

On the Wings of a Butterfly

CROSS-CULTURAL MUSIC BY AUSTRALIAN COMPOSERS



move

ROS BANDT • BRIGID BURKE • WARREN BURT • LE TUAN HUNG • DEBORAH KAYSER • ANNE NORMAN • RIA SOEMARDJO • DINDY VAUGHAN

1 Unde

music by Deborah Kayser and Anne Norman, based on a hymn by Hildegard of Bingen
Deborah Kayser (soprano)
Anne Norman (shakuhachi)

An improvisational deconstruction of a hymn entitled Unde, composed by Hildegard of Bingen in the 12th Century. This duet for soprano and shakuhachi explores and blurs the borders of text, timbre and melisma. The resultant reverie transcends the everyday in a moment of quiet rapture (Anne Norman).

The duo's response to this text can be located in the lines, 'wherever they arrived at in their wanderings' ... Resonance to these words inform the duos free-flowing, 'stream of consciousness' approach to this work (Deborah Kayser).

Translation:

'Therefore, wherever they arrived at
In their wanderings,
There was a warm welcome,
Like we shall always receive
In Paradise,
Because in their devotion,
Their great faith
Was clearly apparent
To everybody.'

2 On the Wings of a Butterfly (2004)

music by Ros Bandt and Le Tuan Hung
Ros Bandt (medieval psaltery, Balinese suling [end-blown flutes])
Le Tuan Hung (dan tranh [Vietnamese zither], Balinese suling)

On the Wings of a Butterfly is a cross cultural composition for two zithers, the Vietnamese dan tranh played by Le Tuan Hung and the medieval psaltery played by Ros Bandt. The shimmering and ephemeral life of the butterfly is mirrored in the evanescent glissandi, harmonics and wing-like textures achieved through the playing of the strings with feathers. The landscape changes sometimes violently, sometimes slowly as the butterfly takes us on a sonic journey of ecstatic flight. A new Australian culture emerges from the exchange of eastern and western musical techniques as they are contrasted, shared, exchanged and fused in this composition (Ros Bandt).

On the Wings of a Butterfly is a musical reflection on the rising spirit of harmonious togetherness of peoples and cultures. This togetherness of peoples and cultures is reflected in the collaborative composing process, the combination of eastern and western musical idioms and instrumental colours. The flight of a butterfly symbolically represents a journey to explore the beauty and fragility of human togetherness in the changing social environment (Le Tuan Hung).

3 Adrift (2005)

music by Ria Soemardjo and Anne Norman
Ria Soemardjo (voice)
Anne Norman (shakuhachi)

A free improvisation influenced by the alap tradition of Hindustani music. A funky home made 4 string dulcimer (made by Gil Freeman) underpins the modal explorations of the shakuhachi and voice (Anne Norman).

4 A Song for Sky Bells (2004, rev. 2005)

music composed and performed by Le Tuan Hung for power pole bells, Vietnamese zither dan tranh, Balinese flute suling, and Oceanian panpipes

A Song for Sky Bells is a composition for power pole bells, Vietnamese zither dan tranh, Balinese flute suling, and Oceanian panpipes. Power pole bells are unique Australian instruments. They are galvanised iron caps made by the State Electricity Company of Victoria to fit on the top of electricity poles made from tree trunks of varying diameters. Their function was to protect the poles from the weather and for mounting insulators above the poles. Since 1996, Australian composer Anne Norman has been collecting these bells for use as musical instruments and components of sound sculptures.

When I first touched these bells, I had the impression that their richness of frequencies and harmonics was the result of years of absorbing waves of vibrations from the winds and electric cables under the Australian sky. This impression is musically realised by the interaction of sounds of the bells, the dan tranh and the wind instruments. Frequencies and pitches are transmitted from one instrument to another in the process of generating melodies and layers of music. *A Song for Sky Bells* is music generated from the power pole bells after years of absorbing sounds in silence (Le Tuan Hung).

5 Pound Bend – Yarra River

music by Dindy Vaughan
Anne Norman (shakuhachi)
Peter Hagen (harpsichord)

A meeting of European and ancient traditions.

The water moves strongly with turbulent -- There is collision and confluence of European and Aboriginal cultures. Present time moving swiftly and changing, strongly challenging and reshaping. The harpsichord, deliberately reflecting European baroque style, converges with the fluidity of rapid interchange.

Deep in the water is the reflection of trees -- both European and indigenous -- and rocks more ancient than any human influences, bones of the earth -- the shakuhachi represents depth; in water, in thought, in space, time and concept (Dindy Vaughan).

