‘I see no instruments, nor hands that play’: *Antony and Cleopatra* and visual musical experience

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In 1599, composer Richard Alison prefaced a book of four-part psalm settings with a particularly memorable sales pitch. Like the 1563 psalter frontispiece explored in our volume’s introduction (Figure 1), Alison’s dedicatory address imagines an ideal performance of psalms set to music. He foregrounds the breadth of sensory stimuli offered by such a performance as a clinching argument for the devotional and, of course, economic worth of his volume:

And that our meditations in the Psalmes may not want their delight, we haue that excelle[n]t gift of God, the Art of Musick to accompany them: that our eyes beholding the words of Dauid, our fingers handling the Instruments of Musicke, our eares delighting in the swetenesse of the melody, and the heart obseruing the harmony of them: all these doe ioyne in an heauenly Consort, and God may bee glorified and our selues refreshed therewith.¹

Stimulation of sense receptors in eye, finger, ear and heart are united in a bodily experience of ‘heauenly Consort’ that, fortuitously, both praises the Almighty and gives the performer a restorative boost. Through this experience, purchasers are included in the community of worshippers that Alison constructs with collective pronouns; all one need do is simply purchase the book, take it home and follow his directions. This passage is a work of art in itself, counterpoising expressions of genuine faith with business practicalities; musical experience theory with the textual authority of the Bible; pragmatic bodily benefits with points of theological principle. Yet this balancing act would not be possible if the idea at the centre of the passage – that musical performance should be experienced through a combination of different senses – did not have a similar centrality in widespread early modern understandings of music.

Many scholars argue that sensory experiences are encountered not in isolation, but in combination with one another. Michel Serres asks, ‘How could we see the compact capacity of the senses if we separated them?’, using the five chapters of his seminal work *The Five Senses* not to consider each sense in turn,

but rather to explore how sensations become entangled in practice.² Recent studies of early modern performance, such as Janette Dillon's exploration of Elizabethan court spectatorship, have similarly acknowledged the co-functionality of the senses:

The word 'spectator', linked as it is, through etymology, to sight, is inadequate to represent the nature of the engagement a subject makes with a spectacle (again a term that privileges sight). Perceiving a procession, as von Wedel's account [of Elizabeth I's Accession Day tournament at Whitehall on 17 November 1584] richly demonstrates, involves hearing, speech and motion, as well as deep roots in the order of power.³

Royal processions are not just experienced through sight, and likewise, musical experience is not limited to hearing alone. Accordingly, scholars have increasingly considered musical performance in relation to senses beyond hearing, seen in Richard Sennett's memorable account of the primacy of touch when playing the cello, and in Jennifer Nevile's recent exploration of dance as an important visual component of musical performance in fifteenth-century Italy.⁴

Early modern sources preserve many accounts of musical experience – both real and imagined – that constitute musical performance as a fundamentally multisensory phenomenon. Unsurprisingly, music was generally conceptualized in the early modern period as a primarily aural phenomenon, working upon the body and mind through the organs of hearing, yet this sensory process was not understood in isolation from the stimuli that music offered to the other senses. In particular, the sights of performance are overwhelmingly presented in early modern texts as integrated and critical to the experience of music. I wish to argue that this visual privileging is extremely significant for our understanding of early modern commercial drama, for this widespread expectation of seeing a musical performance underlay numerous dramatic uses of hidden music in commercial playhouses, in which an audience's interactions with key moments of a play were shaped through the distinctive responses that unseen music could draw. I offer two snapshots of this dramatic technique at work in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, in Act 4, Scene 10 and Act 4, Scene 3.⁵

Early modern expectations of visual musical experience are certainly evident in the wider textual record, with many sources preserving accounts both of visual engagement with music, and of responses to unseen music. But who exactly shared these expectations? Francis Bacon's irritation regarding the movement of ideas about music amongst non-specialists is helpful here. Published in 1627, his *Sylva Sylvarum* offers a detailed consideration of the processes of sound and hearing, including much attention to the experience of music. He complains that:

Musicke in the Practise, hath bin well pursued; And in good Variety; but in the Theory, and especially in the Yeelding of the Causes of the Practique, very weakly; Being reduced into certaine Mystickall Subtilties, of no use, and not much Truth.⁶

For Bacon, making the case for the epistemological centrality of experimental empiricism, the circulation of rather broadly formed and untested ideas about music is a constant irritation.⁷ Hot on the heels of this first remark comes a further observation:

The *Cause* given of *Sound*, that it should be an *Elision* of the *Aire* (wherby, if they meane any thing, they meane a *Cutting*, or *Diuiding*, or else an *Attenuating* of the *Aire*) is but a Terme of Ignorance: And the Motion is but a Catch of the Wit upon a few Instances; As the Manner is in the *Philosophy* Receiued. And it is common with Men, that if they haue gotten a Pretty *Expression*, by a *Word of Art*, that *Expression*, goeth currant; though it be empty of *Matter*.⁸

Once again, the fact that an idea can hold vast cultural currency – it ‘goeth currant’ – without retaining its clear theoretical basis and empirical reference points is extremely problematic for Bacon.⁹ Significantly, his emphasis on the movement of musical ideas in wider culture suggest that we should look broadly for references to visual musical experience, seeking a large and multifarious range of subjects who may have been familiar with the idea. Indeed, the notion of seeing music has a widespread presence in early modern texts, suggesting that this mode of sensory engagement is an idea about music, like Bacon’s ‘*Elision of the Aire*’, that ‘goeth currant’ in broad early modern culture, shaping engagements with practical musical performances for a wide range of subjects.

