

South Bank, London (1979-1988)-, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, UK, USA-Performance Space, Sydney (1996-2001), Canberra (2002-2007),
-Sydney Conservatorium of Music (2003-)

An international sound and intermedia ensemble, creating, performing and producing new work, composed and improvised.

"phenomenal musicianship" (Sydney Morning Herald, 1995)

"cutting edge ... eclectic ... consummate" (BBC Radio 3, 1997)

"ever challenging" (Sydney Morning Herald, 2000)

"continue to push the parameters of music and multimedia...probing the nature of performance art" (Sydney Morning Herald, 2004)

"those doyens of computerised music" (Sydney Morning Herald, 2008)

The Late Night Sonic Space

ABC Studio 227, Ultimo, Sydney, July 31 2010.

PROGRAM

Promoted by New Music Network and australYSIS Productions Inc in conjunction with the ABC. This is an outcome of a 2010 collaboration between australYSIS and Halcyon, within the New Music Network. The New Music Network is supported in part by the Australia Council for the Arts, and by the New South Wales Ministry for the Arts.

Creators/Performers: Roger Dean, Jenny Duck-Chong, Phil Slater, Hazel Smith, Greg White.

australYSIS is an international sound and intermedia ensemble based in Australia since 1989, creating, performing and producing new work, composed and improvised. Director: Roger Dean. It has made more than 30 commercial recordings, 50 web- and radio pieces, and performed in 30 countries. Go to www.australysis.com to see australYSIS' current activities and a summary of its history and outputs since its inception in 1970 in the UK as LYSIS.

Halcyon is a vocal performance ensemble of broad interest, achievement and aspiration. Founded in 1998 by singers Alison Morgan (soprano) and Jenny Duck-Chong (mezzo soprano), it is the only Australian ensemble dedicated to the performance of new and recent music for voice and instruments. It has made several recordings, and been a long-standing member of the New Music Network. Go to www.halcyon.org.au for more information.

Besides creative work from australYSIS, we also present a great electroacoustic piece by Canadian Robert Normandeau, who some audience members may have heard in Australia in 2008, but who is heard here all too infrequently. There are two new works written especially for an australYSIS/Halcyon collaboration in 2010 (*Wordspotting* and *Toy Language I*), and a third will be included in Halcyon's New Music Network performance in December 2010, in which australYSIS will provide electroacoustic diffusion of a range of other works, from Wishart and Saariaho to Adamcyk and Glowicka.

Performers : members of australYSIS: Roger Dean (piano, keyboards, computers, sound diffusion), Phil Slater (trumpet), Hazel Smith (text artist), Greg White (computers, sound diffusion); and from Halcyon, Jenny Duck-Chong (mezzo-soprano).

Programme:

*indicates works receiving their premiere, or their first performance in Australia.

There are also some live interviews interspersed in the programme.

Dean/Slater/White : Improvisation* (for piano, trumpet, live electroacoustic processing)

Roger Dean : Wordspotting (2010)* (for mezzo-soprano, trumpet, electroacoustic composed material, and live electroacoustic processing)

Robert Normandeau : Malina (2000) (first broadcast Australian diffusion of a pre-recorded acousmatic piece)

Roger Dean: MultiPiano Trumpet (2010)* (for piano, trumpet, pre-recorded material, and live processing)

Interval

Hazel Smith and Roger Dean : Clay Conversations 2 (2010)* Soundscape and text: for text performer and acousmatic diffusion)

Roger Dean and Hazel Smith : SnowTalking (2007). Pre-recorded; diffused by Greg White

Roger Dean and Hazel Smith (2010): Toy Language 1* (for mezzo-soprano, trumpet, pre-recorded material, and live processing)

Some programme information:

