme changes and settings ('PRG') and the lowest for any Controller settings and levels (Pedal or Modulation Wheel), though this is not often used. The ideal time for any programme change is given with a short double stroke on the line. Some actions are 'tied' to soprano performance actions with a dotted line.

7. The operator should note on the score the programme numbers on the specific machines in use. These are arbitrarily given as '1-9 (or 10)' below.

Programme details for the Quadraverb and SPX90

XX= setting doesn't matter - as it is inoperative  
ETC: XX = all subsequent pages (on the QV) inoperative

Song 1: Quadraverb: Programme 1  
SPX90: Programme 1

Song 2: Quadraverb: Programme 2  
SPX90: Programme 2

Song 3: Quadraverb: Programmes 3-5  
SPX90: Programmes 3-6

Song 4: Quadraverb: Programmes 6-9  
SPX90: Programmes 7-11

QUADRAVERB PROGRAMMES

SCORE PROGRAMME 1

MACHINE PROGRAMME

'ECHO1' : GRAPHIC EQ-DELAY

MIX: EQ: DELAY:  
Master effects=+99 Not used Ping-Pong Delay  
EQ o/p=0 Delay i/p:Pre-EQ  
Delay o/p=+99 Delay time=700ms  
Feedback=99%

MOD:  
(1):Pitch Bend:Delay Feedback:-99

SCORE PROGRAMME 2

MACHINE PROGRAMME

'EQFLANGE2' : EQ-PCH-DL-REVERB

MIX: EQ: PITCH:  
Direct:Post-EQ Lo: 150Hz:-14dB Stereo Flange  
Master effects=+99 Mid: 200Hz:Q=0.2:+14dB Pitch i/p:Post-EQ  
EQ o/p=0 Hi: 8kHz:-14dB LFO Speed=01  
Pitch o/p=0 LFO Depth=50  
Delay o/p=+99 Pitch feedback=99%  
Reverb o/p=0 Trigger flange:OFF

DELAY: REVERB: MOD:  
Stereo Delay Not used (1):C004:Mid Eq  
Delay i/p 1:XX Freq:+50  
Delay i/p mix: 99>Pitch (2):C001:Delay Mix  
L Delay Time=40ms Level:-99  
L Feedback=0 (3):C001:EQ Mix  
R Delay Time=80ms Level:+99  
R Feedback=0

SCORE PROGRAMME 3

MACHINE PROGRAMME

'SUSTDRIFT3' : 3 BAND EQ-REVERB

MIX: EQ: PITCH:  
Direct:Pre-EQ Not used Chorus: ON  
Direct =0 LFO Shape=Triangle  
Master effects=+99 LFO Speed=99  
Reverb o/p=+99 LFO Depth=99

REVERB: MOD:  
Room2 Not used  
Reverb i/p: Pre-EQ  
Pre-delay=1ms  
Pre-delay mix 99>POST  
Decay=99  
Diffusion=1  
Density=1  
Low freq. decay=0  
High freq. decay=0  
Reverb gate: OFF  
ETC:XX

SCORE PROGRAMME 4

MACHINE PROGRAMME

'EQDETUNE3' : EQ-PCH-DLY-REV

MIX: EQ: PITCH:  
Direct:Post-EQ Lo: 150Hz:-14dB Detune  
Master Effects=+99 Mid: 200Hz:Q=0.2:+14dB Pch i/p:Post-EQ  
EQ o/p=+99 Hi: 8kHz:-14dB Amount=0  
Pitch o/p=+99  
Delay o/p=0  
Reverb o/p=0

DELAY: REVERB: MOD:  
Not used Not used (1):C001:Detune  
Amount:+50  
(2):C004:Mid Eq  
Freq:+50

SCORE PROGRAMME 5

MACHINE PROGRAMME

'ECHO3' : GRAPHIC EQ-DELAY

MIX: EQ: DELAY:  
Master effects=+99 Not used Ping-Pong Delay  
EQ o/p=0 Delay i/p:Pre-EQ  
Delay o/p=+99 Delay time=700ms  
Feedback=99%

