

# Monash

University Flute Ensemble

## *Fantasia Australis*



The **Monash University Flute Ensemble** was established in 2010 as an ensemble course-unit within the Monash University School of Music program. The student-based ensemble is open to all flutists, both in Performance and Arts degrees. The ensemble has recorded creative compositions by both faculty and student composers and has made appearances at the 2009, 2011 and 2103 Australian Flute Festivals. The group is featured on the University's 'Sound Series' programs and plans to visit the United States in 2014 to premiere several commissioned works. As students in

training, these musicians are provided with the opportunities to experience real-world performance settings, and this recording process has given this platform to their education.

The ensemble ranges in size and timbral colour as all members double or triple on Piccolo, Eb flute, C flute, Alto, Bass, Contrabass and Subcontrabass flutes. With their unique sound, and commitment to new music, the Monash Flute Ensemble is poised to be one of the leaders of new music for multiple flutes in Australia.

## *Fantasia Australis*

This recording features compositions by living Australian composers, mostly whom are based in Melbourne, Victoria. The flute ensemble repertoire of Australia is rather minor compared to other national musical genres, though the country has a rich and vibrant source of fine woodwind composers. A strong growing interest in the extended flute ensemble is taking place here in Australia and worldwide, as multi-award winning composers are exploring and investigating the sonic possibilities of the extended flute family with fresh ears. This album displays a variety of musical styles from driving rhythmic pieces to works based around pure lyricism and improvisation. These imaginative creations can take the listener on a journey into the Australian landscape, to explore the wild bird-calls, the driving the waves, and the howling southern winds of a land as old as time. Australia is a land filled with natural sounds that can permeate the psyche and open new thoughts of sonic possibilities. This recording provides both student performers and composers the opportunity to experience, and publicise their musical training and aptitudes on the international stage. It is our vision that this CD will inspire new generations of composers and performers to explore the traditional sounds of the Western flute, as well as showcase the abilities of the power and sensitivity of the entire flute family.

**Fanfare for Uncommon Flutes** by Houston Dunleavy is a pure burst of flashy and furious flute sounds. Commissioned by Peter Sheridan, the piece was the opener for the ensemble's 2013 Australian Flute Festival appearance. Composed in binary form, the work explodes in a frenzy of off-beat rhythmic patterns that drive with momentous energy. A battery of low flutes enters almost in a united gang formation, and support, if not even challenge, the high octane energy that bubbles above their sound world. The B section pushes the boundaries of any large ensembles virtuosity, as the melodic intervals become wider and more complex. The energy of the dense texture suddenly dissipates and the low flutes drag us down into the recapitulation. An exciting tour-de-force this work features over 8 octaves of flute sound, from piccolo down to hyperbass.  
[www.houstondunleavy.com](http://www.houstondunleavy.com)

**Fantasia Australis** is a lyrical contemporary parody based loosely around the tune of 'Australia Fair.' Composed by third year composition major (of 2010), Vincent Giles, the work opens and closes with some very unique clustered sonorities from c flutes to subcontrabass and incorporates different uses of the flutist's airstream (jet whistles, flutters etc.). The central section hints at the National Anthem, yet never quotes any phrase in its full capacity, yet the ear can still discern its presence and sense of beautiful lyrical musical direction. The score is weighted towards the low end, with alto

bass, contra and subcontrabass flute parts all having important parts to add to this unique sound world. The ensemble is greatly indebted to Mr Giles for his fine contribution and continued inspiration.  
[www.vincentgiles.com](http://www.vincentgiles.com)

**Chaconne** was originally composed for double string orchestra, and was easy to adapt for double flute choir. Listeners familiar with Bach's famous chaconne (from the Partita for solo violin in D minor BWV 1004) may notice allusions to Bach's rhythm and structure, which are themselves part of the chaconne tradition. This chaconne consists of twenty-one cycles, a Fibonacci number that is broken down into successively smaller Fibonacci numbers to provide the structure of the piece. Most notable is three cycles of strict canon between the two choirs leading into the climax: three cycles worth of ten-part counterpoint. Non-technical readers are advised not to worry about cycles and Fibonacci numbers, and are encouraged just to enjoy the music!  
[www.mcalley.net.au](http://www.mcalley.net.au)

