

I am a musician working in various genres from traditional, contemporary classical to theatre and dance. My main instrument is the *erhu* (Chinese 2-string fiddle), which I play traditionally and in a modern context locally and internationally.

I am particularly interested in the 'function' of music, such as its healing properties, and seek to marry the ancient and the modern through acoustic and electronic sound.

At Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, I recently curated the festival *Encounters: Musical meetings between Australia and China* (6-9 May 2010) www.griffith.edu.au/music/encounters.



Contact details

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Present Appointment

- *Research Fellow, Music in and from China* | Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University (2009-)

Employment History

- *Associate Lecturer* | Australian National University School of Music (2008)
- *Sessional Lecturer/Tutor* | Australian National University School of Music (2004-2007)
- Freelance composer, performer, researcher (2000-)

Qualifications

- *Doctor of Philosophy in Music* [composition & ethnomusicology] (2003-2008) | Australian National University
- *Bachelor of Music* [composition & ethnomusicology] – Honours Division I (1998-2001) | University of Sydney

Select awards and achievements

- *Bathing the Buddha* for descant, treble, tenor, bass and contrabass recorders: Orpheus Publications Composition Competition Prize (2005) | 1st Prize
- *Opium Dreaming* for string quartet: "Young Composer's Salon of the 11th Sydney Spring Festival at Sydney Opera House (2000) | 1st Prize
- Donald Peart Memorial Prize for Music (1999) | University of Sydney

Prominent commissions (research-based compositions)

- *Sister, sister* for SATB choir: a new work based on text by Queensland poet Neville Thomas Yeomans (2010) | The Australian Voices (work in progress)
- *Dragonseed in the Antipodes* for 2 recorders and 2 guitars (2010), 15 mins | Ensemble Saitenwind, Bergische Biennale für Neue Musik (Galerie der Stadt Remscheid)
- *Stories East and West* (theatrical production): incidental music (2010), 25 mins | Company B Belvoir, Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney
- *6th Asia Pacific Triennial: Mansudae Mural* (exhibition): music for The Children's Art Centre (2009), 8 mins | Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Gallery of Art
- *The China Project* (exhibition): music for The Children's Art Centre (2009), 21 mins | Gallery of Modern Art, Queensland Gallery of Art
- *Star Dance*: collaborative sound project with Lebanese poet Maher Kheir (2009), 10 mins | Maher Kheir (Riverside Theatre, Parramatta, Sydney)
- *The Garden* for erhu and symphony orchestra (2008), 10 mins | Orchestra Victoria, Iwaki Auditorium (ABC Southbank, Melbourne)
- *The Entrance and Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: music for *The Lost Buddhas* exhibition (2008), 15 mins | Art Gallery of New South Wales (Sydney)
- *Emma's Dynasty* (theatrical production): incidental music and theme song for erhu and electronics (2007), 20 mins | Jigsaw Theatre Company (Canberra)
- *Landscape: Quantum Leap at the Playhouse* (collaborative dance project): electro-acoustic soundtrack. In partnership with the National Gallery of Australia (2006), 10 mins
- *The Great Invocation* for SATB choir, recorder, erhu, didgeridoo, strings & percussion (2006) | Sangita Instrumental Ensemble and Choir, Foundation for Universal Sacred Music (Merkin Concert Hall, New York City)
- *Reckless Valour: Quantum Leap at the Playhouse*: electro-acoustic soundtrack. In partnership with the Australian War Memorial (2005), 9 mins
- *Secret of the Golden Flower: Spirals* for orchestra and electronics (2005), 12 mins | Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

- *Manila Takeaway* (play): incidental music and theme song for Bb clarinet and electronics (2005), 20 mins | Tugpindulayaw Theatre Company
- *Eternity: Quantum Leap at the Playhouse*: electro-acoustic soundtrack with live erhu. In partnership with the National Museum of Australia (2004), 30 mins
- *Some Yum Cha-Cha* for Soprano 1 and 2, Alto, Tenor, Baritone and Bass (2002), 7 mins | The Song Company
- *The Honey-white Black-stump Koori-kid* for SATB choir (2002), 6 mins | The Australian Voices
- *Prelude before the Bridge*: festival trailer/soundtrack (2002), 2 mins | Sydney-Asia Pacific Film Festival
- *Poppies and Spice* for erhu and guitar (2000), 5 mins 45 secs | United Nations of Australia Association

