In a series of chamber and orchestral compositions I employ approaches to composition in which motivic material is developed in a multi-linear fashion, according to processes of branching and divergence of parameters which are analogous to branching structures in nature. The resultant musical structures coexist within works that may contain multiple branches of motivic development, simultaneously or discretely, rather than following a single temporal line of development.

**Compositions in portfolio:**

**Earth** for large orchestra

- Forces: Balcony: 2ob, 2ssax, 1perc
- Stage: 3(2picafl).1(ca).2(bcl).2+cbn/4331/3perc/pf/str(12.12.10.8.6)
- Completed January 2011
- Duration 21 minutes

**Ghost Patrol,** an opera in 4 scenes to a libretto by Louise Welsh

- Forces: 3 singers (sop, ten, bar), pre-recorded tape, ensemble: 1(pic).1(ca).1(bcl).1(cbn)/0110/perc/hp/str(1.1.1.2.1)
- Completed September 2011
- Duration 58 minutes
String Quartet No.1

 Completed February 2012
 Duration 25 minutes

Nephele for flute, harp, violin, viola and cello

 Completed November 2012
 Duration 12 minutes

Ixion for clarinet, cello and piano

 Completed May 2013
 Duration 15 minutes
Stuart MacRae

Earth
(2010)

for Orchestra

Full Score

Novello & Co.
Stuart MacRae's _Earth_ is a BBC Radio 3 commission for the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. It was first performed in the Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow on 9 March 2013 conducted by Richard Baker.

**Instrumentation**

On balconies:
- 2 Oboes
- 2 Soprano Saxophones
  Percussion (1 player) Bass drum, low tom-tom, tam-tam

On platform:
- 3 Flutes (3. doubling Piccolo and Alto flute)
- 1 Oboe (doubling Cor Anglais)
- 2 Clarinets in B-flat (2. doubling Bass Clarinet)
- 2 Bassoons
- Contrabassoon
- 4 Horns in F (straight and practice mutes)
- 3 Trumpets in B-flat (Harmon, cup, straight and practice mutes)
- 3 Trombones (Harmon, straight, plunger and practice mutes)
  (Trombone 3 should be a bass or tenor/bass instrument)
- Tuba
- Timpani

Percussion (3 players)
- *Chic cymbal, sizzle cymbal, suspended cymbal, Chinese cymbal, pair of cymbals, (Chinese) opera gong (ascending tone), tam-tam, small thundersheet, bell tree, 2 log drums (high and low), woodblock, 2 temple blocks, side drum, tenor drum with snares, kick drum, 3 roto-toms (high, mid, low), low tom-tom, bass drum, shakers, sleighbells, triangle, vibraphone, xylophone, marimba (ideally down to but at least )
- 4 cowbells (ideally below concert pitch by up to 1/4 tone)
- 2 gongs
- Piano
- Strings
  at least: 12.12.10.8.6

Score in C

Duration: ca. 20 minutes

**LAYOUT**

The balcony instruments should be placed as follows: Oboe 1 and Saxophone 1 together on a balcony behind a good portion of the audience, on their left; Oboe 2 and Saxophone 2 similarly on the audience’s right. The balcony percussionist should be directly behind and above the audience.

The second Violins should be on the conductor’s right, as antiphonal effects are used.

The following layout is suggested:
resolutely più dolce

Vlc.
Vla.
pizz.

senza sord.

arco, sul tasto senza vib.

Perc.

Tam-tam

Log drum

Tuba

poco

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vla.
Cb.
div. a 3

con vib.

resolutely

più dolce

molto

Cbsn.

Fl.

C.A.

Cl. (Bb)

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2

Pic.

Cl. (B)

Fl. 2

Hn.

Hn.

Log drum

Tuba

Perc.

Fl. 1

Picc.

C.A.

Fl. 1

Picc.
Atmospheric but pointed \( J = \text{ca.} 58 \)
* Practice mutes may be necessary to achieve an equal balance between trumpets and flute.
Moderato scorrendo

S = ca. 104 (gossamer-light)

Sul tasto

Moderato scorrendo

S = ca. 104 (gossamer-light)
(It is more important here to create a smooth variation of pitch than to achieve perfect timing and tone.)
Più mosso (punchy, with a contained energy)

\( \text{\( j = \text{ca. 112} \)} \)

(Use pitch bend technique to achieve ¼ tones. Some variation in pitch is acceptable.)

Vibraphone (motor on)

Cowbells (usually below concert pitch by up to ¼ tone)

Chinese opera gong

\( \text{\( \text{Più mosso (punchy, with a contained energy)} \)} \)

\( \text{\( \text{\( j = \text{ca. 112} \)} \)} \)
* sempre sim. signifies an accented note followed by a rapid diminuendo, unless otherwise indicated.
* maintain same dynamic shape of notes (accent and rapid dim.) except staccato notes, which should be at the quieter (post-dim.) volume.
Throughout this section, no note should be longer than a semiquaver in duration, except for those with a tenuto mark.
Throughout this section, no note should be longer than a semiquaver in duration, except for those with a tenuto mark.

* Throughout this section, no note should be longer than a semiquaver in duration, except for those with a tenuto mark.
* Fl. may optionally play Piccolo, sounding at written pitch.

** See note on previous page.
Bracketed notes are for instruments without a 5th string or extension.

* Illustratd notes are for instruments without a 5th string or extension.
Stuart MacRae

Ixion
Instrumentation

Clarinet in B flat
Violoncello
Piano

Duration c.15-16 minutes
The clarinet part is transposed (in B flat) in the score.

Performance note

*Ixion* has 8 'moments' which are numbered 1-8 in the score.
In performance, these should run without a break between moments.

Accidentals apply to the whole bar, until cancelled.

In the clarinet part, 'timbral trills' denote a rapid alternation between
the notated pitch and either another fingering for that pitch or a
microtonal pitch close to the notated pitch.

Commissioned by the Court of the University of Glasgow, in 2014,
under the terms of the McEwen Bequest

The first performance is scheduled for 6th November 2014.
Ixion

Stuart MacRae

Score transposed

1. Powerfully

$\frac{7}{4}$

Clarinet in Bb

Violoncello

Piano

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pedal may be lifted occasionally between indicated places to allow low notes to clear
Stuart MacRae

String Quartet no. 1
(2012)
for the Maggini Quartet

String Quartet No.1

Stuart MacRae

Duration: approx. 25 minutes

Performance notes

Tempo

Metronome marks are included as a guideline to the performers. Capturing the character of the music is more important than observing these metronome marks exactly.

Where metric modulations (or pulse equivalences) are indicated, such relationships should be preserved to the greatest practicable extent. Some of these are approximate equivalences, indicated by the symbol “≈” in place of “=”.

In the section from bar 231 to bar 300 these metric modulations should create the effect of gradual, stepped accelerations that overlap – the slower-moving parts accelerate to become the faster-moving parts in the next phase of acceleration. This, and the sense of precipitate acceleration, are the most important outcomes of the given tempo relationships.

Accidentals

\[ \begin{array}{ccccccc}
\text{\textfrac{3}{4} tone flat} & \flat & \text{\textfrac{1}{4} tone flat} & \natural & \text{\textfrac{3}{4} tone sharp} & \sharp & \text{\textfrac{1}{4} tone sharp} \\
\end{array} \]

An accidental with an arrow attached (e.g. \( \downarrow \) or \( \uparrow \) or \( \downarrow \uparrow \)) indicates a flattening or sharpening of the pitch of less than \( \text{\textfrac{1}{4} tone} \). For example in viola: bar 436, B\( \uparrow \) means between B\( \natural \) and B\( \# \).

A note with no accidental but a small arrow about or next to the note (e.g. \( \uparrow \)) indicates the smallest perceptible variation in tuning from the written note, in the direction specified. (e.g. cello bar 104).

Glissandi should always begin immediately and be continuous for the full notated duration until the next pitch is specified. Where a later slide between notes is desired “port.” (i.e. portamento) is written beside the glissando line.

Articulation and bowing

Some bowings (both slurs and up-bow/down-bow indications) and string specifications (e.g. I, IV etc.) have been suggested by the composer. These may be altered by the performers if desired.

An arrow from one bow position to another (e.g. sul pont. –– molto sul pont.) indicates a gradual change from one position to the other, over the duration of the arrow.
Poco meno mosso \( \text{L} = 90 \)

poco sul pont. con vib.

(cresc.)

poco sul pont. senza vib.