**Aerofoil** is arranged from an electro-acoustic composition of the same title (2008) by student composer Emma Rogers. The piece opens with fluttering flutes playing harmonics which quickly form a tight unified rhythmic groove. As this ostinato gradually develops, fragmented melodic shapes enter in and allow the sonic structure to morph into something new, yet at the same time remain stable. A most effective and unique compositional device for multiple flutes, as

the colours of the various flutes blend well into the texture of the whole, yet remain individual in their register voicings.

[www.thomasreiner.com.au](http://www.thomasreiner.com.au)

A somewhat abstract work, **Milford Fall** is based around the simple instrumental technique known as 'tremolos', or shakes. These fast alternating notes, are basically much like trills, though some of the spacing between the notes can be wider than a trill, which makes the resulting sound more complex and even a bit scary. In composer Houston Dunleavy's words, "Milford Fall is, for the most part, more meditative. Yet it is still concerned with sonority: this time, that which can be built from quarter tones through to tremolos. These are heard in the piece as an expanding entity, as if they are part of a continuum based on the sonorities of intervals. The work grew from my last experience of Milford, Pennsylvania, in the autumn of 2003. The sights and sounds of this small town at that time of year, like the fluttering, rustling autumn leaves, the bracing cold of the playground and parks, the quiet of the nearby forests, the sudden, chilling winds that promise the bitter winter ahead, the giant Sport Utility Vehicles, and the mighty Delaware River, all compete for space in this little piece. Yet perhaps the main reason for writing this work is the many pleasant days I've spent in Milford over the years, composing, walking, drinking coffee, and eating pizza and ice cream in the company of my family. I've also composed this piece to acknowledge the kindness and generosity of my mother-in-law, Dr M

Elsbeth Goodin. It is with great pleasure that I dedicate this work to her, with love and thanks."

Short and quirky, **Blow Pipes** by the Tasmanian based composer Russell Gilmour is originally for flute quartet, though the piece works well in a large ensemble setting. The ostinato rhythmic groove is layered by melodic interests on the upper flutes. As this opening section comes to a cadence, a new slower feel of time is developed. The C flutes find their voice in a soaring short lived rising melody that brings the return of the opening ostinato. An accelerando ushers in the coda, where the flutist add a singing line to their 'blow pipes' and the work comes to an exciting close. Gilmour has worked as a teacher, lecturer and arts administrator over the years and recently has established the Gilmour Ensemble in 2003. The score and parts can be electronically purchased from Pink Chesterfield Music.

[www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/gilmour-russell](http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/gilmour-russell)

**Roses: Potpourri of Pain and Peace** by Emma Rogers, is a cyclical four movement work that features fragmented melodic phrasing and fine instrumental blends. In the composers words, "Roses is playing with the notion of being simultaneously happy and sad. It takes the imagery of the blood red rose; a delicate, fragile object that is present at both weddings and funerals and explores it within a musical context." The opening low flute solos gently emerge into a forward moving section featuring the combined

sonorities of the piccolo, C flutes and alto flutes. As the rhythms and tempos grow slightly faster so does the sound of the ensemble and melodies appear in the bass and contrabass parts, giving the movement a blossoming affect. The gesture climaxes with the opening phrase being tossed around the ensemble from piccolo to contrabass flute. The movement closes with a suddenly syncopated rhythmic figure. The second movement opens with a driving emotional rhythm that is released into a potpourri of melodic fragments and gestures. A heart-felt passage features the piccolos crying their phrase above the vigor and power of the low flutes as they stomp their rhythmic gesture into submission. A short and delicate piccolo solo brings the motion to the closing flighty syncopations of the coda. The emotional weight of the Andante is immediately felt in the woeful tones of the low flutes, as alto basses and contrabass flutes pass mournful fragmented phrases between each other. Glimpses of hope can be felt in fast rhythmic gestures, that help move the musical idea forward. As the sound of the ensemble grows, the dark tone remains present and this profound yet simple movement is brought back to its lonely opening. The thematic motive is used to open the fourth movement is a sombre and almost desolate state. This gives way to a 6/8 dance that seems weighted with pain, though continues to march on. A sudden stop, has the opening thematic phrase return on the contrabass flute to close this emotional and passionate work. Ms Rogers is a third year undergraduate composition student

