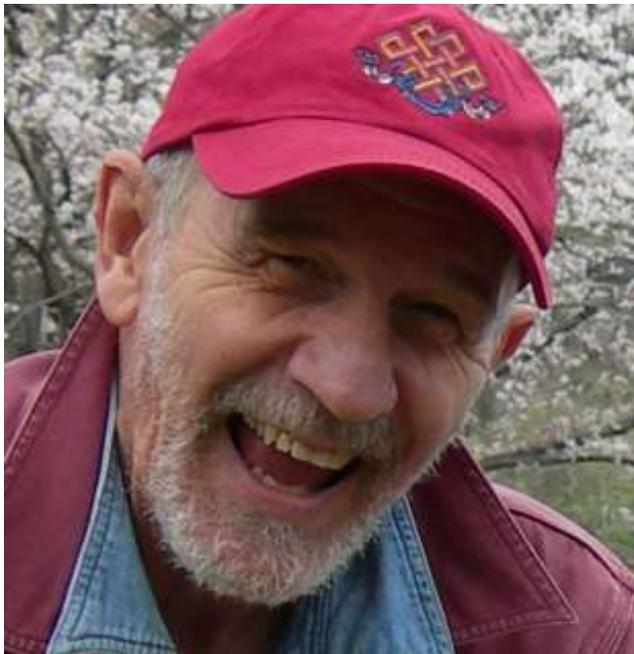


COLLECTIVE AUTONOMY: RIVER'S FLOW

by Phil Treloar*

As the saying goes, “much water has passed beneath the bridge,” since Eric Myers, the then editor, published *Collective Autonomy: a path towards another alternative*, in the Feb/Mar 2002 issue of *JazzChord*. [For those interested, that article can be accessed on this website at <https://www.ericmyersjazz.com/essays-9.>]

Like us all, I'm older now, though in my case it's debatable whether wiser. What is less debatable is that Collective Autonomy has developed substantially. This article is a bird's eye view on the developments that have taken place and the ways in which these have been made manifest over the intervening years.



Phil Treloar: Collective Autonomy has been an all-consuming engagement for me . In point of fact, it's a way of life...

In the 2002 article I was particularly concerned with communicating philosophical perspectives so as to indicate through those its cultural depth and why Collective Autonomy has been such an all-consuming engagement for me. In point of fact, it's a way of life. A brief encapsulation of pre-millennial, catalytic events is apposite. I'll then continue by spotting several key instances, signposts so to speak, which, from

*Phil Treloar has lived in Kanazawa, Japan, since 1992. Examples of some of what is discussed in this article can be found among CDs obtainable from his Catalogue & Shop: <http://www.feeling-to-thought.com/catalogue.html> or videos can be accessed: http://www.feeling-to-thought.com/dvd_playlist.html.

where I stand today, seem to me to be culminations in development's flow and will serve to facilitate clarity for an understanding of Collective Autonomy in its cultural, creative, psychological, and artistic cast.



The American drummer Billy Hart: Treloar's time with him in 1980 answered any residual questions he may have had regarding his relationship with creative music-making...PHOTO CREDIT ANTONIO BALANO

The time I spent in NYC with Billy Hart during 1980 answered any residual questions I may have had regarding my relationship with creative music-making. Because the exchanges Billy and I shared were so open and honest I was able to gain clear insight into the heart of a truly exceptional African American jazz musician. As a result, resolution was effected regarding the inner conflict I'd carried for ten years prior to this regarding, on the one hand, the love I felt, and to this day, feel, for that music while on the other, having been born and raised in a working class suburb of Sydney, Australia. And with this resolution I clearly saw just how critical is the problem of style and its relationship with creative expression. A place of human habitation isn't just a matter of bricks and mortar. It's also a matter of environment, culture, heart, mind, feeling and thought. Creative expression embraces this, intentionally or otherwise. My project had been conceived of and established embryonically in 1976. I simply hadn't recognised the fact and it would wait until 1987 before clarity of feeling and thought enabled me to coin the epithet, Collective Autonomy.

This 'naming' came at the end of an undergraduate degree course, 1982-87, at Sydney Conservatorium where, under the care and integrity-replete guidance of Graham Hair, I learned to compose music. I'd never been short of ideas nor of enthusiasm to see them realised, and, albeit via inadequate means, had been trying to compose for years earlier. But music composition, if understood, spells out much more than the mere words indicate. Furthermore, among the many matters significant to Collective Autonomy the eschewal of style looms large. My compositional studies enabled me to endow musical ideas and inspirations with a

fertile environment for their exploration and growth rather than assigning them to a dependence on stylistic characteristics and the constraints by which these are constituted. My structuralist disposition has always envisioned creative ideas as developing from the foundations up. To my way of thinking, ideas are little different to living beings. Interdependent parts abide therein and, if understood and acknowledged for what they are, the idea qua being is nourished and will thus develop in accord with its innate nature.

