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*A Portfolio of  
Compositions*

submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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By

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## MMus Portfolio 2010

### Abstract

The pieces in this portfolio cover a wide range of methods and styles - from work for a single vocalising percussionist, to singing bowl and electronics and a work for full orchestra. The aim of this portfolio is to demonstrate my technical and musical proficiency as well as to give an overview of my personal composing philosophy and style.

The portfolio opens with a work for orchestra, *A Study in Scarlet*. It differs from my previous orchestral works and is based on a musical code of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's book, titled *A Study in Scarlet*. This was read in the 2009 Todd/ NSZO Young Composer Readings. The second work is *.manatu.* It features tinkly piano, wind chimes and ethnic instrumentalists in a chamber ensemble to create a musical sound world. This was written for and premiered at Bang on a Can's summer music festival in Massachusetts 2009. The piano work *.ātanga.* is an adaptation of *.manatu.* for solo pianist and was written for the Dame Malvina Major Foundations Showcase Concert in New Plymouth. This adaptation proved to be a worthwhile exercise in efficient use of music material. *Wrong Number* is a Janet Frame poem set for soprano and real-time effect processing of audio. *Confessions – Part I and II*, for solo violin and string orchestra is based on the Fibonacci series and explores my love for string sonorities. *Sand Song* was written for a friend who asked me to set a poem she wrote. Here I demonstrate my love for setting text and voice to say something beautiful and precise. This song now stands as a eulogy for her Father. *Parihaka*, for vocalising percussionist, is a setting of Apirana Taylor's poem *Parihaka* and was written for Australian performer Louise Devenish. I explore further in the realm of live acoustic and electroacoustic music with *Orison* a piece I wrote for myself to perform live with singing bowl and Ableton Live. Finally *The Headlines Today* for five improvising musicians explores the music of shouting and the vernacular of place.

*To Delsie Boult*

The most amazing Grandma in the world

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## CD and DVD Track Listing

### CD

- 1 - *A Study in Scarlet*  
for orchestra. (Todd / NZSO Young Composer Readings 2009)
- 2 - *.manatu.*  
for chamber ensemble. (Bang on a Can 2009)
- 3 - *.ātanga.*  
for solo piano and wind chimes. (Pianist: Tama Porter, Live at The University of Waikato's Lilburn Composers Concert)
- 4 - *Wrong Number*  
for soprano and live electronics. (Soprano: Diantha Hillenbrand, Recorded at The University of Waikato)
- 5 - *Confessions Part I*  
for solo violin and string orchestra. (Conductor: James Tennant, Soloist: Dr Lara Hall with The Waikato Universities String Orchestra)
- 6 - *Confessions Part II*  
for solo violin and string orchestra. (computer realization)
- 7 - *Sand Song*  
for soprano and piano. (Soprano: Diantha Hillenbrand, Piano: Elizabeth Dobson)
- 8 - *Paribaka*  
for vocalizing percussionist. (Performed by Louise Devenish)
- 9 - *Orison*  
for singing bowl and live electronics.

### DVD

- 1 - *.manatu.*  
Live at premiere - Bang on a Can summer musical festival, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art
- 2 - *.ātanga.*  
(Pianist: Tama Porter, Live at The University of Waikato's Lilburn Composers Concert)
- 3 - *Wrong Number*  
(Soprano: Diantha Hillenbrand, Computer: Elizabeth Dobson. Live at The University of Waikato's Lilburn Composers Concert.)

# **My Musical Concerns**

*An essay*

## My Musical Concerns

***“Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.”<sup>1</sup> (Picasso)***

There are several musical concerns and questions I have sought to address in this portfolio, where each work is researched and written to explore a certain idea or concept. Throughout, there are important undercurrents that tie the works together; centred around compositional questions of why, how and for who.

I feel a vocational impulse to compose. It has been a life-long journey of learning, and an aspiration from a young age starting soon after beginning piano lessons. I have never wished to be talented in other ways, apart from in painting and photography. I compose not because I have to, but because I could not live happily without doing it. I have frequently found myself agitated from prolonged periods of low compositional activity, often due to work commitments and physical fatigue.

### **Who to compose for?**

I believe that to compose for selfish gain is futile. With music I want to create something bigger than myself, and to reach an audience or person to soothe (or help) their soul. Many artists seek to do this by making an argument or point through their chosen medium. I find this to be a very disciplined process.

In the succinct words of Witold Lutoslawski’s artistic purpose for composition; *“One thing always undeniable to me: no sound sequence, no vertical aggregation should be composed without regard being given to every single detail of expression, colour, character, physiognomy. Even the minutest detail should satisfy the composers sensitivity to the maximum degree ... there should be no indifference.”*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Inc Icon Group International, *Dusting: Webster’s Quotations, Facts and Phrases*. (San Diego: Inc Icon Group International, 2008.), pg 2.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Bodman Rae, C. *The Music of Lutoslawski*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (London: Omnibus Press, 1999.), Pg 57.

## How I compose

Lutoslawski wrote *“to assess a composers creative output can be to distinguish between two polarised but complementary characters; the introvert and the extrovert – silence and solitude are essential to enable a composer to inhabit the introverted conceptual world from which creative ideas develop.”*<sup>3</sup>

Composing is not an impersonal art – one throws oneself headlong into this conceptual introverted world. Generally, to quote Picasso, *“I begin with an idea and then it becomes something else”*.<sup>4</sup> I am influenced by poetry and literature and the works of composers who I find empathetic. I frequently compose from the heart and not the head where this introverted conceptual world comes from, infusing musical thoughts and theories into pieces to create something that can be appreciated on different levels.

Composing to relate to people who are not musically knowledgeable is sustainable and worthwhile. Edwin Carr said *“music must be magic – even if it’s intellectual – it must be magic – I want to relate to my audiences”*.<sup>5</sup> Some may say it is degrading to “water down” musical ideas and concepts to create something understandable to the everyday person. However if all music is composed purely for the benefit of the musically educated yet surpasses everyone else’s understanding and kinaesthetic response to the music, then music as a human endeavour is doomed to be nothing more than an elitist pastime. A body of compositions that are accessible to the common person must exist in order to attract the interest and passion of those who will continue the art into the future. The creation of music is more than an intellectual endeavour and serves many functions in our society. Therefore, music should be composed that reaches out and engages the everyday person.

## Why I compose

Each new work offers a challenge. Again in the words of Picasso, *“I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.”*<sup>6</sup> All the while I am concerned about the

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<sup>3</sup> Bodman Rae, *The Music of Lutoslawski*, pg 261.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Boeck, W., and Sabartés J. Picasso. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1955), pg 506.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Shieff, S. *Talking Music: Conversations with New Zealand Musicians*. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2001.)

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Chang, L. *Wisdom for the Soul*. (Washington: Gnosophia Publishers, 2006.), pg 288

musical outcome. I love to read about music theory and explore certain theories but the practice of music comes first and must fit the creative space in which the work is created.

As a true synaesthete might experience colour and sound as an integrated entity, I try to think about how a certain music could taste, feel or look if it were a living organism. I have an affinity with landscape and in particular the qualities of Taranaki. Being an amateur photographer I am interested in our experience of textures in landscape - the way light differs from sunrise to sunset and its interplay over Mount Taranaki is an example of what I strive to capture in my photography. I find composing a very visual yet textural art form and often tackle it the same way as I would when taking a photo – finding the right balance of foreground and background in a way that presents a perfect piece.

I believe in the multiplicity of purposes for music and compositional skills and that this view can enhance ones sustainability as a composer, teacher and musician. Additionally, I believe we need to be musicians. I frequently explore one or two new instruments each year and take lessons and sit exams for another. This enhances my skills not only as a musician but as a composer, enabling me to write more idiomatic works.

## **Introduction to the Music**

I have attempted to with all these pieces to impart some of myself and my musical ideals to explore an idea, while staying true to my creative identity as a New Zealander who grew up in Taranaki. During 2009 I was fortunate enough to attend a music residency programme which had a great impact on how I write music. I was incredibly inspired to continue extending myself as a composer and endeavoured through all my work to bare my soul to the listener; believing that an audience can connect better to the work if they can hear the composers personality in it.

Another task I have thought about while working on this portfolio is summed up in the words of marimbist Nancy Zeltsman “*performers depend on composers for music that challenges and inspires.*”<sup>7</sup> I consider this frequently while writing - believing that a performer can portray music more convincingly to an audience if they can “feel it” or enjoy it.

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<sup>7</sup> Zeltsman, N. “Commissioning New Music”. (*Percussive Notes* 37:5 October 1999.)

I decided after Bang on a Can to not rely on the University's computer equipment to create digital works. Over the past few years I have been assembling my own studio and in particular building a live performance rig for myself to perform mixed media electro-acoustic and live performer works. While this project is still in its infancy I have goals to extend the set up. The beginnings of this project were explored in my work *Wrong Number* for soprano and computer and *Orison* for singing bowl and computer. Both of these pieces are included in this portfolio.

I will briefly introduce each work in this portfolio along with a short justification.

The portfolio opens with a work for orchestra, *A Study in Scarlet*, especially written for the NZSO Todd young composer readings. It is heavily influenced by Dutilleux and shows my desire for escaping from the style of my previous orchestral works. The second work is *.manatu.* and was written especially for Bang on a Can's 2009 summer festival (from now on referred to as BOAC 09). It features tinkly piano, wind chimes and ethnic instrumentalists in a chamber ensemble to create a musical sound world.

The piano work *.atanga.* was written for Tama Porter to premiere at the Dame Malvina Major Foundation showcase concert in New Plymouth. It is an adaptation of *.manatu.* and proved to be a worthwhile exercise in efficient use of music material. Both pieces now stand alone as their own entities while sharing the same sound world. Shrinking a ten minute chamber work for eleven performers to one pianist is no small feat and I learnt a lot from the process.

*Wrong Number* came about from my love for vocal music. I wanted to write another large song cycle this year,<sup>8</sup> but instead I decided to try something different and set a Janet Frame poem for soprano and realtime effect processing of audio. I explored this mixed live acoustic and electroacoustic genre further with *Orison* – a work for singing bowl and live electronics.

*Confessions – Part I and II*, for solo violin and string orchestra was inspired by the work of American composer Julia Wolfe. She is passionate about creating sumptuous string timbres and textures and inspired me to experiment with this medium despite never feeling any

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<sup>8</sup> For my Honours portfolio I wrote *Dried Corsages* – 5 songs for soprano and marimba detailing the experience of a young nurse going to war.

particular attraction to strings. I enjoyed exploring the beauty of a virtuoso performer who whether sustaining one note or playing a fury of passages can create and maintain interest.

*Sand Song* was written for a friend who asked me to set a poem she wrote. Here I explore my love for setting text and voice to say something beautiful and precise. This song now stands as a eulogy for her Father.

Writing a solo piece for performer Louise Devenish was on my musical agenda since coming home from Bang on a Can. *Parihaka*, for vocalising percussionist, was one of those pieces that came together easily and acts as a protest about what happened at Parihaka. It is a setting of Apirana Taylor's poem *Parihaka*.

*The Headlines Today* explores the music of shouting in an indeterminate work, improvised about news headlines.

**Let the  
Music Begin**

**E. J. Dobson**

*A Study in Scarlet*

*for orchestra*

# A Study in Scarlet

## **Programme Note**

*A Study in Scarlet* (2009) is a short work for orchestra focusing on woodwind and metal percussion timbres. The motivic and harmonic material is derived from tone clock principles and a musical code based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's book, titled *A Study in Scarlet*.

## **Performance note**

*A Study in Scarlet* was selected for the 2009 NZSO / TODD Corporation Young Composers Awards. In August it was work-shopped and recorded by the NZSO, conducted by Hamish McKeich. The recordings were broadcast on Radio New Zealand Concert on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2009. Sincere thanks to composer and mentor Ross Harris, Hamish McKeich, The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Radio NZ Concert.

# A Study in Scarlet

## Instrumentation

Score at concert pitch, except octave transposing instruments.

2 flutes

Oboe

Cor anglais

2 clarinets in Bb

2 bassoons

2 horns in F

2 trumpets in Bb

2 trombones

Bass trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion 1- Triangle, mark tree and metal wind chimes

Percussion 2 - Medium suspended cymbal and high sizzle cymbal

Percussion 3 - Vibraphone

Strings

**Duration** 5 minutes, twenty seconds.

# A Study in Scarlet

## Analytical Note

This piece grew out of a love for musical codes. Having just read Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes book *A Study in Scarlet* I decided to "encode" this book into a piece. I wanted to voyage to a sound world I had not yet experimented with in an orchestral medium. A world that is quieter and slower moving - contrasting with my recent orchestral work *Ricercare per Vita*, a busy, loud and densely textured toccata.

The form of *A Study in Scarlet* is inspired by the first section (rehearsal mark 1 – 17) of Dutilleux's *Timbres, Espace, Mouvement*. I pay tribute to his haunting cor anglais solo (*Timbres* - bar 47) by placing my cor anglais solo at the typical climax point of *A Study in Scarlet*. I have emulated the mood of Dutilleux's opening by also utilizing atmospheric percussion sounds.

The instrumentation focuses heavily on woodwind. As a wind player I am biased towards its timbre and wanted to explore the sound. The cor anglais is almost a soloist while the brass and the strings are largely ignored. The woodwind timbre is contrasted with bright metallic percussion which is dissimilar with my previous 2008 fascination with wooden percussion.

The work is predominantly set in 3/2. This is to suspend gestures through the bar by the use of repeated triplets or crotchets (i.e. bar 12, woodwind or bar 19-20, woodwind and vibraphone). These pulsing repeated notes help the harmony to feel quite stagnant and slow moving.

The opening texture morphs out of "thin air" like fog drifting over the plains at dawn. The first tunes heard are pieces of musical code from Doyle's book *A Study in Scarlet*. The dark themes unravel, muddying up the texture with stagnant pulses of clustered woodwind chords that drift in and out of unison. The plot thickens with brief wind and vibraphone solos, and breaks down to a disjointed wind quartet at bar 28. The quartet is to add rhythmical interest and helps evoke the franticness often involved with figuring out a mystery.

The strings enter at bar 32 with their main theme which features large angular intervals - in contrast with the small interval motivic material from the beginning. It helps build momentum to the fortissimo tutti at bar 42. This quickly collapses into an anticlimax of a cor anglais solo supported by light percussion and wind. The solo here, where one would expect a large climax, became my favourite section of the work due to its sparse instrumentation.

The strings enter again at bar 66 with a stomping ostinato supporting a restless vibraphone solo. Strains of the musical code filter through the winds and vibraphone to reinforce the mysterious feeling. The second tutti at bar 70 suddenly diminishes again to stagnant pulsing woodwind timbres, reinforcing the feeling of an unattainable outcome to the mystery. The piece then fades, with a final reiteration by cor anglais and flute of thematic material derived from the opening.

The score is cutaway to reveal only what is necessary. Often to see the bigger picture one has to use imagination - much like Holmes looking at a crime scene. I set this as a challenge for my notational skills and felt *A Study in Scarlet* suits the calligraphic eye-catching individualism of a cut away score.

*“All looked so peaceful and happy, the rustling trees and the broad silence of grain land that it was difficult to realise that the spirit of murder lurked through it all”<sup>9</sup>*

The main harmonic and motivic material is based on the third hour of the tone clock.<sup>10</sup> (Intervals 1 + 3). I translated the following sentence into a musical code using this scale.



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<sup>9</sup> Doyle, A.C. *A Study in Scarlet*. Reissue ed. (United States of America: Oxford University Press, 2009.), Chapter Four.

<sup>10</sup> Schalt, P. (translated by McLeod, J.) *The Tone Clock*. (Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993.) pg 61.

*“There’s the scarlet thread of murder running through the colourless skein of life, and our duty is to unravel it, and isolate it, and expose every inch of it.”<sup>11</sup>*

Each letter was assigned to a note of the scale depending on how frequently it appeared in the sentence. For example; the letter E appears 14 times, all letters appearing 14 times became a = G $\flat$  etc , or letter A, appearing 7 times became D. Motivic and harmonic material were then formed upon this code . Three examples of how this musical code translated into motivic material follow.

*All examples are in concert pitch*

*Cor Anglais Bar 5 (concert pitch) Clarinet 1 in 4 has the M = B $\flat$ . The U (D) is substituted for C $\flat$ , to provide semitone clash with clarinet.*

*Oboe bar 7*

The vertical harmony at bar 12-15 is based on the “scarlet” set of notes clustered into chords.

*Clarinet 2, bar 11 (concert pitch)*

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<sup>11</sup> Doyle, A.C. *A Study in Scarlet*, Chapter Four.