(cresc.)

poco sul pont.
Poco più agitato \( \text{\textit{d} = 96} \)

\[\text{sim.}\]

\[\text{cresc.}\]

\[\text{poco marcato}\]

\[\text{stacc. notes quieter}\]
Impetuoso $J = 120$

cresc. poco a poco

rit.

---

$J = 128$

---

poco stentato

---

poco stentato
* staccato notes always lighter/quieter than non-staccato notes
† † = smallest interval possible above written note (see notes at start of score)

A tempo (Strepitoso)

\[ j = 124 \]
Più meccanico (stesso tempo)

senza vib. 

f

(f)

(martellato)

(f)

(martellato)

(f)

(martellato)
Presto vivace \( \text{\textbf{\( J = 144 \)}} \)
Selvaggiamente (stesso tempo)
con vib.

Vln. 1 (alternative notation)
Vla. (alternative notation)
e tc.
con vib.

etc.

167

etc.

con vib.

165

con vib.
Presto volante e ritmico (stesso tempo)

170

175

177
This relationship is the same as the previous $\frac{3}{2}$, and all other 4:3 ratios (e.g. $\frac{3}{2}$).

* This relationship is the same as the previous $\frac{3}{2}$, and all other 4:3 ratios (e.g. $\frac{3}{2}$).
Pochissimo più mosso (Tempo I)

\( \textstyle j = 94 \)
Più pesante $J = 90$

costo sul pont.
* Vn. 1, 2 & Va.: gradually and subtly shift the balance between the two notes: the indicated pitch should fade in and out to almost nothing, while the other remains more or less consistent. The intonation of the stopped notes should also be altered subtly to create constantly (but slowly) varying colours in the chord.
Più stentato (Poco meno mosso)

\( \text{J = 100} \)

con vib.

senza vib.

con vib.

senza vib.

con vib.

senza vib.

Più stentato (Poco meno mosso)
allargando – Stentato ma brillante $J = 88$

Largo $J = 40$

Flessibile $J = 56$
Stuart MacRae

NEPHELE
(2012)

Score
Instrumentation

Flute  
Harp  
Violin  
Viola  
Violoncello  

Duration c.11-12 minutes  

Performance note  

*Nephele* has 8 'moments' which are numbered 1-8 in the score. In performance, there should be a break after moments 3 and 4; moments 1-3 and 5-8 should run without a break. The bar numbering and rehearsal letters have been grouped accordingly.

Accidentals apply to the whole bar, until cancelled.

The flute 'tongue pizzicato' in moment 4 is executed by tonguing the given notes sharply without releasing the breath.

*Nephele* was commissioned by the Nephele Ensemble and first performed by them at the Park Lane Group Young Artists New Year Series concert, at the Purcell Room, London on 10th January 2013.
Like a playful machine

$\approx 80$

Fl

$\text{p}$

Hc

secco

mp $\theta$ sempre sim. $f$ mp $f$ mp $nf$ mp

Like a playful machine

$\approx 80$

Vln

$\text{p}$ senza sord.

Vla

senza sord. senza vib. $pp$

Vc

senza sord. pizz. $p$

37
Graceful yet febrile
\( \frac{4}{4} = 132 \) (\( \lambda = 44 \))
poco a poco cresc.
GHOST PATROL

an opera in four scenes

by

Stuart MacRae

with a libretto by

Louise Welsh

Full score

Novello & Co. Ltd.
GHOST PATROL

an opera in four scenes

by Stuart MacRae

with a libretto by Louise Welsh

Dramatis Personae:

Sam (tenor)  An ex-army sergeant in his thirties, who has fallen on hard times
Alasdair (baritone) An ex-army captain in his thirties; proprietor of the pub where the action takes place; Vicki’s boyfriend
Vicki (soprano)  An aspiring singer in her late twenties or early thirties; Alasdair’s girlfriend

Setting:  The opera is set in a contemporary British city five years from now. The country is at war in a distant land, but it’s business as usual at home. There are no bombs or armed combat in the streets, but images of the conflict and its victims dominate TV news reports. The opera takes place entirely in the barroom of Alasdair’s chichi gastro-pub. The hostelry is equipped with all the usual comforts, a well-stocked bar flanked by high stools, a flat screen TV, a few tables and chairs and a comfortable looking couch. A vase of spring flowers sits on the bar. A pair of French doors opens out onto a beer garden, where a tree is heavy with blossom. The far wall is decorated with a poster advertising Vicki’s forthcoming performance. It shows Vicki in dress uniform, her cap tipped at a jaunty angle.

Orchestra:

Flute    (+ Piccolo)
Oboe     (+ Cor Anglais)
Clarinet in B-flat    (+ Bass Clarinet)
Bassoon    (+ Contrabassoon)
Trumpet in B-flat  (with straight, cup, and Harmon mutes)
Trombone   (with extension down to C-sharp; with straight, cup and Harmon mutes)
Percussion vibraphone, hi-hat, sizzle cymbal, suspended cymbal, Chinese cymbal, Small tam-tam, Chinese opera gong, log drum, 8 temple blocs, 1 woodblock, 2 cowbells, anvil, bell (E), triangle, sleigh bells, tambourine, high bongo, snare drum, 2 tom-toms, kick drum, bass drum

Harp
2 Violins
Viola
2 Cellos
Contrabass  (with C-extension or 5 strings)

Tape A recorded semi-chorus of 4 voices (notated in score) plus electroacoustic track, prepared by the composer.

Duration: ca. 58’00”
Scene 1 ca.14’30”   Scene 2 ca. 6’00”   Scene 3 ca. 21’00”   Scene 4 ca. 16’30”

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Extract from “Ode of Remembrance” by Laurence Binyon
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Stuart MacRae’s Ghost Patrol was co-commissioned by Scottish Opera and Music Theatre Wales. It was first performed on 30 August 2012 at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh.
Scene 1

[Lights up on the interior of a pub. It's closed for the night. The room is almost in darkness.]

Music: Stuart MacRae

Text: Louise Welsh

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>ca. 5'</td>
<td>ca. 5'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violoncello</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contrabass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>ca. 5'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trombone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>ca. 5'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oboe (Cor Anglais)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarinet in Bb (Bass Clarinet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bassoon (Contrabassoon)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Score in C

Contrabass

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A Scorrevole ed agitato

[ SAM jemmies open a window and climbs in. He creeps through the bar quietly, looking for anything of value that he can steal. ]
vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

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cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

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viola.

vcl.

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perc.

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viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.

vln.

viola.

vcl.

ct.

perc.

bsn.

cl.
Alasdair quickly takes in the scene and a violent tussle commences. The two are well matched and it's anyone's guess who will win.

[Sam is emptying the till when ALASDAIR enters, turning on the light.]

Alasdair quickly takes in the scene and a violent tussle commences. The two are well matched and it's anyone's guess who will win.
C

\( \text{j = ca.} \text{78} \)

to Picc.

Hi-hat

Log drum

Susp. cymb.

Low and Mid Tom-toms

\( \text{j = ca.} \text{78} \)
[ A punch throws the men apart and they see each others' faces. Their combat shudders to a halt. The two men are still wary, but there is something between them which will not allow the fight to continue. ]
Alasdair goes to the pantry and opens a bottle of whisky. He throws the bottle's cap on the floor, pours two drams, sets the bottle on the counter and takes a seat on the customer side of the bar. Sam joins him, leaving a vacant stool between them. His eyes wander round the room.
Sam's gaze rests for a moment on the photograph of Vicki.
[The men are both exhausted by the fight. They maintain eye contact as, out of breath, they raise their glasses and drink, without making any toasts (the pair continue to drink throughout the scene).]
Alasdair takes out a pack of cigarettes. He selects one for himself and then offers one to Sam who accepts. Alasdair lights them both up with a bashed Zippo.
Blood, nois for a ghost.
If I'd known this place was yours

I'd strongly have left well alone.

...would have been quiet, et cetera.

...would have been qui et cetera.

Largo $J = \text{ca.} 54$

Poco più mosso

$J = \text{ca.} 60$

(parlando)

(parlando)
Alasdair refreshes their glasses.

Sam pushes his glass away and gets to his feet, ready to leave the way he came.

Più mosso

Fl.

Obl.  
Pizz.

Bcl.  
Pizz.

Bsn.

Pizz.

Tpt.  
Pizz.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Pizz.

A.

leaving the fight, raising a family.

Più mosso

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Ob.

Fl.

Hp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

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Bsn.

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Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

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Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.

Bsn.

Bcl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hnp.
[ Sam turns to face Alasdair, his expression incredulous. ]

But you were safer in the army.