I initiated a performance group towards the end of 1987, Feeling to Thought, which included the mighty powers of David Ades, Mark Simmonds, and Steve Elphick.



The group Feeling To Thought, L-R, Mark Simmonds, Dave Ades, Phil Treloar (rear) and Steve Elphick (in front)... PHOTO CREDIT TRACEY A. SCHRAMM

Then in '88 an extremely productive association with Simone de Haan and Pipeline Contemporary Music Project unfurled a remarkable stream of performances and recordings, some of which included Feeling to Thought. This partnership opened up creative territory that enabled in-depth exploration, doing so in state-of-the-art performance situations. Pipeline included the outstanding talents of Mardi McCullea,

Geoff Dodd, Michael Kieran Harvey, Daryl Pratt, occasional guest Christian Wojtowicz, and of course, Simone de Haan, who was its artistic director. We gave concerts in Melbourne, Sydney, Hobart and Perth, many of which were recorded and broadcast by the ABC. During this period, in addition to composing extensively for Pipeline, I was writing commissions for other people and teaching in the Music Department at La Trobe University. This proved to be the fecund ground in which my compositional enterprise was firmly planted and the first real flowering of the dreams and aspirations that had fuelled and motivated my work since 1976.



The trombonist Simone de Haan, artistic director of Pipeline Contemporary Music Project...

Then, on the heels of a commission from Tom O’Kelley for an extended multipercussion piece, recorded with Victor Japan, I relocated to Kanazawa in 1992 where I have since lived. Following this move the 1990s were to witness a thorough rethinking, disassembling, and reassembling of my compositional approach and methodology. The Pipeline experience had induced a complete reappraisal apropos of a compositional path able to accommodate the philosophy of Collective Autonomy as it had by then evolved. During this lengthy period of rigorous research I began to steadily accrue a substantial library of reference books and recordings. It was obvious right from the beginning that the move to Japan signalled a new way of life. What wasn’t quite so obvious, at least initially, was the enormity and all-consuming task involved in completely rethinking the compositional approach I now realised was indispensable for Collective Autonomy’s continued development. Traditions, as I knew these to be, had to be reconstituted or sidelined altogether, and this applied to both theory and practice. Collective Autonomy was becoming more open to expressive freedom and with this ‘opening up’ the demand for structural clarity increased. With performance in mind, if, for example, I was to be clear about what not to write, I needed to be absolutely clear about what might have been written. If structures were to be flexible within any given “Work” I need to know how, and to what extent their foundations needed to be set in place, and how, and to what extent,

slippage would work beneficially; for it is *this* 'place' that *this* "Work" inhabits. Here, the question of distinguishing characteristics vis-à-vis a "Work's" identity fell under the microscope. Indeed, an intersection on which improvisation and notated composition meet, cohabit, interact, interpenetrate, or dissent, calls for the clearest and most precise of indications so as to avoid (except where desired) disaster. Disasters are typically occasioned where feelings and thoughts are primary and confusion abides. Clarity and precision are not about quantity but quality. This thought, especially where creative processes strive in their call, is crucial when style does not function as a bonding element. And Collective Autonomy has eschewed style in its affection for creative exploration's call from unyoked space.

During that ten-year period of assembling anew my creative wherewithal I became intimate friends with the marimba, an instrument I'd loved since around 1972, while concurrently I developed an active interest in text. I began exploring poetry as a means of extending my expressive palette, an aspect of which involved its integration with composition and performance. In this my Buddhist commitment is significant. As I was embracing these newfound expressive colours in much the same way as I'd done with music theretofore, I realised almost immediately that the learning curve would be best approached without expectation or predetermination. Thus it has been through to the present.