A Study in Scarlet

10

Fl. 1 *p* *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*

Fl. 2 *pp* *p* *pp* *mp* *p*

Ob. *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*

C. A. *p* *mp* *pp*

Cl. 1 *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*

Cl. 2 *mp* *solo* *mp* *solo* *mp*

Bsn. 1 *pp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *p*

Bsn. 2 *pp* *mp* *pp*

Tpt. 1 *con sord.* *mp*

Perc. 1 *[Trd]* *mp*

Vla. *pizz.* *p* *p* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *pizz.* *p* *p* *mp* *mf*

Cb. *pizz.* *mf*



A Study in Scarlet

21

Fl. 1 *mf* *mp*

Fl. 2 *mf* *mp*

Ob. *f* *mf* *p*

C. A. *solo*

Cl. 1 *mf* *f*

Cl. 2 *mf* *f*

Bsn. 1 *f* *mf*

Bsn. 2 *f* *mf* *p*

Timp. *ppp*

Perc. 1 *mf* *mf* *mf* *f*

Perc. 2

Vib. *mf* *f*

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, titled 'A Study in Scarlet', covers measures 21 through 24. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute 1 and 2, Oboe, Clarinet in A, Clarinet 1 and 2, Bassoon 1 and 2, Timpani, Percussion 1 and 2, Vibraphone, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The music is in 3/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs. Dynamics range from *ppp* (pianissimo) to *f* (forte). The Oboe part has a *f* dynamic at the start of measure 21, while the Flutes and Clarinets start at *mf*. The Percussion 1 part includes a *Trgl.* (trill) and a *gliss.* (glissando) in measures 21 and 22. The Vibraphone part has a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts have a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Timpani part has a *ppp* dynamic in measure 24. The Clarinet in A part has a *solo* marking in measure 24. The Flute 1 and 2 parts have *mf* dynamics in measure 21 and *mp* dynamics in measure 22. The Bassoon 1 and 2 parts have *f* dynamics in measure 21 and *mf* dynamics in measure 22. The Clarinet 1 and 2 parts have *mf* dynamics in measure 21 and *f* dynamics in measure 22. The Bassoon 1 and 2 parts have *f* dynamics in measure 21 and *mf* dynamics in measure 22. The Percussion 1 part has *mf* dynamics in measures 21 and 22, and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Percussion 2 part is silent. The Vibraphone part has a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts have a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Timpani part has a *ppp* dynamic in measure 24. The Flute 1 and 2 parts have *mf* dynamics in measure 21 and *mp* dynamics in measure 22. The Oboe part has a *f* dynamic in measure 21, *mf* in measure 22, and *p* in measure 23. The Clarinet in A part has a *solo* marking in measure 24. The Clarinet 1 and 2 parts have *mf* dynamics in measure 21 and *f* dynamics in measure 22. The Bassoon 1 and 2 parts have *f* dynamics in measure 21 and *mf* dynamics in measure 22. The Percussion 1 part has *mf* dynamics in measures 21 and 22, and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Percussion 2 part is silent. The Vibraphone part has a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts have a *mf* dynamic in measure 21 and a *f* dynamic in measure 24. The Timpani part has a *ppp* dynamic in measure 24.

A Study in Scarlet

Lively and Bouncy

26

Fl. 1 *f* *p* *mf* *f*

Fl. 2 *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

Ob. *mf*

C. A. *f* *f*

Cl. 1 *f* *mf* *f*

Cl. 2 *f* *mp*

Bsn. 1 *f* *mp*

Bsn. 2 *f* *pp* *mp*

Timp.

Vib. *f* *pp* *p*

Vln. I *ppp* *mp* *ppp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *arco* *pp*

Vc. *f* *pp*

Cb. *f* *pp*

A Study in Scarlet

31 *Accel. poco a poco*

The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes Flutes 1 and 2, Oboes 1 and 2, Clarinets 1 and 2, Bassoons 1 and 2, Trombones 1 and 2, Tuba, and Timpani. The second system includes Vibraphone, Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and accents. Dynamics range from *pp* to *f*. The tempo marking is *Accel. poco a poco*. The score is written in 2/4 time.

Fl. 1 *f* *mf* *f*

Fl. 2 *mf*

Ob. 1 *f*

Ob. 2 *mf*

Cl. 1 *f*

Cl. 2 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bsn. 1 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Bsn. 2 *mf* *mp* *mf*

Tbn. 1 *pp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Tbn. 2 *pp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Tba. *p*

Timp. *sof.* *p*

Vib. *mf*

Vln. I *mp* *mf* *p*

Vln. II *pizz.* *mp* *mf* *f*

Vla. *pizz.* *mp* *mf* *f*

Vc. *pizz.* *p* *mf*

Cb. *pizz.* *p* *mf*

A Study in Scarlet

$\text{♩} = 66$  Stringendo

Fl. 1 *f* *mf*

Fl. 2 *f*

Ob. 1 *f* *ff*

Cl. 1 *f* *mf*

Cl. 2 *f* *ff*

Bsn. 1

Bsn. 2 *f* *ff*

Hn. 1 *f*

Tpt. 1 *mf* *mp* *f*

Tbn. 1 *mp*

Tbn. 2 *mp*

B. Tbn. *mp* *mf*

Tba. *mp* *mf*

Vib. *f*

Vln. I *f* *mf*

Vln. II *arco* *ff*

Vla. *arco* *f*

Vc. *arco* *f* *mf* *ff*

Cb. *f*

A Study in Scarlet

Fl. 1 *ff* *f* *ff*

Fl. 2 *f* *ff*

Ob. *mf* *f* *ff* *ff*

Cl. 1 *f* *mf* *f* *ff*

Cl. 2 *f* *f* *ff*

Bsn. 1 *f* *ff*

Bsn. 2 *mf* *f* *ff*

Hn. 1 *f* *f* *ff*

Hn. 2 *f*

Tpt. 1 *f* *f* *ff*

Tpt. 2 *f*

Tbn. 1 *f*

Tbn. 2 *f*

B. Tbn. *f* *mp* *ff*

Tba. *mf cresc. poco a poco* *ff*

Timp. *mf cresc. poco a poco* *f* *ff*

Vln. I *mp* *ff*

Vln. II *ff* *f*

Vla. *ff*

Vc. *pizz.* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

Cb. *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

46

*ff* 3 *dr* *Poco rit* *mf* *pp*

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Ob.

C. A.

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Hn. 1

Hn. 2

Tpt. 1

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Tbn.

Timp.

Perc. 1. *f* *ppp* *ppp*

Vib.

Vc. *arco* *mf* *Poco rit* *pp*

Cb. *arco* *mf* *pp*

Very freely  $\text{♩} = 50$   
*espress. ad lib.*  
solo *p*

Tbn. 1 *pp*

Tbn. 2 *pp*

B. Tbn. *pp*

A Study in Scarlet

**Più mosso**

This musical score system covers measures 51 to 56. It features a 3/2 time signature and a tempo marking of **Più mosso**. The instruments and their parts are: Fl. 1 (flute) with a *flz* marking and dynamics *pp* to *mf*; Ob. (oboe) with dynamics *mf*; C. A. (clarinet in A) with dynamics *mf* to *f*; Cl. 1 (clarinet in B-flat) with dynamics *mf* to *mp*; Tbn. 1, 2, and B. Tbn. (trumpets and trombones) with dynamics *pp*; Perc. 2 (percussion) with *Susp. cymb.* and dynamics *pp*; Vib. (vibraphone) with dynamics *mp* to *mf*; Vc. (violin) and Cb. (cello) with dynamics *pp* and *pizz.* (pizzicato) markings.

**Accel.**

This musical score system covers measures 57 to 62. It features a 3/2 time signature and a tempo marking of **Accel.** (accelerando). A metronome marking of  $\text{♩} = 60$  is present. The instruments and their parts are: Fl. 1 (flute) with dynamics *mf* to *f*; Ob. (oboe) with dynamics *f*; C. A. (clarinet in A) with dynamics *f*; Cl. 1 (clarinet in B-flat) with dynamics *f* to *ff*; Bsn. 2 (baritone saxophone) with dynamics *mp* to *ff*; Tbn. 1 (trumpet) with dynamics *f*; Timp. (timpani) with dynamics *mf*; Perc. 2 (percussion) with *Susp. cymb.* and *heavier sticks* markings and dynamics *mf* to *f*; Vib. (vibraphone) with dynamics *mf* to *ff*; Vln. I and II (violins) with dynamics *f*; Vln. II (violin II) with dynamics *f*; Vla. (viola) with dynamics *f*; Vc. (violin) with dynamics *f* and an *arco* marking; and Cb. (cello) with dynamics *f*.

A Study in Scarlet

Musical score for measures 63-66. The score includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Bassoon 2 (Bsn. 2), Horns 1 and 2 (Hn. 1, Hn. 2), Trombone 1 (Tbn. 1), Timpani (Timp.), Vibraphone (Vib.), Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). Measure 63 starts with a 2/2 time signature. The Oboe and Vibraphone play a melodic line marked *ff*. The Clarinet 1 and Bassoon 2 play sustained notes marked *mp*. The Trombone 1 plays a rhythmic pattern marked *f*. The Horns 1 and 2 play a melodic line marked *f*. The Timpani plays a rhythmic pattern marked *mp*. The Violin 1, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass are silent. Measure 64 continues the same instrumentation. Measure 65 introduces a 3/2 time signature. The Oboe and Vibraphone play a melodic line marked *f*. The Clarinet 1 and Bassoon 2 play sustained notes marked *mp*. The Trombone 1 plays a rhythmic pattern marked *mf*. The Horns 1 and 2 play a melodic line marked *f*. The Timpani plays a rhythmic pattern marked *mp*. The Violin 1, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass are silent. Measure 66 continues the same instrumentation.



Musical score for measures 67-70. The score includes parts for Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Bassoon 2 (Bsn. 2), Vibraphone (Vib.), Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). Measure 67 starts with a 2/2 time signature. The Flute 1 and Flute 2 play a melodic line marked *mf*. The Oboe plays a melodic line marked *mf* with the instruction *cresc. poco a poco*. The Clarinet 1 plays a melodic line marked *f* with the instruction *solo*. The Bassoon 2 plays a melodic line marked *f*. The Vibraphone plays a melodic line marked *ff*. The Violin 1, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass are silent. Measure 68 continues the same instrumentation. Measure 69 continues the same instrumentation. Measure 70 continues the same instrumentation.

**Dramatic**

70

Fl. 1 *ff*

Fl. 2 *ff*

Ob. *ff*

Cl. 1 *ff* *dim. poco a poco*

Bsn. 1 *ff* *ff*

Bsn. 2 *ff* *fff*

Tpt. 1 *f* *ff*

Tpt. 2 *ff*

Tbn. 1 *f* *ff*

Tbn. 2 *f* *ff*

B. Tbn. *f* *ff*

Tba. *f* *ff*

Timp. *f* *mf* *mp* *p*

**Dramatic**

Vln. I *ff*

Vln. II *f*

Vc. *f* *mf*

Cb. *f* *mf*

A Study in Scarlet

Musical score for measures 74-77. The score includes parts for Flute 1 and 2, Oboe, Clarinet in A, Clarinet 1 and 2, Bassoon 1 and 2, Vibraphone, Violin 1, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. Dynamics range from *p* to *mf*. A Clarinet in A solo is marked *f* starting at measure 76. The woodwinds and strings play a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and slurs.



Musical score for measures 78-81, marked "a Tempo - mysterious". The score includes parts for Flute 1 and 2, Oboe, Clarinet in A, Clarinet 1 and 2, Bassoon 1 and 2, Vibraphone, Violin 1, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. Dynamics range from *mp* to *p*. A Clarinet 2 solo is marked *p* starting at measure 80. The woodwinds play a melodic line with slurs and triplets, while the strings play a pizzicato accompaniment.



**E. J. Dobson**

*.manatu.*

*for*

*2 flutes, Bb clarinet, violin, cello, piano,*

*vibraphone, percussion and*

*two instrumentalists from Kyrgyzstan*

*“...pay this tribute to a place we all called  
home...”<sup>12</sup>*

Dedicated to the Dobson’s who have loved 674 Lincoln Road  
for nearly a century.

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<sup>12</sup> Dobson, E. J. *Tribute to a Place*. Song lyrics 16-04-09.

## **.manatu.**

### **Programme Note**

manatu:

1. **(verb)** (-hia,-tia) to remember, bear in mind.
2. **(stative)** be homesick, anxious, sad.
3. **(noun)** reminder, memorandum.<sup>13</sup>

*.manatu.* pays tribute to lands, past or present, which are significant and meaningful in our lives and that serve as references for who we are. However, when time calls for change *.manatu.* reminds us not to feel lost without that place and to let our hearts heal and become whole again.

### **Performance Note**

This was recorded live at Bang on A Cans Summer Music festival at MASS MoCA (the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art) July 2009. Many thanks to Bang on a Can, MASS MoCA, Todd Reynolds, Julia Wolfe, David Lang, Michael Gordon and the entire Bang on a Can Festival faculty and fellows.

Performers:

Conductor: Todd Reynolds (New York)

Kyrgyzstan Instrumentalists: Kutmanaaly Syltanbekov, Kambar Kalendarov.

Flutes: Roberta Michel, Kelli Kathman (New York)

Clarinet: Rafael Caldenty Crego (Spain)

Violin: Jeff Young (New York)

Cello: Fjola Evans (Canada)

Piano: Kate Campbell (New Jersey)

Vibraphone: Louise Devenish (Perth, Australia)

Percussion: Steven Sehman (New York)

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<sup>13</sup> (manatu). Māori Dictionary Online.

## .manatu.

### Instrumentation

Transposed Score

Musicians from Kyrgyzstan playing ethnic instruments:

Kutmanaaly Syltanbekov: Choopo choir, sybyzgy

Kambar Kalendarov: Choopo choir, chogoino choir

Flute

Alto flute - doubling on piccolo

Clarinet in Bb

Violin

Cello

Piano

Two percussionists:

Percussion 1: vibraphone

Percussion 2: suspended cymbal - (large, rich sound), wind-chime station (mark tree and metal and wooden wind chimes), triangle, tom-toms (medium and low).

Percussion 2 key:

1 – tom-toms

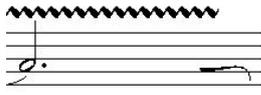
2 – wind chime station

3 – suspended cymbal

4 - triangle



## Note for performers



A wiggly line over top of any note(s) – indicates it is to be played in a wailing/mournful style to imitate the Maori instrument called the Koauau. To do this bend the note slowly a quarter tone flat and a quarter tone sharp while using lots of vibrato.

The embellishment at the end of notes indicates to play a Maori hi-ianga. (translates as *the drag* or *terminal glissando*). It is an “expulsion of breath accompanied by a glissando drop of the voice/instrument over the interval of a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>”.<sup>14</sup>

### *Percussion performance:*

This part is ad lib. and needs to be played empathetically in regards to the other performers. The percussionist is to improvise with the wind chimes at marked places leaving the chimes to resonate and fade naturally. Tom-toms pitches can be selected by the performer.

### *Piano gliss:*

To be performed on string inside of piano in a rapid sweeping manner with fingers. Hold down pedal.

### *Woodwind:*

Either circular breathe or stagger breathing where possible.

### *Kyrgyzstani Instrumentalists (Choopo choir, chogoino choir, sybyzgy)*

Play as near as possible to notated pitches, while still adhering to instruments natural tuning.

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<sup>14</sup>McLean, M. *Maori Music*. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, NZ, 1966.), pg 256.



## .manatu.

### Background

Bang on a Can's Summer Music Festival is a top performer and composer residency programme run by the leading contemporary music group Bang on a Can. American composers David Lang, Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe formed Bang on a Can in 1987 and are "dedicated to commissioning, performing and creating... exciting and innovative music"<sup>15</sup>. Every year they run a special three week festival in July-August at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA). I was one of nine international composers accepted into the 2009 festival and am the only Kiwi to have ever attended. While there I met composers and performers from all over the world. We all performed, listened to and talked about contemporary music non-stop.

As part of my attendance to BOAC 09 I was asked to write a brand new chamber work which would be work-shopped, premiered and recorded. This piece was written in a short time frame while I was busy organising two fundraising concerts to help with attendance to BOAC 09 as well as organising travel and applying for funds for fees and flights. *.Manatu.* was inspired by John Psathas' piano and percussion concerto *View from Olympus* and his use of high tinkly piano mixed with bright metallic percussion.

BOAC 09 was a life changing experience - so much so that I have since referred to my composition as *Before BOAC* and *After BOAC*. The multitude of music I heard live every day was astounding. The vast range, style, timbre and ingenuity and the sheer virtuosity of it has since inspired my music.

BOAC helped to validate myself as a composer. The reception of my work after the premiere was heartfelt and moving with many musicians and composers commenting on how beautiful my score was. I received praise from the performers for writing enjoyable parts to play. In particular the percussionist who played vibraphone, Australian Louise Devenish, enjoyed the mood and atmosphere of the work. We have since begun collaborating and my first piece for her, *Paribaka*, is included in this portfolio.

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<sup>15</sup> Bang on a Can website. <[http://bangonacan.org/about\\_us](http://bangonacan.org/about_us)>

Of the nine composers invited to write for the Kyrgyzstani ethnic instrumentalists, I was only one to accept the challenge to include them in my piece. Up until the day of meeting Kutman and Kambar (two musicians from Kyrgyzstan) I did not know if they could read Western music notation or speak English. I first met them with their interpreter from Russia and I found out that they could read music and one could speak some English. Interestingly they had had my music for a few weeks and had worked through learning it despite one slight mishap. Unfortunately the exhausted composer (after working 72 hours on it in four days) accidentally slipped them one page of the piccolo part, which was virtually impossible for Kutman to play on his native instrument the sybyzgy.

By involving the Kyrgyzstani musicians it differentiated my piece from the other composers. Several musicians and composers were curious as to how I wrote for them. All I had while writing the work was several inaccurate Youtube videos of someone playing Kyrgyzstani instruments. From this I approximated range on the piano and notated simple but sing-able lines. My backup plan, if reading the notation was a problem for them, was that I could teach their part to them aurally by singing it.

