

## Brett Dean



Brett Dean Photo © Cordula Groth

Music as Protest and Remembrance. On Brett Dean's Work as a Composer  
The fact that art does not arise from a cultural vacuum but is inspired by its environment as well as the social and cultural reality around it is a crucial aspect of Brett Dean's work as a composer. His musical language, which, though highly sophisticated, always remains intelligible, exploits the possibilities of musical style to create intellectual references to the past or the present, while Dean often alludes to these references in the titles of his works – sometimes as a mere association, sometimes in the form of a comment. It is only the composer's profound knowledge of the possibilities of instrumentation that allow him to achieve such effects of musical language.

Born in 1961 in Brisbane, the principal concern of the Australian composer has been to explore melodic lines in all their different forms, varying their characters, placing them in different contexts – from sketchy melodic courses to expanding them into a broad band of sound – or dissolving them into progressions of microintervallic tones. An example of this is the first of the Winter Songs for tenor and brass quintet based on poems by E.E. Cummings (2000), a piece which evolves from single melodic threads from the individual instruments which become intertwined to form a dynamic fabric to which the tenor is added as an independent tonal colour. As in other works, harmony is primarily generated by the interaction of melodic elements that are superimposed onto each other, developing instrumental textures of varying tonal colours and sometimes – as in the orchestral piece Dispersal (2001) – growing into aggressive agglomerations, dynamic masses of sound and layers offset against one another.

The graphic moulding of Dean's melodic lines is most prominent in works featuring the human voice or solo instruments. While the latter may be a reflection of Dean's intimate knowledge of the demands of solo performance (attributable to his experience as a violist), it also shows a certain proclivity towards traditional concerto writing. The way in which the solo parts are given the leading voice of the musical discourse in works such as the clarinet concerto Ariel's Music (1995), his Viola Concerto (2005) or the violin concerto The Lost Art of Letter Writing (2006), lends the music its storytelling character. The titles of Dean's compositions suggest a particular focus on musical discourse, often including references to sources of inspiration or impulses beyond the music itself. While Ariel's Music, for example, owes its

title to the first name of a young woman who died of AIDS, the Pastoral Symphony for ensemble and tape (2000) focusses on the contrast between unspoiled nature and pollution. The orchestral work Ceremonial (2003) represents a personal protest against the violence of terrorism and war; the string quartet Eclipse (2003) is Dean's response to the dramatic incidents concerning the refugees known as the 'Boat people' in the Indian Ocean; Vexations and Devotions for chorus, children's chorus and orchestra (2005) throws a critical glance on the empty phrases used in the world of financial capitalism to conceal the pursuit of profit; and, finally, The Lost Art of Letter Writing is a work about the culture of letter writing which is about to die out as a result of increasing digitalisation.

Owing to the highly associative way in which he treats the tonal settings unfolding in his music, Dean manages to make these ambitious themes audible on the content level of the music. In the Pastoral Symphony, for instance, he creates a frightening, oppressing effect by using complex sound effects such as clusters charged with noise, before letting the music fade away into dry, wooden colours – symbolic of natural beauty which has been destroyed but which is then resurrected for a brief moment in the form of bird calls added from a tape. Overlaying these wooden colours of sound, a trumpet cantilena is heard that expresses a sense of mourning. Ariel's Music is another work which can be seen as a piece of funeral music. This is achieved by the declamatory motif of a major ninth when the solo clarinet is introduced; the motif, played in various guises, is affectively associated with the expression of mourning. Apart from these instances, the jazz elements in Moments of Bliss for orchestra and electronics (2004) – an instrumental anticipation of the opera Bliss, which, based on Peter Carey's novel, is currently being written – or the tonal layers taken from Carlo Gesualdo's madrigal Moro, lasso in Carlo for 15 strings, sampler and tape (1997) demonstrate that Dean is not only able to draw upon other stylistic elements, those that differ strongly from his own musical idiom, but is also capable of integrating them into his music in a seamless manner by exploiting their tonal logic for his writing. Vexations and Devotions, which features fragments of language that are electronically fed into the music, is a good example of this approach. One basic idea underlying these processes is an attempt to shape musical works as vital forms of cultural memory, as vehicles for protest and recollection. This is apparent, for example, in the way in which different stylistic techniques are referred to in The Lost Art of Letter Writing or in the quotation from Clara Schumann which pervades the ensemble work Recollections (2006) as a fragment of memory. If this attempt is successful, the form of recollection itself becomes part of the cultural memory bank, thereby inspiring future art.

