



Who we are, and why we recorded this album:

Established 2012, the Adelaide Wind Orchestra was founded by alumni of the Elder Conservatorium Wind Orchestra who sought to continue and progress the legacy of that ensemble's distinguished director, the late Robert 'Bob' Hower (1953-2019). Building a reputation as one of Australia's leading symphonic wind ensembles over the ensuing decade, the Adelaide Wind Orchestra strives to promote works by both emerging and established Australian composers, with a special focus on supporting South Australian composition in partnership with the Elder Conservatorium of Music.

This album, the first by the ensemble, connects two of Australia's most respected composers—Sydney based Matthew Hindson (collaboratively with electro-pop musician Paul Mac) and David Stanhope—with three leading voices of the next generation—Martin Cheney, Holly Harrison and David John Lang—in a celebration of Australian music for the wind ensemble.

We wanted to acknowledge the huge contributions of the players of the Adelaide Wind Orchestra, our collaborating composers (Martin Cheney, David John Lang, Holly Harrison, Matthew Hindson, Paul Mac, David Stanhope, Natalie Williams), Ray Thomas - our recording technician, Lachlan Bramble - our producer, and Bryan Griffiths - our music director. In addition, the Elder Conservatorium staff who have supported us. Charles Bodman Rae, Martin Victory, Amanda Grigg, Luke Dollman, Anna Goldsworthy



Track listing:

1. Holly Harrison—Splinter (2020)
- 2-4. David Stanhope—Folksongs for Band, Suite no. 3 (1991)
 - i. Droylsden Wakes
 - ii. Lord Bateman
 - iii. Three ships and Lisbon
- 5-9. Martin Cheney—Tangent: Symphony for Wind Orchestra (2021)
 - i. a thought
 - ii. to distract
 - iii. to forget
 - iv. to remind
 - v. a memory
10. David John Lang—Fanfare for a Warrior (2018)
11. Paul Mac and Matthew Hindson—Requiem for a City (2015)

1. Holly Harrison—Splinter (2020)

Programme notes by Holly Harrison

In this context, the word 'Splinter' means to break into small, sharp fragments, and refers to the way in which the piece is structured as a type of mosaic or stylistic patchwork. Many sections of the piece feature instrument sounds breaking or distorting in some way – whether this be in the extremes of register, wild glissandos, or crunchy chords. The other meaning of 'splinter' is as a foreign object within the body. This acts as a metaphor for my experimentation with some lighter, delicate moments, which are not always part of my musical soundworld.

2-4. David Stanhope—Folksongs for Band, Suite no. 3 (1991)

- i. Droylsden Wakes
- ii. Lord Bateman
- iii. Three ships and Lisbon

Programme notes by David Stanhope

Dedicated to the memory of Percy Grainger, all my folksong suites use folk-songs in a variation or passacaglia-like form. The original folksongs come from Great Britain. The titles of the 3rd Suite are: 1. Droylsden Wakes - a simple verse and chorus setting with rich romantic harmonies; 2. Lord Bateman - a fast-moving and virtuosic multi-metre setting; 3. Three Ships & Lisbon - a sound-picture of a group of troubadours approaching a coastal town, the Three Ships melody eventually overwhelming their own tunes.

5-9. Martin Cheney—Tangent: Symphony for Wind Orchestra (2021)

- i. a thought
- ii. to distract
- iii. to forget
- iv. to remind
- v. a memory

While not strictly programmatic in nature, I hear Tangent as a kind of musical analogy of distraction and getting carried away with oneself (no doubt influenced on some subconscious level by my own experience of writing the piece). The more I developed and played with the melodic and harmonic themes across the five movements, the more I began to personify the orchestra as someone who is easily side-tracked, trying in earnest to articulate a simple idea amidst a flurry of interruptions and diversions. Once I couldn't shake that image, finishing and orchestrating the piece became a great deal of fun (for the most part). In some moments, the orchestra is the thought. Sometimes, it is the tangent. At other times, it is both simultaneously. The listener can decide whether the original idea or pervasive distractions prevail, but hopefully, the conversation is more interesting than the outcome.