Meno mosso

$\text{\textit{Saf er.}}$

Meno mosso

$\text{\textit{Saf er.}}$

Meno mosso

But you were safer in the army.
a lone in the dark and the black feel.

ing the cold on your face,

Perc.

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

S.
Più mosso  
(Moderato) \[ j = \text{c.a.} 100 \] 
\[ \frac{4}{4} \] 

Speak the softness of...
girls, the fizz of beer on your tongue.
ears fucking straining for the sound of a cocking gun.
roughly, but jaunty—a bit grotesque

Head ing out on Pat, rol, pock, ets packed with sweets.
Meno mosso (ma giocoso)
Wait ing for an or phan to de.
to Flute

Meno mosso
rall. . . \( J = \text{ca.} 54 \)

A.
- coy you to a bomb that blows your brains to fucking hell and your bollocks to Hong,

Meno mosso
rall. . . \( J = \text{ca.} 54 \)
whole thing just kicked off. Scream long in the wagon.
Follow him just the same (resigned, darkly)
blood...
lace in shattered glass
your eye on a gun site,
a gun site on your arse.
Poco meccanico

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vlc.</th>
<th>Claro.</th>
<th>Cbsn.</th>
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<tr>
<td>= ca. 72</td>
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And the only prize if you survive is a mug of NAA... Fl brew.

Poco meccanico

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<tr>
<td>= ca. 72</td>
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[The men grow physically closer.]
A platoon of virgins growing up too fast.
and atom in a bomb.
A bread on a byre.
rock et in a launcher ready to ex - a bullet in a gun,
a hundred marching feet,
A glint on a trigger, an edge.

Marching down a road.
Sonic's sculpture.
Fear was our friend.
But we didn't fight for country or for Queen.
We fought for each other Comrades and brothers,

Meno mosso

\[ \text{j = ca.92} \]
Ancora meno mosso

\begin{align*}
\text{Ancora meno mosso} & \quad \text{P} \\
\text{A.} & \quad \text{Comrades and brothers.} \\
\text{S.} & \quad \text{Comrades and brothers.} \\
\text{Vln.} & \quad \text{Vla.} \\
\text{Vla.} & \quad \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vlc.} & \quad \text{Cb.} \\
\text{Vln.} & \quad \text{Vla.} \\
\text{Vla.} & \quad \text{Vlc.} \\
\text{Vlc.} & \quad \text{Cb.} \\
\end{align*}

[The mood changes. It takes on a sinister, less exuberant edge. The past has entered the room.]
[Alasdair moves away from Sam and refills their glasses. Alasdair tries to maintain the jaunty tone, but ultimately cannot resist Sam's melancholy.]

```
You miss the company...
I sleep no more.
I taste no marc.
```

Calmo

\( \text{\( \frac{d}{dx} \)} = \text{ca.} \, 60 \quad \text{Calmo} \)

Vln.

\( \text{senza sord.} \)

Vla.

\( \text{con sord.} \)

Vlc.

\( \text{ senza sord.} \)

Cb.

\( \text{ senza sord.} \)
...the camera de nie. You miss the army.
I close my eyes and see
a lonely road,
a pretty

dreamily, remembering

"A dream, remembering a lonely road, a pretty..."
You see no thing. 

and far a way, far, an old man.

You see no thing.
A bird sings and I hear screaming, marcato, pointedly.

The night is silent.

Più mosso

$J = \text{ca.} 56$
I smell the street. Van smell of roasting flesh.
[Alasdair makes an expansive movement with his arm and a glass smashes to the floor.]

the old man turns his head and...

Enough!
[VICKI enters. She's wrapped in a dressing gown, tousled and sleepy, but still glamorous.]

Woken by nightmares? My poor Alasdair, still fighting the war.

Meno mosso (flexibly)

\( \text{\(J = \text{ca.50}\)} \)
Vicki takes in the scene: Sam, the broken window, rifled till and smashed glass. The men are frozen, as if caught in the middle of a criminal act.

Vicki makes a noise that is half scream, half gasp.

Alasdair rushes to Vicki and puts an arm around her. He is back in control.

The spell is broken. Sam looks stunned.
Vicki’s daze seems more than sleep induced. She touches Alasdair’s cheek.

Meet my man, Sergeant Sam.
[ She takes Alasdair's hands in hers and recoils. ]

[ Alasdair is determinedly bright. ]

face.

And on your hands.

Ser. grant Sam.
Alasdair pulls away the throw covering the couch and starts to arrange it into a makeshift bed, using cushions for pillows etc. His movements are economical and efficient. Sam hesitates on the sidelines, torn between the prospect of a bed for the night, the possibility of a job and his embarrassment.
He broke in but you give him the key.

VICKI
A. We fought for each other.

V. to the door.

We fought for each other.
In softly five years I never heard his name. [This news galvanises Sam. He steps forward, allying himself with Alasdair.]
Comrades and brothers. We lived for each other.
Play boxes 1, 2 and 3 in order first, then repeat in any order.
When signalled to stop, complete the motive within the current box, then stop.

U Senza misura

\[ \text{\textit{rall. poco a poco}} \]

(\footnotesize go out of sync with Contrabass)}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textbf{BCL.} Cb., Vlc. 1
\item \textbf{Cb.} Vla., Vln.
\item \textbf{Vlc. 1} Cb.
\end{enumerate}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Vlc. 1} Cb. together
\item \textbf{Cb.} Vla., Vln.
\item \textbf{Vln.} 2
\item \textbf{Vla.}
\item \textbf{BCL., Cb. together}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Vlc. 1} Cb. together
\item \textbf{Cb.} Vla., Vln.
\item \textbf{Vln.} 2
\item \textbf{Vla.}
\item \textbf{BCL., Cb. together}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Vlc. 1} Cb. together
\item \textbf{Cb.} Vla., Vln.
\item \textbf{Vln.} 2
\item \textbf{Vla.}
\item \textbf{BCL., Cb. together}
\end{itemize}

* Stop at the end of current motive.
The kind of arioso you want on your side.

I want you to be good friends.

[Alasdair steps aside, joining Sam and Vicki’s hands.]

Vlc. 1

\( \text{Senza misura} \)

\( \text{poco accel.} \)

\( \text{al legno battuto} \)

\( \text{rit.} \)

\( \text{molto} \)

[Alasdair turns to Vicki.]
Vlc. 1 3 sul tasto
Vla. 3 sul tasto
Vln. 3 sul tasto
Vlc. 3 sul tasto

Dolce
$\frac{2}{4} \quad J = \text{ca. 60}$

A charge passes between them. [Sam and Vicki look each other in the eye. A charge passes between them.]

Dolce
$\frac{4}{4} \quad J = \text{ca. 60}$

Tranquillo
$\frac{2}{4} \quad J = \text{ca. 52}$

Vicki
$\frac{4}{4} \quad J = \text{ca. 52}$

in a gar • n • son town you meet • man • • y men, who are ghosts.

They let go of each other’s hands suddenly, as if shocked by an electric current, and step apart. Alasdair puts an arm around Vicki’s shoulder and leads her towards offstage and bed. Vicki pulls away from him.

Vlc. 2 1
Vla. 2 1
Vln. 2 1
Vlc. 2

Perc.

Hp.

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Vlc. 2

Bass drum
They walk like men and talk and look like men.
But the best part of them is lost. Ghosts hate the
living and their love is cursed.

Con moto $J = \text{ca.} 63$

Con moto $J = \text{ca.} 63$
He'll steal everything you ever worked for.
[ Alasdair shrugs his shoulders at Sam in a ‘women, can’t live with them, can’t live without them’ gesture. He leads Vicki off stage. Sam is left standing alone in the dim light of the empty bar. ]

Transition I–II

( = ca. 63)
Sam sits down on the couch. He looks up at the ceiling, following the progress of Alasdair and Vicki’s footsteps across their bedroom floor.

SAM

Scene 2

Senza misura

His heavily

stride, her lighter tread. He folds his clothes up on the chair.
Her robe falls to the floor. I sit here alone.

Sam clicks on the bar's television. The news is on, the war playing out on the screen. Sam is ignoring the broadcast, but the TV is a conduit which returns his subconscious to the past.
Largo \( \frac{3}{4} \) \( \text{\textit{veloce e grazioso con vib.}} \)

Too far to see, too far to know.
We meant no harm.

[We hear a chorus of newscasters, who read out the headlines.]