of Russell Goodwin and Thomas Reiner. She is also a fine flute player and has recently taken her Associate of Music examination for the Australian Music Examinations Board. [www.emmarogerscomposer.com](http://www.emmarogerscomposer.com)

**Fragments**, is a piece for large flute ensemble that exploits the wide range of this ensembles diverse colours. Vincent Giles' composition is designed as a layering of different sounds within time, that explores sonic space with relation to both pitch and rhythm. It is not written with a harmonic structure or progression in mind. The work also explores silence and space through the range of the instruments. The climax of this special exploration comes in the form of 'improvised fragments.' Each member's small fragmented gesture is added to the whole, creating a collage of sounds. The piece calls for a specific stage setup, that provides an antiphonic performance, with sound being moved around in a stereo field.

**Angry Tunes** by Polish born, Queensland based composer Michal Rosiak features a variety of clever compositional tricks and parodies. In the composer's words: "This contemporary composition is addressed to predominantly younger audiences. The main motive was taken from the popular game 'Angry Birds'. The entire composition is based on that very motive which is developed throughout the piece and interestingly becomes the harmonic foundation in both the horizontal and vertical lines. The other familiar tunes have also been used in this composition: Mozart's G major Concerto,

Bach's Badinerie and the main theme from the 'Harry Potter' movie. This is a great encore piece, as well as having educational value. It contains a variety of forms like round and fugue as well as plenty of technical challenges. Angry Tunes was premiered at the Australian Flute Festival in Canberra in 2011 and has since become a very popular piece among students and professional ensembles and the composer himself has created a number of arrangements ranging from flute quartet to flute choir, including low sounding flutes." [www.mrflute.com.au](http://www.mrflute.com.au)

**Improvised Fragments** is an alternative take of free improvisation section of Vincent Giles Fragments. This track's unique communication and sonority surprised me at how well the ensemble can express without written music in front of them. It begins with a solo on bass flute and adds instruments one by one, until there is a cluster of sound that eventually fades away. The possibilities are always endless with improvisation though this particular take almost feels as if it were premeditated ... a fine example of what a University instrumental ensemble can do, when giving the opportunity.

For more information about Australian music and ensembles: [www.australianmusiccentre.com.au](http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au)

## **Monash University Flute Ensemble**

Kate Aldred  
Jessie Beaty  
Alice Bennett\*  
Elizabeth Collier  
Jessica Foord  
Merrily Hansen  
Jessica Hateley\*  
Ruth Hill\*  
Emily Huang  
Sabrina Jansen  
Catherine King  
Kerryn McDonald\*  
Jazmine Morris  
Katie Nestoriwskyj  
Daniel Nguyen  
Maree Pattas  
Emma Rogers  
Chris Street  
Cassandra Van Heer  
Grace Wiedemann  
Sophia Zhou-Ambatsidis  
(\*guest performers)

**Peter Sheridan** has directed flute ensembles in the United States and Australia, leading groups for the Victorian College of the Arts, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), University of Arizona and La Sierra University. Mr Sheridan was a founding member of the innovative Los Angeles Flute Quartet, and recorded with the Hollywood Studio Orchestra. A Teaching Associate for the Monash University School of Music, he has lectured in the areas of American Music and Woodwind pedagogy since 2009. Mr Sheridan is woodwinds instructor and band

director at Donvale Christian College and Mazenod College, and presents lectures and workshops for the low flutes, Internationally. He has commissioned numerous works for the low flutes/flute ensemble and has been an invited guest artist to the Australian, American, British, Canadian and Japanese International Flute Festivals. His flutes can be heard on Varese Sarabande, Albany, Innova, Warner Bros. (Latina), Forest Glade and Move Records. [www.lowflutes.com](http://www.lowflutes.com)

### Acknowledgements

We express our appreciation to the Music Faculty at Monash University, especially David Griffiths, Thomas Reiner and Robert Burke for their kind assistance in securing the Music Auditorium for these recording sessions.

