

SONG-PEACE-WAR-SINS-INDUSTRY-DISCONTENT-FAME-OBSCURITY

For Solo Voice

Daniel Fardon

~ To be freely interpreted ~

WORDS

Sing a sad song
Where there ain't nuthin' but happy
It's what Jesus would do
Yeah, yeah-yeah, yeah

Hate the sin not the sinner
Jump upon the peace train
In the heart of America

It's sad but true,
When the day that lies ahead of me
Bears heavy on my mind
Y'all can't blame it on the hip-hop
Everyone needs it baby

Fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame
Fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame
Fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame, fame

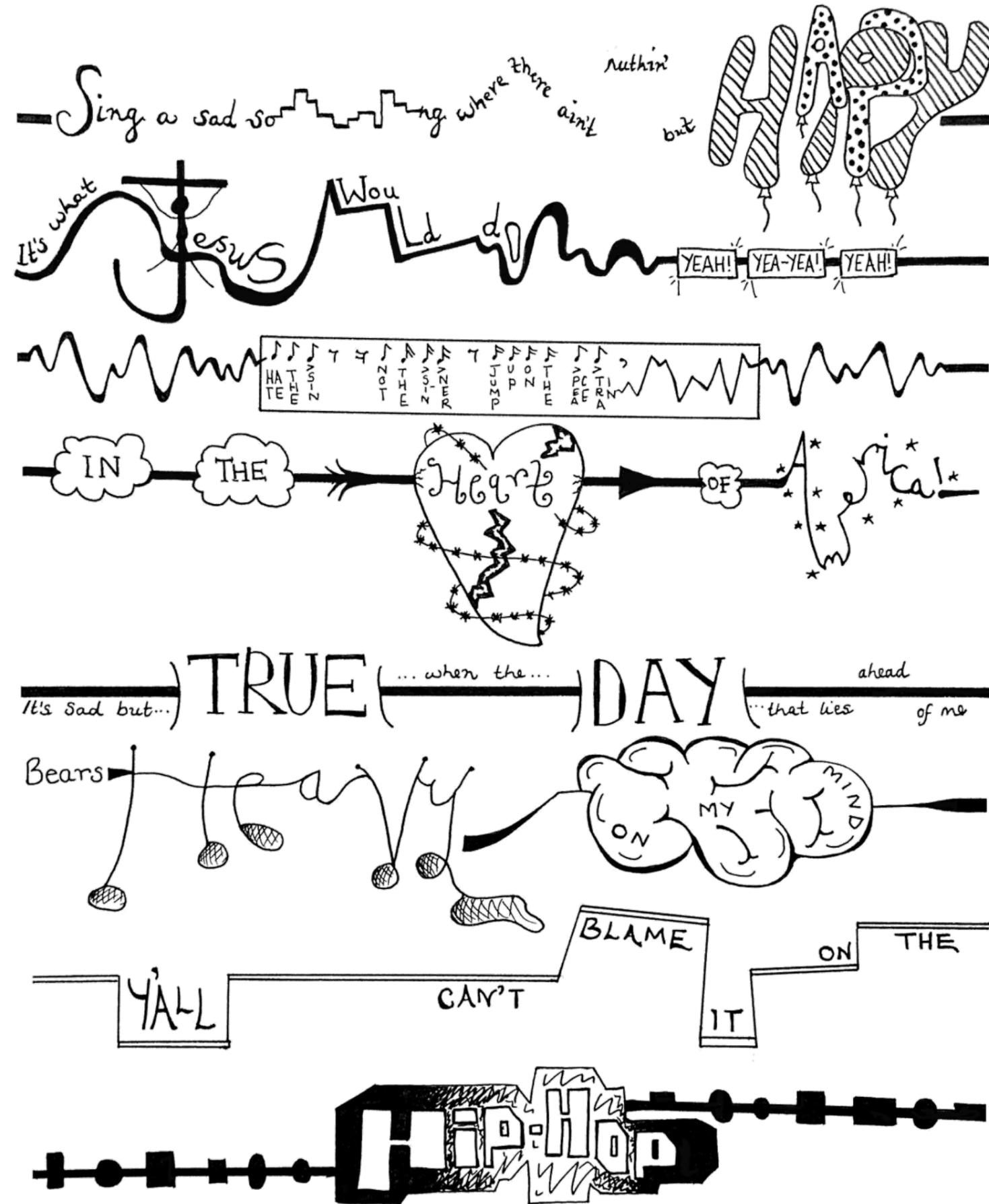
Discontent, you must leave
Got me looking
In the heart of America
Looking so crazy in love

Obscure as we are
Come on now peace train
Don't throw it all away

What's your name?
There's only our hair's breadth between us
You should feel ashamed
Cause they say I've done wrong
Blood on the floor

Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin
Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin
Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin, Sin

