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Portfolio of Compositions

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Music in Composition

at

The University of Waikato

by

Ben Hoadley

2016
Abstract

The music in this portfolio of original compositions is steeped in the Western tradition of tonal music. The pieces were written while also pursuing a professional career as a bassoonist touring internationally and performing a wide variety of western art music, from Renaissance to contemporary. I have responded to these influences consciously and unconsciously in my music. The overarching focus of this composition portfolio is to provide an answer to the question — to what extent do musical influences impact on the compositions of an international touring performer?

Underpinning the portfolio is the fact that the pieces were all written in New Zealand during periods of intense reflection and study. While I am constantly collecting ideas and inspiration for my music while travelling, I consolidate and realise these ideas only when I am home.

I identify with being a New Zealand composer, with cosmopolitan influences on my music, reflecting the global influences on New Zealand’s culture and art.

Working closely with composers performing their music has also informed my composition. I mention Gillian Whitehead in particular, whose music I have performed widely.

The two outer pieces in the portfolio, *Huia* and *Manaia 4* are the most directly associated with New Zealand in their subject matter. Other pieces have foreign themes, from my nocturnal impressions of New York in *Night Music* to the Ancient Greece of *Ostrakon* to the West African poetry of *Four Songs*.

All of the pieces were written for professional musicians to perform, including the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and the Sydney Omega Ensemble. Having these outstanding performers in mind while writing, and interacting with these musicians during the composition process, has informed my writing.
Acknowledgments

All of the staff of the University of Waikato Music Conservatorium have been welcoming and have provided much support and encouragement. I want to thank in particular Dr Michael Williams, the supervisor of this thesis. His patience, generosity and guidance throughout every part of the process has been invaluable and greatly appreciated. Dr Martin Lodge has also provided considerable encouragement and help.

To the marvellous performers who have realised my visions – Indra Hughes, Paul Meyer, Claire Scholes, Luca Manghi, David Kelly, Lara Hall, Nathaniel Smorti and Liam Wooding – without you this portfolio would not exist. Thank-you to David Rowden and Maria Raspopova of the Sydney Omega Ensemble for championing my music. Two of the pieces in this portfolio were commissioned by the Sydney Omega Ensemble.

I wish to make a special mention my fellow student, Phillippa Ulenberg, who was a reassuring and encouraging presence while writing this portfolio. Phillippa and I first met at workshops of taonga pūoro in Whakarewarewa. These wananga were a turning point in my musical and personal life.

To my parents, Steve and Wyn Hoadley, your constant and unconditional love, understanding and support has made this possible. This portfolio is dedicated to you.
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Huia

For Organ and Symphony Orchestra

Ben Hoadley
**Instrumentation:**

3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo)

2 oboes (2nd doubling cor anglais)

2 clarinets in B flat

2 bassoons

Contrabassoon

4 horns in F

2 trumpets in C

2 trombones

Bass trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion, 2 players: clash cymbal, suspended symbols, triangle, bass drum

Harp

Organ

Strings
In 2012 the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra invited composers to submit ideas for new works for organ and orchestra, written for the refurbished Auckland Town Hall Organ. I was one of six composers chosen who were partnered with six organists for the 2012/2013 Auckland Philharmonia Composer Workshop. Our compositions were workshopped at various stages of completion in three sessions in 2012 in the Town Hall by the organists with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Hamish McKeich. Composers John Elmsly and Jack Body provided mentorship during these sessions. The finished works, including *Huia*, were performed in their final versions in May 2013.

While composing *Huia*, I worked closely with Indra Hughes, the organist that I was paired with. This collaboration with Hughes was an intrinsic part of the compositional process, and his knowledge of the Auckland Town Hall Organ and his technical advice assisted me in realising the work.

The Auckland Town Hall organ has an extremely wide dynamic range, from the massive roar of the full organ, to the softest of *pianissimi*. With 77 sets of pipes over 5 manuals, it has a seemingly infinite array of potential timbres, and I believe it to be the acoustic instrument closest to the full orchestra in terms of its range of sounds. It was apparent from the beginning that the two main challenges of writing the work would be: 1) to not be overwhelmed by the tonal possibilities from both the orchestra and organ and 2) to create the right balance between the organ and the orchestra.