For Kutman, (the one who did not speak English) it was no small feat taking part in BOAC 09 as it was the first time he had played with a Western ensemble or played a contemporary classical piece. He had initial difficulties with communication and unification with the ensemble, however these were overcome and the experience was invaluable to both him and me. The Spanish clarinetist, Rafael Caldentey Crego, was empathetic in the way he communicated with the Kyrgyzstani's. To aid Kutman's performance in the ensemble Rafael sat next to him and wrote cues for Kutman's part on his clarinet part. Rafael was a great communicator and, despite not speaking Russian, he was able to convey performance directions and important information to them. Rafael's help was invaluable to the ensemble and he taught me a lot about communicating without English.

While both Kutman and Kambar found performing in the ensemble tiring they were so genuine in their enjoyment of the experience. Much to my pleasure and humility, whenever I passed them in the hallway or at the pub at night they would bang their heart, smile and say "*manatu...manutu*" and start singing one of their lines from the score.

The two instrumentalists played a lot of different instruments, including the temir ooz komuz or the jigach ooz komuz (metal and wooden jaw harps), komuz and domba (three

and two stringed guitar like instruments), the chopo choor (like an ocarina – which came in many different sizes) the chogoino choor (wooden pipe shaped instrument) and the sybyzgy (a flute like wooden instrument). My background as a wind player and owner of many wind instruments lead me to use the wooden wind instruments for *.manatu..* Additionally their similarity to other ethnic instruments such as native American flutes, Chinese bamboo flutes or the Japanese Shakuhachi allows for many different potential interpretations of *.manatu.* in the future. While I assumed Kutman and Kamar would be amplified for the premiere any sections where they play I set sparsely, not just dynamically and texturally sparse but tonally sparse, allowing their non Western diatonic tuning to sound natural.

The main question I dealt with while writing this piece for a prestigious international festival was how will I make this my own, and did I want it to sound inherently of New Zealand? As being the first Kiwi to ever go to BOAC I decided I did want to incorporate elements of New Zealand into my work. To do this I used a Maori hi-ianga at the end of most phrases. This combined with the koauau-like imitation suited the mournful nature of the piece. I had no problem communicating what sound I wanted and one brilliant flute player from New York piped up “oh so it’s like a waiata?” She had played Helen Fisher’s *Te Tangi a Te Matui* before as her previous teacher was Alexa Still.

The first few rehearsals instantly quelled my main concerns about the blending of the timbres and if the atmospheric sound world I imagined in New Zealand would come alive in Massachusetts. Instantly I felt the work had a distinctive sound world - one which the performers and audience could connect with. I had no concern over timing and technical issues as the performers were studying doctorates at the likes of Harvard or Yale or had equally impressive resumes under their belts.

## **Postscript**

This piece was a prelude to a change in circumstances that affected my artistic development as a composer. Primarily the experience from BOAC 09 and writing *.manatu.* was a large step forward in believing the validity of my work.

One of the main highlights while at the festival was meeting Steve Reich. Before attending, everyone had opinions on what Steve Reich would be like. Safe to say the basic summary of him I received from most people was wrong. He was with us for the middle week of the

festival and came to our composer seminar to give a personal lecture. When I met him he shook my hand and in a gruff voice said “*ahh you’re the New Zealand girl*”<sup>16</sup>, and will probably remember me as the photographer and avid note taker. He talked about the importance of developing your signature sound and advised believing in our work. “*Do something you really believe in and feel strongly about it. If we don’t believe in it, how will anyone else believe in it.*”<sup>17</sup>

He spoke about the importance of writing music that people enjoy listening to, and doing it well. “*It really doesn’t matter what you do – it’s how you do it - do it extremely well*”<sup>18</sup> His goal being to provide a sound world to move audiences, physically, mentally and emotionally. I believe that is what I did with *.manatu*. This piece was born out of a torturous move off the family farm through dark feelings of depression and displacement. It became a solace or a light to sooth my broken heart.

I will always remember his parting advice “*If this inspiration inspires your ideas and energy – do it. Something good will come of it. Otherwise go bite another horse*”<sup>19</sup>. I have no intention of biting a horse Mr Reich so I will forever try to be inspired.

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<sup>16</sup> Quote from Steve Reich – personal seminar at Bang on a Can 2009. 23 August 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Steve Reich Bang on a Can 2009.

<sup>18</sup> Steve Reich Bang on a Can 2009.

<sup>19</sup> Steve Reich Bang on a Can 2009.

# .manatu.

**A** atmospheric, spacious, free and melancholy  $\text{♩} = 40$

E. J. Dobson © 2009

**Kutmanaaly** *pp*

**Kambur** *pp*

**Flute** *pp*

**Alto Flute** *pp*

**Clarinet in Bb** *pp*

**Violin I** *pp*  
*light and airy sul pont.*

**Violoncello** *pp*

**Piano** *ff mp*  
*with pedal rapid gliss inside piano on strings (fingertips) ad. lib.*

**Vibraphone** *p*  
*with light sticks or fingers*

**Percussion** *pppp*  
*[Cymb.] wire brush, swirl on cymbal - ad. lib.*





.manatu.

20 poco Più mosso

Score for measures 20-29, tempo *poco Più mosso*. The score includes parts for Kutt., Kam., Fl., A. Fl., Cl., Vln. I, Vc., Pno., Vib., and Perc. The woodwind parts (Cl., Vc., Pno.) feature a melodic line with triplets and dynamic markings of *mf*, *f*, and *mf*. The strings play a rhythmic accompaniment. Performance instructions include *solo*, *mf espress.*, *alleg.*, *sul pont.*, and *Waldchms*. The percussion part includes a *glock.* (glockenspiel).

.manatu.

**C**

24 fresh & airy, yet still sad. with more movement  $\text{♩} = 60$

Score for measures 24-31, featuring the following instruments and parts:

- Kut.** (Koto): *p*
- Kam.** (Kamome)
- Fl.** (Flute): *sub. pp*
- A. Fl.** (Alto Flute)
- Cl.** (Clarinet): *sub. pp*
- Vln. I** (Violin I): *molto legato*
- Vc.** (Violoncello): *pp*
- Pno.** (Piano): *sub. pp*, *mp*, *gliss. as before*, *with pedal*, *mf*
- Vib.** (Vibraphone): *p*
- Perc.** (Percussion): *lv*

The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*p*, *pp*, *mp*, *mf*), articulation (*gliss.*, *gliss.*), and performance instructions (*molto legato*, *with pedal*). The piano part features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 28.







.manatu.

**D**

37 build tension little by little

The musical score consists of ten staves, each representing a different instrument or section. The instruments are: Kutt. (Koto), Kam. (Kamome), Fl. (Flute), A. Fl. (Alto Flute), Cl. (Clarinet), Vln. I (Violin I), Vc. (Violoncello), Pno. (Piano), Vib. (Vibraphone), and Perc. (Percussion). The score is written in 3/8 time and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics (mf, f, mp, flz.), articulations (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (sul pont., gliss.). The music shows a gradual increase in tension and dynamics from measure 37 to 46.



























.manatu.

108 satirical, crazy ♩ = 180

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the following parts and staves from top to bottom:

- Kut.** (Kuhle) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Kam.** (Kamere) - Bass clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Fl.** (Flute) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Picc.** (Piccolo) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Cl.** (Clarinet) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Vln. I** (Violin I) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Vc.** (Violoncello) - Bass clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Pno.** (Piano) - Grand staff (treble and bass clefs), 3/8 time signature.
- Vib.** (Vibraphone) - Treble clef, 3/8 time signature.
- Perc.** (Percussion) - Bass clef, 3/8 time signature.

The score contains various musical notations including dynamics (*mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*), articulation (accents), and performance techniques (trills, triplets, slurs). The percussion part includes a 'Toms' section. The overall tempo is marked as 'satirical, crazy' with a quarter note equal to 180 beats per minute.

.manatu.

118

more movement, gradual cres to 126

Kutt. Kam. Fl. Picc. Cl. Vln. I Vc. Pno. Vib. Perc.

*mf* *f* *f* *f* *f* *f* *fff* *f* *fff* *f* *fff* *f*



.manatu.

127

Kutt. Kam. Fl. Picc. Cl. Vln. I Vc. Pno. Vib. Perc.

lighter sticks *p*

repeat gliss

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 127 to 130. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with staves for Kutt. (Kobza), Kam. (Kamacha), Fl. (Flute), Picc. (Piccolo), Cl. (Clarinet), Vln. I (Violin I), Vc. (Violoncello), Pno. (Piano), Vib. (Vibraphone), and Perc. (Percussion). The woodwind section (Fl., Picc., Cl.) and Violin I part feature complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The Flute and Piccolo parts include trills and grace notes. The Violin I part has a triplet in measure 128. The Piano part includes a 'repeat gliss' instruction. The Vibraphone part has a triplet in measure 129. The Percussion part uses 'lighter sticks' and plays a simple rhythmic pattern. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *p*.

.manatu.

**J** calmer...  
solo

129 rit. less movement

Kutt. *mf*

Kam. *mf*

Fl. *mp*

Picc. *ff* *sub. p* *solo ad. lib.* *pp*

Cl. *ff* *sub. p* *sul pont.* *pp*

Vln. I *ff* *sub. p* *pizz.* *p*

Vc. *ff* *solo ad. lib.* *sub. p* *gliss. as before*

Pno. *ff* *sub. p* *gliss. as before*

Vib. *ff* *sub. p*

Perc. *ff*

Alto Flute *pp*

Timb. Tail. Fig. *pp*





.manatu.

159

Kut. *ppp* *pppp*

Kam. *pppp*

Fl. *flz.* *pppp* *pppp*

A. Fl. *flz.* *pppp*

Cl. *flz.* *ppp*

Vln. I *gliss.* *gliss.* *pppp*

Vc. *gliss.* *gliss.* *pppp*

Pno. *gliss as before* *ppp* *pppp*

Vib. *ppp* *ppp 3* *gliss.* *pppp*

Perc. *ppp* *pppp*

**E. J. Dobson**

*.ātanga.*

*for*

*solo piano and wind chimes*

*Dedicated to*

Tama Porter

The Dame Malvina Major Foundation

Bang on a Can Fellows, Faculty and MASS MoCa Staff 2009

## **.ātanga.**

### **Programme Note**

ātanga

1. (verb) (-tia) to adorn, embellish, enhance.
2. (stative) be beautiful, attractive, handsome, stunning, good-looking, gorgeous, appealing, exquisite, comely, fair, fine.<sup>20</sup>

*.ātanga.* is an adaption of my work *.manatu.* from BOAC 09. When *.manatu.* was premiered at BOAC 09 everyone who spoke to me about it said that it was really beautiful, so the title of this solo pays homage to their loving reception and reaction to my music.

The wind chimes were an integral part of the chamber work and I could not bear to part with them for this adaptation. They are to be set up on a cymbal stand overhanging the low register keys of the piano, and are to be played with which-ever hand is available, in a gentle sweeping motion. The performer must play the chimes empathetically and may choose to use certain registers of the chimes for certain sections of the piece.

The piano adaptation was especially written for Tama Porter to perform at the Dame Malvina Major Foundation Annual showcase concert on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2009 in New Plymouth's TSB Showplace.

### **Performance Note**

The version on the CD is Tama Porter's live performance at the annual Lilburn Trust Young Composers Competition at The University of Waikato, October 2009.

**Duration** 7 minutes

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<sup>20</sup> (ātanga) māori Dictionary Online.

## **.ātanga.**

### **Background**

I was asked to write a work for the Annual Dame Malvina Major Foundation Young Performers Showcase concert in New Plymouth. Having grown up in Taranaki I am affiliated with the foundation. I was to be a part of the concert by giving a speech about BOAC 09 and writing a new work for Tama Porter to perform. Tama is an up and coming brilliant seventeen year old pianist and musician from Waitara who is also affiliated with the Foundation.

While at BOAC 09 I was surrounded by vast quantities of amazingly different music. This inspired me to start many different piano works. However after consulting my mentor, composer and BOAC co-founder David Lang, I decided to take on the great challenge of adapting my work *.manatu.* which I had written for the festival for solo piano. We discussed the validity of creating works this way,<sup>21</sup> as well as the efficient use of musical material. He suggested I call the piece by another title to avoid future confusion.<sup>22</sup>

Arranging an eleven part ensemble for piano was a large task and was a good opportunity in which to grow as a composer. It was the first time I had undertaken such a large adaptation or written such an extensive piano work. I have become fond of the result which has lived on beyond its premiere. *.ātanga.* has been performed The University of Waikato's Annual Blues Awards where I won Creative and Performing Arts Person of the Year 2009. Tama Porter performed *.ātanga.* again at the annual Lilburn Trust Young Composers Competition at the University of Waikato in October 2009 and it is scheduled to be played by ex-pat New Zealander Justin Bird at The Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore in 2010.

### **Analytical Note**

I wanted to write a beautiful piano solo that the New Plymouth audience would easily understand so I focused on keeping the meditative and atmospheric aspects of *.manatu.* I

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<sup>21</sup> (Private conversation with David Lang. At BOAC 09 July 2009.) He does not have a problem with it and borrows from himself all the time.

<sup>22</sup> Initially because the two piece were shaping up to be so similar I was going to call them the same thing.

was fortunate to have such a talented musician to work with, as this piece is a lot more difficult than what one would usually write for a seventeen year old, grade eight pianist.

The opening page is a literal translation of *.manatu.* with the right hand picking up the opening motives from the flutes and the clarinet. At rehearsal figure B the left hand has the Kyrgyzstanis' first main tune embellished with appoggiaturas (bar 20 from *.manatu.*). Section C originally featured piano motivic material so it adapted easily for this solo. This section and the end became Tama's favourite parts to play due to the flowing melody.

Rehearsal mark D is the first mini climax and to aid the drama two repeated chords were added here. These chords and the following section build the momentum up to the second climax just before rehearsal mark G. Neither climaxes are at the traditional climax place of 2/3rds through the work – they occur sooner and support the distinctive mood and shape of this solo.

From *.manatu.* most of bars 44 – 53 were cut however the virtuosic build up to bar 57 became the main climax of *.atanga.* The original woodwind solo through bars 60 – 79 were cut because of length and consistency.

Section G is my favourite part of the work in terms of character. The chimes, which have not been recently used appear more frequently and blend with the piano's quasi improvisation of the second Kyrgyzstani's tune (bar 85 of *.manatu.*). This theme is supported by improvised left hand tremolos which extend the resonance of the piano to imitate the woodwind's vibrato on sustained notes. When played empathetically and with sustain the tremolos proved to be effective and became a characteristic of the piece.

A further large section of *.manatu.* bars 97 - 129 were cut; including the main climax at bar 126 - the clarinet solo with toms and heavy vibes. This and the next section, marked satirical, did not fit the luminescent mood established in the piano solo. However the Kyrgyzstani's second tune (*.manatu.* bar 129) led beautifully to the end of the piano solo. The piano rises up through the registers and ends sustained with one final wind chime glissando.

The wind chimes were kept on a whim after hearing how well they worked in *.manatu.* I enjoy how inherently musical they are so I could not bear to part with them. Tama's teacher was initially worried about the volume of the chimes and whether they would be

heard. My main concern was the chimes not overpowering the piano. If the chimes are hung near the piano's opening then they are amplified sympathetically with the natural resonance of the piano through the sound board. In all the halls in which *.ātanga.* has been played the sound of the chimes and piano has been a successful mix.

### **Learning Experience**

In retrospect the form could have been more precise. In some performances the sections have felt disjointed; however, other times it flows beautifully dependant on the performer's interpretation.



.ātanga.

*gliss.*

**B**

*mp*

*mf* *sub. p* *f* *mp* *mp espress.*

*gliss.* **C**

Chimes

*ad lib. gradually speed up through run*

*f* (*G Ab A C Db*)

*sub. pp*

fresh, airy & delicate  
(yet still sad)  
more movement ♩. = 60

\* with pedal.

*p* *mf* *p*

*mf mp* *mp*

.ātanga.

Chimes *gliss.*

(8)

(8)

(8)

**D**

*slight trem on each chord - swell volume and trem speed of each chord*

*gradual cres to 59*

.ātanga.

First system of a piano score. The right hand features a complex melodic line with triplets and slurs. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *f* and *ff*.

Second system of a piano score. The right hand continues with intricate melodic patterns. The left hand has a more rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics include *ff*.

Chimes *gliss.* **E** *gliss.*

Third system of a piano score. The right hand has a melodic line with triplets. The left hand has a bass line with triplets. Dynamics include *ff* and *p*.

Fourth system of a piano score. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs. The left hand has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *pp*, *mp*, and *p*.

Fifth system of a piano score. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs. The left hand has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *f*, *mp*, and *mf* *espress. molto legato*. The instruction "less movement" is written above the right hand. A triplet is marked at the end.

.ātanga.

Musical score for the first system of 'ātanga.' It consists of two staves. The upper staff has dynamics *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. The lower staff has a dynamic of *f*. There are trill ornaments above some notes in the upper staff. A trill in the upper staff is marked with a '3' and 'rit.'. Fingering numbers '3' are present in both staves.

**F** ♩ = 60 build to climax at 78

Musical score for the second system of 'ātanga.' It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a dynamic of *f*. The lower staff has a dynamic of *mf*. There are trill ornaments above some notes in the upper staff. Fingering numbers '3' are present in both staves.

