

AUTHOR

Dr Kingsley Marshall
Falmouth University

TITLE:

“Can you hear me?” From script to mix – writer/director Mark Jenkin and ‘son sur le scénario’ - the act of writing sound in the script of *Enys Men* (2022)

KEYWORDS

Mark Jenkin, *Enys Men*, Bait, Bronco’s House, 16mm, analogue, film sound, Foley, sound design, film music, Cornwall, folk horror, horror, screenwriting, analogue, film sound and script, film sound and characterization, film sound and narration, silent landscape dancing grain, manifesto, sound/image cinema lab, bosena

INTRODUCTION

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | INT. COTTAGE. DAY. | 1 |
| | A table top VHF radio. | |
| | A microphone, small speaker and dial incorporated into it. | |
| | A button on the top. | |
| | WOMAN’S VOICE | |
| | Hello! Hello! | |
| | A meter with a needle indicates the volume. | |
| | WOMAN’S VOICE | |
| | Is anybody there? | |
| | The wind whips. | |
| | WOMAN’S VOICE | |
| | Can you hear me? | |
| | The needle on a meter freezes. | |

Figure 1: Excerpt from Mark Jenkin’s script, *Enys Men*, 2020, p. 2 (© Bosena)

In the opening scene of the script for the ecosophical folk horror *Enys Men* (Jenkin 2020), a woman’s voice emanates from a table top VHF radio. The voice is that of The Volunteer, a character whose experience is at the centre of this time slippage story taking place on a remote island off the coast of Cornwall, UK. A meter needle indicates volume. ‘Hello! Hello!’, she asks, before adding “Is anybody there?” as the wind whips around her location. With no response, she asks ‘Can you hear me?’ at which point the needle on the volume meter freezes and the story begins (Scene One, Jenkin 2020). This scene serves a similar function to the audio-zoom that opens Francis Ford Coppola’s script to *The Conversation* (1972), the filmmaker describing how both camera and microphone pick through San Francisco’s busy Union Square to alight visually and sonically on the titular conversation between two characters that forms the heart of the story. In *Enys Men*, these first lines – both dialogue and action - of writer/director Mark Jenkin’s feature screenplay serve the same function. They demonstrate that sound will be privileged and that listening will be as important to viewing in understanding the narrative of his film.

As an executive producer on the film and a colleague and collaborator with Jenkin at the Sound/Image Cinema Lab operating from Falmouth University in the UK, this paper uses an

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”**

early version of the *Enys Men* screenplay and the subsequent film itself as a case study. Conversations with the filmmaker provide a starting point to consider cinematic sound design through the prism of *writing* sound in film prior to the actualisation of the processes of recording and mixing sound for the film itself. The paper examines the specificity of Jenkin’s screenwriting practice and demonstrates how this is entirely integrated with his wider approaches to filmmaking, and demonstrate how this is realised consistently through his writing, through the production of his film’s themselves right through to post production. The intention is to better understand the significance of his approaches to writing sound and its application to the construction of spatiality and temporality, and the interrelationship of sound with the visual realisation of character, location and narrative in cinema. In 2000, Rick Altman, McGraw Jones and Sonia Tatroe described the notion of a unified soundtrack of dialogue, effects and music in cinema as the ‘mise-en-bande’ arguing that, just as image analysis had benefited from the introduction of the comparative and relational notion of the mise-en-scene or ‘putting onto the stage’, so the understanding of the soundtrack’s relationship with image required the concept of what they termed ‘mise-en-bande’, or ‘putting onto the soundtrack’ (2000: 341). This paper proposes an additional term - ‘son sur le scenario’ – the consideration of how sounds articulated within the pages of a script have connotations beyond what it will ultimately denote on the screen, and the manner with which audio can be used to articulate and evoke complex temporal and spatial interrelationships with the imagined image at this stage of film development.

ISLAND LIFE: AN INTRODUCTION TO *ENYS MEN*

The narrative of *Enys Men* is orientated around the experience of a wildlife worker – referred to in the script as The Volunteer - who lives and works on an island off the coast. The island’s name - *Enys Men* - translates as Stone Island from the Cornish language, Kernewek, and refers to an ancient standing stone that the script details is situated at ‘the highest point of an island viewed from the sea’ (Scene Two, Jenkin 2020). Menhirs, from the Cornish for long stone, are monumental standing stones that mark the landscape of Cornwall and typically date from the Bronze Age (Jones and Quinnell 2011: 199). This specific stone, described as ‘Granite. Rough Hewn. Nearly 6 feet tall’, is later explained as being visible from The Volunteer’s cottage on the island (Scene Five, Jenkin 2020). The Volunteer’s role is to document any changes to a patch of flowers that grow on a clifftop on *Enys Men*. She visits these flowers daily to visually inspect them, before taking a temperature reading of the surrounding soil. As she makes her way from back to her cottage each day, she stops by an abandoned mine and drops a stone down a mineshaft. On her return home she writes her observations of the flowers in a notebook. The dates of the observations she documents indicate that the events of the film take place in the week leading up to 1 May 1973.