I was particularly interested in exploring the softer end of the organ’s dynamic, and to highlight the juxtaposition and interplay of the orchestral woodwind instruments and the organ (itself being a woodwind of sorts). I purposely reserved the full organ and orchestra for a few climactic moments to give maximum effect.
The following is a passage detailing some of my thoughts for approaching the orchestration, excerpted from my proposal sent to the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra before the workshops:

“I have noticed that several composers writing for organ and orchestra often minimise the woodwind (for example: the Rheinberger concerto (strings plus horns only), the Dupré concerto (strings and brass only), Haydn’s several masses etc. (strings and brass only with bassoon doubling basses) on the grounds that woodwind can sound similar to organ flutes and softer reeds, and that is how they achieve differentiation in timbre between orchestra and organ. I do think that organ is the hardest instrument to pair with orchestra because of this aspect. However, as I have mentioned above there could be beautiful possibilities of interweaving. Rather than trying to avoid the organ “clashing” with the woodwind and brass I want to encourage this and create modern and unusual sounds that have never been heard before. The juxtaposition of an orchestral woodwind or brass that is blown with the breath, and an organ flute or reed stop blown with bellows, is fascinating to me”

During the three workshops I was able to experiment with compositional ideas, including different timbres and fine tuning the balance of sonorities. The opportunity to hear the various results before committing to the final performance version was invaluable to the evolution of the piece and its final success.

Another challenge I had while writing the work, and one that is unique to organ writing, was identification and indication on the score of organ registrations (the particular stops and combinations of them to be used). Because the piece was written for a specific organ and player, most of the registration was left to the player, Indra Hughes, to suggest. As we had access to the organ while I was writing the piece and while Hughes was learning it, he would play certain passages to me with different registrations that he suggested based on my description to him of the sound I wanted. I would then decide which to commit to, often with Hughes’s input based on what was easier to accomplish technically. Most of these registrations were handwritten notes on the score and I have decided not to include them in the final typeset version. I would like the piece to have the possibility to be performed on other instruments and not be limited to one specific
organ. While the piece is undoubtedly written with the Town Hall Organ in mind, it could potentially be played on a smaller organ. For this reason I have decided not to add specific registrations and pipe lengths as I believe they have to be approached personally by the player to each organ and performance situation. As a guide, I have indicated dynamics and, where necessary, the particular manual to be used (for example, the swell or great manuals, indicated in abbreviations as Sw. and Gt.) and sometimes an idea of the sound wanted (for example, the reedy in bar 22).

Structure and analysis

The piece conjures up a day at Huia Bay, a beautiful location at the northern tip of the Manukau Harbour for which the piece is named. It is a tone poem with the organ having a concertante role, and is romantic in style and scope. I was influenced by late romantic French organ writing, and recognised the Town Hall Organ as being the ideal instrument to perform this repertoire. It is loosely structured in sonata form, with an intermezzo before the development section.

The first chord, describing the morning mist rising over Huia Bay, is a modal mixture constructed from a tonic triad with both major and minor thirds, with an added minor 7th. This is heard over a pedal note in the bass which is a semitone higher than this minor 7th. The chord, essentially a dominant 7th with both major and minor 3rds and 7ths is a feature of the work, reoccurring several times in different inversions in the piece. This chord is shown in Example 1.

Ex 1. Opening chord of Huia
This chord contrasts with the simple C major tonic chord in 1\textsuperscript{st} inversion that follows, (created over the same pedal note) and accompanies the entrance of the organ in a solo role at bar 8. The sudden major tonality after the vague tonal centre of the beginning describes the first rays of sunrise bursting through the clouds.

Sequences of dominant 7\textsuperscript{th} chords and mediant relationships are reoccurring themes during the work.

A short motif is frequently heard throughout the work. This motif is first stated by the woodwinds at Figure B, having previously been suggested in a longer variation of itself in the organ at bar 9. This motif is shown below in Example 2.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{motif.png}
\caption{Ex 2. Reoccurring motif in \textit{Huia}}
\end{figure}

The section between figures E and F is a slower \textit{intermezzo}, featuring the 4 foot concert flute on the organ’s solo manual, playing in canon with a solo (orchestral) trumpet, and later a clarinet. The melody is constructed from a series of ascending perfect 4ths. This section provides a moment of calm and reflection. The turbulent section between Figures F and H can be seen as the development section of the work, leading to the climax at Figure H. This is followed is a brief recapitulation of the opening material in reverse order. The piece closes with a coda suggesting the sunset, in its starting key of C major.
**Version for solo organ:**

I had a further opportunity for collaboration with Indra Hughes later in 2013, this time to develop a version of *Huia* for solo organ at Hughes’s request. He performed the solo version in a recital at the Auckland Town Hall in November 2013. A recording of this performance can be heard in the recording that accompanies this portfolio.
Huia

A tempo

Tempo ad lib. (organ solo)

Chsn

Hn. 1 & 2

Hn. 3 & 4

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1 & 2

B. Tbn

Tba

Temp

Org

Ped

Vln. 1

Vln. II

Vla

Vc

Db
Huia

In tempo

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

Ob. 1

Ob. 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Bsn. 1 & 2

Org.

pp

Poco più mosso (\textit{L} = c.69)

Tpt.

