

THE MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

NIGEL WESTLAKE

GEOFFREY PAYNE

JEAN-LOUIS FORESTIER

THE GLASS SOLDIER



THE GLASS SOLDIER SUITE (2007) Nigel Westlake

1 THE GLASS SOLDIER 3'16"

2 THE AGE OF DESTRUCTION 6'29"

3 WHITE BIRDS FLY OVER THE VALLEY OF THE SOMME 4'12"

4 SYMPHONIES OF GLASS 4'53"

5 I WAS BLINDED BUT NOW I SEE 5'46"

6 THE MINSTREL BOY Thomas Moore 2'47"

7 DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND C.H.H. Parry 4'14"

8 THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER (1908) Thomas Moore 3'21"

9 SUSSEX BY THE SEA (1901) William Ward-Higgs 1'29"

10 INVERCARGILL (1909) Alexander Frame Lithgow 2'07"

11 STONY BROKE IN NO MAN'S LAND (1918) Schwartz/Lewis 3'07"

12 JE TE VEUX (1905) Erik Satie 3'52"

13 ROMANCE WITHOUT WORDS OP 17 NO 3 Gabriel Fauré 2'09"

14 THE SOUNDS OF VILLERS-BRETONNEUX (2007) 1'19"



MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Wilma Smith,
Concertmaster
Lorraine Hook
Kirsty Bremner
Eleanor Mancini
Peter Fellin
Kathryn Taylor
Sonia Baldock
Michael Brooks-Reid
Michael Loftus-Hills
Lynette Rayner

Second Violins

Matthew Tomkins
David Shafir
Roger Young
Cong Gu
Isy Wasserman
Gretchen Anderson
Jane-Marie Mason
Leigh Raymond

Violas

Stuart Johnson
Cindy Watkin
Ceridwen Davies
Katie Chilmaid
Lauren Segal
Erkki Veltheim

Cellos

Sarah Morse
Angela Sargeant
Zoe Knighton
Svetlana Bogosavljevic

Double Basses

Damien Eckersley
Stephen Newton
Stuart Riley

Flute/Piccolo

Andrew Macleod
Kathryn Moorhead

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Vicki Philipson
Michael Pisani

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

David Thomas
Dean Newcomb

Bassoon/Contra

Bassoon
Rolf Kuhlmann
Brock Imison

Horns

Graeme Evans
Russell Davis
Geoff Lierse
Eric Bramble

Trumpets

Geoffrey Payne
Dave Farrands
Bill Evans
Julie Payne

Trombones

Ken McClimont
Christopher Farrands
Charles MacInnes

Tuba

Scott Frankcombe

Timpani

Christine Turpin

Percussion

Robert Clarke
Stephen Hardie
Christopher Lane
Leah Scholes

Harp

Julie Raines

Celeste

Janis Cook

THE BRASS ENSEMBLE

Geoffrey Payne
Bill Evans
David Farrands
Shane Hooten
Sean Priest
Ben O'Callahan
Tristan Rubien
Julie Payne
Trevor Green

Russell Davis
Andrew Bottomley
Jason Moulton

Brett Kelly
Peter Brosnan

Christopher Farrands
Scott Evans
Charles MacInnes

Scott Frankcomber
John Woods
Daniel Mallia

Gareth Bowen
Tom O'Kelly
Rolf Kuhlmann
Ben Smart

The Brass Ensemble
includes members of
the
Melbourne/ Villers-
Bretonneux Brass
Ensemble
based in Melbourne

Producers Don Farrands/ Hot
Road Productions Pty Ltd.

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Kate Scaysbrook and the
Australian War Memorial

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Ferguson, Avondale Heights
Catholic Church, Melbourne

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MEMORANDA.



Please send this book
to the above address if
it should be found
in my body.