Sources describing visual musical experience range from works of music theory and the paratexts of printed music books, through to dramatic texts and the prefaces of popular psalm settings, like Richard Alison’s 1599 publication.¹⁰ This mode of engagement was thus rehearsed in a consistent form to subjects as diverse as professional musicians engaging with theoretical material, highly trained singers or instrumentalists with access to the latest publications by court composers, those with a rudimentary ability to read music and a desire to sing psalms, and anyone who could afford a ticket to a playhouse, regardless of whether they could read English – or musical notation – at all.¹¹ The necessity of seeing music appears consistently in these contrasting texts, indicating how far the visual permeated conceptions of musical experience for audiences well beyond any narrow group of professionals or specialists.

I first consider early modern accounts of the importance of visual musical experience, before examining accounts of musical response when music is hidden and unavailable for such engagement. These sources offer a clear picture of the reactions expected from contemporary subjects when faced either with visible or with unseen music. I then consider two particular responses to unseen music that, I suggest, were invited from playgoers at early performances of *Antony and Cleopatra*. As we have seen in Jackie Watson and Eleanor Decamp’s chapters in this collection, our understandings of early playhouse engagements with drama can be usefully refined through close attention to the senses, for such attention can reveal distinctive early modern sensory expectations shaping

both dramatic performances and playhouse responses – in this case, expectations that music will be seen as well as heard.

Seeing music in early modern culture

Early modern sources consistently suggest that sight is by far the most necessary sense besides hearing for the experience of music.¹² Linda Phyllis Austern has explored male accounts of the allure of early modern female-seeming singers, arguing that an objectifying gaze was often as significant a part of men's musical experience as the aural attention that they afforded a song.¹³ However, this visual draw of music in performance seems to have been just as strong without alluring bodies to leer at. As I shall explore, accounts of performance for high status audiences in England and elsewhere often relate uses of music that rely upon the audience looking towards the source of the sounds in order to achieve the desired dramatic or performative effect, without expectations of the performer's physical appeal: in the seventeenth century, audiences wanted their musical experience to consist of sight as well as sound.

Many scholars have examined the 'ocularcentrism' of twentieth- and twenty-first-century culture, yet sensory engagement with music has seen a stubborn trend not towards a privileging of sight, but rather towards aural emphasis in the last 100 years.¹⁴ Quite simply, unlike early modern subjects, we no longer expect to watch musicians play as we listen to their performances. The reasons for this shift have been explored by a number of commentators; William Forde Thompson, Phil Graham and Frank A. Russo argue that '[a] significant event in the current context is the invention of the radio and gramophone, which isolated the audio mode of music, reinforcing the notion that musical experience was a solely aural phenomenon'.¹⁵ Specific twentieth-century developments in recording technology have excised the visual experience of musicians from everyday consumption of music, making commonplace a mode of engagement with musical sound that was far more unusual before the advent of recording technology. The musical culture of the last century or so has thus seen the aural portion of music become increasingly divorced from the other sensory stimuli of musical performance; whilst the sound of music is often combined with other sensory stimuli – as cinematic underscore or videogame accompaniment – it tends to be used as aural support for sights other than that of the performing musician. Indeed, the influence of film scores on live theatre music in the twentieth century illustrates this shift: modern theatrical audiences might expect their music to be dramatically integrated and sympathetic to the context of the production, but in most cases, it remains very much invisible.¹⁶ In contrast, long before the isolation of 'the audio mode of music', seventeenth-century subjects expected that music would be seen unless there was a particular reason for it not to be, both in the theatre and elsewhere.

In accordance with this expectation of seeing music, early modern sources describing specialist musical performances to high status audiences are often particularly concerned with the visual presentation of music and musicians. Such a focus is evident in Thomas Campion's printed account of 'Lord Hay's Masque', performed on Twelfth Night 1607. He describes the layout of the hall meticulously, including the three groups of musicians used:

The vpper part where the cloth & chaire of State were plac't, had scaffoldes and seates on eyther side continued to the skreene; right before it was made a partition for the dauncing place; on the right hand whereof were consorted ten Musitions, with Basse and Meane Lutes, a Bandora, a double Sack-bott, and an Harpsicord, with two treble Violins; on the other side somewhat neerer the skreene were plac't 9. Violins and three Lutes, and to answere both the Consorts (as it were in a triangle) sixe Cornets, and sixe Chappell voyces, were seated almost right against them, in a place raised higher in respect of the pearcing sound of those Instruments.¹⁷

His emphasis on the visible layout of the musicians 'as it were in a triangle', and their presence in front of the screen in the key line of sight from the 'chaire of State' confirms the common expectation of clear visual engagement as part of musical experience. Sight and sound are integrated in Campion's description of the set-up of the hall, just as they are in the underlying rationale that his comments reveal: six cornets and six singers are raised for aural reasons, as the former are 'pearcing', but the left, right and centre formation that these raised performers are slotted into – a spatial organization plotted, of course, to be seen in perfect perspective from the royal chair – reflects simultaneous interest in the sight of musical performance.¹⁸