Timp.

Poco più mosso (\textit{L} = c.69)

Chn.

Vln. 1

Vln. II

Vla

Vc

Db

pedal
Huia

poco rall.

To Ob.

C. A

Cl. 2

Chsn

Hn. 3 & 4

Tba

Timp

Org.

Ped.

Vln. 1

Vln. II

Vla

Vc.

Db.

Poco lento (ma non troppo) \( (\text{\textit{\(\tau\)}} \approx \text{c.69}) \)
Huia
Huia

Chsn. 

Hn. 1 & 2 

Hn. 3 & 4 

Tpt. 1 

Tpt. 2 

Tbn. 1 & 2 

B. Tbn. 

Tba. 

Temp. 

S. Cym. 

Org. 

Ped. 

Vln. 

Vln. II 

Vla. 

Vc. 

Db.
Huia
Night Music

For clarinet in A, viola and piano

Ben Hoadley
It is a hot and humid summer night in New York City, and I am walking through the streets in Greenwich Village at 2am. Intermittent traffic and car horns, faint music from nearby bars and voices wafting through the streets create a sonic backdrop to the lights from the street signs and the buildings above. These elements combine to create a chimerical atmosphere that suddenly reminds me of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”. The nocturnal cityscape that I am part of could be a perfect contemporary urban setting for Shakespeare’s play.

The evening described above occurred many years ago, and sowed the seeds in my mind for the composition Night Music. A decade later I was invited to write a Trio for clarinet, viola and piano for French clarinettist Paul Meyer to perform on a tour of New South Wales with the Sydney Omega Ensemble. I immediately came back to that night in Greenwich Village and decided the trio combination to be an ideal sound world to realise the piece.

I was very fortunate that six further performances of Night Music were played on the tour within one week from the premier, in June 2014. I was travelling with the musicians and we were able to meet after the premier and each subsequent performance to iron out mistakes and discuss what could be improved. The piece went through a significant evolution during the tour before achieving its final version which is heard on the recording that accompanies this portfolio. Critical response from the musicians proved perceptive and insightful during this development. Paul Meyer’s suggestion that the clarinet part was technically more appropriate for the A clarinet, instead of my initial scoring for B flat clarinet, led me to hear and appreciate the tonal differences between the two instruments, that I had never properly pondered even after years of playing next to clarinets in professional orchestras. I soon concluded that the slightly darker timbre of the A clarinet was more suited to the sound I had in mind for Night Music.

I found the clarinet and viola to be a fascinating and rewarding combination to write for, and discovered that despite their similar range, tonally they complement each other
perfectly. Initially, I deliberately made use of the extremes of register in the piano to compensate for the clarinet and viola’s similar range in the middle of the piano. But I soon realised it wasn’t necessary to do this because there was already a wide variety of colours and effects intrinsic in the instrumentation without having to compensate for any tonal shortfalls. The clarinet in the higher register naturally takes on a soprano role and I made use of the double stops in the viola to create a rich accompanying chordal texture in places. I also explored the unique sound of the clarinet and viola in unison.

Like *Huia*, *Night Music* is a tone poem, albeit with a very different inspiration. The piece has obvious French impressionistic influences. These come from the music of Debussy and Roussel which were strong influences on my writing in particular, and also impressionistic painting. I have tried to recreate pointillistic effects through sound in places during *Night Music*, for example at the opening of the piece and also the section between bars 115 and 117, where the clarinet and viola improvise on the same note.

Rhythmically, I set a rule that the whole piece was to be written in simple quadruple meter. The time signature remains in 4/4 throughout the piece.

The opening bars of *Night Music* are firmly in D major. However the interruption by the clarinet and viola of a melody based on descending tritones (starting in bar 9), over a tritone pedal note in the piano, disrupts the tonality and creates an uncertain tonal centre. The harmonic driver of the piece is the tension between major tonality and the reoccurring tritone. As the melodic fragments stated in the first few pages are woven together and expanded, the musical narrative becomes more cohesive. After a climactic moment, the ending is peaceful, with the rumbling noise of the city becoming calmer and fading away into the background. For this coda, which mirrors the opening in some ways, I chose D flat major, to me a darker key and more suited for this mood than the brighter D major of the opening.