Signed,

Nelson Ferguson

91234
C/O Ferguson
"Trusdale"
P.O. Box 2
Ballarat
Victoria
Australia

The Glass Soldier Story

THE GLASS SOLDIER is inspired by the life of Nelson Ferguson who served in France as a Field Ambulance officer in World War I. It is an epic story about war and art and the triumph of love told from the point of view of a young Australian who was plunged into a powerful international tragedy, the likes of which he could never have anticipated.

Nigel Westlake has produced an orchestral suite of astonishing power and integrity. It is an exquisite privilege to have such a work accompany my play. And it is thrilling that it should be performed by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. For me this has been a collaboration made in heaven.

- Hannie Rayson

Based in Melbourne, Australia, Hannie Rayson is an internationally acclaimed writer who has won numerous awards. Her works include *Hotel Sorrento*, *Life After George*, *Inheritance* and *Two Brothers*.

NELSON ENLISTED with the Australian Medical Corp from Warnambool on August 2, 1915. He was a private in the 15th Field Ambulance. On December 18, he boarded the Karoola with a shipload of other anxious young soldiers. For Nelson, it would be a long but wonderful voyage to Southampton, England. His detailed diary entries, which he kept for the duration of the war, record his excitement in seeing a new world far from his home town. They describe the exotic markets of Ceylon, the hustle and bustle of Port Suez and the glory of the Bay of Naples.

On arriving in England, Nelson trained for seven months as a stretcher-bearer and prepared for the battlefields of France. During this time he took advantage of numerous cultural offerings. His diary records his great enthusiasm for the churches, plays and concerts, galleries and museums he attended at this time. His relentless love for art and drawing persisted throughout the entire duration of the war. His sensitive sketches and watercolours of the things he saw remind us of the human ability to appreciate life and beauty, even in times of hardship or chaos.

No amount of time could have helped Nelson prepare for France. Stretcher-bearing was one of the most grisly and dangerous positions on the battlefield. Throughout his diaries, Nelson remains positive despite the hardships of the trenches, particularly during the winter. He describes the measly rations, the mud and horror with the poetic detachment perhaps necessary to deal with the trauma of it all.

On April 17, 1918, the Germans opened with a heavy bombardment of mustard-gas on the village of Villers-Bretonneux, north of Paris. The whole region of France was drenched with thousands of gas shells. Though Australian soldiers fiercely defended this territory, many like Nelson were grimly affected by the poisonous gas. Suffering severe corneal scarring, Nelson was blinded. In an act of extreme courage, on April 24, 1918, the Australian army re-took the village. This was a turning point in the war.