Stefan Drees, 2009 (translation: Andreas Goebel)

## OPERAS

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### **Bliss**

**2004/06-07/09**

2 hr 30 min

Opera in three acts

Text: Libretto by Amanda Holden after the novel by Peter Carey (1981) (E)

Major roles: 3S,M,3T,2Bar,BBar; minor roles: 2S,T,Bar; dancers; chorus (up to 48 voices);

orchestra (mid-sized, between triple and double winds);

On-stage: cl, vln, git, upright piano; elec.vln;

electronics (only in part of the piece)

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### **World Premiere: 12 Mar 2010**

Opera House, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Neil Armfield, director; Opera Australia Chorus / Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

Conductor: Elgar Howarth

## FULL ORCHESTRA

### Amphitheatre

2000

11 min

#### Scene for orchestra

2(II=picc).af(=picc).2.heckelphone(or corA ad lib).1.bcl.dbcl.3.dbn-4.4.3.1-timp.perc(3):I=3roto-toms/crot/TD/SD/t.bells/marimba/xy/ly/ms; II=7tuned gongs/2tam-t(med.lg)/chin.cym/4susp.cym/SD; III=4tom-t/lg BD/2susp.cym/chin.cym/SD/vib/steel drums-harp-strings

*"It is a beautifully conceived work that, despite its brevity, generates an expansive timelessness that conjures up the imposing landscapes of Sibelius. Dean's deft handling of a large orchestra is immediately appealing, yet the work has layers of structural and expressive complexity that beckon further hearing." (Bronwen Arthur, The Australian, 19 Jun 2000)*

*"Amphitheatre encompasses clarity and succinctness in its brief musical message... It was a lesson in substance." (Jeremy Vincent, The Australian, 11 May 2001)*

9790202530504 **Orchestra (score)**

**World Premiere: 16 Jun 2000**

Concert Hall, Brisbane, Australia  
Queensland Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor: Daniel Harding

### Amphitheatre

(version for reduced orchestra)

2000

11 min

#### Scene for orchestra

2(II=picc).af(=picc).2.corA(=heckelphone ad lib).1.bcl.dbcl.2.dbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(3):I=3roto-toms/crot/TD/SD/t.bells/marimba/xy/ly/ms; II=7tuned gongs/2tam-t(med.lg)/chin.cym/4susp.cym/SD; III=4tom-t/lg BD/2susp.cym/chin.cym/SD/vib/steel drums-harp-strings

## Beggars and Angels

1999

26 min

#### Music for orchestra

4(I,II,III=picc,IV=afi).3(III=corA).4(II=Ebcl,III,IV=bcl).3(III=dbn)  
-6.4.3.1-timp.perc(4):I=vib/xy/lglsp/roto-toms/sizzle  
cym/2chin.cym/rainpipe/ratchet/2bongos/SD; II=drum kit/t.bells/cyms/3chin.cym/lg  
BD/tamb/4tuned metal plates;  
III=3tam-t/5tom-t/2chin.cym/5susp.cym/whip/2tgl/SD/TD/tamb/3wdbl/roto-toms/cabaca;  
IV=marimba/3tgl/crot/SD/lg BD/t.bells/2metal lids/3wdbl/ratchet/2chin.cym/5tuned metal  
plates-harp-pft(=cel)-strings

*"Beggars and Angels is at once an aggressive pictorial and ethereal journey, taking in a huge orchestral force. Played in one continuous breath, but with a decisive shift in mood midway through, the work delights in its expansive physical framework... [and] pushes its emotions in all directions." (Jeremy Vincent, The Australian, 08 Nov 1999)*

*"... an exciting soundscape that has a breadth of conception and a unified sense of structure that places Dean at the forefront of 21st century musical creativity." (Barbara Hebdan, Courier-Mail, 08 Nov 1999)*

9790202521625 **Orchestra (Study Score)**

**World Premiere: 04 Nov 1999**

Melbourne, VIC, Australia  
Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor: Markus Stenz

## Between Moments

2003

6 min

#### Music for orchestra, in memory of Cameron Retchford

2(II=picc).1.corA.0.0-3.1.3.0-perc(3):I=vib/sm tam-t(or gong)/sm susp.cym/glsp;  
II=cym/lg tam-t/lg susp.cym/glsp; III=BD/med susp.cym/field dr/glsp-harp-pft-strings

*"... a short, contemplative work, with restrained dynamics, long sustained sounds and subtle instrumental timbres. Atmospheric, controlled and sensitive..." (Courier Mail, 10 Jun 2003)*

**World Premiere: 07 Jun 2003**

QPAC Concert Hall, Brisbane, Australia  
Queensland Youth Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor: John Curro

## Ceremonial

2003

8 min

(second part of the orchestral triptych Three Memorials)

3(II,III=picc).3(III=corA).2.bcl.2.dbn-4.2.3.1-perc(4):I=timp/BD/rattle/alu-foil;  
II=vib/crot(2octaves)/gongspiel/tuned gongs(F2,G2)/seed-rattle; III=marimba/bass  
marimba/tam-t/2chin.cym/3susp.cym(lg to med/sm); IV=marimba/lg  
chin.tom-t/2tom-t(med,high)/2bongos(high)/2tgl(sm)/3Peking opera cym(susp)  
-harp-cel.pft-strings(min.14.12.10.8.6; 2nd vln desks 3-6 also play perc:sm bells/sleigh  
bells/house keys/sm containers of stones/toy bells etc.)