Roger Dean : Wordspotting (2010)*

Amongst the sound processing techniques to be used tonight, is the newly available SoundSpotting, developed by a large research endeavour in music information retrieval, originally based at Goldsmiths and Queen Mary Colleges, University of London, and elaborated by Michael Casey in the recent Oxford Handbook of Computer music edited by Roger Dean. This technique permits real-time analysis of an incoming sound stream, such that as each chunk of sound passes, the computer can systematically choose a piece of sound from a pre-stored database of sounds it stores (and has analysed earlier) on the basis of graded similarity or dissimilarity. If the database consists solely of the same sound as is incoming, then when maximum similarity is chosen, the technique can fully reproduce the original sound file; but when dissimilarity is chosen, it fragments it. More often, the database consists of different but somewhat related material from that of the incoming stream, and the stored material is successively performed in fragments relating to the input. The performer can thus choose the nature of the similarity or dissimilarity evidenced in the resultant output stream, and vary this continuously. *Wordspotting* uses a system of phonemic sounds which are set vocally, together with a single brief series of words near the conclusion of the piece. Pre-recorded components of the vocal score are used within both the live and the pre-formed electroacoustic parts.

Robert Normandeau : Malina (2000) (15 minutes)

Normandeau provided an exciting group of presentations of his work during a visit to Sydney in 2008 initiated by the Australasian Computer Music Association. He also gave a workshop on multichannel diffusion of CDs and other stereo recordings, which reawakened an enthusiasm austraLYSIS had shared in the early 90s, but had somewhat neglected since in favour of works created directly in multichannel audio. In presenting this piece we continue with that tradition tonight.

Normandeau writes of the piece:

At the origin of the work is a play — an adaptation from the 1971 novel by Ingeborg Bachmann (Australia, 1926-73), *Malina*, — presented in Montréal in September 2000.

The stage adaptation, a poetic reading of Bachmann's novel, makes use of the unsaid, silence, and atmosphere in a way that allows the music a place that it seldom enjoys in theater. It became clear from the beginning that the ideal instrument for this meditation was the shakuhachi. As the work progressed it became increasingly evident that the music would have to be an omnipresent element in the play. The absolute confidence that the director showed in me

on this question allowed me to develop the music through a creative process similar to the one I use when writing concert music.

I want to thank Brigitte Haentjens, without whom this music would not exist, for commissioning the work, certainly, but above all for the confidence that she showed during its creation. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the entire production staff of *Malina*. Finally, my special thanks goes to Claire Marchand for her playing of the shakuhachi, a truly fascinating instrument that provided the sole and unique material for the work, and for which she adapted the techniques of modern flute playing, her principal instrument.

Brief Biography of Normandeau: After a BMus in Composition (Electroacoustics) from the Université Laval (Québec City, 1984) Robert Normandeau moved to Montréal and completed an MMus in Composition (1988) and the first PhDMus in Electroacoustic Composition (1992), under Marcelle Deschênes and Francis Dhomont. He is a founding member of the Canadian Electroacoustic Community (CEC, 1987). From 1986 to 1993, he was an active member of the Association pour la création et la recherche électroacoustiques du Québec (ACREQ), where he produced the Clair de terre concert series at the Montréal Planetarium. In 1991, he co-founded Réseaux, an organization for the production of media arts events, notably the acousmatic concert series Rien à voir.

After a certain interest in instrumental and mixed works, his current endeavours are focused on acousmatic music. More specifically, his compositions employ aesthetic criteria whereby he creates a ‘cinema for the ear’ in which ‘meaning’ as well as ‘sound’ become the elements that elaborate his works. Along with concert music he now writes incidental music, especially for the theatre.

He is Professor in electroacoustic music composition at Université de Montréal since 1999. He received two Prix Opus from the Conseil québécois de la musique in 1999: “Composer of the Year” and “Record of the Year-Contemporary Music” for *Figures* (IMED 9944) The Académie québécoise du théâtre (AQT) has given him a Masque Award in 2002: “Best Music for Theatre” for the play *Malina*.

Robert Normandeau is an award winner of numerous international competitions, including Ars Electronica, Linz (Austria, 1993, Golden Nica in '96), Bourges (France, 1986, '88, '93), Fribourg (Switzerland, 2002), Luigi Russolo, Varese (Italy, 1989, '90), Métamorphoses, Bruxelles (Belgium, 2002, '04), Musica Nova, Prague (Czech Republic, 1994, '95, '98), Noroit-Léonce Petitot, Arras (France, 1991, '94), Phonurgia-Nova, Arles (France, 1988, '87), and Stockholm (Sweden, 1992).

