



Quivering String
Back to Back Zithers

1 **Reflections**
Le Tuan Hung/ Back to Back Zithers

Inspired by the view of images of clouds reflected on shimmering water. The impression gained from viewing layers of clouds slowly moving in the sky and their tranquil reflection on water is represented in two contrasting musical sections.

2—6 **Basho poems**
Musical settings of five Basho poems

2 **Cicadas**
Kari

Kono michi ya	It's fall and dusk
Yuku hito nashi ni	And no one is walking
Aki no kure	along the road

3 **Spring**
Le Tuan Hung/Back to Back Zithers

Haru nare ya	It's spring, all right
Namonaki yama no	that hill we never named
usugasumi	is hidden in the mist

4 **Pond**
Back to Back Zithers

Meigetsu ya	It's fall and a full moon
Ike wo megurite	I walked around the shore
Yomosugara	of the pond all night

5 **Stones**
Back to Back Zithers

Fukitobasu	Storm on Mount Asama!
Ishi wa Asama no	Wind blowing
Nowaki kana	out of the stones!

6 **Bell**
Kane kiete
Hana no ka wa tsuku
Yuube kana

The temple bell stops -
but the sound keeps coming
out of the flowers

7 **Intisari**
Kari/Back to Back Zithers

Intisari is the inner nectar within the stone within ripe fruit. This piece is an attempt to peel back the layers of three cultures, Sunda (in West Java), Vietnam and thirteenth century France, to find the essence within. We found elements in fragments of traditional Sundanese kacapi ostinato Pangapungan and Eros, in Vietnamese ornamentation and in French troubadour song Reis Glorios (anon.). In a series of improvised duets Intisari traces a triangle formed by the meeting of three cultures.

8 **Cobwebs**
Ros Bandt/Back to Back Zithers

Inspired by a large cobweb in tropical Queensland. This piece is a journey of a spider making its own habitat in a forest strewn with old webs and its attempts to deal with environmental changes and the coming of friend or foe.

9 **tikar plastik tikar pandan** Poem by wiji thukul
Music by Kari/Back to Back Zithers

tikar plastik tikar pandan	plastic mat, straw mat
kitar duduk berhadapan	we're sitting facing each other
tikar plastik tikar pandan	plastic mat, straw mat
lambang dua kekuatan	symbols of strength - both
plastik buatan pabrik	plastic made in the factory
tikar pandan dianyam tangan	straw woven by hand
plastik makin mendesak	plastic just falls apart
tikar pandan bertahan	straw lasts and lasts
kalian duduk di mana ?	where do you sit ?

On a day of frustration we were inspired by wiji to explore the conflict between technology and tradition.

10 **Prayer for land**
Le Tuan Hung/Back to Back Zithers

Leaving one's homeland in search of another land to live is a painful experience. Yet, the search is not always successful for every displaced person. The three sections of this piece, subtitled Departure, Despair and Wordless Prayer, are musical representations of this experience. Dedicated to those living in exile and those who lost their life, hope or trust in humanity on their way searching for a new land to live.

Back to Back Zithers are four distinguished solo composer-performers who enjoy sharing each other's traditions and skills in the process of making a new Australian music. Since 1988 they have combined their original ideas with musical thoughts from Vietnam, West Java, medieval France and Italy in new compositions which transcend the boundaries of East and West.

Kari is a musician and visual artist. She spent several years living a Sundanese life in West Java studying music and dance. She has performed in several multicultural ensembles and explored many musical landscapes. She has also played a key role in facilitating multicultural music in Australia. Her work has taken her from Indonesia to Greece, from the deserts of Australia to sails on the seas.

Kim Thi Le is a virtuoso in Vietnamese classical and village music. Apart from being a very active performer, she taught at the Conservatoire of Music in Vietnam for several years. In 1984 she received the National Gold Medal for Excellence in Dan Tranh Performance. She has performed widely in Asia, Australia, Canada and Europe.

Le Tuan Hung is a composer, performer and writer in music and arts. Apart from performing Vietnamese classical and village music, he has also been exploring music and sound sources from other cultures for inspirations to create new soundscapes. He has performed widely in Asia, Australia, Europe and New Zealand. He is the author of various publications on Vietnamese performing arts and is regarded as an international authority in Vietnamese musicology.

Ros Bandt is a composer, performer and sound sculptor. Her original music and sound sculptures have been widely appreciated in Europe, America and Australasia. She performs with the early music group La Romanesca as well as creating her own acoustic and electronic compositions which are recorded on Move Records. She was awarded the Don Banks fellowship for composition in 1991 and an Australian Research Fellowship in 1992.

All music composed and performed by members of Back to Back Zithers.
English translations of Basho poems by Robert Bly, of wiji thukul poem by Kari.
Cover design by Kari, photographed by Howard Birnstihl

Digital sound recording and editing by Martin Wright, Move Records
Composition and performance is © 1992 Back to Back Zithers
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Back to Back Zithers



- 1 **Reflections** 5'54"
Psaltery, kacapi and 2 dan tranh
- 2 **Cicadas** 3'23"
Kacapi, bells, bamboo chimes and cicadas
- 3 **Spring** 4'14"
3 bamboo slide whistles, psaltery,
prepared dan tranh and kacapi
- 4 **Pond** 4'23"
Renaissance flute and 2 dan tranh
- 5 **Stones** 2'51"
Stones, wind chimes, and ocarina
- 6 **Bell** 0'32"
Japanese bell
- 7 **Intisari** 11'41"
Kacapi, 2 dan tranh and psaltery
- 8 **Cobwebs** 12'14"
Kacapi, 2 dan tranh and psaltery
- 9 **tikar plastik tikar pandan** 5'22"
Voice and prepared kacapi, psaltery and dan tranh
- 10 **Prayer for land** 16'25"
Voice, Renaissance flute, kacapi, 2 dan tranh, wooden sticks,
bell, clay drum and skin drum.