

Scent of Time

Australian compositions for Asian instruments and voices



ROS BANDT
WARREN BURT

ANNE NORMAN
DANG KIM HIEN

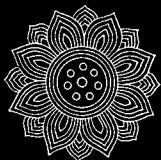
LE TUAN HUNG
WANG ZHENG-TING

Scent of Time

- 1 We Lose Things** (Anne Norman) 15'34"
for power pole bells, shakuhachi (Japanese end-blown flute) and double bass
- 2 Inside/Outside** (Dang Kim Hien and Ros Bandt) 10'45"
for voice, dan tranh (Vietnamese zither), Vietnamese percussion, viola da gamba and renaissance tenor recorder
- 3 Shadows of the War Horse** (Dang Kim Hien) 8'19"
for dan tranh (Vietnamese zither), with wooden sticks and bells

Three Musical Poems (Le Tuan Hung) 10'16"

- 4 Lotus Pond** 5'11"
for dizi (Chinese flute), sheng (Chinese mouth organ), two erhu (Chinese 2-stringed fiddles) and woodblock.
- 5 Scent of Time** 2'35"
for shakuhachi (Japanese end-blown flute) and harpsichord
- 6 Echoes of an Old Festive Song** 2'30"
for dizi (Chinese flute), sheng (Chinese mouth organ), erhu (Chinese 2-stringed fiddle), drum and woodblock.
- 7 Spectre** (Wang Zheng-Ting) 8'39"
for sheng (Chinese mouth organ) and tape
- 8 Ethnic Static from Easy Round and Folk Dances** (Warren Burt) 8'22"
for fake gamelan (Fairlight Computer Music Instrument)
- 9 Chinese Whispers** (Warren Burt) 5'32"
for two voices





In the last two decades, the number of Australian composers who created new works for Asian instruments has been growing steadily. The availability of competent performers of Asian instruments in Australia, and positive developments in cultural, social, political and economic engagements between Australia and Asia are the main stimuli for this new trend in Australian composition. The varieties of tone colours, musical gestures and technical possibilities of Asian instruments have enriched the palette of Australian contemporary music. From the Asian perspectives, Australian works have contributed fresh winds of ideas, styles and forms for a number of East and Southeast Asian traditional instruments. While the works for traditional instruments by many contemporary composers in Vietnam, China and Japan tended to be confined or restricted within their own traditional concepts or borrowed concepts from the West, Australian works appear to be extremely diversified in compositional approaches. Perhaps, the lack of an old age musical heritage in Australia has given composers the freedom to explore ideas and break down artificial boundaries of East and West.

This compact disc brings together the works of two groups of Australian composers:

(1) those who have reached out to actively

engage with Asian music and arts, and (2) Asian artists who have settled in Australia and have continued to preserve their own musical heritage as well as creating new cross-cultural works.

Their works exemplify the diversifying compositional approaches of Australian compositions for Asian instruments and voices. Ros Bandt and Dang Kim Hien have collaborated in both improvisation and conceptual development to generate a beautiful meeting of acoustical realms of East and West. Warren Burt used technology to control, craft and construct powerful musical images from Asian raw materials. Anne Norman drew her inspirations from Balinese gamelan music, Japanese shakuhachi honkyoku tradition and her own experience in improvisation to create a highly original piece for shakuhachi, double bass and found objects. Dang Kim Hien's and Wang Zheng-Ting's solo compositions demonstrate conscious efforts to expand the playing techniques and expressive capability of Asian instruments. Le Tuan Hung's works are poetry-based and show a combination of musical concepts from Vietnam, China and Europe and a careful application of idiomatic gestures of various instruments.

The works of these composers have taken Asian instruments and voices beyond the boundaries of their own traditions to take part in a journey that may result in more and more adventurous sounds in the future
(LE TUAN HUNG, 2002).

THE WORKS

1 We Lose Things (Anne Norman, 2000) *

Anne Norman SHAKUHACHI
Nick Tsiavos DOUBLE BASS
Peter Neville POWER POLE BELLS

We Lose Things draws inspiration from a number of diverse sources: several months spent with local music groups in Bali in the 1980s surrounded by gongs and numerous metallophones; work with Peter Neville in Nadoya and Jouissance where Peter showed a clear interest in playing found objects; the gestural nature of shakuhachi honkyoku (Zen meditations) where each breath constitutes a phrase and world unto itself; and for motivation, the life and recent death of dancer Machiko Kaneko, who first commissioned and inspired Anne to create new works for shakuhachi and other Japanese instruments back in the late 80s and early 90s.