**World Premiere: 09 May 2003**

Perth, Australia

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Matthias Bamert

## Dispersal

2001

5 min

(first part of the orchestral triptych Three Memorials)

3(I,II,III=picc).3(III=corA).3(II,III=bcl).3(III=dbn)-4.3.picc  
tpt.3.1-timp(=whip/tamb).perc(3):I=xyl/vib/glsp/2tgl/lg BD; II=marimba/crot/brake  
dr/tamb/piece of corrugated iron; III=SD/4susp.cym/sizzle cym/2TD(or low  
tom-t)/2bongos/pedal BD/tam-t/t.bells-harp-pft-harmonium-strings

*"Dispersal is a powerful statement if ever there was one from a five-minute orchestral work. Deriving its title from the mass slaughter and driving out of Aborigines from their homelands, it begins with a tremendous maelstrom of disconnected sounds – stabs, shocks and searing outbursts – which give way to reveal a shadowy, eerie hymn setting..." (Graham Strahle, The Australian, 16 Nov 2001)*

**World Premiere: 09 Nov 2001**

Festival Theatre, Adelaide, Australia

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: David Alan Miller

## Komarov's Fall

2006

7 min

(third part of the orchestral triptych Three Memorials)

2.2picc.3.corA.2.Ebcl.2.bcl.2.dbn-6.3.2.btrbn.1-timp(=whip).perc(5):I=marimba/BD/alu-foil  
; II=xyl/glsp/5wdbl/3tom-t/crot(2octaves)/alu-foil; III=glsp/1crot/susp.cym/hi-hat/SD/sand  
paper; IV=vib/tam-t/alu-foil; V=tuned gongs/SD/med  
chin.cym/thundersheet/alu-foil-2harp-cel-strings

**World Premiere: 16 Mar 2006**

Philharmonie, Berlin, Germany

Berliner Philharmoniker

Conductor: Simon Rattle

FULL ORCHESTRA 4

## Moments of Bliss

1. Hotel Room (Awakening); 2. Heart of the Matter; 3. Knocking at the Hellgate; 4. Far  
2004 25 min

for orchestra and electronics

4(IV=picc).3(III=corA).4(II=Ebcl,III=bcl,IV=dbcl).3(II=whirly tube,III=dbn)  
-4.3.3.1-timp.perc(4):I=vib/SD/sizzle cym/tgl/3gongs/7cowbells; II=lg  
tam-t/5tom-t/3bongos/5susp.cym(incl.1sizzle cym)/whip/marimba(shared with IV)/glass  
chimes/tamb/tuned gong/whirly tube; III=sm tam-t/xyl/glsp/SD/lion's roar/4t.bells/tuned  
gong; IV=BD/marimba/full drum kit/glsp/2tgl/1crot/tuned  
gong-2harp-elec.git-pft(=cel).MIDI kbd(using Ableton LIVE via Mac computer)  
-strings(16.14.12.10.8; pincipal 1st vln=elec.vln; 2vln/vla/vlc=whirly tube; 1 female 2nd  
vln="Wheel of Fortune"; all vlc/db require a medium soft timpani stick)

*"Moments of Bliss [is] an orchestral suite drawn from an opera that Dean is writing based on Peter Carey's novel, Bliss. Introducing the work, (Markus) Stenz called it 'a true 21st-century piece', and in many ways it's an apt description, particularly in the use of sound effects and tape sequences. These ideas are hardly new in themselves, of course, but Dean manages to blend the electronic and the acoustic sounds in a fashion that makes previous attempts seem like a rehearsal for their real possibilities. He also backs it with some sensational instrumental writing, especially for bass and contrabass clarinet. I can't wait for the full opera." (Martin Ball, The Australian, 06 Dec 2004)*

*"This new score mirrors some Mahler characteristics: a huge orchestra, some extraordinary solos and unexpected instrumental combinations, a mixture of severely serious and popular music and an all embracing impression of sombre resignation. On its first outing, the work received a warm response; yet another substantial product from the MSO's active composer in residence." (Clive O'Connell, The Age, 04 Dec 2004)*

*"Dean's brilliant sense of humour comes to the fore in a suite of extracts from a forthcoming opera based on Peter Carey's novel Bliss... For this story of an Australian advertising executive who thinks he has died and gone to hell, Dean combines street noise, advertising jingles and air-conditioning hum in a hellist potpourri of modern life that climaxes in a convulsive orchestral heart attack. If Dean's vocal writing is half as expressive, he could be on course to produce the first great landmark opera of the 21st century." (Guardian, 18 June 2007)*

**World Premiere: 02 Dec 2004**

Hamer Hall, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Markus Stenz

FULL ORCHESTRA 4

## Parteitag

2004/05

11 min

Music for orchestral groups and video

Text: Video by Cazerine Barry

GROUP I: 1.1.1.bcl.1-2.0.picc tpt.2.1-perc(2):vib/glsp/crot(2octaves)/med tam-t/very sm susp.cym//4tom-t/SD/pedal BD/5susp.cym(1crash,1ride,1med chin.cym,1lg Peking opera cym,1sizzle.cym); GROUP II: 1.1.0.Ebcl.dbcl.0.dbn-2.0.picc tpt.1.btrbn.1-perc(2):glsp/5tuned gongs(D1,E-flat1,G-flat1,B-flat1,E-flat2)/SD/pedalBD/4susp.cym(1crash,1ride,1lg chin.cym,1med Peking opera cym)/lg tam-t/rain maker//1small susp.cym/steel drums(2pans, chromatic from E2 to C#4)/crot(2octaves); GROUP III: 4antiphonal tpt(placed singularly, separately and antiphonally, equidistant from the other groups); GROUP IV: timp.perc(1):glsp/4tom-t/SD/BD/pedal BD/4susp.cym(1crash,1ride,1sm chin.cym,1sm Peking Opera cym)/sm tam-t-MIDI kbd(4loudspeakers) -strings(min.14.12.10.8.6); oboists and members of the string section also play 4 plastic whirly tubes and 6 empty wine glasses of differing sizes (with thin tgl beaters)

