

**JANE DICKSON PORTFOLIO**

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## ARE THESE WAVES (2018)



*Are These Waves*, a chamber opera commissioned by the National Opera of Belgium, illuminates the fantastical relationship between love and death in opera, particularly in relation to the fate of women. Voice is the impetus for a structure which interweaves text, light and movement. A distilled libretto is fragmented and modified; playing with perception, reality and the suspension of disbelief. *Are These Waves* was first performed by sopranos Anne-Kathryn Olsen and Carine Tinney, and members of the Brussels Brecht-Eislerkoor; all of whom were instrumental in the creation of the work.

*Two sopranos · Women's choir · Recorded piano · Live electronics*

*First performance: June 2018, La Monnaie | De Munt Ateliers, Brussels*

<http://janedickson.net/AreTheseWaves.mp4>

*Are These Waves* is a coproduction of La Monnaie | De Munt and Q-O2. Kindly supported by Creative Scotland and the Hinrichsen Foundation.



De Munt  
La Monnaie



## LABYRINTHINE (2015)



*Labyrinthine* is a work for two women which explores female voice and identity within the apparatus of opera. Stripped back to the essential elements of opera, *Labyrinthine* uses voice as a sculptural and structural element to explore the multiplicity of identity and opera's potential to enable and restrict the female voice. A "set" reduced to lighting, costume and demarcations through choreography, distills the idea of the complete artwork, allowing a focus on the relationships between each element and the whole. The text score forms the foundation of each realisation; a blueprint for the overall aesthetic, lighting, choreography, costume, structure and libretto. This acts as a framework for a text and vocal score which places at its centre the voices and practices of the performers. This method of production seeks to challenge the traditional hierarchy and disjunction of librettist - composer - performer and explore individual virtuosity. Live electronics unsettle, disrupt and extend the physical limits of the voice, heard with heightened fragility over a backdrop of single tones.

*Two voices · Loop pedals: live recording and playback, prepared piano recordings and pure tones · Electronics*

*First performance: Lucy Duncombe and Anneke Kampman, the other the self Festival, La Monnaie / De Munt Ateliers, Brussels, October 2015*

[http://janedickson.net/Labyrinthine\\_Brussels.mp4](http://janedickson.net/Labyrinthine_Brussels.mp4)

*Developed for BBC Tectonics Festival, Glasgow, May 2016*

[http://janedickson.net/Tectonics\\_excerpt.mp3](http://janedickson.net/Tectonics_excerpt.mp3)



## TRACES (2014)

Traces is a piece for elongated piano notes, pure tone and minor disruptions. It explores the point at which the natural and artificial converge, using this horizon as a third compositional element. The decay of the piano notes are heard on and just beyond the threshold of reality, lengthening gradually on a continuum to encourage the suspension of disbelief. Sparse single notes and intervals are used to create a skeleton allowing a focus on decay, process and transformation. The low dynamic marking - pianissimo to piano - helps blur the line between natural and augmented acoustic. The effect of the piece - to unsettle the balance of perception and reality - rests on the volume and balance of each element: acoustic piano, extended decay phase and pure tone, and is dependent on a mic-ing and speaker system capable of reproducing the natural acoustic of the piano as truthfully as possible. The single pure tone fades in slowly, rests on the threshold of audibility and fades away; it is predominantly perceived as a disruption to the partials of the piano or as elongated sympathetic resonances. Structure is provided by means of this shifting relationship; the complexities found in the decay phase of the piano note become potentially controllable compositional material.

*Grand piano · Discreet mic-ing and speaker system inside piano · Granular synthesis · Pure tone*

*First performance: Sonic Arts Series No. 80, University of East Anglia, February 2014*

<http://janedickson.net/Traces.mp3>

## VII (2010)

*VII* was commissioned by members of the London Symphony Orchestra *Living Room in London* for mixed ensemble with sine tones and live electronics. Long, textured tones, pitch bending and beat patterns are used to integrate the unusual instrumentation.

*Mixed ensemble: violin, viola cello, hang and bass clarinet · Pure tones · Electronics*

*First performance: LSO St. Luke's, London, October 2010*

<http://janedickson.net/VII.mp3>