* This gap may be omitted; it should never be longer than one beat. There is no gap on the audio track, so it should be cued on the second beat of the bar if the rest is included.
The following is a rough visual guide to the other layers of the pre-recorded material.

Chorus

joined the lists of the fallen. Relatives have been in.

formed but names have not yet been released. Their names cannot be

Tape

3/4 7/8 5/4

Meno mosso

J = c.60

Fl.

Cl.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Sus. cymbal (soft beaters)

Chorus

formed but names have not yet been released. Their names cannot be

Vln.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.
5/4 B

3/4 \( j = \text{ca.} 48 \)

7/8

4/4

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Hp.

Spoken. They are the newly dead, freshly lost,

Spoken. They are the newly dead, freshly lost,

remembering the past: haunted and increasingly troubled

A lonely road, a pretty girl, and

* Independent of conducted tempo
Doppio movimento

J = ca.96

Far away an old man. Too far to see, too far to hear.

and we must not, can not whisper,

Chorus

Tape

and we must not, can not whisper,

S.

Doppio movimento

J = ca.96

becoming somewhat panicky

(cresc. = sempre J = 72)

fl.

cresc...

ob.

cresc...

cb.

cresc...

bsn.

cresc...

tpt.

cresc...

tbn.

cresc...

perc.

hp.

Vlc.

Vla.

Cbs.

Vln.

(Vlc.

(Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(1) Vln.

(1) Vla.

(2) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

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(2) Vla.

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(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.

(1) Vlc.

(2) Vln.

(2) Vla.
We meant no harm. Their names. Relatives. Their names. Relatives. Their names. Relatives.

(Play slow glissandi on resonators, with two wooden beaters, allowing an irregular "rhythm" to result.)

More reflective

Too far to know. We meant no harm. Senza sord.
Too far to run, too far to stop, my hand touching

smooth gliss., free (legato) bowing

smooth gliss., free (legato) bowing

 produce indeterminate multiphonics and beating (growl)

sing

hold a pencil or pen against the string as it vibrates
her face, wiping the tears from her face, trying to smooth
becoming more panicky, almost desperate
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. To bar 65 Sam is overwhelmed by what may be an episode of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.}
Breathe as necessary. Try to re-enter as smoothly as possible.

* Breathe as necessary. Try to re-enter as smoothly as possible.
Sam's symptoms gradually subside.

Gradually introduce rests.

Gradually descending.

Vary between 1-3".

Last time.

Log drum.

Bisbigliando (with fingers, normally).

As long as breath lasts.

Ca. 22°.

Ca. 22°.

Ca. 22°.

Ca. 22°.

Ca. 22°.
Chorus: Must not, cannot whisper their names.

Tape:

Vln. 1

Vla. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. 2

Ch.:
[Sam looks up at the ceiling.]

[Sam collapses back on the couch and the stage fades to black.]
Scene 3

3/4 Poco più mosso

[ Lights up. Some time has passed since that first night and small changes have taken place in the pub. The flower arrangement on the bar is composed of autumnal blooms. The large portrait of Vicki now shows her in combat gear, her mouth set in the same shining smile, her cap tipped at the same jaunty angle as before. Beyond the French windows, the tree in the beer garden sheds russet leaves (this may begin during the previous transition). It's early evening. Sam springs into business, tying a black apron around his waist, setting to polishing glasses and slicing lemons. ]
[Vicki enters dressed to the nines, ready to entertain the customers. No audience awaits her. Sam starts to mix Vicki a cocktail.]
Sotto voce playfully

VICKI

Silent as a morgue

Damp all
Piu mosso
\( \text{\( \frac{3}{4} \) Allegretto} \)
\( \text{\( j = \text{ca.} 90 \)} \)

Sleigh bells

Allegretto
\( \text{\( \frac{3}{4} \) Più mosso, poco stringendo} \)
\( \text{\( j = \text{ca.} 114 \)} \)

A roadside bomb

Meno mosso
\( \text{\( \frac{3}{4} \) Più mosso, poco stringendo} \)
\( \text{\( j = \text{ca.} 60 \)} \)

Chinese cymb.

(soft beater)

Allegretto
\( \text{\( \frac{3}{4} \) Meno mosso} \)
\( \text{\( j = \text{ca.} 60 \)} \)

Meno mosso

\( \text{\( j = \text{ca.} 60 \)} \)
Brave men. A testament to our regiment. The townspeople mourn.

To the men who died.

To the women who weep for them.

Quite freely, unhurried.
A man who picks up a gun should expect to die.
I'd always knew I'd be a soldier, or the mother of a soldier, or the

every be a soldier, or the mother of a soldier, or the

So I always knew I'd

Adagio \[ \text{ten.} \] $J = \text{ca. 54}$  
Più mosso \[ \text{Adagio} \]$J = \text{ca. 60-66}$

S.  
loved as a soldier.  
Nev.  
So I always knew I'd be a soldier.

Vln.  
sul tasto warmly  
ord.

Vla.  
sul tasto warmly  
ord.

Vlc.  
sul tasto warmly  
ord.

Vlc.  
sul tasto warmly  
ord.

Cb.  
sul tasto warmly  
ord.

Sam and Vicki are drawn physically closer as their words both chorus and

a soldier.

like my father and his father before him.  
I'll always

\[ J = \text{ca. 72} \]

D

So I always knew I'd be a soldier.

\[ J = \text{ca. 72} \]
contradict each other. Although they profess different attitudes, they’ve discovered
a common background and this pulls them to each other. Whereas before they
have been singing to themselves, now they sing to each other. 

Meno mosso
\( \text{j = ca. 63-66} \)

They’ll always be a soldier, a lover of a soldier. 

\( \text{sol} \)
Where is Alas, dair?

Our lord and master?

Armed with bottles.
he battles with bankers,

mortars of wine,
Sam takes her in his arms to comfort her. 

Vicki covers her face to hide her tears.

slightly melodramatic

read y to drown in whis ky.

more sadly

Meno mosso

\( \text{\textit{Meno mosso}} \)

\( \text{\textit{slightly melodramatic}} \)

\( \text{\textit{read y to drown in whis ky.}} \)

\( \text{\textit{more sadly}} \)

Meno mosso

\( \text{\textit{Meno mosso}} \)

\( \text{\textit{slightly melodramatic}} \)

\( \text{\textit{read y to drown in whis ky.}} \)

\( \text{\textit{more sadly}} \)
Meno mosso, tranquillo  \( \text{\( j = \text{ca.66} \)} \)

[Vicki pulls away from Sam's embrace.]
but laughter drowns my song

Sometimes in

Some times
Battle silence breaks through gun fire.

and bird song rises.
Your voice is bird song.

echo
Sam and Vicki look into each other's eyes as if they are really seeing each other for the first time. Sam puts his hand gently on Vicki's face, their heads move closer. They kiss, and then quickly pull apart, unsure of themselves.

[The light drops, suggesting the incoming night, and reflecting the patterns of the falling leaves beyond the window.]
ALASDAIR enters but VICKI and SAM are so focussed on each other, they don’t see him. He stands unnoticed in the shadows helping himself to a dram from his hip flask while he watches the couple.

SAM steps from the shadows. 

[ ALASDAIR steps from the shadows. ]

[ SAM and VICKI spring apart, unsure of how much ALASDAIR has witnessed. ]

Your voice is sweeter than bird song...

Sweet...
Alasdair’s attitude is determinedly cheery, but there is steel beneath his bluff exterior. [Alasdair helps himself to a drink from the bar. His movements are clumsy and it’s clear he has had several before this.]

---

Good men died today, but we're...
The dead will sleep, we'll carry on. Sing!
Verse 1

To be sung with freedom, and a folk-song sensibility. Although plenty of rubato is encouraged, the rhythm and its variants should always retain a strongly dotted character.

[ Sam looks at Vicki, unsure of whether he should intervene, but she steps forward, ready to perform. ]

[Vicki looks at Sam when she is singing the opening lines, but her attention shifts to Alasdair for the final, pointed line of each verse. ]

Con rubato $j = 60$

Out on a lonely highway walks a
High on a barren cliff top stands a girl in a white gown, she's

.setOn.cliff.top.stands.a.girl.in.a.white. gown, she's

.set.on.cliff.top.stands.a.girl.in.a.white. gown, she's

.set.on.cliff.top.stands.a.girl.in.a.white. gown, she's

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.set.on.cliff.top.stands.a.girl.in.a.white. gown, she's
searching for her father, but the soldiers shot him down.
Verse 3
very quiet and deep

Deep in a silent
Valley weeps a girl in a white gown, she's...
waiting for her lover, but the soldiers shot him
freely, with a sense of drama to Ob.

down.

cresc.