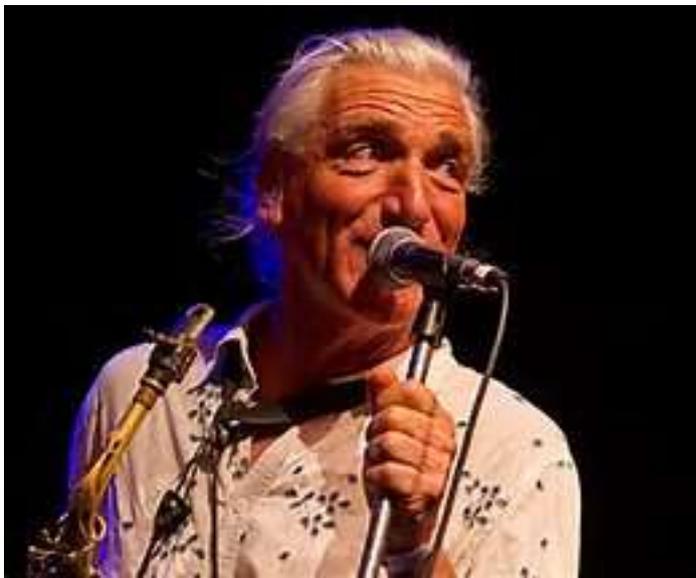
My dear, long-time friend and partner in musical mischief, Roger Frampton, passed away in 2000. With characteristic empathy, John Shand informed me of Roger's critical condition early in December, 1999, and so I was able to be with Roger during his final weeks. Roger's spirit, of course, remains with us. Certainly, in my own case this is so and as things turned out I found myself writing an extended "Work" in his memory: *SHADES in memoriam Roger Frampton*. As we'd spent many years collaborating, much could be said regarding our relationship, both personal and musical. And eventually it will be, but here is not the place.



Treloar's long-time friend and partner in musical mischief, Roger Frampton...

As a composition *SHADES* is an imaginary dialogue between us. Its duration extends over approximately 80 minutes, bringing together creative aspects Roger and I either shared or investigated independently. The poetry of E E Cummings (Roger) and Paul Celan (myself) converge at one dialogic level while the exploration of improvised and notated music explore another. The background structure, designed to facilitate our dialogue, works in such a way that these various dialogic levels keep shifting, filtered through modes of expressive emphasis with these at times contemplative and introverted while at others, up front, heart-on-the-sleeve extroversion. The “Work” progresses in plateau-like sections in which Roger’s profound interest in sound qua entity is reflected, as is the joy he derived from creative engagement. Compositionally, *SHADES* is, I feel, a close reading on my part of Roger’s creative spirit as I understood this to be, and is a direct result of our many years together in music making.

SHADES in memoriam Roger Frampton premiered at the Studio, Sydney Opera House November 24, 2002. The performers, other than myself, included David Ades, Carl Dewhurst, Steve Elphick, and John Clare (poetry reading). Subsequently the “Work” was presented with the same line-up in two concerts at the Wangaratta Festival in October 2003. Michele Morgan (poetry reading) replaced John Clare and Scott Tinkler participated as an additional performer. The occurrence of these three performances is owed entirely to the indomitable spirit and determination of the late David Ades, who not only played his musical heart out in his expression of love and respect for Roger, but saw to it that things of a logistical nature moved along as they should. Gratitude...!!!



The late David Ades: three performances in Sydney and Wangaratta owing entirely to his indomitable spirit and determination...

Zen’s Way : through the eye of Gogō-an ~ homage to Ryōkan received its premiere performance in Kanazawa, Japan, on November 15, 2004. As the title suggests the “Work” is dedicated to Ryōkan (1758–1831), a zen master who lived much of his life in a four-and-a-half tatami hut in Niigata Prefecture, located on the Japan Sea. The “Work,” scored for a quartet of two percussionists, clarinets (B Flat and bass), and reciter, spans almost two hours with an interval between two halves. Though

meditative in character, it is quite intense, placing considerable demand on performers, especially the reciter. The language used is that of Ryōkan's era and I'm told is so different to modern Japanese that nowadays it's difficult if not impossible to understand; possibly a little like Chaucer's English is to modern speakers.



Phil Treloar (left, on marimba & percussion) performing Zen's Way : through the eye of Gogō-an ~ homage to Ryōkan in Kanazawa in 2004. Other performers are L-R, Satoko Hiramatsu, Miki Kidō and Kimiko Sunagawa... PHOTO CREDIT KANEMASA TAKASHI

The composition process was long with rigorous research involved. Though an interval divides it, the background structure is a single arc-form whose trajectory is guided by the 28 chapters of the Lotus Sūtra. This scripture was very close to Ryōkan's heart and overtones of it appear often in his poetry. My own reading of the sūtra sees a distinct division between chapters 13 and 14 and it is here that I programmed the interval. In chapter 13, brief as it is, the members of Śākyamuni's (the Buddha of our present era) biological family are brought together and he bestows on them the prophecy of their future buddhahood. The fairly lengthy chapter 14 turns to Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom and among the most significant for Mahāyāna Buddhism. Chapter 14 emphasises the importance of conduct (ethics) which then leads into chapters 15 ~ 18 where Maitreya is prominent. Maitreya, "The Benevolent One", is the name of our next Buddha. If an intermission was to be interpolated, then between chapters 13 & 14 seemed to me to be the most suitable place.