The War Years

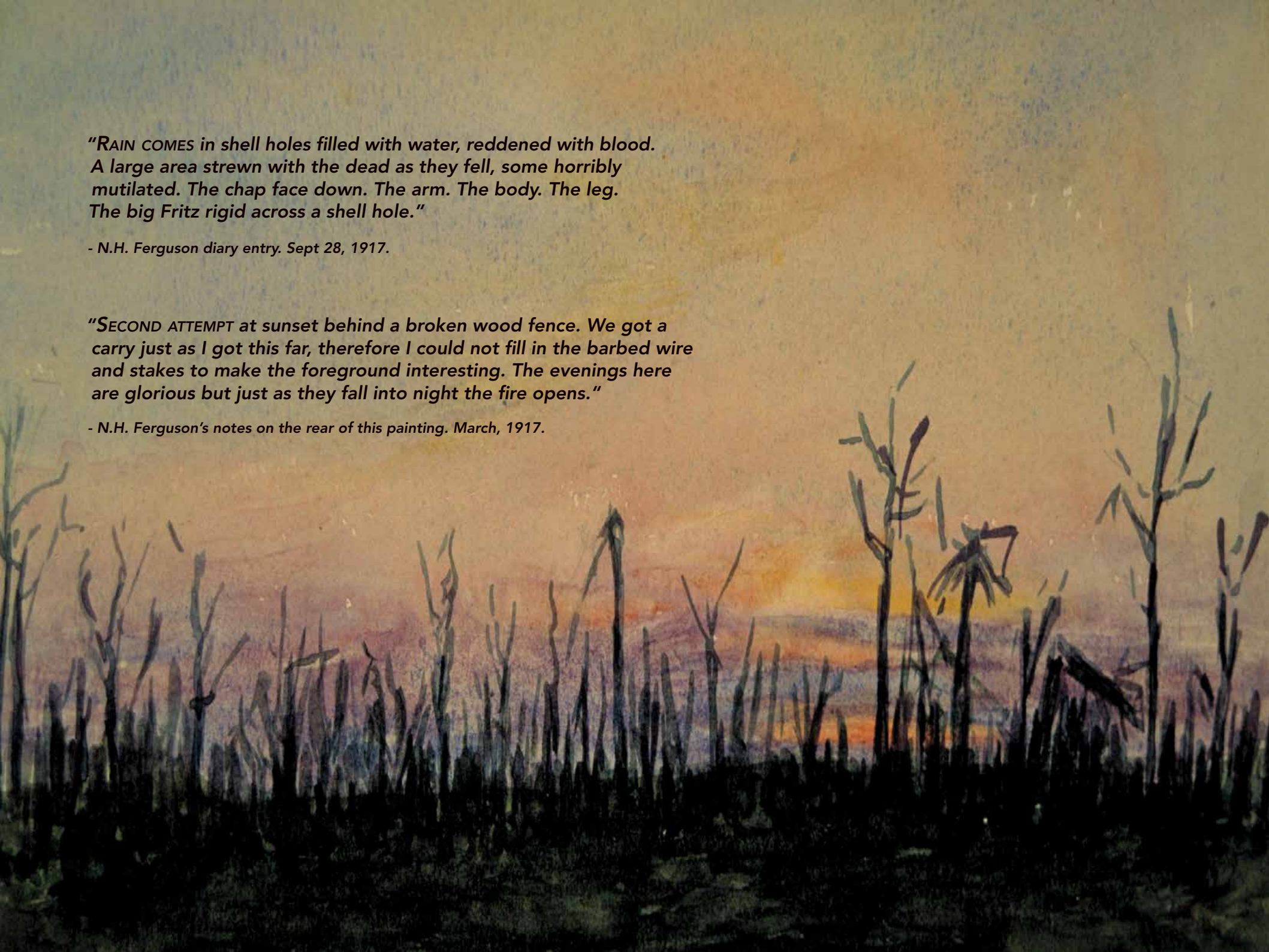


"RAIN COMES in shell holes filled with water, reddened with blood. A large area strewn with the dead as they fell, some horribly mutilated. The chap face down. The arm. The body. The leg. The big Fritz rigid across a shell hole."

- N.H. Ferguson diary entry. Sept 28, 1917.

"SECOND ATTEMPT at sunset behind a broken wood fence. We got a carry just as I got this far, therefore I could not fill in the barbed wire and stakes to make the foreground interesting. The evenings here are glorious but just as they fall into night the fire opens."

- N.H. Ferguson's notes on the rear of this painting. March, 1917.



"FRITZ OPENS with a heavy gas bombardment at 4 going on till 9. Chaps gassed everywhere in the village. We begin to feel it and all begin vomiting badly. I went for relief but was unable to get back. Very weak and retching all the time. Mara brings Arthur; met on stretcher, and the rest assist each other. Now about 1 o'clock. A couple of hundred are gassed and lying in a sunken road awaiting transport. A motor takes us to Aubigny where Jack fixed up my belongings. Blaikie washed and bound up my eyes."

- N.H. Ferguson diary entry. April 17, 1918.





Life After War

UPON HIS RETURN to Australia, Nelson recuperated in his home town Ballarat and then was offered work by the Victorian Government as an art teacher. He married Madeleine Hobbs, who worked in a photographic studio. Nelson eventually became an instructor to art teachers at RMIT, Melbourne. Among those who learned from Nelson were his daughter, Jessica Ferguson, and his son, John Ferguson, who later was sent to Papua New Guinea in World War II. Young sister Mary also learned art and performed music with her brother and sister.

