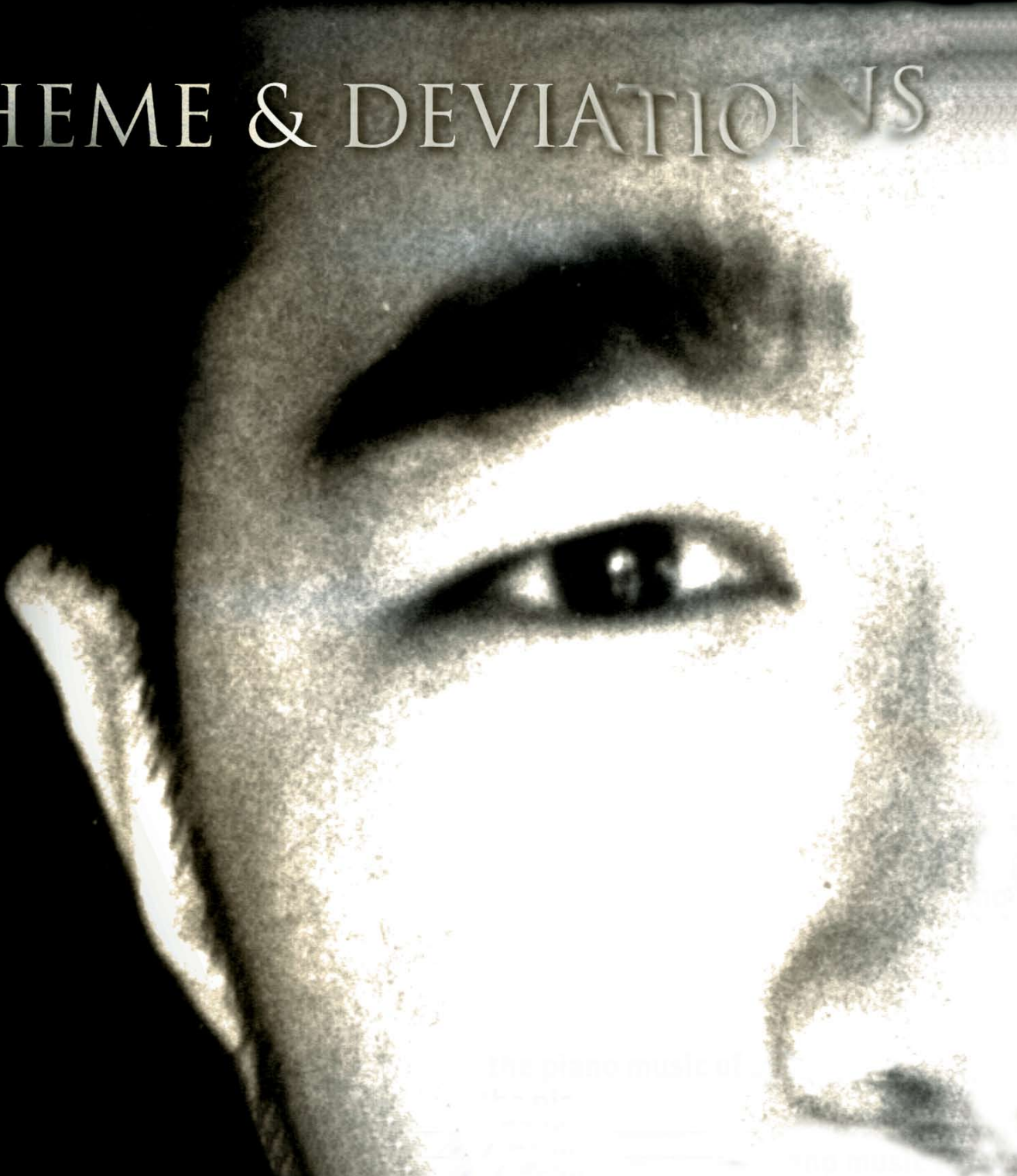


**move**

# THEME & DEVIATIONS

the piano music of  
**sonny chua**



the piano music of  
sonny chua

## composer's preface:

The music on this album seeks to communicate provocatively on several levels, stimulating the wit and imagination in audiences of all ages and all sorts.

Through various styles of expression, with overt and subversive references to traditional and contemporary culture, this compilation of little piano pieces explores the playfulness, gracefulness and exhilaration in music.

SC, September 1999.

## programme notes

### red hot rhapsodies (1997)

A suite of 3 feisty dances infused with infectious rhythms and biting harmonies of new and primeval folk music. These rhapsodies were created in the spirit of tribal drumming, clapping and stomping.

