Paradise
Andrew Schultz
Felicitas Fuchs
Li-Wei Qin
Bernard Lanskey
Sedition8

Paradise by Andrew Schultz

I. Suspended earth

The still, suspended earth
spreads dreams across the sky.
It has no answers.
Blue mist and green sea
stretch through horizons of dust.
They have no answers.
They cannot see.
They cannot hear.

Thick glass catches light
then flashes and flames.
A slow rumble through space
is a deep throb then gone.
Ask no questions.
It has no answers.
It cannot feel.
It cannot know.

II. Safety Glass

The shapes of dust caught in the light
are intricate and perfect hexagons.
Patterns of dust move up and down.

Who could have guessed the safety glass
as it hung suspended would fracture craze fall
to earth with shapes the same as dust.

Mobile lines in frozen patterns.
Rough-edged hexagons.

III. Child, who are you?

What is your name?
Wer sind sie? Wie ist dein name?
Chi sei? Qual'é il tuo nome?
Qui êtes-vous? - L'enfant perdu. Quel est votre nom?
Ya toufla, meen inti? Habibi, ma ismaki?

At last, a flicker in the eye but then it's gone.
Now she's gone.

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IV. Jigsaw

The hexagons of dust and light
are tattooed on your body:
perfect shapes of red and blue
fit together on your chest, face and legs.

But your arm is torn off, jagged.
Flesh hangs, sinews, cords and bones –
sticky blood in pools.

Even if all the pieces were found there could be no repair.

One – side two
side three side
four side five
side six side
to make a
hexagon.

V. Almost flight

When you dreamed, as children often do,
of flying above the earth,
cool and still:
is this what you had in mind?

A sudden flight this one, without any choice
as the blast lifted you into glass
and beyond.

When he looked at your face
did he see you
or all those faces he hated?

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Paradise, for soprano, cello and piano, Opus 95 (2013)

1. Suspended earth
2. Safety glass
3. Child, who are you?
4. Jigsaw
5. Almost flight

Paradise, Opus 95 (2013) is a cycle of five songs for soprano, cello and piano written for Felicitas Fuchs, Li-Wei Qin and Bernard Lanskey. They gave its first performance in June 2015 at La Loingtaine, Paris. Halcyon gave the Australia premiere shortly afterwards in September 2015. The work is a setting of the composer's own texts in which a physician observer wrestles with the small-scale detail and the large-scale effect of an horrific and violent event. The concept of 'paradise' is interpreted in three ways in the work: the aloof beauty of the natural environment; the paradise of childhood, so often destroyed by adults; and, the faux paradise of religion.

Composer's note:

For some time I have either been writing my own texts or quietly editing, translating and adapting pre-existing texts to suit my musical purposes. In choosing to write my own texts I have been attracted by the freedom and precision of expression this allows me to bring to my vocal music. This is partly because of the inevitable constraints that a text places on a composer but also because I am looking for a personal, specific and clear expression of ideas and that requires a high level of unity of artistic means.

In the case of *Paradise* the subject matter of the work's texts is sensitive and tricky to pull off. This work occupies a similar creative space to my opera, *Going Into Shadows,* in the way it addresses brutal violence and its aftermath in the contemporary world. Finding a way to deal with this material is an artistic challenge that is very important to me so I'm very grateful for the support of two groups of wonderful performers.

AS, 2016

Australian composer Andrew Schultz (b.1960) studied at the Universities of Queensland and Pennsylvania and at King's College London and has received various awards, prizes and fellowships. His music, which covers a broad range of chamber, orchestral and vocal works, has been performed, recorded and broadcast widely by many leading groups and musicians internationally. He has held numerous commissions, including from the major Australian orchestras. Andrew has written a number of large-scale works, including three operas (*Black River, Going Into Shadows* and *The Children's Bach*), which have been presented live and on film around the world. Other major works include *Journey to Horseshoe Bend, Song of Songs* and three symphonies. Recent orchestral works include *Sound Lur and Serpent* for the Sydney Symphony, *Peace* and *Endling* for the Tasmanian Symphony and *August Offensive* as a part of the Gallipoli Symphony centenary commemoration commissioned by the Australia Government.

Andrew has held residencies and academic posts in Australia, Canada, France, UK, US and is currently Professor of Music at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. Recent composition successes include the Paul Lowin Prize, the Schueler Award, a 2016 Australian Art Music Award, Australia Council Fellowship, Cité des Arts Paris residency and the Centenary of Canberra symphony commission.

CDs of his orchestral music performed by the Sydney and Tasmania Symphonies are available on ABC Classics, three volumes of chamber music are available on the Tall Poppies and Wirripang labels, Brisbane Chamber Choir and the Kühn Choir of Prague have released his *Magnificat* and *Nunc dimittis*, a disc of ensemble vocal music has been released by The Song Company, and Wirripang have released a disc of his solo piano music played by Antony Gray. The Moravian Philharmonic has recently recorded his *Falling Man/Dancing Man* for a Navona/Naxos CD and Halcyon a disc of his vocal chamber music for Tall Poppies.

300 words, October 2016