**World Premiere: 03 Jun 2005**

Westergasfabriek, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Conductor: Markus Stenz

## Three Memorials

2001/03/06

20 min

I. Dispersal; II. Ceremonial; III. Komarov's Fall

## CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

### Carlo

1997

21 min

Music for strings and sampler

strings(8.0.3.3.1)-sampler (also: version for strings and live chorus)

"... a mesmeric score that shows again why Dean is perhaps the most significant of all Australian composers. It stands out as one of an increasingly small number of pieces that successfully mix live and electronic performance. The music, at once haunted and haunting, opens with taped Gesualdo and expands in every direction with strings that are by turns wispy and scorching." (John Allison, *The Times*, 31 Oct 2001)

"Dean's treatment [of Gesualdan motifs] is brilliantly imaginative, the splintering of vocal harmony into the screams and moans of Gesualdo's victims forming a particularly graphic climax." (*The Times*, May 1998)

"The best piece was Carlo... The strings mimic, fuse with and distort Gesualdo's gestures. A strange 20th century beauty emerges." (*Evening Standard*, May 1998)

9790202530405 (Full score)

**World Premiere: 05 Dec 1997**

Huntington Winery, Mudgee, Australia

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Brett Dean

### Etüdenfest

2000

10 min

for strings and piano

pft-strings(9.0.3.3.1)

"Etüdenfest takes as its starting point a series of the simplest technical exercises that young string players learn. Imaginatively varied and built upon, these little studies are given incarnations that are as intriguing and tricky as the originals are tedious..." (Neville Cohn, *West Australian*, 17 Nov 2000)

"There was ecstasy and dread... It all adds up to a chilling experience, a kind of spiritual tremble, something of a shadow across a grave." (John Carmody, *Sun Herald*, 26 Nov 2000)

**World Premiere: 10 Nov 2000**

Concert Hall, Brisbane, Australia

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Richard Tognetti

### Game over

2000

13 min

for instrumental soloists, string orchestra and electronics

cl(=bcl)-elec.gtr-perc(1):susp.cym/tom-t/chin.cym/2tam-t/SD/hi-hat/pedal  
BD-pft-elec.vln.vlc.db-strings(min.4.4.3.3.1)-multi track tape-CD player

"*Game Over is the composer's musical treatise against that most vacuous of television culture's genres, the game show... [and] stood out for the finely wrought complexity of its orchestral textures.*" (*Metropolitan*)

**World Premiere: 08 Apr 2000**

University of Iowa, Hansher Auditorium, Iowa City, United States

Bang on a Can; Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Brett Dean

### Pastoral Symphony

2000

17 min

for chamber orchestra

1(=picc).1.2(=Ebcl,bcl,Il=bcl).1(=dbn,flexatone)-2.2(=picc  
tpt).1(=flexatone).1(=flexatone)-perc(2):l=4tom-t/4susp.cym/SD/pedal  
BD/2bongos/2roto-toms/crot/marimba/tgl/tam-t; Il=vib/xyl/glsp/crot/sm  
chin.cym/BD/alu-foil/thundersheet-pft-kbd sampler-strings(3.3.3.1)-CD player

"*Pastoral Symphony begins with birdsong, moves into mechanized madness and ends with a sorrowing viola, like a prayer beside a grave, only this grave contains the entire planet and everything on it.*" (Robert Jones, *The Post and Courier*, 28 May 2002)

9790202521526 Orchestra (full score)

**World Premiere: 09 Feb 2001**

Maison de Radio France, Paris, France

Ensemble Modern

Conductor: Stefan Asbury

## Shadow Music

2002

21 min

for small orchestra

2(I,II=af,II=picc).2(II=corA).2(I,II=bcl).2-2.2.2.btrbn.0-timp(=tamb/chin.cym/tpl.bl/BD).perc  
(1):vib/tom-t/tgl/wdbl/SD/talking  
dr/BD/susp.cym/chin.cym/tam-t/maracas/whip/glsp/crot-harp-strings(min.10.8.6.4.2;  
3vlnII also play water gongs and susp.cym; 2vlnII also play bowed crot)