As sure as we be, a lovely day;
The reason I'm goin'; we're throwing it all away



El Tren Fantasma: A Familiar Journey into Unknown Narratives

Fiamma Mozzetta

“Pensé en un mundo sin memoria, sin tiempo”¹

J. L. Borges, *El Inmortal*

On Sunday morning I left home and flew back to London, where I now live. Then from Gatwick I took the Southern line for just one stop, heading towards East Croydon. The train was crowded as usual, packed with tired, clumsy, curious tourists’ eyes, self-absorbed commuters, luggage everywhere: I stood up. As the train was leaving the station, a woman in her late thirties with two kids, a girl and a boy in the stroller, sat on the empty seat in front of me. Mom and daughter, both with long, beautiful brown and blond hair, respectively, started to sing this counting song, very popular in Spanish speaking countries, “laaa gaaaallina turuuuleca, haa puesto un huevo, ha puesto dooos, haa pueesto trees...”,² and then started to play with mom pretending to be some old-time friend knocking on daughter’s door, TOC TOC, “¿Quién es?”, “Soy yo. ¿Me dejas entrar?”.³ I stood there, staring at them as if I knew them, smiling all the way through. Reaching the station, they stopped, called father, “Daaaad,” who was lost in the crowd near the train doors, “Yes, sweetie,” collected their belongings and we all got off. It was such an emotional moment for me, filled with joyous, melancholic nostalgia. They reminded me of my family, mother from Argentina and father from Italy, and of all the years spent travelling from place to place, growing up switching languages and customs. She reminded me of my mom as I recall her with my childhood eyes, same hair, same straw bag, same laid-back, slightly ‘freak’ attitude. And of all the times she sang that same song to us. But, most of all, that fifteen-minute journey reminded me of the way I felt when I first listened to Chris Watson’s *El Tren Fantasma* (The Ghost Train) and how it accompanied me through overlapped and fragmented memories, either lived or acquired, of my early childhood and teenage years. It was as if, suddenly, I was on Watson’s train.

Founding and former member of Cabaret Voltaire and The Hafler Trio, Chris Watson is a sound recordist who specialises in natural history, recording sounds of animals, environments, wildlife and locations. In 1999, he spent more than a month recording the sounds of a train journey for an episode of the BBC’s travel documentary series *Great Railway Journeys*, and later used, edited and recombined the audio material he collected into ten tracks released in 2011 as *El Tren Fantasma*. The BBC episode was “Los Mochis to Veracruz,” which was obviously set in Mexico and whose main aim was to document the people, the atmosphere and the landscape of the train journey, running from the Pacific Coast to the Gulf of Mexico. Since the train ceased to run shortly after, what interested Watson was to recreate the atmosphere of that train journey going beyond the historical project of documenting the real for future generations and delving, instead, into a new dimension in which the real fuses with the fictional: a recording of a specific time and place that is nevertheless able to capture a multiplicity of experiences, narratives and recollections. The record, inspired by the musique concrète work of French composer Pierre Schaeffer and by drawing on electronic musical techniques, tells the ‘ghost’ train journey combining the heavy, industrial and mechanical loops of the locomotive with the voices of passengers and workers, and the natural sounds of the environment.⁴ Touching upon the issue of whether Watson’s ‘unmelodic’ sounds should be considered as

¹ Trans. I thought of a world without memory, without time.

² Trans. La Gallina Turuleca has laid an egg, has laid two, has laid three.

³ Trans. Who’s there? It’s me, can I come in?

⁴ Listen, for example, to “Los Mochis,” *Youtube Video*, 6:31. Posted by “Touchmusic33,” 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGA2jYffWx0>; also “El Divisadero,” *Youtube Video*, 5:37. Posted by “Touchmusic33,” 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDQZTXz2-7o>.

Daniel Fardon

I am a British Composer, currently studying for a PhD in Musical Composition at the University of Birmingham under the supervision of Michael Zev Gordon. As a graduate of the University of Cambridge, and the Birmingham Conservatoire, I previously studied under the tutelage of Richard Causton, Howard Skempton, and Errollyn Wallen, partaking in masterclasses with Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Judith Weir, Colin Matthews, and Mark-Anthony Turnage.

My current research explores how musical eclecticism is understood and manifested across new music platforms, with a specific focus on stylistic construction in concert music, and the historical evolution of the relationship between composer and performer. My latest paper (on Schnittke to Zorn) was published by the University of Southampton’s *Emergence Journal* in Autumn 2016, and my new graphic setting of Shakespeare’s ‘When icicles hang by the wall’ was published in the *Birmingham Journal of Literature and Language* (BJLL) in Summer 2017. I am currently the recipient of both The Sir Thomas White’s Music Scholarship, and a University of Birmingham College of Arts and Law Doctoral Scholarship Award, which fully funds my study and research.