



| SCULTHORPE | REQUIEM |

MY COUNTRY CHILDHOOD • GREAT SANDY ISLAND  
NEW NORCIA • QUAMBY • EARTH CRY

ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA • ARVO VOLMER • JAMES JUDD

PETER SCULTHORPE b. 1929

CD1

**Requiem**

[42'15]

- |   |                 |      |
|---|-----------------|------|
| 1 | I. Introit      | 3'00 |
| 2 | II. Kyrie       | 7'00 |
| 3 | III. Gradual    | 3'36 |
| 4 | IV. Sequence    | 7'08 |
| 5 | V. Canticle     | 9'21 |
| 6 | VI. Sanctus     | 2'43 |
| 7 | VII. Agnus Dei  | 2'37 |
| 8 | VIII. Communion | 6'47 |

**Adelaide Chamber Singers**  
**William Barton *didjeridu***  
**Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**  
**Arvo Volmer *conductor***

CD2

**My Country Childhood**

[15'54]

- |   |                        |      |
|---|------------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Song of the Hills   | 4'10 |
| 2 | II. A Church Gathering | 3'26 |
| 3 | III. A Village Funeral | 4'22 |
| 4 | IV. Song of the River  | 3'56 |

**5 Earth Cry (abridged version)**

5'57

**Great Sandy Island**

[22'47]

- |    |                      |      |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 6  | I. The Sea Coast     | 2'53 |
| 7  | II. The Boro-ground  | 3'53 |
| 8  | III. The Rain-forest | 6'21 |
| 9  | IV. The Garrison     | 3'28 |
| 10 | V. Dune Dreaming     | 6'12 |

**11 New Norcia**

5'07

**Quamby (for chamber orchestra)**

[23'26]

- |    |                     |      |
|----|---------------------|------|
| 12 | I. Prelude          | 3'41 |
| 13 | II. In the Valley   | 5'11 |
| 14 | III. On High Hills  | 5'20 |
| 15 | IV. At Quamby Bluff | 9'14 |

Total Playing Time 115'26

**Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**  
**James Judd *conductor***

**Requiem** (2004) for SATB chorus, didjeridu and orchestra

Since the mid 1950s, death has never been far from Sculthorpe's music, the nexus between the Australian landscape and the dreamtime world beyond. The first of his *Irkanda* series of works, for solo violin, composed in 1955, was both an evocation of Outback loneliness and a 'funeral rite', while the last of the series, *Irkanda IV* (1961) was 'a ritual lamentation' composed after the death of his father. His Sixth String Quartet (1965) conjures 'a state of no-desire, and desolation and loneliness' in the face of mourning, and was dedicated to the memory of Bonnie Drysdale. The funerary rites of the Aztecs inspired the final movement, 'Destruction', of his *Sun Music* ballet (1968), while in his first opera *Rites of Passage* (1974) the climactic fifth section, 'Death', leads to 'Rebirth'.

Sculthorpe's first instrumental setting of the Latin mass for the dead dates from 1979; though no words are heard, the *Requiem for cello alone* can hardly be called 'textless', since it quotes extensively from the traditional plainchant melodies of the mass, whose 'coolness and objectivity' Sculthorpe intended to be set against 'the warmth, even passion at times, of my own kind of music'. Completed shortly before his 50th birthday, the cello work was, as he described it at the time, 'concerned with imploring, with the wanting of forgiveness, and the wanting of eternal life'. More portentously, he also used the chant of the 'Dies irae' from the requiem mass in his ecologically inspired *Memento mori* (1993) for orchestra.

Later, but certainly not yet finally, Sculthorpe set aside most of the year around his 75th birthday in 2004 to compose, and then revise, this choral and orchestral setting of the Latin requiem mass. As if to play down the portentous nature of such an exercise, and to assert its essentially familiar aspect, he dedicated it to the memory of his father and mother, who died in 1961 and 1994 respectively, and explained that its main concerns are not with judgment and reckoning (though these do rear their heads in the 'Dies irae') but 'with eternal rest and with light that is all enlightening, both of primary concern to all human beings'. However, he also revealed a more particular list of reasons for writing such a 'prayer for light and peace', as much for the living as for the dead, in an interview shortly before the premiere. While actually composing it, he thought of the Requiem as being chiefly 'for' children killed in the war in Iraq, and behind them all children affected by wars. Meanwhile, he also wanted the work to be noted as his personal prayer for justice in Australia's treatment of asylum-seekers, for a remedy to its failure so far to ratify the Kyoto protocol, and its ongoing problems with race relations. The prominent place given to the didjeridu, and to one particular Australian

Indigenous chant, leaves no doubt that the work is his call for justice for Australian Aboriginal people, though he chooses not to use the word 'reconciliation' for what he is seeking, simply 'because we were never conciled in the first place.'

The Requiem is the longest and most substantial single work Sculthorpe has produced since his television opera *Quiros* (1982) and the film soundtrack *Burke and Wills* (1986), consisting of over 40 minutes of music scored for a modestly-sized orchestra (with double winds) and chorus without soloists. Though Sculthorpe frequently reuses his own earlier music in new compositions, it is not the case here, and the entire work was composed in the space of four months from October 2003 to January 2004 (emblematically, the day of completion was Australia Day). It was jointly commissioned by the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the Adelaide Festival and the Lichfield Festival in the UK. The premiere duly took place in the Adelaide Town Hall, with William Barton, didjeridu, and Richard Mills conducting the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and the Adelaide Chamber Singers (directed by Carl Crossin); the first European performance was in Lichfield Cathedral, as part of the Lichfield Festival, in July 2004. Between these performances, Sculthorpe carried out substantial revisions, finalised in November 2004, and since then the revised work has also been performed widely.

