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“No more minutes, no more seconds!”: The Manipulation of Time in Act II of John Adams' *Doctor Atomic*

Table 1: Sources and usage for the libretto of *Doctor Atomic*¹

Author	Title	Usage (Title, Act, Scene, Character)
Poetic and literary (in alphabetical order by author)		
Baudelaire, Charles (translated by Michael Hamburger)	“A Hemisphere in a Head of Hair”	“Long Let Me Inhale” act I, scene 2, Robert Oppenheimer
Donne, John	“Batter My Heart”	“Batter My Heart,” act I, scene 3, Robert Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“Easter Eve 1945”	“Easter Eve,” act II, scene 1, Kitty Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“Ninth Elegy, The Antagonists”	“Those who most long for peace” act I, scene 2, Kitty Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“The Double Death”	“To keep the weakness secret” act II, scene 3, Kitty Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“The Motive of All of It”	“The motive of it all” act II, scene 2, Kitty & Robert Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“Three Sides of a Coin”	“Am I in Your Light?” act I, scene 2, Kitty Oppenheimer
Rukeyser, Muriel	“Seventh Elegy, Dream Singing Elegy”	“Dreamers wake” act II, scene 4, Kitty Oppenheimer
Traditional (translated by Herbert Joseph Spinden)	<i>Songs of the Tewa</i>	Used by Pasqualita throughout
Unknown (translated by Sw. Prabhavananda and C. Isherwood)	<i>Bhagavad Gita</i>	“At the sight of this” act II, scene 3, chorus

(continued on next page)

¹ Peter Sellars and John Adams, *Doctor Atomic* (New York, NY: Hendon Music, 2005).

Author	Title	Usage (Title, Act, Scene, Character)
Documentary (in alphabetical order by author)		
Blumberg, Stanley A. and Louis G. Panos	<i>Edward Teller: Giant of the Golden Age of Physics</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Groves, Leslie R.	<i>Now It Can Be Told</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Hales, Peter Bacon	<i>Atomic Spaces: Living on the Manhattan Project</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Lamont, Lansing	<i>Day of Trinity</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Norris, Robert S.	<i>Racing for the Bomb</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Rhodes, Richard and Robert Serber	<i>The Los Alamos Primer; The First Lectures on How to Build an Atomic Bomb</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Smyth, Henry DeWolf	<i>Atomic Energy for Military Purposes</i>	Act I, scene 1, chorus; throughout for dialogue
Stoff, Michael B., Jonathan F. Fanton, and R. Hal Williams	<i>The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Szasz, Ferenc Morton	<i>The Day the Sun Rose Twice: The Story of the Trinity Site Nuclear Explosions, July 16, 1945</i>	Throughout for dialogue
Teller, Edward	<i>Memoirs: A Twentieth-Century Journey in Science and Politics</i>	Throughout for dialogue

Table 2: Clock time vs. stage time in Act II of *Doctor Atomic*

	Stage Time	Clock Time	Ratio Stage : Clock
Act I	1 month	81 minutes	~9 hr : 1 min
Act II, Scenes 1-3 (incl. Scene 4, m. 1-92)	12 hours	69 minutes	~ 10 min : 1 min
Act II, Scene 4 (m. 93-540)	5 minutes	18.5 minutes	~16 sec : 1 min

Table 3: The gradual tempo reduction in Act II, Scene 4 of *Doctor Atomic*

Measure in Act II, scene 4	♩ =
95	176
187	98
340	88
366	60
414-498	Accelerando
498	100 (“Begin rallentando”)
504	60

Time Definitions

Clock Time: time as measured by an audience member's watch.

"The opera starts at 7:30 PM and will last for 2 hours."

Stage Time: time as it flows within the opera.

"The events in the final act of *Doctor Atomic* cover 12 hours."

Psychological Time: time as the audience perceives it.

"I feel like we've been here forever!"

Velocity of Time: the relationship of stage and clock times.

Chronology of Time: "when" in time something takes place or is perceived to take place.