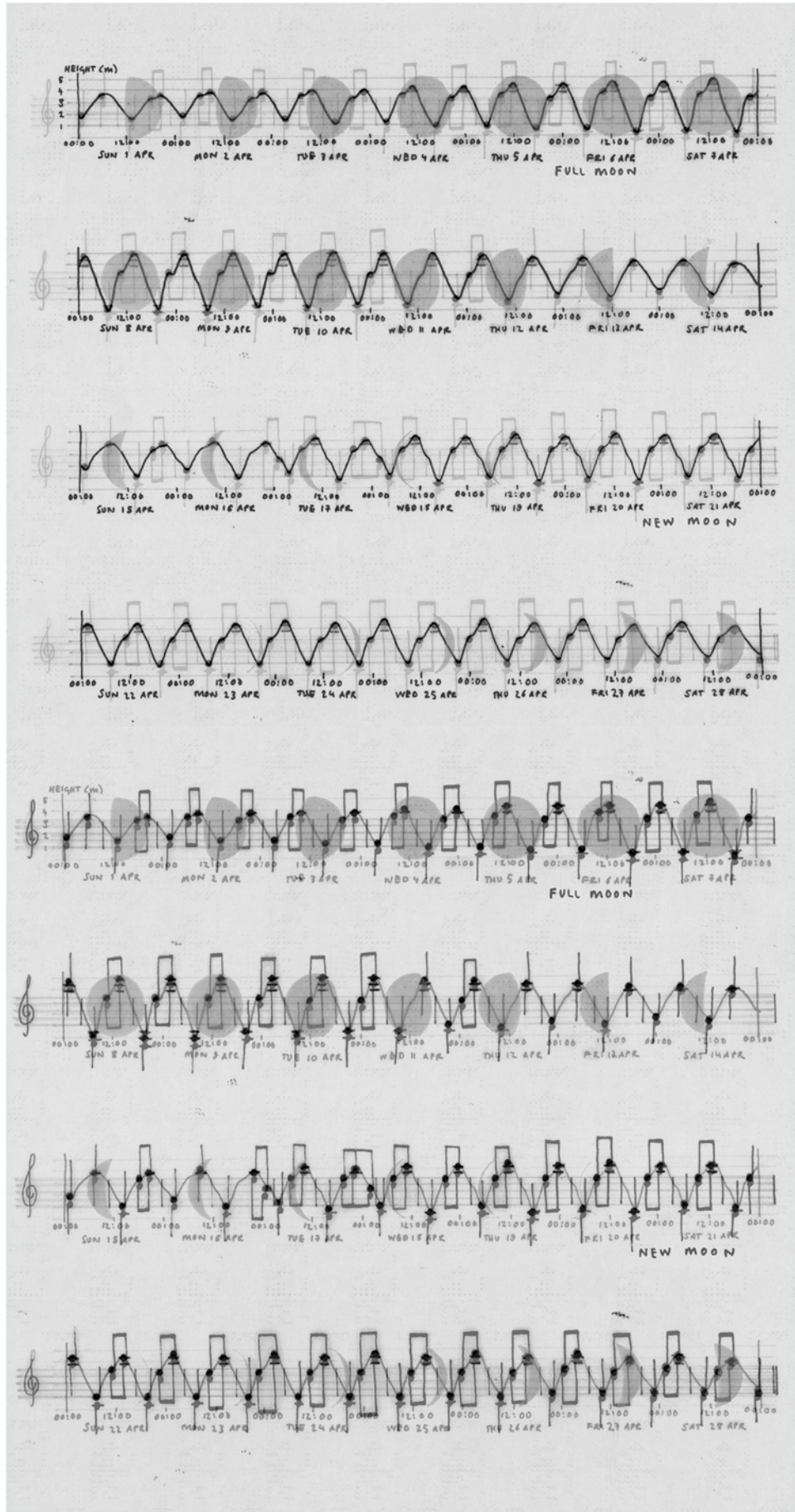




## High-Slack-Low-Slack-High

### Hanna Tuulikki *Just as the Tide Was Flowing* 23 April 2012

Performed by Hanna Tuulikki, Nichola Scrutton, Peter Nicholson and Drew Wright.  
Field recording by Patrick Farmer.



The river is a score: a composition for four voices and megaphones.

Tidal data for the Clyde is mapped out as a graph: time (twenty-eight days in April) against height (five meters).  
The graph is placed onto a musical stave and the height of the river translated into pitch: the turning of the tide marks the musical intervals.  
The score is performed by four vocalists, two on either side of the river.