The Volunteer interacts directly with two other characters within the story. She appears to share her cottage with a young woman – referred to as The Girl in the script - and, though they acknowledge and speak to one another, their conversations are sparse. She also speaks and shares a meal with a character called The Boatman who visits the island to resupply her with fuel and provisions. As the story progresses, The Volunteer notes lichen growing on one of the petals of the flowers and, after coming into contact with it, this appears to have a physical effect on her body where lichen begins to grow from a scar on her torso. As the flowers change, so The Volunteer’s experience of the island also changes. Time on the island is shown to slip through allusions to the past and the future, of events occurring both before and after her life in 1973. She experiences visions or encounters with past occupants of the island. These consist initially of a single miner who appears to have lived in her cottage and,

The Soundtrack (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”

later, a group of seven miners, all of whom are described in the screenplay as dressed in 19th Century clothing, with hand tools and helmets adorned with candles, rather than electric lights. As the script progresses The Volunteer sees a lifeboat crew and a group of Bal Maidens – a term used for female manual labourers who worked in the mining industry in Devon and Cornwall at that time. Each of these groups appears in tableau, staring at The Volunteer. These groups do not speak nor does she speak to them and, again, each group is dressed as though from the 19th Century. At one point a group of children rushes past her by the standing stone to sing a May feast song outside of her cottage, which appears derelict in the scene. As they sing, The Volunteer can see herself first in a window and then the doorway. Later still a preacher seen earlier on the moors by the cottage sings a hymn to her in a large chapel with a congregation, though neither the children, the preacher nor the congregation interact with her.

Towards the end of the screenplay, The Volunteer witnesses The Boatman’s dead body being pulled from the sea by a modern lifeboat. As in the scene with the children, The Volunteer again sees herself – this time as one of the crew on the lifeboat, who stares back. The Boatman’s death is foreshadowed in the script by references to a plaque mounted on the wall of a quay which presents an account of the loss of a 19th Century lifeboat crew who had gone to the aid of a supply boat as 1 May 1897. This event is also referred to in a memorial broadcast over the AM radio, and also in The Volunteer’s discovery of an oilskin jacket and part of the name board from The Boatman’s vessel, Govenek, that she recovers from the coast of the island.

In his curated season which accompanied the launch of *Enys Men* that took place at events across the UK through the BFI in 2023, Jenkin made use of a much cited Robert Bresson quote in the accompanying literature - ‘I’d rather people felt a film of mine before before understanding it’ (Bresson in Cardullo 2009: 297). Appropriately then, his script to *Enys Men* is true to the spirit of Bresson in that it offers little in the way of explanation. Rather Jenkin’s screenplay shows The Volunteer slipping the moorings of her subjective reality, appearing to exist in multiple temporal dimensions before transmogrifying into the island’s standing stone to become part of the landscape itself. The script considers what connects individuals with the land around them; its flora and fauna together with an industrial past that both haunts and makes visible the impact of human activity on the landscape, together with an existential concern with an individual’s experience of time, of grief and the unreliability of memory.

The early draft of the script that this paper draws upon is dated 20 February 2020. Principal photography for the film itself took place in Cornwall and Wales in the UK between March and May 2021, with post-production completed by December 2021. Though some scenes were altered in order for shooting to take place due to COVID controls introduced during the global pandemic – primarily the reduction in numbers of scenes with large groups of characters – 40 children reduced to seven in the film, and the congregation replaced by a scene with The Preacher, The Volunteer and a baby - the film itself otherwise realises the utilised screenplay. The film premiered at Cannes Film Festival as part of the prestigious Director’s Fortnight program in 2022 and was released in cinemas in early 2023, distributed by the BFI in the UK and Neon in the USA.