Concern for the arrangement of musicians is even dramatized by John Fletcher and Philip Massinger in *The Custom of the Country* (King's Men, first performed 1619–20).¹⁹ In Act 3, Scene 2, the frantic preparations for a banquet are staged. As a servant notes, the house expects 'some great person, | They would not make this hurry else'. As the playhouse audience watch the '*Banquet set forth*', it is clear that the characters are particularly determined to arrange the musicians in a visually appropriate performance formation. As the organizer Zabulon instructs the servants to 'Be quick, be quick', he demands 'where have you plas'd the musicke?' A servant shows him their position, indicating where 'they stand ready Sir', and he commends the placement, agreeing that 'Tis well'.²⁰ The actions of Zabulon and the servants demonstrate the absolute importance of the musician's visual arrangement to the experience of the banquet. This arrangement is one of the few aspects – including the pungency of the scent and the quality of the wine – that require his personal attention and approval. Fletcher and Massinger's scene of domestic organization indicates that visual musical experience was widely understood to be important: the playwrights expect concerns about seeing music to be just as comprehen-

sible to their commercial playhouse audiences as they are central to Thomas Campion's understanding of private court entertainment at Whitehall Palace. It is clear, then, that those organizing musical performances anticipated visual engagement with music, requiring keen awareness of the physical appearance and spatial organization of musicians.

Further evidence for the importance of sight appears in a striking use of the term 'music' in several plays to indicate the physical performers themselves. Indeed, when Zabulon shows concern for visual layout in *The Custom of the Country*, he refers explicitly to musicians as 'the musicke', as 'they stand ready'. The 'music' he describes is not an isolated notion of invisible, purely aural harmony, but rather a specific performance, to be given by physical musicians, whose performing must be experienced with both eyes and ears. Similar uses of the term appear in *The Old Law* (1618–19). The text preserves stage directions including, 'Enter Musick one carrying a Bridecake, | the Clowne, the rest with them old Women', and 'Enter Clowne, and Wench, the rest with the[m] old women, | The Clownes wife, Musick, and a Bride Cake to the wedding.'²¹ The 'music' here is sufficiently embodied to help carry a prop on stage, indicating once again that a physical, observed performer is a fundamental part of music. Likewise, in Fletcher and Massinger's *The Elder Brother* (King's Men, c. 1625), the 'music' is physical enough to require sustenance, for when Andrew asks the butler 'Is th' musicke come?', he learns that 'th'are here at breakfast'.²² The everyday nature of these references to 'the music' indicates how ingrained multisensory musical experience was in early modern thought, with even the term that today refers specifically to aural harmony being used widely to encompass sight, sound and the physical bodies that perform.

Hiding music in early modern culture

Early modern sources are similarly clear about responses to unseen music. As I shall argue, it is through these responses that visual musical experience took on a particular significance for playgoers. Accounts of hidden musical performance appear in a range of dramatic and non-dramatic texts, with a brilliant and possibly unique dramatization occurring in Massinger and Nathan Field's *The Fatal Dowry* (King's Men, 1617–19). The play stages a delicate balancing act of hospitality and deceit, in which a domestic musical performance is presented by the host and singer Aymer to his guest Charalois. Aymer refuses to let his visitor see the accompanying musicians, in order to keep Charalois apart from his wife, Beaumelle, who is with male company 'within'. Charalois leaves absolutely no doubt that he considers musical experience partial without clear visual and aural access:

AYM. Begin the last new ayre.

CHA. Shall we not see them?

AYM. This little distance from the instruments
Will to your eares conuey the harmony
With more delight.

CHA. Ile not consent.

AYM. Y^eare tedious,
By this meanes shall I with one banquet please
Two companies, those within and these Guls heere.

Song Aboue.

Musique and a Song, Beaumelle within — ha, ha, ha.

CHA. How's this? It is my Ladies laugh! Most certaine
When I first pleas'd her, in this merry language,
She gaue me thanks.²³

Aymer is desperate to keep 'those within and these Guls heere' separate, to which end he makes his claim that the aural delight of music is heightened by visual sensory deprivation. Unsurprisingly, Charalois gives this argument short shrift, insisting that he will 'not consent' to such an incomplete experience of the ayre. In a neatly balanced moment of irony, despite Aymer's care to thwart Charalois's desire for a sight of the music in order to stop him seeing Beaumelle, Charalois still recognizes his wife aurally. Charalois's demand for visual stimulation typifies early modern expectations of complete musical experience, doing so in explicit and unequivocal terms.

Similar responses to hidden musical performance appear in textual accounts of court entertainment that circulated in print in early modern Europe. In Olivier de la Marche's late fifteenth-century French work, *Memoirs of the House of Burgundy*, a text that enjoyed multiple printings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the author describes a striking court entertainment:

A bit later four trumpets sounded a joyous and very loud fanfare. The trumpets were behind a green curtain hung over a large pedestal at one end of the hall. When the fanfare ended the curtain was suddenly drawn and a person playing the role of Jason, heavily armed, was spied on the pedestal.²⁴

For this performance to succeed dramatically, the audience must be looking towards the sound, seeking sights of music, at the moment when the curtain is raised and the scene commences. Here, the gaze of the audience is drawn towards the sound because invisible, disembodied music would not constitute full musical experience for early modern spectators.

With this example, we are moving towards the dramaturgical use of a particular idea about music, just as we find in the early modern playhouse. The makers of the entertainment presuppose that their audience will seek a complete musical experience including both sight and sound, enabling them to draw visual attention towards a certain point by hiding music there. Writers and performers of commercial drama appear to have had similarly clear expectations of their audiences, for equally confident uses of hidden music are preserved

in play-texts, suggesting that similar responses to unseen music occurred in London playhouses in the early seventeenth century.²⁵ In the rest of this chapter, I consider two such uses of unseen music in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. In one case, music conveys an unseen dramatic world to playgoers, reaching beyond the representation of the theatre's stage space. In the other, hidden music is used to evoke responses from playhouse attendees analogous with the responses of staged characters, thus inviting the audience to share the perspective of these characters for a moment.