*"An orchestral soundscape in three movements, Shadow Music finds Dean in increasingly confident voice. There's nothing identifiably Antipodean about the accent, but his balance of form and content shows that 15 years as a violist with the Berlin Philharmonic were not wasted. The title suggests an indeterminate, often dark atmosphere, which the music amply embroiders. In 'Prelude' staccato rumblings cast long, shadowy lines that coalesce in an abrupt crescendo. 'Forgotten garden' is a dense hothouse of sound, full of ideas that sustain and renew themselves. 'Voices and Shadows' begins with atmospheric bowed crotales, before following trombone and contrabassoon into the bowels of the orchestra. Dean knows how to lead the ear..." (Andrew Clark, Financial Times, 09 Jul 2003)*

*"... a substantial, three-movement work, full of sombre sonorities, which gradually gains in musical weight." (The Guardian, 07 Jul 2003)*

**World Premiere: 13 Jun 2002**

Malthouse Theatre, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Markus Stenz

## Short Stories

2005

12 min

Five interludes for string orchestra

*"Interwoven between, and sometimes within, the [Vivaldi Flute] concertos was the world premiere of Brett Dean's Short Stories. Cleverly utilising a range of effects, including pizzicatti, glissandi and whispering harmonics, these evocative, tightly structured miniatures are, for the most part, brooding and unsettling, dominated by a threatening, nervous energy that occasionally swells up into frenzied outbursts. Only the elegiac, Arvo Pärt-like finale, Arietta, offers any sense of relief, albeit fleeting and unresolved. Once again, Dean proves that he is a composer with a distinctive voice and singular vision." (Murray Black, The Australian, 04 Jul 2005)*

*"[Dean's] miniature stories are a rich amalgam of images and sonorities. His string essays proceeded in stealthy fashion. The plucked strings seemed to conspire in whispers before converging onto a meshed canvas of solo melodies and glissandi, the sounds made by sliding a finger along a string. The celestial mood eventually succumbed to combative episodes. This is a finely crafted work." (Xenia Hanusiak, Herald Sun, 06 Jul 2005)*

9790202531891 **String Orchestra (Full score)**

**World Premiere: 02 Jul 2005**

City Recital Hall, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Richard Tognetti

## Testament

2008

14 min

Music for orchestra, after 'Testament: Music for twelve violas' (2002)

2(I,II=picc).2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp(=lg susp.cym)-strings (All string players require an additional bow without any traces of rosin on the hairs.)

**World Premiere: 07 Mar 2008**

Federation Concert Hall, Hobart, Australia

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Sebastian Lang-Lessing

## SOLO INSTRUMENT(S) AND ORCHESTRA

### Ariel's Music

1995

25 min

for solo clarinet and orchestra

3(I,III=picc).2.0.3(III=dbn)-4.2.2.1-timp.perc(3):I=4susp.cym/4tom-t/4wdbl/tabor(or lg SD)/2tgl(sm.lg)/ratchet; II=4tom-t/t.bells/BD/SD/tam-t/glsp/whip/susp.cym; III=4susp.cym/crot/tamb/5tom-t-harp-pft(=cel)-strings(min.12.10.8.6.5)

*"... a monumental and chillingly effective work, dedicated to Ariel Glaser, who died of AIDS in 1988 at the age of seven... The composer has uncommon skill in orchestration and describes a very emotional situation with contemporary music that is both sympathetic and powerful but never offensive." (Theodore Jahn, International Clarinet Journal, Feb 2000)*

**World Premiere: 29 Sep 1995**

Concert Hall, Brisbane, Australia

Paul Dean, clarinet; Queensland Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Markus Stenz

### Etüdenfest

2000

10 min

for strings and piano

pft-strings(9.0.3.3.1)

*"Etüdenfest takes as its starting point a series of the simplest technical exercises that young string players learn. Imaginatively varied and built upon, these little studies are given incarnations that are as intriguing and tricky as the originals are tedious..." (Neville Cohn, West Australian, 17 Nov 2000)*

*"There was ecstasy and dread... It all adds up to a chilling experience, a kind of spiritual tremble, something of a shadow across a grave." (John Carmody, Sun Herald, 26 Nov 2000)*

**World Premiere: 10 Nov 2000**

Concert Hall, Brisbane, Australia

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Richard Tognetti

## The Lost Art of Letter Writing

2006

38 min

for violin and orchestra

3(I,III=picc,II=afi).2(I,II=corA).2(II=bcl).bcl.2(II=dbn)-4.2.ttrbn.btrbn.1-timp(=sm bells,toy bells etc).perc(4):I=marimba/steel dr/3susp.cym/med water gong/sm bells/toy bells etc; II=marimba/steel dr/3susp.Chin cym/sm tam-t/2tgl/rain maker/TD(or lg tom-t)/sm bells/toy bells etc; III=vib/glsp/3susp.cym/sizzle cym/tam-t/4tuned gongs/water gong(med-sm)/sm bells/toy bells etc; IV=glsp/crot(2octaves)/tamb/1tuned gong/sm water gong/BD/pedal DB/4tom-t/SD/hi-hat/t.bells/sm bells/toy bells etc-harp-pft(prepared)-upright pft(=cel)-strings(14.12.10.8.6)

*"Dean is certainly not one of those composers whose works disappear from the repertoire after their premieres... His writing is brilliant and at the same time perfectly playable for the string instrument. Zimmermann indulges in his solo part; he brings the lyrical passages to life with subtle reservation. The Lost Art of Letter Writing is a most sincere and substantial work – it is art which needs neither pretension nor gimmicks." (Shirley Apherth, Financial Times, 11 Mar 2007)*