The power pole bells are made from galvanised iron caps taken from the top of old wooden electricity poles. The tonality of this work is dictated to a great extent by the SEC and the pitches to which they inadvertently tuned their caps. It encompasses modes which suit the shakuhachi as well as microtonal intervals. The work traverses several moods and is essentially about loss (ANNE NORMAN).

2 Inside/Outside

(Dang Kim Hien and Ros Bandt, 2002) *

Dang Kim Hien VOICE
DAN TRANH (VIETNAMESE ZITHER)
VIETNAMESE PERCUSSION
Ros Bandt VIOLA DA GAMBA
RENAISSANCE TENOR RECORDER

Recorded and edited by Paul Petran & Russell Thomson at the ABC studios in Melbourne for Music Deli.

Inside/Outside is a collaborative journey of the outer and inner worlds of the voice in relation to the instruments (viola da gamba, tenor recorder, dan tranh and Vietnamese percussion). The piece traverses states of calm, agitation, happiness and sadness, and culminates in the symbiosis and reconciliation through the breath of both voice and recorder (ROS BANDT).

Life is nurtured and maintained by cycles of breaths. Each breath conveys and/or conceals various feelings and emotional states. At a certain moment, a breath may carry contradictory feelings such as love and hate, calm and anger, sadness and happiness. These feelings are flowing within the inner and outer voices. **Inside/Outside** is a musical exploration of the inner and outer emotional gestures of the voice in an instrumental landscape that transcends the boundaries of East and West (DANG KIM HIEN).

3 Shadows of the War Horse

(Dang Kim Hien, 2000) *

Dang Kim Hien DAN TRANH (VIETNAMESE ZITHER)
WOODEN STICKS AND BELLS

In the shadows of wartime glories, one can see tears, blood and tremendous sufferings. Yet, humankind has been unable to resolve differences and conflicts of interests without violence. Wars have continued to be a fact of life. This composition is about women of the world, who have been shadows of wars, but their strength, caring spirit, courage and determination have ensured that life goes on, wounds would be healed, and love and reconciliation would prevail during and after wars. I wrote and performed this piece in the hope that one day the spirit hidden in the shadows of war horses may prevail in humankind's ways of life (DANG KIM HIEN).

This piece was created for a specially constructed 25-stringed dan tranh made for the composer in 1991 (The standard versions of traditional and contemporary dan tranh consist of 16, 17, or 22 strings).

4-6 Three Musical Poems (Le Tuan Hung, 1998-2002)

These pieces were created as the musical companions for three short poems written by the composer.

4 Lotus Pond (Le Tuan Hung, 1998) *

The Australian Chinese Music Ensemble
dizi (Chinese flute)
sheng (Chinese mouth organ)
2 erhu (Chinese 2-stringed fiddles)
woodblock

Beside a lotus pond
in the stillness of the night
I watched the moonlight
making a silent tune
on my lute

5 Scent of Time (Le Tuan Hung, 2000)

Anne Norman SHAKUHACHI
Peter Hagen HARPSICHORD

In a fragment of time
memories return
with the scent of time

6 Echoes of an Old Festive Song (Le Tuan Hung, 2002)

The Australian Chinese Music Ensemble
DIZI (CHINESE FLUTE)
SHENG (CHINESE MOUTH ORGAN)
ERHU (CHINESE 2-STRINGED FIDDLE)
DRUM
WOODBLOCK

Between echoes of a gong
rhythms of an old festive song
lingering

7 Spectre (Wang Zheng-Ting, 1996) **

Wang Zheng-TingSHENG (CHINESE MOUTH ORGAN)
TAPE

The music is inspired by the Buddhist concept of karma, which advocates that one's afterlife is determined by the previous existence, and that it is possible for deliverance from karma through the performance of beneficent deeds (WANG ZHENG-TING).

8 EthnicStaticfromEasyRoundandFolk Dances (Warren Burt, 1985)

Fairlight CMI FAKE GAMELAN

This is a fake gamelan piece I made in 1985 on the Fairlight Computer Music Instrument at the Victorian College of the Arts, using gamelan samples. I had just finished a number of microtonal pieces using this instrument, but here, in a twist of reverse orientalism, I decided to tune the gamelan samples to the Western 12-note scale, and used structures in the music that had more to do with Western minimalism than with the Indonesian gamelan tradition. So what's the difference between my doing in this piece and, say, Caesar Cui doing something similar in Russia in the 1870s? Only this: in my piece, I know what I'm doing is ridiculous and inappropriate in the extreme, and I'm laughing at my combining of these inapposite cultural artifacts (WARREN BURT).