Musical distraction in *Antony and Cleopatra*

In Act 4, Scene 10 of *Antony and Cleopatra* (King's Men, 1606–08), music's visual experience is suppressed in order to convey a dramatic world beyond the stage. This technique makes use of music performed offstage and out of sight, as a form of dramatic representation through sound. As David Lindley notes of early modern theatrical convention, 'instrumental music – whatever symbolic weight it might carry – is almost always assumed to be audible to the characters on stage' as well as to the audience, unless explicitly framed as otherwise.²⁶ When unseen music appeared, then, providing there was no suggestion that it was supernatural, disembodied and invisible, the audience's overwhelming understanding would be that the dramatic world extended beyond the playhouse's stage to the location of this hidden sound. Early modern playwrights exploited playgoers' desires to see the music in order to create this effect of musical narration. By removing the sight of music, playwrights encouraged their audience to fill in the gap imaginatively, mentally constructing the dramatic scene that the music aurally describes.

Musical narration allowed early modern commercial drama to reach beyond the inherent limits of a playhouse's physical dimensions, telling stories of the largest scale. There are many examples of this practice, in which scenes are constructed that would be too expansive to convey through stage action.²⁷ In these cases, playgoers experience music primarily as a narrative device – a theatrical language describing the dramatic world. This has been recognized in part by Frances Ann Shirley, who notes that 'musical sounds [...] create the illusion of marching armies off stage' in a number of Shakespeare's plays. She traces the particular meanings that certain musical and non-musical sounds can convey – how '[a] flourish, for example, adds an air of dignity and increases our excitement', or how 'the words of Caliban and Barnadine before they enter not only create anticipation in the audience, but also confirm the unflattering descriptions of each'. However, in accordance with what she sees as 'the necessity of classifying [...] off-stage sounds [...] according to some system', her work focuses on the nature, categories and meanings of sounds that occurred at the Globe and Blackfriars rather than on the dramatic effects and narratorial

possibilities of hidden music.²⁸ In more recent work, Elizabeth Ketterer offers a sustained engagement with the dramaturgical possibilities of offstage music in a foundational study of music in the repertory of the Admiral's Men, giving a particularly rich account of a series of offstage 'musical military signals' in Christopher Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris* (Strange's Men, 1593).²⁹

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, unseen musical narration is used not just to create an offstage dramatic world, but also to interrupt the concurrent stage representation. Hidden sound punctuates a significant moment of stage action, making a competing bid for audience attention. In moments such as this, the stage business needs to be of particular significance to playgoers in order to create the desired tension between the demands of sight and sound. Few moments can be considered more dramatically key than the death of a central character in a tragedy, and so precisely this stage action is intruded upon by offstage music in *Antony and Cleopatra*, at the death of Enobarbus. This character plays a key role as a soldier and friend to Antony, his relentless observations combining choric and malcontent elements in a constant reflection upon the events that unfold, and upon Antony himself.

The musical narration of Act 4, Scene 10 is framed by the events that precede Enobarbus's death. He defects to Caesar early in the fourth act, but by Scene 6, upon receiving both his own treasure and Antony's 'bounty overplus' as a parting gesture from his former friend, he realizes the severity of his betrayal and is overcome with grief (4.6.21).³⁰ Absent from the stage for three scenes, Enobarbus eventually re-emerges in Scene 10, soliloquizing upon his guilt before he dies – apparently of a broken heart – calling 'O Antony! O Antony!' Three overhearing soldiers move in, hoping to ascertain whether he is returning to Antony, for such news 'May concern Caesar'. They attempt to wake him, offering the audience the possibility that he merely 'sleeps' rather than lies dead. This suggestion is significant, for by verbalizing the opinion that Enobarbus may recover, the characters raise expectations among the audience that they may yet hear more from him, directing attention towards his body. Uncertainty reigns until the Sentry concludes that 'The hand of death hath raught him' (4.10.22–29). At this point, playhouse attention would be focused on Enobarbus: the audience look and listen for any sign of life, just as the soldiers do.

When Enobarbus's death is confirmed, the focus of attention created by the preceding dialogue sets up audience expectations of reflection upon this complex character. Instead, the sound of '*Drums afar off*' immediately follows, signifying an army moving into action (l. 29.i). No consideration of Enobarbus is forthcoming, and the scene shifts abruptly to '*Antony and Scarus with their army*' (4.11.0.i). The principal effect of the '*Drums afar off*' is to extend the dramatic world beyond the stage, creating a tension in focus between the important stage business unfolding and the wider military context that the music creates offstage. These competing demands for attention are strong, with early modern

playgoers' desires for visual musical experience foregrounding an unseen dramatic world, even as they are simultaneously concerned with Enobarbus. This would require subjects in the playhouse to consider which they found more important: the moral dilemmas and personal fate of a central and sympathetic character, or the global political meltdown unfolding beyond the stage.