*Night Music* received first place in the Lilburn Trust Student Composition Awards at the University of Waikato in 2015.
Night Music

Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A tempo

Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A tempo

Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

62
Night Music
Night Music
Night Music

105

107

(senza rall.)

dim, poco a poco

(senza rall.)

dim, poco a poco

109

pp
Night Music

Tempo primo

Random 'peeps' on same note - not too busy
(4-5 each per bar; viola notes slightly longer)

off exactly
with clarinet

p on horn
Ostrakon

For flute, oboe, clarinet in B flat, bassoon,
alto saxophone and horn

Ben Hoadley
The title Ostrakon refers to a piece of pottery, usually broken off from a vase or other earthenware vessel and used in ancient Greece as a voting ballot. Each year the public could vote to make a decision to banish a disliked person. Citizens wrote the name of the person they wished to banish on the piece of pottery. Whoever suffered the most votes was exiled for a period of ten years. Example 1 is a photograph of an ostrakon.

Ex 1. Ostrakon of Cimon, an Athenian statesman

I had long wanted to write a piece with an ancient Greek theme, partly because of my fascination with the aulos, an important reed instrument in Ancient Greece. I have often imagined how this instrument would sound, perhaps something like a fusion of the modern saxophone, oboe and clarinet. So when I was asked to write a work for wind sextet, I was immediately drawn to this idea. The resulting work is a two-movement suite that was performed by the Sydney Omega Ensemble in Sydney and Wollongong in July and August 2013. Example 2 is a portrayal of the aulos.
Ex 2. Aulos: an ancient Greek reed instrument, often depicted in art and also discovered by archaeologists

My central preoccupation in this piece was on tone colour. I have used various combinations of the six wind instruments playing melodically in unison to experiment and to try to recreate the sound of the aulos as I imagined it. The aulos is often depicted as having a double pipe, as in the above illustration, and so sometimes I've varied the unisons slightly, either in pitch or rhythm, so that one instrument is slightly out of sync, giving the feeling of two voices from the same source. Examples of this are in the first movement, bar 80 between the flute, clarinet and saxophone, and in the second movement at bar between bar 15 and 17, between the oboe and saxophone which is illustrated in Example 3.

Ex 3. Bars 15-17 second movement, oboe and saxophone
In my notes on *Night Music*, I described the combination of clarinet, viola and piano as being a perfect match. By contrast, this is not always true of the wind quintet, despite the fact that it is a very well established chamber music genre. Differences in the natural articulation, dynamic ranges and intonation tendencies of the different instruments can present difficulties in achieving a homogenous ensemble. However it can be a very effective combination when managed correctly, and with experienced performers the discrepancies can be mitigated. These discrepancies can also be exploited by the composer to create particular effects, such as I have tried to do with my unison passages in *Ostrakon*. I want the idiosyncrasies of the different instruments to be highlighted and create a sound that is slightly eccentric.

The addition of the alto saxophone to the traditional wind quintet brings some unique tonal opportunities, but also more challenges. I was warned to be careful with my use of the alto saxophone because tonally it has the potential to dominate the other instruments. I kept this in mind when composing because I wanted to achieve equality among all six parts. The final result was a compromise. The saxophone has slightly more of a solo role than the other instruments, but it is as an obbligato rather than a concertante role.

In the first movement, a descending melodic motif in thirds is juxtaposed against a repeated note ostinato, reminiscent of a mosaic. The first movement follows a clear trajectory, building in intensity and texture until bar 62, where a repeated chromatic motif in the clarinet part leads to a short cadenza for the instrument. In bar 81 a melodic fragment is stated that will be heard again in the second movement. This is illustrated below in Example 4.
Ex 4. Melodic material from the end of movement one that is developed in movement two.

The second movement of Ostrakon is twice as long as the first and is slower and more static. It uses as its primary melodic material in Example 4, which is restated and developed throughout the movement. It is heard in all the instruments in various combinations as I explored timbres. The modal mixture of this melody, which uses both major and minor 3rds and 7ths, creates an uncertain tonal centre, particularly after the clear minor tonality of the first movement. There is a feeling in this movement of loss or exile, and of fading into antiquity.
Four Songs

For mezzo-soprano and piano

Ben Hoadley
The four poems that form this song cycle have their origins in traditional oral poetry of West and Central Africa.