Verse 4

freely

Sev' en years, she's been gone now, the girl in the wedding gown, some say the fairies took her, but

poco vib.

poco vib...
Alasdair shakes his head, displeased by the tone of Vicki’s song, but Sam is visibly moved. The men’s varying attitudes are reflected in their recollection of the atrocity they were involved in, though Alasdair’s defences begin to waver towards the end of the scene. Vicki is relegated to the sidelines. She didn’t share their experience and so cannot understand its significance.
Energico
\( \frac{3}{4} \)

O

\( \text{Energico} \)
\( \frac{3}{4} \)

SAM

Energico
\( \frac{3}{4} \)

Fl.\n
Ob.\n
Cl.\n
Bsn.\n
O\n
Tpt.\n
Tbn.\n
Perc.\n
Pp.\n
Vln.\n
Vla.\n
Vlc.\n
Cb.

\( \text{Chinese opera gong} + \text{Log drum} \)

Sizzle cymb.
2 Temple blocks (low)

Log drum

p dolce poco

road, a pretty girl and an

pret a

pizz.

arco

pizz.

poco

arco

pizz.
Too far to see, too far to hear, too far to know.
we meant no harm.
Too far to run, too far
My hand touching her face, to stop.
wiping the tears from her face, trying to smooth
the fear from her face.
ALASDAIR

A lonesome road,
a pretty girl,

Pizz.
a lonely road, a pretty girl, and hiding close a young gun.
I saw the young boy.
boy heard a pop and a crack, saw him fall and looked back, saw your
ri-ble raised, saw a smile on your...
I saw the girl and a young gun, saw your hand on her face.
A. saw his rifle raised, let my...
VICKI

Your war is over

bullets blaze.

(omit if more time is needed to get to Chinese opera gong)
I saw the old ver.

SAM

I saw the old

 senza vib. con vib.

Chinese opera gong
man, saw him lifting his hand, saw your
ri. fle raised, saw a smile on your
At home they

Meno mosso
\( \text{\(j\)} = \text{ca.90} \)

Kick drum
dolce (obbligato)

ALASDAIR

Meno mosso
\( \text{\(j\)} = \text{ca.90} \)

To Cbsn.

Meno mosso
\( \text{\(j\)} = \text{ca.90} \)

Meno mosso
\( \text{\(j\)} = \text{ca.90} \)

Meno mosso
\( \text{\(j\)} = \text{ca.90} \)

At home

They
turn the radio down when the dead are named.

Low tom-tom
Our boys lie dead in a box.
Civilians look away.
They talk through silence, they talk through silence.

Meno mosso
\( \text{\( J \approx \text{ca.84} \) } \)
She trembled, like blossoms trembled in the breeze.
sun. shine dappled through the leaves, my head still
ALASDAIR

Rules of conflict

wet with her tears.
made by men who never struck a blow. Soldiers caught in battle...
know how it goes: their blood or ours, their blood or
Alasdair puts his hand on the back of Sam's head drawing his friend's face close to his in a gesture that is both intimate and dominating. The men's conjoined silhouette is reminiscent of the shape of Vicki's and Sam's physical closeness during their kiss earlier in the scene.
so they can keep all this.

[Alasdair pushes Sam away and makes a defeated gesture with his hands, that somehow manages to encompass the country and the futility of war. Drink and memories have suddenly sapped his strength and his shoulders slump.]

[Vicki puts her arms around Alasdair in a hug.]
Over, your wars are over.

[Vicki holds out her hand to Sam and after a moment’s hesitation he grasps it. She sings to Sam over Alasdair’s bowed head.]
[Vicki lets go of Sam’s hand and leads Alasdair off stage in a reversal of roles that is nevertheless reminiscent of the end of scene one. She looks back at Sam whose expression twists as if he’s in pain. He slumps at a table.]
Vicki re-enters the bar. She stands alone looking at Sam. He raises his head and their eyes meet. Sam gets to his feet. The scene ends with the couple staring at each other across the deserted bar room, each unwilling to make the first move.

Largo

| 180 |

The lights go down.

\[ 3 \]
[Lights up. It is the morning after the night before. The tree in the beer garden is bare. Alasdair is sitting at one of the tables going over accounts. Although it's early, a glass of whisky sits next to a half empty bottle beside his ledgers. Sam climbs up from the cellar, wearing a drayman's apron and carrying a crate of beer. A vase of poppies sits on the bar and both Alasdair and Sam wear red poppies in their lapels. Vicki enters dressed in jeans and a T-shirt. A poppy is stuck in her disarrayed hair and a duster hangs from her back pocket. She looks at Sam. Sexual tension crackles between them. Vicki half-heartedly starts cleaning. Sam descends back down to the cellar. He makes the trip several times, trying to ignore the domestic drama playing out in the bar.]
choose freely from these 3 mobiles

card the time, and with no gaps between last 2 or 3 mobiles

any non-pitched instruments (mixed)
If the kick-drum is too far from Tam-tam or otherwise inaccessible, use tom-tom or sim.

* If the kick-drum is too far from Tam-tam or otherwise inaccessible, use tom-tom or sim.
The balance is red.
I pay in blood, sweat and tears, but the scales are weighed.
against me.
Andante $\approx \text{ca. } 69$

Age shall not wear them, nor the years condemn.
They shall not grow old as we.

They shall not grow old as we.

I never saw a charming corpse.
Bombs, have a way of blowing you to pieces. The balance is darkly.

(let all ring)
Now I envy the dead, will remember them.

At the going down of the sun,

We that are left to grow old, will remember them.

Now I envy the dead,
Chorus

2/4 5/8 4/4 4/8
of the sun, staunch to the end. We will

A.

2/4 5/8 4/4 4/8
vile as they are, only

1. 2. 3.

Vln. Vla. Vlc. 1

Vlc. 2

5/4 4/4
re - mem - ber them,

5/4 4/4
the dead have seen the end of

196
Alasdair snatches the TV remote roughly from Vicki, she staggers and falls. Alasdair kills the screen and throws the remote into a far corner. Sam puts down his knife, removes his apron and steps from behind the bar. He helps Vicki to her feet.

[Alasdair will not wear them age we will not wear them age we will remember them]

[Alasdair puts down his knife, removes his apron and steps from behind the bar. He helps Vicki to her feet.]
If death is looking for me, he’ll find me back in the ranks.
A new life is waiting.
make peace with peace, and
poco rit. \[ \text{J = ca. 60} \]

leave your battles behind.
In the fog of battle, everything's clear, but here...
Death is constant, but be gone.
I thought I'd be

love is a traitor.
Death is always waiting.
Leave your dead and your battles be behind.
ALASDAIR

You always were a lady-killer.

Snare drum (snares off)

Snare drum

ordinary roll

M Tom-tom

veloce

molto

molto

Spitefully, but with irony

You always were a lady-killer.
His love is life!

His love is the kiss
A lonely road. A pretty girl. We should have strode...
on our way.

She cast her eyes down to the ground,

you _de_.
you put your hand on her face.

Tbn.

Log drum \ 2 cowbells

Perc.

Bcl.

Ob.

Fl.
To wipe the fear from her face.

From behind a corner

Poco più agitato = ca. 72
A. heard her brother call her, saw his rifle raised,

Fl.   
Cl.   
Bcl.  
Cnt.  
Tpt.  
Tbn.  
Perc. 
Hp.   
A. heard her brother call her, saw his rifle raised,
Then the man, an old man, had a gun in his hand,
a gun in his hand. I blew him away.
From behind a corner, I heard her brother call her...
saw him crumple and land,
saw your rifle raised, saw
smile on your face.
saw the old man with a phone
in his hand, saw him

ALASDAIR

A gun
S. trying to run, saw you aiming your gun,
What have you done?

[ VICKI has moved away from both men; now she looks from one to the other, horrified. ]

VICKI
Più lento
$J = \text{ca.} 56$

Flute

Perc.

Tbn.

Perc.

Perc.

Flute

espr.

Flute

espr.

Vlc.

Vla.

Vln.

Cb.

Ob.

Cl.

Cln.

Tpt.

Tbn.

Perc.

Cl.

Perc.

Cl.

The blood
a round her head

pulled the trig ger.
accents should remain within a general $p$ dynamic
You killed her?  
with her tears.
You forcefully took command, her blood on your hands.
You raised your gun, told me to shoot,
I didn’t stop to dispute. She ran. I thought I’d missed her.
prayed I'd missed her
She fell to BC.

and I knew I'd hit her,
VICKI

Christ, I knew I'd hit her!

