

Stockport2020 – video transcript

Video transcript of Stockport Write out Loud poetry reading by John F Keane.

Hauntology in Stone

Bristol slaver surveys his city
From unusual angles
As angry hands seize his legs
Of stockinged stone,
Upend him from his
Philanthropic pedestal
Drag him through strange streets
To enriching Avon waters
And drop him in the tides
Like another dead slave
Amidst raucous cheers and
Pebbles of biting laughter.

Something is weakening.
Once, nothing changed
Except the metronome
Ebb and flow of rhetoric
Decade in, decade out,
A sea of wastrel words
While effigies of slavers
And war criminals gazed
With unquestioned eyes
On far futurity, haunting

Our distant present,
Inhibiting true change.

Now, we the living
Are being exorcised.
No cassocked priest
Looms by our bedside
Mouthing Latin prayers
To cleanse us: Instead,
This chiropteran plague
Dissolves unseen bonds,
Breaks gnostic curses.
Prising the past from
Our crumbling present,
A liberating prison.