

KELECHI ANUCHA AND CARL GENT

Fancies flee away! I'll fear not what men say

Ralph Vaughan Williams originally created *He Who Would Valiant Be* by setting words from John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* to the tune of *Our Captain Cried All Hands* after collecting the melody from Monk's Gate in Sussex. For this piece Anucha and Gent have reintroduced both sets of lyrics, creating a hybrid version of the famous hymn and traditional song.

Using the line 'there's no beliefin men, not my own brother / so girls if you can love, love one another' to reflect on how much of the knowledge lost in the wake of the Enclosures Act was held specifically by women and girls, Anucha and Gent have embedded their recording in a traditional percussive Morris stick, and replaced ribbons and bells with false nails, hoop earrings and alcopop bottlecaps.



Morris stick, false nails, costume jewellery, ribbon, alcopop bottlecaps, plastic loom bands, audio player and speaker looping recording of Our Captain Cried All Hands / He Who Would Valiant Be with field recording from Cowplains, Hampshire.

Duration: 20 min

Vocals: Kelechi Anucha and Carl Gent

Morris stick: Kelechi Anucha

Battery-powered organ: Carl Gent

Production: kyle acab

I met a young lady, a-making her mourn

Looking at English folk song as a place where a sense of a cultural Commons persists – a place where melody and narrative can be readily shared, disseminated and occasionally smuggle a little truth beneath received history, Anucha and Gent have made three new recordings of favourite folk songs and embedded them in sculptural listening posts dispersed among the A Year On The Farm displays.

Sweet England details an English settler's regret and nostalgic pining after a new life in America has not met expectations. Reflecting further on the importance of traditionally feminised craft practices and the literal agricultural material of the English countryside, Anucha and Gent have embedded their recording into a mannequin wearing friendship bracelets interwoven with barley.



Barley, glow-in-the-dark polyester friendship bracelets, plastic loom band friendship bracelets, viscose / polyester top washed in beer, audio player and speaker looping Sweet England with field recordings from Bourn, Cambridgeshire.

Duration: 20 mins

Vocals: Kelechi Anucha

Production: kyle acab

Nor shall I lie with any young man until the day I die

A dramatic and mournful ballad where a newlywed couple are separated as the husband leaves for a life in the whaling industry on the cold, cold coast of Greenland, Anucha and Gent have embedded their new recording into a doily made of bridal lace, pitch tar and sea-fishing booms. The red beads are spaced at specific intervals that echo the rhythm of the song's vocal melody, an alternating pattern of thirteen and fourteen syllables.



In the nearby display case a small glass bottle from The MERL's Lavinia Smith collection is packed with salt and sixteen strips of ribbon, brocade and silk, then sealed with a one cent copper coin. Bottles of material packed in salt were traditionally given by husbands to their newly married brides as a sign that she was 'worth her salt' - that she was useful.

Bridal lace, pitch, sea-fishing booms with beads, thread washed in seawater, audio player and speaker looping The Spermwhale Fishery with field recordings from Petersfield, Hampshire and Bourn, Cambridgeshire. The Spermwhale Fishery contains samples from whaling documentary Barbed Water

Duration: 20 mins

Vocals: Kelechi Anucha

Keyboards and drum: Carl Gent

Production: kyle acab



Sealed bottle containing salt, fabric samples, and topped with a one cent coin ([MERL 51/1298](#)).