Though there is nothing that would preclude the work from being performed liturgically (a few small additions to the Latin text notwithstanding), Sculthorpe intended it chiefly for concert performance, its eight sections divided into two parts. The Introit (*Risoluto*), like the faster sections in many of his orchestral scores, is underpinned by ostinato drumming patterns (on congas, timbales and tom-toms), slightly less to the fore in a more reflective central episode ('Exaudi orationem meam...'), but returning forcefully with the reprise of the opening text and music. Apart from trumpets (mainly doubling the sopranos), the orchestra consists of what might be called the work's core ensemble of low brass, cellos and double basses. The chorus sings in a dissonant C major, coloured in the central episode by insistent repeated semitone oscillations, G to A flat, which, following on from the Renaissance astronomer Kepler's identification of the same pitches with the planet Earth in his 'Music of the Spheres', Sculthorpe frequently enlists as a metaphor for the plight of the Earth.

Whereas much of the Cello *Requiem* is based around re-workings of the traditional Gregorian chants, there are no direct borrowings at all in the chorus parts, and only three brief passages in the orchestra, though these latter are used to maximum thematic and tonal effect. The first is in the Kyrie, where, almost as if emerging out of the opening improvisation for didjeridu in A (and an orchestral drone on E from the double basses), the chant is presented (in E minor mode) in a palpably earthy form by the bassoons and cellos. But

rather than treating the melody continuously, Sculthorpe simply repeats and varies its characteristic opening into a repeating harmonic pattern or 'ground-bass' (extending the earth-chant metaphor perhaps), itself above the continuing didjeridu ground, and above which the newly composed (if still chant-like) vocal parts are counterpointed. In the central episode, the chant, though again presented as an ostinato, moves into the middle range of the orchestra (trombones and violas); while it disappears completely when the choral invocations reach their goal in a jubilant and dance-like A major section (still underpinned by the didjeridu), there is a brief reprise of the ground to close.

With its repeat of the text of the Introit, the opening of the Gradual is the opportunity for a reprise of the work's opening chorus and C major tonality, though at first quietly, a little slower (only *Poco risoluto*) and without the drumming. The solemn central prayer ('In memoria aeterna...'), with its chant-like but again newly-composed melody, is scored entirely in low register, for men's voices, cellos and double basses, and didjeridu. The didjeridu then remains, and the drumming has resumed, with the return to the opening music (again marked *Risoluto*).

In the Sequence, which sets only selected verses of the lengthy original text, Sculthorpe likewise deploys only certain phrases of the immediately recognisable traditional D mode melody (which also appears as the theme of his orchestral work *Memento mori*) in recurring orchestral figures in the violins. The main choral melody, which grows out of it so naturally, does for once refer organically to characteristic figures from the original chant, though without quoting systematically. The didjeridu, now an instrument tuned roughly in C, improvises softly during the two quieter episodes (marked *Come una preghiera*), when the chorus music likewise moves in tonality down a step to C and again oscillates around Kepler's 'Earth' semitone. Rather than return to the D mode after the second of these episodes, there is an extended choral coda ('Pie Jesu', marked *Estatico*) which also serves to bring the first part to a conclusion, though peacefully, in its opening key of C.

The second part opens with the only non-liturgical movement, the Canticle, a setting of the so-called *Maranoa Lullaby*, whose words and music were transcribed by Dr H.O. Lethbridge from a performance by an Indigenous singer from the huge Maranoa region of southwest Queensland. Sculthorpe's very first treatment of the tune, a student orchestration exercise for one of Bernard Heinze's classes at the Melbourne University Conservatorium in 1949, was based directly on the popular 1937 Allans edition arranged in accompanied 'part-song' format by Arthur S. Loam (1898-1976). Lethbridge insisted that his transcription 'adhered strictly to the melody, rhythm and words' of the original. But once repackaged by Loam as an exotic artefact for

white Australians, the chant was so thoroughly 'Westernised' as probably to be unrecognisable to its traditional people. Nevertheless, in Lethbridge and Loam's hands, the simple chant-like melody reveals its affinities with other global chant traditions, from China and Japan to Christian Rome. Loam's added harmonies, while totally unauthentic, were also attractive and not unlike some of Percy Grainger's folksong accompaniments, and because of this Sculthorpe chose to retain some of them when he again arranged *Maranoa Lullaby* in 1996 for mezzo-soprano and string quartet (since recorded by Anne Sofie von Otter and the Brodsky Quartet).

This Aboriginal lullaby, here sung for the children of Iraq, and introduced by Sculthorpe's trademark 'seagull sounds' (harmonic glissandos for the strings), is the *Requiem's* serene centre. Sculthorpe's setting underlines its similarity-in-sound to the Gregorian chant in earlier movements, though it is telling that it (and not one of the traditional requiem melodies) is the only borrowed chant in the work that is actually sung by the chorus. The text of its refrain is made up of tender nonsense syllables ('mum-ma war-run-no, mur-ra wa-thun-no'), generic to lullabies from many cultures; the central section, likewise generic, is a charm 'against harm of every kind'. (Sculthorpe does not quote the Aboriginal melody for this section.)

A didjeridu 'cadenza' (in which the player also beats with percussive clap-sticks on the body of the instrument) leads directly into the short Sanctus. The main orchestral melody derives from the chorus's music at the climax of the Kyrie, with the choral melody a step further removed. Sculthorpe adapts liturgical precedent slightly by repeating the opening text complete (rather than just the Osanna). The choral melody in the Agnus Dei is also based on the tune of the Kyrie climax, though rather less obviously, since the mood and setting are rather different, and to form a middle section Sculthorpe again adapts liturgical precedent by recapping the text (and music) of the 'Te decet hymnus' of the Introit.