A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION: THINGS LEFT UNSAID IN *ENYS MEN*

In her opening line of dialogue The Volunteer asks to be heard and, throughout the script, she listens to the response of the objects and characters who occupy the island. It is only at the

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”**

end of the story that she receives some form of an answer to her initial question - ‘Can you hear me?’ - though this is described as being indecipherable, ultimately neither heard nor understood. In the script she moves towards the origins of sounds, listens carefully and tries to understand what she is hearing or what is creating them. In the cinematic worldbuilding of *Enys Men*, sound is alive - in the script it reverberates, it thuds, it clanks, and, occasionally, it dies. Compounding the significance of the auditory within the script is an unusual omission – a lack of dialogue. In an interview, Jenkin had described his intention that *Enys Men* ‘would be much more [...] like a silent film’ than his previous film *Bait* (Jenkin in Judah 2023). Accordingly there are just 50 lines of dialogue in the screenplay, many of which are repeated or recounted back to The Volunteer through the VHF radio as time jumps backwards and forwards for her across the 75 pages of the script. The most significant auditory cue of contemporary cinema since the silent era - dialogue and its attendant vococentrism, the privileging of the human voice within a film’s mise-en-bande - is mainly absent.

Instead Jenkin replaces dialogue in the script with creative descriptions within the script’s action descriptors, often allowing sound cues to take on the burden of narrativisation. Traditionally, this action written under the sluglines that identify location and time of day in a script provides detail as to the physical activity of characters within a scene. In the *Enys Men* screenplay however this action description take the form of lines and lists that evoke a sense of the spaces The Volunteer occupies and the emotional tone of each scene. As an example, before the title card, Jenkin’s script describes the island:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2 | EXT. CELTIC SEA. DAY. | 2 |
| | A tall standing stone. | |
| | At the highest point of an island viewed from the sea. | |
| | One mile across. | |
| | Steep cliffs. | |
| | Black. | |
| | Waves crash against the rocks. | |
| | Moorland above. | |
| | Treeless. | |
| | Bleak. | |
| | Windswept. | |
| | Title: | |
| | ENYS MEN | |

Figure 2: Excerpt from Mark Jenkin’s script, *Enys Men*, 2020, p. 2 (© Bosena)

This scene serves both as a visual shot list for the director for when Jenkin came to make the film, but also as an audio list that provides the emotional tone of what is being described. Waves crash, the island is windswept and the standing stone witnesses all. Later, in an introduction to a mine location, The Volunteer drops a stone into a mineshaft. Jenkin evocatively describes the space: ‘The stone disappears into the darkness. Silence. She waits. Finally. A splash. An echo. Distant. Deep below’ (Scene Four, Jenkin 2020). Through using the time it takes for the stone to reach the base of the shaft, sound gives a sense of the depth of the mine workings and the unknowability both of this space, and the island itself. The darkness of the shaft is accentuated through a sonicity that provides further information as to the significance of a second space – the island’s topography made more complex by what is occurring underneath it. Elaborating on the notion of approaching *Enys Men* differently to his

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”**

earlier work, Jenkin gives a specific example of his approach and thinking of cinema. ‘Silent films were all about sound, where the early talkies were dominated by dialogue. If you think of something like *The Wind* from 1928, Lillian Gish is haunted by the sound of the win, but in a silent film there is no sound of the wind and it has to be represented visually. One sense is evoking another sense. In this case they were reliant on the picture to evoke sound, thinking visually about how they can represent sound of the wind’ (in Marshall 2023). Sound written in *Enys Men* then could be considered by the writer/director as potentially a sonic and visual marker, Jenkin indicating sound cues in the script and tackling whether to realise these audiovisually within his post-production workflow.

SOURCES OF SOUND IN THE PAGES OF THE *ENYS MEN* SCRIPT

In the script for *Enys Men* sounds are often expressed as heard through the subjective position of The Volunteer, as an isolated occupant on the island, with Jenkin’s script drawing attention to the characters interiority through the very act of her breathing. It is described as *heavy*, *quicken*ing, *racing*, *shallow* and eventually, and most terrifyingly, it *stops* entirely. Sound also often serves as an indicator of liminal spaces. These sit between the natural and the unnatural, familiar and the unfamiliar, the understood and the uncanny. The description in the script of sound cues is often onomatopoeic. Natural spaces are characterised by a bee ‘buzzing’ and where different species of birds make their distinctive calls – ‘A chough. Chiow-chiow’ (Scene Five, Jenkin 2020). Elemental sounds are also highlighted. The wind serves as a mercurial character that evokes the pace and emotion of the scenes it occupies - described to whip, buffet, rise, blow, circle, surge, whistle and rage. At one point it is noted to be absent entirely – the action description of the scene highlighting that there is ‘not a breath of wind’ (Scene 86, Jenkin 2020). The state of the sea is another important sonic indicator – occasionally it *laps* into rockpools and against a quay, but is more commonly violent with waves described as crashing, booming and exploding against the island. Even the island itself, and the subterranean space underneath it, is alive with noise – specifically bangs and a rhythmic thudding that increases in volume as the story progresses. At one point, the entire island is portrayed as ‘tremoring’ (Scene 88, Jenkin 2020).