I searched through all Ryōkan's available poetry (in English translation, of course!) finding either direct or implied references to the content of each chapter of the Lotus Sūtra. Poems appropriate to the text of the sūtra were then tracked down in a Japanese edition of Ryōkan's original. Bringing this together within the flow of the arc-form proved to be a complicated matter as each chapter of the Lotus Sūtra is clearly defined, a story in its own right as it were. Furthermore, Ryōkan hadn't



良寛に深く傾倒する音楽家フィル・トゥリローが贈る「詩と音楽」のコラボレーション。

禅の道—五合庵の目を通して

～良寛へのオマージュ～

ZEN'S WAY : *Through the Eye of Gogo-an ~Homage to RYOKAN~*

この作品は、良寛さんを私が感じるようなクリエイティブな人間としてそのまま受容しようというものである。
彼の詩を通して彼という人物を体験しようとする試みであり、またそれによって、テキストと音楽が変わる確を作り出そうとするものである。
(フィル・トゥリロー)

*

砂川 公子 (詩、朗読) *Kimiko Sunagawa*
木藤 みき (クラリネット) *Miki Kido*
ひらまつ さとこ (マリンバ) *Satoko Hiramatsu*
フィル・トゥリロー (打楽器) *Phil Treloar*

*

2004 11|15 月 19:00開演
(18:30開場)

石川県立音楽堂交流ホール

●チケット料金 一般 2000円 学生 1000円

- 前売りプレイガイド
石川県立音楽堂チケットボックス TEL.076-232-8632
- 主催 (財)石川県音楽文化振興事業団
- 後援 (財)石川県芸術文化協会 テレビ金沢 エフエム石川

Flier publicising the performance of Zen's Way : through the eye of Gogō-an ~ homage to Ryōkan in 2004...

written his poems with this kind of unity in mind. However, after much deep thought and contemplation I was able to unify the structure into a continuous, smooth flowing whole. Rehearsals were demanding and extensive. And, as the reciter, Kimiko Sunagawa, was unable to read music, all her entries had to be conducted, with the pacing of her recitation committed to memory, and at times, luck, so that the text lined up with the instrumental parts. She, unable to read music, me as conductor, unable to understand the language of her recitation, made coordination very tricky! As fortune had it though, with the exception of one glitch, the performance was absolutely fantastic. How this happened can be explained.

My wife, Miki Kidō, had devoted an enormous amount of time to the preparation of the poetry. Plus, she played the clarinet parts in the performance. She knew the music and she was, by then, pretty familiar with the poetry. Satoko Hiramatsu, the other percussionist, also knew the music and by performance time was pretty familiar with the poetry. So between them, any potential disasters could be diverted. Although I'd researched and written the "Work" and in this was entirely responsible, in all other respects it was a collaboration, including Takashi Kanemasa, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, organising and promoting the concert. Much devotion was given by these kindhearted people and without their generosity of spirit *Zen's Way* would never have been performed.



Treloar's wife Miki Kidō: she devoted an enormous amount of time to the preparation of the poetry, and played the clarinet parts in the performance...

In 2005 I set sail on a voyage of solo explorations. This was intended to serve two distinct purposes. The idea of solo presentations had interested me for years but I'd not been confident enough to feel I could present material rich enough to sustain an improvised solo situation. Since, by then, I'd been working with the marimba for about ten years, our friendship had developed to be 'as one'. So, with the marimba, plus the various other ideas I'd developed with percussion over previous decades, I now felt there were enough elements of contrasting character to explore their potential relationships in a concert-length improvisational setting.



Treloar on marimba: enough elements of contrasting character to explore the potential relationships between marimba and percussion in a concert-length improvisational setting...

The other motivating factor was to do with composition in the context of Collective Autonomy which had, by now, developed to the point where solo-oriented material in a collective environment needed to emerge from deeper, more essential levels of both structure and spirit; intrinsically essential to compositional foundations rather than being additional to it. Improvisational materials and their realisation in the performance of a specific “Work” needed to connect in terms of structural function with middle- and background configurations. A solution to this problem would mean, among other things, the possibility of the overlapping and interweaving of structural levels that included improvisation as a constituent rather than simply being a foreground feature. Furthermore, this could operate on several concurrent levels. Qua research, the means was at hand. I could explore through various percussion setups a vast array of colours, including register and quasi-pitch material, and while the marimba presented a more limited range of colour it enabled extensive exploration apropos of precise pitch material. This was in fact pivotal, as compositionally I’d been working with post-tonal pitch structures for years, but not as a performer. It had become imperative that I find a way to improvise with pitch-class sets structurally, compositionally, so I could then transfer this, qua experience, back into composition processes in a way that, ideally, would, in turn, enable performers to invent their own forms with given pitch material which does not

depend on the language of tonality. This, in effect, was an extension of style eschewal. The upshot of this venture has been a remarkable development with compositional procedures apropos of the relationships between compositional structure and pitch material rendered through improvisation though nonetheless embedded in the compositional material itself. I should point out that diatonic pitch material is not off the slate. It's just that there is no stylistic demand for it to function in accord with the language of tonality.