6 Wimmera River – Lake Hindmarsh

music by Dindy Vaughan
Anne Norman (shakuhachi)
Peter Hagen (harpsichord)

Country is vast, wide, still, ageless.

Wind blows through this movement -- so strong it makes, very clearly, the sound of human voices.

Between gusts there are lulls, when country is utterly still and quiet; bird song, scent of wattle, sunshine.

Opening bars give rise to the first gusts of wind (shakuhachi) over the stillness of the land (harpsichord).

As wind begins to blow the voices speak -- uplifted voices, asserting ownership, full of authority and confident in power, in tune with the land, at one with the earth.

The river is the life-blood of the people, the earth and all creatures -- unity and harmony above all. (Dindy Vaughan).

Pound Bend – Yarra River and Wimmera River – Lake Hindmarsh are two movements of the suite Prayer for the Restoration of Our Rivers by Dindy Vaughan. These two tracks are original recordings from the CD of the complete suite to be released in the near future.

7 Grit (2004)

music by Brigid Burke
Brigid Burke (clarinet)
Wendy Couch (vibraphone and Indian drum)

Bowed vibraphone opens Grit to create a timeless scene. The clarinet is aimed to mimic the attack of the Indian drum parts. Its musical context is based on improvisations and experimentation using frequency changes with these fragments of sound through computer manipulation of extreme contraction, expansion, panning and pitch modification. The Indian drum imitates the clarinet as if in conversation and is lyrically thick with the percussive sounds overlapping themselves to form complex rhythms. The Indian drum consists of a thick wooden shell in an hourglass shape and single calfskin head tensioned around the rim with thin rope. The drum is initially played with the fingers. Then various hand techniques and strokes are used to produce different timbres. As the volume and intensity of the piece increases, felt mallets and wooden sticks are introduced to increase the dynamic impact (Brigid Burke).

Poems of Rewi Alley (2003)

8 Dedication

9 The Family Supper

10 The Way Ahead for Youth

11 The First Eighty Years

selections from 19 musical settings by Warren Burt
Warren Burt (computer)
John Britton (voice)

The life of the New Zealand born poet Rewi Alley is one of the most amazing of the 20th century, encompassing several careers, and enough adventure and dedication to fill several more normal lifetimes. Over his 90 years, he worked as a soldier, an educator, a scholar, a peace activist, an industrial reformer, a farmer and a writer, among other things. In 1927, out of curiosity, he visited China, and stayed there for the next 60 years. In his last decades, he was honoured in both China and New Zealand for a lifetime of labor in the service of the working people of China.

In the 1930s, Alley began translating Chinese poetry, and shortly thereafter, began writing poetry himself, sometimes basing his English language poetry on Chinese models, and sometimes simply writing discursive, narrative poems. From the mid 1940s until the late 1970s, he produced a number of volumes of poetry. Some of his poems were quite lyrical observations of Chinese village life, while others were angry, forceful polemics, where he scathingly condemned political conditions he disapproved of. Although he allied himself with the Chinese Communist Party from the 1950s on, Alley was nobody's puppet, and his political poetry, often quite Brechtian, always retains his own idealistic voice. One would say, using the language of the time, that although the Party would claim that the people and the party were one, if push came to shove (and it often did), Alley would side with the people every time.

In making musical settings of his poems, I didn't want to prettify them, nor did I want them to be sung. It seemed to me that they were best heard with a speaking voice, which could articulate the emotions inherent in them. John Britton provided me with better readings than I could have ever hoped for, bringing these poems to life in ways that continue to delight me. I took the recordings of his readings, and processed them through a computer program called AudioMulch, made by the Melbourne composer Ross Bencina. AudioMulch contains a device called a comb filter, which enables you to create ringing chords, which follow both the rhythm and the pitches inherent in the speaking voice. Further, you can change these chords in performance, creating progressions of sounds that will follow the incoming voice, creating a kind of ghost harmony that envelops and hangs behind the voice, making a musical accompaniment that seems particularly apt for speech. My settings of the 19 poems progress from elegiac, and traditionally tonal, through to more dark, dissonant and angry microtonal musical worlds before finally returning, at the end, to the placid world of the beginning. I hope that the listener is aware of the harmonies I chose to accompany the poems and the interplay between the text and my musical choices (Warren Burt)

COMPOSERS

Ros Bandt is a well-known composer, performer and sound sculptor. 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 and the Listening Room Sound Art Award in 1991. She has also written a book on sound sculptures in Australia funded by an ARC Research Fellowship.