Seagull sounds and the opening of the traditional Gregorian melody are heard at the outset of the Communion. However, before any of the text is set, Sculthorpe reintroduces the *Maranoa* refrain in the chorus, interspersed with further phrases of the Gregorian melody from the orchestra. The setting of the proper Latin text itself only begins in the movement's central section, which is scored starkly at first for men's voices and didjeridu only, and then repeated, serenely in A major, by full chorus and orchestra. To close, Sculthorpe adds (in Latin) a variation on the mass text's recurring request for the afterlife ('May they rest in peace'), asking instead simply, for the living as much as the dead, 'Dormitant in pace. Amen' – 'May they sleep in peace...'

**Introit**

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.  
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,  
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.  
Exaudi orationem meam,  
ad te omnis caro veniet.  
Requiem aeternam...

**Kyrie**

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

**Gradual**

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,  
et lux perpetua luceat eis.  
In memoria aeterna erit justus:  
ab auditione mala non timebit.  
Requiem aeternam...

**Sequence**

Dies irae, dies illa,  
Solvat saeculum in favilla:  
Teste David cum Sibylla.

Liber scriptus proferetur,  
In quo totum continetur,  
Unde mundus judicetur.

Lacrimosa dies illa  
Qua resurget ex favilla  
Judicandus homo reus.

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,  
and may perpetual light shine on them.  
To you, God, hymns of praise are sung in Zion,  
and unto you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.  
Hear my prayer,  
to you shall come all flesh.  
Grant them eternal rest...*

*Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.*

*Grant them eternal rest, Lord,  
and may perpetual light shine on them.  
The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance,  
and will not be afraid of any evil news.  
Grant them eternal rest...*

*That day, the day of wrath,  
shall consume the world in ashes,  
as foretold by David and the Sibyl.*

*The written book shall be brought,  
in which all is contained,  
whereby the world shall be judged.*

*That day is one of weeping,  
on which shall rise again from the ashes  
the guilty man, to be judged.*

Huic ergo parce, Deus.  
Pie Jesu Domine:  
Dona eis requiem.

Dies irae, dies illa,  
Solvat saeculum in favilla:  
Teste David cum Sibylla.

Recordare, Jesu pie,  
Quod sum causa tuae viae  
Ne me perdas illa die.

Pie Jesu Domine,  
dona eis requiem.  
Amen.

### **Canticle**

mum-ma war-run-no  
mur-ra wa-thun-no

ween ji-na  
bu-ki ya-ka  
ween ji-na  
bu-ki ya-ka

mum-ma war-run-no  
mur-ra wa-thun-no

### **Sanctus**

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Therefore spare this one, O God.  
Good Lord Jesus,  
grant them rest.*

*That day, the day of wrath,  
shall consume the world in ashes,  
as foretold by David and the Sibyl.*

*Remember, good Jesus,  
that I am the reason for your time on earth:  
do not cast me out on that day.*

*Good Lord Jesus,  
grant them rest.  
Amen.*

*[This Lullaby, from the Maranoa district in southern Queensland, was transcribed by Dr H.O. Lethbridge in the 1930s. According to Indigenous speakers, the text is made up of traditional nonsense-words, sung by a mother as she rocks her baby to sleep. The middle verse, it seems, is concerned with protection from enemies of every kind.]*

*Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

### **Agnus Dei**

Agnus Dei  
qui tollis peccata mundi:  
dona eis requiem.  
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,  
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.  
Agnus Dei  
qui tollis peccata mundi:  
dona eis requiem sempiternam.

### **Communio**

mum-ma war-run-no  
mur-ra wa-thun-no

Lux aeterna luceat eis Domine,  
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum  
quia pius es.  
Dormitant in pace.  
Amen.

*O Lamb of God,  
that takes away the sins of the world,  
grant them rest.  
To you, God, hymns of praise are sung in Zion,  
and unto you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.  
O Lamb of God,  
that takes away the sins of the world,  
grant them everlasting rest.*

*Let everlasting light shine on them, O Lord,  
with your saints for ever,  
for you are merciful.  
Let them sleep in peace.  
Amen.*

[1-4] **My Country Childhood** (1999) for string orchestra

'My Country Childhood' is the title of the first chapter of Sculthorpe's autobiographical book, *Sun Music: Journeys and Reflections from a Composer's Life*, published by ABC Books in 1999, coinciding with his 70th birthday. Its recollections of life in the tiny rural settlement of St Leonards, where his family lived from shortly after his birth in 1929 until 1950, found their way into this work later that same year. It was composed for the strings of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and first performed by them on 23 September 1999 conducted by Marco Zuccarini. To link the work both to South Australia and to his childhood he introduced a reference in the second movement to the well-known triplet accompaniment pattern of J.S. Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*. Sculthorpe intended this to pay 'homage to early Lutheran settlement in South Australia', but also to a close friend of his parents' during childhood years, Else Summers, who had been brought up in a German Lutheran family from Marananga in South Australia.

He has described this short work as being 'in four song-like movements', each of which is built on a simple ground-bass. The first, entitled 'Song of the Hills', also has close affinities with the third movement of *Quamby* ('From High Hills'). In particular the yearning rising intervals round which its main melody is formed (derived from his *Hill-Song No. 2*) recall Sculthorpe's adolescent fascination with the tune of 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' (from the film *The Wizard of Oz*), which he especially associated with idyllic days spent fishing on a lake in the Tasmanian midlands. His own melody, as presented here, quite possibly dates from the late 1940s, as he has claimed, though it is first positively traceable to some rejected ideas for his 1961 soundtrack for the Tasmanian children's adventure film *They Found a Cave*. He later used versions of the same idea in his music for a 1962 Tasmanian film documentary *The Splendour and the Peaks*, and in *Small Town* (1963) and *Hill-Song No. 1* (1992).