In much of the script audio cues provides agency or motivation for The Volunteer’s actions. Sound effects or atmospheres in *Enys Men* serve a function of screenwriting more commonly occupied by expositional dialogue or through conversation with a traditional antagonist, made more challenging in this film through her isolation from other characters with which to converse. As such, the sounds that surround The Volunteer often emanate from objects or her surroundings. In a nod to horror’s generic beats, the fabric of her cottage makes itself known through audio - floorboards are noted to *creak*, the faucets *drip*, and a clock *ticks*. Even the pages of a book being read by The Volunteer make a sound as they turn in the screenplay (Scene 69, Jenkin 2020). The ‘on-the-air’ (Chion 1994: 76) sound of a VHF and an AM radio allow for the delivery of information from beyond the island. The AM radio in particular takes on a similar role to that of Jenkin’s earlier film *Bait*, where radio broadcasts served a helpful narrative function. In the script for *Enys Men* the broadcast of sports results iterates the day of the week, Jenkin explaining that his ‘idea was to indicate that it was Saturday, which was important to me for because she kind of has the afternoon off. I like the idea that it hints that there's life going on elsewhere’ (Jenkin in Marshall 2023). Similarly a news report provides further expositional context as to a memorial plaque on the quayside The Volunteer discovers, adding information as to the timing of the seafaring disaster it commemorates. Jenkin describes the radios within the script as serving the function of a ‘built-in expositional safety net. I always knew that if I had the shots of the radio that if I needed to add more

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”**

exposition I could do it with no lipsync and I could transmit as much information story information as I needed to through those two radios. Or if it was too straightforward, I could confuse the narrative through those radios as well’ (in Marshall 2023).

Specific objects take the form of characters, again often distinguished in the scene action of the screenplay in terms of their sonic qualities. The generator – critical in a cottage cut off from mains power - is described as *rumbling*, *humming* and *chugging*. Jenkin explains that, when the generator is turned off at the end of each day, The Volunteer would ‘go upstairs [...], back to a natural world, where it was candlelight’ (In Weir 2023). Throughout the screenplay The Volunteer is shown as responding to each of these sounds, with audio cues both motivate her to action and driving the story forward. When her generator runs out of fuel, her first reaction is not to look at the machine, instead - ‘She listens. No sound’ (Scene 33, Jenkin 2020). The generator’s silence demonstrates its lack of fuel and, as the sole provider of power to the cottage, potential danger in the subsequent lack of the ability to generate heat, hot water and electric light. Douglas Weir notes that the significance of this specific object has a further connotation for him. ‘When that generator stops,’ he says, ‘you’re suddenly alert to something changing, that something’s [...] going wrong, something’s going on in the plot’ (2023). These sonic characteristics of objects are contrasted by the sounds The Volunteer experiences outside of her home – typically those of her natural surroundings, but also originating in the sounds of the industrial past that has been imprinted or carved from the island or made by its ghostly occupants.

For The Volunteer, sounds draw her gaze and attention. She follows aural cues and seeks out their origins. In one scene she puts her ear to the ground to *hear* what lies beneath the island itself, revealed to be a ‘Rhythmic thudding, stamping clanking’ (Scene 20, Jenkin 2020). These scripted sounds provide information as to the spatiality or geography of the island, both through the subterranean sounds and the sound of a bell that she hears - described as soft and in the distance – abstracted, invisible and out of reach. They form, as Michel Chion describes, part of an ‘acousmètre’ (2018: 10), sounds of an unseen origin that add depth and richness to the story and, ultimately, its audiovisual realisation. In a repeated ritual where The Volunteer drops a stone down a mineshaft as she returns from examining the flowers, the sound of the subsequent splash and its echo appears to serve as a comfort - a tangible indication of the continuing physical reality of the island and a signifier of its mineshaft’s depth. On her fourth visit to the mine however, one of her dropped stones fails to make a splash. The island of *Enys Men* becomes unknowable and uncanny in for a moment before equilibrium is restored through a second dropped stone and its corresponding splash. On her fifth visit, there is no corresponding splash at all. Instead, the mineshaft is dry and appears to be occupied by a character – unseen beyond a flicker of candlelight. This character becomes fully manifest on her sixth and final visit to the mine, towards the end of the story, where the miner who once occupied her cottage stares back at her from the bottom of the shaft. In the script of *Enys Men* sound grounds the phenomenological – the lived experience articulated from The Volunteer’s ‘point of audition’, the sonic equivalent of point of view (Chion 2009: 485) - but also indicates her experience as occupying a number of different timelines on the island, coexisting in its past, present, and future. The screenplay’s scripted sound cues illustrate the spatial and temporal quality of the The Volunteer’s relationship with the space and time she occupies, and the past occupants of the island.