The piece is named after a traditional song from Sussex:  
*'The tide flows in, the tide flows out,  
Twice every day returning'*

### John Cavanagh *Synodic Revolutions* 24 April 2012

Performed by Ceylan Hay, Gayle Brogan and John Cavanagh.

The collage of field recordings in ***Synodic Revolutions*** ranges from the eerie rhythmic gurglings of the Clyde at low tide to the engine of the paddle steamer Waverley and the rich spectrum of sounds heard within a nuclear submarine at the Faslane Naval Base.

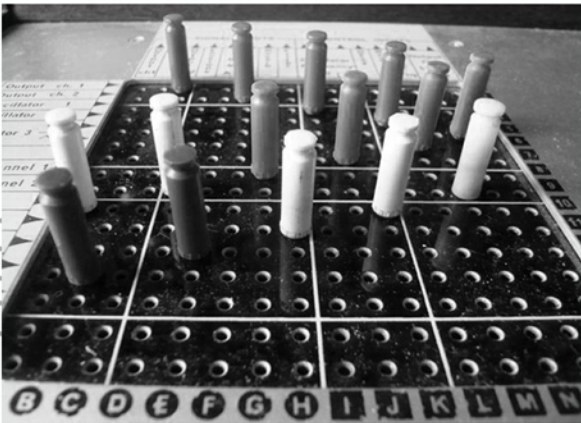
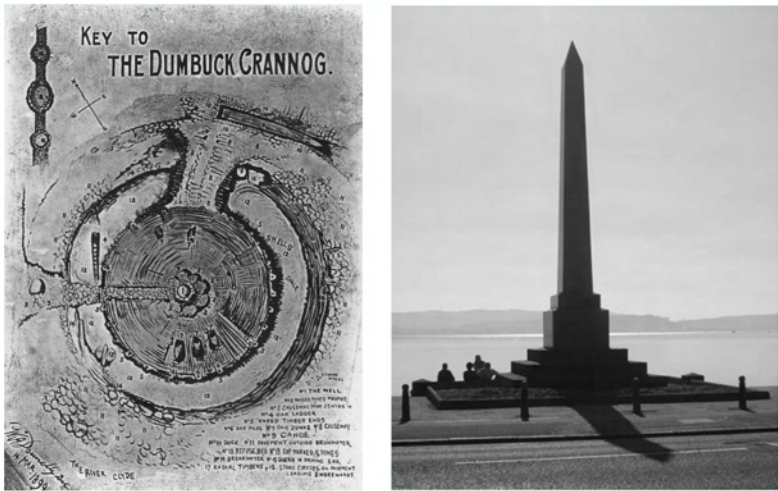
While capturing the tones and textures of the Clyde today, I came across many stories of distant river history and was struck by the prediction and detailed logging of the tides themselves. As this piece involves three performers, I've integrated three Clyde stories, using both field recordings and tide timetables in the process, with each singer's focus on one story as a catalyst to their input.

Ceylan's story concerns the Dumbuck Crannog on the Firth of Clyde between Dumbarton Rock and Bowling Harbour. This ancient burial site was discovered at low tide on the afternoon of 31 July 1898 by artist William Donnelly. The tide level was sufficiently low for Donnelly to spot timbers protruding from the foreshore silts. Had Donnelly dropped by at a different time, the crannog would have been invisible, with the oak piles submerged in up to eight feet of water. Donnelly's discovery sparked a wave of attention and controversy which brewed for thirty years. Although the crannog itself is genuine, a large collection of 'queer things from the Clyde', allegedly gathered from the site, were subsequently revealed as fakes. High tide times on the day of Donnelly's discovery were 11:16 and 23:47 in Glasgow; 10:15 and 22:46 in Greenock.

Gayle's story is associated with a sight which has graced Ardmore Point since 27 January 1974. On that night, during a ferocious storm, a Greek sugar ship, the *Captayannis*, was blown into BP tanker, *British Light*, while attempting to deliver its cargo to James Watt Dock. To save his crew, the captain of the *Captayannis* ran his ship onto a sandbank at the Tail o' the Bank, where she has lain ever since. The costs of removing the wreck discouraged any company from claiming ownership of the vessel. The *Captayannis* has become a home to many species of bird and marine life, including an unusually high number of conger eels. The tidal highs for 2 January 1974 were 02:57 (4.5m) and 15:10 (4.9m) in Glasgow; 02:34 (3m) and 14:40 (3.4m) in Greenock.