ALASDAIR

You killed her!

Vicki

You killed her!
And while he cried I made up lies to save his
A boy with a broom. An old man with a phone. Men with guns and a cause.
A girl with tears in her eyes.

VICKI to Sam—imploring, forgiving
A new life is waiting

[ Alasdair twitches with irritation ]

A girl with tears in her eyes.
Alasdair lunges for Sam. Sam grabs the knife he was using to cut lemons. The two men start to fight. The action mirrors their first meeting, except that this time Vicki is on the edge of the battle, scared, panicking and unsure of how to stop them. She screams at the men to stop, but they are caught in the fight.
Strings III and IV should continue their smooth downward glissando.

* Sempre gliss. Keeping the left hand in position, strings I and II may be stopped to produce indeterminate pitches.

Strings III and IV should continue their smooth downward glissando.
[Alasdair raises a hand, the knife is in it, we see his arm rise and fall three times.]
* Randomly and rapidly change between short bowed glissandi and knocking on the body of the instrument.

[ Alasdair holds out a bloody hand to her in supplication. She hesitates, clutching her face in horror. ]

[ Vicki screams. ]

[ Alasdair throws his knife away and slumps on the floor cradling Sam's bloody body. ]
He was my brother.

But you killed... him.

VICKI: weakly

ALASDAIR

Molto adagio

\( \text{\footnotesize \( j = \text{ca. 38} \)} \)

\( \text{\footnotesize \( T \)} \)
We dreamed of how it would be when the

We dreamed of how it would be when the

We dreamed of how it would be when the

We dreamed of how it would be when the
Con moto \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 63 \)

**Fl.**

**C.A.**

**Cl.**

**Cbsn.**

**Tpt.**

**Tbn.**

**Perc.**

**Hp.**

**Vln.**

**Vla.**

**Vlc.**

**Cb.**

**U**

**Adagio** \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 48 \)

ten. \( \frac{\times}{4} \)

poco vib.

---

But the war never ended, now both...

---

A.

war was won.

---

Con moto \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 63 \)

---

Con moto \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 63 \)

---

Con moto \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 63 \)

---

Con moto \( \bar{\text{J}} = \text{ca.} 63 \)
[Vicki sinks to her knees close to where the two men are slumped.]

[234] A.

Dead as the dead you of us are dead.

[255]
256

5/4

Fl.
C.A.
Cl.
Cbn.

V.

Tpt.
Tbn.

Vln.
Vla.
Vlc.
Cb.

Poco più mosso
\(J = \text{ca.} 54\)
senza vib.

\(\text{tenuto} \ldots \ldots J = \text{ca.} 48\)

Adagio

breve

\(\text{poco più mosso} \ 
\text{tenuto} \ldots \ldots J = \text{ca.} 48\)

\(\text{Adagio} \ 
\text{breve}\)

\(\text{Fib.}\ 
\text{breve}\)

\(\text{Cl.}\ 
\text{breve}\)

\(\text{Perc.}\ 
\text{breve}\)

\(\text{Vln.}\ 
\text{senza vib.}\)

\(\text{Vla.}\ 
\text{senza vib.}\)

\(\text{Vlc.}\ 
\text{poco vib.}\)

\(\text{Cb.}\ 
\text{senza vib.}\)
GHOST PATROL

Libretto

by

Louise Welsh

Characters

Sam       An ex-army sergeant in his early thirties who has fallen on hard times.

Alasdair  An ex-army captain of around the same age, proprietor of what he hopes will become a fashionable gastro-pub, Vicki’s boyfriend.

Vicki     An aspiring singer in her late twenties, Alasdair’s girlfriend.

A chorus of Newsreaders (recorded)

Acknowledgement

The words of the chorus in scene four are adapted from ‘For the Fallen’, by Laurence Binyon (The Times 1914) from which the Ode of Remembrance is taken.
Setting: A contemporary British city five years from now. The country is at war in a distant land, but it’s business as usual at home. There are no bombs or armed combat in the streets, but images of the conflict and its victims dominate TV news reports. The opera takes place entirely in the bar room of Alasdair’s chichi gastro-pub. The hostelry is equipped with all the usual comforts, a well-stocked bar flanked by high stools, a flat screen TV, a few tables and chairs and a comfortable looking couch. A vase of spring flowers sits on the bar. A pair of French doors opens out onto a beer garden, where a tree is heavy with blossom. The far wall is decorated with a poster advertising Vicki’s forthcoming performance. It shows Vicki in dress uniform, her cap tipped at a jaunty angle.

Scene I

Lights up on the interior of a pub. It’s closed for the night. The room is almost in darkness. SAM jemmys open a window and climbs in. He creeps through the bar quietly, looking for anything of value that he can steal. Sam is emptying the till when ALASDAIR enters, turning on the light. Alasdair quickly takes in the scene and a violent tussle commences. The two are well matched and it’s anyone’s guess who will win. A punch throws the men apart and they see each other’s faces. Their combat shudders to a halt. The two men are still wary, but there is something between them that will not allow the fight to continue. Alasdair goes to the gantry and opens a bottle of whisky. He throws the bottle’s cap on the floor, pours two drams, sets the bottle on the counter and takes a seat on the customer side of the bar. Sam joins him, leaving a vacant stool between them. His eyes wander round the room. Sam’s gaze rests for a moment on the photograph of Vicki. The men are both exhausted by the fight. They maintain eye contact as, out of breath, they raise their glasses and drink, without making any toasts (the pair continue to drink throughout the scene).

ALASDAIR

Night manoeuvres,
Sergeant Scott?

SAM

I have no rank in Civvy Street,
Sir.

ALASDAIR

So you go
on Ghost Patrol,
Sergeant?

Alasdair takes out a pack of cigarettes. He selects one for himself and then offers one to Sam who accepts. Alasdair lights them both up with a bashed Zippo.

ALASDAIR

Bloody noisy for a ghost.
If I’d known
this place was yours I . . .

. . . would have been quieter?

. . . would have left
well alone.

Alasdair refreshes their glasses.

Ghost Patrol, Ghost Patrol.
Night manoeuvres.

Sam pushes his glass away and gets to his feet, ready to leave the way he came.

You used to dream,
dream
of leaving the fight,
raising a family.
But you were safer
in the army.

Sam turns to face Alasdair, his expression incredulous.

Safer?
Safer.

Standing all night on a stag
alone in the dark and the black,
feeling the cold on your face,
the weight of the kit on your back,
recalling the softness of girls,
the fizz of beer on your tongue,
your ears fucking straining
for the sound of a cocking gun.

Heading out on patrol,
pockets packed with sweets,
kids swarming the squad
like a fucking paedo’s treat.
Waiting for an orphan
to decoy you to a bomb
that blows your brains to fucking hell,
and your bollocks to Hong Kong.

SAM
Hearing a shout down the wire:
‘the whole thing just kicked off.’
Screaming along in the wagon,
and the officer’s a toff,
he wouldn’t last your tower block
but you follow him just the same,
cos orders is orders is orders,
and war’s a bloody game.

ALASDAIR
Lying on a pavement,
your face in shattered glass,
your eye on a gun-site,
a gun-site on your arse.
Remembering the jobs
mother prayed you’d do.
And the only prize, if you survive,
is a mug of NAAFI brew.

The men grow physically closer.

SAM
Knowing every day
might be your last.

ALASDAIR
A platoon of virgins,
growing up too fast.

SAM
Being one of many,
an atom in a bomb.

OVERLAPPING:

ALASDAIR
A tread on a tyre,
a bullet in a gun.
SAM A rocket in a launcher, ready to explode.

ALASDAIR A hundred marching feet, marching down a road.

SAM A finger on a trigger, an edge on a blade.

ALASDAIR A glint on a bayonet an order that’s obeyed.

TOGETHER (BOTH) Fear was our friend . . .

SAM . . . against the enemy.

ALASDAIR But we didn’t fight for country or for Queen.

SAM We fought for each other.

TOGETHER (BOTH) Comrades and brothers, comrades and brothers.

*The mood changes. It takes on a sinister, less exuberant edge. The past has entered the room.*

SAM Brothers in blood.

*Alasdair moves away from Sam and refills their glasses. Alasdair tries to maintain the jaunty tone, but ultimately cannot resist Sam’s melancholy.*

SAM I sleep no more.