Musical score for the third system of 'ātanga.' It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a dynamic of *f*. The lower staff has a dynamic of *f*. There are trill ornaments above some notes in the upper staff. Fingering numbers '3' are present in both staves.

Musical score for the fourth system of 'ātanga.' It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a dynamic of *ff*. The lower staff has a dynamic of *fff*. There are trill ornaments above some notes in the upper staff. A section of the score is marked 'dramatic, dark & heavy Chimes' with a glissando line above it. A section of the score is marked 'ad lib. the static tremelos to fill space' with a glissando line above it. Fingering numbers '5' and '8<sup>rb</sup>' are present.

Musical score for the fifth system of 'ātanga.' It consists of two staves. The upper staff has a dynamic of *mf*. The lower staff has a dynamic of *mp*. There are trill ornaments above some notes in the upper staff. A section of the score is marked 'free & airy, atmospheric Chimes' with a glissando line above it. A section of the score is marked 'lots of pedal' in the lower staff. A section of the score is marked 'pp' in the lower staff. Fingering numbers '3' are present in both staves.

.ātanga.

Chimes *gliss.*

*mf espress.* *mf*

*gliss.*

little more movement & heavier

*mf* *mp* *mf*

Chimes *gliss.*

rit.

*f* *mp* *mf*

**H** calmer...

*ad. lib.*

Chimes *gliss.*

*sub. p* *mp* *mp espress.*

**I** Tempo = ♩ = 50  
(like beginning)

*mp*

.ātanga.

The first system of the musical score is in 6/8 time. The right hand features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes at the beginning, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with a triplet of eighth notes at the start and sustained chords. The dynamic marking *mp* is placed above the right hand.

very delicate & atmospheric  
gradually slow down...

The notation for the Chimes instrument shows a single note with a long horizontal line above it labeled *gliss.*, indicating a glissando. Below the note, a downward-sloping line indicates that the sound should gradually slow down.

The second system continues the piece. The right hand has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes and a *pp* dynamic marking. The left hand features a triplet of eighth notes and a *ppp* dynamic marking. A long horizontal line with a downward slope spans across the system, indicating a gradual deceleration.

lift pedal occasionally..very sustained through  
last section

The third system shows the continuation of the melodic and harmonic lines. The right hand has a triplet of eighth notes and a *ppp* dynamic marking. The left hand has a triplet of eighth notes and a *ppp* dynamic marking. A long horizontal line with a downward slope spans across the system, indicating a gradual deceleration.

The notation for the Chimes instrument shows a single note with a long horizontal line above it labeled *gliss.*, indicating a glissando. Below the note, a downward-sloping line indicates that the sound should gradually slow down. The text "let all resonance fade.." is written to the right of the notation.

The fourth system is the final system of the piece. The right hand has a triplet of eighth notes and a *pppp* dynamic marking. The left hand has a triplet of eighth notes and a *pppp* dynamic marking. A long horizontal line with a downward slope spans across the system, indicating a gradual deceleration.

NZ / USA 2009  
cj dobson

**E. J. Dobson**

*Wrong Number*

*for*

*amplified soprano, live effects and computer*

*Dedicated to*  
*Diantha Hillenbrand*

# Wrong Number

## Programme Note

This piece grew out of a conceptual song cycle for soprano and computer. It is a setting of Janet Frame's poem *Wrong Number*, from her poetry collection *The Goose Bath*.<sup>23</sup> The work makes use of real-time effects processing of both voice and pre-recorded audio samples<sup>24</sup> that are manipulated to create a soundscape over which the soprano sings.

## Text *Wrong Number* by Janet Frame

*It is not the right time to telephone me.  
I have been emptying ashes  
from two fires,  
getting rid of old bodies of embers  
with traces in my hair and eyes  
stinging and  
flames freshly bleeding where I struck the hot coals  
meaning only to bring about  
a deathbed  
revival as I promised, setting my speech  
to match the fires frail whispering,  
I must be  
Cruel (surely you have heard it!) to be kind.  
But I am tired and it is not  
the right time  
to telephone me and ask in a strange voice  
Hello is that the Mornington  
Butchery.*<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Janet Frame's poem is used with permission via the Janet Frame Literary Trust.

<sup>24</sup> All samples recorded by EJ Dobson. Apart from "telephone ring" – see bibliography.

<sup>25</sup> Janet Frame's poem quoted from, Gordon, P., and Harold, D., and Manhire, B. (Ed's) *The Goose Bath Poems – Janet Frame Poetry*. (New Zealand: Random House, 2003), Pg 73.

## **Performance Note**

This work was premiered at the annual Lilburn Trust Young Composers Competition at The University of Waikato, October 2009, by soprano Diantha Hillenbrand and Lizzie Dobson and was awarded equal first place in the electro-acoustic section by John Cousins. The version on the accompanying CD was recorded at The University of Waikato's recording studio by Diantha Hillenbrand and Elizabeth Dobson and is one possible interpretation of the work. Thanks to Diantha Hillenbrand for her committed performances of the work.

# Wrong Number

## Instrumentation

Soprano, with large range (G3 to B5)

Computer operator

## Technical Requirements

Laptop with soundcard. Ability to have 1 line in and stereo out

Ableton Live on laptop (7.0.1 or higher)

Midi controller. (i.e. m-audio trigger finger)

1 vocal microphone plus pop filter

Wide stereo speakers. (Preferably 2.1)

## Note on Notation

Small Soprano Score: The small vocal only score should be used as a learning aid for the soprano to master interpretation and timing. In live performance use the full score.

Full Score: Notation is proportional and approximate. Every interpretation of the score will be different as the backing is adaptable to the singer's interpretation.

Soprano Staff: Indicates all performance directions for the soprano. Accidentals apply only to the note they precede. As the backing track is not tempo driven, it is up to the singer to aid the dramatic momentum by changing her pace. Sections 1-4 are to sound improvised and the performer may use what is written as a guide to do so.

Vocal effects: Notates the effects to be applied to the soprano by the computer operator. These are an indication to aid performance and can be interpreted freely. Freeze delay means keep the delay signal running via pre programmed action.

Computer samples, computer effects: Gives description of backing sound to aid soprano. Includes direction for manipulation of samples (performed and triggered by the operator).

Synthesiser: Indicates pitched synthesizer pedal notes (pre-mapped to midi controller - performed by operator)

Solid black line following any event indicates that event is to continue for the indicated time.

Arrowed lines joining different staves indicate that part should be synchronised.

**Duration** Nine minutes, dependant on interpretation.

## Details for Live Performance

This is an Ableton Live set controlled by laptop keyboard and an M-audio trigger finger. Indications of performance are notated on the score; however, each performance is ad lib, and can be interpreted by the performers as they wish.

### Ableton Live Tracks

Ten channels of sound, including two for live soprano input, five for samples (bussed onto a submixed channel) and two for synthesizers. Samples arranged horizontally by scenes (1-13) which are triggered at the marked places on the score. Each channel of sound can be sent to the four effect units for manipulation. (reverb, delay, ultrapitch vocoder and pan). All samples have been additionally pre manipulated.

The master track has a mastering chain consisting of compressors, equalizer, high frequency stereo ambience and a light reverb.

All automation and effects are mapped to the midi controller and laptop keyboard. i.e. P= Play, E= turns on / off high pass filter on EQ, F= freezes the delay signal.

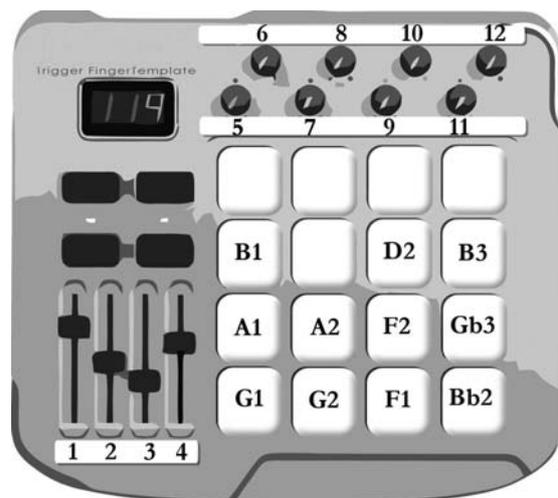
### Example of mapping

Any midi controller could be used. This is an example with the M-Audio trigger finger.

1-4: Submix, voice, synthesizer and master volume faders.

5 – 12: Effects sends (signal amount send to effect units)

Square touch pads: Plays the pedal notes of synthesizer (notes indicated on score)



**M Audio Trigger Finger**

# Wrong Number

## Background

Wrong Number came about with my love for vocal music and song cycles. I wished to write another large cycle this year.<sup>26</sup> However to “do that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it”<sup>27</sup> I decided to set a NZ poem for soprano and electronic backing with live manipulation of effects, samples and voice. Previously I had written for instrument and tape (*A Clear Shell*, for flute and tape: 2008) and found this an exciting yet limited medium to work in due to the inflexibility (yet practicality) of a fixed “just press play” tape part. Moving into real time processing and working with a live “tape part” lent much more flexibility in the creation of this “sound poetry”.<sup>28</sup>

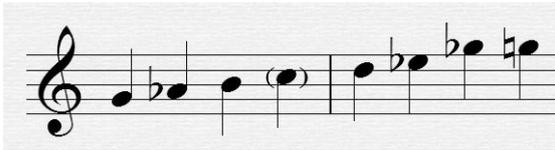
As I own all the equipment necessary to realise a live performance of this piece it was not necessary to rely on university resources.

## Analytical Notes

Number rehearsal marks were used as they fit with the theme of the text.

## Vocal Line

This is a free soliloquy heavily set around the third tone clock hour of intervals 1+3. G, Ab, B (C) D, Eb, Gb G.<sup>29</sup>



The vocal line exploits a large vocal (G3 to B5) and dynamic range. The strong tonal centre of G assists the soprano in live performance by means of a reference pitch and suits the fixed nature of the poem.

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<sup>26</sup> For my Honours portfolio I put together *Dried Corsages*; A five song song-cycle for soprano and marimba detailing the experience of a young nurse going to war.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Chang, *Wisdom for the Soul*, pg 288.

<sup>28</sup> Weber-Lucks “Electroacoustic voices in vocal performance art – a gender issue?” *Organised Sound*. 8.1. (2003) pg 64.

<sup>29</sup> Schat, *Tone Clock*, pg 57.

The soprano moves between a state of subconscious to conscious. This is respectively depicted by heavy reverb, delay and atmospheric drones, to minimal or no vocal effects backed by sparse bird calls, shovel scrapes and bucket sounds (cleaning out the fire) to suggest the present.

### **Vocal effects**

Despite the voice's suitability to be a source of "concrete raw material"<sup>30</sup> I have chosen to treat it subtly in consideration of the soprano's tone and identity. The voice setting is focused on having the text clear and audible throughout – the feeling being that use of extended vocal technique might obfuscate the meaning and story of the text.

### **Backing**

Ableton Live provided the platform with which to build the piece. The backing is controlled by the operator who follows the singer's interpretation. The exact sound content (not length) of each scene is determined earlier by the composer and processed in a way to not disguise its origin. Samples are natural bird sounds and urban life.<sup>31</sup>

### **Joining the two sound worlds**

I am interested in the contrast and interaction of the voice and electronic backing and consider a successful piece one which joins the "temporal flexibility of the human interpreter"<sup>32</sup> with the poetic realms of electroacoustic music. Amplification is necessary to create fusion between the voice and backing. A final reverb unit on the master track is to "blur the boundaries of the live performer's voice, room acoustics and electronic sounds."<sup>33</sup> The text is to "enhance and accentuate certain aspects of the electroacoustic context"<sup>34</sup> for example the opening shovels may not become clear as to their origin until the soprano sings "*I have been emptying ashes from two fires*".

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<sup>30</sup> Weber-Lucks, *Electroacoustic Voices*, pg 63.

<sup>31</sup> Recorded by the composer with Sony PCM-D50 handheld recorder.

<sup>32</sup> Menezes F. "For a morphology of interaction". *Organised Sound*. 7.3. (2002) pg 306.

<sup>33</sup> Sivuoja-Gunaratnam, A. "Desire and Distance in Kaija Saariaho's *Lonh*". *Organised Sound*. 8.1. (2003), pg 72.

<sup>34</sup> Menezes, *Morphology*, pg 301.

Length was not a consideration while constructing this piece as the narrative of the text was so strong and I felt it could sustain interest over an extended period of time. Menezes quotes Messiaen *“The listener will perceive much less the existence of time the better the composition is organised.”*<sup>35</sup> This has been a guiding principle for me in this work.

A version for flute and electronics exists of this work as well which works really well due to the similar register and timbre of the flute and soprano voice..

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<sup>35</sup> Quoted in Menezes, *Morphology*, pg 306.

# Wrong Number

Based on tone clock scale: G, Ab, B (C) D, Eb, Gb G  
Score for practice / rehearsal only

Janet Frame

E J Dobson

Soprano Solo *f*

It's not the right time to te - le - phone me.

5

I have been emp - ty - ing ash - es from two fires, get - ting rid of the

9

old bod - ies of em - bers with tra - ces in my hair and eyes

13

sting - ing and flames fresh - ly bleed - ing where I struck the hot

17

coals, mean - ing on - ly to bring a - bout a death - bed re - vi - val

21

as I prom - ised set - ting my speech to match the fi - res frail - whis - per -

26

ing, I must be - cruel But I am tired (and) It's not the

31

right time to te - le - phone me. and ask in a strange voice

36

"Hel - lo" Is that the Mor - ning - ton But - cher - y?"

E. J. Dobson © 2009

# Wrong Number

Janet Frame

e j dobson © 2009

**1**  
**Largo** ♩ = circa 60

25" wait for shovel scrape to be delayed slightly before entering **ppp** free - quasi soliloquy

Soprano

Ah

Vocal FX reverb 50%-----100%

Computer samples  
Computer FX

P - Play from start  
Scene 1 - scrape of fire shovel and evening birds

Synth

S. Solo

Ah

Ah

Vox FX delay 0%-----50%

Comp scene 1 loops

Synth.

Wrong Number

Hurrying along a little

2

S. Solo *mp* Ah \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* emm \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* em - *mf* pty

Vox FX

Comp B - Next Scene N - play scene 2  
Scene 2 - bucket, shovel and scrape  
delay 0 - 50%, reverb 20%

Synth. Synth preset 2  
*ppp* evolving

S. Solo *mf* ah \_\_\_\_\_ *p* shhhh - esssss *mp* ash - es \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* a -

Vox FX delay - 50% Freeze delay Freeze delay

Comp

Synth. (6)

3

S. Solo *f* shes \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* lost in own subconscious a - - shes \_\_\_\_\_ *p* oooo

Vox FX Freeze delay manipulate delay & reverb through to 4

Comp N - play scene 2  
Scene 3 - shovel, scrape and bucket  
delay 0 - 50%, reverb 20%, manipulate EQ on samples

Synth.

Wrong Number

Live recorded loops of soprano, randomly looped and eq'ed differently

Recorded Soprano

S. Solo

Vox FX

Comp

Synth.

4

improvise on this 10"

mf < f

(it) Ih... t!

Delay - 60 - 100%  
Reverb 70%

Scene 4 - bucket, scrape and birds  
manipulate EQ, delay

4A

wait for phone ring to continue

gradually aware of sound

mp < f

I t!

Distant telephone ring

pp

S. Solo

Vox FX

Comp

Synth.

pauses to confirm phone is ringing

f annoyed

ah te - le phone (ne)

Delay - 0  
Reverb 10%

telephone ring

telephone ring

telephone ring - abruptly cut

mf

f

ff

Freeze delay

let delay ring through scene 5,

P

S. Solo

Vox FX

Comp

Synth.