My story is from Helensburgh, the seaside town on the Firth of Clyde where I - like many Glaswegians - was taken for day trips as a child. It relates to Bell's Monument, erected in 1872 in memory of Henry Bell, who designed the first commercial steam-powered transit, *The Comet*, while living in the small town. Bell's work had a major local and global impact, giving passengers on the Clyde the first taste of travel with a lessened dependence on the tides and wind that hampered sailing ships. ***Synodic Revolutions*** includes recordings of the incoming tide made adjacent to Bell's Monument.

Fusing past and present together, I've used the number sequences of the tide times listed above to generate combinations of oscillators and filters, with the additional idea that using the shapes of tide patterns to programme a synthesiser pin matrix could be made to act as a kind of sonic cartography. As the synthesiser I use is an analogue device, without samplers, sequencers or memory, each of these events has to be set up manually. The photograph below gives an idea of the process.



## High-Slack-Low-Slack-High

A suite of sound works presented as part of Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art and made in response to the tidal range of the River Clyde in Glasgow by artists:  
**John Cavanagh, Minty Donald/Nick Millar, Douglas Morland, Nichola Scrutton and Hanna Tuulikki.**

Monday 23 April - Hanna Tuulikki - Bell's Bridge/Millennium Bridge - 3.15pm.

Tuesday 24 April - John Cavanagh - Riverside Museum - 3.45pm.

Wednesday 25 April - Nichola Scrutton - Dixon Street - 4.05pm.

Thursday 26 April - Douglas Morland - Clyde north waterfront between Victoria and Glasgow Bridges - 4.45pm.

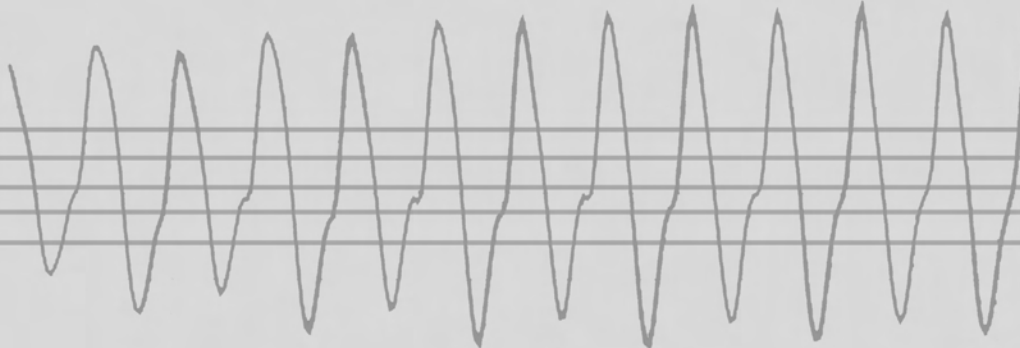
Friday 27 April - Minty Donald/Nick Millar - citywide - 5.25pm (and throughout the week).

Performances are timed to coincide with high tide.

Saturday 28 April - Trust Hall, Clydeport Authority Headquarters, 16 Robertson Street, Glasgow - 5pm and 7.30pm.

***High-Slack-Low-Slack-High*** reflects on the functional and symbolic roles played by urban rivers in contemporary cities - and in particular, the role of the River Clyde in Glasgow today. It's common belief that, following the decline of shipbuilding and other maritime industries, Glasgow turned its back on the river. Now, while the riverbanks are undergoing significant regeneration, the water itself remains a relatively dead space. Through interweaving the natural cadences of the tide with contemporary urban rhythms, ***High-Slack-Low-Slack-High*** is an invitation to re-imagine the relationship between river and city - beyond the legacy of Glasgow's industrial and manufacturing past.

Perpetually rising and falling yet constrained within manmade embankments, detached from the city that once saw it as symbolic of its industrial prowess, the tidal river is taken as a cue to reflect on ideas of change and continuity, nature and culture, repetition and variance, in relation to the contemporary, post-industrial city.





Nichola Scrutton  
*Lateral*

25 April 2012

Performers include: Nichola Scrutton, Hanna Tuulikki, Claire Docherty, Kirstie Edgar, Jessica King and Morag Scott.



A ‘Lateral System’ is a system of navigational aids comprising shapes, colours and numbers, used to guide boats up river channels into ports and docks. Lateral is a sound work that creates a metaphorical journey up the Clyde from the mouth of the river into the city of Glasgow. Place names and the numerical information from tidal charts provide sound source materials for the periodic rhythms of a vocal ‘landscape’ in which depth is mirrored by density and current is mirrored by flow. The vocal material is interwoven with fragments of water recordings from the Clyde and punctuated with an array of signal sounds.