I. a thought

A solo clarinet initially outlines a thought, echoed by a solo trumpet, as if to confirm. The whole orchestra then establishes this theme accompanied by thick, descending harmonies until the end of this short prelude is punctuated by an unstable ellipsis in the French horns...

II. to distract

The marimba and clarinets waste no time interrupting, abruptly upsetting the staid opening, although fleeting restatements of the original thought can still be heard, albeit without the subtlety of the first movement. An incessant ostinato of staccato fifths is pervasive throughout the movement, over which the alto saxophone and trumpet first introduce the primary melodic theme of Tangent – the distraction.

The various instrumental families gradually layer on top of each other, the orchestra eventually confirming its preference for this more rambunctious approach. While a solo oboe briefly tries to bring a sense of calm (even though it seems to slightly misjudge the key), the orchestra ultimately rejects this idea, opting instead to return to the more rollicking spirit of the tangent. The second movement ends with a handful of solo woodwind instruments reiterating a fragment of the distraction theme, ending with the piccolo, who nearly forgets what it was going to say.

III. to forget

The third movement begins with the saxophones establishing a harmonically distorted two-chord waltz – certainly not one that you would dance to. The first section is uncomfortably sparse, with the flutes, oboes, piano and clarinets attempting their own brief interjections until the brass, lower woodwinds and percussion join, finally giving stylistic context by way of a more conventional waltz, even though there is still something very much off about it. After a second, unaccompanied statement by the flutes (which is a fragment of the distraction in disguise), a solo bassoon introduces the third movement's main theme of forgetfulness - a rambling, chromatic melody that can't quite decide which of the two chords it belongs to. A number of conflicting and contrasting sequences then ensue, each heralded in one way or another by the chromaticism introduced by the bassoon. The orchestra seems to become increasingly aware that it has forgotten the distraction theme, which at this point has superseded the original thought. A feeling of increasing angst begins to simmer throughout an extended section of irregularly grouped time signatures, until one final, explosive reiteration of the waltz chords. Luckily, the flutes have not forgotten.

IV. to remind

An atmospheric percussion soundscape commences, with the bowed vibraphone introducing fragments of what will eventually become this movement's primary melodic content. An expressive piano solo introduces the main theme in its entirety - a simple, poignant melody that also integrates a return of the distraction motif first introduced in the second movement. The marimba and vibraphone then join with a restrained, syncopated ostinato that begins a long, slow burn of interweaving fragments of the theme, beginning with a solo flute. The texture gradually thickens as more instruments join the polyphony and the upper woodwinds swirl, ebb and flow above. The movement reaches its climax with a progression of colourful, bittersweet harmonies, played by the whole orchestra. A few more melodic fragments begin to surface before the wall of sound suddenly dies away, leaving only the piano, marimba and vibraphone. There seem to be no melodies left.

V. a memory

Without warning, the brass reintroduce the fifths featured in the second movement, but this time transposed into two contrasting keys, juxtaposed directly alongside each other and given the freedom to move melodically in parallel. All previous themes appear to have been forgotten in favour of this brand-new, high-spirited idea. Before long, this riotous mood gives way to a pulsating texture with a comparatively slow harmonic rhythm, over which a solo trombone and French horn remind us of the original distraction theme, but now more sustained, regretful and almost mournful. The orchestra seems to gradually recall its collective decision from the second movement, culminating in a near-exact recapitulation of its peak, now



only containing momentary hints of the harmonic progression that originated in the prelude. As the piece appears to be drawing to a close, the orchestra draws us back into the brashness of this final movement's opening, but this time allowing it to sit side-by-side with the distraction theme. In a last ditch effort, we hear the French horns repeatedly remind us of the ellipsis from the end of movement one, before the piece suddenly thunders to its violent conclusion.

10. David John Lang—Fanfare for a Warrior (2018)

Programme notes by David John Lang

Before they became musical, the instruments of the wind orchestra made themselves useful on the battlefield. There's nothing like a battalion of drums and trumpets to stir the soul as you march towards death or glory. You don't want to be hearing the delicate whimper of a violin while the enemy charges toward you and flaming arrows whistle overhead – you want crashing cymbals, baying horns! This fanfare is a battle cry. It's in the tradition of the call-and-response chants known as military cadences, in which a leader yells out short, barely-musical phrases and the soldiers shout them back. It's an effective way to keep in step and to get pumped up for some strenuous physical activity – so, good for musicians as well! It sounds all the more terrifying when you don't know the language, so I'll let you in on the secret: all the rhythms you hear can be matched to the words of the famous "Armour of God" passage in St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. "Stand firm then!"