ALASDAIR You miss the company . . .

SAM I taste nothing.

ALASDAIR . . . the camaraderie.
SAM     Colours lack lustre.

ALASDAIR You miss the army.

SAM     I close my eyes and see
a lonely road,
a pretty girl,
and far away,
far,
an old man.

ALASDAIR You see nothing.

SAM A bird sings,
and I hear screaming.

ALASDAIR The night is silent.

SAM Day dawns,
I smell the street-van smell of roasting flesh.
The old man turns his head and . . .

ALASDAIR Enough!

Alasdair makes an expansive movement with his arm and a glass smashes to the floor. VICKI enters. She’s wrapped in a dressing gown, tousled and sleepy, but still glamorous.

VICKI Woken by nightmares?
My poor Alasdair.
Still fighting the war
in your sleep.

Vicki takes in the scene: Sam, the broken window, rifled till and smashed glass. The men are frozen, as if caught in the middle of a criminal act. Vicki makes a noise that is half scream, half gasp. The spell is broken. Sam looks stunned. Alasdair rushes to Vicki and puts an arm around her. He is back in control.

ALASDAIR Meet my man,
Sergeant Sam.

Vicki’s daze seems more than sleep induced. She touches Alasdair’s cheek.
VICKI There’s blood on your face.

She takes Alasdair’s hands in hers and recoils.

VICKI And on your hands.

Alasdair is determinedly bright.

ALASDAIR Sergeant Sam
our new barman.

Alasdair pulls away the throw covering the couch and starts arrange it into a makeshift bed, using cushion for pillows etc. His movements are economical and efficient. Sam hesitates on the sidelines, torn between the prospect of a bed for the night, the possibility of a job and his embarrassment.

VICKI He broke in,
but you give him
the key to the door.

ALASDAIR We fought for each other,
comrades and brothers.

VICKI In five years
I never heard
his name.

This news galvanises Sam. He steps forward, allying himself with Alasdair.

SAM Comrades and brothers.
We lived for each other,
long before he ever knew
your name.

ALASDAIR Cease fire!

Alasdair takes hold of Vicki and Sam’s hands and stands between them. He addresses Sam.

ALASDAIR Vicki makes me
an honest man.
Without her
I’m just a soldier,
who’s lost his war.

Alasdair turns to Vicki.

ALASDAIR     Sam is the hardest man
to face an enemy.
The kind of arsehole
you want on your side.

Alasdair steps aside, joining Sam and Vicki’s hands.

ALASDAIR     I want you to be good friends.

Sam and Vicki look each other in the eye. A charge passes between them. They let go of each
other’s hands suddenly, as if shocked by an electric current, and step apart. Alasdair puts an
arm around Vicki’s shoulder and leads her towards offstage and bed. Vicki pulls away from
him.

VICKI     In a garrison town
you meet many men
who are ghosts.
They walk like men,
and talk and look like men.
But the best part of them is lost.
Ghosts hate the living,
and their love
is cursed.
He’ll steal everything you ever worked for.

Alasdair shrugs his shoulders at Sam in a ‘women, can’t live with them, can’t live without
them’ gesture. He leads Vicki off stage. Sam is left standing alone in the dim light of the
empty bar.
Scene II

Sam sits down on the couch. He looks up at the ceiling, following the progress of Alasdair and Vicki’s footsteps across their bedroom floor.

SAM

His heavy stride,
her lighter tread.
He folds his clothes
upon the chair.
Her robe
falls to the floor.
I sit here alone.

Sam clicks on the bar’s television. The news is on, the war playing out on the screen. Sam turns away from the television. He seems to be ignoring the broadcast, but the TV is a conduit which returns his subconscious to the past.

Too far to see,
too far to know,
we meant no harm.

We hear a chorus of newsreaders, who read out the headlines.

NEWSREADER CHORUS

Today
two soldiers
joined the lists
of the fallen.
Relatives have been informed,
but names have
not yet been released.
Their names
cannot be spoken.
They are the newly dead,
freshly lost,
and we must not,
cannot
whisper,
whisper
their names.
SAM A lonely road,
a pretty girl,
and far away an old man.
Too far to see,
too far to hear,
too far to know
we meant no harm.
Too far to run,
too far to stop,
my hand touching her face,
wiping the tears from her face,
trying to smooth the fear
from her face.

Sam gets up from the couch. The intensity of the flashback is still upon him, but he is shifting from the past into his war-infected present. He knows that the memory of the atrocity will continue to contaminate his life, especially when he is on his own. He is overwhelmed by what may be an episode of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. His symptoms gradually subside.

NEWSREADER CHORUS must not
cannot
whisper
their names.

SAM This night lies longer than that road.

Sam looks up at the ceiling.

SAM I walk it
alone.

Sam collapses back on the couch and the stage fades to black.
Scene III

Lights up. Some time has passed since that first night and small changes have taken place in the pub. The flower arrangement on the bar is composed of autumnal blooms. The large portrait of Vicki now shows her in combat gear, her mouth set in the same shining smile, her cap tipped at the same jaunty angle as before. Beyond the French windows, the tree in the beer garden sheds russet leaves (this may begin during the previous transition). It’s early evening. Sam springs into business, tying a black apron around his waist, setting to polishing glasses and slicing lemons. Vicki enters dressed to the nines, ready to entertain the customers. No audience awaits her. Sam starts to mix Vicki a cocktail.

VICKI          Silent as a morgue after the undertaker’s had his fun.

SAM            A roadside bomb sent four men home to glory today. Brave men. A testament to our regiment. The townspeople mourn.

VICKI          To the women who weep for them.

SAM            To the men who died.

VICKI          A man, who picks up a gun should expect to die.

VICKI          My father was a soldier and his father too.

SAM            My father was a soldier and his father too.
OVERLAPPING (BOTH)

SAM  I always knew  
I’d be a soldier.

VICKI  So I always knew  
I’d never  
be a soldier,  
or the mother  
of a soldier,  
or the lover  
of a soldier.  
Never.  
Never  
a soldier.

SAM  So I always knew  
I’d be a soldier  
like my father  
and his father  
before him.

Sam and Vicki are drawn physically closer as their words both chorus and contradict each other. Although they profess different attitudes, they’ve discovered a common background and this pulls them to each other. Whereas before they have been singing to themselves, now they sing to each other.

OVERLAPPING (BOTH)

SAM  I’ll always be a soldier,  
a soldier,  
a soldier.

VICKI  Never be a soldier,  
a lover of a soldier.

SAM  I’ll always be a soldier,  
a soldier,  
a soldier.

VICKI  Never be a soldier,  
a mother of a soldier.
Sam and Vicki are standing very close to each other.

TOGETHER

SAM Always.

VICKI Never.

Sam pulls away, slightly flustered. Something electric has passed between them.

SAM Never.

SAM ‘Lover of a soldier.’
Where is Alasdair?

VICKI Our lord and master?
Armed with bottles
he battles with bankers,
mortars of wine,
barrages of beer.
A soldier?
No, he’s a reckless sailor
ready to drown
in whisky.

Vicki covers her face to hide her tears. Sam takes her in his arms to comfort her.

SAM He should soak
in your voice.

Vicki pulls away from Sam’s embrace.

VICKI I sing,
no-one listens.
I raise my voice,
But laughter drowns my song.

SAM Sometimes in battle,
silence breaks through the gunfire,
and birdsong rises through the air.
Your voice is birdsong
after the rattle of gunfire.

The light drops, suggesting the incoming night, and reflecting the patterns of the falling leaves beyond the window. Sam and Vicki look into each other’s eyes as if they are really seeing each other for the first time. Sam puts his hand gently on Vicki’s face, their heads move closer. They kiss, and then quickly pull apart, unsure of themselves. Alasdair enters but Vicki and Sam are so focussed on each other, they don’t see him. He stands unnoticed in the shadows helping himself to a dram from his hip flask while he watches the couple.

SAM     Your voice is sweeter than birdsong . . .

Alasdair steps from the shadows.

ALASDAIR     . . . sweeter than birdsong.

Sam and Vicki spring apart, unsure of how much Alasdair has witnessed. Alasdair’s attitude is determinedly cheery, but there is steel beneath his bluff exterior.

ALASDAIR     So pipe up, give us a song!

Alasdair helps himself to a drink from the bar. His movements are clumsy and it’s clear he has had several before this.

VICKI     The town grieves.
Every shade down,
every curtain drawn.

ALASDAIR     Good men died today,
but we’re alive today.
The dead will sleep,
we’ll carry on.