The site of the initial work, Dixon Street, is a main thoroughfare that runs from the river directly up through Buchanan Street, the city’s main shopping artery. Effectively, the sounds of *Lateral* within this site connect today’s shopping mecca with the history of the river as a main route for transportation of goods into the city.



Douglas Morland  
*Keening Luna*  
(A Tidal Threnody)

A performance in two parts  
26 April 2012

**A**s a child, at night, I often wondered what would happen if the moon were to simply just disappear. Hours spent in insomniac cosmic speculation yielded no clear picture of what a post-lunar existence might hold for us here on Earth, were that silver disc just to drift off into the dark unknown, never to return, like the slow fade of a retinal after-image. One thing I did know, at least, was that it would affect the tides in some way or other. I imagined a world without tides – eerily placid, seas and oceans like glass, a dark veil descending at night. All would be still.

**R**ecently, I discovered just how wildly off-the-mark my hypothetical *après la lune* imaginings had been. According to scientists’ projections, the effects of the moon’s disappearance would be truly catastrophic for life on Earth as the incredibly sensitive set of celestial checks and balances that hold the planet’s rhythms and ecosystems in complex synchronicity would be thrown into complete chaos. The length of a day would be drastically altered due to the drag that the moon exerts on the Earth’s orbit. Seasons would conflate. The lack of tidal regularity would cause incredible changes to land masses. Extreme weather conditions would ensue - floods, droughts, ice caps melting, seas freezing over - entire species would be wiped out. Eventually we would all die.

**I**t’s worth noting that our moon is the only moon we know of that is quite as close, in terms of size and composition, to the planet it orbits (and they are the only tidally-locked pair we know of too). Perhaps then it’s no coincidence that it’s also the only moon we know of that circles an intelligent civilisation. Could it be that our large satellite not only benefits life on our planet but is an utterly essential requirement for it ever to have existed at all?

*Of the various works of art on which the primeval inhabitants exercised their ingenuity, probably none are more interesting than their boats. In these we see the first rude efforts of savage man to adventure on the deep, and to float himself on his native waters. Our noble Clyde appears to have been, from immemorial time, a favourite locality for the construction of vessels; and the deep alluvial strata, skirting the river of Glasgow, has at various periods yielded up the wrecks of canoes which these unknown savages had launched. No less than seventeen have been discovered within the last eighty years, at various places, on the plain of Glasgow; some under the very streets of the city. David Robertson, Glasgow Past and Present (1884).*

**I** was born in Yorkhill, overlooking the Clyde. My father grew up in Whiteinch to the clank and clangour, klaxon bursts and shrill whistles of heavy industry before he sailed off down the same river to explore the world as a young merchant seaman. This was just as the future of Clydeside shipbuilding was starting to look bleak and the resultant impact upon the culture, economy, topography and human story of Glasgow was about to be felt in all-too-real terms. River industry as relic: that’s what you glean from a walk along the refurbished river front – old iron protrusions, cobbled sections of path containing rusting rail tracks and black flagstones beat an intermittent tattoo on the long stretch from Partick to Glasgow Green amidst the clean lines and smooth surfaces of the modern gloss. During its major period of dredging, narrowing and deepening in the 19th century, the Clyde yielded well over a dozen relics from a far earlier period. These prehistoric canoes were buried well inland at points that would have marked the tidal reach thousands of years ago, when these vessels were sailed. Opening a space in the imagination of the Victorian Glaswegian river-user, he too dependent on its ebb and flow, a sense of continuity may have been perceived. A ghost may have been sighted somewhere along the foggy banks. Progress and industry leads to an unearthing of the ancient, the unknowable. I can picture the black vessels emerging slowly, one-by-one, from the seams of sand and blue clay, telling tales of a people that perhaps enable us to mourn them.

**A**t high tide an assembly gathers at the river’s edge. A seemingly pointless gesture. Singing to the river. Singing to those who sailed on the river. Freed of words, female voices keen in microtonal harmony. Patterns emerge, currents mix and separate. A rising. A falling. Lungs engage. A sound is heard. The tide covers, the tide reveals. Is this how memory works? Through a series of small gestures and motions the conductor engages the assembly. Buckets, rope and vessels. In a futile undertaking, he attempts to dredge the river. Water is gathered.