Colours Changing (2006) is an early adventure in this newly enriched compositional field. It is scored for violin, two multi-percussionists, and drum-set. During its 50-minute duration it passes through some areas that are fully notated and others notated in one part concurrent with another which is improvised. The "Work" opens with a ten-minute violin solo, 'Area 1', which, though fully notated, is open to interpretation and this in several ways. Later, 'Area 5' is a fairly extended section where the violin, again fully notated, is in duo with a multi-percussion setup, with the latter improvising round the structure of the violin part. Areas 1 & 5 can be viewed on my website at the link above.

In 2008 I wrote *Sinhavijurbhita*. This 24-minute solo violin piece extends considerably the ideas explored in *Colours Changing*, contrasting precisely, fully written material with completely open, non-metric sections. The "Work" was premiered in Kanazawa, Japan, August 2012, by Jyunko Kamishima, in her otherwise all-Bach program. These, and other "Works" written during the six years between 2006 ~ 2012 firmly established a compositional ethos unique to the philosophy of Collective Autonomy while setting a course for development well into the future.



Jyunko Kamishima: she premiered the 24-minute solo violin piece Sinhavijurbhita in August, 2012...

Exchanges I shared between 2010 ~ 2012 with various musicians predominantly of the improvising persuasion put to rest any doubt I may have had regarding the direction Collective Autonomy had taken. Among the many aspects integral to music-making at the intersection where notated composition and improvisation meet, the matter of style lies in centre field. It's not the only concern. Far from it in fact. To be sure, style facilitates, perhaps more accurately, expedites, through its bonding function, its signposts, and its altimeters, passage through a "Work's" structure. But, by dint of this expedition creative exploration is defined by the characteristics constitutive of the style. Mapping stylistics onto composition is tantamount to mapping composition onto composition. Style of any stripe is, by definition, a predetermined entity. Thus, the "Work" and its being worked are enclosed by stylistic constraints rather than being opened up to the raw potential that inhabits the foundations, the DNA if you will, of the composition, its processes of coming into being, and of performers themselves. And for Collective Autonomy, performers – their creativity, their interpretive perspectives, their instrumental capabilities, and their spirit of adventure – are intrinsic to these processes.

Style is identifiable by the manifest consistency of relationships between constitutive elements. The question may well be asked: Does not consistency apply to Collective Autonomy? The answer is "Yes, it does". But not as style. Rather, consistency is relegated to each "Work" qua composition and in this serves a structural purpose. That is to say, consistency is embedded in the foundations of a given "Work" and applicable to that "Work's" work. And the work of the "Work" not only includes the work involved in compositional processes but, and significantly so, equally with performance processes which include – theoretically, if not always realisable – infinite improvisational possibilities, case by case as these might be appropriate "Work" to "Work." To reiterate my thought at the beginning of this article:

Ideas are little different to living beings. Interdependent parts abide therein and, if understood and acknowledged for what they are, the idea qua being is nourished and will thus develop in accord with its innate nature.

This perspective is, I believe, vital for composition, vital for improvisation, vital for their meeting in dialogue, and vital for their co-habitation.



*"As they step in to the same rivers, other
and still other waters flow upon them."*

Heraclitus (5th C. BCE.)

The period between 2012 ~ 2016 was remarkably productive, with a plethora of explorations pushing the compositional and performance boundaries in many directions. By now Collective Autonomy was able to employ a wide range of processes which, as appropriate to generative ideas, were able to nourish their development, opening them up rather than imposing upon their innate nature. Not only could malleability be structurally operative with each of the processes in themselves, but when put to work in relation to others in a given context, creative flexibility proved vast. This, when applied to composition and performance means, as

the words of Heraclitus might suggest, distinctive instantiation in real-time creative action.

I've included a list of the principal "Works" completed during this period. The range of compositional procedures is, in fact, enormous and is reflected in the kind of notation employed – from absolute graphics to very detailed, precise staff notation. Several of these "Works" have been premiered while some remain as yet unperformed. Solo presentations, incomplete "Works," and collaborations under the auspices of other initiatives have not been included.

In what follows directly I offer an account of two recent "Works" significant for Collective Autonomy's project.

Samantasattvatranojahshri – March 11, 2011 in memoriam

There are occasions when words fail to express our feelings. At these times we either fall silent, or find another way to communicate. While poetry will sometimes say what our everyday language can't say, an exclamation or a vocal noise will communicate our feelings directly. We can't find these noises in a dictionary but we always understand their meaning. They express surprise and strong emotion, and they are spontaneous. Music, too, can be like this.