11. Paul Mac and Matthew Hindson—Requiem for a City (2015)

Programme notes by Paul Mac and Matthew Hindson

Paul Mac writes: Music is about freedom. All good cultural movements occur on the fringes where ratbaggery, a sense of mischief, and new vistas of visions are found and formed into newly created genres. Techno is most definitely an example of this. It is always forward looking, where new sounds, rhythms, atmospheres and ideas are continually being discovered in some kind of international dialogue from the African-American straight and gay club lands of Detroit, and Chicago, the technical / conceptual response from Germany, the continual invention of new instruments from Japan (such as the Roland TR-808,909 and 303 etc) and the cultural revolution of illegal parties in warehouses and fields and the ultimate crossover of this music going Top 40 in the UK. It's always been an exciting adventure for me.

In 2014, I was fortunate enough to receive a Fellowship from the Australia Council for the Arts. This allowed me the time to work on a wider range of compositional projects than I can normally achieve whilst still eating at the same time. One of these goals was to embark on a classical collaboration with Matthew Hindson. We both have a love of Techno, and whatever it is that you define as "Classical". I bring the synthesisers and chords, and Matthew brings the orchestration and an over-arching compositional technique that was a master class for me. It was a weekly buzz for both of us to meet up and see where we could go, applying Techno tropes to a Wind Band.

Requiem For A City is my statement against the Lock Out Laws and the cultural squeeze that is currently occurring in Sydney because of them.

After The Imperial Hotel was closed down recently, I felt so sad for the current state of Techno culture in Sydney. I lost my job/income, as did all of the bar staff and Drag/ Performance artists. Try to explain the current nanny state laws to a visitor from Berlin. Eg, you have to be there by 1.30, you can't walk up a staircase with a drink (even if it's in plastic), you can't drink and smoke at the same time, smoke four metres away from the entrance (but not after 1.30am or you are ejected from the venue), you can't eat and smoke at the same time. No whisky on its own: it has to be diluted with a mixer etc. If you want to meet your friends at that other party later- forget it.



I'm fully aware of drunken violence, and the sad events that led to the introduction of these, some would say, draconian laws, and I don't smoke so I love having smoke free areas, but it came as a revelation one morning as I was riding my bike up Oxford St. in Sydney, that late night mainstay Olympic Yeeros had closed. This was the cultural equivalent of the gas cylinder at the BBQ becoming empty, and there is absolutely no chance of a refill!!!!!!
It's OVER!!!!!!!

Anyway, Requiem For A City is my humble prayer to a very First World Problem. But, any music culture is important, and should be respected and nurtured. I was trying to capture the joy, melancholy and triumph of the situation.
Forever forward!

Matthew Hindson writes:

I have long been a fan of Paul Mac's work as a composer, DJ and electronic music artist. I have also long been a fan of electronic dance music, dating right back to "Ride on Time" in 1989.

The opportunity to collaborate with one of Australia's foremost DJs was an opportunity too good to miss, and particularly to write for the centenary of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (which has undergone its own renaissance in recent years, embracing popular music as a valid form of musical expression.)

My last piece of electronic dance music was written in January 1990, and so it was fascinating to work with Paul on this piece in a truly collaborative way 25 years later, in 2015. Paul's sense of harmonic progression and rhythmic layering is extremely musical. I helped with the large-scale sense of structure and direction. We decided on the orchestration along the way, then I entered it all into notation format and added various subtleties along the way.

This is a unique work in many respects. Apparently there is nothing else like it in the wind symphony world. It's testament to Paul Mac's skill and intuition that we chose to write for this most incredible of ensembles, the wind symphony, and great that we managed to create something new and different in the process.

Performers:

Adelaide Wind Orchestra is a collective of instrumentalists from Adelaide, South Australia. As this album was recorded from 2020 – 2023, there were a significant number of involved players. Please enquire with awo@awo.org.au for exact player information.