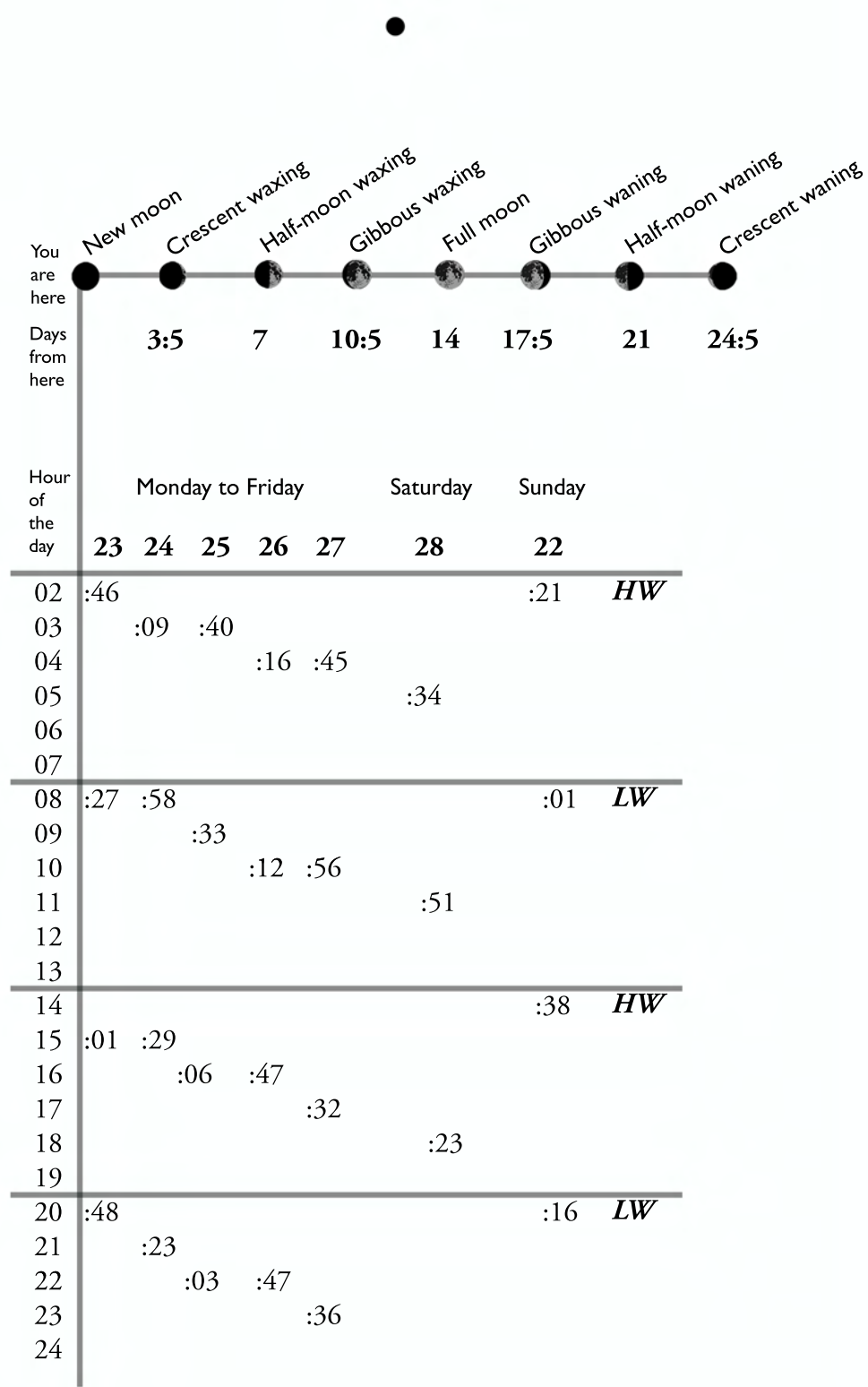
**W**ater is taken to a round room. Glass vessels are filled to varying levels of fluid depth. A hand comes into contact with smooth glass. Circular motion is applied. Breath across glass. A sound is heard. A loop. An echo. Is this how memory works?

Minty Donald/Nick Millar  
*Rivertime*  
27 April 2012

*Cyclical repetition and the linear separate out under analysis, but in **reality** interfere with one another constantly. The cyclical originates in the cosmic, in nature: days, nights, seasons, the waves and tides of the sea, monthly cycles, etc. The linear would come rather from social practice, therefore from human activity: the monotony of actions and of movements, imposed structures.*

Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis* (1991).

How would the city feel if the rhythms of the river ran through it? What if urban schedules were infiltrated by the tempo of the tide? A refrain of ships’ horns, rising and falling, interrupts the pulse of the city’s transport network.



Thanks to:

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