



s e r e n a d e s

original motion picture soundtrack

Serenades

original motion picture soundtrack
music by Davood A. Tabrizi

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Peydayesh <i>encounter</i> 3'50" | 11 Henna 2'09" |
| 2 Conception 2'57" | 12 Raaz <i>mystery</i> 2'19" |
| 3 Mother 1'07" | 13 Attan dance 0'59" |
| 4 Jila's baptism 0'51" | 14 Matrimony to mourn 2'24" |
| 5 Kooch <i>journey</i> 1'18" | 15 Matrimony to escape 1'52" |
| 6 Rainman's death 1'39" | 16 Jila's escape 2'22" |
| 7 Shir <i>lion</i> 3'10" | 17 To dream 1'03" |
| 8 Eid-e-Fetr <i>feast of fetr</i> 1'54" | 18 Water Soil and Fire 8'12" |
| 9 A lover in sin 0'27" | 19 Serenades 4'12" |
| 10 To whatever measure..... 2'11" | 20 Neeyayesh <i>prayer</i> 8'52" |



Serenades tells of a little-known aspect of Australian history, when Afghan cameleers were brought to the country to help supply communities in outback Australia. The desert people and their camels were perfectly suited to the harsh environment. The film is set in northern South Australia, an area settled by German Lutheran missionaries who attempted to bring Christianity to Aboriginal people.

The Story

The year is 1890. Jila, a beautiful dark-skinned girl, with emerald green eyes is conceived when her Afghan father wins a night with her Aboriginal mother in a card game. Her early childhood is spent amongst the Aboriginal tribe, learning from her grandfather, Rainman, about the magic of the Dreamtime. But it is a different kind of magic that creates a vivid and everlasting sensation in Jila's young



heart. The magic of a serenade.

At the break of every dawn, Jila wakes up to the sound of Bach, played on the organ at the nearby mission by twelve year old, Johann.

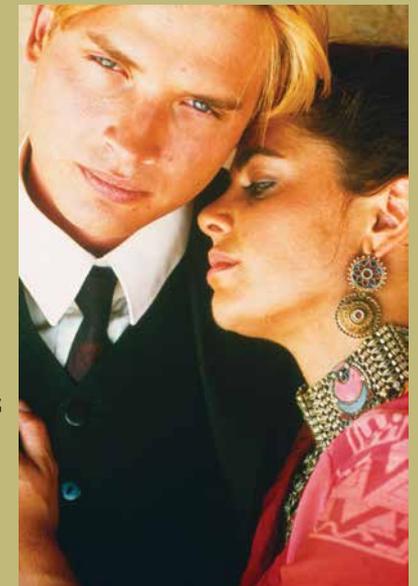
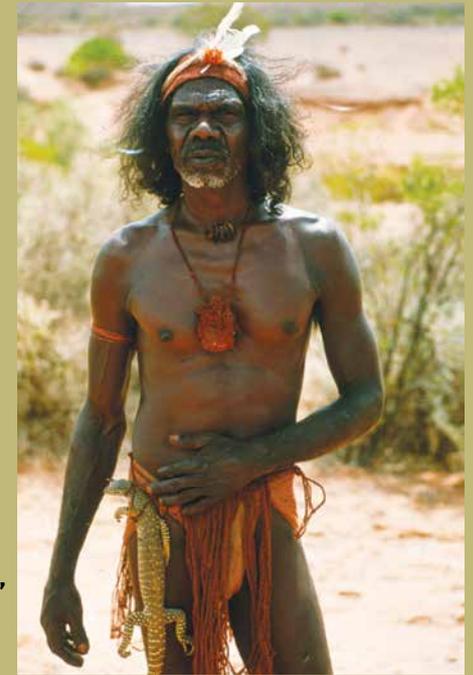
This white-skinned German boy is the son of the Pastor, and the pride and joy of the Lutheran mission.

Before long the children are



separated, when after the death of her mother Jila is taken by her father to live at the Ghantown, and Johann is sent to Germany to pursue an education in music.

Years go by, and Jila grows into a young woman under the influence of Islam, strictly practised by her Afghan family. Johann returns from Germany, and on his way back to the mission, comes looking for Jila. They meet now as adults, and realise their childhood attraction has grown into love.





But Jila is already betrothed in marriage to the revered holy man of the Ghantown, and Johann is forced to leave by Jila's angry father. Jila's marriage preparations continue, as Johann returns to the mission.

Jila is in despair. She takes desperate measures to try to save herself from the inevitability of the wedding.

Escaping into the desert, she seeks refuge at the Lutheran Mission but is turned away.

