

OUR COMPOSERS

Douglas Lilburn described as “the elder statesman of New Zealand music” and the “grandfather of New Zealand music”, died peacefully at his home in Wellington on 6th June 2001.

Douglas Lilburn composed his *Seventeen Pieces for Guitar* between 1962 and 1970 for local guitarist Ronald Burt. They are amongst the last of his works for acoustic instruments and can be heard as providing a transition to his works in the electronic medium. He also drew inspiration from earlier works: No. 2 is based on the penultimate song in his cycle *Sings Harry* to words by NZ poet Denis Glover:

*“Who plucked at me plucked
holly,
But I pluck the flowers of the
sea,
sings Harry”*

The pieces are not intended to be performed in sequence, and can be performed in any grouping.

PETER LEASK

Peter Leask was born in 1977 in Lower Hutt, New Zealand. He began formal piano tuition at the age of seven and at fifteen he started learning the guitar, appreciating the wide variety of styles it is capable of. In 1995 he studied classical guitar with Matthew Marshall at the Conservatorium of Music in Wellington, graduating in 1998. At this time he was performing regularly in and arranging for *Totally Plucked - The Wellington Guitar Quartet* and *Tango Vivo*, a tango band quartet. An arm injury in 2000 directed Peter's energy into composition. In 2002 he studied composition and orchestration with John Psathas and Jack Body. Most recently, Peter has continued his interest in South American music by studying the improvisational music of Baden Powell.

Peter's music has performed in concerts throughout New Zealand and on Concert FM and Radio New Zealand. His piece, *Aatidahlge* was recorded by Owen Moriarty on Owen's self-titled album in 2003. His music has been work-shopped by The New Zealand String Quartet and his piece *Gat Orc* was played by The U.S.C. Guitar Ensemble directed by William Kanengiser and Scott Tennant.

HOMAGE TO RODRIGO (2001)

World Premiere

PETER LEASK (b. 1977)

Rodrigo's compositions served to propel Peter Leask into the world of classical music. A world that had been totally closed to him prior to hearing his solo guitar works.

Homage was conceptualised in New Zealand on a musical pilgrimage with some friends to the isolated township

of Takaka. It then travelled via Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo to end up in Wellington. I was lucky enough to have been the piece's travelling companion for most of the way. This particular journey has been integral to my personal musical development as it taught me all sorts of valuable lessons relating to music. If a musical problem was too difficult to solve I would leave it for a while, sometimes over a period of months, before a solution was found. Sometimes this answer took hours of hard graft, but mostly it would unravel of it's own accord. In these months of not working on *Homage* I feel that I grew musically, obtaining the skills and instinct required to compose the next passage of the piece.

I have always revelled in the immediacy of Rodrigo's, at times, macabre melodic and harmonic writing in *Invocation and Dance* and *Three Spanish Pieces*. These pieces are what formed the inspiration behind *Homage*.

(Note by Peter Leask)

THREE SAD WALTZES (1991)

Andante con rubato

Andante

Moderato

KENNETH YOUNG (b. 1955)

Kenneth Young is one of New Zealand's leading composer. Various commissions from Chamber Music New Zealand, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand International Festival of Arts and Radio New Zealand have been performed nationwide and also in the United States, Europe and Australia. Recent highlights include his Piano Concerto premiered by the Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra in August 2004, a *Trio* for trumpet, horn and trombone written for the Talisker Trio and premiered in a Chamber Music NZ tour in June 2004 and he has also recently completed a Concerto for euphonium.

In addition to his work as a composer, Kenneth Young has established himself as a performer and conductor – a passionate and skilled interpreter of the romantic and 20th century repertoire is backed by twenty years of practical orchestral playing as principal tuba in the NZ Symphony Orchestra, giving him a specialised rapport with his colleagues. As a conductor he has received recognition for his recordings of New Zealand orchestral music including a CD of his own orchestral works, and works of Edwin Carr and Gareth Farr, as well as opera excerpts with the New Zealand tenor, Keith Lewis. his most recent CD, *New Zealand Landscapes* features the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra playing works by five New Zealand composers including Lyell Cresswell and Ross Harris.

Kenneth Young has written a number of solo and chamber works for guitar. *Three Sad Waltzes* were written in 1991 at the request of guitarist and

academic Dr. Suzanne Court and are published by Pro Arte Publications in a collection of guitar works by New Zealand composers called *Guitar Aotearoa*.

“MATARIKI” SUITE FOR GUITAR (2005)

World Premiere

Introduction

Tapuanuku

Tapuarangi

Waiti

Waita

Waipunarangi

Ururangi

MICHAEL HOGAN (b. 1971)

Born in 1971 in Christchurch, New Zealand, Michael Hogan began playing music at the age of four with the recorder and then the piano at seven years of age, followed by sojourns on the banjo and drums until discovering the guitar at the age of 12. This instrument, so close to the human heart, became an obsession which has continued throughout Michael's life.

From the beginning of his musical education Michael showed intrinsic talent for rhythm and ensemble playing and was soon giving public performances, the first at the age of five.

Composition has always been an innate presence in Michael's life, manifesting itself in ensemble works, song writing, improvisations and full scale writing for such diverse genres as bluegrass, rock, jazz and classical.

“When I compose music, my ultimate aim is always to reflect my environment. Beginning with the environment inside my head, which is, in turn, influenced by the environment around me. If I can reflect this with honesty and integrity then I feel that my job is complete. What the audience hears is its own business.”

This obsession with the environment is no random fixation. Michael's first memory is of Cyclone Tracy which devastated Darwin, Australia on Christmas Eve 1974, killing 50 people. Michael was just three years old, but it spurred a need to understand the elements. By the age of 12 Michael was already journeying alone into the wilds of the New Zealand bush and by the time he started his first job as a bushman at 18, he was a competent survivalist. Since then Michael has worked as a forester, often living on-site and the tough beauty of the wilderness forms a decisive part of his music.

Although moving into true composition relatively late in his musical life, Michael has produced works of significance, such as the multi-media production *“Toru”* and many solo guitar work. Michael currently resides on the rugged West Coast of New Zealand's South Island and is working on a modern political tragedy.

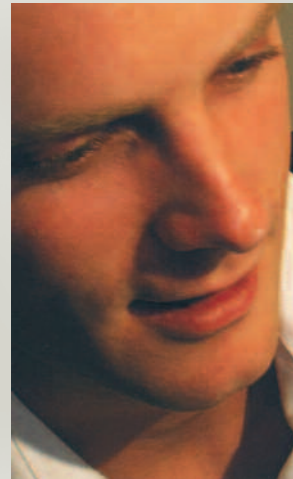
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Michael Hogan (b. 1971)



Douglas Lilburn (1915-2001)



Peter Leask (b. 1977)



Kenneth Young (b. 1955)