Along with the South Australian Lutheran connections already mentioned, the Anglican Church of St Peter in St Leonards, where Sculthorpe was baptised and where he later sometimes played the harmonium for Sunday services, is recalled in the second movement. Called 'A Church Gathering' (and marked *Con piet *, 'with compassion'), its main melody is based on the 'Mission Hymn' from his *Songs of Sea and Sky* (1986). The third movement, 'A Village Funeral' recalls a genuinely traumatic event, the death of a childhood playmate from tetanus. The music is a reworking of a poignant sequence from his soundtrack for the 1985 film *Burke and Wills* (starring Jack Thompson, Nigel Havers and Greta Scacchi). The final movement, 'Song of

the River', refers to the North Esk, which flows nearby St Leonards and in which he swam as a child, and contains a further development of the 'Hill-Song' idea already essayed in the first movement.

**5** **Earth Cry** – abridged version (1999) for orchestra

In setting out to compose the original, full version of *Earth Cry* for orchestra in 1986, Sculthorpe was torn between two quite different impulses. He'd returned home from several short trips abroad in recent years, notably to Russia and the USA in 1984, somewhat disillusioned by his experiences, and more than ever convinced that Australia was 'one of the last places on earth where one could honestly write quick and joyous music'. At first, he wanted his yet-unnamed 1986 orchestral piece to be such a work. On reflection, however, as he wrote in the original program note:

*It soon became clear that it would be dishonest of me to write music that is altogether quick and joyous. The lack of a common cause and the self-interest of many have drained [Australians] of much of our energy. A bogus national identity and its commercialisation have obscured the true breadth of our culture. Most of the jubilation, I came to feel, awaits us in the future. Perhaps we now need to attune ourselves to this continent, to listen to the cry of the earth, as the Aborigines have done for many thousands of years.*

During his last years at school in Launceston in the mid 1940s, one of his teachers, Wilfred Teniswood, had introduced him to the work of Norma Davis, one of Tasmania's early wilderness poets. Davis's first and only collection had been published in Sydney in 1943, its title poem, foremost a wartime reflection, speaking of 'the threat / Of horrors that would turn our sunshine dark', but drawing solace from the 'unconquered land'. The poem was called *Earth Cry*. Unfortunately, the young Sculthorpe never got to meet the poet. Davis died suddenly in 1945, as it happens only shortly after reading a dismissive review of her book by A.D. Hope. Hope was reportedly so chastened by the coincidence that he stopped writing reviews until the 1950s. So shortly after Max Harris was twitted over the Ern Malley hoax, poetry reviewing in Australia had become perhaps too dangerous a business!

Partly inspired by Davis's example, however, Sculthorpe's original ten-minute-long *Earth Cry* came to include moments, rare in his music, which seem to be genuinely angry. He remains committed to the work in its 1986 form, and its grappling with dire and still-present realities. However, in the 1999 abridged version, he decided to follow up his earlier impulse to produce a piece that was, throughout, 'quick and joyous', as an expression of hope for an alternative happier future outcome, appropriate too for the occasion for which it was prepared, a 1999 New Year's Eve concert by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra on Cottesloe

Beach. It consists of just two sections, the first described by the composer as 'ritualistic...suggesting Aboriginal chant and the landscape', and the second 'broadly melodious, bringing the material of the first to its consummation, and affirming my belief in the possibility of future harmony on earth.'

**6-10** **Great Sandy Island** (1998) for orchestra

Sidney Nolan began work on the first of his series of 'Mrs Fraser' paintings at Heide, outside Melbourne, in the late 1940s, thereby inaugurating one of the more fruitful thematic streams in the recent history of Australian (and indeed international) creative arts. When the paintings were shown at London's Whitechapel Galleries late in 1957, they had a galvanising effect on the expatriate Australian arts community there. For the first time, perhaps, 'expats' were given not only a reason to be proud of their Australian nationality, but a serious reason to think about returning home.

Sculthorpe arrived in the UK a year later, and spent 1959 and 1960 working toward an Oxford doctorate. Though he was aware of the impact made by Nolan's exhibition, it was not until late in 1960 that the 'Mrs Fraser' paintings were brought pointedly to his attention. Only shortly before he was due to return to Australia, Sculthorpe was introduced in London to Trafford Whitelock, an Australian and former dancer with the Kirsova Company in Sydney in the 1940s. In July 1936, the 20-year-old Brisbane-born Whitelock was Australia's first Petrouchka on the stage of Verbrugghen Hall, as a member of Louise Lightfoot and Mischa Burlakov's First Australian Ballet, predating by a slender margin the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's tour of the same ballet later that year. More sedentary of recent years, Whitelock was at that time a producer with the BBC Light Program, responsible for, among others, several series of the much-loved *Doctor Finlay's Casebook*. Whitelock introduced Sculthorpe to Joan Sutherland after a performance of *La sonnambula* at Covent Garden; on another night, at the Dorchester, Elizabeth Taylor, then about to begin work at Pinewood Studios on *Cleopatra*, joined their party. Sculthorpe also attended several parties at Whitelock's flat in Pont Street, which he later described as 'just like a film set, & with priceless antiques etc.!' Promisingly, Whitelock assured him of plenty of work in the event he wanted to write 'light music' for the BBC; but also had in mind a more serious long-term project, a radio opera based on the Nolan 'Mrs Fraser' tentatively called *The Convict and the Lady*, for which he asked Sculthorpe to think about providing the music. Sculthorpe wrote to his parents at the time that Whitelock's proposal was strictly 'between ourselves, as we don't want anyone else to have similar ideas.' Patrick White, however, had also seen Nolan's show, and in a letter to the painter in June 1958 asked about 'the woman, whose name I forget, who survived shipwreck on the coast of Australia in company with a convict. It sounds like material I could use, and one day you must tell me more about her.'

