the whale (2019)

Open notation and fixed media materials
Audio visual presentation (2020)

Programme Note:

The Whale is an allegorical poem in Old English, concerning the potential for the reader to unwittingly fall into sin. Read literally, it concerns the mistaking of a whale, by sailors, for an island. The fragments of the poem in my version focus on the whale's treatment; on the indignity of having a tent pitched on one's back and then being set on fire, before finally protesting. Musically, this piece also focuses on what cannot be seen: the part of the whale that is there, but under the water; the places that are known to the whale but are unknown to the reader or listener. The materials for the piece comprise a graphic score outlining the structure and text of the piece, and images that are derived from medieval manuscripts that depict whales, as well as a set of recorded fragments that are made entirely from my reading and speaking the fragments of the poem that appear in the score and the performance. The piece should not be considered a setting of the text of The Whale, but rather a reflection on its materials as the sailors might reflect on the image of the whale under the water.

First performance:
the whale was presented as an audio visual piece by Summit Salford at the Buxton Fringe Festival from 1st -19th July 2020, online.
The audio visual presentation comprised a video made from the score images, and recorded sound created by myself (accordion, wind instruments, percussion) and Alistair Zaldua (violin).
Summit: *https://summitsfd.wordpress.com/*
Trailer
Review: *https://www.buxtonfringe.org.uk/reviews2020and.html*

> "The Whale by Lauren Redhead is the most accomplished piece and has been created during lockdown. It's an animation featuring a poem read over an experimental noise score. The soundscape manages to successfully evoke whalesong and a sense of foreboding that complements the beautiful imagery of whales, waves and maps." Stephen Walker

SUMMIT

@ Buxton Fringe

1.7.20 - 19.7.20

https://summitsfd.wordpress.com

Buxton festival fringe

Nate Chivers
OD Davey
Gidouille Noise
Hanslip / Karlsen
Lauren Redhead
Mark Reid

Summit