The competing demands of the personal and the global are central concerns in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Jonathan Dollimore notes that 'heroism of Antony's kind can never be "entirely personal" [...] nor separated from either "heroic achievement" or the forces and relations of power which confer its meaning', for 'to kiss away kingdoms is to kiss away also the lives of thousands'.³¹ Significantly, the suppression of visual musical experience at Enobarbus's death would have invited early modern audiences to live out this very tension in their response to the scene: even as they were encouraged to focus on the character taking centre stage, the music would make the competing demand that they should instead imagine the extended dramatic world beyond Enobarbus, a world of large scale military conflict. These concurrent demands for attention are thus an attempt to engage playhouse audiences in a direct and emotive way that is only possible with stage action and hidden music, distinct from the similarly unique engagements with drama in print that Hannah August traces in Chapter 11 of this collection. Here, a central tension of the play, a key development in the narrative, and the audience's own response to both of these would all be united in a single theatrical experience created through music. Michael Neill notes that this complex passage of stagecraft forms a 'semblance of a funeral march for Enobarbus' as the soldiers take the body offstage, but it is very much an inverted semblance.³² The social function and related conventions of a funeral march are turned utterly inside out: the characters focus on themselves (the Sentry notes that 'Our hour | Is fully out'); they lack concern (the Second Watch casually remarks 'Come on, then. He may recover yet'); and, most significantly, the music describes the global conflict when it should be memorializing the deceased (4.10.29–33). The scene directly and confrontationally juxtaposes the hidden musical representation of military preparation with the stage presentation of death. This juxtaposition recalls a similar use of offstage music in another of Shakespeare's death sequences from the turn of the sixteenth century, in which Horiatio's eulogizing is famously concluded with the angry demand, 'Why does the drum come hither?' (*Hamlet*, 5.2.314).

Supernatural music in *Antony and Cleopatra*

Hidden music is also used with precise dramaturgical intentions in Act 4, Scene 3 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, this time in a supernatural context.³³ Here, playwright and playing company asked playgoers to respond to hidden, seemingly supernatural music in ways that were simultaneously echoed by the characters upon

the stage, encouraging empathetic engagement with those characters. As we saw when trumpeters hid behind a green curtain, or when Charalois found himself excluded from the musical performance space, early modern responses to unseen music begin with an immediate, powerful desire to place the music visually.³⁴ In de la Marche's memoir and Massinger and Field's play, the musical performers were readily identifiable as human; significantly, however, when a hidden, earthly performer cannot easily be located, the desire to see music is typically followed with speedy resort to a supernatural explanation. This is dramatized in *The Costly Whore* (Revels Company, 1619–32). When a Duke hears music but can 'see no instruments, nor hands that play', he comes swiftly to the conclusion that 'Tis some celestiaall rapture of the minde', and 'No earthlie harmonie'.³⁵ The Duke's immediate concern is to establish whether music is above him and thus heavenly, or below him and devilish: as Ferdinand asks in *The Tempest*, is this music 'I'th' air or th'earth?' (1.2.390).³⁶

When playgoers heard unseen and unexplainable music, they were likely to display similar responses to those of the Duke and Ferdinand: visual desire; recourse to supernatural explanation; and, finally, attempts at further comprehension. Moreover, dramatic characters often responded ostentatiously to unseen playhouse music, seemingly to encourage playgoers to align themselves and their musical experience with the reactions – and the perspectives – of those characters. Shakespeare's dramatic use of hidden, supernatural music in *Antony and Cleopatra* occurs prior to Enobarbus's death, taking place as a group of soldiers stand guard at night in Act 4, Scene 3. Ideas of the mysterious and unexplained open the scene as two soldiers discuss an odd rumour that is circulating:

SECOND SOLDIER: Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?

FIRST SOLDIER: Nothing. What news?

SECOND SOLDIER: Belike 'tis but a rumour. Good night to you.

(4.3.3–5)

In these short lines, audience interest is piqued, and the possibility of a supernatural presence is hinted at. When the soldiers disperse shortly afterwards to stand guard, '*They place themselves in every corner of the stage*' (1. 7.1). This direction is critical for its striking visual impact, the stage space blocked out with soldiers presumably looking outward into the unknown 'night', preparing for unexpected sights. Their gaze draws attention to the very limits of the stage space as a mode of dramatic representation, quite literally looking beyond it for that which will remain unseen. This moment of stagecraft can be imagined just as persuasively at either of the playhouses in which *Antony and Cleopatra* is likely to have been performed; the vast crowd and openness of the Globe could convey the mysterious unknown just as aptly as the indistinct extremities of the indoor Blackfriars after 1609, where 'the sparkling audience – and actors –

will have emerged through a delicate haze; a confusion of smoke from candle and tobacco'.³⁷ Through the soldiers' opening dialogue and their subsequent stage movements, the audience are encouraged to expect the unexpected, and to give strong visual attention to the stage and its boundaries. The unexplained duly appears in aural form, when the '*Music of the hautboys is under the stage*' (l. 10.1). The audience's response to this unseen music would be heightened by the very fact that their visual attention has been demanded so directly by the preceding use of the stage space, as the soldiers look outward. The playgoers' unfulfilled desire to see and comprehend the hidden music would thus steer them towards an otherworldly explanation, supported by the music's continuing lack of embodiment.

