

7 April 2025 SoundBites

Programme Notes

ALICIA DIVA CHANDRA

Spinning for Voice and Live Electronics

Spinning

Fell in a trance and I'm swimming through

Mid-slumber, vision blur

I'm seeing faces in the wood below me

My little world is spinning

Curtains are closing

The ring of a bell

A silk woven blanket I'm wrapped in with no escape

Not that I want to

Swirls

What a whirl

Dreams where ribbons twirl

Low in the heart

How am I losing light in the night

Slowly blinding

How did I get so lost

Waiting for a dream to find me?

Spinning is an excerpt from my diary, it expresses the sentiment of being super passionate about my dream life, only to slowly forget about that dream as time passes. This sentiment is paralleled with the act of falling into a deep sleep.

JODI TAN

Dance Class for 2-speaker playback

Dance Class is a piece of music created for dance choreography. The music is created from sound recordings of a dance class and of dance items such as ballet pointe shoes and ballet skirts etc.

Reach for 2-speaker playback

Reach is a piece of music inspired by contemporary dance improvisation. In contemporary and ballet dance, movements are often portrayed with a sense of growth and reach. In this piece, the soundworld mirrors how a contemporary dancer moves in a dance piece.

Breathe for 8 singers

Breathe is a vocal work written for an eight part vocal ensemble.

The message of the piece is about each of us having the privilege to live and to be expectant for the future that has yet to unfold. The beginning focuses on the evolution of literal breath sounds, which slowly transforms into the evolution of a single note. The piece also focuses on tension and release in the intervals of the pitches, to illustrate the motion of breathing in and out.

CHAN HAO LI

7 / 5 = 1.4 for Reed Quintet

i. decrease

ii. increase

7 / 5 = 1.4 is named after the average number of reeds in a reed quintet (1 reed each from the clarinet, saxophone, and bass clarinet, and 2 double reeds from the oboe and bassoon, totaling 7 reeds. Divided across 5 instruments, each instrument has an average of 1.4 reeds).

7 / 5 = 1.4 is a two-movement piece that uses the numbers of 7514 (and variations upon it) as musical material for pitch, chords and time signatures. The first movement, *decrease*, is a minimal soundscape using just 4 notes (B, G, C, F), which gets more energetic as the time intervals between musical events and the intervals between the notes *decrease* over time. The second movement, *increase*, retains the energy of the first movement, keeping a lively and rhythmic character over changing time signatures. Following a simple structure, the length of the music's phrases and time signatures *increase* over time, along with the music's harmonic and rhythmic complexity.

ESTENE CHEONG

TEAR for 2-speaker playback

TEAR explores formlessness within a fragile sound world. Spliced, "torn," and fragmented recordings drift in and out, shaping a soundscape that feels both expansive and brittle.

*I tear the pages, one by one
ripping them open, bleeding them dry,
only to find more behind—
a chorus I never invited inside.*

*Once, I chased melodies like fireflies,
held them in my palms,
let them glow against my skin.
Now, they shatter into static,
fractured light swallowed whole.*

*A tear falls — no, it rips —
splitting me open, breaking me down.
Some days, I almost hear it right,
a fleeting thread of something pure.*

*But the voices return, a storm in my skull,
and the notes I long for are lost again.
I beg for quiet, for a breath of sotto voce,
but the cacophony swells like a scream,
robbing me of what once felt like home.*

*I tear it apart—every hope, every plan,
unravelling my dream at the seams.
The music I love dissolves in the din,
my voice lost in the void.*

*Yet you reach for me in the dark,
reminding me that my heart keeps beating time.
Though I cannot hear the stars,
you remind me that,
they have not burned away.*

*In the ruins, I look towards the light
not alone, not unheard.
And to those who stood when I faltered,
when my world was torn —*

Thank you, for being the calm within the storm.

ALICIA DIVA CHANDRA

CAT for 2-speaker playback

CAT is dedicated to my batchmates Estene and Jodi. It is about the spontaneity of our energy when we see each other, the quickness of our energy and the sense of humour we share.

It is an attempt to create a fast-paced piece where most of the material appears only once, occurring consecutively with almost no gaps in between. Also, everything is directly and indirectly related to cats, because Estene and Jodi both like cats.