Brigid Burke is a composer, clarinet soloist, visual artist, and educator. She has performed extensively in solo and chamber recitals, both nationally and internationally. She has also presented her musical ideas and concepts as a performer, composer and creator through workshops, lectures and master classes. She has a Master of Music in Composition from Melbourne University and is currently lecturing Composition and Clarinet at Victoria University. Her recent projects include commissions from the Australian Broadcasting Commission and concerts of her works on Sunday Live in Iwaki Auditorium, ABC Melbourne and the Asian Music Festival in Tokyo.

Warren Burt is an American Australian composer whose works have been performed and shown in the USA, Australia, Europe and Japan. 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. His highly original electronic and computer compositions are recognised internationally.

Le Tuan Hung is a composer, performer and musicologist, specialising in Vietnamese music, cross-cultural music and experimental music. He is a multi-instrumentalist with a strong background in Vietnamese traditional music and Western classical music. He has performed widely in Asia, Australia, Europe, America and Oceania. His compositions have been created for a wide range of instruments, ensembles and media. His compositions and performances have been released on Move and ABC labels. He is also the author of various publications on Vietnamese performing arts and is regarded as an expert in Vietnamese musicology.

Deborah Kayser performs in areas as diverse as ancient Byzantine chant, French and German Baroque song and classical contemporary music, both scored and improvised. Her work has led her to tour regularly both within Australia, and internationally to Europe and Asia. She has recorded, as soloist, on numerous CDs, and her work is frequently broadcast on ABC FM. As a member of Jouissance, and the contemporary music ensembles Elision and Libra, she has performed radical interpretations of Byzantine and Medieval chant, and premiered works written specifically for her voice by local and overseas composers.

Anne Norman is a composer, improviser and performer focusing on her own original works for her primary instrument shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute) in ensemble with a variety of other instruments and artists. Anne is a bi-musical artist who specialises in both Western and Japanese musical idioms. She held a Bachelor of Music from the University of Melbourne, a Masters of Arts in Ethnomusicology from Monash University and had studied the shakuhachi in Japan under the Living National Treasure Yamaguchi Goro and the Grand Master Tajima Tadashi. Anne performs contemporary Australian music and collaborative fusions in ensemble with a variety of other artists. She has performed in major arts festivals in Australia, Europe, and Japan. In 2004, Anne was commissioned by the International Shakuhachi Research Centre in Japan, under the patronage of Living National Treasure Yokoyama Katsuya, to compose a sextet for shakuhachi. "Life" was premiered in Bisei, Japan in August 2004. For more information on Anne, visit her website at: www.vicnet.net.au/~amncrow

Ria Soemardjo's distinctive vocal style is shaped by her love of traditional Asian music as well as an inventive and eclectic approach to improvisation. Curious about her father's love for the haunting songs of his traditional Javanese heritage,

Ria has studied this vocal style characterised by non-western tunings and highly complex vocal ornamentation. Her performance work is also informed by her intensive study of the Alexander Technique in the use of voice. Recent collaborations include performances with Anne Norman (shakuhachi player and composer) and 'Rongo' – the Millennium Chorus concert for the 2004 Melbourne Festival. Ria has worked on several community theatre projects, including the Museum project (directed by Bagryana Popov), the Grand Feeling (directed by Nadja Kostich, winner of the green room award for best fringe production 2002) and as musical director with the Brunswick Womens Theatre 2003 season (directed by Catherine Simmons). While regularly performing this ancient Javanese repertoire as soloist with various ensembles (she is the only female performer of this style in Melbourne), she has also collaborated with a diverse range of musicians and theatre directors to create original work and new arrangements of traditional songs. Ria is currently recording a new full length CD.

Dindy Vaughan is a composer, environmentalist, organiser, writer and educator. Her music is frequently performed live and has been broadcast on 3MBS FM and the ABC. Happiest in the thick of artistic, intellectual but above all practical, activity, she thrives in social groups where imagination and creativity combine with plenty of grass roots growth in a hurry. In 1996 Dindy was awarded the prestigious University of Sydney Alumni Award for Achievement in Community Service. The award was given for her innovation, stimulation of new ideas and services, creativity, dedication and leadership in the areas of arts and education. She was nominated and selected for inclusion in Who's Who in the World, Millennium 2000 edition, having demonstrated "outstanding achievements in (her own) fields of endeavour . . . thereby, contributed significantly to the betterment of contemporary society".