It is significant that the hautboys (or shawms) play while generic soldiers stand watch, rather than alongside a previously characterized, noble personality. Instead of inviting empathetic engagement with a single, clearly defined character, the scene stages a group of marginal figures: the soldiers are outside of the small set of socially superior characters driving the tragedy, looking on and listening in. This is directly analogous to the audience's position; they are in close proximity to the events of the play, bound to the action in a collective theatrical experience, yet outside of the dramatic world in which the events unfold. As the soldiers describe their powerful response to the supernatural music, music that expresses the plight of a character central to the tragedy, the invitation is for the audience to do the same, emulating the soldiers' responses to the under stage hautboys. Playgoers are carefully steered towards an experience of the hautboy music as convincingly supernatural, at least within the dramatic world.

As the scene and the music continue, the soldiers make a series of remarks further suggesting a supernatural presence, and encouraging playgoers to continue aligning themselves with the soldiers. The soldiers listen carefully in an attempt to locate the music's source, and to establish – as always – whether it is 'Music i'th' air' or 'Under the earth' (l. 11). A more definite gloss is ultimately offered by the Second Soldier, who had initially displayed superior knowledge about the strange rumours at the start of the scene. He announces that 'Tis the God Hercules, whom Antony loved, | Now leaves him' (ll. 14–15). From this point, the audience have a specific reading of the music to take forward: this is supernatural music, and it does not bode well.

The presence of music is drawn directly from Plutarch's *Lives*, Shakespeare's major source for the play in Thomas North's translation.³⁸ However, rather than the subterranean hautboy music that is ascribed to Hercules by Shakespeare's soldier, Plutarch's text describes the sound of:

A marvelous sweete harmonie of sundrie sortes of instrumentes of musicke, with the crie of a multitude of people, as they had bene dauncing, and had song as they use in *Bacchus* feastes, with movinges and turninges after the maner of the

Satyres: & it seemed that this daunce went through the city unto the gate that opened to the enemies.
(4P5^{r-v})

The most famous of Roman biographers is not describing Herculean revelry here, although the suggestion in Plutarch that ‘it was the god vnto whom *Antonius* bare singular devotion to counterfeate and resemble him, that did forsake them’ is echoed in Shakespeare’s play (4P5^v). Plutarch remarks upon Antony’s self-styled resemblance to both Hercules (4M6^{r-v}) and Bacchus (4N4^r), so in the context of revelry and satiric leapings, the ‘god’ intended here in the source text must be the latter.³⁹ Shakespeare’s scene departs from Plutarch by changing the instrumentation, removing the procession, adopting a different style of music, and explicitly glossing the god in question as Hercules, rather than Bacchus.⁴⁰ This is certainly practical for the performers: rather than bringing a procession of dancers on stage, the unseen music is simple to implement and immediately conveys supernatural malevolence through choice of instrument. The substitution of deities is thus one part of a whole set of adjustments made in order to shape the scene into a powerfully engaging and appropriate moment of theatre. A spectacle of Bacchic dancers might have provided an entertaining diversion at this point, but the hidden hautboy music offers the audience an experience aligned with the concerns of the stage characters, making the scene a central part of their involvement in the play’s global conflict.

Shakespeare adapts his source radically in the supernatural encounter that he dramatizes, and this departure would have gone some way towards normalizing different playgoers’ understandings of what actually happens in the scene. Those who knew nothing of Antony’s life beforehand would be seeking an explanation for the music until the moment that the Second Soldier speaks. Equally, those well versed in Plutarch would remain unsure whether the underground, devilish music of the hautboys is supposed to be a radical reworking of the Bacchae’s procession, another supernatural presence, or something else entirely. Finally, it must not be forgotten that Plutarch only offers the Bacchic interpretation as what those ‘in reason [...] thought’ was the best explanation, rather than as a certain reading (4P5^v). Accordingly, a playgoer interested in the sources of the drama might be expecting an entirely new interpretation of the music in this narrative incarnation. It is extremely significant that the Second Soldier’s explanation is held back until the final few lines, so that playgoers with a range of prior knowledge could all share the experience of seeking out understanding for most of the scene, aligning them with the soldiers. Whether they knew Plutarch or not, they would be hoping for further information – or better yet, sight of the music – that might clarify the signification of these hautboys. Until the mention of Hercules gives some degree of conclusion to the matter, the audience would have shared both the soldiers’ uncertainty, and their desire for visual musical experience.

Shakespeare's scene ends as the soldiers give chase to the music, aiming to 'Follow the noise so far as we have quarter' (l. 19). There is a final gesture of inclusiveness to bring the audience directly into this moment, as the soldiers all speak simultaneously, declaring 'Tis strange' (l. 20). By closing the scene with a group of generic characters expressing themselves in chorus and in accordance with one another, the invitation is made one final time to the even larger crowd of playhouse witnesses to seek out the unseen music's source themselves, and thus imaginatively to enter the dramatic world.⁴¹ Experience of hidden music would be central to the audience's experience of the supernatural here, central to their alignment with the stage characters and, ultimately, central to the stagecraft of this scene as it was produced on the early modern stage.

