5. Bennett Hogg

*". . . singing every minute high up in the golden-green blossom . . ."* and *"Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night . . ."*

Digital piano music loop; 18mins long

2017/8

The music in the gallery consists of two separate but interconnected pieces, both of which are made from transcriptions of the individual birds of the Cheeseburn dawn chorus. These are not "straight" transcriptions after the manner of the French composer Olivier Messaien - they don't transcribe the *sound* of the birds. Instead, Collier's visual rendering of the sonograms forms the basis for melodies in medieval neumatic notation, which Hogg has then transcribed into modern musical notation. The musical notes then are "twice-translated", from sonograms into medieval neumes; and from neumes into modern notation.

In the first piece *". . . singing every minute high up in the golden-green blossom . . ."*, Robin and Blackbird are joined by Dunnock, Blue Tit, Great Tit and Wren. The title comes from a short prose piece by Edward Thomas, whose poetry, like that of John Clare almost a century earlier, is infused throughout by birdsong. A subtle change of atmosphere halfway through signals a shift from the brightness of the dawn chorus to the softer, mellower evening chorus, dominated by Woodpigeons. The seven different bird species complement the seven different layers of Collier's image *The Dawn* Chorus 2017 (catalogue no. 4), for which the music was composed, though this correspondence was more serendipitous than designed.

The second piece *"Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night . . ."* (also Edward Thomas) is in three sections, beginning with Redstarts in the before-the-dawn darkness, moving through two sections in which Chaffinch and Wren, then Blackbird and Robin duet with one another, the final section being again based entirely upon Woodpigeons. This piece was composed to accompany the sequence of prints *The Dawn Chorus - A Transitional Narrative* 2018 (catalogue no. 6).

Though the music is based on birdsong, it doesn't *mimic* birdsong, and in this it closely parallels Collier's approach. To a visitor it is probably not even apparent *which* piece is being heard, let alone which birds are "present". But this is not the point. Just as we can listen to the dawn chorus, or indeed birdsong at any time of the day, and not necessarily recognise each and every species, the combination of the music and the images is intended to stage, for want of a better word, an "experience", inside of which we can, of course, make our own connections.