Samantasattvatranojahshri is an exclamation, a noise that has been spontaneously released in response to a happening, a disaster on March 11, 2011 so enormous that it is beyond description with words. And, however we generally think about music, it is also beyond musical description.



The Free-Range String Quartet performing the world premiere of Phil Treloar's Samantasattvatranojahshri : March 11, 2011 in memoriam, at Kanazawa Art Hall, Ishikawa-Ken, Japan on October 20, 2015. L-R, Jyunko Kamishima (violin 1); Yuka Shibuya (violin 2); Yasunori Ishiguro (viola); Keiko Fukuno (cello).

To express a response to this disaster I found myself spontaneously inventing streams of noises that became music and have been notated as music. Historically,

the string quartet is a medium that expresses intimacy, sensitivity, and sympathetic resonance. It also expresses individual points of view. This string quartet does just that. It does employ some standard sounds notated with standard notation. But it also employs unusual playing techniques so as to perform noises as music; it integrates traditional forms of music making with unusual methods of sound production.

Samantasattvatranojahshri is written in four movements. Its duration is long. The first movement, fairly short compared to the other three, functions like an introduction to the entire work and presents the four voices – violin 1, violin 2, viola and cello – in various combinations, sometimes together, sometimes as independent parts. These combinations become developed as expression during the following three movements.

The second movement is quite long and written entirely in rhythmic unison. It functions as a group expression – people together looking at the same situation with a united feeling. But the subject they experience is way beyond description. So, instead of individual points of view expressed as independent voices, unified and often dissonant harmony express sympathetic resonance. Sometimes the perspective is close-up, almost magnified, and sometimes it is at a great distance. But sympathetic resonance is always together, felt and seen as the one experience.

Now in a very different world, the third movement is made of independent streams of expression. Each is, in its own way, strong and emotional. And at the same time each seems to be alien. It requires of the performers that they play on different instruments. A long solo viola introduction with overtones of a romantic past is integrated with the stark reality of an immediate present. It leads into streams of individual voices – violin 1, violin 2, and cello – each expressing vividly their own perspective on this alien world. The viola continues along the path it began. It concludes, yet offers no resolution.

An image in a mirror is just a reflection. The mirror image looks real yet we know it's only a representation. It appears to be three-dimensional yet when we run our hands over the mirror's surface we find just two dimensions. The mirror's image is static. It has no life of its own. Only when we move, the image moves. The fourth movement is like a mirror image. It's a reflection looked at but has no life of its own. It is a static image asking us to remember. It asks us to never forget. It asks us to consider the contribution we can make to a more loving, more mutually supportive world, one where open hearts allow compassion to flow in the direction of others; those souls whose lives have been transformed by a fate over which none had any control.

Samantasattvatranojahshri is a night goddess in the Gandavyuha sutra. She represents knowledge and compassion merging as one. She gives her name to this music, a string quartet that proposes no solutions. It does not try to be beautiful. It does not wish to entertain. It does not seek to pacify our feelings or to excite them. In fact, this composition does not ask us to focus on ourselves at all. It simply asks us to remember a day – March 11, 2011.

Samantasattvatranojahshri Pre-Performance Talk
copyright © Phil Treloar, 2015

NOTE: March 11, 2011, was the day the earthquake and massive tsunami hit the Tohoku region, northeastern Honshu, Japan, claiming the lives of round 24,000 people, leaving untold devastation in its wake, and many thousands of people homeless, a large proportion of whom had lost family members and an entire way of life. Those whose habitat lies within about 30 kilometres of the nuclear power station in Fukushima are still unable to return and the temporary homes they had no choice but to move to are now in an almost unliveable state of disrepair. The reality is, of course, far more devastating than these, or any, mere words can begin to suggest.

The broadcasting network, NHK, followed closely the events and the people who were, and are, living through this indescribable horror. There have been some wonderful accounts of precious humanity but the overwhelming grief of most who were there, and remain, can't be told. And this string quartet doesn't try to.

The pre-performance talk was delivered in Japanese by Miki Kidō just prior to the premiere performance in Kanazawa. Miki-chan, as I refer to my wife, had made the translation. She was also largely responsible for organising the concert, rehearsal space, promotion, and countless other things. As always, life is as replete with loving care as it is because of her. My love, respect and gratitude, abound.

My deepest, heartfelt thanks are extended to the members of the string quartet who worked tirelessly in group rehearsal and private practice so as to overcome the daunting difficulties a rendering of this "Work" invokes.

Jyunko Kamishima, 1st violin, was relentless in her contribution, coordinating the quartet members, copying parts, spending time with me sorting out technical problems, and so on. I feel inadequate in expressing my thanks to her, though nonetheless, I'm grateful to the Nth.