LIMITATIONS AS A DRIVER OF FILM FORM IN MARK JENKIN’S PRACTICE

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”**

Jenkin is a prolific director of short films and having wrote and directed three independent features - *Golden Burn* (2002), *The Midnight Drives* (2007) and *Happy Christmas* (2011) - before gaining a broader audience together with accompanying critical acclaim and a number of awards, including a BAFTA – for his work in 2019 through the feature film *Bait*. A shift in his working practice had been instigated seven years prior to *Bait*'s release however through Jenkin's commitment to a film manifesto titled *Silent Landscape Dancing Grain 13*, written by the director on 25 December 2012. The manifesto saw Jenkin's return celluloid over digital cinematography and a prolific and febrile period of short film production. In the ordered list of the first twelve points of the manifesto (which included an additional thirteenth rule, allowing the breaking of one of the other twelve) Jenkin committed to shoot 'on small gauge film', that his films would 'be shot silently and post-synchronised' and contain 'no non-diegetic music' (Jenkin 2012). The featurette *Bronco's House*, released in 2015, laid the groundwork for later feature film work with Jenkin making use of what he describes as 'experimental film techniques with a narrative script' (Jenkin, in Oram 2023). Speaking to *Bronco's House*, Jenkin explains that the manifesto connected his filmmaking practice back to his earliest works, in addition to the impact of post-synchronised sound that encouraged experimentation in his work throughout the post-production process.

It was a big revelation in the first film that I made in that way. Normally, the first day of working on the sound would be making a list of all the things that were wrong and needed to be repaired. The first day when I didn't have any sound, I had nothing to repair. There was nothing wrong, yet. I'm creating everything from scratch - that was a really exciting moment. It also led me straight back to how I first started making films as a teenager when I used to shoot a roll of Super8, send it off and two weeks later get it back. In the meantime I would have made a soundtrack on audio tape, which I would play roughly in sync with the projected image (In Weir 2023).

Both *Bronco's House* and *Bait* were shot on 16mm black and white film, and drew critical attention through Jenkin's commitment to filmmaking as a physical, rather than digital, craft. Both were shot on a hand-cranked clockwork Bolex H-16 SB 16mm camera manufactured in 1976. In addition, every frame of the footage for *Bait* - all 129 rolls and 13,000 feet of the rushes – were hand-processed by Jenkin using an antique photochemical rewind tank (Kodak 2020). Within *Bronco's House*, *Bait* and *Enys Men* Jenkin both operates and loads the camera and records no production sound, instead creating all of the film audio from scratch after principal photography. Though the Bolex has the capacity to sync to production recording, albeit with some difficulty, Jenkin chooses not to stating that: 'I probably could shoot sync sound, but in some ways I use the Bolex as an excuse not to, as I like to do all that later on' (Oram 2023). He admits in an interview that this choice further informed his visual aesthetic with this 'hands-on approach kind of mirrored what I had been doing with shooting film and hand processing film', allowing him to take on 'the responsibility of creating the sound world myself' (In Weir 2023). Perhaps surprisingly considering the dubbed dialogue and lack of production audio, Jenkin's approach to sound in his later work successfully grounds the otherwise striking visual form of hand-processed visuals – described by reviewer Ian Mantgani as 'scratchy, flickering, flaring' (2019) - within a sense of a real place and characters.

In *Enys Men* Jenkin is credited as sound designer though also records and edits the dialogue of each performer, creates his own spot effects and atmospheres, and works as a Foley artist – all executed from his small studio in Cornwall, UK. While the rhythm of *Bait* was driven by

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)**
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”

its dialogue in *Enys Men* the relative lack of dialogue saw Jenkin drawing this rhythm of his edit instead from ‘footsteps, or doors opening and closing, and non-diegetic sounds within the score. This was much harder to sound design’ (Jenkin in Marshall 2023). He explains how this works in the studio: ‘In *Enys Men* I had so many footsteps to Foley. I’m stood on a piece of fake wooden floor which is mic’d up, so I can do my footsteps as I’m cutting the picture in order to get the rhythms of things. I’ve got a small wooden table which I use for all the furniture moves which are quite rhythmic within the film’ (In Weir 2023). Unusually, Jenkin’s post-production workflow sees him completing his visual editing and initial sound mix at the same time. ‘It’s all filmmaking for me,’ he explains, ‘It’s all the same thing - the picture and the sound, the music - I like it all to happen at the same time’ (Jenkin in Marshall 2023). Having so few collaborators within the creation of the soundtrack allows Jenkin a great deal of freedom to experiment within his sound design and, knowing from the start that he will complete this work within the multiple roles he undertakes in the post-production process, allows a significant influence on the overall audiovisual experience.