Prominent performance venues (research-based performances)

- **AUSTRALIA:** Queensland Conservatorium Theatre (2010) | Brisbane RNA Showgrounds (2010) | Kangaroo Point (2010) | Woodford Folk Festival (2009) | Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre (2009) | Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts, Brisbane (2009) | St John's Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane (2009) | Nepalese Pagoda, Brisbane (2009) | Albert Hall, Canberra (2009) | Carriageworks, Sydney (2009, 2007) | Space Theatre, Adelaide Festival Centre (2008) | Iwaki Auditorium, ABC South Bank, Melbourne (2008) | Chinese Embassy, Canberra (2006, 2004) | National Museum of Australia (2006) | The Playhouse, Canberra Theatre (2006, 2005, 2004) | Queensland Conservatorium of Music | Llewellyn Hall, Canberra (2005) | University of Western Australia (2003) | Griffith University (2002) | The Studio, Sydney Opera House (2000)
- **NEW ZEALAND:** Otago Settler's Museum, Dunedin (2008) Energy Theatre-Founder's Park, Nelson (2008)
- **ASIA:** Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, Taipei (2004)
- **EUROPE:** BIT Teatergarasjen, Bergen [Norway] (2007) | Tou Scene, Stavanger [Norway] (2007) | Théâtre 140, Brussels (2007) [Belgium] | Museu Fundação Oriente, Lisbon [Portugal] (2007) | Klosterkirche, Remscheid-Lennep [Germany] (2006)
- **NORTH AMERICA:** Frederic Wood Theatre, Vancouver [Canada] (2010) | Theatre Junction GRAND, Calgary [Canada] (2010) | Usine C, Montreal (2010) [Canada] | Merkin Concert Hall, New York City [United States of America] (2006)

Broadcasts

R A D I O

- *Harvest of Endurance*: selections from the live performance – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Sherre Delys | ABC Radio National – *Into the Music* (June 12, 13, 18, 2010)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition | ABC TV – *Sunday Arts* (October 26, 2008)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Geoff Wood | ABC Radio National (2008)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition | ABC Classic-FM | Edmund Capon interviewed by Margaret Throsby (2008)
- *Secret of the Golden Flower: Spirals* for orchestra by performed Melbourne Symphony Orchestra – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Mairi Nicholson(2005) | ABC Classic FM (Melbourne)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Geoff Wood (2008) | ABC Classic FM (Sydney)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition – Edmund Capon interviewed by Margaret Throsby | ABC Classic FM (2008)
- *Some Yum Cha Cha* for SATB choir performed by The Song Company – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Julian Day | ABC Classic FM (2003)
- *Poppies and Spice; Opium Dreaming* performed by Nicholas Ng (erhu) and Marko West (guitar) | ABC Classic FM (2001)
- *Poppies and Spice; Opium Dreaming* – Samson Young and Nicholas Ng interviewed by Julian Day | ABC Radio National (2001)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiotrack for The Lost Buddhas exhibition – Nicholas Ng interviewed by Geoff Wood | ABC Radion National (2008)
- *Improvisation* with interview (2008) | ABC Chinese Services (Melbourne)
- *Ping Hu Qiu Yue* and *Liang Zhu* performed by Nicholas Ng (erhu) and Diana Chunyan Zhang (guzheng) – Nicholas Ng and Diana Chunyan Zhang interviewed | ABC 666 AM, Canberra (2008)
- *Chu Yue Xiao Cang* performed by Nicholas Ng (erhu) | ABC 666 AM, Canberra (2005)
- *Jiangsu* performed by Nicholas Ng (erhu) and Jaki Kane (piano) | ABC 666 AM, Canberra (2004)
- *When Mary Met Johnny Ah Long* performed by Nicholas Ng (erhu) and The Quong Tartans | ArtSound 92.7 FM, Canberra (2003)

T E L E V I S I O N

- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time* | ABC TV – *Sunday Arts* (October 26, 2008)
- William Yang and Nicholas Ng | *Channel 9 Online: Dunedin Television* (2008)