In the 1950s, Nelson Ferguson retired as an art instructor as his eye sight had failed him. John, with Nelson's son in law, Nick Papas, created a stained glass window workshop in Nelson's backyard. They made fantastic windows for many churches through-out Victoria. The sons, Peter and Andrew Ferguson, now carry on the stained glass business in Melbourne.

The pictures to the left are: Pastel sketch by N.H. Ferguson of his son John, 1942; the Ferguson family on holiday in the 1930s; N.H. Ferguson; Madeleine and baby Jessica, late 1920s.



Sight Restored

NELSON WAS CONSIDERED for a corneal transplant to restore his sight in 1962. At that time his incapacity was assessed at ninety percent. The Repatriation Department had given him an 'Entitlement Card' for treatment. However, he was assessed and considered a 'bad risk' for the operation. Nelson accepted the medical opinion negating the operation. In 1968 he was again considered for the operation and this time a new ophthalmologist, Mr Hardy Smith of Melbourne, considered that the operation could be undertaken. On August 4, 1968 Nelson, aged 77, was taken to the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and a corneal transplant was performed. He spent one month in hospital. The transplant was successful. He regained the vision which mustard gas in 1918 had taken from him. He delighted in his new world, from the artwork he could now see so clearly, to the details which had escaped him for so long. He admired everything there was to see: from the blades of grass in the back yard of his home; to the fine detail of the nails in his back verandah. And he could now see the stained glass windows which had been created in the workshop of his backyard.

He could not, however, share this new world with Madeleine, who had died before this operation.

In 1976 Nelson Ferguson died, aged 85. He was a great Australian and a wonderful artist.



This is Nelson's tree and plaque in the Avenue of Honour, Ballarat, Victoria. It is tree No. 3167 of the original number of 3,771. The Avenue, which was established in 1919, stretches for some 22 kilometres.

A Recent Trip to Villers-Bretonneux

IN THE MISTY half-light after dawn, the bare winter trees and tapestry fields of Villers-Bretonneux are eerily similar to pictures from World War I. Of course, the land is no longer a muddy morass, torn by shells and trenches, but to the minds of 15 Australian visitors who are remembering the great battles fought there, it's just a small step. Bullets from World War II pockmark the memorial and bring a sharp sense of drama to the now-tranquil and lovely sacred space.

We have come – 13 musicians from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and two journalists – on a pilgrimage, while the rest of the orchestra enjoy a free day in Paris. Trumpeter Dave Farrands' grandfather was blinded here in 1918, and principal trumpeter Geoff Payne lost two great uncles. We find the cross of one in a photo at the war museum above the L'Ecole Victoria – a school built with money donated by Victorian children, where they still sing *Waltzing Matilda* in English every morning, as they have for 80 years.

This morning the musicians play for the students, including *Waltzing Matilda*. Then we visit the memorial – formally Australian soil – for a deeply moving rendition of *The Minstrel Boy* and *The Last Post*. Farrands and Payne lay a wreath. The French museum director who is holding Payne's music is in tears – "my weeping, walking, shaking music stand", Payne calls him – and his emotion helps settle Payne, enabling him to produce a simple and profound beauty from Nelson Ferguson's 1904 cornet.

Lest we forget? It is a day those who were there will always remember, for those who were there before.

Age journalist Barney Zwartz accompanied the MSO on its European tour in January 2007.

Photos: Villers - Bretonneux War Monument, France; Geoff and Julie Payne; Derek Guille, ABC Radio



1–5. THE GLASS SOLDIER SUITE

Nigel Westlake (b.1958)

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Commissioned in memory of N.H. Ferguson and in honour of his contribution to art and his virtuous life, *The Glass Soldier* has been composed specifically for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and resident Principal trumpet, Geoff Payne.