The fourth poem, *The Little Bird*, is a folk song from Gabon translated by Rolf Italiaander, from the collection *Poems from Black Africa* [Indiana University Press, 1963].

Ulli Beier writes in the introduction to his collection:

“All of the poems are of course translations, and the rhythms of African songs are often too complex for English to render them properly. Many African languages are tonal languages and the rhythms and sound patterns based on these tonal languages simply have no equivalent in any European language.

*One of the most important elements of poetry, however, does survive translation relatively well: the imagery. The originality of the metaphors and images in these poems is a source of constant delight."

I have never heard these poems in their original language. They may have originally been sung. While I have heard and enjoyed West African traditional music, it is a vast area of huge depth and range, and my knowledge doesn’t extend past a surface familiarity with several styles. In my settings of these poems, it is the imagery that Beier presents that I have responded to. My musical ideas are based on my reaction to and inspiration from what Beier’s translations evoked and suggested to me. I haven’t tried to recreate their original sound world or evoke African languages or music in any way; the settings are my own interpretation of the translations.
1. Three Friends

I had three friends
One asked me to sleep on the ground
One asked me to sleep on the mat
One asked me to sleep on his breast
I saw myself carried on a river
I saw the king of the river and the king of the sun
There in that country I saw palm trees
So laden with fruit
That the trees bent under the fruit
And the fruit killed it

Notes:
This poem is from the Yoruba tribe of present-day Nigeria and Benin. The river is a metaphor for death. My score is impressionistic and the accompaniment has a rippling feel, suggesting the river.
2. Lament

Your death has taken me by surprise
What were your wares
That they sold out so quickly?
When I meet my father, he'll hardly recognise me
He'll find me carrying all I've got
A torn old sleeping mat and a horde of flies
The night is fast approaching
Somewhere a child is crying out for its mother

AKAN

Notes:
The Akan tribe is from Ghana and adjacent parts of the Ivory Coast.

A slow melody, reminiscent of a low flute and evoking pathos, is interwoven between the recitave-like vocal line. A delicate ostinato of three two-note chords, high in the piano, adds punctuation.
3. The Little Bird

Early one morning I got up
To pick oranges in the garden
And I saw this
I saw the rising Sun
And the little bird
Singing his morning song
The little bird cried “cui, cui, cui”
“Please leave my little ones in their nest”
And I said this:
First I cried “cui, cui, cui”
And then I said:
“Don’t be afraid, I am your friend”
And what was asked I did.
Since that day, the little bird is my friend
And his song gives me great pleasure.
And that is my story.

FOLK SONG FROM GABON
Notes:

I originally composed *The Little Bird* as a separate work, for flute, voice and piano. Subsequently I arranged it for voice and piano and inserted it into the song-cycle to create a light-hearted moment in the cycle, and so that the transition from the *Lament* to the final song of the cycle would not feel abrupt. This song has the role of a scherzo movement in a symphony or sonata. It is the only song in the cycle not concerned with the subject of death. The fast motives in the right hand of the piano were originally written for flute and are obviously bird-like. The song has an improvised, recitative-like character.
4. Death

There is no needle without piercing point
There is no razor without trenchant blade

Death comes in many forms
With our feel we walk the goat’s earth
With our hands we touch God’s sky

One day in the heat of noon
I will be carried shoulder high
Through the town of the dead

Don’t bury me under the forest trees
I fear their thorns
Don’t bury me under the forest trees
I fear the dripping water
Bury me under the great shade trees in the market
I want to feel the dancers’ feet
I want to hear the beating of the drums

KUBA

Notes:

The Kuba Kingdom was a pre-colonial kingdom in Central Africa.

I have used harmonic and rhythmic jazz elements in this song. Some of the rhythms suggest drums. The poet describes impending death as an ongoing conscious state of being by using verbs usually reserved for living senses: “I want to feel the dancers feet.... I want to hear the beating of the drums”.

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Four Songs

I. Three Friends

Yoruba

Moderato, quasi recit.

I had three friends
One asked me to sleep on the
One asked me to sleep on the
One asked me to sleep on his

Moderato, quasi recit.

chromatic cluster

5

Moderato assai

breast

M-S.

Pno.

I saw my self car ried on a ri ver
I saw my self car ried on a

7

M-S.

Pno.
Four Songs

10
ri - ver

12
I saw the king of the ri - ver

14
I saw the king of the ri-ver and the king of the sun
There in that country
I saw palm trees so laden with

fruit
That the trees bent under the fruit

And the fruit killed it
II. Lament

Akan

Poco lento, con tenerezza

Piano

4

M-S.