Though Whitelock was back in Australia during 1961, and visited Sculthorpe in Launceston to discuss the opera project further, nothing more came of their proposed collaboration. Mrs Fraser was still on Sculthorpe's mind in mid 1963, however, when he mentioned her as possible subject for an opera in a letter to a new friend, the Sydney-based music reviewer Curt Prerauer. By coincidence, Prerauer was also close to Patrick White, and knew that White was by now considering the Mrs Fraser story for an opera libretto he'd been asked to write by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

The key facts of the story followed on from the wreck of the ship *Stirling Castle*, returning from Sydney to London, in 1836. According to Colin MacInnes's summary for the catalogue of Nolan's 1957 exhibition:

*Mrs Fraser was a Scottish lady who was shipwrecked on what is now Fraser Island, off the Queensland Coast. She lived for six months among the aborigines, rapidly losing her clothes, until she was discovered by one Bracefell, a deserting convict who himself had hidden for ten years among the primitive Australians. The lady asked the criminal to restore her to civilization, which he agreed to do if she would promise to intercede for his free pardon from the Governor. The bargain was sealed, and the couple set off inland. At first sight of European settlement, Mrs Fraser rounded on her benefactor and threatened to deliver him up to justice if he did not immediately decamp. Bracefell returned disillusioned to the hospitable bush, and Mrs Fraser's adventures aroused such admiring interest that on her return to Europe she was able to exhibit herself at sixpence a showing in Hyde Park.*

In White's treatment of the story, Eliza Fraser became Mrs Roxburgh; White called Bracefell Masters in the libretto, and Jack Chance in the novel.

The Trust first tried unsuccessfully to interest White in working with the composer James Penberthy, and in mid 1963 White and Nolan were instead both trying to convince the English composer Benjamin Britten to take the project on, though to no avail. When White returned to Australia late that year he was still looking for a musical collaborator, and it was with this in mind that the *Sydney Morning Herald* music reviewer, Roger Covell, arranged to introduce White and Sculthorpe early in November 1963.

News of the Sculthorpe-White opera was leaked in the press by the middle of 1964, and was big news even before the official commission was announced by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. However, the collaboration itself had run aground by then, and by late in the year, having written only a few sample scenes, White chose to withdraw; he would rework his Mrs Fraser scenario into the novel *A Fringe of Leaves*. Nolan and

Sculthorpe, meanwhile, found a new collaborator in writer Alan Moorehead, who completed his Mrs Fraser libretto (with advice from Roger Covell) in 1965.

Sculthorpe originally set aside 1966, which he spent in the United States on a Harkness Fellowship, to set Moorehead's libretto to music. However, shortly after arrival he met Nolan and choreographer Robert Helpmann in New York, who persuaded him to reconsider developing the Mrs Fraser scenario not as an opera, but a ballet. By the end of that year, the ballet proposal had also been superseded. Yet despite the demise of both the opera and ballet, Eliza Fraser – the victim, the enchantress, the betrayer – was not destined to disappear from Sculthorpe's thoughts.

In Sussex over Christmas and New Year 1971-72, he read a new book, *Mrs Fraser on the Fatal Shore* by the English writer and former war hero, Michael Alexander. It briefly rekindled his interest, enough to look again at the Moorehead libretto and discuss it with a rising young English playwright, novelist and literary critic, Gabriel Josipovici. In the event, Sculthorpe persevered with another plan, which led finally to the successful completion of his long-awaited first opera, *Rites of Passage*, to his own libretto, in 1974. Meanwhile Josipovici went away to write his own dramatic treatment of the Mrs Fraser story, first produced upstairs at London's Royal Court in August 1972; Sculthorpe wrote at the time that Josipovici's *Dreams of Mrs Fraser* (directed by Robert Croucher, with Rosemary Martin in the title role, and 'sound effects' by Nick Heppel) was a 'very bizarre piece' that 'takes place mostly in a cage in Hyde Park.'

Curiously, when in 1978, four years after *Rites* and 18 years after first taking an interest in her, Sculthorpe did finally produce a work based on Mrs Fraser's story, it too was set in the 'cage' in Hyde Park from which, for sixpence, Eliza recounted her adventures for curious Londoners. This short music-theatre piece for soprano, flute and piano, *Eliza Fraser Sings* (1978), was a collaboration with Barbara Blackman and with designs by Charles Blackman.