These unseen musical performances, in the tiring house and under the stage of a commercial playhouse, complete a picture of early modern sensory engagement with music that began with Richard Alison's devotional model of multi-sensory musical experience. Through textual evidence drawn from a diverse range of sources, I have argued for the significance of visual musical experience to early modern engagements with music in a range of contexts. These sources reveal an understanding of musical experience with particular relevance to the commercial playhouse, for the rich and interrelated accounts of sensory experience in these various sources shed new light on dramaturgical practices at the Globe and Blackfriars based on precise and sophisticated uses of unseen music. The traces of early performance practice in the Folio text of *Antony and Cleopatra* suggest playhouse music uses that were demonstrably shaped by the early modern expectation of visual – as well as aural – engagement with music.⁴²

Notes

- 1 Richard Alison, *The Psalmes of David in meter* (1599), A2r–v.
- 2 Michel Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies (I)*, trans. by Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley (London: Continuum, 2008), p. 305 and *passim*.
- 3 Janette Dillon, 'Spectatorship at the Early Modern English Court', in *Spectatorship at the Elizabethan Court*, ed. by Daniel Dornhofer and Susanne Scholz, Special Issue of *Zeitsprünge: Forschungen zur Frühen Neuzeit*, 17 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2013), 9–21 (p. 21).
- 4 Richard Sennett, 'Resistance', in *The Auditory Culture Reader*, ed. by Michael Bull and Les Back (Oxford: Berg, 2003), pp. 481–84; Jennifer Nevile, 'A Measure of Moral Virtue: Women, Dancing and Public Performance in Fifteenth-century Italy', in *The Sounds and Sights of Performance in Early Music: Essays in Honour of Timothy J. McGee*, ed. by Maureen Epp and Brian E. Power (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 197–210.
- 5 Similar uses appear in plays including: Anon., *The Costlie Whore* (1633), C3v; John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, 'The Double Marriage', in *Comedies and Tragedies Written by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher Gentlemen* (1647), 5D2v; Thomas Heywood, *The Wise-woman of Hogsdon. A Comedie* (1638), G1r; John Marston, *The*

- Wonder of Women Or The Tragedie of Sophonisba* (1606), F1v–F2r.
- 6 Francis Bacon, *Sylva sylvarum: or A naturall historie* (1627), F1r.
 - 7 William Rawley's preface to the volume explains that, 'true *Axiomes* must be drawne from plaine Experience, and not from doubtfull; And his Lordships course is, to make Wonders Plaine'. Bacon, A2r.
 - 8 Bacon, F4r–v.
 - 9 Christopher Marsh considers Bacon's remarks in the context of earlier music theory, in *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 40.
 - 10 In addition to the examples considered below, see Anon., *Costlie Whore*, C3v; Michael East, *The fourth set of bookes, vwherein are anthemes for versus and chorus, madrigals, and songs of other kindes* (1618), A2r; John Fletcher, 'The Captaine', in *Comedies and Tragedies*, 2G4r; John Fletcher, 'The Chances', in *Comedies and Tragedies*, 3A4r–v; Fletcher and Massinger, 'The Double Marriage', 5D2v; Robert Jones, *Vltimvm Vale, with a triplicity of musicke* (1605), A2v; John Marston and John Webster, *The Malcontent [...] With the Additions played by the Kings Maiesties servants* (1604), B1r; Henry Shirley, *The Martyr'd Souldier* (1638), C2v; *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, 1535–1617*, ed. by A. Francis Steuart (London: Routledge, 1929), pp. 96–97.
 - 11 The question of who purchased and consumed the various music-related publications available in early modern England has been explored from a number of fruitful perspectives. Foundational work on the production and consumption of printed music books includes Donald Krummel, *English Music Printing, 1553–1700* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1975); *Music Printing and Publishing*, ed. by Donald Krummel and Stanley Sadie (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990). Linda Phyllis Austern's recent article exploring female domestic psalm-singing sheds light on a much-overlooked part of this picture: "For musick is the handmaid of the Lord": Women, Psalms, and Domestic Music-making in Early Modern England', in *Psalms in the Early Modern World*, ed. by Linda Phyllis Austern, Kari Boyd McBride and David L. Orvis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 77–114. Christopher Marsh brings a cultural-historical perspective to this topic with extremely productive results: 'Recreational Musicians', in *Music and Society*, pp. 173–224.
 - 12 See note 10.
 - 13 Linda Phyllis Austern, "'Sing Againe Syren": The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 42 (1989), 420–48; "'Alluring the Auditorie to Effeminacie": Music and the Idea of the Feminine in Early Modern England', *Music and Letters*, 74 (1993), 343–54; "'No Women Are Indeed": The Boy Actor as Vocal Seductress in Late Sixteenth- and Early Seventeenth-Century English Drama', in *Embodied Voices: Representing Female Vocality in Western Culture*, ed. by Leslie C. Dunn and Nancy A. Jones (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 83–102.
 - 14 Studies examining 'ocularcentrism' include Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 45–90; 'The Rise of Hermeneutics and the Crisis of Ocularcentrism', *Poetics Today*, 9 (1988), 307–26; Constance Classen, *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and Across Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 6–7.