7

P

Your death has taken
me by surprise

(wait for
singer)

Pno.
10 \textit{molto dolce} \\
What were your wares, \textemdash \textemdash That they sold out so quickly?

13 \textit{Poco pi\'u mosso} \\
When I meet my father, \textemdash \textemdash

15 \textit{sprechstimme} \\
\underline{he'll} hardly recognize me: \textemdash \textemdash He'll find me carrying all I've got
torn old sleeping mat and a horde of flies

Tempo I

The night is fast approaching
Somewhere a child is crying out for its mother

(wait for singer)

pp poco ten.
III. The Little Bird

Folk Song - Gabon

Andantino

Early one morning I got up to pick oranges in the garden.

Andantino

And I saw this. I saw the rising sun and the little bird singing his morning song.
And I heard this.

The little bird cried "Cui cui! Please leave my little ones in their nest. Cui cui cui!" And I said this:

First I cried "Cui cui cui!" And then I said this. "Don't be afraid..."
I am your friend."
And what was asked, I did.

Since that day, the little bird is my friend
and his song gives me great pleasure.

And that is my story.
Four Songs

IV. Death

Kuba

Moderato, quasi recit.

Lento

Ben Hoadley

There is no piercing point.

There is no trenchant blade

Death comes

Piano

Moderato, quasi recit.

Lento

chromatic clusters

Allegro moderato

With our feet

in many forms.

Allegro moderato

mf molto marcato

3

We walk the goat's earth

With our hands we touch God's sky

91
One day in the heat of noon I will be carried shoulder high through the
town of the dead

Don't bury me under the forest trees I fear their thorns

Don't bury me under the forest trees
19

M-S.

I fear the dripping water

Pno.

20

M-S.  

Bu-ry me un-der the great shade trees in the

Pno.  

ff

Molto tenuto

Vivo, poco accel. a fine

mar-ket I want to feel the dan-cers feet

Vivo, poco accel. a fine

I want to hear the beat-ing of the drums

Pno.
Three Sketches for a Nocturne and Winter I Was

For alto flute, piano and spoken voice

Ben Hoadley
Three Sketches for a Nocturne and Winter I Was are miniatures with the alto flute as a common element. They were written independently to each other and premiered as separate pieces by flautist Luca Manghi. The initial idea to combine the two pieces came from Manghi, who wanted to perform them both in the same concert. We decided to programme them one after the other without a break and found the result to work so well that they seemed like they were always meant to be played together. I’ve kept them as two individual pieces because they can still be performed separately. But I think of them as being partnered now and belonging alongside each other.

Three Sketches for a Nocturne

Three Sketches for a Nocturne is exactly what its title suggests. The Nocturne was a larger single-movement piece for flute and piano, and the Three Sketches were my initial ideas for it. Melodic and rhythmic fragments are stated in the Three Sketches that were further developed in the larger piece. However, after composing Three Sketches, I discovered that it started to take on a life of its own. It became a piece in its own right as I grew increasingly disillusioned with the Nocturne and subsequently discarded it. After consideration of both pieces by Luca Manghi, it was the Three Sketches that he preferred. He has since played it frequently and has recorded it for CD on the Atoll label. It is perhaps the brevity of the Three Sketches, and their conciseness and economy of material, that has made them more successful than the Nocturne, which in the end I felt was too long. The fragmented ideas and motifs in the Three Sketches can be interpreted as fleeting memories and thoughts that are gone before they can be fully grasped. Each movement has its own mood or flavour but they are small tastes rather than meals. One listener has described them as an “enigma”.

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Three Sketches for a Nocturne correspond to three short movements.

Movement 1: risoluto

While not quite an argument between the alto flute and the piano, it's certainly an intense discussion. Repeated staccato semiquavers in the alto flute are interrupted by crashing chords in the piano based on a tritone. The piano then responds to the flute's semiquavers, echoing them. After a further interruption by the piano, the alto flute begins a chromatic melody which the piano repeats in canon. Further outbursts from the piano and alto flute follow, and the alto flute has the last word. The tonal centre is uncertain and insecure and the mood is tense.

Unusually and worth mentioning, is that the musical ideas in this movement first came into my head while I was looking at the collection of severed gold miners' fingers in the Waihi Museum.