MOD:  
(1):Pitch Bend:Delay Feedback:-99

SCORE PROGRAMME 6MACHINE PROGRAMME

'REVERB4' : 3 BAND EQ-REVERB

MIX: EQ:  
 Direct Signal: XX Lo: 150Hz:-14dB  
 Master effects=99 Mid: 200Hz:Q=0.2:+14dB  
 EQ o/p=0 Hi: 8kHz:-14dB  
 Reverb o/p=99

REVERB:  
 Chamber 2  
 Reverb i/p:Post-EQ  
 Rev pre-delay=0.1ms  
 Predelay mix:99>Post  
 Rev decay=80  
 Rev diffn=9  
 Rev density=9  
 Low frq decay=0  
 High frq decay=0  
 Reverb gate: OFF  
 ETC: XX

PITCH: MOD:  
 Reverb Chorus:OFF (1):C004:Mid EQ  
 ETC: XX Freq:+60

SCORE PROGRAMME 7MACHINE PROGRAMME

'SUSTDRIFT4' : 3 BAND EQ-REVERB

MIX: EQ:  
 Direct:Pre-EQ Not used  
 Direct =0  
 Master effects=+99  
 Reverb o/p=+99

PITCH:  
 Chorus: ON  
 LFO Shape=Triangle  
 LFO Speed=99  
 LFO Depth=99

REVERB: MOD:  
 Chamber 2 Not used  
 Reverb i/p: Pre-EQ  
 Pre-delay=1ms  
 Pre-delay mix 99>POST  
 Decay=99  
 Diffusion=1  
 Density=1  
 Low frq. decay=0  
 High frq. decay=0  
 Reverb gate: OFF  
 ETC: XX

SCORE PROGRAMME 8MACHINE PROGRAMME

'GATEREVERB4' : EQ-PCH-DL-REVERB

MIX: EQ:  
 Direct Signal: XX Not used  
 Direct Sig level=0  
 Master Effects=+99  
 Pitch o/p=0  
 Delay o/p=0  
 Reverb o/p=99

PITCH:  
 Mono Chorus  
 Pitch i/p:Pre-EQ  
 LFO Shape:Square  
 LFO Speed=01  
 LFO Depth=01  
 Pitch feedback=99%

DELAY:  
 Not used

REVERB: MOD:  
 Room 1 Not used  
 Rev i/p 1: XX  
 Rev i/p 2:Ptch o/p  
 Rev i/p mix:99>2  
 Rev predelay=1ms  
 Predelay mix:99>post  
 Rev decay=60  
 Rev diffusion=9  
 Rev density=9  
 Low frq decay=0  
 High frq decay=0  
 Rev gate:ON  
 Rev gate hold=10  
 Rev gate release=99  
 Rev gated level=0%

SCORE PROGRAMME 9MACHINE PROGRAMME

'DELAYRES4' : EQ-PCH-DL-REVERB

MIX: EQ:  
 Direct Signal:Pre-EQ XX Not used  
 Direct Sig level=0  
 Master Effects=+99  
 Pitch o/p=0  
 Delay o/p=0  
 Reverb o/p=+99

PITCH:  
 Stereo Flange  
 Pitch i/p:Pre-EQ  
 LFO Speed=01  
 LFO Depth=30  
 Pitch feedback=99%  
 Trigger flange:OFF

DELAY:  
 Stereo Delay  
 Delay i/p 1:XX  
 Delay i/p mix:99>Pitch  
 Left delay time=10ms  
 Delay feedback L=99%  
 Right delay time=20ms  
 Delay feedback R=99%

REVERB: MOD:  
 Plate 1 Not used  
 Rev i/p 1: XX  
 Rev i/p 2:Dly o/p  
 Rev i/p mix:99>2  
 Rev predelay=1ms  
 Predelay mix:99>post  
 Rev decay=55  
 Rev diffusion=9  
 Rev density=9  
 Low frq decay=0  
 High frq decay=0  
 Rev gate:OFF  
 ETC: XX

