

Several Dances

ALSO BY MAURICE SCULLY

BOOKS

Love Poems & Others

5 Freedoms of Movement

The Basic Colours

Priority

Steps

Livelihood

Sonata

Tig

Doing the Same in English

Humming

A Tour of the Lattice

BOOKLETS

Prior

Certain Pages

Over & Through

Prelude, Interlude & Postlude

Tree with Eggs

Work

ART OBJECT

Numbers [with Coracle Press]

E-CHAPBOOK

Five Dances

CD

Mouthpuller

CHILDREN'S

What is the Cat Looking At?

Maurice Scully

Several Dances

(for voice)

Shearsman Books

First published in the United Kingdom in 2014 by
Shearsman Books
50 Westons Hill Drive
Emersons Green
BRISTOL
BS16 7DF

Shearsman Books Ltd Registered Office
30–31 St. James Place, Mangotsfield, Bristol BS16 9JB
(this address not for correspondence)

www.shearsman.com

ISBN 978–1–84861–336–2

Copyright © Maurice Scully, 2014.

The right of Maurice Scully to be identified as the author
of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the
Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act of 1988.
All rights reserved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ahadada books [web], *Burning Bush 2* [web], Dedalus Press,
eKleksographia [web], *Gathered Here Today*, *Golden Handcuffs Review*,
Great Works [web], *MATERIALPoetry*, Oystercatcher Press,
Past Simple [web], *Smithereens* [web], *Succour*,
The 15 Project [web], *Veer Off*, *Wurmfest*.

Grateful thanks to all concerned.

Contents

On a Light Ground: Eye Dance	11
On a Dark Ground: Work Dance	13
Lyric: Bal/ancing	16
Mountain Railway: Gavotte	18
Miniature	19
Tango	20
Sunlight	21
Just to Say (for tom-tom)	22
Imprint Studio	24
For Treated Piano	27
Tap Dance	28
Thorns Spindles Twigs	32
Sonnet: Print	36
Baint an Fhéir	38
Bluebells in a Wood: Waltz	39
Exposure: Tuesday	42
Klee-like (for glockenspiel)	43
Ballad	44
Ground	45
Walk Dance: The Artist & His Model	47
Heart	49
Blackbird: Jig	51
Geometric (for gamelan)	53
Rain [signed piece]	59
A Stupendous Idea	66
Parallax: on Vellum	67
Song: Dance [knots in the grain]	69
Sonnet: On Tiptoe	72
Butoh: Coup de Soleil	73
Ballad [Irish]	78
Winter	79
Descending a Staircase	80
[Hungarian] Folk Dance: Artist's Studio	82
To Balance	85
Studio Stamp	86

Thread-Bridge (for clarinet)	87
Jig: Blizzard	90
This to Say: Sonnet (drums)	91
Rain Dance	93
Setting (for guitar)	96
Carpet of Memory	98
Locket	99
<i>Uic aithan</i>	100
Poetry	101
Mazurka	102
Pavane	106
Song Beginning ‘When’	108
Echo	109
CODA	
Village & Interior (with glockenspiel)	115
Jig	117
Orbit	120
Notes	122
Backing Vocals	124

for Bob & Daisy

Sunlight is
on things.

Frank Samperi



On a Light Ground: Eye Dance

Dapple of mother-spider
at the centre of its wet
web between a hedge & a
trellis. After work, the

wait. Place your foot
there. Then place it
there. Pitch a rock
in the pond: hear that

difference over there.
I-me-myself are moving
forward
forward

to that left behind, through
air, to that placed shimmer
ahead. Forward. Carry your
spinning circle, a drop

lands, little by/connects
[pendent speck] reverberant.
Hold still. I do. Move. Stare.
Are you ready? What? To cross

which pattern a/pattern a/
[black] ripple of leaf-shadow
over those books there
restless surges & retreats

smooth fluid undulations
that move across a vase
sketched in to burn care-
fully across representations

of small flowers on a curved
ceramic edge complications.
Pause. Meshes of energies
made visible. A calm [autumn]

morning in which pollen or
a calm autumn morning on
which a drift of rich [yellow]
pollen, a calm autumn morning

‘outside [the community of] our
perceptions’ in which outside
... which ... I think (dab)

a fossil horizon, a dust horizon,
a mud horizon, the recent rising
of a nearby river, another fossil
horizon, one on top of the other

(small paint-marks on my palm,
wonder-swirl skin pattern, red
giant, white dwarf)—yes I

think I’ll live here for a bit
not across no but along. One.
Border. Forever.