In five movements, the suite is inspired by Hannie Rayson's epic play which tells the story of Nelson Ferguson's misfortune in war and his ultimate triumph against adversity.

6. THE MINSTREL BOY

Thomas Moore (1780-1852)

Brass Ensemble

This piece was arranged by David Farrands and was a favourite of Nelson's. He used to whistle it in the kitchen. It was originally a Welsh Boeur War tune, which was subsequently adopted by the AIF as its unofficial anthem and more recently was popularised by The Corrs. The cornet here, played by Payne, is the original cornet of Nelson Ferguson. It is a 1905 Boosey B Flat, which was recently restored to working order.

7. DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND

C.H.H. Parry (1848-1918)

Brass Ensemble

Obligato by David Farrands.

8. THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER

Thomas Moore

Trumpet and Brass Ensemble

Arranged by David Farrands.

9. SUSSEX BY THE SEA

William Ward-Higgs (1866-1936)

Brass Ensemble

10. INVERCARGILL

Alexander Frame Lithgow

(1870-1929)

Brass Ensemble

11. STONY BROKE IN NO MAN'S LAND

Jean Schwartz (1878-1956)

Sam M. Lewis (1885-1959)

Recorded by Frank Miller in 1921

Voice and Band

No Man's Land is a metaphor of the post-war period for the veterans who return from war disabled, yet are required to continue life meaningfully.

This piece features in the Hannie Rayson play *The Glass Soldier*.

12. JE TE VEUX

Erik Satie (1866-1925)

This piece is the perfect twin to track number 13. Composed in 1905, its lyrical quality expresses great romantic affection, yet somehow it is also imbued with sad reflection. Featuring Geoff Payne on trumpet, Jane Hammond on piano, James Lloyd on double bass and George Butrumlas on accordion.

13. ROMANCE WITHOUT WORDS, OP 17 No 3

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Trumpet and Piano

This piece was selected because of its French origin and because it was composed in the era of Nelson's early life. Its melancholy and tranquil melody can take the listener to the peaceful poppy fields in Northern France.

14. SOUNDS OF VILLERS-BRETONNEUX

Bird Song

The sounds of Villers-Bretonneux include not only the rustling of the poppies but also the small birds nested amongst the war monuments. They were the companion of soldiers when all was quiet. This track reminds us that within the tumbling chaos of life, like art, perfect moments of nature are still possible. Recording of birds from northern France provided by Geoff Sample, www.wildsong.co.uk.

The Glass Soldier Suite

THE GLASS SOLDIER Beginning slowly and tentatively, this is a portrait of the young Nelson; an artist imbued with dignity and optimism as he embarks upon his journey to France, an ill fated adventure that will change his life forever. The low register trumpet phrases in the final bars suggest an apprehension of the fate awaiting Nelson and his comrades that lies over the horizon.

THE AGE OF DESTRUCTION An orchestral impression of the battle of Villers-Bretonneux in North France (April 17-24, 1918) in which Nelson, a stretcher-bearer, was embroiled. This music seeks to describe the relentless juggernaut of war and the terror of life on the battlefield. Nelson (via the trumpet) can be heard from time to time; a vulnerable lone voice searching for reason amongst the surrounding mayhem.

Various effects are incorporated into the score in an attempt to conjure the desolate atmosphere of death and destruction including a wind machine, thunder sheet, air raid sirens and gas alarms. On the battlefields of World War I, empty shell casings were hung and struck like a bell to warn of an impending gas attack.

WHITE BIRDS FLY OVER THE VALLEY OF THE SOMME Solo cello is featured in a slow lament for the aftermath of the battle. The image of white birds juxtaposed over a desolate landscape devastated beyond recognition is a metaphor for hope, the title being a scene descriptive from Hannie Rayson's original screenplay.

As Nelson surveys the killing fields of the Somme he yearns to be back in the arms of his true love, Madeleine. The sweet sounds of her piano playing inhabit his daydreaming and offer a glimpse of hope amongst the scarred earth and mud-filled trenches.