Wrong Number

**5** Adagio ♩ = circa 69 bpm faster

*f* angry / annoyed & brisk

S. Solo 

Vox FX *Minimal vocal effect*

Comp Scene 5 - dark rumbly backing, telephone drone - heavy pan  
*ppppp*  *mf*



S. Solo 

Vox FX

Comp



**6**

*mp* softer

S. Solo 

Vox FX *Manipulate delay, EQ*  
*record live loops and play back*

Comp Scene 6 - crackles and sizzles enter and build, roar of fire sound



Wrong Number

*mp* *p* 5"

S. Solo  
rid of the old bod - ies of em bers

Vox FX  
*reverb - 25%*  
*manipulate delay through to 8*  
Freeze delay

Comp  
*crackling sounds builds*

*mf* *f* *exasperated* *big inhale*

$\text{♩} = \text{circa } 69$  7

S. Solo  
with tra - ces in my hair and eyes

Vox FX  
*reverb - 0% - 50%*  
Freeze delay

Comp  
Scene 7 - loud crackles and bass grinding

*ff* 10"

S. Solo  
sting ing

Vox FX  
*reverb - 100%*  
Freeze delay

Comp  
*fade out submix (60%) for smooth transition into scene 8*

*fade between 2 synths to create contrast*

*ff*

Wrong Number

**8**

*f* dark      *subitop*      *mf*

S. Solo  
and flames fresh - ly bleed - ing where I struck the hot

Vox FX

Comp  
Scene 8 - low crackle  
submix back to normal volume

*mf*

**9**

*p* dark & sinister

S. Solo  
coals,      mean - ing on - ly to bring a - bout

Vox FX

Comp  
Scene 9 - low crackle heavily panned

Live recorded loops of soprano, randomly looped

Recorded Soprano  
prom - ised      5"

*p*      *rit.*

S. Solo  
a death - bed re - vi - val as I prom - ised

Vox FX

Comp  
fade out submix to 20%

Wrong Number

10

**a tempo** *mf* hurrying along *p* whisper like

S. Solo  set - ting my speech to match the fi - res frail\_ wis - per - ing,

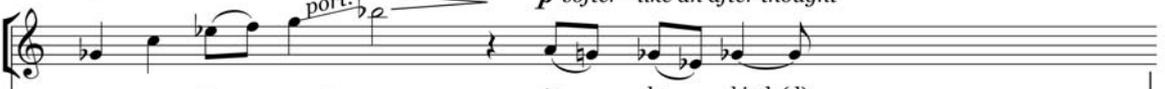
Vox FX *reverb - 20%*  
*delay - 0%*

Comp [Scene 10 - shovel and crackles, with fire roar]

(cue D for soprano)

*p* 

*mf* angry yet contemplative *port.* *p* softer - like an after thought

S. Solo  I must be\_ cruel\_ to\_ be\_ kind\_(d)

Vox FX *delay 50%* Freeze delay

Comp

*f*  *subitomp*

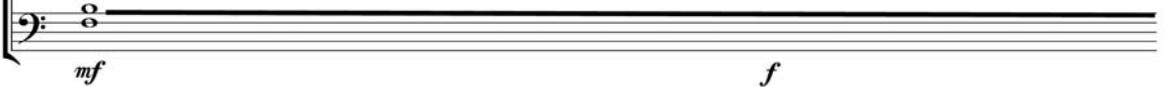
11

*mf* *f* exasperated

S. Solo  But I am tir\_ ed Yes I am tir - ed

Vox FX *reverb 25%*  
*delay - 0 - 50%* Freeze delay

Comp [Scene 11 - shovel plus low roar]

*mf*  *f*

Wrong Number

**11B**

*mp* slower and tired  *mf* brisk and fast

S. Solo But I am tired\_ (and) It's not the right time to

Vox FX reverb 50% delay 0% minimal vocal effects

Comp Scene 11B - backwards telephone and roar

*mp* *mf*

S. Solo *f* *mf* contemplative & slower

te - le - phone\_ me. (yes) It's not the right time It's not the

Vox FX reverb - 25%

Comp

*f*

**12** *mp*

S. Solo right time to te - le - phone\_ me. and

Vox FX fade out effects

Comp

*mp*

Wrong Number

*wait for shovel  
to stop before  
going on* 13 *mf quasi spoken*

S. Solo  
ask in a \_\_\_\_\_ strange \_\_\_\_\_ voice "Hel - lo

Vox FX *reverb 50%* *reverb = 0%,  
ultrapitch = 5%*

Comp Scene 12 - backwards shovel Scene 13 - evening birds  
*pp*

*pppp*

*mf*

S. Solo  
Is \_\_\_\_\_ that the Mor - ning - ton \_\_\_\_\_ But - cher - y?" \_\_\_\_\_

Vox FX

Comp

cj dobson  
hamilton, new zealand 2009

**E. J. Dobson**

*Confession(s)*

*Parts I & II*

*for*

*solo violin and string orchestra*

## Confessions – Parts I & II

### Programme Note

*“God safely quit her of her burden...if she may confess it”*. King Henry VIII, Shakespeare.<sup>36</sup>

The first movement is spiralled around the Fibonacci series which controls pitch, rhythm and structure. This was written on a composing retreat at Hokio Beach October 2009. The second movement is fugal based and inspired by the string works of American composer Julia Wolfe. It was written in Hamilton in January 2010.

### Performance Note

The first movement was read by The University of Waikato’s String Orchestra conducted by James Tennant, with Dr Lara Hall performing the solo. The recording is for reference only. In the absence of a bass player cellist Edward King read that part. The recording gives a fair representation of the overall mood and atmosphere of the piece and I am pleased with the subtly of the string sound and textures.

The second movement is straight from Sibelius played through Miroslave Orchestra plug in and Sibelius player. This was then mixed in Ableton Live. It misses a lot of the detail and subtly of a live performance however is a fair representation of the rhythm.

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<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Shakespeare, W. (ed. Proudfoot, R.) *The Arden Shakespeare Complete Works*. (U.K: Cengage Learning EMEA, 2001.) *King Henry VIII* (Suffolk Act 5.1 Line 70 and King Henry VIII Act 3.2 Line 164.)

# Confessions – Parts I & II

## Instrumentation

Violin Solo

Violin 1

Violin 2

Violin 3

Viola

Cello

Double Bass (with C attachment)

**Duration I** - ten minutes

**II** - seven minutes

## Confessions – Parts I & II

### Background

I wrote this piece after being inspired by Julia Wolfe while at BOAC 09. It did not come from a preconceived idea, unlike a lot of my other music, although it grew into something quite intense and dark. I toiled with the idea of writing a violin concerto for a few years having loved John Adams and Philip Glass's violin concertos. This piece is my first delve into solo string territory. The first movement is a battle of tension and release - almost like the soloist is trying to confess something. The second is rhythmical and lighter in mood and atmosphere – like the soloist is trying to move forward after a bad period of life.

### Analytical Note

#### Movement I

This movement was written on mandolin at a composers retreat at Hokio Beach early October 2009. The Fibonacci series is used in this movement as a way to achieve balance and symmetry<sup>37</sup> by applying it to form and other parameters at will. The piece is fixated with the tension between the string group (who are mainly routed in the harmonic series of E) and the soloist who soars overtop - obsessed with the note F. The soloist tests the sound and tonality of this F against the backing - struggling to find a resting point.

The Fibonacci series can be applied to a wide variety of parameters in music and I will briefly talk about a few ways I applied it to *Confessions Part I*.

#### Why use Fibonacci

I decided to experiment with manipulating a system to my creative means. I kept in mind Kramer who said “*the additive and proportional properties of the Fibonacci series give it an internal*

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<sup>37</sup> Kramer, J. “The Fibonacci Series in Twentieth Century Music.” Journal of Music Theory 17. 1 (1973), pg 142.

*consistency and attractiveness that make it a better candidate... than any randomly chosen series of durations.*"<sup>38</sup> It helped form instant coherency within the work.

The Fibonacci series was applied strictly and intuitively to the composition. Often rules would be applied to a section which would then inspire the piece further.

### **Structure**

The Fibonacci series was applied to a fixed duration to provide satisfying structural proportions.<sup>39</sup> The 10 main sections were then made at each division of the total length by phi (8/13) – my chosen Fibonacci ratio number. For example; the total duration divided by phi became the climax point, the climax point divided by phi marked the beginning of the cadenza. Fibonacci also influenced instrumentation – for example in the opening page how many and when instruments enter (bar 2, 2 players, at first division of phi; bar 3, 3 players at second division of phi, bar 4, 5 players at third division.)

Phi was used for large scale structure as well as micro structures within sections. The cadenza is structure to phi proportions, as well as the outro section (rehearsal mark H) between the climax and the ending.

### **Rhythm control**

The Fibonacci series was mapped to rhythm in a matrix and was applied to various rhythmical values. For example in bar 17 the cello rhythm is taken from line three of the matrix (3, 5, 8 etc), applied to semi quavers and acts as a pedal point. The first note is three semiquavers long, the second is 5 semiquavers long etc. This uses the E harmonic series starting on the 5<sup>th</sup> harmonic. Another example is bar 87 in the double bass which is another pedal point built with these principles.

This is the first three lines of the Matrix which was applied to a rhythmical value.

1	2	3	5	8	13	13	8
2	3	5	8	13	13	8	5
3	5	8	13	13	8	5	3

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<sup>38</sup> Kramer, *The Fibonacci Series*, pg 132.

<sup>39</sup> Kramer, *The Fibonacci Series*, pg 120.

## Pitch Material

The harmonic material is based on the harmonic series due to its correlations with the Fibonacci series. Initially the string orchestra was to play in natural tuning to aid the resonance.<sup>40</sup> While the orchestra is primarily rooted in the harmonic series of E the soloist floats over top in the harmonic series of F. F was chosen to purposely provide a semitone clash with E and because F is not found in the E harmonic series until quite high up. It is as if the soloist is trying to find a musical zone to meet with the orchestra, and plays with the inharmonicity around F with the use of microtones and different voicing's. For example bars see 19-28 and the use of designated strings for the same pitch. These sustained F's in the soloist are built with the rhythm matrix at the seventh division of the structure. (Rehearsal mark B).

## Motivic Material

The Fibonacci series inspired motives - in particular how many notes in each phrase. For example rehearsal mark B – violin I, the



number of notes in each phrase are additive according to the Fibonacci series. 1 + 1 + 2 + 3 etc.

## Movement II

The second movement is based on a semi tonal fugue in Bb major, starting on D, with an occasional raised G# (Ab). The movement also explores pizzicato and double stops. It purposefully has more rhythmical vibrancy than the first movement which is a characteristic I wanted to explore in this movement. The fugue inspired and created the sound of the harmony which developed as the fugue continued. Each repetition starts on a different scale note. (i.e. Violin I starts on G in bar 2. Violin II starts on D in bar 5. Viola starts on C in bar 8. These entries were dictated by the Fibonacci series (the cello's sustained note is supportive).

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<sup>40</sup> This was not feasible with the time available.

The fugue builds to rehearsal mark C where the soloist enters with a shorter section of sustained F's referring to the first movement but set in a more relaxed context. The cadenza moves to a dark section of unrest which begins with a large sustained G minor chord at rehearsal mark E (Bar 51). The Soloist and Violin I take up little Fibonacci inspired figures (groups of three or five). This section was very much inspired by Julia Wolfe's *Four Marys* where she wrote large unstable sliding sustained chords. This is followed by a small interlude in Bb and Gm at rehearsal mark F.

The middle section (rehearsal mark G) drives relentlessly forward with stomping slap pizzicato chords inspired by John Adams' *Chamber Symphony*. The double bass takes off with a retrograde version of the fugue at H. This fugue builds to bar 122 where the bass starts playing augmented sustained notes which help drive the harmonic momentum. The piece winds down toward the end reminiscent of the ending of the first movement, but with a little more momentum.

# Confession(s) Part I

for solo violin and string orchestra

E. J. Dobson

**A**  $\text{♩} = 60$  (Heavy 0-4")

0.05" - Atmospheric and light

0.06" 0.12" 0.18" 0.24"

Violin Solo  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 solo ord. bow pressure behind bridge sul c  
*pppp* *ppp*  
 2 players only

Violin I  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 ord. bow pressure  
*ppp*  
 solo behind bridge sul a.

Violin II  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure behind bridge sul d.  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 ord. bow pressure  
*ppp*  
 solo behind bridge sul d.

Violin III  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 ord. bow pressure  
*ppp*

Viola  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 ord. bow pressure  
*ppp*

Violoncello  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
 ord. bow pressure

Double Bass  
*con sord.* heavy bow pressure  
*gliss.*  
*pppp*  
*pppp* subito *pp*

0.30" 0.36" 0.42" 0.48" 0.54"

Vln. S.  
 6  
*mp*  
 tutti gradually increase bow pressure

Vln. I  
*mp*  
 tutti gradually increase bow pressure

Vln. II  
*mp*  
 tutti gradually increase bow pressure

Vln. III  
*mp*  
 tutti gradually increase bow pressure

Vla.  
 two players sul g lightly touch string *gliss.*  
*p*  
 tutti gradually increase bow pressure

Vc.  
 3 players  
*pp*

Db.  
*mf pesante*

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Confession(s) - Part I

11

**B** ♩ = 60 no accent  
on first beat of bar

con sord. *tense* *sul a*

Vln. S. *mp*

Vln. I *f* *fff* *pp sempre staccatissimo*

Vln. II *f* *fff* *subito p*

Vln. III *f* *fff*

Vla. *f* *fff* *subito p*

Vc. *f* *fff* *subito p*

Db. *fff* *ppp*

ord. bow pressure  
modo ord.

ord. bow pressure

ord. bow pressure  
modo ord.

ord. bow pressure

ord. bow pressure

ord. bow pressure

ord. bow pressure

tutti - gradually increase bow pressure

gradually increase bow pressure

15

*sul e* *sul a* *sul a & c*

Vln. S. *mf*

Vln. I *p* *mp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db. *p* *mf*

*gliss.*

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 19-23. The score includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 19 features a dynamic range from *f* to *mp*. Measure 20 includes a dynamic of *fp*. Measure 21 has a dynamic of *p*. Measure 22 has a dynamic of *f*. Measure 23 includes a dynamic of *f* and the instruction "sul e".

Violin I and II parts include improvisation instructions: "Improvise using these notes in random 1, 2, 3, or 5 note patterns during solid line\* (fast, short and light)".

Violin I dynamics: *p - mf* (with *sempre staccatissimo*), *fp*.

Violin II dynamics: *p - mf* (with *sempre staccatissimo*), *mf*.

Viola dynamics: *mf sempre staccatissimo*.

Violoncello dynamics: *mf*, *pp*, *f*.

Musical score for measures 24-28. The score includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 24 features a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction "sul a & c". Measure 25 has a dynamic of *p*. Measure 26 has a dynamic of *p*. Measure 27 has a dynamic of *p* and the instruction "sempre staccatissimo". Measure 28 includes dynamics of *p* and *f*, and the instruction "sul e".

Violin I dynamics: *p*.

Violin II dynamics: *p*.

Viola dynamics: *p sempre staccatissimo*.

Violoncello dynamics: *f*.

\* = improvise with random semiquaver rhythms to create hazy or blurred effect. Try to fit in / around with notated notes

Confession(s) - Part I

**C** no accent on first beat

senza sord.

*f* relaxed, cantabile

senza sord.

*mf*

senza sord.

*mf*

senza sord.

senza sord.

*f*

senza sord.

*mp* sempre staccatissimo

senza sord. pizz.

*mp*

**||**

33

*f*

*f*

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 37-40. The score includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 37 starts with a dynamic of *mp*. The Violin I and II parts feature continuous sixteenth-note patterns. The Viola and Violoncello parts have triplet markings. The Double Bass part is mostly silent.



Musical score for measures 41-43. The score includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 41 starts with a dynamic of *mf*. The Violin I and II parts feature continuous sixteenth-note patterns. The Viola part has a dynamic of *f*. The Violoncello part has a dynamic of *mf*. The Double Bass part has a dynamic of *mf* and the instruction *arco*. The score ends with the instruction *mf sempre staccatissimo*.

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 44-51. The score includes staves for Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The Vln. S. staff features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 45 and a glissando in measure 48. The Vln. I and Vln. II staves play rhythmic patterns. The Vla. and Vc. staves play chords and rhythmic accompaniment. The Db. staff provides a bass line. The instruction "gradual cresc. to bar 51" is present in the Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. staves. A double bar line is located at the end of measure 51.

Musical score for measures 48-51. The score includes staves for Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The Vln. S. staff features a melodic line with a glissando in measure 48. The Vln. I and Vln. II staves play rhythmic patterns. The Vla. and Vc. staves play chords and rhythmic accompaniment. The Db. staff provides a bass line. The instruction "gradual cresc. to bar 51" is present in the Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Db. staves. A double bar line is located at the end of measure 51.

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 51-52. The score includes staves for Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 51 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Vln. S. features a melodic line with triplets and quintuplets. Vln. I and Vln. II play rhythmic patterns. Vla. and Vc. have sparse accompaniment. Db. is silent.

Musical score for measures 53-55. The score includes staves for Vln. S., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 53 starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. Vln. S. has a melodic line. Vln. I and Vln. II play rhythmic patterns. Vla. and Vc. have sparse accompaniment. Db. has a bass line starting with *ff legato*. Measure 54 includes a dynamic change to *mf* for Vln. I and Vln. II. Measure 55 features a dynamic change to *mf* for Vln. S. and a box labeled 'D' with the instruction 'freely - sync with soloist'.

Confession(s) - Part I

cadenza - at soloist's leisure

56

Vln. S. *ad lib.* sul g

Vln. I *legato* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *legato* *mf* *mp* *mf* *pp*

Vla. *legato* *mp* *mf*

Vc. *legato* *mf* *mp*

Db. *legato* *mf*

60

Vln. S. *p* *gliss.* *gliss.* 3 3

62

Vln. S. *sul d* *sul a, sul d, sul a* *ff*

65

Vln. S. *sul a* 3 3 *mp* *sul g* 3 *sul d & a sul d, a, e*

Vln. I *p < mp* *pp*

Vln. II *p < mp* *pp* *sul g* *gliss.* *p*

Vla. *p* *mp* *pp*

Confession(s) - Part I

69 *sul e* *sul e*

Vln. S.

Vln. II



**E**

$\text{♩} = 60$   
Heavy & dramatic

71

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*f*

*ff* *sempre staccatissimo*

*ff* *sempre staccatissimo*

*p*

*ff* *sempre staccatissimo*

*ff* *sempre staccatissimo*

*ff* *sempre staccatissimo*

Confession(s) - Part I

74

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*ff* sempre staccatissimo

*mf*

*legato*

*gliss.*

Measures 74-75 of the musical score. The score includes staves for Violin Solo, Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 74 features a triplet in the Violin II part and a *ff* *sempre staccatissimo* marking in the Viola part. Measure 75 features a *gliss.* marking in the Violin II part and a *mf* marking in the Violin III part.