Another shot of the string quartet which performed Samantasattvatranojahshri on October 20, 2015. L-R, Jyunko Kamishima (violin 1); Yuka Shibuya (violin 2); Keiko Fukuno (cello); Yasunori Ishiguro (viola)...

Vistas Visceral - Mārga Two : Reading Dōgen

As the name implies, this “Work” grants access to a panorama of inward feelings... the self, as sensed in a particular location, in a particular environment, on a particular occasion, in the company of particular people. The “Work” qua notated composition remains the same though can never be repeated qua performance. This observation can, of course, be made of life in general as this may be considered moment to moment. But the “Work’s” concept is deeply rooted in the philosophy of Collective Autonomy and thus invites onto the field of play all those elements of personhood – from the sensitivities of a person’s inner most nature to the externalised expression of these in a given environment – where communicating with others unfolds in a particular context.

The extremely complex background structure of *Vistas Visceral - Mārga Two* is never foregrounded through larger-than-life signifiers. Though it remains in the background, unseen, it is felt time and again through overlaid, local structures. It is in the more local domain that creative exchange occurs and serves to shape the emerging form.

As standard scores go, there isn’t one. The “Work” is conducted and the ‘score’ is like a road-map. Much the same as in Renaissance compositional practice, the parts were written directly, as parts. Among the many, complex aspects of this is the fact that performers don’t have any way of telling how and what they should be coordinating with other than responding to the conductor’s indications and the immediate, real-time musical environment. Furthermore, the parts are written sparsely, though in this they are not a ‘reduction.’ Enough information (performance material) is there to enable each performer to move through the “Work’s” unfolding, doing so with the confidence that coordination *will* take place and that it will necessitate co-operation to do so. The anything goes mentality is nowhere to be seen. This music, by and large, calls for delicacy and sensitivity on the part of the performers, not to mention the employ of their creative imagination.

The “Work” is written for violin; percussion/keyboard perc.; voice-recitation/perc.; vibraphone/perc.; contrabass; and conductor. It is precisely 30’30” in duration. At least that’s what the road-map says. Actually, there is flexibility in this. But durational flexibility is entirely in the hands of the conductor who never at any time ‘beats time.’ The conductor listens to the various interactions as these move through the “Work” and responds in accord, conducting the beginnings and endings of sections.

Vistas Visceral - Mārga Two : Reading Dōgen proceeds through three *Tableau*. Each one is 10’00” in duration. There is no break between them. In fact, it is crucial to the “Work’s” conception that the music-as-made flows inexorably, beginning to end. The beginning of each *Tableau* marks a major structural moment, one more felt than announced. The kind of creative activity explored is significantly different in each case. Each *Tableau* consists of a Primary Field flanked by other regions. *Tableau 1*, for example, runs: Prologue, Primary Field 1, Intermezzo 1. The Prologue is divided into six zones, all of which have durations indicated on the road-map. Primary Field 1 is divided into seven zones and Intermezzo 1 into three. In this, timing is fairly precise though pacing is freely rendered, performer to performer. While performance materials, and in some cases, manner of exchange, are indicated

in the parts for each Primary Field and the other Regions in each *Tableau*, how these exchanges take place is entirely up to the performers. The material on the parts never ‘instructs’ but rather, provides. The material enables improvisation while being specific enough to maintain structural unity, foreground through to background. The “Work’s” work is to explore possibilities through improvisational means and personal woodshedding vis-à-vis the specificity of parts in relation to the road-map will yield beneficial results for all. Rehearsal time is best spent gaining familiarity with the relationship between the conductor qua performer and the instrumentalists, but beyond this, rehearsal time is not advised. While ‘perfection’ and ‘definitive performance’ are alien concepts, integrity is crucial, a determining factor, in fact.

The sub-title, *Reading Dōgen*, refers to a poem I wrote in 2004. Dōgen was a 13th century Zen master whose impact on Buddhism in Japan and beyond is still felt strongly today. After four years in China, 1223 ~ 27, he returned to Japan where an extremely creative life through to his passing in 1253 gave rise to the establishment of the Sōtō sect of Zen and its home at Eihei-ji (monastery), completed in 1244 and located in what is known today as Fukui Prefecture, western Japan. His writings are prolific and just as appropriate today, perhaps more so in fact, to Buddhist spiritual life and life more generally, as when he wrote them. The poem I wrote, its words and sonics, are given voice in each of the three Primary Field of *Vistas Visceral - Mārga Two*.



An image of Dōgen, a 13th century Zen master whose impact on Buddhism in Japan and beyond is still felt strongly today...