In both *Bait* and *Enys Men*, Jenkin also composed the music to the films, again providing significant control over the minimalism of the film’s soundtrack and allowing the integration of environmental sounds, Foley and spot effects in his ambient recordings to further enrich the sensory experience of the *mise-en-bande*. This approach further extends the opportunities for experimentation beyond the visual image, as Jenkin explains: ‘In the studio that became really exciting, it became something that I could create another layer of abstraction. It is almost automatically a layer of abstraction as it was non-sync sound. I am not good enough to create a realistic, naturalistic sound world so it becomes quite impressionistic. Once I abandoned that ambition to recreate location sound it just opened up a door to me’ (In Weir 2023).

Although it is not uncommon to write, direct, shoot and edit film – evident in the independent cinema practice of countless filmmakers including Gus van Sant and Alfonso Cuarón, and even for director’s to compose music for their films such as John Carpenter and Julie Taymor – it is more unusual for a director to undertake all of the traditional sound roles. Through undertaking roles not just from script to screen, but script to sound design, Jenkin is able to initially render sound through his own screenplays, which serve as an *aide-mémoire* · an indicator of how the film will sound and feel which can be carried through to principal photography and ultimately the visual and sound editing. He describes his process, and its malleability.

I don’t want to prescribe too much in the script but I want enough of a framework for the shoot to be able to function. So I try not to think of sound too much at that stage and wait until I’ve got pictures to see how the sound is going to relate to them [...] Sometimes I will know when I’m writing the script that something needs to have silence but then when it comes to looking at it in the edit when I’ve shot the pictures and I’ve cut the pictures together then I’ll realise that actually I was wrong and it maybe needs a lot of sound design. In other moments where I think it will be very dependant on sound design I’ll end up with very little’ (Jenkin in Weir 2023).

As such, the auditory notes in the action sections of the script serve more as a guiding principles than a fixed roadmap, which can change through principal photography and post production. The freedom of not being bound to production sound is significant to this, as Jenkin explains: ‘If you know you’re not recording location sound when you’re writing and

The Soundtrack (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”

when you’re shooting, you know there's not going to be any accidental sound, like there can be no accidental footage,’ he explains. ‘I describe it as a subtractive process rather than additive. If you start with location sound you’re cleaning it up all the time [...] and I just think that’s a terrible creative starting point. Conversely when you start with nothing then you're just adding. I'm always thinking about the sound’ (Jenkin in Marshall 2023). At the very end of the process, Jenkin works with dubbing mixer Richard Butler with the final mix.

ENYS MEN AS REALISATION OF SCREENPLAY TEXT

In the film *Enys Men*, released in cinemas in the US and UK in 2023, Jenkin’s approach to film sound is made more sophisticated through the opportunities for experimentation within his post-production workflow. This is particularly evident in the spaces between what is seen and heard in the film. In the mineshaft scene, the audience hear but do not see the rock splashing at the bottom of the shaft. In the lifeboat scene, the boat has no diegetic sound. Small creatures make comparative large noises. In one sequence, a hunting gannett that dives into the sea off the coast is accompanied by the sound of breaking glass. Jenkin explains: ‘Obviously it was shot silently. Creating a sound of a gannett hitting the surface of the sea at 70-mph is quite difficult to recreate in the studio with a bucket of water and a stone. I did try for quite a while and got to the point where I thought that ‘this isn’t going to happen’ and went more abstract with it. That happens a lot [...] I’ll try and create stuff to sound naturalistic, but it will get to a point when I just can’t quite do it and then I sort of rule out it being naturalistic and go somewhere else with it’ (In Weir 2023).

There is also a sense of play within some of the more subtle spot effects which, though barely perceptible, add to the strangeness of his recent films and led a critic to describe Jenkin’s *Bait* as heralding ‘the new weird Britain’ (Mantgani 2019). In *Enys Men* Jenkin offers some examples: ‘There’s a clock ticking in the house, but the clock never ticks at the same rate.’ In instances where the *The Volunteer* is moving in the film, ‘she’ll be walking forwards but the sound of the footsteps will be playing backward. It’s funny when people describe a real uncanny eerie feeling to it, in the way it looks [...] I’ll be thinking – it’s not in the way it looks, it’s the way it sounds’ (Jenkin in Oram 2023). With so much of the story – whether in the written script or final film - experienced from the subjective position of *The Volunteer*, sound seeds doubt as to whether what she is experiencing is real at all, rather imagined, remembered or dreamt. The lack of corresponding sounds on action destabilises the audience’s understanding of *The Volunteer*’s experience of the island and, ultimately, her place in the present of *Enys Men*.