- **TRANSYLVANIAN ROMP** (for Michael) A highly charged opening movement in 7/8 time. Reminiscent of bubbling Bartok & babbling Brubeck.
- **SIESTA**  
This lullaby has 3 voices, each an ostinato weaving, flirting and teasing one another in triple time. The undulating texture builds to an explosive orgy of clashing chords, which then dissipates behind the veil of the opening (dream) motif.
- **JAMAICAN FUMBLE**  
A moto perpetuo finale in 5/8 time, rumbled and fumbled by a multitude of cross rhythms.

### genesis (1993)

- **THE BEGINNING**  
Was without form and darkness was upon the face of the deep. The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters and said: Let there be light.
- **THE FRUIT**  
Eat this of the tree of life and let your eyes be opened. Knowing good and evil. Ye shall die and be as gods.
- **THE RAIN**  
Shall I cause upon the earth for forty days and forty nights; Every living substance that I have made will I Destroy off the face of the earth.
- **THE LAMB**  
...Take thy son and make him a burnt offering. Abraham, fire, knife, and Isaac. ...Behold fire and wood, but where is the lamb? Abraham, altar, wood and Isaac. ...Lay not thine hand, for now I know thou fearest God, Abraham, Angel and Isaac.
- **THE COAT**  
Of  
Many  
Colours.

*scenes of childhood (1992)* (for Jenny)

- FORTRESS MARCH (marcia)
- ASTRAL AIR (aria)
- DUNGEON MASTER (nocturne)
- MIDNIGHT SNACK (scherzo)
- DEATH BY PASTA (tarantella)
- AROUND THE WORLD IN 2 MINUTES...OR LESS (bagatelle)
- NIGHTWALKER (nocturne)
- STOP THAT! (theme and variations)
- THE HUNT (nocturne)
- THE LAST VOYAGE (nocturne)
- CALLING (marcia)
- VISION (dirge)
- YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE OF RUM (jig)
- RODEO (rondo)

*Assorted fairies (1996)* (for Allegra)

A fleeting flock of 15 frivolous, feverish and frightful fantasies.

- twinkling fairy
- flapping fairy
- dizzy fairy
- cuckoo fairy
- lonely fairy
- dripping fairy
- slimy fairy
- funky fairy
- morning fairy...not
- hysterical fairy
- airy fairy
- jiggling fairy
- nagging fairy
- fishy fairy
- twirling fairy

*sonatina (1998)*

- PRELUDIO - fanfare (for Elizabeth)
- INTERMEZZO - angel (for Amy)
- RONDO - night dance

The Victorian Music Teachers' Association (Australia) commissioned this work for the commemoration of its 70th year in 1998



## Theme and 12 Deviations (1990)

The well-worn "tune", Chopsticks, is set in the traditional structure of 'air and variations'. However, the variations that follow deviate unconventionally to 12 different keys and styles. This giddy trifle is a tour de force with countless references and scenarios (from the ridiculous to the delirious), quoting anything that is remotely related to the gaudy theme. Numerous genres, cliché melodies, musical and unmusical idiosyncrasies are fused and overhauled, from hysterical arias to steamy tangos. The challenge is to catch the Woody Allen-esque cum Marx Brother-istic madness in which tawdry tributes and precocious parodies are flashed, tossed and whizzed around!



### sonny chua

Sonny began improvising soon after being introduced to the piano at the age of 8. Discovering how to compose independently, he explored freely in many musical directions. His music reveals an accumulation and assimilation of seemingly incongruous ideas, displaying the use of a broad palette, with myriad influences from classical, pop, jazz, rock, folk to "techno" music. With insatiable curiosity, Chua has ventured into and experimented with the world of classical music (as soloist & accompanist), repeteur (cabaret, musical theatre & opera), folk festivals (touring with a Celtic band), and Musical Director (the Walt Disney Company).

Born in Penang, Malaysia. Chua grew up, was educated and lives in Melbourne, Australia. He completed a Bachelor of Music degree, with specialist studies in Piano Performance (Honours) at the University of Melbourne in 1990.





**Acknowledgments:**

Eternal gratitude to all my friends and supporters. Special thanks to – the passion of Svetlana and the enthusiasm of her wonderful gang of devoted students; Debbie & Judith; Julie & Gerard; Max; Lotti; and A. Trout, a Muse of this and other lives. SC

Music composed and performed by Sonny Chua – Cover photo, Martina Beilharz – Design, Brett Kiteley



for mum and dad, thanks for indulging my passions and obsessions.

**MOVE RECORDS**

e-mail [move@move.com.au](mailto:move@move.com.au)

fax: + 61 (0)3 9497 4426

phone: + 61 (0)3 9497 3105

website: [www.move.com.au](http://www.move.com.au)

© 2000 Move Records