SPX90 PROGRAMMES  
SCORE PROGRAMME 1

MACHINE PROGRAMME

GATE REVERB  
Reverse/Room Size=10/Liveness=10/Delay=0.1ms/LPF=THRU

SCORE PROGRAMME 2

MACHINE PROGRAMME

REV 1 HALL  
Rev Time=99s/Hi=1.0/Delay=30ms/HPF=THRU/LPF=THRU

SCORE PROGRAMME 3

MACHINE PROGRAMME

GATE REVERB  
Plate/Room Size=20/Liveness=10/Delay=40ms/LPF=THRU

SCORE PROGRAMME 4

MACHINE PROGRAMME

DELAY L,R  
L Delay=500ms/L Feedback=76%/R Delay=490ms/R Feedback=0%/High=1

SCORE PROGRAMME 5

MACHINE PROGRAMME

ADR-NOISE GATE  
Trg level=50/Trg delay=0ms/Trg msk=105ms/Attack=5ms/Decay=5ms  
Decay lvl=100%/Hold=30ms/Release=5ms/MIDI trg=OFF

SCORE PROGRAMME 6

MACHINE PROGRAMME

PAN  
Speed=4.5Hz/Direction L<>R/Depth=100%

SCORE PROGRAMME 7

MACHINE PROGRAMME

PITCH CHANGE C  
L Pitch=-12 : L Fine=+5 : L Dly=0.1ms  
R Pitch=-12 : R Fine=0 : R Dly=0.1ms

SCORE PROGRAMME 8

MACHINE PROGRAMME

PITCH CHANGE A  
Pitch=-12 : Fine=-10 : Delay=100ms : F.B. Gain=80% : Base Key=XX

SCORE PROGRAMME 9

MACHINE PROGRAMME

STEREO FLANGE B  
Mod Frq=0.1Hz : Mod depth=2% : Mod Dly=29ms : F.B. Gain=99%

SCORE PROGRAMME 10

MACHINE PROGRAMME

TRIGGERED PAN  
Trg Level=75 : Trg delay=0ms : Trg mask=131ms  
Attack=5ms : Panning=75ms : Release=5ms  
Direction L>R : L/R Balance=50% : MIDI Trg=OFF

SCORE PROGRAMME 11

MACHINE PROGRAMME

REVERB & GATE  
Rev time=99s : High=1.0 : Delay=0.1ms : HPF=THRU : LPF=THRU  
Trg level=70 : Hold=1ms : Release=420ms : MIDI trg=OFF

SIMON EMMERSON

SENTENCES (soprano and live electronics)

Programme Note

Sentences was composed between November 1990 and January 1991 to a commission from Nicola Walker Smith with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain. It is for solo soprano and live electronics (two signal processing units and sound projection). The work is essentially for two performers, the live electronic part being detailed and exacting.

Texts were chosen from Whitman (an extract from 'Passage to India'), Thoreau ('Woof of the Sun') and Shakespeare ('Full Fathom Five' - more accurately a deconstruction/reconstruction of this poem). The vocal material for the fourth song was constructed from isolated elements of the previous three, largely abstract and unrecognisable, fragments of words reordered and reassembled.

The work seeks to mediate several 'poles': the obvious onomatopoeia linked to word association - 'mimesis' - with the more abstract demands of electroacoustic sounds and their combination. So the cycle moves from the declamation of the Whitman - an influence on the Futurists and hence the *lettriste* tradition - through the symbolic impressionism of the Thoreau to the increasingly fragmented 'deconstruction' of the Shakespeare, in which single words conjure up whole images, to the final dissolution into 'semantic noise' (Berio's phrase).

The work was written specifically for the idiosyncracies of two well-known sound processors of the 1980s (the Alesis *Quadraverb* and Yamaha's ubiquitous *SPX90*) though future versions will be made as new equipment becomes available.

My thanks to Andrew Lovett and the Electroacoustic Music Studio at City University, London for technical assistance in the realisation of the piece.

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Texts for 'Sentences'

(1) Passage to India (extract) (Walt Whitman)

I see over my own continent the Pacific railroad surmounting  
every barrier,  
I see continual trains of cars winding along the Platte carrying  
freight and passengers,  
I hear locomotives rushing and roaring, and the shrill steam-  
whistle,  
I hear the echoes reverberate through the grandest scenery in the  
world,  
I cross the Laramie plains, I note the rocks in grotesque shapes,  
the buttes,  
I see the plentiful larkspur and wild onions, the barren  
colorless, sage-deserts,  
I see in glimpses afar or towering immediately above me the great  
mountains, I see the Wind river and the Wahsatch mountains,  
I see the Monument mountain and the Eagles's Nest, I pass the  
Promontary, I ascend the Nevadas,  
I scan the noble Elk mountain and wind around its base,  
I see the Humboldt range, I thread the valley and cross the  
river,  
I see the clear waters of lake Tahoe, I see the forests of  
majestic pines,  
Or crossing the great desert, the alkaline plains, I behold  
enchancing mirages of waters and meadows,