Rejected and utterly alone, Jila begins to break free from the constraints of her past and to face her future without fear.

Serenades is an unusual tale of love, set against an exotic background of cultural and religious conflict.

The Cast

For the role of **Johann Hoffman**, son of a German Lutheran missionary pastor, director Mojgan Khadem had always wanted Aden Young. While still at film school she had seen Aden in a student film.

"I felt a sense of absolute truth in Aden's performance and that had a lasting effect on me."

Aden wanted to take the role because of Johann's strength of character in questioning the absolute authority of his father's church and his own fascination with the particular place and time in Australian history.

Johann's attraction to Jila and his distaste at her arranged marriage to the older Mullah forces him to question the rigidity of his Lutheran upbringing.

"I also have tremendous respect for the Lutherans who – my research indicated – had extraordinary dedication. They were extremely devout people who would go to the farthest ends to find Aboriginal people and establish missions ... and that meant going far, far away from the picturesque areas of South Australia. It must have been a very harsh life. You only have to look at the costumes I have to wear in the film – the stiff black suits – to understand that they were in a completely alien world. God was the fuel that sustained them," Aden says.

"In Johann I found there was a great spirit. Here is a character so bound by the structure of the church and yet he allows love and spirituality to cross the borders of religion ... he recognises where the real truth lies. He refuses to become a stagnant thinker.



“Having read the script, I was very interested to see how the images would play out because I knew the landscape out there was extraordinary and I just loved the juxtaposition of the collar against this forbidding environment.”



The search for an actress to play the leading role of **Jila** was particularly challenging, as the necessary qualities were not just performance ability but physical appearance as well. She had to have green eyes, like her Afghan father.

“We auditioned people all over the country. Our casting director contacted schools, music groups and amateur groups in Darwin, Broome, Adelaide and Perth, as well as on the east coast,” Sandra says.

“It was an incredibly difficult ask. We came across Alice Haines quite by chance. She was studying music in Perth and other friends were auditioning for the part so she thought she should as well. And she has emerged as a beautiful leading lady.”

Alice Haines grew up in northern New South Wales but has been living in Perth for several years. She is studying at the WA Academy of Performing Arts and has written and performed her own one-woman show.

“Where I grew up there weren’t any other people with green eyes, but there are a lot of Afghan/

Aboriginal people in South Australia so it was a bit of shock to me to discover so many people with my kind of features and eyes,” Alice says.

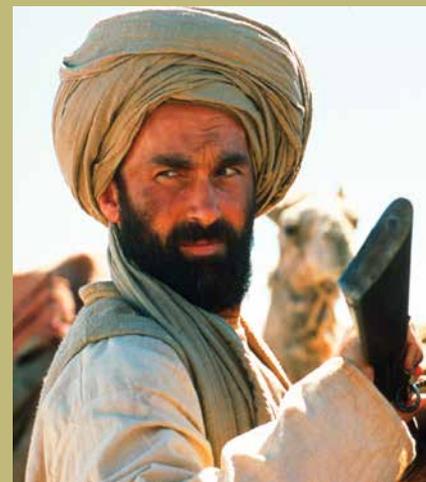
“I have traced where the Afghan people went and discovered that some of the people they married did come from New South Wales and that they travelled to where my people live, so perhaps there is some Afghan in my background.”

Sinisa Copic, who plays Jila’s Afghan father **Shir Mohammed**, is originally from Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Sinisa, who has lived in New Zealand for the past five years where he had done considerable film and theatre work, started acting at the age of 11.

“Once again we were looking for a particular quality in Shir Mohammed which I can only describe as a sense of confidence against the odds. Whatever anybody else’s point of view may be, Shir still thinks his opinion is the right one. He never doubts his status or his authority,” Mojgan says.

“Sinisa had a understanding of the kind of person Shir would be. I

didn’t see that in anyone else who auditioned – perhaps because of his Serb background his influences have been Christian and Muslim and he understands the conflicts involved with that.”



Many of the Afghan extras in the film are drawn from Mojgan’s family connections in the expatriate Persian community.



Mojgan Khadem

The Music

Director's Notes

It was a piece of music that inspired the initial concept of *Serenades*. A track by 'Dead can Dance' entitled Yulunga (spirit dance). I distinctly remember the first time I heard the piece in 1994, and I never stopped playing it over the following five years of scriptwriting and production.

Serenades is a tale of oppression, the kind that paralyses the spirit of the young female protagonist, Jila, and she cannot dance (spirit dance) until she finds a way to set her spirit free.