**World Premiere: 08 Mar 2007**

Philharmonie, Köln, Germany

Frank Peter Zimmermann, violin; Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

Conductor: Brett Dean

## The Siduri Dances

2007

10 min

Music for solo flute and string orchestra

## Viola Concerto

2004

27 min

3(I,III=picc,II=picc,afi).2(II=corA).2(II=bcl).2(II=dbn)  
-3.2.2.1-timp.perc(3):I=vib/5tom-t/SD/vibraslap/2tgl/sandpaper; II=xyll/sm  
tam-t/3chin.cym/5susp.cym/BD/tamb/5tuned gongs/3crot;  
III=marimba/crot(2octaves)/wdbl/tpl.bl/chin.cym/lg  
tam-t/cowbell/whip-harp-cel-pft-strings(12.10.8.6.5)

*"Dean is a top-flight viola player as well as an upwardly mobile composer. His new Viola Concerto is a substantial affair, elegantly proportioned and full of colourful musical imagery." (Andrew Clements, The Guardian, 21 Apr 2005)*

*"Dean has written something as personal as one would expect. The haunting and arresting sounds are all his own, and bright colours suggest a strong connection to his country's landscape. Indeed, the peaceful close, in which the previously hectic solo viola emerges purified, evokes a lullaby in which the earth seems to be singing itself to sleep." (John Allison, The Times, 19 Apr 2005)*

**World Premiere: 15 Apr 2005**

Barbican Hall, London, United Kingdom

Brett Dean, viola; BBC Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Rumon Gamba

## Water Music

2004

28 min

for saxophone quartet and chamber orchestra

solli ssax, asax, tsax, barsax;  
tpt-perc(4): I=tam-t/vib/timp/susp.cym(sm,lg)/glsp/SD/BD/tuned gong; II=tam-t/sizzle  
cym/sm susp.cym; III=crot/sm bells/med susp.cym/mark tree/med thundersheet;  
IV=crot/sm bells/lg susp.cym/lg thundersheet(all perc play water bowls in different sizes  
and water gongs)-pft(=MIDI keyboards)-strings

*"Even as the instruments first come into view, a murmur ripples through the audience: a podium with a huge variety of percussion instruments and four water tanks equipped with hoses through which air is blown. Diffuse, computer-programmed sounds emanate from the keyboard and unusual techniques produce atmospheric shades from the strings and saxophones... Everything scintillates and vibrates, solidifies into a vivid body of sound, and then catapults a monstrous energy into the air. Bold rhythms roll over the music like waves... The audience was thrilled, congratulating the musicians with loud bravos." (Christine Gehringer, Badische Neueste Nachrichten, 16. Jun 2004)*

**World Premiere: 18 Mar 2004**

Konserthus, Örebro, Sweden

Raschèr Saxophone Quartet; Swedish Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Christopher Lyndon-Gee

## VOICE(S) AND ORCHESTRA

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### **Songs of Joy**

**2008**

20 min

for baritone and orchestra

Text: Amanda Holden (E)

3.2.3.2-4.2.3.1-timp.perc(3)-harp-elec.git-strings

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**World Premiere: 02 Oct 2008**

Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, United Kingdom

Peter Coleman-Wright, baritone; Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor: Simon Rattle

## CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

### Bell and Anti-Bell

(From Parables, Lullabies and Secrets)

2001

14 min

for children's choir and small orchestra

Text: Michael Leunig (E); sound design by Paul Healy

perc(2):l=susp.cym/tam-t/vib/timp/hi-hat/SD/tom-t/chin.cym/crot/xylo/pedal  
BD/tamb/bongos; ll=glsp/t.bells/crot-2harp-strings-prerecorded CD-sampler

**World Premiere: 07 Jul 2001**

Concert Hall, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Gondwana Voices, Australian Chamber Orchestra

Conductor: Lyn Williams

### Vexations and Devotions

I. Watching Others; II. Bell and Anti-Bell; III. The Path to Your Door

2005

35 min

for SATB choir, children's choir and large orchestra

Text: Michael Leunig, Dorothy Porter; additional texts compiled by the composer (E)

2(ll=af),picc(=af),2.corA,2.bcl.dbcl,2.dbn-4,3.2.btrbn,1-timp(=1susp.chin.cym),perc(3):  
l=vib/glsp/5t.bells/SD/hi-hat/pedal BD/2tom-t/1susp.chin.cym/tam-t/wdbl;  
ll=crot(2octaves)/gongspiel(1octave:C3-C4)/BD/bongos/tamb/rainmaker/1susp.cym(sm  
)/flexatone; III=marimba/glsp/tom-t/susp.cym/mark tree/whip/flexatone-2harp-pft(=cel)  
-MIDI kbd(+sound engineer)-strings(16.14.12.10.8; min.14.12.10.8.7); 2bn also play  
mouth organs; members of the choirs also play 6 tuned bells, 4 water gongs and 5  
alu-foils