On a Dark Ground: Work Dance

past a postage stamp stuck
sideways to the side of a
bookshelf going nowhere in
particular just now

past memory-flashes in tight dark
tangles open to the least access
of light stopped formally in code
in ink on paper in rows [blank]

wrapped up in stillness & expect-
ation &/past a weather here then
another there passing beyond past-
future (coil'd)((2, 3))(together)

weathers hitting the roof with a
red herring once in a blue moon
white as a sheet in a black mood
on a red letter day & so on a

jumble then two more (one ornate—
one spartan) take note coming all

the way down to treetops laughingly
referred to *as*. past that through
several nests one in particular I
remember *oh* down along an

uptilting branch through the
bark the feathers the downy warm
woven against the storm past
that sun catching green cloth

through glass here we go thorns
spindles twigs new & auton-
omous additions to the world
not representations of it

cackled an elderly stretcher
behind a canvas all dried up
scrap that sip yr tea Cranach
the Younger Scully the Unsub-

missive a tiny scalded insect
from a desk-lampshade for instance
to the page-top until *he was well-*
loved yr very breath disappears it

holding the falling world *he was*
well-loved as an artist and as a
man holding the falling world well.
who is that figure turning into

the doorway to go? a skull re-
members embers to re-invigorate
me-me-me-me-me/so. I'll deal you
plastic squares of the Absurd while

you shuffle the Possibilities-of-
the-Ridiculous over there, okay?

done.

intent at desk in shed. relaxed
at table. reading in bed. working.
dreaming. breathing. drinking tea.
spearing fish spelling it out won-

dering wandering pondering
weaving a willow basket or two
on the damp riverbank billows of
mist over water at dawn. rules:

the ludicrous. the fragile. the
indefensible.

give me some money. give me some
money to live. I'm willing to work.
I'm willing to work well. I'm willing
to work well and apply what talents

I have to the job. you will not get all
of me no but then I'll not get all of yr
money. give me some money. give
me some money now.

Lyric: Bal/ancing

It's resolved.

This is what you need:
the wheels on the road
go *then—then—then*.

I draw the line
you do too
it's a blackbird
on a rooftop addressing

the neighbourhood
where all's in place
moving apart
& disappear-
ing leaving a trace.

How's yr hearing?
Pressed to the paper
ink wet softest at
the apical bud

rend-
ered into
alpha-
bet out of
the mouth
&
memory
seed-
pod
burst & ...

& stones settle into
their foundations
in silence again.

Watch them settle
(no talking please)
down here well.

Mountain Railway: Gavotte

Drop a pebble in a pool: listen to it. Its
blue glistens. Black-gold-black. To glint,
tremble, stop. I turn off the radiator,
turn on the desk-lamp, sit, start. Here we
are. Soft pulses of light threading a small
hollow to contain the main phase in a fibrous
nest & the next move, the next move, one true
shimmering altercation. Then see. Oh all claim
that. Then don't. Let liars work, enough is
enough as they say (vexed proof), into their
own dark trap. Drop a pebble in a pool,
bow.

You plug the kettle in, hear it boil, is
that the phone? Cup, spoon, milk. Good.
Do you really know then what you're about?
Say: work-shadow by screen-glow, here is
the chorus that throws us more than (Who?)
we can ever predict, crest on crest each
ripple moving out carries light into its
next receptive fold. Two crows fly low
following their shape exactly in the clear
sheen of the wet sand spread flat [tilt sur-
face to reduce glaze] underneath upside-
(beat for beat)-down. To land. Hello? Yes?
By the wave's edge. Holding a lit match, its
wavering apex, glint of sap below the heat-
line—each decisive moment, each precise
flick—drop it in the dish & go.
Now.

Miniature

Listen: sip coffee from a china cup

still alive

look

good

[glass

good

luck

hot till olives

drop off that tiny tree up

there

till then. Still. Good.

Listen.

Tango

To know every branch of those trees
beside that house & to climb each one
as a little boy & linger up there, head in the sky
2, 3, 4 swaying
so that

in the year of Possibility, first Month of Release,
fourth day of Abjection, if we step here, then there,
then return & repeat that, tap block, here, look, step,
too, there, feeling, wheeling along—what then?
Thumb, middle finger, the little & ring acting as light
supports to the wrist moving in its bony balance holding
the stem & point inking across to thought & eye in a world
placed bright way through.

Then what? One.

One year later into one year later into step by step
it would seem the paper to the pen laughing, sip tea,
said, think, feel the tension in the wires relax—
your notebook on a pile of books open at eye-level
slant-wise changing your writing to meet it nib-level to
paper. Blunted blades, powdered shrapnel.

Then step down the corridor—underpaid
cleaning staff spirited away—with a click of your
steel-tipped cane & a dance, through time, why not—
one-two, one-three-two-one—& (at the Moment of Impact
& Passing Evidence) turn the lights off
on your way out. Okay?

Then.