



ALICIA CROSSLEY

# BASS INSTINCTS

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BASS RECORDER COMPOSITIONS  
BY AUSTRALIAN FEMALE COMPOSERS.

## 1-3. HOLLY HARRISON

**SYLVAN** 8:05

For bass recorder and percussion

I. 2:40

II. 2:47

III. 2:38

## 4. FIONA HILL

**LOST IN THE DARKNESS** 9:36

For bass recorder and live electronics

## 5. ANNE BOYD

**ALHEKULYELE** 6:57

For bass recorder player and wind chimes

## 6. ALICE CHANCE

**INHALTATIONS** 6:25

For bass recorder and multi-tracked bass  
recorder quartet

## 7. LISA CHENEY

**BEFORE YOU** 6:06

For bass recorder

## 8. AMANDA COLE

**VIBRATION MEDITATION** 8:05

For bass recorder and electronics

## 9. JESSICA WELLS

**THE CLOCKMAKER** 6:11

For bass recorder and electronics

Tracks 1-3 performed by Alicia Crossley and Joshua Hill, tracks 4-9 performed by Alicia Crossley. All tracks recorded and mastered by Ross A'hern. Recording producer Jessica Wells. Tracks recorded at City Recital Hall, Sydney, mastered at The Chapel of Sound. Track 1-3 mixed by Holly Harrison, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 4 mixed by Fiona Hill, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 5 mixed by Anne Boyd, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 6 mixed by Alice Chance, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 7 mixed by Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 8 mixed by Amanda Cole, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern. Track 9 mixed by Jessica Wells, Alicia Crossley and Ross A'hern.

# “IF THERE CAN BE SUCH A THING AS A RECORDER ROCKSTAR, CROSSLEY IS THAT...”

## FISH FINE MUSIC

Alicia Crossley is one of Australia’s leading recorder players. She performs a wide variety of repertoire from renaissance dance tunes to contemporary electro-acoustic works with a particular interest in bass recorder repertoire.

An experienced recorder player, Alicia regularly performs throughout Australia and has toured in the USA and New Zealand. She has presented works at a number of festivals and conferences including Tilde New Music Festival, Electro-Fringe, Metropolis, Vivid Festival, Electronic Music Midwest, and SEAMUS, and has performed with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, Bach

Akademie Australia, Salut! Baroque, The Sydney Consort, and The Marais Project. Alicia is also a founding member of the unique and vibrant ensemble Duo Blockstix.

Alicia is a passionate supporter of contemporary Australian music and has collaborated with a number of Australian composers to create inspired, conceptual, and virtuosic new compositions for the recorder. In 2011, Alicia released her debut solo CD *Addicted to Bass* featuring seven newly commissioned Australian works for bass recorder, followed by her second solo CD *Alchemy* in 2015, which was nominated for Best Classical Album by AIR. In 2018 Alicia released her third CD *Muse* with the acclaimed Acacia Quartet which was nominated for Best Classical Album by ARIA.

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

# BASS INSTINCTS

ALICIA CROSSLEY

The bass recorder is an exquisite instrument that has evolved from its humble consort roots into a virtuosic solo instrument. It possesses a beautifully deep, earthy tone, with mellow and haunting characteristics. The instrument sings with a natural lyricism that can effortlessly morph into agitated and textural soundscapes. It is these unique musical qualities that are embraced and showcased in the compositions created for *Bass Instincts*. With diverse compositions written by some of Australia's leading female composers, *Bass Instincts* explores the instinctual musicality, versatility and virtuosity of this unique instrument.



HOLLY HARRISON

# SYLVAN

*For bass recorder and percussion*

*Sylvan* is a direct response to the album's title *Bass Instincts*. Although a clever pun devised by Alicia, I also wanted the work to connect with the literal meaning of 'base instincts' too. A quick word search throws up definitions ranging from 'subconscious urges' to 'inborn impulses' and 'primeval behaviours'. This spurred me into imagining and exploring a soundworld where the bass recorder acts as a sort of seductress, weaving her sonic charms throughout. It struck me as an interesting proposition as the recorder is (sorry, Alicia!) so often (wrongly) viewed as merely an educational instrument. The bass recorder as sultry temptress seemed like a fitting way to challenge this.

The result is three movements for bass recorder and percussion. The first sees the recorder paired with hand drums as a type of call to awakening, ending with a breathless conclusion. During the second, the recorder takes on a smokier role with plenty of blues inflections, and is supported by marimba riffs and resonances. Finally, the third movement has a sprightlier feel, with the recorder featured in a higher tessitura, interweaving and dancing with the marimba throughout.