Towards the end of his life Nelson played the cello, an instrument that he himself had made.

SYMPHONIES OF GLASS Escaping from the horror of the trenches, Nelson has carved out a moment in time (on leave) and finds himself inside an ancient village church somewhere in the French countryside. He admires the grandeur of the stained glass windows and lovingly communes with the spirits of the artisans responsible for such beauty, empathizing with and marvelling at their work. Their search for beauty, for colour. Basking in the play of light, the music opens with a reference to the 15th Century French Advent plainchant "Veni, Veni, Emmanuel" over which is superimposed a filigree texture of harp arpeggios, celesta, crotales (pitched metal discs) and solo violin.

Nelson reflects on the meaningless slaughter of the war and berates the Almighty for allowing such atrocities to occur, at which time the orchestral texture is expanded and intensified, exploding at the peak of his

anger as a stray bomb lands on the roof of the church and Nelson is covered in broken glass as the windows collapse upon him. Engulfed by mustard gas, there is panic and a deep awareness exploding in a sense of catastrophe. He is hurled into darkness. His visual world is destroyed and his life with it. He is buried alive, suffocated by helplessness and claustrophobia. The mustard gas takes his sight.

I WAS BLINDED BUT NOW I SEE

This is the struggle for a man plunged into darkness to find the light. Literally, and metaphorically.

For Nelson blindness is akin to being a lost man. Caught up in turmoil and anxiety and unable to be the author of his own life, with extraordinary tenacity the trumpet cadenza charts Nelson's journey as he sets about the process of regaining control.

Optimistic and uplifting, this finale speaks of hope and rebirth; the regeneration of the human spirit.

I would like to thank Hannie Rayson for her guidance and feedback throughout the composition process, Jean-Louis Forestier for directing the orchestra with great sensitivity and attention to detail, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for a committed and powerful reading of the score and their ongoing support of my work and also Don Farrands for offering me a unique opportunity to render his family's powerful story through the medium of music.

- Nigel Westlake



MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

With a reputation for excellence, versatility and innovation the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is Australia's internationally-acclaimed and oldest orchestra, celebrating its centenary throughout 2007.

This fine orchestra is renowned for its performances of the great symphonic masterworks with leading international and Australian soloists and conductors. It has also enjoyed hugely successful performances with the Three Tenors, Frank Sinatra, Elton John, John Farnham, Dionne Warwick, Harry Connick, Jr. kd lang, Ben Folds, rock bands KISS and Meat Loaf.

In 2005, Oleg Caetani took up the baton as the MSO's Chief Conductor and Artistic Director for a four-year appointment, and in 2007 he led the Orchestra on its second European tour to Spain, Paris, Berlin and Milan.

The MSO has received widespread international recognition in recent overseas tours to Europe (2000), China (2002), St

Petersburg, Russia (2003) and Japan (2005).

Each year the Orchestra performs to more than 250,000 people in Melbourne and regional Victoria. The MSO reaches an even larger audience nationally through its concert broadcasts on ABC Classic FM. Some performances are presented on ABC TV,

including the documentary *To Russia with Love* about the MSO's St Petersburg tour and *MSO Century* in celebration of 100 years of the Orchestra.

Recent recordings include major CD releases on the Chandos and ABC Classics labels. The MSO's Chandos recording of Alexandre Tansman's Symphonies No. 4, 5 and 6 with Oleg Caetani recently received a *Diapason d'Or* award. In 2005 the Orchestra launched a new live-in-concert CD series, MSO LIVE through ABC Classics. In addition, members of the Orchestra have featured on numerous film soundtracks including *Babe*, *IQ*, *Six Degrees of Separation* and *The Dish*. The MSO has also recorded music for a number of computer and console-based games based on films such as *Jurassic Park* and *The Polar Express*.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Ltd is a member of the Symphony Services Australia network. The Orchestra is funded principally by the Australia Council, the Commonwealth Government's arts funding and advisory body and is generously supported by the Victorian Government

through Arts Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet. The MSO is also funded by the City of Melbourne, its Principal Partner, Emirates, and individual and corporate sponsors and donors.