NOTE: I said very little in rehearsal regarding the performance of this “Work.” Brent Miller, the conductor, who is not a conductor by training but by outstanding perception, put together a conductor’s score by cutting and pasting bits of the parts at appropriate points along the road-map and he programmed a computer readout so as to keep us all on track as the performance progressed. When I sighted this at the first rehearsal (and there were only two) I was absolutely speechless. So intelligent,

so musical, so insightful! The performing body, listed below, latched on to the fundamentals of this piece in a way I'd never have dreamed of. And the result? An absolutely exhilarating experience in performance and in person.

I'd like here to extend my appreciation to Caleb Colledge. The concert in which this piece was premiered was in fact one Caleb organised to celebrate my 70th birthday. He organised the performers, the space, instruments, transportation, and countless other necessities. On top of all this, he played the music like an angel. Yes! The entire concert was 'out there'... Wherever that is, it's a great place to be! Thank you all so very much, you precious people.



Principal “Works” 2012 ~ 2016

Samantasattvatranojahshri – March 11, 2011 in memoriam (2014) : string quartet.
duration: ca. 60'00” performance: ‘Free Range Quartet’ – Jyunko Kamishima, vn.1;
Yuka Shibuya, vn. 2; Yasunori Ishiguro, vla; Keiko Fukuno, vc.
premiere: October 20, 2015. Kanazawa Art Hall, Ishikawa Ken, Japan.

Veshthila (2016) - for trombone solo
duration ca. 18'00”
performance: Simone de Haan
premiere: October 13, 2016. Colbourne Ave, Glebe, NSW, Australia.

Mountain Water (2016) - duo for trombone and voice with percussion duration ca.
15'00”
performance: Simone de Haan, tbn; Phil Treloar, text recitation & perc.
premiere: October 13, 2016. Colbourne Ave, Glebe, NSW, Australia.

The Square Has Doors - DiaSCRIPT One ~ Six (2015) : for any numbers of players
between two and ten
duration: to be determined by performers

DiaSCRIPT One (quartet version) duration: ca. 30'00”
performance: Caleb Colledge, perc.; Alex Bull, perc.; Michael Louttit, CB.; Amanda
Terry, vn.
premiere: October 18, 2016. Jugglers Art Space, Brisbane, Australia.

Vistas Visceral - Mārga Two : Reading Dōgen (2016) : for quintet, duration: ca.
31'00”
performance: Phil Treloar, text recitation + perc.; Caleb Colledge, k/b perc. + perc.;
Alex Bull, k/b perc.; Michael Louttit, CB.; Amanda Terry, vn.
premiere: October 18, 2016. Jugglers Art Space, Brisbane, Australia.

Treloar at 70

Symbol's Sound

A Brisbane Collaboration

A collaboration between two generations of improvisors;
Phil Treloar and Caleb Colledge.

Featuring the world premiere of two new works by Phil Treloar
with Brisbane musicians Caleb Colledge, Alex Bull, Amanda
Terry, Michael Louttit and Brent Miller.

*Flier for the performance of two of Treloar's works DiaSCRIPT One and Vistas
Visceral - Mārga Two : Reading Dōgen, in Brisbane, October 18, 2016...*

*Sudhana's Steps - six pieces for solo timpanist with assistant (2013) - timpani: 23"
26" 29" 32"; two prepared drums: 29" timpani, and Gran Cassa.
duration: ca. 46'00" performance: Tom O'Kelly; Nozomi Omote; Gary France;
Venessa Tomlinson; Callum Farquharson; Matt Godard; Peter Neville; Brent Miller;
Mark Robinson; Daryl Pratt; Gabe Fisher; Mathew Levey; James Townsend.
premiere: October, 2013.
Australian premiere tour - Brisbane, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney. Various venues.
coordination: Tom O'Kelly*

Mirror's Image Radiant (2015) - for spoken text and gong
duration ca. 20'00" performance: Phil Treloar, text recitation; Brent Miller, gong
premiere: April 25, 2014. Just Percussion Performance Space, Brisbane, Australia.

Prashantarutasagaravati (revised 2015) for quartet duration ca. 40'00"
performance: Phil Treloar, marimba; James McLean, dms.; Scott McConnachie, alto
& sop, sax.; Sam Pankhurst, CB.
premiere: November 19, 2015. Just Percussion Performance Space, Brisbane,
Australia.



Painting of Phil Treloar by the artist Margaret Fredrickson...

Vistas Visceral - Mārga One (2016) : for double trio + marimba duration ca. 41'00"

Anala (2014~15) - for double string trio and four timpani + two prepared drums
(timpani and Gran Cassa) duration ca. 50'00"

Sudarshana (2014) - duo for two multi-percussion setups
duration ca. 10'00" ~ 30'00"

Born on the Wind (2016) - duo for piano and drum set duration 21'00"

Collective Autonomy : River's Flow copyright © Phil TRELOAR