76

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*f*

*ff*

*legato*

Measures 76-78 of the musical score. The score includes staves for Violin Solo, Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 76 features a *f* marking in the Violin III part. Measure 77 features a *legato* marking in the Violin II part. Measure 78 features a *ff* marking in the Viola part.

Confession(s) - Part I

79

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*f* *gradual cresc. to bar 87*

*f* *sempre staccatissimo, gradual cresc. to bar 87*

*ff*

*f* *gradual cresc. to bar 87*

*f* *gradual cresc. to bar 87*

*f* *gradual cresc. to bar 87*



81

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

dramatic

fiery

*sfz*

*gliss*

*legato*

Confession(s) - Part I

84

Vln. S.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vln. III  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Db.

6/4

gliss.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 84, 85, and 86. The Vln. S. part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Vln. I, II, and III parts play rhythmic patterns. The Vla. part has chords and a glissando. The Vc. part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Db. part has a simple bass line. The time signature is 6/4.

87

Vln. S.  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vln. III  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Db.

**F**

*fff* *f*

*fff* *mf*

*fff* *mf*

*fff* *mf*

*fff* *mf*

*fff* *f*

sul g. ad lib. gliss. gliss. gliss. sul a & c

6/4

Detailed description: This system contains measures 87, 88, and 89. Measure 87 starts with a forte (fff) dynamic. Measure 88 has a dynamic change to mezzo-forte (mf). Measure 89 has a dynamic change to forte (f). The Vln. S. part has a melodic line with a 'sul a & c' instruction. The Vln. I, II, and III parts have sustained notes. The Vla. part has a glissando. The Vc. part has a sustained note with a glissando. The Db. part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The time signature is 6/4.

Confession(s) - Part I

91

Vln. S. *mp*

Vln. I *gliss.* *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vln. III *gliss.* *mp*

Vla. *gliss.* *gliss.* *mp*

Vc. *gliss.* *mp*

Db. *mf*

95

Vln. S. *p* *mf*

Vln. I *p* *mf*

Vln. II *p* *mf*

Vln. III *p* *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *p*

Db.

G

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 99-102. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 99 starts with a dynamic marking of *pp*. The Violin I part features a triplet of eighth notes. The Violin II part plays a steady eighth-note pattern. The Viola part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with rests. The Violoncello and Double Bass parts are silent.



Musical score for measures 103-105. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. Measure 103 starts with a dynamic marking of *f*. The Violin I part features a triplet of eighth notes. The Violin II part plays a steady eighth-note pattern. The Viola part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with rests. The Violoncello part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with rests. The Double Bass part is silent.

Confession(s) - Part I

106

*gliss.*

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*mp* *f* *mp*

**H** *delicately*

109

*gliss.*

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*mp* *subito p*

Confession(s) - Part I

Musical score for measures 112-114. The score includes staves for Violin Solo (Vln. S.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Measure 112:** Vln. S. has a melodic line with a *tr* (trill) and a *tr* (trill) marking. Vln. I and Vln. II have whole notes. Vln. III is silent. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note marked *p*. Db. is silent.
- Measure 113:** Vln. S. has a melodic line. Vln. I and Vln. II have whole notes. Vln. III is silent. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note marked *p*. Db. is silent.
- Measure 114:** Vln. S. has a melodic line with a *tr* (trill) and a *tr* (trill) marking. Vln. I and Vln. II have whole notes. Vln. III is silent. Vla. has a whole note. Vc. has a whole note marked *p*. Db. has a whole note marked *p*.

Musical score for measures 115-117. The score includes staves for Violin Solo (Vln. S.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Measure 115:** Vln. S. has a melodic line with a *tr* (trill) and a *tr* (trill) marking. Vln. I has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. II has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. III is silent. Vla. is silent. Vc. is silent. Db. has a whole note marked *gliss.*
- Measure 116:** Vln. S. has a melodic line with a *gliss.* marking. Vln. I has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. II has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. III is silent. Vla. is silent. Vc. is silent. Db. has a whole note marked *gliss.*
- Measure 117:** Vln. S. has a melodic line with a *sul g* marking. Vln. I has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. II has a whole note marked *pp*. Vln. III is silent. Vla. has a whole note marked *p*. Vc. is silent. Db. has a whole note marked *gliss.*

Confession(s) - Part I

118

any string

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*gliss.*

*p*

*sul g*  
lightly touch string *gliss.*

120

Vln. S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

*gliss.*

*mf*

*p*

*gliss.*

*gliss.*

Confession(s) - Part I

**I**  
122

Vln. S. *sul a sul d sul a sul d*  
*sul a sul d*

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vln. III *pp*

Vla. *pp* *gliss.*

Vc. *pp* *gliss.*

Db.

126

Vln. S. *p* *pp* *ppp* *pppp* *gliss.*

Vln. I *pppp*

Vln. II *pppp*

Vln. III *pppp*

Vla. *pppp* *gliss.*

Vc. *pppp*

Db. *pppp*

e j dobson hokio beach  
october 2009

# Confession(s) Part II

for solo violin and string orchestra

E. J. Dobson

**A**

$\text{♩} = 220$  Light and airy

Violin Solo

Violin I *mp*

Violin II *mp*

Violin III

Viola

Violoncello *pppp* *gliss.* *gliss.* *ppp* *pizz.*

Double Bass *ppp*

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *pppp* *gliss.* *mf*

Db. *arco* *mf*

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Confession(s) - Part II

11

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

Db. *mf*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 11 through 14. Measure 11 is a whole rest for all instruments. Measure 12 features Vln. I and Vln. II with a crescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Measure 13 continues with Vln. I playing a half note G4 and Vln. II playing a half note F4. Vln. III is silent. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Measure 14 features Vln. I and Vln. II with a decrescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Db. plays a half note G4.

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 15 through 18. Measure 15 features Vln. I and Vln. II with a crescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Vln. III is silent. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Measure 16 continues with Vln. I and Vln. II with a crescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Vln. III is silent. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Measure 17 continues with Vln. I and Vln. II with a crescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Vln. III is silent. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Measure 18 features Vln. I and Vln. II with a decrescendo hairpin. Vln. I plays a half note G4, and Vln. II plays a half note F4. Vln. III is silent. Vla. plays a half note G4, and Vc. plays a half note F4. Db. plays a half note G4.

Confession(s) - Part II

19

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

Detailed description: This system of music covers measures 19 through 22. The Violin I and II parts play sustained chords with some movement in the second half of the system, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Viola part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Violoncello and Double Bass parts play a similar rhythmic accompaniment. The Violin III part is silent throughout this system.

23

**B**

Vln. I *mp* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *mp* *mf* *f*

Vla. *mp* *f*

Vc. *mp* *f*

Db. *mp* *f*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 23 through 26. A section marker 'B' is placed above the first measure. The Violin I and II parts play sustained chords, with dynamics increasing from mezzo-piano (*mp*) to mezzo-forte (*mf*) and then forte (*f*) across the measures. The Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass parts play a rhythmic accompaniment, also marked with *mp* and *f* dynamics. The Violin III part is silent throughout this system.

Confession(s) - Part II

27 C

Vln. *f* *f*

Vln. I *subito mp* *mf*

Vln. II *subito mp* *mf*

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc. *mp* *mf*

Db. *mp*

31

Vln. *mf* *mf*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vln. III

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Db. *mf* *mf*

**D**

37 Adagio (about ♩ = 80)

Vln. *mf* *f* *p*

43 Più mosso ♩ = 200 Allegro ♩ = 120 accl. . . . .

Vln. *mf* *f* *p*

48

Vln. *mf* *f* *p*

**E**

Adagio ♩ = 60 molto vibrato

51 5 + 5 (no accents on subdivision)

Vln. *mf* *ff* *p*

Vln. I

Vln. II *mf* *ff* *p* *pp*

Vln. III

Vla. *mf* *ff* *p* *p* lightly touch string gliss. ad lib. *gliss.*

Vc. *mf* *ff* *p* *pp* lightly touch string gliss. ad lib. *gliss.*

Db. *mf* *ff* *p* *pp*

Confession(s) - Part II

55

Score for measures 55-56. The score includes staves for Vln., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. Vln. I has a *sul pont.* instruction and a *mp* dynamic. Vln. II and Vln. III have rests. Vla. and Vc. have glissando markings. Db. has a *mp* dynamic.

57

accel.

Score for measures 57-58. The score includes staves for Vln., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. Vln. has an *accel.* marking and dynamics *p* and *mf*. Vln. II and Vla. have glissando markings. Vc. and Db. have glissando markings. Vln. II, Vla., and Db. have *mp* dynamics, while Vln. has *mf*.

Confession(s) - Part II

59 F

Più mosso

a tempo (♩ = 220)

Vln. *mf* *gliss.* *mf* *f*

Vln. I *mf* *gliss.* *mf* *f*

Vln. II *mf* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *f*

Vln. III *f* *gliss.* *f*

Vla. *gliss.* *f*

Vc. *mf* *gliss.* *f*

Db. *gliss.* *gliss.* *gliss.* *f*

62

Vln. *mp* *mf* *3*

Vln. I *mp* *mf*

Vln. II *mp* *mf*

Vln. III

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *mf* *mf*

Db. *mp* *mf* *mf* *gliss.* *f*

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 67-72. The score includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Measures 67-72:** The music is in 4/4 time. The Violin part starts with a glissando in measure 67. Dynamics range from *mp* to *fp*. A triplet of eighth notes is marked in measure 71.

Musical score for measures 73-76, marked with a **G** box and the instruction "Energetic".

- Measure 73:** Violin I and II play a melodic line with a dynamic of *f*. Violin III, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass play a bass line with a dynamic of *ff*. The Viola, Cello, and Double Bass parts include "slap pizz." markings.
- Measures 74-76:** The Violin I part features a rapid sixteenth-note passage with a dynamic of *f*. The other parts continue with their respective bass lines, maintaining the *ff* dynamic.

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 77-80. The score includes parts for Vln. (Violin), Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Db. (Double Bass). The Vln. part features a continuous eighth-note pattern. The other instruments enter in measure 78 with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, marked *arco pesante* and *ff*. The Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. parts include triplets and slurs in measures 79 and 80.

Musical score for measures 81-84. The Vln. part continues with a dense eighth-note texture. The other instruments (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db.) play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, marked *f*. The Vln. I part has a *ff* dynamic marking in measure 83. The Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. parts include slurs and accents in measures 83 and 84.

Confession(s) - Part II

**H**

85

Vln. *f*

Vln. I *mf* *f* *ff*

Vln. II *mf* *f* *ff*

Vln. III *f* *ff*

Vla.

Vc. *mf* *ff*

Db. *ff*

**I**

89

Vln. *ff*

Vln. I *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Vln. II *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Vln. III *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Vla. *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Vc. *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Db. *ff* *arco pesante* *3*

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 93-96. The score includes parts for Vln. (Violin), Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Db. (Double Bass). The Vln. part features a continuous sixteenth-note pattern. The other instruments play a rhythmic accompaniment with accents and dynamic markings such as *ff* and *arco pesante*. Measure 96 includes a fermata over the final notes.

Musical score for measures 97-100. The score includes parts for Vln., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The Vln. part continues with the sixteenth-note pattern. The other instruments play a rhythmic accompaniment. Measure 100 features a section marked with a box 'J' and a fermata, with dynamic markings *f*, *ord.*, and *mf*.

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 101-104. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Violin I (Vln. I):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *f* (measures 101-102), *mf* (measures 103-104).
- Violin II (Vln. II):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *f* (measures 101-102), *mf* (measures 103-104).
- Violin III (Vln. III):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *f* (measures 101-102), *ff* (measures 103-104).
- Viola (Vla.):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 101-102), *ff* (measures 103-104). Includes *slap pizz.* in measure 101 and *pizz.* in measure 104.
- Violoncello (Vc.):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 101-102), *mf* (measures 103-104). Includes *pizz.* in measure 103 and *arco* in measure 104.
- Double Bass (Db.):** Measures 101-104. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 101-104). Includes a triplet in measure 104.

Musical score for measures 105-108. The score is for a string ensemble consisting of Violin I, Violin II, Violin III, Viola, Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Violin I (Vln. I):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *f* (measures 105-106), *rit.* (measures 107-108). Includes *espress.* in measure 108.
- Violin II (Vln. II):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *f* (measures 105-106).
- Violin III (Vln. III):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 105-106), *f* (measures 107-108).
- Viola (Vla.):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 105-106), *arco* (measures 107-108).
- Violoncello (Vc.):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 105-106), *pizz.* (measures 107-108).
- Double Bass (Db.):** Measures 105-108. Dynamics: *ff* (measures 105-106).

Confession(s) - Part II

a tempo (♩ = 220)

108

Vln. *ff*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vln. III *subito mp*

Vla. *subito mp*

Vc. *subito mp* arco

Db. *subito mp*

slap pizz *ff*

slap pizz *ff*

112

Vln. *f*

Vln. I *f* arco

Vln. II *f* arco

Vln. III *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

Db. *f*

Confession(s) - Part II

116

Score for measures 116-119. The score includes parts for Vln. (Violin), Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Db. (Double Bass). The Vln. part features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 117. Vln. I and II use 'slap pizz.' (slap pizzicato) in measure 116 and transition to 'arco' (arco) in measure 117. Vln. III plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets in measures 117-119. The Vc. and Db. parts provide a steady bass line with eighth notes and quarter notes. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

120

Score for measures 120-123. The score includes parts for Vln., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. The Vln. part has a melodic line with a crescendo from *mf* to *f* in measure 120. Vln. I and II play chords and rhythmic patterns. Vln. III has a melodic line with a quintuplet in measure 121 and a triplet in measure 122. The Vc. and Db. parts continue with a bass line. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte).

Confession(s) - Part II

124

Vln. *ff*

Vln. I *f* *ff*

Vln. II *f* *ff*

Vln. III *f* *ff*

Vla. *f* *ff*

Vc. *f* *ff*

Db. *f* *ff*

128

Vln. *fff* *f* *ff*

Vln. I *fff* *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vln. III *fff* *f* *gliss.* *gliss.*

Vla. *fff* *f*

Vc. *fff* *f* *non. div*

Db. *fff* *f* *gliss.* *gliss.* *pizz.*

Confession(s) - Part II

Allegretto (♩ = 200)

Musical score for measures 132-135. The score includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Measures 132-133:** Vln. starts with *ff* and triplets. Vln. I and II play *ff* pizzicato. Vln. III plays *ff* with glissando. Vla. plays *ff* with triplets. Vc. plays *ff* with triplets. Db. plays *ff* arco.
- Measure 134:** Vln. continues with triplets. Vln. I and II play *ff* slap pizzicato. Vln. III plays *ff* with glissando. Vla. is silent. Vc. plays *f* with glissando. Db. plays *f* pizzicato.
- Measure 135:** Vln. continues with triplets. Vln. I and II play *f*. Vln. III plays *f*. Vla. is silent. Vc. plays *f* with glissando. Db. plays *f*.

Musical score for measures 136-139. The score includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Measure 136:** Vln. starts with *mp* and triplets. Vln. I and II are silent. Vln. III plays *fp* arco. Vla. plays *fp*. Vc. is silent. Db. plays *fp*.
- Measure 137:** Vln. continues with triplets. Vln. I and II play *mf*. Vln. III plays *fp* arco. Vla. plays *fp*. Vc. is silent. Db. plays *fp*.
- Measure 138:** Vln. continues with triplets. Vln. I and II play *mf*. Vln. III plays *fp* arco. Vla. plays *fp*. Vc. plays *fp* pizzicato. Db. plays *fp*.
- Measure 139:** Vln. continues with triplets. Vln. I and II play *fp* arco. Vln. III plays *fp* arco. Vla. plays *fp*. Vc. plays *fp* arco. Db. plays *fp* arco.

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 141-146. The score is for a string ensemble and includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Vln.:** Starts at measure 141 with *mp*, then *mf* at measure 142. The part features a melodic line with slurs and accents.
- Vln. I:** Starts at measure 141 with *f*, then *mf* at measure 142. The part includes the instruction "arco" at measure 142.
- Vln. II:** Starts at measure 141 with *mp*. The part consists of sustained chords.
- Vln. III:** Starts at measure 141 with a rest, then *f* at measure 142. The part includes the instruction "pizz." at measure 142.
- Vla.:** Starts at measure 141 with a rest, then *mf* at measure 142. The part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- Vc.:** Starts at measure 141 with *p*. The part consists of sustained chords.
- Db.:** Starts at measure 141 with *mp*. The part includes the instruction "rizz." at measure 142.

Musical score for measures 147-152. The score is for a string ensemble and includes parts for Violin (Vln.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Violin III (Vln. III), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (Db.).

- Vln.:** Starts at measure 147 with *p*, then *mp* at measure 148, and *mf* at measure 150. The tempo is marked "rit" and "slower and spacious (♩ = 180)".
- Vln. I:** Starts at measure 147 with *mp*. The part includes the instruction "slap pizz." at measure 148.
- Vln. II:** Starts at measure 147 with *mp*. The part includes the instruction "slap pizz." at measure 148.
- Vln. III:** Starts at measure 147 with a rest, then *mp* at measure 148. The part includes the instruction "slap pizz." at measure 148.
- Vla.:** Starts at measure 147 with a rest, then *p* at measure 148. The part consists of sustained chords.
- Vc.:** Starts at measure 147 with a rest. The part consists of sustained chords.
- Db.:** Starts at measure 147 with *mp*. The part includes the instruction "pizz." at measure 150.

