



Elephantasy

orchestral, operatic and chamber music of Eve Duncan

The background is an abstract painting with vibrant, organic shapes in shades of green, blue, yellow, and pink. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall style is expressive and somewhat chaotic, with a focus on color and form rather than recognizable objects.

Elephantasy presents the colour and drama of large-scale orchestral and operatic music.

Architects Andrea Palladio and modernist Jørn Utzon, reached the peak their careers in their huge coastal public buildings; Il Redentore Chiesa and the Sydney Opera House. I have put the architectural mathematics into the music so that their designs can be experienced as living sound.

The trumpet heralds a world of myth and nature. In *Juliana and Jeffrey's Love Duet*, the male sings higher than the female. In *Aer Turas* the world is travelled through the memory of vitality in air.

May Elephantasy be phun.

cover image *Spot in the Sun* 2019
acrylic on paper

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|--|---------|
| 1. <i>Approaching Venice</i> (2013)
Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra
Conducted by Josefino Chino Toledo | (4'08) |
| 2. <i>Sydney Opera House I</i> (2012)
Chamber Orchestra conducted by Timothy Phillips
Michael Kieran Harvey (piano) | (10'15) |
| 3. <i>Sydney Opera House II</i> (2012)
Chamber Orchestra conducted by Timothy Phillips
Michael Kieran Harvey (piano) | (9'45) |
| 4. <i>Deep in Summer</i> (2016)
Tristram Williams (trumpet). Michael Kieran Harvey (piano) | (2'45) |
| 5. <i>From a Star Afar</i> (2018)
Michael Kieran Harvey (piano) | (1'31) |
| 6. <i>I Told You Mr Vayne, Nothing Here is Mine</i> (2016)
Justine Anderson (soprano), Jerzy Kozlowski (baritone) | (4'57) |
| 7. <i>Do You Think I Am Beautiful?</i> (2016)
Deborah Kayser (alto) | (2'36) |
| 8. <i>Ah. But I Do Know His Face</i> (2016)
Deborah Kayser (alto), Jerzy Kozlowski (baritone) | (5'56) |
| 9. <i>Juliana and Jeffrey's Love Duet</i> (2016)
Dan Walker (countertenor), Deborah Kayser (alto) | (2'44) |
| 10. <i>So This is the Dragon's Den</i> (2016)
Justine Anderson, (soprano), Deborah Kayser (alto) Jerzy Kozlowski (baritone) | (7'48) |
| 11. <i>If You Were a Relation</i> (2016)
Justine Anderson, (soprano), Deborah Kayser (alto) Jerzy Kozlowski (baritone) | (5'19) |
| 12. <i>Aer Turas</i> (2018)
Sirius Ensemble,
Lisa Breckenridge (flute) Ian Sykes (clarinet), Clare Kahn (violoncello) | (4'19) |

Timothy Phillips conducts the chamber orchestra in *The Aspern Papers* on Tracks 6 to 11.

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Jellyfish 2020
acrylic on paper



ELEPHANTASY

BY EVE DUNCAN

Approaching Venice

What author Henry James described as the golden glow of Venice may be the intersection of its physical and metaphysical space, between the changing spaces of tidal water, the intertwining alleyways and the artistic spaces of its sublime architecture. For hundreds of years, Venice was approached by water. Ships turned into the lagoon where magnificent palaces emerged from sea mist. Boats with orange sails darted close by, belying that Venice was called la Serenissima, the Serene City. The overture to the opera The Aspern Papers takes the listener into the enchanted world of Venice.

Mathematics in Music: I embedded non-musical mathematics of the architecture of Andrea Palladio's sixteenth century Chiesa Il Redentore into the music. Ships passed by the church when approaching Venice. The proportions of its length and height are mapped into the music, and the cupola is heard in the rise to the high notes.

Sydney Opera House

The piano concerto follows the inspirations and trials of Danish architect Jørn Utzon who designed and supervised the construction of the Sydney Opera House. The piano takes the role of Utzon throughout the concerto.

Mathematics in Music: Architectural mathematics was given a parallel in the mathematics of the music so as to create a characteristic inner space within a sonic landscape. My intention was to see if qualities expressed in the architecture of the Sydney Opera House could be heard in the music. Architect Fumihiko Maki compares listening to music to moving through space. "Like music, movement in space can be a sense of elemental joy, something to which one can give oneself entirely".

Movement One Utzon grew up by a fjord in Aalborg, north Denmark, where he built models of his father's boat designs. From an early age he was at ease with curved surfaces in design. His interest in east Asian and mezzo-American temples had an impact on the dynamic design of the Sydney Opera House. His preliminary sketches show space between roof and platform, and sea and clouds.

The piano in the concerto was composed for Michael Kieran Harvey.