*"This three-movement work reflects the de-humanisation of contemporary life as exemplified by reality television, automated answering services and meaningless corporate jargon. A sense of restlessness, even anxiety, pervades the work from its extremely effective opening, where chaotic orchestral rumblings and murmuring voices lead to a plaintive enunciation of the word 'loneliness'. Dean's score is complex and multilayered, creating an imaginative array of textures while mostly avoiding any sense of narrative... The juxtaposition of the children's voices to represent innocence in contrast to the world-weary adult choir was especially moving at the end of the work, and the use of an old-fashioned telephone ring in the second movement created an ominous, Hitchcock-like dramatic effect. Dean's writing demands much of the orchestral musicians and WASO responded extremely well under the direction of Matthias Bamert." (Mark Coughlan, The Australian, 20 Feb 2006)*

*"The second movement in particular hit the proverbial nail on the head. I cannot imagine anyone in the audience who would not have identified with this movement... An abiding impression of this first performance is the seriousness of purpose that Dean has brought to bear on his writing for both orchestra and choir." (Neville Cohn, The West Australian, 20 Feb 2006)*

**World Premiere: 17 Feb 2006**

Concert Hall, Perth, Australia

West Australian Symphony Orchestra / WASO Chorus / Gondwana Voices

Conductor: Matthias Bamert

## ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITHOUT VOICE(S)

### Dream Sequence

**2008** 16 min

Music for ensemble

1(=picc).1(=corA).1.bcl.1-2.1.btrbn.0-perc(2):  
l=vib/crot(2octaves)/BD/tgl(sm)/sandpaper/lg sheet of newspaper(susp);  
ll=marimba/SD/4tom-t/4susp.cym/sizzle cym/tam-t/rainmaker-harp-pft(=cel)  
-strings(1.1.1.1.1)

**World Premiere: 20 Jun 2008**

Theaterhaus T1, Stuttgart, Germany  
Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart des SWR  
Conductor: Brett Dean

### Eclipse

**2003** 20 min

for string quartet

*"Eclipse was written in reaction to the 'Tampa Crisis' of 2001... The human drama at the heart of this power play is depicted programmatically throughout three unbroken movements... The members of Artemis held the audience in a lengthy silence after the quartet's last chord." (Lydia Steier, klassik-in-berlin.de, Oct 2004)*

*"... a beautifully fashioned gem... Dean's range and control of textures is outstanding, giving Eclipse a remarkable sculpted beauty that dazzles the ear." (Graham Strahle, The Australian, 12 Jul 2004)*

9790202531501 **String Quartet (Score & parts)**

**World Premiere: 02 Dec 2003**

Philharmonie, Köln, Germany  
Auryn Quartett

### Die Fledermaus

#### Overture

Johann Strauss, arranged by Brett Dean

8 min

arrangement for octet

cl, bn, hn, 2 vln, vla, vc, db

### Night Window

**1993** 22 min

Music for clarinet, viola and piano

cl(=bcl)-vla-pft

*"... a real tour-de-force in terms of instrumental scoring. Depicting human thoughts and behaviour at night time, the music surveyed a vast array of techniques and textures, as well as contrasts of moods ranging from sombre and reflective to hyperactive and wild... a substantial and interesting work." (Anthony Ritchie, chambermusic.co.nz, 29 Jul 2005)*

*"Night Window, which is influenced by a painting by Dean's wife and deals with states of mind after dark. It is an atmospheric piece skilfully scored and cleverly constructed which opens with wonderfully dark bass clarinet lines paired with dense viola writing, the piano is edgy and with often staccato sounds. It has a jazz and a thirties feel to some of the writing and is reminiscent of impressionistic French works of Milhaud and others such as the jazzy Martinu pieces of the time. It also brings to mind some of the great jazz wind soloists but all in a distinctive original package." (Garth Wilshere, chambermusic.co.nz, 17 Aug 2005)*

9790202519936 **Clarinet or Bass Clarinet, Viola, Piano (Score & parts)**

**World Premiere: 25 Jul 1993**

Brisbane, Australia  
Paul Dean, Brett Dean, Stephen Emmerson

### Night's Journey

**1997** 12 min

for four trombones

9790202519912 **4 Trombones**

**World Premiere: 04 Oct 1997**

Bielefeld, Germany  
Triton Posaunen Quartett

### Polysomnography

**2007** 17 min

Music for piano and wind quintet

fl.ob.cl.bn-hn-pft

9790202532232 **(Score & parts)**

**World Premiere: 07 Sep 2008**

Lukaskirche, Luzern, Switzerland  
Ensemble Wien-Berlin / Lars Vogt, piano

## Recollections

2006

14 min

for ensemble

0.0.1.0-1.0.0.0-perc(1):BD/Pedal BD/3tom-t/SD/tam-t/4susp.cym/vib/3tuned  
gongs(Bflat,B,C1)-pft-strings(1.0.1.1.1)

*"Top-class chamber music – Dean's setting combines different aspects of memory: memory resonating in a single phrase, momentary shocks or mysterious reverie. He translated into a score how three gong strokes unfold their harmony and colour. The last movement features a quotation from Clara Schumann, held in suspense behind an 'avantgarde' veil – a wonderful artistic device from the composer, whose piece was cheered like a home victory." (Olaf Weiden, Kölnische Rundschau, 19 Jun 2006)*