- 15 William Forde Thompson, Phil Graham and Frank A. Russo, 'Seeing Music Performance: Visual Influences on Perception and Experience', *Semiotica: Journal of the International Association for Semiotic Studies*, 156 (2005), 203–27 (p. 220).
- 16 As Claire van Kampen notes, 'Musicians are generally placed unseen in a music studio entirely disconnected from the stage action other than through a visual monitor and headphones, and their playing is "piped in" to the auditorium via a sound system.' This contrasts dramatically with the ostentatious display of musicians at the reconstructed Globe Theatre in London. 'Music and Aural Texture at Shakespeare's Globe', in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 79–89 (p. 82).
- 17 Thomas Campion, *The discription of a maske, presented before the Kinges Maiestie at White-Hall, on Twelfth Night last* (1607), A4r–v.
- 18 Particularly valuable scholarship exploring the relationships between performance space and royal spectatorship in court entertainment includes Janette Dillon, *The Language of Space in Court Performance, 1400–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 103–28; Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 1–34; Helen Cooper, 'Location and Meaning in Masque, Morality and Royal Entertainment', in *The Court Masque*, ed. by David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 135–48.
- 19 Here and throughout, I give each play's posited dates of first performance and any associated playing company in parentheses, following *DEEP: Database of Early English Playbooks*, ed. by Alan B. Farmer and Zachary Lesser (2007) <http://deep.sas.upenn.edu> [accessed 12 July 2014].
- 20 John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, 'The Custome of the Countrey', in *Comedies and Tragedies* (1647), 2B1v.
- 21 Thomas Middleton, William Rowley and Thomas Heywood, *The Excellent Comedy, called The Old Law: or A new way to please you* (1656), K3r.
- 22 John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, *The Elder Brother a Comedie* (1637), E1v.
- 23 Philip Massinger and Nathan Field, *The Fatall Dowry: A Tragedy* (1632), 11r. Aymer performs a second song in a fruitless attempt to distract Charalois further; Tiffany Stern reveals the dramatic significance of this song in light of a missing verse that she has recovered. See *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 165.
- 24 This translation by Gary Tomlinson in *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. by Oliver Strunk, 2nd edn, rev. by Leo Treitler (New York: Norton, 1998), p. 314. Olivier de la Marche, *Les Mémoires De Messire Olivier De La Marche* (Lyon, 1561; repr. 1562; 1566; 1567; 1616; 1645).
- 25 See, for instance, John Fletcher, 'The Tragedie of Bonduca', in *Comedies and Tragedies* (1647), 4H1v; William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*, 1.4–6; *Antony and Cleopatra*, 4.3 (considered below).
- 26 David Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music* (London: Thomson Learning, 2006), p. 112.
- 27 See note 25.
- 28 Frances Ann Shirley, *Shakespeare's Use of Off-Stage Sounds* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), pp. 51–55.

- 29 Elizabeth Ketterer, “‘Govern’d by Stops, Aw’d by Dividing Notes’: The Functions of Music in the Extant Repertory of the Admiral’s Men, 1594–1621” (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009), pp. 164–66.
- 30 The sole early textual witness to *Antony and Cleopatra* is the 1623 Folio, in which all the stage directions I consider are present.
- 31 Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy* (Brighton: Harvester, 1984), pp. 206–15.
- 32 *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Michael Neill, The Oxford Shakespeare (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 278n. See also Michael Neill, “‘Exeunt with a Dead March’: Funeral Pageantry on the Shakespearean Stage”, in *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1985), pp. 153–93; *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
- 33 The close links between music and the supernatural in early modern culture and drama have been widely explored; particularly significant studies include Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Amanda Eubanks Winkler, *O Let Us Howle Some Heavy Note: Music for Witches, the Melancholic, and the Mad on the Seventeenth-Century English Stage* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); Linda Phyllis Austern, “‘Art to Enchant’: Musical Magic and Its Practitioners in English Renaissance Drama”, *Journal of the Royal Music Association*, 115 (1990), 191–206; Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music*, pp. 218–33.
- 34 De la Marche, in *Source Readings*, p. 314; Massinger and Field, *Fatall Dowry*, 11r.
- 35 *Costlie whore*, C3v. See similarly Fletcher and Massinger, ‘Double Marriage’, 5D2v; Robert Davenport, *A New Tricke to Cheat the Divell* (1639), F4r; Fletcher, ‘The Chances’, 3A4r–v.
- 36 Lindley’s work on *The Tempest* is authoritative; for his discussion of Ferdinand’s response to Ariel’s invisible music (1.2.376–410), see *Shakespeare and Music*, pp. 1–3.
- 37 Tiffany Stern, ‘Taking Part: Actors and Audience on the Stage at Blackfriars’, in *Inside Shakespeare: Essays on the Blackfriars Stage*, ed. by Paul Menzer (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2006), pp. 35–53 (p. 45). The play’s 1608 entry in the Stationer’s Register suggests that it was written for and first performed at the Globe, but given the King’s Men’s acquisition of the Blackfriars theatre by 1609, the play is likely to have seen later performance both indoors and outdoors (see *DEEP*).
- 38 Plutarch, *The liues of the noble Grecians and Romanes*, trans. by Thomas North (1579). All quotations are from this edition, hereafter cited in the text.
- 39 For accounts of the connections between Antony and Hercules, see Patricia R. Robertson, “‘This Herculean Roman’: Shakespeare’s Antony and the Hercules Myth”, *Publications of the Arkansas Philological Association*, 10 (1984), 65–75; Richard Hillman, ‘Antony, Hercules, and Cleopatra: “The Bidding of the Gods” and “the Subtlest Maze of All”’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 38 (1987), 442–51.
- 40 See Frank Kermode, *Renaissance Essays: Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne* (London: Fontana, 1973), pp. 98–99; John Coates, “‘The Choice of Hercules” in *Antony and Cleopatra*’, in *Shakespeare Survey Volume 31*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 45–52.

- 41 Early modern plays often ask audiences to engage with narratives through imagination and fantasy; the *Henry V* Chorus speeches are merely the most famous and explicit examples of this (Prologue; 2.0; 3.0; 4.0; 5.0; Epilogue).
- 42 I am grateful to Hannah August, Anita Butler, Jackie Watson and Sue Wiseman for their comments on this material at various stages. I also wish to acknowledge the support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, which enabled me to complete the research for this chapter.