I N T E R N E T

- Nicholas Ng, Nirmal Jena, Nancy Rahman and Marko West in *Arts After Hours* | Online streaming www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/events/cal/aah_lost_buddhas (accessed 26/11/2008)
- William Yang and Nicholas Ng | *Channel 9 Online: Dunedin Television* | Online streaming <http://www.ch9.co.nz/node/10186> (accessed 26/11/2008)
- *Bodhi Sutra: meditation on the breath of time*: installed audiobook for The Lost Buddhas exhibition | Online streaming <http://www.abc.net.au/bestof/archive/20081103.htm> (accessed 26/11/2008)
- *Prelude Before the Bridge* | Online streaming <http://www.asianaustalianstudies.org/echoes-Responses.html#nng> (accessed 18/1/2009)

Publications (Score | CD | DVD)

- 'Domesticating the foreign: singing salvation through translation in the Australian Catholic Chinese community'. In *Sounds in Translation*, ed. Amy CHAN and Alistair Nelson, 111-144. Canberra: ANU E Press
- *Bathing the Buddha [music]: for recorder quintet Ds, Tr, T, Bs, CB (if available)* / Nicholas Ng. Armidale, N.S.W.: Orpheus Music, c2006. Description: 1 score (11 p.) +5 parts; ISMN: M720028644. OMP 150 [National Library of Australia. National Library of Australia \(ANL\) 3698558](http://nla.gov.au/nla:ANL3698558) MUS N m 785.836195 N576
- *The Thread of Life [sound recording]: Kim Cunio, Heather Lee & The Sultana Ensemble*. New York City, New York: Society for Universal Sacred Music and Lotus Foot, [2008] Description: 1 sound disc (CD) (65 mins.) [Track 5 *Yer a ming*]
- *Zhuang Biao – mounting a hanging scroll [videorecording]* / Sun Yu, Conservator of Asian Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales; music by Nicholas Ng. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, c2003. Description: 1 videodisc (DVD) (103 mins.)

Referees

- Ross Edwards, AM, DMus (USyd) MMus (UAde) | 12 Ennis Street, Balmain NSW 2041 | **W** www.rossedwards.com | **E** redwards@wix.com.au
- Prof Larry Sitsky, AM, Higher Doctorate of Fine Arts (ANU) Australian Academy of the Humanities, Diploma (State Conservatorium of Music, Sydney) | School of Music, Faculty of Arts, The Australian National University | **F** +61 2 6125 9775 | **T** +61 2 6125 5765 | **E** Larry.Sitsky@anu.edu.au

Media

- The erhu is at the centre of the composition, again framed by Western instruments and tonalities. Gonging and glissandi, some striking, deep, flowing saxophone and jaunty flute and clarinet lines provide rich interplay. In a second movement solo, the erhu, increasingly and fascinatingly distorted, is amplified dramatically against pre-recorded sound (not unlike deep breathing and percolation) suggestive of physical interiority. The work then becomes almost meditative before dancing to a finish... a satisfying multimedia experience: an ambitious concert built thematically around light (actual and metaphysical) but also, for the most part, dexterously realised in inventive staging and engaging projections.

Keith Gallasch, RealTime Arts | August-September, 2009

- ...the live Chinese music backing...is beautifully delivered by Nicholas Ng.

Simon Ferguson, The Daily Telegraph | 23 March, 2007

- Nicholas has shown amazing skill in interpreting the ideas and requirements of the choreographer, connecting to the overarching theme yet still creating individual pieces that are hauntingly beautiful, delicately intricate, powerful or profound in impact. His sections always reflect the theme perfectly.

Nicholas is also very accomplished in playing a beautiful Chinese instrument all an erhu. In 2004 he played the erhu live on stage, which created a stunning mood as the dancers worked around him in a piece called *Devotion*.

Ruth Osborne, The Australian Choreographic Ensemble | 3 March, 2006

- All works composed by Nicholas for our various groups were imaginative, effective in performance and made excellent use of the players involved...Nicholas is an outstanding young composer, whose works demonstrate well-developed technique, originality and intelligence.

Vivienne Wither, Music for Everyone | 5 March, 2006

- Recorded sound was given a short but beautiful pause when a solo erhu player (Nicholas Ng) appeared during *Passion [Devotion]*.

Larry Ruffell, The Canberra Times, p. 24 | 30 July 2004

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