Confession(s) - Part II

Musical score for measures 153-158. The score includes staves for Vln. (Violin), Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla. (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Db. (Double Bass). Measure 153 starts with a *mp* dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes in the Vln. staff. Vln. I and Vln. II enter in measure 158 with *mp* dynamics. Vln. III and Vla. play a melodic line with *mp* dynamics, transitioning to *p* in measure 158. Vc. and Db. are mostly silent, with Db. playing a few notes at the end of measure 158 marked *p*.

Musical score for measures 159-164. The score includes staves for Vln., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., Vc., and Db. Measure 159 features a *pp* dynamic in the Vln. I staff. Vln. II and Vln. III play a melodic line with *pp* dynamics. Vla. and Vc. play a melodic line with *pizz.* (pizzicato) dynamics. Db. plays a melodic line with *ppp* dynamics. Measure 160 has *pp* dynamics in Vln. I and Vln. II. Measure 161 has *p* dynamics in Vln. I and Vln. II. Measure 162 has *ppp* dynamics in Vln. I and Vln. II. Measure 163 has *ppp* dynamics in Vln. I and Vln. II. Measure 164 has *ppp* dynamics in Vln. I and Vln. II.

**E. J. Dobson**

*Sand Song*

*for*

*soprano and piano*

*Dedicated to the  
Hillenbrand Family*

# Sand Song

## Programme Note

While working with soprano Diantha Hillenbrand on my piece *Wrong Number* she asked me as a favour to write music to one of her poems. I was humbled to be trusted with such a text and am honoured to write a piece that now stands as a eulogy for someone who was tragically taken from her family's life.

## Text *Sand Song* by Diantha Hillendbrand <sup>41</sup>

A misty cling to a fluid mirror still,  
That which sinks into the seeping sand.  
There, in soothing silence, I breathe  
And feel the salt tingling.  
I can almost taste it, tinted with sweetness  
As it elapses as the waves on the beach

A simpler idol of my own, I see no longer here  
But mine is not a burgled soul  
He will not be eternally where I cannot go  
His days were gentle as the moon doth wane  
Yet I wish I were the last to hold  
Him on this Earth before he flew away

A desperate cling to a mirror of his life  
That which sinks into the seeping sand  
In soothing silence I breathe  
And hear nothing, but deafness inwardly  
I can almost see him, innocent and sweet  
As he elapses as the waves on the beach

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<sup>41</sup> Text: *Sand Song* Diantha Hillenbrand © 2009

**Performance Note**

This recording was made at The University of Waikato's Academy of Performing Arts, Concert Chamber by soprano Diantha Hillenbrand, pianist Elizabeth Dobson and music technician Terrance Maxwell, February 2010.

**Duration** five minutes

# Sand Song

## Analytical Note

*Sand Song* was written at the same time as *Confession(s) Part I* and features a similar obsession with the pitch F. This is prominent through though the opening motive in *Sand Song*. The song is basic ternary form due to the similarities between the first and third stanzas.

The 7/8 time signature is to emphasise the feeling of hesitance and longing. While it feels slightly disjointed the flow of the song is helped by the changes between 6/8 and 7/8. e.g. bars 26-36 and 51-56. The 7/8 bars give an important amount of space during and after phrases which are crucial to evoke the feeling that the singer was unable to move on or deal with the subject.

Syncopation during the piano (e.g. bars 17-22) is to depict the “elapsing waves” rocking and the falling figures (e.g. bar 9) are to illustrate the singers reference to “seeping sand”. The singer floats into syncopation at bar 11 as if to evoke that while the world continues and the waves elapse around her she is moving at her own pace separately.

The second stanza builds to a climax at “*He will not be eternally where I cannot go, His days were gentle as the moon doth wane*” then sinks to a poignant moment where the poet wishes she was with the person at the moment of death. As a sign of the singer’s grief and emotional vulnerability the piano’s main motive returns at 35 deflated. Unlike before it is unable to reach the repeated high F’s. The falling figure in bar 38-39 falls shrinks to a minor seventh (RH D-C-Eb). Previously the piano had octave intervals (RH bar 3 G, F, F) and suggests the singers fragile state of mind.

At bar 45 the piano reaches its highest note: a Bb. This becomes unison with the soprano in preparation for the final peaceful “*I breathe*” (bar 46) which leads into the final recapitulation of the piano’s motive.

The harmony of *Sand Song* evolves from the initial major 7<sup>th</sup> opening interval. It sets up tension which is resolved at bar 3 with the Bb major chord. The suspended chords help to evoke a wistful and sad mood.

This is one of my favourite pieces due to its emotional weight and meaning. I was fortunate, in a way, that the intended pianist who had had the music for three weeks dropped out the night before the scheduled recording time. At such short notice I could not source another pianist so I had to step in to play myself. I really enjoyed the opportunity to play in the concert chamber as it is such a highly regarded facility for chamber music. Also, despite my lack of official piano player status, I was pleased to have the chance to play music with Diantha again. After the recording I caught a music lecturer in the hallway (who knew about my pianist fail at the last minute) and he asked who I got to play. I remarked “I played! I winged it, and there were even some takes in which I don’t think I played wrong notes.” To my amusement he commented “Ahh! Finally a composer who plays their own music.”

While the recording is not perfect, I believe it still captures the intended mood and atmosphere for the work sufficiently.

I also set this work for marimba and voice and sent it to a percussionist from BOAC but as of publication I was unable to get the recording. Therefore I had to omit it from this portfolio.



Sand Song

10

There, in soothing silence, I breathe

13

I breathe And feel the salt tinging. I can almost taste it,

16

tin-ted with sweetness As it

19

e-lap-ses as the waves on the beach

gradual cresc. to 22

Sand Song

22 *mf*  
simp - ler i - dol of my own, I see no lon - ger here But  
*mf*  
*mp*  
rumbly but quiet tremelo

25 *f*  
mine is not a bur-gled soul He will not be e - ter - nal - ly where  
*f*

28 *ff* *tender mf*  
I can-not go His days were gen-tle as the moon doth wane Yet I  
*ff* *tender* *mf*

31 *mp* *rit.* *mp*  
wish I were the last to hold him on this Earth be -  
*mp* slow tremelo speed

Sand Song

35 **A tempo**

fore he flew a - way

*p ppp p*

38 **mp**

A des - per - ate cling to a

*mp mp*

41

mir - ror of his life That which sinks in - to the seep - ing sand -

*mp*

43

There, in sooth - ing - si - lence,

*mp*

Sand Song

46

I breathe I breathe And hear noth - ing but deaf - ness in - ward - ly—

50

Oh I can al-most see him, in - no-cent and sweet As he

55

rit. A tempo (gradually get slower)

e-lap-ses as the waves on the beach.

58

Very slow

ppp

**E. J. Dobson**

*Parihaka*

*for*

*vocalising percussionist*

## Dedication

*“I will sing for you a song of Parihaka”<sup>42</sup>*

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<sup>42</sup> Tim Finn *Parihaka*. Song Lyrics, from the album “Tim Finn”. 1989.

# Parihaka

## Programme Note

*“I never knew about Parihaka”*<sup>43</sup>

The former is a quote from the poem *Parihaka* by New Zealand poet Apirana Taylor. I instantly felt connected to Taylor’s poem. The opening line rang true from my own experience of growing up in Taranaki, having heard the word “Parihaka” but never knowing what it meant or learning about it at school.

In 1870 Parihaka was the “largest and most prosperous”<sup>44</sup> Maori settlement on the West cape of Taranaki, New Zealand. Village leaders, Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi, were committed to peaceful protest against the “mass confiscation and disposition of Maori from their land.”<sup>45</sup> In the 1860s they created Parihaka to escape further land threats and protect their rights as indigenous people. Due to the government continuing to take land by force, in 1879 Te Whiti and Tohu sent Maori over Taranaki in a peaceful protest to plough up newly surveyed land and uproot survey pegs. By 1880 tension had risen so much that during this time many were exiled and unjustly sent to prisons to die in terrible conditions without trial. In 1881 Native Minister John Bryce lead “644 troops and 1000 settler volunteers”<sup>46</sup> to invade Parihaka and were met by village children singing and unarmed men. Over the three week attack Parihaka was “reduced to a ruins”<sup>47</sup> the houses, agriculture, animals and valuable possessions were plundered and destroyed. Years later Te Whiti and Tohu were eventually allowed to return to their community after being forcibly removed by the government. Parihaka is now a small coastal town where the spirit of Te Whiti and Tohu live on though regular traditions including an annual peace festival. It has since inspired many poets, musicians, artists and film makers to pay tribute to what happened there.

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<sup>43</sup> Taylor, Apirana *Parihaka* Line 1. Quoted from Ross J., and Kemp. J. (ed’s) *Contemporary New Zealand Poets in Performance*. (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007.) pg 124.

<sup>44</sup> Riseborough. H., *Days of Darkness – The Government and Parihaka*. (Auckland: Penguin Books, 2002.), pg 17.

<sup>45</sup> Parihaka Website: <http://www.parihaka.com/About.aspx> accessed 21-01-2010.

<sup>46</sup> King, M. *The Penguin History of New Zealand*. (Illustrated Edition) (Auckland; Penguin Group, 2007.) pg 201.

<sup>47</sup> Riseborough, *Days of Darkness*, pg 17.

**Text: *Parihaka* - Apirana Taylor** <sup>48</sup>

*We never knew  
about Parihaka  
it was never  
taught anywhere  
except maybe  
around the fires  
of Parihaka  
itself at night  
when stories  
are told  
of the soldiers  
who came  
with guns  
to haul us up  
by the roots  
like trees  
from our land  
though the Prophets  
called peace peace  
it was never  
taught at school  
it was all busbed up  
how we listened  
to the Prophets  
Tohu, Te Whiti  
who called  
Peace Rire rire  
Paimairire  
but the only  
peace the soldiers knew  
spoke through  
the barrels  
of their guns  
threatening  
our women, children  
it was never  
taught or spoken  
how we  
were shackled  
led away to the caves  
and imprisoned  
for ploughing our land.*

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<sup>48</sup> Taylor, Apirana, *Parihaka*. Quoted from Ross J., and Kemp, J. (ed's) *Contemporary New Zealand Poets in Performance*. pg 124.

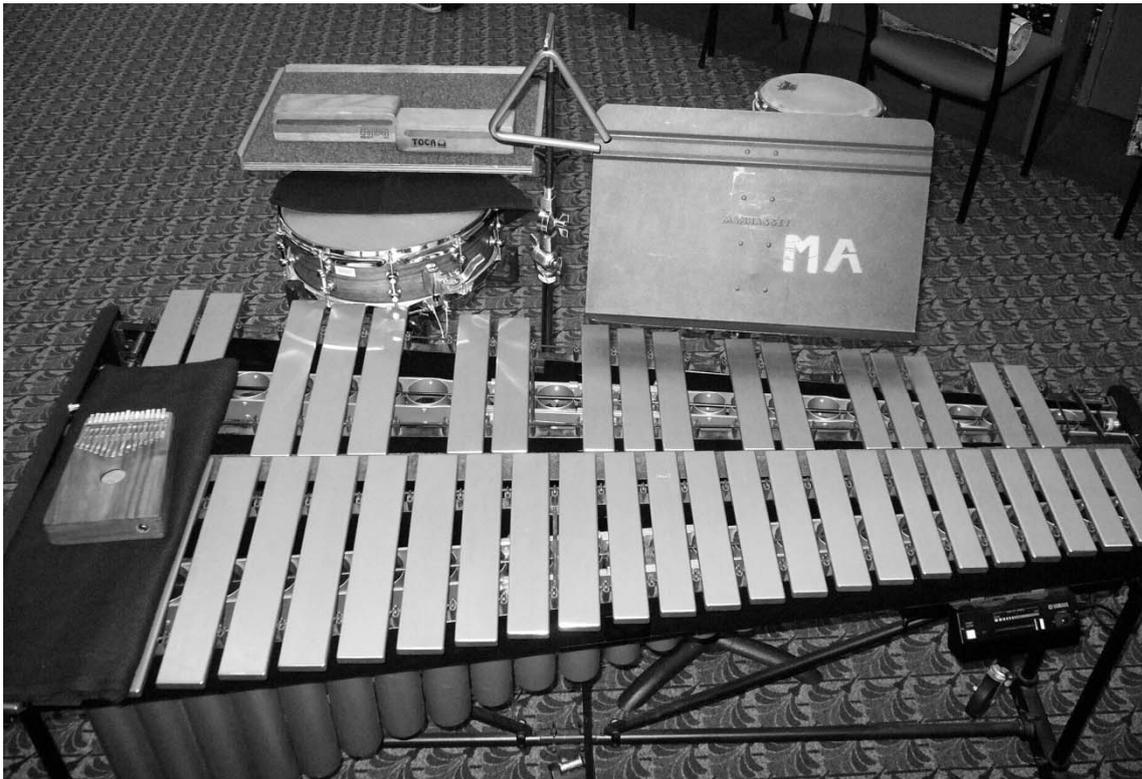
## Performance Note

This piece is to be premiered on March the 11<sup>th</sup> at the Blue Room Theatre in Northbridge Perth, followed on the 18<sup>th</sup> at the University of Western Australia in the Octagon Theatre and then on March the 29<sup>th</sup> in Perth by Louise Devenish at the Ellington Jazz Club. I am heading to Perth to see the final performance. The recording included with this portfolio was made by Louise in preparation for these concerts.

## Set up

The following image is a suggested set up for performance and the one that Louise has worked out to suit her performance style. Note her vibraphone has an extended lower range ( C below middle C), so she is able to rest the kalimba on the low register which is not used in this piece.

Additionally note the cloth over the back half of the snare – which she has done to provide two snare timbres.



*Paribaka Set up by Louise Devenish*



## Parihaka

### Analytical Note

The initial reason for writing a work for a percussionist sprung from a musical connection at Bang on a Can. While playing my vibraphone part in my work *.manatu*. Louise Devenish (an Australian percussionist) and I spoke about the potential for collaboration in Australasia. She liked my style of writing and was interested to see what I would write for solo percussion.

Once back in our respective homes I began researching to write her a solo work. While listening to her CD of music that she had had written for her in Australia there were two obvious types of solos that stood out. I could write either a virtuosic showy piece for percussion<sup>52</sup> or something rather different: her CD included a gorgeous song for voice and marimba titled *Rum* by Graeme Blevins. It was in the style of a children's song with easy to sing repetitive phrases. I enjoyed the performance value of this inherently innocent writing style and therefore chose to use this aspect of Louise's performance abilities.

While beginning to research writing this piece I had a memorable conversation with New Zealand composer Susan Frykberg. I was working out how to structure the piece and if to have an electronic backing, i.e John Psathas' *One Study, One Summary*. Louise said there would be limited performance opportunities on her part if the work had a backing due to accessibility of P.A systems. Susan agreed with Louise and suggested I think about having a " 'meta-narrative' that takes people on a journey", as well as how the story of the performer will be told in the performance.<sup>53</sup> A few days later, while thinking about this advice, I remembered reading Taylor's *Parihaka* poem and thought it would suit a narrative type piece.

The publication in which I found Taylor's poem featured a CD of the poets reading their works. Hearing Taylor's gravelly voice speak this text brought the rhythm of the poem alive and I started to hear how I could set it to music. I chose it because it was intrinsically of

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<sup>52</sup> However she had a few pieces like this already - including an interesting work by Australian composer David Pye for marimba and bull frogs/tape

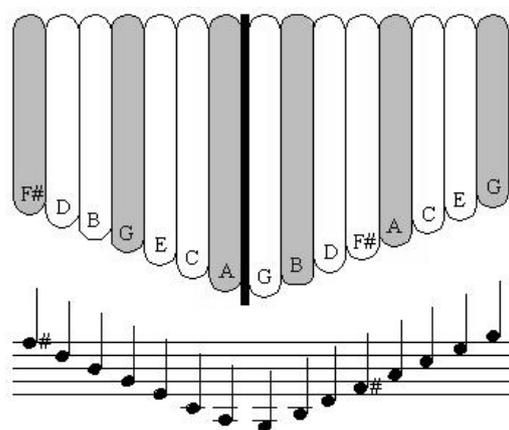
<sup>53</sup> Private correspondence with Susan Frykberg 18/11/2009

New Zealand and Taranaki and believed that a New Zealand based theme would add an interesting dimension to mine and Louise’s Trans-Tasman collaboration.

I chose Taylor’s poem because the subject was easy to interpret straight away. Despite my love for extended metaphor type poems I felt over a 5-10 minute time frame it would be too hard for the audience to stay attentive and understand the meaning. I wanted the text clear and precise. The multiplicity of uses for a vocalizing percussionist allowed me to explore the effect of percussion and voice while focusing on having the drama and the story line lucid.

An outline of the form came to me while improvising at the piano that afternoon. I mapped the mood and instrumentation of each section, if any lines of the text would repeat and where interludes or solos could go.

The instrumentation initially started with the Kalimba – a thumb piano (Hugh Tracey Alto model) which Louise had recently acquired. This particular model has 15 keys and is tuned as per the diagram.<sup>54</sup> They are re-tuneable so I replaced the F# with an F natural to use the mixolydian mode of G.