Architecture in the Music, Movement One: Utzon used architect Alvar Aalto's additive architecture principle of repeating patterns found in nature, such as leaves and branches, for the tiling and ceiling patterns of the Sydney Opera House. I adopted this when constructing modal scales from motifs. The angles created by the roof shells were given a mathematical parallel in characteristic intervals of two notes sounding together. Mathematical parallels were made between roof peaks and high notes, and platform lengths and the duration of low notes. Utzon's preliminary drawing of a temple roof hovering over the temple platform is referenced in the east Asian character that temporarily emerges.

Movement Two explores Jørn Utzon's psyche once the shells were constructed, as ongoing hostility forced the project to a halt. I imagined him flying back to Denmark with his family, as though undergoing a spiritual death. I imagined him entering the Dreamtime, associated with the Sydney Opera House through thousands of years of the Aboriginal feasts on its site. I imagined Utzon being rescued and revived by a



Butterfly 2016 acrylic on paper

Nordic sea goddess arising from the ocean below. I imagined him looking out of the plane window up into the night sky and seeing the Sydney Opera House as a new constellation of stars, heralding its future as a world icon.

Architecture in the Music, Movement Two: The architectural space, tidal space and the metaphysical space of Jørn Utzon were combined in sonic space and time layers. The dimensions of the roof shells, platforms and three dip points were given a parallel in the register of the music, that is, in where the high and low notes were placed. I measured the lengths of the three platforms, and plotted above them the high points of the ten roofs and three distinctive dips proportionally. These were given a parallel in the sonic time of traversing the platform length. The changing tides at Circular Quay were paralleled in changes occurring in the low notes.

Deep in Summer

What I love about the trumpet is its warm and sensuous tone, its spirited character and its way of really connecting with human emotions, especially happiness. I hope that some of these qualities made their way into Deep in Summer. It was composed for Sydney trumpeter Paul Goodchild.

From a Star Afar

I imagined looking from a distant star towards earth thousands of years ago. Years passed by. At the time of the mystery of Golgotha the blood of Christ fell into the earth, and this changed the earth's aura. I saw the beginning of the earth becoming a star.

The Aspern Papers

David Malouf created a playful and heart-warming libretto from Henry James' short story The Aspern Papers, Set in Venice it explores deception and the harm that it causes. Henry Vayne seeks the letters written by the long dead famous poet Jeffrey Aspern to his lover Juliana Bordereau. Juliana is now elderly and she is in need of money. Her great niece Miss Tita seeks love, and is willing to buy it by providing Vayne with the letters.

Architecture in the Music: David Malouf asked me to include Venice as a fifth character in the opera. I did this by incorporating the mathematics of its alleyways, canal tides, and its sublime architecture into the mathematics of the music. In this way, the proportions of Venice enter into the sonic space of the opera.

I Told You, Mr Vayne. Nothing Here is Mine

The opera opens as Henry Vayne knocks at the door of Juliana Bordereau's house and is answered by her great niece Miss Tita. Vayne poses as a writer seeking to rent a room with a garden. Henry praises Venice as a place of "light, life, poetry".

Architecture in the Music: Miss Tita and Vayne meet at the door and a triplet-duplet-triplet rhythmic motif mirrors the proportions of a Veneto villa entrance designed by Andrea Palladio. Palladio often visited the Palazzo Barbaro where, three hundred years later, Henry James lived whilst he wrote The Aspern Papers. The movement of the bass instruments parallels Venetian canal tides, with the change of register and duration matching their rate of change and height.

Do You Think I am Beautiful?

Juliana turns to Henry Vayne with a challenging and teasing question: now that she is nearly a hundred years old, is she, a former beauty, still beautiful? She says that her beauty was once the inspiration for poetry, alluding to her relationship with Jeffrey Aspern.

Architecture in the Music: By the 11th century the Venetians traded as far away as East Timor, and southeast Asia entered its culture. Here, the aristocratic Korean genre style of gagok court music suggests both the imperial nature of Juliana and the aesthetic of Venice. I used gagok's meter of repeated cycles of 7 and 3 beats and the Korean gyemenjo scale (D, Eb, Gb, Ab, Bb). Gagok was alluded to in the instruments,

the pacing of the music and in the characteristic lack of a bass line.

Ah. But I Do Know His Face

Juliana shows Henry Vayne a portrait of Jeffrey Aspern that her father painted, knowing that Vayne's presence in Venice and in her home is motivated by his desire to find the poet's memorabilia. She suggests that the painting may be for sale, if the right price were offered.

Architecture in the Music: Palladio's Il Redentore Church is a metaphor for majestic Venice, La Serenissima, the Serene City, with a parallel to its length in the music's duration (1 beat = 1.6 feet). The upper and lower roof lines and cupola were recreated in the higher register with the church's base designated D above middle C, and giving 1 semitone in raised pitch to each 4.5 feet of its height.