Movement 2: crotch = c.112, quasi cadenza

This bi-tonal movement opens with the piano playing jazz style riffs in E flat minor. These are interrupted by quasi improvisando cadenzas from the alto flute, based on the interval of a major seventh in D. The piano enters again and is again interrupted, this time by a malicious hiss by the alto flute. The two instruments play together, each in their respective keys, with the alto flute seeming to improvise over the piano riffs. The cantabile last phrase in the alto flute leads directly into the third movement.

Movement 3: slowly

The left hand of the piano improvises on a tritone. In bar 52 the notes move to a perfect fifth and from then until the end, the tonality is the most secure of the whole piece. The alto flute enters with a plaintive melody exploiting the haunting timbre of this instrument. After a delicate four-bar interlude, the piano plays a harmonised recapitulation of the opening melody, accompanied by subtle air noises issued by the alto flute. Slow syncopated rhythmic fragments take shape out of the improvised bass of this section.
Performance note

I have used some common extended techniques for the alto flute: pitch dropping, glissandi and air noises. Air noises -- created by blowing across the mouthpiece without creating a pitch -- are described in the score by the particular effect that I want: "low hissing sound" and "s sound".

There is an element of improvisation in the piano part in the 3rd movement, where pitches are written in brackets and the pianist is left to improvise rhythmically on these pitches within given time frames, indicated on the score directly above by unpitched notes in brackets. This notational device is shown in Example 1 below.

Ex 1. Three Sketches for a Nocturne, bars 49 and 50

Winter I Was

The rhythmic motif at the end of Three Sketches for a Nocturne leads naturally and seamlessly to the beginning of Winter I Was. The spoken words can be read by the pianist or by a narrator, already sitting on the stage during the Three Sketches, to minimise disturbance between because the two pieces because they should be performed without any gap when played in sequence.
Written by well-known Wellington-based art curator, poet and artist Gregory O’Brien, the poem *Winter I Was* is from his collection of poems by the same title [Victoria University Press, 1999]. It was given to me by Gregory O’Brien after I asked him for some poetry that I could possibly set to music, with the note “*Winter I Was* suggests some sort of music to me”.

The poem is subtitled *in memory, Morton Feldman and John Cage* and was written in New York City after hearing of the death of John Cage. The pianist mentioned in the poem is Marianne Schroeder, who made various recordings of Cage and Feldman on the Hat Hut label.

*Winter I Was* was written in one day and the compositional process was instinctive and personal. On initially reading the poem, to me the music that Greg O’Brien suggested was not part of the words themselves, but rather a countermelody that was a response to and interpretation of the words. Therefore I left the words spoken and added the alto flute as a counterpoint to the poem.
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

1.

Risoluto \( \frac{j}{4} = \text{c. 96} \)

Alto flute

Piano

Ben Hoadley © 2015
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

2.

\[ \begin{align*}
    \text{\textit{quasi cadenza}} \\
    \text{\textit{A tempo}} \\
    \text{\textit{quasi cadenza}} \\
    \text{\textit{A tempo}}
\end{align*} \]
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

34 Slow low hissing sound A tempo

36 (gl.)

38 quasi cadenza

40 f mp accel. e cresc.
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

Molto meno mosso

ten.

mp

segue
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

3.

49  Slowly

51  pp
    ad lib.  \[\text{[\text{ioi}]\]}

53  \[\text{p semplice}\]
    \[\text{ad lib.}\]
    \[\simp\]

56  \[\text{hold until *}\]
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

61 Poco meno mosso

63
Three Sketches for a Nocturne

65  "s" sound

soft pedal to end

67

(dolce)

(this rhythmic pattern to grow organically out of the preceding)

69

mordendo al fine

71


Winter I Was

*in memory, Morton Feldman and John Cage*

Freely \( (\nu = 54) \)

Alto Flute

Spoken Voice

Winter I was clear articulate among the notes the piano could still muster

With Morton gone and now John moving

inland, in memory the hours lengthening

A tempo

gone the way of talk

What I mean is the hand remembers

where the hand went the flooded field remembers who crossed it, trees around

* Dotted vertical lines indicate that the instrumentalist and speaker should start together at that point
the property falling in and out of line, and she took me to the bridge and what I mean is a

fine distinct thing

her hands a thick fog through which I cannot see her hands at the piano

All we have lost

and the above.
Manaia 4

For bass clarinet and bassoon

Ben Hoadley
Manaia 4 is the fourth and last of a series of works for wind instruments.

This series was inspired after by attending Hue, an exhibition of paintings by Auckland artist Natalie Couch, in 2007.