ALL TOGETHER

ALASDAIR     Sing!

VICKI     My heart is too heavy.

SAM     The flags hang low.

ALASDAIR     Sing!
Sam looks at Vicki, unsure of whether he should intervene, but she steps forward, ready to perform. Vicki looks at Sam when she is singing the opening lines, but her attention shifts to Alasdair for the final, pointed line of each verse.

VICKI

Out on a lonely highway
walks a girl in a white gown,
she’s looking for her brother,
but the soldiers shot him down.

High on a barren cliff top
stands a girl in a white gown,
she’s searching for her father,
but the soldiers shot him down.

Deep in a silent valley
weeps a girl in a white gown,
she’s waiting for her lover,
but the soldiers shot him down.

Seven years, she’s been gone now,
the girl in the wedding gown,
some say the fairies took her,
but I know, the soldiers shot her down.

Alasdair shakes his head, displeased by the tone of Vicki’s song, but Sam is visibly moved. The men’s varying attitudes are reflected in their recollection of the atrocity they were involved in, though Alasdair’s defences begin to waver towards the end of the scene. Vicki is relegated to the sidelines. She didn’t share their experience and so cannot understand its significance.

SAM

A lonely road
a pretty girl
and an old man
far away.
Too far to see,
too far to hear,
too far to know
we meant no harm.
Too far to run,
too far to stop.
My hand touching her face,
wiping the tears from her face,
trying to smooth the fear
from her face.

ALASDAIR

A lonely road,
a pretty girl,
a lonely road,
a pretty girl,
and hiding close,
a young gun.

SAM

I saw the boy,
a young boy,
heard a pop and a crack,
saw him fall and looked back,
saw your rifle raised,
saw a smile on your face.

ALASDAIR

I saw the girl
and a young gun,
saw your hand on her face,
saw his rifle raised,
let my bullets blaze.

VICKI

Your war is over.

SAM

I saw the old man,
saw him lifting his hand,
saw your rifle raised,
saw a smile on your face.

VICKI

Over,
your war is over.

ALASDAIR

At home
they turn the radio down
when the dead are named.
Our boys, lie dead in a box.
Civilians look away.
They talk through silence,
they talk through silence.

SAM
She trembled
like blossom
trembles in the breeze,
sunshine dappled through the leaves.
My hand still wet
with her tears.

ALASDAIR
Rules of conflict
made by men
who never struck a blow.
Soldiers caught in battle
know how it goes:
their blood or ours,
their blood or ours.

*Alasdair puts his hand on the back of Sam’s head drawing his friend’s face close to his in a gesture that is both intimate and dominating. The men’s conjoined silhouette is reminiscent of the shape of Vicki’s and Sam’s physical closeness during their kiss earlier in the scene*

ALASDAIR
We killed to live,
killed to live,
so they can keep all this.

*Alasdair pushes Sam away and makes a defeated gesture with his hands, that somehow manages to encompass the country and the futility of war. Drink and memories have suddenly sapped his strength and his shoulders slump. Vicki puts her arms around Alasdair in a hug.*

VICKI
Over,
your wars are over.

*Vicki holds out her hand to Sam and after a moment’s hesitation he grasps it. She sings to Sam over Alasdair’s bowed head.*

VICKI
Leave your dead
and your battles
behind.
Vicki lets go of Sam’s hand and leads Alasdair off stage in a reversal of roles that is nevertheless reminiscent of the end of scene one. She looks back at Sam whose expression twists as if he’s in pain. He slumps at a table. Vicki re-enters the bar. She stands alone looking at Sam. He raises his head and their eyes meet. Sam gets to his feet. The scene ends with the couple staring at each other across the deserted barroom, each unwilling to make the first move. The lights go down.
Scene IV

Lights up. It is the morning after the night before. The tree in the beer garden is bare. Alasdair is sitting at one of the tables going over accounts. Although it’s early, a glass of whisky sits next to a half empty bottle beside his ledgers. Sam climbs up from the cellar, wearing a drayman’s apron and carrying a crate of beer. A vase of poppies sits on the bar and both Alasdair and Sam wear red poppies in their lapels. Vicki enters dressed in jeans and a T-shirt. A poppy is stuck in her disarrayed hair and a duster hangs from her back pocket. She looks at Sam. Sexual tension crackles between them. Vicki half-heartedly starts cleaning. Sam descends back down to the cellar. He makes the trip several times, trying to ignore the domestic drama playing out in the bar.

ALASDAIR

The balance is red.
I pay in blood,
sweat and tears,
but the scales
are weighed
against me.

CHORUS

Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
They shall not grow old,
as we . . .

ALASDAIR

I never saw
a charming corpse.
Bombs have a way
of blowing you
to pieces.

ALASDAIR

The balance is red,
always red.

CHORUS

We that are left to grow old
will remember them.
At the going down of the sun,
staunch to the end,
we will remember them.
Age will not weary
nor

[The following lines are sung over the chorus above.]

ALASDAIR
Now I envy the dead.
Vile as they are,
only the dead
have seen the end
of war.

Alasdair snatches the TV remote roughly from Vicki, she staggers and falls. Alasdair kills the screen and throws the remote into a far corner. Sam puts down his knife, removes his apron and steps from behind the bar. He helps Vicki to her feet.

SAM
If death is looking for me
he will find me
back in the ranks.

VICKI
No!
A new life is waiting,
make peace with peace,
and leave your battles behind.

SAM
In the fog of battle
everything’s clear.
But here
love destroys loyalty.
Tomorrow
I’ll be gone.

VICKI
Death is constant
but love is a traitor,
I thought I’d be yours forever.
My heart may have no honour,
but I must honour my heart.

SAM
Death is always waiting.

VICKI
Leave your dead
and your battles
behind.

ALASDAIR
You always were
a lady-killer.

VICKI
Love is life!

ALASDAIR
His love
is the kiss of death.

ALASDAIR
A lonely road.
A pretty girl.
We should have strode
on our way.
She cast her eyes
down to the ground,
you decided to stay,
we should have picked up our pace,
you put your hand on her face.

SAM
To wipe the fear from her face.

ALASDAIR
From behind a corner
I heard her brother call her,
saw his rifle raised,
let my bullets blaze.
Then the man,
an old man
had a gun in his hand,
a gun in his hand,
I blew him away.

SAM
From behind a corner
I heard her brother call her,
saw a broom in his hand.

ALASDAIR
It was a gun.

SAM
Saw him crumple and land,
saw your rifle raised,  
saw a smile on your face.  
I saw the man  
with a phone in his hand,  

ALASDAIR  
A gun.  

SAM  
saw him trying to run,  
saw you aiming your gun,  
then the girl was gone.  

Vicki has moved away from both men now she looks from one to the other, horrified.  

VICKI  
What have you done?  

SAM  
I followed orders,  
I pulled the trigger.  
The blood around her head  
a red  
halo,  
my hand  
still wet  
with her tears.  

VICKI  
You killed her?  

ALASDAIR  
You took command,  
her blood on your hands.  

SAM  
You raised your gun,  
told me to shoot,  
I didn’t stop to dispute.  
She ran,  
I thought I’d missed her,  
prayed I’d missed her.  
She fell,  
and I knew I’d hit her,  
Christ, I knew I’d hit her!
TOGETHER

ALASDAIR       You killed her!

VICKI          You killed her!?

ALASDAIR       And while he cried
I made up lies
to save his arse.

SAM            A boy with a broom.
An old man with a phone.

ALASDAIR       Men with guns,
and a cause.
A girl with tears in her eyes.

VICKI          A new life is waiting.

Alasdair twitches with irritation. He lunges for Sam. Sam grabs the knife he was using to cut lemons. The two men start to fight. The action mirrors their first meeting, except that this time Vicki is on the edge of the battle, scared, panicking and unsure of how to stop them. She screams at the men to stop, but they are caught in the fight. Alasdair raises a hand, the knife is in it, we see his arm rise and fall three times. Alasdair throws his knife away and slumps on the floor cradling Sam’s bloody body. Vicki screams. Alasdair holds out a bloody hand to her in supplication. She hesitates, clutching her face in horror.

ALASDAIR       He was my brother.

VICKI          But you killed him.

ALASDAIR       We dreamed
of how it would be
when the war was won.
But the war never ended.
Now both of us are dead.

Vicki sinks to her knees close to where the two men are slumped.

VICKI          Dead
as the dead
you murdered.
Dead
as the girl
he executed.

ALASDAIR     All of us . . .

VICKI         Dead.

END