Juliana and Jeffrey's Love Duet

The love duet alludes to history's first opera Orfeo, composed by Monteverdi who worked for thirty years as the music director at St Mark's in Venice. In the Greek myth, Orpheus seeks his dead lover Eurydice in the Underworld. Likewise, in her dying delirium, Juliana travels to the Underworld by gondola to meet her dead lover Jeffrey Aspern. She and Jeffrey call to one another. The pitch of Juliana's voice has lowered over the years. Jeffrey's voice has become higher over the many years since his death. This is certainly not the first opera, however, it may be the first operatic love duet in which the male sings at a higher pitch than the female.

So This is the Dragon's Den

Henry Vayne and Miss Tita tiptoe around the dying Juliana in search of the love letters written to her by Jeffrey Aspern. Juliana sees them, and accuses Vayne of being a devil and a thief.

Architecture in the Music: in Venice exterior and interior space is blurred. Henry James called the city a living room. I used the non-mathematical architecture of the nearby intertwining

alleys as a metaphor for the tangled minds of Vayne and Miss Tita and they search Juliana's room, as she lies dying. I traced a grid over a map of the San Croce neighbourhood. To the north-south trajectory I assigned the chromatic scale and instruments were assigned a particular alleyway; reflected in higher and lower pitch, whilst their width was mirrored in the fuzziness of trills and rapid bowing. To the east-west trajectory I assigned beats of musical time, as though the listener was traversing metaphorically through tangled alleyways and the tangled minds of the characters.

If You Were A Relation

Juliana has died and Miss Tita now has access to the letters sent to her long ago by Jeffrey Aspern. Miss Tita suggests to Henry Vayne that she will give him the letters if he were to marry her. Vayne draws aside to consider this. Through his hesitation Miss Tita realizes that he doesn't love her, and so she burns the letters. As she does so, Juliana, Miss Tita and Vayne express their passions, hopes and sufferings.

Architecture in the Music: The trio passacaglia, a ground bass with a harmony that is repeated, mirrors the repeated hopes, sufferings and passions of Juliana, Henry and Miss Tita.

Aer Turas (Air Journey)

In the 1980s I visited Leh, which was once in Tibet and, at 3,500 metres, is one of the highest towns in the world. The monasteries hovered like eagle's nests in the cliffs. The monks blew huge, long trumpets and sang prayers whilst drinking yak-butter tea. Twenty years later, John and I travelled to the Appalachian Mountains. The invigorating air at Mount Washington reminded that for the early settlers America was God's own country.

We breathed pure air in Australia's MacDonnell Ranges. Following winter rain, the desert was covered with beautiful flowers.

The spring air in New South Wales' Wollemi National Park melds suspended time with a gentle, untouched wilderness.

ABOUT EVE DUNCAN

Eve composes chamber, orchestral, vocal and collaborative music that has been performed in Australia, North America, Asia and Europe.

She completed a Doctor of Creative Arts at Western Sydney University with Bruce Crossman and Clare MacLean, a Master of Music at the University of Melbourne with Brenton Broadstock and Honours in Music Composition with Anthony Briggs at Latrobe University. She was awarded the International Music Prize for Excellence in Composition (Greece), Recital Music Double Bass Composition Competition (England), International Modern Music Award for Composition (Vienna) and two Australian Apra Composition

Awards. She worked with Aboriginal didgeridoo performer Tom E. Lewis, who invited her to join his Murrungan tribe in Western Australia.

Eve founded the Melbourne Composers League in 1995 in order for composers to be active in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. She served twice on the Executive Committee of the Asian Composers League and directed Federation Music Week in 2001, an Asia-Pacific festival. She was music coordinator, class music and guitar teacher at the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School for thirty years, a school where music is at the heart of the curriculum.



Composer by Siri Hayes 2010
achromogenic print

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Approaching Venice was recorded live by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and conducted by Josefino Chino Toledo at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo Cultural Center of the Philippines on November 8th, 2015. The recording is reproduced with the kind permission of the Cultural Centre of the Philippines. With thanks to Chris Millado.

I Told You Mr Vayne, Nothing Here is Mine, Do You Think I am Beautiful? Ah. But I Do Know His Name, Juliana and Jeffrey's Love Duet, So This is the Dragon's Den and ***If You Were a Relation*** are excerpts from the opera ***The Aspern Papers***, with the libretto written by David Malouf and based upon the short story by Henry James. Along with ***Sydney Opera House*** and ***Deep in Summer***, they were recorded live by ABC Classic at the Salon of the Melbourne Recital Centre on October 26th, 2016. Duncan Yardley was concert producer and Alex Stinson was sound engineer. These tracks are reproduced courtesy of ABC Classics, licensed by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

From a Star Afar was recorded at Move Records.

Aer Turas was recorded live by Gary McKie on November 9th 2019 at the Church of All Nations, Carlton.

Elephantasy was mastered by Martin Wright (Move Records).

With thanks to Bruce Crossman, Prue Gargano, Tim Duncan, Bridie Duncan, Siri Hayes and Melanie Hayes. With thanks to John Fergeus who sat beside me in the mornings from 2011 to 2016 when most of this music was composed.



Breakout 2020 acrylic on paper

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