Her journey is one that begins with the moment of her conception, and gathers momentum through much conflict until it reaches an overflowing deluge of emotion. Ultimately Jila breaks with tradition and celebrates the beat of her human heart in track **18**, named after the three elements of her make-up: WATER, which she is named after (JILA means living waters in an Aboriginal dialect), SOIL, being the reaping ground of her mother earth, and FIRE, being the burning power of her father.

When the time came to choose a composer, the priority was an understanding of the symbolic and the poetic nature of the film, an expertise of both Eastern and Western influences, and a knack for the unique. Davood A. Tabrizi provided all of the above. His choice of instruments, his sensitivity and understanding both of the cultures

involved and the importance of the music as a vehicle for storytelling added more than just a soundtrack to the film. *Serenades* is a feast of emotion delivered through the fourth element, vibrations of the AIR.

Mojgan Khadem, Writer/Director

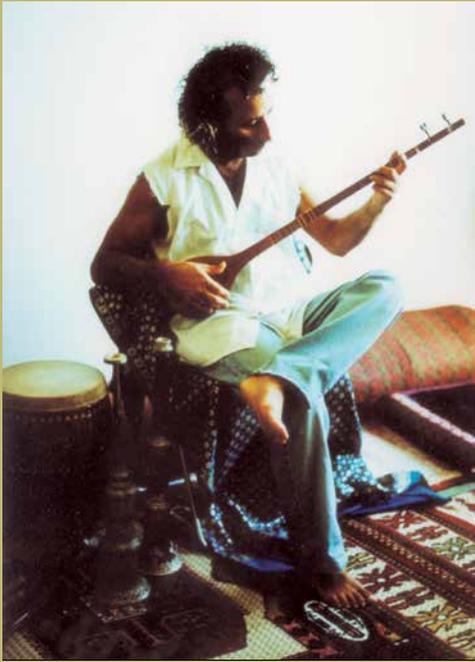
The Composer

Davood A. Tabrizi is an accomplished composer and performer from Iran. Trained in Western Classical and Persian Classical music, he has written music extensively in Australia, Iran, Canada and USA for film, theatre, television, radio and special events.

Davood has established a reputation as being an innovative, multi-talented and diverse composer, producer and performer. He has won several awards for films including an Australian and New Zealand Film and Television Award for his score for *The Navigator* (dir. Vincent Ward) in 1988, while his score for Clara Law's *Floating Life* (1996) won the Golden Horse Award at the 1997 Taiwan Film Festival, as well as the Asian and Pacific Film Festival Award 1997.



Davood A. Tabrizi



Davood A. Tabrizi performing

His other film credits include Business Behind the Bars (2000), Cinema, Cinema (1996), Resistance (1991), For All The World To See (1991), Australia Daze (1988), The Surfer (1986), Rocking the Foundations (1984), Hostage (1983) and Sleeping Lion (1977).

The Musicians

Bahar	Main Vocal
Parviz Amiri	Vocals
Hasib Delnavaz	Vocals
Akdagcik Sabahattin	Yalli Tanbur, Baglama, Oud
Kim Sanders	Mey, Ney, Keval
Yama Sarshar	Tabla
Sayd Sarshar	Harmonium
Davood A. Tabrizi	Vocals, Persian Daf, Piano, Dayereh, Tibetan Karney, Bolivian Flute, Violin, Percussion, Keyboards

Recording Credits

Soundtrack recorded and mixed at Trackdown Digital Pty Ltd, Camperdown NSW

Producer	Davood A. Tabrizi
Engineer and Editor	Tim Ryan
Mixing	Tim Ryan and Davood A. Tabrizi
Assistant Engineer	Scott Ryan

Keyboards and synthesiser recorded and programmed at Because Yes Studio, Sydney

Engineer	Matthew Hughes
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Other Credits

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serenades

**To whatever measure your heart aches today,
to the same measure it will rejoice tomorrow.**

A SOUTHERN STAR SANDRA LEVY PRODUCTION **SERENADES** ALICE HAINES · ADEN YOUNG · Sinisa Copic and BILLE BROWN
production designer COLIN GIBSON · director of photography RUSSELL BOYD A. C. S. · costume designer LOUISE MCCARTHY · casting ANN ROBINSON - MULLINARS CONSULTANTS
editor TIM WELLBURN · composer DAWOOD A. TABRIZI · line producer BARBARA GIBBS · story by CHRISTINE STEVENS and MOJGAN KHADEM
based on research from "TIN MOSQUES AND GHANTOWNS" and "WHITE MAN'S DREAMING", written by CHRISTINE STEVENS · screenplay MOJGAN KHADEM
producer SANDRA LEVY · director MOJGAN KHADEM



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Australian Film Commission



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