9 Chinese Whispers (Warren Burt, 1998)

Julian Yu and Marian Grey VOICES

This piece was originally designed for an installation at the Warrnambool Art Gallery in 1998. I wrote a series of short statements that compressed, as much as I could, the history of atrocities committed against the Asian-Australian community in Australia in the 19th century. These statements were then translated into Chinese by Julian Yu and Marian Grey, leaving only the place names in the original English. I then recorded them whispering these statements. In the installation, two recordings combined randomly, as the statements move between two loudspeakers placed at the entrance to a gallery, forming a memorial garland of whispering sounds recalling yet another black part of Australian history. On this recording, each statement appears once, surrounded by silence (WARREN BURT).

(*) These works were commissioned by the Australia Asia Foundation and financed through the generous support of the Music Fund of the Australia Council. We Lose Things was premiered in Melbourne in 2000 and Japan in 2001. Inside/Outside was premiered on ABC Radio National's Music Deli in 2002. 'Shadows of The War Horse' was premiered in Melbourne in 2000. Lotus Pond was premiered at the Melbourne International Festival in 1998.

(**) This work was commissioned by the American Composers' Forum and was premiered in Minnesota in 1996.

COMPOSER-PERFORMERS

Ros Bandt is a composer, performer and sound sculptor. She has worked in cross art form and cross-cultural collaborations for many years. Her original music, sound sculptures and installations have been widely appreciated in Europe, America and Australasia. She plays the medieval psaltery and historical wind instruments with the early music group La Romanesca as well as creating her own acoustic and electronic compositions. She was also the founding member of the cross-cultural ensemble Back to Back Zithers. She won the Don Banks Composer's Fellowship in 1990, the Listening Room Sound Art Award in 1991, and an ARC Research Fellowship in 1991. Her book "Sound Sculpture: Intersections in Sound and Sculpture in Australian Artworks" was published by Craftman House in 2001. She is currently the director of the Australian Sound Design Project at the Australian Centre, University of Melbourne.

Warren Burt has worked in academia, education, radio and as a composer, filmmaker, video artist, writer and community-arts organizer. He has written probably far too many works for instruments, electronics, voice, video, theater, prose, poetry, et cetera. His works have been performed and shown in the USA, Australia, Europe and Japan. His highly original electronic and computer compositions are recognised internationally. He has been the artist in residence with many organisations, such as the CSIRO, the Los Angeles based art-science think-tank International Synergy, ABC Radio,

the American Composers Forum and various Universities.

Dang Kim Hien is a composer, vocalist and multi-instrumentalist, specialising in Vietnamese strings and percussion. She was awarded a National Gold Medal for Excellence in Vietnamese Zither Performance and a National Award for Traditional Vocal Performance in Vietnam. She taught at the Department of Traditional Music of the Conservatory of Music in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) for 14 years before migrating to Australia in mid-1990s. Since then she has performed at many music festivals and concerts in Australia and America. Her performances and compositions were recorded and released on Move Records.

Le Tuan Hung is a composer, performer and author, specialising in Vietnamese music and experimental music of Australia. He is a multi-instrumentalist with a strong background both in Vietnamese traditional music and Western classical music. He has performed widely in Asia, Australia, Europe, America and Oceania. His original music has been created for a wide range of instruments, ensembles and media. His compositions and performances have been recorded and released on Move, ABC Music, and NMA labels. He is also the author of various publications on Vietnamese performing arts and is regarded as an authority in Vietnamese musicology. His book *Dan Tranh Music of Vietnam: Traditions and Innovations* was published by the Australia Asia Foundation in 1998. Le was trained as a traditional musician in the Vietnamese tradition and also

had a Bachelor of Music from the University of Melbourne and a Ph.D. in Music from Monash University. As the program manager (music) of the Australia Asia Foundation, Le has been the driving force for the program of commissioning Australian composers to create new works for Asian instruments and voices since 1997.

Anne Norman is a composer, improviser and performer working in a diverse range of music creation. Originally trained on flute (B. Mus. & Dip.Ed. at Melbourne University), Anne took up the shakuhachi (bamboo flute) in 1986 while living in Japan. During this period she studied shakuhachi with Nakamura Shindo, and began composing for Japanese instruments and vocal ensembles. In 1990, following a Masters in Ethnomusicology at Monash University, Anne continued her studies of the traditional shakuhachi repertoire at the Tokyo University of the Arts under Yamaguchi Goro. She also studied another lineage of music under Tajima Tadashi. During this second period in Japan, Anne gave two recitals of her own compositions for Japanese

instruments that were received enthusiastically by the audience and media. Anne was awarded first prize in the Overseas Students Music Contest of Japan organised by the Japan International Cultural Exchange Foundation in 1992.