He received commissions from The Banff Centre for the Arts, CKUT-FM, Codes d'Accès/Musiques & Recherches, Groupe de recherches musicales (GRM), Groupe de musique expérimentale de Marseille (GMEM), Jacques Drouin, Événements du neuf, Claire Marchand, Arturo Parra, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Open Space Gallery, Société Radio-Canada, Réseaux, Sonorities Festival, Vancouver New Music, and Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie (ZKM).

He was composer in residence in Banff (Canada, 1989, '92, '93), Belfast (Northern Ireland, 1997), Bourges (France, 1988, '99, '05), Mons (Belgium, 1996), Paris (France, 1990, '94), Ohain (Belgium, 1987), and Karlsruhe (Germany, 2004).

Roger Dean: MultiPiano Trumpet (2010)*

In this piece, trumpet, piano and computers perform with a pre-recorded electroacoustic part, which is taken from an earlier work, *PianoStones*. It is one of a series of pieces currently being developed and presented in relation to Roger's Solo MultiPiano Show, in which he plays the piano in a wide range of contexts which produce multiple instrumental and electroacoustic streams. For example, they can involve acoustic delay/transformation, MIDI-data streams being realized as piano sounds, and pre-recorded piano and/or electroacoustic material, as in MultiPiano Trumpet.

Hazel Smith and Roger Dean: Clay Conversations 2* (c. 10minutes)

Clay Conversations 2 arises out of a video piece *Clay Conversations*, which was part of a

collaboration between British ceramicist and potter Joanna Still and australYSIS member Hazel Smith. The video, constructed by Hazel, included ceramic objects made by Joanna, photographs of her travel in Zambia and Ethiopia where she worked with local communities, and text by Hazel. As part of the piece Roger created a soundtrack collage of clay sounds: this forms the basis of the sound of *Clay Conversations 2*.

For *Clay Conversations 2*, a purely sonic work, Hazel wrote some completely new text which was inspired by Joanna's love of clay, her sense of its historical impact and geographical reach, and her relationship with it as a flexible and transformative material. In the opening poem the raw substance clay becomes a woman called Clay. The artist wants to mould and control Clay, but Clay continually escapes from her grasp. Later in the piece, Clay speaks in her own language.

The recorded soundscape reflects both the violence and love afforded to clay and pots. Other than the transformed speech elements, the sounds here are (with one short exception) found sounds directly involving clay and pots. Several are recordings of Joanna at work, others are of stone/pot interactions recorded by Roger, while a significant selection of the sounds are taken from the freesound online sonic database maintained in Barcelona. Notable amongst these recordings is a 5 minute recording of clay gradually distributing itself as it hydrates in a body of water, made with an underwater microphone by KG Jones. We would also like to acknowledge, in keeping with the Creative Commons license which applies, the use of material from: Benboncan, Heigh, homejrande, NoiseCollector, Robinhood, and volivieri.

Roger Dean and Hazel Smith : SnowTalking (2007. 4 channel work, diffused by Greg White; c. 8 ½ min)

SnowTalking is a 4-channel acousmatic piece, existing solely as digital recording. It was conceived as a free-standing relation to the piece *SnowTalk*, commissioned by Chaconne Brass, UK for brass quintet and pre-recorded electroacoustic sound. The electroacoustic sound for both pieces includes a text written and performed by Hazel Smith, and sampled brass sounds by Chaconne, together with synthesized brass sound. All these sounds, other than the text, are also digitally processed to generate a complex sound texture which accompanies the live quintet performance of a notated score. In *SnowTalking*, tonight's piece, the electronic sound is further developed to form a free standing and slightly longer work, but still with unprocessed text juxtaposed with digitally transformed brass sounds.

Roger Dean and Hazel Smith : Toy Language 1 (2010)* for mezzo-soprano, trumpet, acousmatic material, and live processing.

With school shootings in mind, the text of *Toy Language* speaks of both children's games and child massacre; it also evokes the tension which occurs in poetic writing between linguistic creativity and violence to language. These ideas are intertwined in the text and also embodied in the words, which are organised in a way which is both playful and grammatically disruptive. The music provides many challenges to the singer. The response to these challenges is exploited both in the acousmatic material (which includes processed versions of extracts of the vocal score, and transformed brass sounds) and in the live electroacoustic processing.