*Hugh Tracey Alto Kalimba*

The change of instruments is something I worked out by having a pretend set up of the performance. Most of the transitions are written in such a way as to allow for one hand to continue playing while the other moves to a different instrument. For example: Bars 16-20; the last two beats of bar 16 and the whole of bar 17 are played with the right hand on the kalimba allowing the left hand to move to the triangle. These instrument changes are marked to be played freely giving the percussionist as much time they like to change over. Having seen the graceful style of Louise’s movements while performing I am certain that these changes do not have to be visually distracting and will not take away anything from the piece.

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<sup>54</sup> (Kalimba Magic) <[http://www.kalimbamagic.com/learnhow/learnhow\\_altokalimba.php](http://www.kalimbamagic.com/learnhow/learnhow_altokalimba.php)>

I have chosen certain parts of the text to repeat – either to tie sections together or to help clarify meaning and reiterate important lines of the text. For example bar 22 – repeating “who came with guns” backed by militaristic style drums adds emphasis. Primarily the percussion part is there to support and sustain the text acting as a commentary element rather than a virtuosic solo for percussion. It features a mixture of sustained and detached rhythms that are linked to the vocal line however only at specific times the backing and vocal line are in unison. For example the two parts are in unison at bars 44-45 and 57-59 for the text “*Though the prophet called Peace Peace*”.

The piece opens innocently – evoking the improvisational way I began writing and evoking a childlike innocence with the open 5ths and the suspended 2nds and 6ths. The modal repetitive feel of the voice melody is something which could easily be taught and passed on aurally - alluding to the Maori tradition of passing on karakia and waiata. The rhythm of the word “*Paribaka*” is an important motive which is used frequently through the work.

The piece moves to a different harmonic scheme at C, since the vibraphone offers more chromaticism, with more angular intervals such as augmented 4ths and minor 7ths. I chose vibraphone for this section to make a dreamy wistful character and at D is the first time the voice and the percussion solo sync – as if they are coming to agreement in their mutual wish for peace.

At E the piece returns to the innocent state of the opening with the return of the Kalimba. The voice melody turns into an osinato in the left hand of the vibes with the right hand playing variations of the main “*I never knew about Paribaka*” tune. G has slight references again to the “*Paribaka*” tune but stays in the dreamy character and moves to the prayer like part of “*Rire rire, Paimairire*” (*Mercy mercy, peace, mercy*). The tempo changes through bars 99-104 are there to make sure text will be heard and will be clear as the text is most important.

At rehearsal mark I the work builds to the loudest section with a snare solo. Initially this was for tenor drum and snare but later cut out at Louise’s recommendation.<sup>55</sup> The woodblock moves in 4/4 and 6/8 patterns creating interest while the snare moves in demi-semi quavers. The vibraphone gradually sneaks in to make the transition to J smoother.

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<sup>55</sup> She suggested keeping instrumentation simple to aid the playability of the piece.

The vibraphone then plays the pitch D at 133 to prepare the performer for the last section – a return to innocence with the kalimba and the opening perfect fifths rhythmically augmented to suggest finality of the music. This is designed to show the finality of the story of Parihaka – all we can do now is to remember and learn the lessons of the past.

# Parihaka

for Louise Devenish

Apirana Taylor

E. J. Dobson

1 **A** ♩ = 100 Folk song like

Voice

Kalimba

Percussion

Vibraphone

5 *mp innocently* 3  $\text{♩}^{\text{3}} = \text{♩}$

We ne - ver knew a - bout Pa - ri - ha - ka it was

Kal.

8 3 3  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^{\text{3}}$

ne - ver taught a - ny - where... ex - cept may - be... a - round the fi -

Kal.

11

res, a - round the fi - res, of Pa - ri - ha - ka of Pa - ri

Kal.

Parihaka

15 *poco rit.* *freely*

3

ha - ka it - self at night when sto - ries are told

Kal.

Perc.

*mp l.v.*

*p*

Trgl.

18 *mf* **B** ♩ = 100 quasi military style

when sto - ries are told of the sol - diers who came with guns

Kal.

Perc.

*mp l.v.* *mf*

W. Bl. High

W. Bl. Low

S. Dr.

22 *(first time only)* *f*

who came with guns (when) to haul us up by the

Kal.

Perc.

*f*

26 *mf*

roots like trees — from our land

Perc.

*mf* 3

Parihaka

31 C Trgl. ♩ = approx 100, expressive

Perc. *mf mp mp*

Vib. *mf p dreamy Red.*

36 Trgl.

Perc. *p mp*

Vib. *mp p mp*

41 D *slow p sad*

Voice *though the Pro-phets called Peace peace peace*

Perc. *mf*

Vib. *mf pp < mf > pp < mf > p*

46 same tempo as C

Vib. *mf mp*

50 *Più mosso* *rit.*

Vib. *p mf mp*

Parihaka

56 **slow** ♩ = 60

Voice: though the Pro-phets called Peace peace peace

Vib. *p*

60 **E** **accel.** (♩ = 100 at bar 63-64) *mp* *innocently*

Voice: it was ne - ver taught at school

Kal. *p* *mp*

Perc. *p*

Vib. *p*

64 *p* *mp*

Voice: it was all hushed up

Kal. *p* *mp*

67 *mp*

Voice: no, it was ne - ver taught at school

Kal. *mp*



Parihaka

91  $\text{♩} = 100$  *mf*  $\text{♩} = 110$

Voice  $\text{♩} = 100$  *mf*  $\text{♩} = 110$   
to the Pro-phets To - hu

Vib. *mf*

95  $\text{♩} = 100$   $\text{♩} = 110$

Voice  $\text{♩} = 100$   $\text{♩} = 110$   
Te Whi - ti

Vib. 3 5

98 **H** **Meno mosso**  
*mp*

Voice *mp*  
who called Peace

Vib. 3 3 *mp*

101 **slow**  
*p* *prayer like*

Voice *p* *prayer like*  
peace peace peace Ri - re ri - re Pai - mai - ri - re

Perc. **Trgl.**  
*p*

Vib.

Parihaka

104 **I** ♩ = 100 **Più mosso** **mf** *bit more menacing* ♩ = 110

Voice: But the on-ly peace that the

Perc.: *p* *mp* *mf*  
W. Bl. High  
S. Dr.

107 *f* *ff*

Voice: sold-iers knew spoke through the bar-rels of their guns threat-en-ing

Perc.: W. Bl. Low

110

Voice: threat-en - ing

Perc.: *ff*

113

Perc.: *ff*

Vib.: *ff* *octave optional*

117

Perc.: *ff*

Vib.: *ff*

Parihaka

121

bit slower ♩ = 100

Voice: threat - ening

Perc.: W. Bl. Low *mp*

Vib.: *mf*

123

slower ♩ = 95

Voice: rit. *mf* threat - ening our

Perc.: W. Bl. High

Vib.: *mf*, 3

126

**J** *mf* angry

*mp* tender

Voice: *mf* angry wo - men and child - ren our *mp* tender wo - men and child - ren our

Vib.: *pp* — *mp* — *pp* — *mp* — *pp* — *mp* — *pp* — *mp*

130

rit.

freely

Voice: rit. freely wo - men and child - ren

Perc.: Trgl. *p*

Vib.: *pp* — *mp* — *p*

a tempo ♩ = 100 Parihaka

**K**

133

Voice *mf* innocent but sad  
it was ne - ver taught or spo - ken

Kal. *mf*

Perc.

Vib.

137

Voice  
how we were shack - led — led a - way to the caves

Kal.

141

Voice *rit.*  
and im - pri - soned for plough - ing our land

Kal.

**E. J. Dobson**

*Orison*

*for*

*singing bowl and Ableton Live*

# Orison

## Programme Note

Singing bowls are beautiful instruments and I wanted to explore their sound with a short piece. I intend to make this into larger piece in the near future as I feel there is yet untapped potential here. I wrote this work to perform myself exploring a cross over role between composer/performer and as a further experiment with my live performance set up.

## Note on Performance

The recording here is a live performance of the work, performed by myself, in my home studio.

## Instrumentation

Singing Bowl (pitched in E)

Performer

## Technical requirements

Laptop with soundcard. Ability to have 1 line in and stereo out

Ableton Live on laptop (7.0.1 or higher)

Midi controller. (i.e. m-audio trigger finger)

1 vocal microphone

Wide stereo speakers. (Preferably 2.1)

**Duration** Four minutes

# Orison

## Analytical Notes

Further experiments with my live performance set up began with two main goals; to create satisfying music, and to have a multiple purpose set up which can be used for future works. This set up will be one “that can facilitate the performance of many different compositions encompassing many different musical styles.”<sup>56</sup> One example of future use is going to be an improvised electroacoustic music performance at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth, May 2010. This concert titled *Let the Art Sing* has been organised by composer Susan Frykberg and will be a collaboration between New Plymouth musicians, composers and artists.

In *Orison* and with future experiments “the evolution of the instrument forms the basis of the composition itself.”<sup>57</sup> In this case the building of an Ableton Live set with the framework, mapping, programmed control of live effects and manipulation of pre-recorded samples to create a piece.

I was interested in this medium of electroacoustic music having loved performing and taking part in live music making, rather than the isolated art form of a “just press play” electroacoustic piece.<sup>58</sup> When interactive music is realised by playing the computer like an instrument creatively then “the composer... takes on the roles of, for example, instrument designer, programmer and performer.”<sup>59</sup>

With *Orison* I liked the flexibility of being able to adlib the composition which could be different with each interpretation.<sup>60</sup> The piece is unscored due to its improve nature.

*Orison* explores the use of reverb, delay and filters on various sound samples all recorded by the composer with the singing bowl. This creates a backing, which is further manipulated live and mixed with the live acoustic singing bowl.

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<sup>56</sup> Drummond, J. “Understanding Interactive Systems”. *Organised Sound*. 14.2. (2009). pg 125.

<sup>57</sup> Drummond, *Interactive Systems*, pg 125.

<sup>58</sup> Often I have felt disembodied from previous studio work in performance.

<sup>59</sup> Drummond, *Interactive Systems*, pg 125.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Drummond, *Interactive Systems*, pg 125.

**E. J. Dobson**

*The Headlines Today:*

New Zealand – 16.12.09

*For five spoken voices & an indeterminate length*

# The Headlines Today

16 . 12 . 09

## Programme Note

*Children 'drugged' by nursery staff, Flashing breasts big traffic hazard and Charges after fish and chip shops raided* were in the news today. Today being 16 . 12 . 2009.

Contentious or amusing headlines brought to you from New Zealand straight to New York City.

## Performance Note

*In the Headlines Today* was written for thingNY<sup>61</sup> – a collective of composer-instrumentalists who were looking for short works to perform at a concert called SPAM in New York on December the 19<sup>th</sup> 2009.

A recording of this work had not been tracked down by the time this portfolio went to print.

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<sup>61</sup> For more information see <<http://www.thingny.com/>>

# The Headlines Today

16 . 12 . 09

## Instrumentation

Five adventurous musicians / improvisers.

## Duration

An indeterminate length – determined by pre-designated performer. Ideally anywhere between one and five minutes.

## Performance Instructions

Each performer is to have a score; one of the five cards below printed.

The performance begins with all five performers vocalising the title “*The Headlines Today. New Zealand 16.12.09*”.

Each performer is to act and speak like a character from any news headline in their score. For example a gunman: *Alleged gunman may plead guilty*, or a mother: *Second Chance for Crash Mum*. The interpretation of this character can be as extreme or subjective as the performer wishes. Performers can choose to vocalise all or any amount of their headlines.

While in character, each performer must interact with other performers and the audience while only speaking out their headlines.

The performance ends when a pre-designated performer reiterates the title.

*Headlines gathered from; [www.nzherald.co.nz](http://www.nzherald.co.nz), [www.stuff.co.nz](http://www.stuff.co.nz), and <http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news> on the 16 of Dec 2009.*

## The Headlines Today

### Analytical Note

While at Bang on a Can I saw a piece by New York composer/percussionist Jude Traxler<sup>62</sup> called *Fallout* for two performers arguing on any subject (2008). Traxler is a composer of experimental and conceptual indeterminate music. This particular piece was performed by many people who argued/shouted with each other situated at various places over the MASS MoCA art gallery. What fascinated me (as I walked around taking photos) was the rise and fall of people's voices, the accents and the intonation, which, once mingled into the surrounding environment, became the music of the work.

This led me to think about what can be called the music of shouting. This is a technique that has been explored by many composers including L. Berio in *The Cries of London* where he set well known and often heard cries from street vendors. This has been thought of as an "exercise in characterisation and musical dramatisation."<sup>63</sup> When you apply this to capturing the essence and mood of a place, then the vernacular of the surroundings becomes the musical substance. Jude played on this idea in *Fallout*. It can be performed anywhere, from street to theatre, using whichever subject to argue about. Therefore this particular music can be sourced from any situation and found anywhere. Upon doing some research I came across New Zealand composer Daniel Beban who must have thought the same thing when he recorded auctioneers and race callers.<sup>64</sup> I found this all quite interesting.

I toiled with the idea of writing a musical indeterminate work for thingNY, i.e. blocks of music that a performer chooses to perform in a short space of time. However when thinking about the performance space, the location and the performers themselves I thought it would be an ideal situation to work with accents and musical shouting. As it was to be performed in New York it would also be interesting to exploit the difference in country and accents.

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<sup>62</sup> Jude Traxler – New York Composer. [www.judetraxler.com](http://www.judetraxler.com)

<sup>63</sup> CD Album Notes. Berio: A-Ronne, Cries of London. Swingle Singers. (London/Decca Enterprise) June 1990.

<sup>64</sup> Daniel Beban – SOUNZ Profile. <<http://sounz.org.nz/contributor/composer/1179>>

I scanned the papers for Kiwi sounding headlines – things contrasting to what American papers would write about. Headlines that were inherently part of New Zealand culture and that sounded interesting. These I divided up in to five performer scores and set about writing a list of rules for performance – composing the piece not through music but through actions and drama.

By bringing a slice of New Zealand to New York I thought it would add drama to the characterisations of the performers.

Would this piece still be as interesting in New Zealand? With the right set of performers it would still hold value and interest. Through different performer's interpretation each performance of *The Headlines Today* would take on a different character.

Sentences ease firefighters' loss

Old lounge suite for sale for \$100,000

Teacher's 30-year career draws to end

Cubicle dairy farms 'greener, more productive'

Teen killed in Maraetai crash named

Nearly 100-year-old butter found at Scott Base

Helping hand for school

**EJ Dobson**  
**The Headlines**  
**Today. New Zealand 16.12.09**

Unicyclist a stand-up

Ban on P ingredient at least a year away

US trade talks confirmation 'significant'

School closure unjustified – board of trustees

Been there, still printing the T-shirt

Charges after fish and chip shops raided

'I was like an Egyptian pharaoh conserved alive' - Kampusch

Long age of Enlightenment

Midwife faulted following newborn's death

Worker who fell asleep on job unjustifiably dismissed

Laser pointed at plane

New Zealand Horsemeat falling off French menus

Escaped prisoner hunted in Paremoremo

Children 'drugged' by nursery staff

**EJ Dobson**  
**The Headlines**  
**Today. New Zealand 16.12.09**

Body found beside Auckland police station

Cellphone jamming in all prisons soon

Police raids smash drugs ring

Reekers admits hairdresser's murder

Injured paraglider winched to chopper

Tax fraudster wins partial appeal victory

Gift-giver's guide to perfume

Hairdresser comes to rescue

Flashing breasts big traffic hazard

Gangland daughter 'murdered' says family

Man died of natural causes, police say

What the Kiwi gossip mags say

Christmas tree thieves' plans axed by owner

A grandstand view

Ageing population Taranaki issue

**EJ Dobson**  
**The Headlines**  
**Today. New Zealand 16.12.09**

Prisoner still on the run, investigation launched

Farms pose 'threat' to wildlife

Old technology' for \$23m scheme

Man admits killing Marie Jamieson

Nick wins on borrowed guitar

Mau's dolphin sighted

Views split over drunks

Canterbury dairy farms flout environmental rules

Charles Dickens' toothpick sells at auction

Risky second chance for manslaughter mum	'Maori' flag will gain meaning in time, says Key	<p>EJ Dobson</p> <p><b>The Headlines Today. New Zealand 16.12.09</b></p>	New research on language disorders	Schools aiming 'too low'
Technology brings Santa to his fans at <u>Starship</u>	Woman <u>run</u> over after flashing		Meningitis kills <u>Urenui</u> schoolgirl	Outlook hazy on sunscreen labels
Heart attack victim found after missed appointment	Joyce: No more than \$3 for Transmission Gully toll		Seeing red over health costs	The road stars have aligned
			Historic hotel faces falling into disrepair, court told	<u>Tauranga</u> basks in sun

'Invisible children' warning	Lamp post falls across motorway	<p>EJ Dobson</p> <p><b>The Headlines Today. New Zealand 16.12.09</b></p>	Last-ditch effort for climate deal	<u>Harawira</u> won't face charges
Govt looks at cap on spending	Ruminating on the harm cows do		Finn's pen could be a real life saver	P-addicted pair jailed for stealing vans to fund habit
Festive feast a bit cheaper	Quad bike restrictions rejected		PM: It's okay to give light smacks	
Conflicting evidence on hammer threat	Do you have faith in the Government's handling of the economy?	Principal on 41 child abuse charges		

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God Bless

Elizabeth Dobson, February 2010.