What Sculthorpe briefly described as 'the story of a woman in two worlds, one inhabited by Aborigines, the other by white colonists' continued to have resonances in other Sculthorpe works, notably in his orchestral work *Mangrove* (1979). Among other references listed in his original program note, Sculthorpe mentioned 'Sidney Nolan's rain-forest paintings, in which Eliza Fraser and the convict Bracefell become, through love, birds and butterflies and Aboriginal graffiti'. In particular, the Eliza envisaged in *Mangrove* comes close to uttering one of the handful of finished lyrics that Patrick White produced for Sculthorpe back in 1964:

*The drops trickle down my body,  
Down between my breasts!  
The waxen, flaxen flesh of waterlilies!  
My life is springing from the skeleton of leaves!  
Where do light and water end,  
And I begin?  
O joy! O water!*

Finally, in *Great Sandy Island* (1998) for orchestra, Sculthorpe again took the opportunity to approach Eliza Fraser. Yet, while the piece derives its overall shape from her story, it is not a narrative presentation, but rather concerned with Eliza's encounters with what Sculthorpe calls 'the spirit of the landscape'. Sculthorpe recorded his own strong first impressions of the island landscape in a letter to his mother after visiting it with Alan Moorehead in 1965:

*Two old fishermen took us across [to the island], & into a great river there, with mangroves down to the water's edge, & the coast of Australia far on the horizon. The fishermen had an ancient truck, & drove us across the Is., to the Pacific, in this... There were things that we had never seen before; thousands of ibis wading in lagoons, enormous sea-eagles, rain-forest & tree-eating trees 200 feet high, & rain-forest almost like night but for thin slivers of sunlight, the most incredible and beautiful bird-life, a beach 80 miles long with the Pacific rolling in on it, packs of dingos, & wild horses, sands like the Sahara & shining white, rotting ships wrecked on the reefs & driven back to the beach, midden heaps with native stone implements, great salt lagoons all teeming with fish...*

While the opening movement, 'The Sea Coast', recalls the 1836 shipwreck, it is essentially an evocation of the Pacific coast itself, successor of a kind to the fourth movement of Sculthorpe's first major orchestral work, *The Fifth Continent* (1963). Entitled 'Pacific', this was introduced by a narration from Chapter 17 of D.H. Lawrence's semi-autobiographical Australian novel *Kangaroo*:

*...the shore was his great solace, for all that. The huge white rollers of the Pacific breaking in a white, soft, snow-rushing wall, while the thin spume flew back to sea like a combed mane, combed back by the strong, cold land-wind... To be alone, mindless and memoryless between the sea, under the sombre wall-front of Australia. To be alone with a long, wide shore and land, heartless, soulless. As alone and as absent and as present as an aboriginal dark on the sand in the sun... That was the perpetual refrain at the back of his mind. To be soulless and alone, by the Southern Ocean, in Australia.*

Emblematically, the second movement 'The Boro-ground' represents Eliza's encounter with the local tribespeople, without attempting to dramatise, or even speculate on the nature of their dealings with one another. According to some accounts, Eliza was treated as a slave, whereas in the corresponding 'Corroboree' movement of the Sculthorpe–Blackman's *Eliza Fraser Sings*, she is accorded the status of a goddess-spirit, a 'She-ghost' in a ritual mating dance with the 'He-ghost' Bracefell. As in Nolan's paintings, almost all the story treatments set the consummation of Eliza and Bracewell's relationship in a rainforest love-scene, corresponding here to the third movement, 'The Rain-forest', though Patrick White's lyric quoted above suggests that perhaps the real consummation is between Eliza and the nature-spirits alone. Despite Sculthorpe's own long history of involvement with the Mrs Fraser story, he made no conscious borrowings in the music from previous treatments, with the possible exception of the opening of this third movement, recalling the similar 'seagull-song' music in *Mangrove*, and the dark cello-dominated colouring of that work's string writing.

Paradoxically, the fourth movement, 'The Garrison', standing for both Eliza's return to 'civilisation' and her betrayal of Bracefell, is not presented here as some dramatic denouement, but as a gradual return. Musically, the distant trumpet calls and side drum figures of the opening (transformations of ideas present in the first movement) become more undeniably joyous in effect as the movement progresses. Significantly, however, in Sculthorpe's reading of the story, it is the spirit of the island itself that continues to resonate. Thus the final movement, 'Dune Dreaming', mainly carries forward musical ideas presented earlier, notably from the second movement the insistent drumming, and the falling pentatonic figures which Sculthorpe has likened to the 'tumbling strains' of Aboriginal chant.

**III** **New Norcia** (2000) for brass and percussion

As a clan, Sculthorpe's ancestors on his father's side were practical, 'can-do' people, little given to metaphysical reflection. His maternal line, the Moorhouses, were another matter. Though not conventionally religious, from them he inherited a sense of the numinous, a questing after 'spirits', a love of coincidences, and a firm belief in the powers of association. At Launceston Church Grammar School in the early 1940s, one of his favourite places was its neo-Gothic Anglican chapel. He sang in the chapel choir, and has a special recollection of singing psalms, sometimes even in Latin, to simple Gregorian plainsong. Thus, when he was commissioned to compose a work for the school's sesquicentenary in 1996, he produced a setting for boys' voices of Psalm 150 *Laudate Dominum*, based loosely on the Gregorian eighth psalm-tone.

The present work, for brass and percussion, is an arrangement of that 1996 choral setting, in turn inspired by one of those series of coincidences that so often attract Sculthorpe's attention. It was, in fact, specially written in response to a last-minute request for a short 'brass filler' for this recording by the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. When Sculthorpe was a university student at the Melbourne Conservatorium in the late 1940s, he bought the score of a mass by Dom Stephen Moreno (1889-1953), the Music Director of the Spanish Benedictine Monastery at New Norcia, northeast of Perth in Western Australia. Recently, he had found out more about Moreno's life, and was struck by the fact that at the same time as he himself had been singing in his Anglican school choir in Launceston, Moreno had trained local Aboriginal boys at New Norcia both to sing for the Catholic Mass and to play in a brass band there. Long before Moreno, one of the community's founders, Dom Rosendo Salvado, had directed the music, and a letter (in Spanish) dating from as early as 1878 mentions that 'our boys and girls sang in two parts the *Laudate Dominum*, as they do every time they come to Mass.' All these facts came together to persuade him to re-set his vocal *Laudate* for brass, as *New Norcia*. The work consists of five soloistic 'chant' sections, each of which is followed by a refrain-like section for the full ensemble, in which the percussion joins in regular drumming patterns intended to represent the traditional tribal music of New Norcia's Aboriginal children.