(2) Woof of the sun, ethereal gauze (Henry David Thoreau)

Woof of the sun, ethereal gauze,  
Woven of Nature's richest stuffs,  
Visible heat, air-water, and dry sea,  
Last conquest of the eye;  
Toil of the day displayed, sun-dust,  
Aerial surf upon the shores of earth,  
Ethereal estuary, frith of light,  
Breakers of air, billows of heat,  
Fine summer spray on inland seas;  
Bird of the sun, transparent-winged  
Owlet of noon, soft-pinioned,  
From heath or stubble rising without song;  
Establish thy serenity o'er the fields.

(3) Fathom words adapted and reconstructed from Full Fathom  
Five (Shakespeare)

Hark! Hear them!  
Ring  
Nothing  
Nothing lies  
Nothing of him fade  
Nothing of him into something strange  
That were  
That were made  
That were his but doth change  
That were his but doth suffer eyes

eyes/lies/dies/die/dying/ding

Sea rich pearls (parolle )  
Coral bones  
Full Fa--(m)

(4) Inferno (materials adapted from the above by the composer)

a/I/hear  
I see/mountains/fath'm full fade  
di-do-be-bo-co-bo-pe  
(sentenzia)

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I: PASSAGE TO INDIR (EMUL) (WALT WHITMAN)

Much energy!

See - o-ver my own con-ti-nent Pacific rail-road sur-ving every barrier 1 see con-tin-ual train of cars win-ding a-long the

PRESET: QV TO PRG.1 (ECHO 1)  
SPX TO PRG.1 (GATE REVERB)

Platte my freight passengers, 1 hear lo-co-mo-tives tu-shing and roar-ing the steam whi-ble hear the echoes re-ver-berate

though grandest scenery in the world, 1 cross the Laramie plains, 1 note the rocks grotesque sha-per, the buttes, 1 See the

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V *plentiful lakspur wild and o-nions barren colorless sage de-  
serts* see in glimpses a-far or tow-  
-ering is dia- a-love the Great Moun-  
-tains

QV  
SPX  
PRG

V *1 see the Wind river the Wahsatch moun-  
-tains, 1 see the Monu-  
-ment -tain and the Eagle's Nest, 1 pass the*

QV  
SPX  
PRG

V *Promontary, 1 a-scend the Ne-va-das, 1 scan the*

QV  
SPX  
PRG



V *mp subito dolce*

no-ble Moun- -tain wind its base, 1 see the Humboldt range thread the valley cross the river 1 see the

Elk and around

QV

SPX

PRG

V

clear wa- -ters of Lake Ta- -hoe 1 see the fo- rest na- -ive pine- s of cro- the desert, the

sing great

QV

SPX

PRG

V *p dolce sostenuto* *senza dim. ent. (p)*

al- ka- lime plains 1 be- -hold en- -chan- -ting mi- -rages of wa- -ters and mea- -dows

QV

SPX

PRG

IN BREAK: ADVANCE QV TO PRG.2 ('EQUILANCE')

ADVANCE SPX TO PRG.2 (REV 1 MAX)

(ADVANCE/RECALL)

MOD. WHEEL TO MAX UP! (100%)

II: WOLF OF THE SUN, ETHEREAL GAUZE (HENRY DAVID THOREAU)