FIONA HILL

# LOST IN THE DARKNESS

*For bass recorder and live electronics*

*Lost in the Darkness* was initially inspired by a poem in a Women's Art Zine published by the Refugee Art Project #6. The poem is written by Maryem, who at the time of publishing was 19 years old and had been in detention for two years with her younger sister. The piece aims to sonically capture aspects of the poem through musical devices, for example the scalar passages that become gradually more frenzied represent 'searching for light' and 'running like a blind bird', vocal counting references 'counting her steps' and the idea of 'searching through the darkness' is represented by motives which continually try to move but ultimately never really get anywhere. The electronic aspect of this work has enabled me to make

use of often inaudible sounds which enhance the micro detail of the instrument. Finding the sonic idiosyncrasies, in this instance of a hollow tube expertly crafted from maple wood, inspired much of the compositional material. Through a series of workshops with Alicia Crossley I was able to hone in on details which I felt lent themselves to the story telling of the piece, in this case breath, rattling, low beating registral leaps. Through the use of long reverbs, spatialisation and delays I am able to temporally extend sounds and layer material not traditionally possible in an acoustic setting. The opportunity to work collaboratively with virtuosic artists uncovering the sonic possibilities of an instrument is such an exciting prospect as a composer.

ANNE BOYD

## ALHEKULYELE

*For bass recorder player and wind chimes*

In the evening, Olive Pink (1884-1975), a legendary character who lived out the later decades of her life in Alice Springs, would habitually walk to a special viewing site from within the Botanical Garden she created on the banks of the River Todd to watch the setting sun illuminate the “Dingo’s Nose”, the tip of Mount Gillen (Alhekulyele); a time of reflection, usually of solitude, she is likely to have remembered the stories, shared with her by her Arrernte ‘family’, of fearsome ancestral battles through which the landscape around Mparntwe (Alice Springs) was created. The music is therefore a meditation and a dance, retreating once more into quietening garden, represented throughout in the sounds of bamboo chimes.

ALICE CHANCE

## INHALTATIONS

*For bass recorder and multi-tracked bass recorder quartet*

*Inhaltations* was born from two ideas: ‘inhale’ and ‘exaltation’. It represents a dance between blossoming and hesitation: being glorious and being doubtful. I see the solo melody as a present-day self, constantly contextualised by past selves, playing with harmony and dissonance against them. In this work, I invite the listener to search for the following things: deep colours, themselves, and, above all, a healthy serving of mischief beneath the meditative veil. I want to thank Alicia Crossley for her contribution to this piece. Her uniquely personal interpretation of not only the notes, but my invitations to ornament and improvise, are responsible for much of this piece’s character.

LISA CHENEY

## BEFORE YOU

*For bass recorder*

Each time I close my eyes to dream, I find it hard to remember a time before you came into our lives. When I'm reminiscing on those memories, they seem to be in black and white. When you arrived in our lives, things changed for the better in every way.

It was as if every moment had somehow been preparing and strengthening us. You woke us up from a lovely, light slumber and catapulted us into a world of colour, noise, learning and love.

When I close my eyes and listen, I feel a quiet calm and stillness. I hear you, and I'm back in the present. My heart sings a new song, one with movement and lyricism, bittersweet joy and sadness, reflection and unwavering love. I savour the moments and sounds as much I can

because memories fade, and I already struggle to remember a time before you, my beautiful baby girl.

AMANDA COLE

## VIBRATION MEDITATION

*For bass recorder and electronics*

*Vibration Meditation* is a meditative composition for bass recorder and a microtonally tuned electronic music part that explores vibrations through tuning and timbre. The tuning of the piece is a microtonal pentatonic scale made from the G harmonic series using overtones 1,3,5,7 & 9. The bass recorder player adjusts the tuning of their notes by ear to match the electronic music pitches. Interference beats are created in the electronic music part and when the recorder bends their pitch whilst doubling a note in the electronic music part.



Extended and idiomatic bass recorder techniques are used to add extra colour and to blend with the electronic music timbres. Harmonies are created in the recorder part when notes are sung and played at the same time. The recorder uses different speeds of diaphragm and finger vibrato to mimic and interact with the rhythmic interference beats in the electronic music. Tuned white noise in the electronic music is blended with breathy sounds produced by the recorder.

JESSICA WELLS

## THE CLOCK

*For bass recorder and electronics*

*The Clockmaker* explores a fantastical sound world, rich with steampunk imagery, in which the bass recorder sings, immerses, floats, and races with the mechanical forces around it. A fast rhythmic pattern of five plus six propels the instrument forward through the opening section, and is revisited in the blistering finale where the recorder must race against time to reach the finish line. In the centre of the work there is a meditative cadenza accompanied by bells and undulating chords, a place where time has been lost.



**BASS RECORDER**

ALICIA  
CROSSLEY

**PERCUSSION**

JOSHUA HILL

**SOUND ENGINEER**

ROSS A'HERN

**RECORDING PRODUCER**

JESSICA WELLS

**COVER ART**

LORIBELLE  
SPIROVSKI

**GRAPHIC DESIGN**

LUKE MOSELEY

**THANK YOU**

Thank you to all the wonderful composers, Ross A'hern, Jessica Wells, Joshua Hill, City Recital Hall, Australia Council for the Arts, Loribelle Spirovski and Luke Moseley for making this recording possible.

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Australian Government

Australia  
Council  
for the Arts 

The logo for the Australia Council for the Arts, featuring a stylized white figure of a person with arms raised, set against a dark background.

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