Māori mythology, magic and the power of creation all play roles in Natalie's work. I was particularly drawn to the paintings featuring moths and other flying creatures. One element that all of the Manaia series have in common is their use of motifs that suggest the fluttering and swarming movements of moths and butterflies.

This is apparent in the opening of the piece, where the bassoon and bass clarinet play rapid chromatic runs in their high registers. To create an improvisatory feel to these runs I have used a notational device for this passage similar to that already seen in the third movement of Three Sketches for a Nocturne. A motif is written with desired pitches and rhythms followed by an arrow. Players are left to repeat these figures within a given time frame indicated by an unpitched note in brackets above. An example of this is shown in the first bar of Example 1.

At several points during the opening section the two instruments join together in unison on notes at the end of a phrase, sometimes preceded by an appoggiatura a whole tone below. The effect of this appoggiatura, seen below in the bassoon part in the second bar of Example 1, is reminiscent of traditional Māori music, and my use of it in the Manaia series was influenced by attending workshops of taonga pūoro and hearing and playing these instruments at the time that I was writing the Manaia series. In the context of this piece it suggests the moths briefly resting after the fluttering.

Ex 1. Manaia 4, page one
The opening semitone runs do not suggest any tonal centre. Tonality begins to be established with the emergence of a major 3rd in bar 13.

New thematic material is introduced and developed in bar 29 with both instruments playing a motif based on repeated intervals of a descending major second.

The piece then takes on a highly rhapsodic form, with more new themes being introduced, several of them taken from previous pieces in the Manaia series. Near the end of a long cadenza of virtuosic arabesques for the bassoon the clarinet enters on a soft pedal note that becomes increasingly raucous, mutating into a multiphonic and then a glissando to the top of the instrument’s register. This wave of sound leads into the emotional climax of the piece between bars 72 and 82.

The final section of the piece, from bar 83 to the end, is faster, rhythmically taut and less abstract than what has preceded. While the first section to bar 83 reflects the natural and supernatural worlds, the final section introduces a human element in its figurative rhythms and dance-like nature.

I wrote Manaia 4 to perform with virtuoso bass clarinettist Andrew Uren. The writing is technically challenging for both instruments. I am indebted to Andrew for his enthusiasm for the work, and for performing it with his customary flair and technical skill. Andrew and I performed Manaia 4 at the 2013 Nelson Composers Workshop. The piece has subsequently been performed in Auckland at concerts organised by Eve de Castro-Robinson and Chamber Music NZ, and recorded for Radio New Zealand Concert. I was invited to perform the piece earlier in 2013 at the International Double Reed Society Convention in Redlands, California, and the recording that accompanies this portfolio is from that performance, played by Los Angeles-based clarinettist Peter Nevin.
(grace note on the beat)

Manaia (IV)

B. Cl.

Bsn.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

B. Cl.

Bsn.

B. Cl.

Bsn.
Appendix: Notes about the attached recording of the compositions included in the portfolio

Track 1: Huia
Performed by Indra Hughes (organ) with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Hamish McKeich; Auckland Town Hall, 23 May 2013.
Recorded by and used with permission, Radio NZ Concert.

Track 2: Huia – version for solo organ
Performed by Indra Hughes at the Auckland Town Hall, 3 November 2013.

Track 3: Night Music
Performed by Nathaniel Smorti (clarinet), Lara Hall (viola) and Liam Wooding (piano); Lilburn Student Composition Awards, University of Waikato, Gallagher Concert Chamber, 2 October 2015.

Track 4: Ostrakon
Performed by the Sydney Omega Ensemble – Lisa Osmialowski (flute), Matthew Bubb (oboe), David Rowden (saxophone), Ben Hoadley (bassoon), Nicholas Rusoniello (saxophone) and Michael Dixon (horn); Sydney Opera House, Utzon Room, 4 August 2013. Recorded by and used with permission, Fine Music 102.5, Sydney.

Tracks 5 - 8: Four Songs
5. Three Friends
6. Lament
7. The Little Bird
8. Death

Performed by Claire Scholes (mezzo-soprano) and Ben Hoadley (piano). Recorded at the University of Auckland, Music Theatre, May 2015.
Track 9: Three Sketches for a Nocturne and Winter I Was
Performed by Luca Manghi (alto flute), David Kelly (piano) and Martin Lodge (voice);
OKTA, University of Waikato, Gallagher Concert Chamber, 9 May 2014.

Track 10: Manaia 4
Performed by Peter Nevin (bass clarinet) and Ben Hoadley (bassoon); International
Double Reed Society Conference, University of Redlands, California, June 28, 2013.