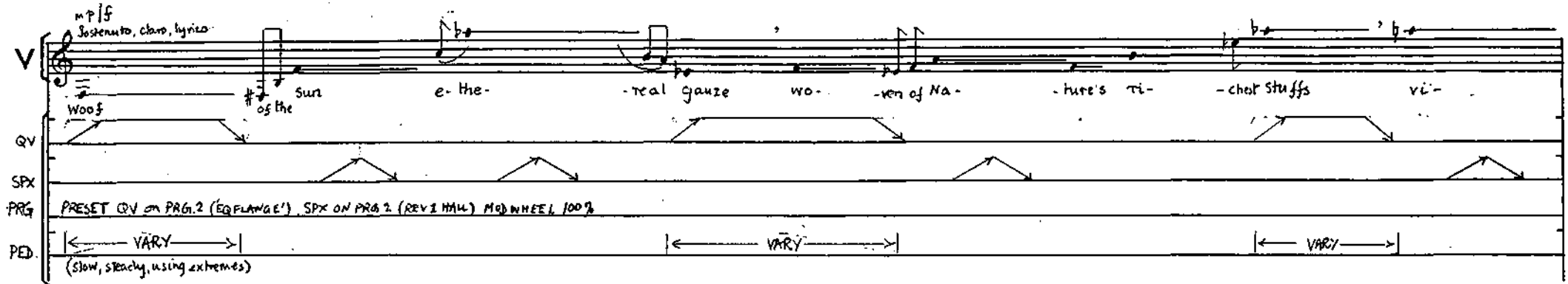
mp sf  
Sostenuto, clar, lyrical

Woolf  
Surf of the

e- the- -real gauze wo- ven of Na- -ture's ri- -chat stuffs vi-

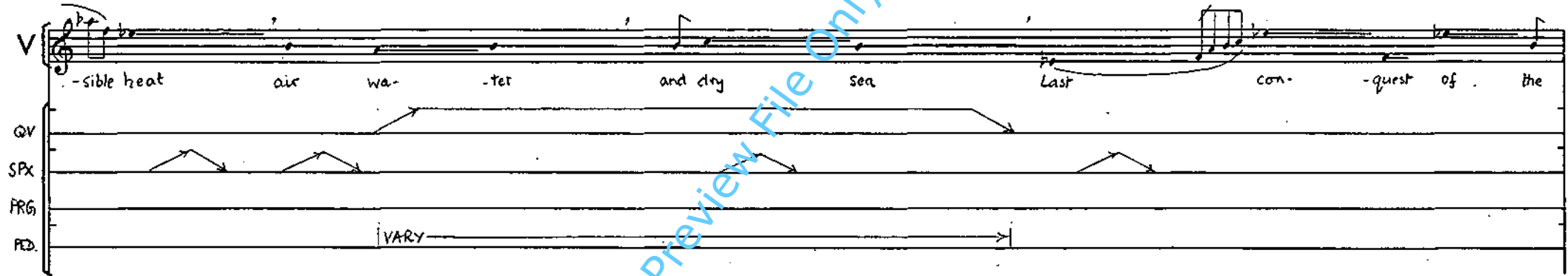
PRESET QV ON PRG. 2 (EQ FLANGE!). SPX ON PRG. 2 (REV. 1 HALL) MOD WHEEL 100%

VARY VARY VARY  
(slow, steady, using extremes)



-sible heat air wa- -ter and dry sea Last con- -quest of the

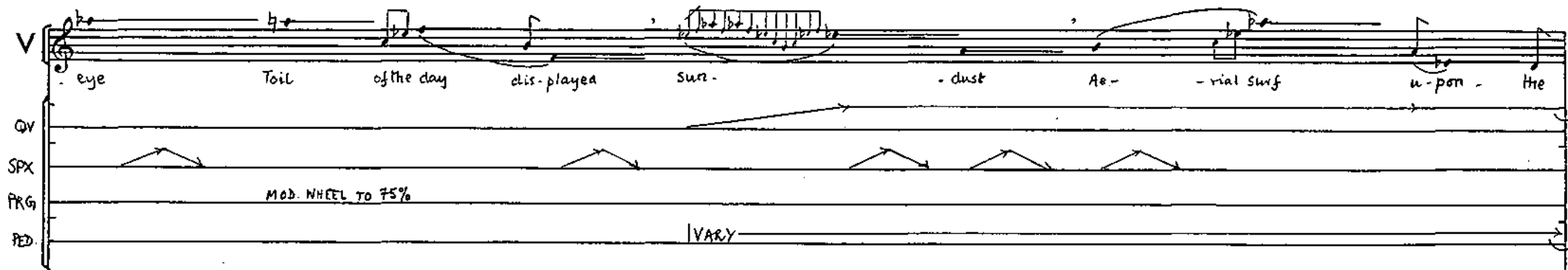
VARY



eye Toil of the day dis-playea surr- -dust Ae- -rial surf u-pon - the

MOD. WHEEL TO 75%

VARY



V

shores of earth E-the - real e - stuary, frith of light, brea - -kens of.