**12-15 Quamby** (2000) for two flutes, two horns and strings

Also specially prepared for this recording, *Quamby* takes a more sombre look at the historical collision of Aboriginal and Western cultures in Sculthorpe's native Tasmania. It is a reworking for small orchestra of his String Quartet No. 14 (1998), a piece composed out of recollections of childhood, and his 'feelings about mountainous landscapes of northern Tasmania'.

Like many Tasmanians who grew up in the 1930s and 1940s, Sculthorpe does not recall being aware of meeting a single Aboriginal person during his childhood, nor expecting to. The much-rehearsed line in those days was that tribal Aboriginals had all 'disappeared' from the island in colonial times, a few survivors being shipped 'for protection' to Flinders Island only to die there of imported ailments like the common cold. Time had veiled even outright acts of genocide in legendary respectability. On fishing trips to the central highlands, Sculthorpe's father told him the legend of Quamby Bluff, where, in the previous century, native inhabitants were said to have been hunted down and herded over the precipice by colonial troops. Their death cries, 'Save me', or 'Quamby', were supposed to have given the spot its name. It was a generic story, a vestige of colonial guilt dressed up with a spot of sentimentality and perpetuated, paradoxically, by generations of the

descendants of the first white settlers for home consumption. Written histories record no massacre on that particular spot, though the story bears a close resemblance to an attested massacre at Cape Grim in 1828, while Quamby was elsewhere reported to be the name of a tribal leader shot in 1832. The legend caught Sculthorpe's interest as a child, and in part inspired his attempts, as a young adult in the 1950s, to document any information he could uncover about the musical culture of the Tasmanian tribes.

The two outer movements, 'Prelude' and 'At Quamby Bluff', are both marked *Inquieto* and both are characterised by what Sculthorpe described as the 'especially important' questioning interval of a tritone. Only after completing this music, directly related in his mind to the legend, did he realise that it reminded him of the famous question motive 'Muss es sein?' ('Must it be?') in the final movement of Beethoven's last quartet, doubly fitting since that very question seemed to him to be raised by the Quamby legend itself. The second movement, 'In the Valley', also opens with the same tritone figure, but here slower and more solemn. The third movement, 'On High Hills' (recalling also the village of White Hills) is a 'calm and lyrical' recollection of his own childhood. Close to the opening is an episode of bird-song from the strings (similar to that in *Great Sandy Island*). The flutes and first violins then share as its main melody a tune very similar to that used in the 'Hills' movement of *My Country Childhood*. Again, if not perhaps dating quite from his school days (as he said in his original program note), it is traceable to his adolescent association of the tune and mood of 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' with the Tasmanian highlands. After returning to the questioning music of the work's opening, the final movement includes at its centre a more reflective episode (*Come preghiera*, 'like a prayer') with a hymn-like tune for the flutes, in fact closely related in many of its features (including being in 5/4 time) with the second movement of *My Country Childhood*. A short coda is intended to bring 'some resolution at the close'.

**Graeme Skinner**



## Adelaide Chamber Singers

Artistic Director and Conductor – Carl Crossin

Adelaide Chamber Singers has been an energetic, innovative and passionate contributor to music making in Adelaide for over twenty years. Formed in 1985 by Carl Crossin, ACS comprises some of Adelaide's best and most experienced ensemble singers, some of whom are also soloists and/or conductors in their own right. The ensemble has built a substantial reputation wherever it has performed – locally, nationally and internationally – and is widely regarded as one of Australia's leading chamber choirs.

Adelaide Chamber Singers has performed at a number of Australia's major festivals, including the Melbourne and Perth Festivals, the Barossa Music Festival and Choralfest, and has participated in almost every Adelaide Festival of Arts since 1988.

Although essentially a chamber ensemble of between ten and sixteen singers, ACS occasionally augments its membership up to 40 singers in order to continue its highly successful relationship with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. These collaborations have included a diverse range of music by Bach, Handel, Mozart, Cherubini, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Copland, Pärt and Messiaen, as well as the world premieres of Peter Sculthorpe's *Requiem* and Ross Edwards' *Symphony No. 4 Star Chant*, also recorded with the ASO for ABC Classics. The choir made its film debut in 2003 in *Human Touch* by Australian director Paul Cox. The film screened in arthouse cinemas around Australia during 2005 and has recently been released on DVD.

Adelaide Chamber Singers has toured Britain, Norway, Singapore, Japan and the USA and in 2006 undertook its sixth international tour, with performances at festivals in the United States, Britain and Canada, where the ensemble was given the 'Choir of the World at Kathaumixw 2006' Award at the International Choral Kathaumixw. ACS has also represented Australia at the Asia South Pacific Symposium on Choral Music in Singapore in 2001 and the 6th World Symposium on Choral Music in the USA in 2002.

### Sopranos

Christie Anderson  
Greta Bradman  
Emma Häll  
Emma Horwood

Fiona Linn  
Sheila McCarthy  
Alexandra Stubberfield

### Altos

Penny Dally  
Carolyn Gale  
Alice Keath  
Annie Parsons

Anna Pope  
Jennifer Tranter  
Callie Wood

## Tenors

Christopher Guntner  
Andrew Linn  
Bernard Mageean  
Martin Penhale

James Pratt  
Robert Macfarlane  
David Watts

## Basses

Edward Ananian-Cooper  
Thomas Flint  
David Hayton  
Alan McKie

Lachlan Scott  
Jonathan Webb  
Timothy Wilson

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## William Barton

William Barton is widely recognised as one of Australia's finest traditional didjeridu players and a leading didjeridu player in the classical world after growing up surrounded by many forms of Indigenous and contemporary music. He is also a teacher and composer for the instrument, committed to enhancing the instrument's profile to a wider classical audience and other music genres.