PERFORMERS

John Britton is the artistic director of quiddity theatre, scriptwriter and performer. He has been writing and performing original performance works since completing his MA in 1988. He has worked as a touring story-teller, an ensemble physical theatre performer and performer in his own work and with companies such as Eclectic Pelican, The Blahs (UK) Yorkshire Television and, most recently, ABC Radio. He has directed The Little Sweep for OzOpera (Australia) and O Sotao for ESMAE, one of Portugal's leading Actor Training Institutions. He teaches regularly across Australia and the UK/Europe, specialising in Improvisation as Actor Training and Ensemble Development.

Wendy Couch has presented solo recitals and concertos in Australia and the US. As a freelance percussionist she has performed frequently with the Melbourne Symphony, Australian Pops Orchestra, Canto Coro and the Australian Boys Choir. During the last twelve years, she has played for many operas and ballets with the State Orchestra of Victoria. Wendy graduated from the University of Melbourne and the Victorian College of the Arts and completed her MA in Percussion Performance at San Jose State University, studying with Anthony J. Cirone.

Peter Hagen majored in pianoforte and harpsichord at Melbourne University, and later studied with Bob Van Apseren, Jacques Ogg, and Ton Koopman in The Netherlands. As well as playing in ensembles such as Il Teatro Musicale and the Flevolandskamerorkest he has given solo recitals in Switzerland, England, Germany, Canada and The Netherlands. In Australia he has performed in many of the capital cities and in such festivals as the Melbourne Early Music Festival, The Brisbane Early Music Festival and the Melbourne Autumn Festival. He has directed numerous chamber music ensembles including

Barok Blaser and performed in numerous recitals. He is also a member of the duo Questing Spirit, the ensemble Hoboy Hoboy, and the trio Watermark.

CREDITS

Producer: Le Tuan Hung
Notes compiled and edited by Le Tuan Hung
Front cover painting Flight 4 is © 2005 by Le Van Tai.
Original painting 120 x 120 cm, oil on canvas.
Painting last page: Graphic score "On the Wings of a Butterfly" by Le Tuan Hung
Cover design and graphics: Le Tuan Hung
Recordings:
Tracks 1, 3, 5, 6 recorded at Baker Street Studios.
Track 2 recorded at Move Records Studio
Track 4 recorded by Le Tuan Hung
Track 7 recorded by Brigid Burke
Tracks 8-11 recorded by Warren Burt
Mastering at Move Records Studio

The works on this CD are © 2005 by Anne Norman and Deborah Kayser (Unde), Ros Bandt and Le Tuan Hung (On the Wings of a Butterfly), Anne Norman and Ria Soemardjo (Adrift), Le Tuan Hung (A Song for Sky Bells), Dindy Vaughan (Pound Bend – Yarra River and Wimmera River – Lake Hindmarsh), Brigid Burke (Grit) and Warren Burt (Dedication, The Family Supper, The Way Ahead for Youth, and The First Eighty Years)



This project was assisted by the Australia Council for the Arts, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory board.

This CD is a musical initiative of the Australia Asia Foundation.

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1 Unde 6'44"

music by Deborah Kayser and Anne Norman, based on a hymn by Hildegard of Bingen ... Deborah Kayser (soprano), Anne Norman (shakuhachi)

2 On the Wings of a Butterfly (2004) 11'17"

music by Ros Bandt and Le Tuan Hung ... Ros Bandt (medieval psaltery, Balinese suling [end-blown flutes]), Le Tuan Hung (dan tranh [Vietnamese zither], Balinese suling)

3 Adrift (2005) 6'05"

music by Ria Soemardjo (voice) and Anne Norman (shakuhachi)

4 A Song for Sky Bells (2004, rev. 2005) 9'59"

music composed and performed by Le Tuan Hung for power pole bells, Vietnamese zither dan tranh, Balinese flute suling, and Oceanian panpipes

5 Pound Bend – Yarra River 3'10"

music by Dindy Vaughan ... Anne Norman (shakuhachi), Peter Hagen (harpsichord)

6 Wimmera River – Lake Hindmarsh 5'54"

music by Dindy Vaughan ... Anne Norman (shakuhachi), Peter Hagen (harpsichord)

7 Grit (2004) 8'23"

music by Brigid Burke ... Brigid Burke (clarinet), Wendy Couch (vibraphone and Indian drum)

Poems of Rewi Alley (2003)

8 Dedication 3'11"

9 The Family Supper 2'26"

10 The Way Ahead for Youth 2'57"

11 The First Eighty Years 2'34"

selections from 19 musical settings by Warren Burt (computer) and John Britton (voice)

