



# LIMELIGHT

AUSTRALIA'S CLASSICAL MUSIC AND ARTS MAGAZINE



Limelight Magazine > News > Sculthorpe's last 'Postcards' to get a hearing in London

NEWS - CLASSICAL MUSIC | ORCHESTRAL

## Sculthorpe's last 'Postcards' to get a hearing in London

by Clive Paget on September 16, 2015 (just now) filed under Classical Music | Orchestral | Comment Now



Ex-pats Kelly Lovelady and Ruthless Jabiru plan to play one of the composer's final commissions.

It's just over a year since the passing of Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe, yet it seems that the man whose music inspired so many still has a few surprises up his sleeve. Aussie conductor and founder of the ex-pat ensemble Ruthless Jabiru, Kelly Lovelady, commissioned Sculthorpe back in 2012 and, although the work was never completed, she now hopes to raise the funds to allow what did make it to the page to be heard.

"I can't remember exactly how my friendship with Peter started but I think I'd decided to write and say hello when I was performing some of his flute music in the 1990s," says Lovelady. "I'd also read his book *Sun Music* around that time and his idea of the Pacific delivering peace to every shore that it touched really stayed with me. His string quartet *Jabiru Dreaming* made a big impression on me and it was Peter's music that inspired me to initiate a string-based project here in London. For me the way he wrote for strings really connected the sound of the instruments with the wood they were made from. I liked the idea of the sound and the source being so organic."

Sculthorpe had accepted Lovelady's invitation to be honorary Patron of Ruthless Jabiru in the lead up to their launch at the City of London Festival. Her next step was to ask him to write a piece for the ensemble. "I'd always intended to make commissioning a focal point of Ruthless Jabiru's activity and it seemed appropriate that Peter should be the recipient of our first commission," says Lovelady. "I'd heard from a friend that he had been turning down most proposals in the later years so his warmth to my idea was really encouraging. I gave him carte blanche. He suggested a collection of miniatures and told me his title for the collection was going to be *Postcards from Jabiru*."

So far, so good. Sculthorpe seemed pleased to have arrived at the postcards idea, a way to acknowledge that Lovelady and her musicians were living abroad, but at the same time keeping the home fires burning by rallying together as an ensemble. "He specifically wanted the impressions to be from Kakadu so he could include a jabiru dancing!" she explains. "He outlined a plan for a series of movements of which three were more fully fleshed out."

Lovelady was happy to leave the composer, by then in his eighties, to his process. "I figured if he wanted to involve me in the development he would reach out with sketches, drafts, questions etc." she admits. "It was a slow evolution and the project was put on hold at one point so he could address some health complications. It never occurred to me that this would be its final form."

Sadly, the work was incomplete at Sculthorpe's death in August last year and Lovelady was only recently able to confirm the state of the sketches through some amateur sleuthing. "The movements were described to me as 'trailing off into empty bars' and this seemed to resonate with the spirit of his leaving us," she says.

Keen to do something in London to honour Sculthorpe and his passion for Australia's cultural future, Lovelady has launched a crowdfunder through the Australian Cultural Fund to raise \$10,000 in support of a concert of new music. "I've devised a programme to reflect both Peter and his music," she says. "I'm planning to use the sketches as a sort of script as well as a score, complemented by music of Kaija Saariaho, Liza Lim, Eugene Birman and John Luther Adams. I'm hoping this programme will inspire deep listening: hearing the sounds of Sculthorpe in some unexpected places."

Lovelady has written about the lessons she thinks that Sculthorpe was trying to teach her through the collaboration on her blogpost, [Answers on a Postcard](#). "I think he'd be pleased to have been responsible for bringing us all together again in solidarity for another concert. And I hope he would stay true to his eternal optimism in agreeing that the work's 'suspended' state allows us unique creative license to contextualise and remember him in such a way that we keep looking ahead into the future rather than back into the past."

**Keywords**

Kelly Lovelady , Ruthless Jabiru , Peter Sculthorpe



**Comments Community**

Recommend Sort by Oldest

Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

**DISQUS**

- Subscribe
- Add Disqus to your site
- Privacy

**Related Stories**

- Notable philanthropist gives Sculthorpe's home a musical future
- Review: Movers and Shakers (CIMF)
- Australia's 10 Greatest Composers
- Lovelady in London: Swinging her baton to a different tune

**News**

- Limelight's October 2015 Issue On Sale
- Artists lobby Turnbull: sack Senator Brandis
- Wesley Enoch unveils his final QTC Season
- Kaufmann fields applause and knickers in BBC Proms first
- Tristan & Isolde's Operatic Revolution
- Simon Tedeschi's Musical Gallery
- Kristian Bezuidenhout on Mozart and the art of the fortepiano
- Steger and Avital lend the Brandenburg's 2016 a touch of magic

**Current Issue**

October 2015 issue on sale now! [more details...](#)

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

**SUBSCRIBE TO LIMELIGHT'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER**

**MOST READ**

- Limelight's October 2015 Issue On Sale
- Artists lobby Turnbull: sack Senator Brandis
- Renée Fleming: The People's Diva
- Tristan & Isolde's Operatic Revolution
- Review: Mahler 6 (Queensland Symphony/Simone Young)
- The 13 Scariest Pieces of Classical Music for Halloween

Limelight Magazine 8,622 likes

Liked Shop Now

You and 67 other friends like this

**WHAT'S ON**

- FROM SEP 17 GU15: Stuart Cole, Greg Shapley, Damien Suplina
- FROM SEP 17 Christina Cordero
- FROM SEP 17 Omega Ensemble: Chamber to Charleston
- FROM SEP 17 The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow

**EVENT FINDER**

Keyword

Category - Any -

State

When - Any -

**SEARCH**