The ensemble wishes to graciously thank Martin Wright of Move Records for his time, efforts and all round support. You have single-handedly added several compositions to the Australian Flute Ensemble repertoire. That is a gift we all will never forget. Thank

you for your vision, trust and professionalism towards the timely completion of this CD.

To my colleague Vaughan McAlley, for his tireless work and continued patience with the editing of this disc. Your 'seasoned-educated-wisdom' has brought our performance and these compositions to life! It is your dedication to sound and overall details that has created our vision. A deep sincere gratitude is bestowed onto you. Thanks also to Move Records employee, Rhys Boak for his assistance.

A warm thank you goes to all the student performers involved in the project. Your work, efforts, talents and expression have made this unique recording a reality. For the flutists whom gave up their weekend (just before finals!) to play on multiple flutes and never complain but rather push through to the other side and complete a very demanding recording/ rehearsal schedule, my sincere gratitude. Your contribution is further-reaching than you can image. Your performance has provided young composers with a fine opportunity to share their gifts and musical voice and experience the joy,

love and pure passion of hearing their creations come to life! For this you have become small heroes and diplomats (if you will) for your countries musical voice and art. That goes beyond the fifteen hours of recording and the years of practice. That

I would like to thank Peter Sheridan for his enthusiastic support of contemporary Australian music. Without his boundless energy this disc would probably not have been made. And contemporary Australian music and Australia's flute ensemble scene would be the poorer for it.

*Vaughan McAlley, composer*

my friends is artistry.

Lastly, a word must be said to our fine composers. Your talents are the true show here. With your adventurous sounds worlds and fun, exciting instrumentations, you have made an ensemble once deemed as 'educational', a vital and living component of serious composition. It is only with your voice that we become performers:

Benefaciat vobis Deus  
et vos inspiratione opus!  
(May God bless you in your  
work and inspiration!)

*Peter Sheridan, director*



# Fantasie Australis

Monash University Flute Ensemble  
directed by Peter Sheridan

Recorded at Monash University, Sir Zelman Cowen  
School of Music, Music Auditorium 8/9 June 2013 by  
Martin Wright (Move Records)  
Edited and balanced by Vaughan McAlley  
Mastered by Martin Wright  
Artwork by Benjamin Thomas  
Photographs by Kerry McDonald and Vincent Giles

**move**

**MD 3366**

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www.move.com.au

- 1** Fanfare for Uncommon Flutes (2013)\* *Houston Dunleavy* 2'53"
- 2** Fantasie Australis (2011)\* *Vincent Giles* 4'13"
- 3** Chaconne for double flute choir (2010) *Vaughan McAlley* 5'54"
- 4** Aerofoil (2003/arr. 2011)\* *Thomas Reiner* 4'32"
- 5** Milford Fall (2010) *Houston Dunleavy* 5'12"
- 6** Blow Pipes (1997) *Russell Gilmour* 3'45"
  
- Roses: Potpourri of Pain and Peace (2011)\* *Emma Rogers*
  - 7** I. Elegant Utterances 3'15"
  - 8** II. Breathe 2'25"
  - 9** III. Crimson 4'02"
  - 10** IV. Fragments of Dance 2'20"
  
- 11** Fragments (2010)\* *Vincent Giles* 6'28"
- 12** Angry Tunes (2011)\* *Michal Rosiak* 3'30"
- 13** Bonus Track: Improvised Fragments (take two) 1'50"

\* Denotes commissioned or arranged composition for MUFE