Born in Mt Isa, William Barton was taught the instrument at an early age by his uncle, an Elder of the Wannji, Lardil and Kalkadunga tribes of Western Queensland, and has appeared at music festivals around the world including the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts, Queensland Biennial, the Australian Chamber Orchestra's Huntington Festival, the Edmonton Festival, the Estonian and Colorado Music Festivals, and the Amelia Island and Madison Festivals in Georgia, USA. He was Australia's first didjeridu Artist in Residence, with The Queensland Orchestra in 2003, and has performed Sculthorpe's *Earth Cry* with that orchestra in Australia and in Tokyo, Japan. He was the soloist in the world premiere of Peter Sculthorpe's *Requiem* at the 2004 Adelaide Festival and again in the UK premiere, at the Lichfield Festival with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

In recent seasons he has performed at Gallipoli for the 90th Anniversary of the ANZAC landing, and made his debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2006 he toured Germany and Switzerland with the Queensland Ballet, performed with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville, and gave the world premiere of Liza Lim's *The Compass* with the Sydney Symphony; in January 2007 he performs that work again in Germany with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

He is the featured artist on the ABC Classics release *Songs of Sea and Sky*, an album of works by Peter Sculthorpe for didjeridu and orchestra, nominated for Best Classical Album at the 2004 ARIA Awards.

## Arvo Volmer

Arvo Volmer took up his four-year appointment as Music Director of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in January 2004.

He began his professional conducting career with the Estonian National Opera in 1985, and made his debut with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra in 1987, becoming their Associate Conductor (1989) and Music Director (1993-2001). In 2005 he concluded a long tenure as Music Director of the Oulu Symphony Orchestra, a position he had held since 1994. He became Artistic Director of the Estonian National Opera in August 2004.

Arvo Volmer's success at the 1989 Nicolai Malko Competition in Copenhagen launched an international career that has seen him conduct almost all the symphony orchestras in Scandinavia, including the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestras, Malmö and Gothenburg National Symphony Orchestras and Stockholm's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also conducted orchestras in the UK, France, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Israel and Iceland.

Recent highlights have included concerts with the Orchestre National de France, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Berliner Symphoniker, Russian Philharmonic Orchestra of Moscow, and the St Petersburg, Dortmund, Jena and Münster Philharmonic Orchestras.

As an opera conductor, Arvo Volmer has worked frequently with the Bolshoi Theatre, Finnish National Opera, Norwegian Opera, Oulu Opera and Malmö Music Theatre. Recordings include the complete symphonies of Eduard Tubin and complete orchestral works of Leevi Madetoja.

He made his Australian debut in 2001 and has conducted the Adelaide, Tasmanian, West Australian, Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and The Queensland Orchestra, as well as directing courses for Symphony Services Australia's Conductor Development Program.

## James Judd

James Judd was appointed Music Director of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in 1999. Since then he has brought the NZSO international exposure through appearances at the 2005 BBC Proms in London, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan, the 2003 Asia International Performing Arts Festival in Osaka, and the 2000 Sydney Olympic Arts Festival. His recordings with the NZSO have received international recognition, most recently his CD of music by Leonard Bernstein (Editor's Choice in *Gramophone*, February 2004) and *Lilburn: The Three Symphonies*, which reached No. 4 on the UK's Classical CD Chart published in the BBC *Music Magazine*.

A graduate of London's Trinity College of Music, James Judd came to international attention as the Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra. Later, Claudio Abbado appointed him Associate Music Director of the European Community Youth Orchestra. He has conducted the Berlin and Israel Philharmonic Orchestras, and made guest appearances with the major orchestras of Europe.

James Judd held the position of Music Director of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra for 14 years, during which time their recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 1 was named Recording of the Month in *Stereophile*, received the Gold Medal from France's *Diapason* and was awarded the *Toblacher Komponierhauschen* at the Salzburg Festival from the Gustav Mahler Society.

He co-founded the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and appears as a guest conductor with the major orchestras in North America.

## Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

With its reputation for youthful vitality and superb artistry, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra plays a central role at the heart of the South Australian community.

In 2006, the ASO proudly celebrates its 70th anniversary season under the leadership of Music Director and Chief Conductor, Arvo Volmer. It is the largest performing arts organisation in South Australia, each year performing over 100 concerts across a diverse musical spectrum. The ASO provides the orchestral support for the State Opera of South Australia and for the Australian Ballet and Opera Australia, whenever they perform in South Australia, and is the most prolific contributor to the biennial Adelaide Festival.

The ASO's commitment to artistic excellence has also strengthened its reputation within the international community. The ASO won world acclaim in 1998 with Australia's first production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle. This monumental project was repeated in 2004 under the baton of Israeli conductor Asher Fisch, and was described by the critics as 'one of the finest occasions in the history of Australian music'.

The ASO reaches out to all sections of the community with music experiences that are accessible, affordable, informal and entertaining. The popular annual tradition of Santos Symphony under the Stars, the outdoor Alfresco concerts, daytime Tea and Symphony Series, the innovative Education Program, ASO on Tour, and the entertaining Showcase Series are just some of the diverse concerts bringing music to South Australians each year.

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