It is the unification of the audiovisual that provides this atmosphere, Jenkin’s audiovisual language first written in the script, considered in principal photography and honed and refined in his post production through the power of visual and sound editing. As he explains: ‘There's maybe two or three set pieces that visually we did something in camera that is slightly otherworldly [...] but aside from that the footage is quite nondescript. It's not until you cut it together, that you get the juxtaposition and a third meaning of two shots intersecting. Even more than that, adding the sound to it brings in the uncanny, the weird and the unsettling. If you've got nothing on the soundtrack when you come to the edit, I think you're always thinking about sound because you haven't got any sound there’ (Jenkin in Marshall 2023).

Bibliography

Altman, Rick, Jones, McGraw and Tatroe, Sonia (2000), ‘Inventing the Cinema Soundtrack: Hollywood’s Multiplane Soundsystem’, in Buhler, James., Flinn, Caryl, and Neumeyer,

The Soundtrack (Intellect Books)
Special Issue: "Screenwriting Sound and Music"

- David. (eds.) *Music and Cinema (Music/Culture)*. Hanover, US: University Press of New England, pp. 339–359.
- BFI (2023), 'Season: The Cinematic DNA of Enys Men' at *BFI*.
<https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=markjenkin>. Accessed 9 May 2023
- Burt, Andrew T. (2019), 'Is it the Wind in the Tall Trees or Just the Distant Buzz of Electricity?: Sound and Music as Portent in *Twin Peak*'s Season Three', in *Critical Essays on Twin Peaks: The Return*. Springer.
- Cardullo, Bert (n.d.) 'Transcendental Style, Poetic Precision: Robert Bresson', In Morris, Gary (Ed.) (2009), *Action!: Interviews with Directors from Classical Hollywood to Contemporary Iran*. London, UK: Anthem Press.
- Chion, Michel (1994), *Audio-vision sound on screen*. New York, US: Columbia University Press.
- Chion, Michel (2009), *Film, A Sound Art*. New York, US: Columbia University Press.
- Coppola, Francis Ford (1972), *The Conversation*, 22 November 1972, *screenplay*, US: The Director's Company.
- Halsall, Phillip (2002), '50 Percent Sound', in *The British Film Resource*.
<http://www.britishfilm.org.uk/lynch/Schap1.html>. Accessed 14 March 2023.
- Jenkin, Mark (@mark_jenkin) (2012), 'Silent Landscape Dancing Grain 13', *Twitter*, 25 December 2012. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Jenkin, Mark (2002), *Golden Burn*. UK: Mark Jenkin Productions.
- Jenkin, Mark (2007), *The Midnight Drives*. UK: o-region.
- Jenkin, Mark (2011), *Happy Christmas*. UK: Awen Productions CIC.
- Jenkin, Mark (2015), *Bronco's House*. UK: Independent Film Unit.
- Jenkin, Mark (2019), *Bait*. UK: *Early Day Films/BFI*.
- Jenkin, Mark (2019), *Bait: Original Score*. UK: Invada Records.
- Jenkin, Mark (2020), *Enys Men*, 20 February 2020, *screenplay*, UK: Bosenana.
- Jenkin, Mark (2022), *Enys Men*. UK: Bosenana/Film4.
- Jenkin, Mark (2023), *Enys Men: Original Soundtrack*. UK: Invada Records
- Jones, Andy M. and Quinnell, Henrietta (2011), 'The Neolithic and Bronze Age in Cornwall, c 4000 cal BC to c 1000 cal BC: an overview of recent developments,' in *Cornish Archaeology*, 50, 2011, pp. 197-229.
- Judah, Tara (2019), 'Encounters with celluloid: Bronco's House and the film revival', in *Sight and Sound*, 3 June 2019. <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/festivals/encounters-35mm-broncos-house-revival>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Judah, Tara (2023), 'Enys Men: An Interview With Mark Jenkin', in *Senses of Cinema*, January 2023, Issue 104. <https://www.sensesofcinema.com/2023/interviews/enys-men-an-interview-with-mark-jenkin/>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Kodak (2020), 'Director Mark Jenkin reveals details about making his modern classic, 'Bait,' using Kodak B&W film', in *Kodak Filmmaker Stories*, 4 February 2020.
<https://www.kodak.com/en/motion/blog-post/mark-jenkin-bait>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Lockhurst, Roger (2023), 'Island of lost souls: Mark Jenkin on Enys Men', in *Sight and Sound*. 10 January 2023.
<https://www.bfi.org.uk/sight-and-sound/features/island-lost-souls-mark-jenkin-enys-men>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Mantgani, Ian (2019), 'Bait first look: Mark Jenkin heralds the new weird Britain', in *Sight and Sound*, 30 August 2019. <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound->