NIGEL WESTLAKE is an accomplished Australian musician, his career embracing performance, conducting, composition and recording.

He has toured Australia and the world with diverse groups such as a circus troupe, chamber ensembles, fusion bands, a ballet company and orchestras. His interest in composition dates from the late 1970s when he formed a classical/jazz-rock/world-music fusion band to play original music.

His feature film credits include *Miss Potter*, *Babe*, *Babe - Pig in the City*, *Children of the Revolution*, *A Little Bit of Soul*, *The Nugget*, *Antarctica*, *Imagine*, *The Edge* and *Solarmax*.

His compositions have received many awards, including several Australian Performing Rights Association awards, Film Critics Circle Awards, and a Gold Medal at the New York International Radio Competition.

JEAN-LOUIS FORESTIER'S great competence and sensitivity as a conductor have earned him great respect from his critics and audience alike. His extensive symphonic and operatic repertoire has shown him to be highly versatile; having crossed into the realms of both classical and contemporary music.

Born in France, he has become internationally renowned and has acted as guest conductor for the Tasmanian, Melbourne and Queensland Symphony Orchestras.

Mr. Forestier travelled to Villers-Bretonneux in

early 2007 with members from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and conducted selected works performed at the Australian War Monument at Villers-Bretonneux.

GEOFFREY PAYNE played the cornet as a child, before he switched to the trumpet at age 12. He received a scholarship to study at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He was admitted to the trumpet section of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In 1979 he joined the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and has been playing with them ever since. While he regularly performs with Hiroyuki Iwaki's Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa in Japan, his soloist career has also seen him perform with the Adelaide, West Australian and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras and the Sydney Symphony.

Mr. Payne features on this recording, including playing Nelson Ferguson's 1905 Boosey B Flat cornet.



A musical tribute to the ANZAC spirit

This album is a spiritual reflection in music of the journey of the Australian soldiers who fought in the Great War. This is expressed through the life of one soldier in particular, Private Nelson Ferguson, an Australian from Ballarat. Ferguson's story is just one of thousands arising from the Great War. But it tells us all about the horrific nature of war, about adversity through disability, and about the triumph of endurance, courage, and love.

Private Ferguson was a stretcher bearer in the 15th Field Ambulance Corp and served in France between 1915 and 1918. Ferguson was blinded by mustard gas during battle at Villers-Bretonneux, a small town north of France. The battle, climaxing on ANZAC day, 25 April 1918, turned the tide of the War on the Western Front.

Despite his disability from war, Ferguson returned to teach art in Victoria after the war. In 1968 he received a corneal transplant and his vision was returned to him.

Ferguson's life is now a play written by Hannie Rayson, entitled *The Glass Soldier*, recently performed by the Melbourne Theatre Company. The play traces Ferguson's challenged life, his love for his beautiful wife, Madeleine, and his journey towards the light.

In early 2007 some of the members of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra visited Villers-Bretonneux and paid homage to the ANZACs. They were there to remember and give respect to Australian soldiers, and in particular, two great uncles of principal trumpet, Geoffrey Payne, and the grandfather of another trumpet player, David Farrands.

The orchestral piece on this album, entitled the *Glass Soldier Suite*, has been composed by Nigel Westlake and is recorded by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The orchestral suite, like the play, exhibits the wonder, tragedy, love and resolution of Ferguson's life. It is a beautiful work by one of Australia's most gifted and respected composers.

The Brass Ensemble on this album is comprised of some of Australia's leading brass players. It features, amongst others, the trumpet of Geoffrey Payne. On one of the tracks, Payne performs on Private Ferguson's 1905 cornet. The Ensemble recently performed at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, on Remembrance Day (11 November each year).

This album is a musical tribute to the courage of the ANZACs in the Great War.