

Programme

Padma in Meditation (1988) by Akira Nishimura

Sudhana's Steps 1 & 2* (2013) by Phil Treloar

Pashupati (2009) by Michael Askill

Sudhana's Steps 3 & 4* (2013) by Phil Treloar

Inward Spiral (2002) by Michael Askill

Sudhana's Steps 5 & 6* (2013) by Phil Treloar

* the playing order of *Sudhana's Steps* will be decided shortly before the concert.

The Artists

Soloists - Sudhana's Steps:

Vanessa Tomlinson

Tom O'Kelly

Nozomi Omote

Gary France (courtesy of the Canberra School of Music)

Callum Farquharson

BaDaBoom (directed by Michael Askill):

Tsoof Baras

Tim Ricketts

Caleb Colledge

Anna Kho

Rachel Western

Tracie Comber

Jamee Seeto

Macaulay Merrett

Special Guests:

Rebecca Lloyd-Jones

Cameron Kennedy

Programme Notes

Padma in Meditation (1988)

This is one of my favourite pieces from Akira Nishimura for tuned percussion instruments. Tonight this piece is intended as a meditative prelude to the journey taken by the Buddhist pilgrim, Sudhana – the subject of Phil Treloar's *Sudhana's Steps*.

– Michael Askill

Sudhana's Steps, 1 - 6 (2013)

Phil Treloar

In an extensive career devoted to creative pursuit the composer/performer, Phil Treloar, has addressed himself to the problem concerning relationships as these are found at the intersection of notated music-composition and improvisation. In 1987 he coined the term Collective Autonomy to signify this endeavor.

Born in Sydney, Australia, his creative journey led to Kanazawa, Japan, with this still quite traditional city becoming his home in 1992. Increasingly since the late 1980s, a growing understanding of Buddhist life and practice has become intrinsic to Treloar's expression. In recent years greater access to the exchange and sharing of his creative ideas has been opened up with the advent of Feeling to Thought, an independent record label established for the purpose of documenting his research and collaborations in Collective Autonomy.

Sudhana's Steps

Sudhana's Steps is the result of a commission with a 'communal base' conceived by Tom O'Kelly. In collaboration with Phil Treloar, Tom has been entirely responsible for its organisation and coordination, making an appeal to Australian timpanists to support its communal philosophy with performance and financial commitment.

A Word on the Six Titles

The six titles that comprise *Sudhana's Steps* derive from Buddhist scriptures. Five of these pieces are to be included in the fifty-three works I am currently writing that, when completed, will constitute the Sudhana Cycle. Sudhana is the protagonist from the Gandavyuha Sutra who encounters a series of fifty-three spiritual benefactors on his path to enlightenment, with each benefactor teaching him an aspect of what it means to be an enlightening being. The other title, *Priyadarasana*, derives from chapter twenty-four of The *Lotus Sutra*. In order to develop each piece with some form of reference to the titles origin I have extrapolated semantic content from the textual source to the musical domain.

The titles and an indication of their meaning follow:

ASHA: a female devotee

VIDVAN: The Knower; he is indomitable

UTPALABHUTI: a perfumer

ANANYAGAMIN: He Who Proceeds Directly

SURENDRABHA: Goddess; daughter of the God, Smrtimati

PRIYADARSHANA: Joy to Behold; an extremely long period of time

- Phil Treloar

Pashupati: The Burning Ghats From Three Places in Kathmandu (2009)

Pashupatinath is the main Hindu holy place in Kathmandu on the banks of the Bagmati River. Platforms on the riverbank are used for cremations. When I visited this site in 2009, the Bagmati was almost dry but some pockets of water were enough for children to bathe and families to wash clothes while monkeys wandered, cows gathered and smoke drifted gently into the sky.

- Michael Aksill

Inward Spiral from Spirals (2002)

Inward Spiral uses simple rhythmic layering based on the Fibonacci series. Instrumentation includes gongs, singing bowls, bass drum and woodblocks to create a sense of time suspension within a very strict linear, time-based framework.

The spoken text is from 'Mr Palomar' by Italo Calvino: "If time has to end, it can be described, instant by instant, and each instant, when described, expands so that its end can no longer be seen."

- Michael Askill



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