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)**
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”

- magazine/reviews-recommendations/bait-mark-jenkin-fear-loathing-cornish-fishing-village. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Marshall, Kingsley (2023), ‘The Sound of *Enys Men*: Conversation with Mark Jenkin.’, transcript, Falmouth University Sound/Image Cinema Lab Masterclass. 10 May 2023.
- Morgan, Frances (2011), ‘Darkness Audible: Sub-bass, tape decay and Lynchian noise’, in Selavy, Virginie (ed.) (2011), *The End: An Electric Sheep Anthology*. London: Strange Attractor Press. pp. 187-202.
- Oram, Barney (2023), ‘Exploring the haunting sound of ‘Enys Men’ - with Director/Sound Designer Mark Jenkin’, in *A Sound Effect*.
<https://www.asoundeffect.com/exploring-the-haunting-sound-of-enys-men-with-director-sound-designer-mark-jenkin/>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Puhr, Thomas M. (2023), ‘Deep Is the Well: On Mark Jenkin’s “Enys Men” and a Cinema of Absence’, in *LA Review of Books*. 20 June 2023. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/deep-is-the-well-on-mark-jenkins-enys-men-and-a-cinema-of-absence/>. Accessed 20 June 2023.
- Rothenberg, David (2002), *Sudden Music. Improvisation, Sound, Nature*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Shaffer, Marshall (2023), ‘Interview: Mark Jenkin on the Sounds and Sensations Behind Enys Men and Bait’, in *Slant Magazine*.
<http://www.slantmagazine.com/film/mark-jenkin-interview-enys-men-bait/>
Accessed 28 March 2023.
- Sjöström, Victor (1928), *The Wind*. US: MGM.
- Slater-Williams, Josh (2019), ‘With Digital You have To Spend a Lot of Money Before It Becomes Free”: Mark Jenkin on His Hand-Processed 16mm Bait”, in *Filmmaker Magazine*, 30 August 2019. <https://filmmakermagazine.com/108148-with-digital-you-have-to-spend-a-lot-of-money-before-it-becomes-free-mark-jenkin-on-his-hand-processed-16mm-bait/>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Stevens, Isabel (2022), ‘“It’s also like a silent movie”: Mark Jenkin on his upcoming 1970s-set horror Enys Men.’ In *Sight and Sound*, 19 April 2022.
<https://www.bfi.org.uk/sight-and-sound/news/mark-jenkin-enys-men-preview-upcoming-1970s-horror>. Accessed 9 May 2023.
- Weir, Douglas (2023), ‘Film Sounds: A Conversation between Mark Jenkin and Peter Strickland’, transcript, in *BFI*, 29 January 2023.
<https://whatson.bfi.org.uk/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=filmsounds>. Accessed 9 May 2023.

Biography

Dr Kingsley Marshall is Head of Film & Television at the CILECT accredited School of Film & Television, and a member of the project team at the Sound/Image Cinema Lab, both based at Falmouth University, UK. As a film practitioner, Kingsley focuses on sound design and music composition for film, and the production of short and micro-budget feature films. He has served as executive producer on the feature films *Wilderness* (Justin John Doherty 2017), *The Tape* (Martha Tilston 2020), *Long Way Back* (Brett Harvey 2021), and the folk horror *Enys Men* (Mark Jenkin 2022), released by the BFI and Neon in 2023. He developed and produced *Backwoods* (Ryan Mackfall 2019) and *The Birdwatcher* (Ryan Mackfall 2023), and composed the score to *Hard, Cracked the Wind* (Mark Jenkin 2019), *Dean Quarry* (Rachael Jones 2021) and *From the Culch* (Paul Mulraney 2023). Kingsley's academic research focuses on cultures of film and television production, sound design and music, and the representation of the technological development as part of the ‘fourth industrial revolution’. He has published widely, and speaks regularly at international conferences.

***The Soundtrack* (Intellect Books)**
Special Issue: “Screenwriting Sound and Music”