Anne has performed shakuhachi in major arts festivals in Melbourne, Sydney & Adelaide as well as many regional centers throughout Australia. Anne has also toured Europe with

the ensemble Jouissance. Anne's compositions include music for theatre & dance productions, the Federation Bells, Choirs, small ensembles, koto, recorder and shakuhachi. Anne has collaborated with a large number of musicians including Sarah Hopkins in recording a CD with the Gyuto Monks of Tibet. Anne has worked as artist in residence in primary and secondary schools, and has toured all states of Australia with native Japanese artists performing traditional Japanese music to Australian school children.

Wang Zheng Ting is a composer and master performer of the sheng (Chinese mouth organ). He graduated from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and had performed with many leading Chinese orchestras before migrated to Australia in the late 1980s. Working as a freelance artist, Ting has lectured and performed widely in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, North America and Europe. He is the founding member and director of the Australian Chinese Music Ensemble. He has also been very active in collaborations with non-Chinese musicians to create Australian cross-cultural music. His book "Chinese Music in Australia: Victoria, 1850s to mid-1990s" was published by the Australia Asia Foundation in 1997. He has recently completed a Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology at the University of Melbourne.

PERFORMERS

Nick Tsiavos (Double bass) studied the classical canon at the Victorian College of the Arts. He developed an interest in contemporary bass technique while studying with noted bassist Dr Burt Turetsky. His further study was under the virtuoso bassist Francois Rabbath in Paris. He worked with the noted jazz groups such as The Tony Hicks Quartet and the Vince Jones Quintet, and played with the contemporary music ensemble ELISION. He has also worked with Viriditas, Alchemy and Interactive Performance Space Ensemble. He is the musical director and founder of the group Jouissance, which focuses on the exploration of the dialogue between contemporary thought and ancient chant. His original music for solo bass was recorded on the CD 'All that is Solid Melts into Air' which has been broadcast on New Music Australia (ABC), The Planet (ABC) and Hybrid (PBS).

Peter Neville (Percussion) is a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts, where he later became the Head of Percussion. He has worked for seventeen years as a casual percussionist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, including its 1988 tour of Japan and its Australian tour with pop singer Elton John. He has also worked with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London. Peter has performed in over a dozen musicals, including 'West Side Story', 'Cats', 'Hello Dolly' and 'The Secret Garden', and in three Australian tours of the Broadway version of 'The Pirates

of Penzance'. He was the musical director of the 1996 Australian tour of 'Tap Dogs'.

As the percussionist of ELISION Ensemble, Peter has been involved with practically all their concerts, nine compact discs, and international tours. Within Dance orchestras, Peter has supported performances of the Bolshoi Ballet, the Russian State Ballet, the Nureyev Farewell Tour and the Netherlands Dance Theatre. As well as Jouissance and Elision, Peter is a member of the Nadoya Music and Dance Company, the David Chesworth Ensemble, the Southbank Ensemble, the duo Chronochromie, and the Zappa Instrumentaale. Peter appears on many CD recordings ranging from pop albums by Peter Andre and Deborah Conway to the experimental industrial sound of Paul Schutze's 'New Maps of Hell'.

Peter Hagen majored in pianoforte & harpsichord at the Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne University. He furthered his studies in the Netherlands learning from Bob Van Asperen, Jacques Ogg and Ton Koopman. As well as playing in ensembles such as Il Teatro Musicale and the Flevolandskamerorkest, he gave solo recitals in Switzerland, England and Germany. In Australia he has performed in many capital cities as well as regional centres performing in festivals such as the Brisbane Early Music Centre, the Melbourne Early Music Festival & the Melbourne Autumn Music Festival. He has also directed & been a member of numerous chamber music ensembles.

Australian Chinese Music Ensemble was established in Melbourne in 1989. Its dazzling musical skills and mastery of both traditional and contemporary Chinese music has ensured its success throughout Australia and Asia. The ensemble has been recognised as one of the finest ensembles of Chinese music in Asia Pacific Region. Apart from performing at major national and international events, the ensemble has also been featured on various radio and television programs in Australia (ABC, SBS, and the Ten Network).

CREDITS

Program notes: Le Tuan Hung

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The works on this CD are © 2002 by Anne Norman ('We Lose Things'), Ros Bandt & Dang Kim Hien ('Inside/Outside'), Dang Kim Hien ('Shadows of the War Horse'), Le Tuan Hung ('Lotus Pond', 'Scent of Time', 'Echoes of an Old Festive Song', program notes and graphics), Wang Zheng-Ting ('Spectre'), and Warren Burt ('Ethnic Static from Easy Round and Folk Dances', 'Chinese Whispers').

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For more information about the Australia Asia Foundation, visit their website at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~aaf/> or contact via email, letuanhung@yahoo.com

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