RV

SPX

PRG MOD. WHEEL TO 50%

PED (VARY) VARY

V

air bi - llows of heat fine su - -mer spray on (i)n -land seas

RV

SPX

PRG

PED (VARY) VARY

V

Bird of the sun trans - pa - -rent winged ow - -let of noon, soft pi - -nioned. health from

RV

SPX

PRG MOD. WHEEL TO 25%

PED (VARY) VARY

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V *tr*  
 OT stu - - ble ri - - sing wi - - thout song E - sta - - (sh) - (sh)

QV

SPX

PRG MOD. WHEEL TO 0% (FULL DOWN!)

PED. VARY

V *tr*  
 thy - - (y) - - (y) - - (y) - - Se - - re - - ni - - ty

QV

SPX

PRG

PED. (VARY)

*p* sostenuto (some vib.)

V *mf*  
 O'er - - (er) the fields.

QV

SPX

PRG

PED. (VARY)

ADVANCE QV TO PRG. 3 ('SUST DRIFT 3')  
 SPX TO PRG. 3 (GATE REVERB)

III: FATHOM (w/ Shakespeare)

$\text{♩} = 120$  Very clear articulation!

V *mp* 3 3 3 *f* 4x 3 *f subito* 3  
Hark! Hear them! Ring No-thing No-thing lies

QV  
SPX  
PRG PRESET QV TO PRG.3 ('SUSTDRIFTS')  
SPX TO PRG.3 (GAME REVERB)

V *3x p* 3 3 3 *f* *3x f* 3 3 3 *p* *f*  
No-thing No-thing of him fade No-thing of him in-to Some-thing strange

QV  
SPX  
PRG

V *f* *subito p* *f* *mf* *p*  
That were That were made That were his but cloth change

QV  
SPX  
PRG

V *f* That were his *but* *mf* *ff* suffer eyes (no dim.!) eyes... lies... dies... die... dying... ding...  
 =120 Whisper *pppp* possible but clearly, absolutely in time with echo. Repeat each word about 8x except "ding" which should be whispered only!

QV

SPX

PRG

↑ ADVANCE SPX TO PRG. 4 (ADVANCE/RECALL) (DELAY L,R)

↑ ADVANCE QV TO PRG. 4 ("EQBETWEE")

Prepare next programme on SPX (flashing)

Allow a few echoes then cut neatly and abruptly by pressing (SPX) RECALL

V L → C (C) → R → C, (C) → L → C (C) p-p-pearls pa-ro-llie  
 Sea Rich

QV

SPX

PRG

CONT. SLOW CONTINUOUS UNDULATING MOVEMENTS OF PEDAL AND MODULATION WHEEL (BETWEEN EXTREMES)

V C → (L ↔ R) → R L → C → (R ↔ L) → L [C] ca. 3x -ll  
 co- -tal b-b-b-bones Fu- -ll

QV

SPX

PRG

CONT. [CONTINUE]

QV ADVANCE TO PRG. 5 (ECHO'S) FAST!!

SPX ADVANCE TO PRG. 6 (PAN) (ADVANCE/RECALL)

MOD. WHEEL: INCREASE TO MAX OVER THE THREE REPEATS.

*mp dolce e lontano*

V

QV

SPX

PRG

CONT (MID. WHEEL)

*Senza dim e rit.*

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ADVANCE QV TO PRG. 6  
(REVERBA)

ADVANCE SPX TO PRG. 7  
(PITCH CHANGE C)







Handwritten musical score for voice and effects. The voice part is on a treble clef staff with lyrics: (ah)-, Sen-, -ten-zi-, a. Above the staff are stereo field annotations: C, (L-C-R), C, (L-C-R), C, C, C, C, and FREEZE!. Below the staff are three tracks: EQ, SFX, and PRG. The SFX track has a long arrow pointing right. The PRG track has "FAST FADE!" written at the end. The word "FINE!" is written below the PRG track.

FINE!

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