*"Dean is a voice of fertile imagination, originality and expressive subtlety. Each of his six brief sections is ingeniously constructed for winds, strings, percussion and piano. Swirls of color pass in patterned array, while the final movement weaves a microtonal haze around a Clara Schumann piano piece, to wonderfully surreal effect. Recollections is a terrific score that goes by all too quickly." (John von Rhein, Chicago Tribune, 14 Jan 2009)*  
9790202532041 **Mixed Ensemble (Study Score)**

**World Premiere: 18 Jun 2006**

Kraftwerk, Heimbach, Germany

Sharon Kam, Marie-Luise Neunecker, Hans-Kristian Kjos Sørensen, Antje Weihaas,  
Hartmut Rhode, Tanja

## some birthday...

1992

14 min

for two violas and cello

*"With some birthday... Dean shows his humorous side. This piece transports the old 'Happy Birthday to You!' into new and unexpected realms of expression. The result is preposterous, bewildering and extremely funny." (Berliner Morgenpost, 01 Jul 1994)*

9790202521588 **2 Violas, Cello**

**World Premiere: 04 May 1992**

BKA, Berlin, Germany

Brett Dean, Walter Küssner, Anna Carewe

## Testament

2002

14 min

for twelve violas

*"Testament relates to Beethoven's desperate document written in Heiligenstadt. Bows without rosin whisper and scrape like Beethoven's erratic quill, quotes from the Rasumovsky Quartets and the Eroica flutter past in a shadowy manner, disturbingly like broken fragments in Beethoven's own failing ears. Dean's intimate experience with his colleagues, the instrument and the entire orchestra is composed into the work. The twelve instrumentalists, each with independent soloistic voices, sound together more like a hundred. This fascinating, multi-layered portrait-homage to the Berliners and their Beethoven style was the centrepiece of an electrifying concert." (Ellen Kohlhaas, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 18 Jun 2003)*

*"Dean's Testament touched on Beethovenian profundity." (Sybill Mahlke, Der Tagesspiegel, 13 Jun 2003)*

9790202530955 **12 Violas**

**World Premiere: 11 Jun 2003**

Philharmonie, Kammermusiksaal, Berlin, Germany

Philharmonische Bratschen Berlin

## Three Pieces for Eight Horns

1998

14 min

9790202519905 **8 Horns (Score & parts)**

**World Premiere: 27 Oct 1998**

Philharmonie, Kammermusiksaal, Berlin, Germany

Horn players of the Berlin Philharmonic

Conductor: Brett Dean

## Twelve Angry Men

1996

18 min

for twelve cellos

*"Twelve Angry Men takes the expressive qualities of 12 cellos and casts them as musical versions of the 12 jurors in Sidney Lumet's 1957 film of the same name... It's a great starting point for a piece of music and Dean's fine musical instincts turned string sounds into palpable human drama." (Harriet Cunningham, Sydney Morning Herald, 17 Jan 2005)*

**World Premiere: 19 Feb 1997**

Philharmonie, Berlin, Germany

Die 12 Cellisten der Berliner Philharmoniker

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## Voices of Angels

1996

26 min

for violin, viola, cello, double bass and piano

*"This quintet occupies an emotional landscape that is rich in character, suggestive of the creatures the composer is celebrating, packed with quicksilver touches and also vehement and driving segments that reinforce the intended image of a different angel to the cherub of sentimental religiosity."* (Clive O'Connell, *The Age*, 19 June 2002)

9790202519929 Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Piano (Score & parts)

**World Premiere: 12 Jun 1996**

Philharmonie, Kammermusiksaal, Berlin, Germany

Mi-Kyung Lee, Brett Dean, Ludwig Quandt, Esko Laine, Imogen Cooper

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## Wendezeit

(Homage to F.C.)

1988

5 min

for five violas

**World Premiere: 09 Sep 2004**

National Academy of Music, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Students of the National Academy of Music

Conductor: Brett Dean

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## ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER WITH VOICE(S)

### Buy Now, Pay Later!

Tim Freedman, arranged by Brett Dean

**2002**

7 min

for voice and ensemble

Text: Tim Freedman (E)

perc(1):SD/2tom-t/3susp.cym/hi-hat/pedal BD/tam-t(or deep gong; much of perc part ad lib)-pft-strings(1 2nd vln plays 2t.bells)

**World Premiere: 06 Feb 2003**

Town Hall, Wollongong, Australia

Tim Freedman, voice; members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra

### Winter Songs

**2000**

26 min

for tenor and wind quintet

Text: based on poems of e.e.cummings (E)

fl(=picc,af).ob(=corA).cl(=bcl).bn-hn

*"The poems chosen by the composer are late, dark and gnomic (even by Cummings's standards) and the half-hour of music they inspire is emotionally charged and on a symphonic scale. The vocal line travels from a whisper to a scream. Dean writes for the quintet as though it is an orchestra, drawing from the players an astonishing variety of texture and colour."*

(Andrew Ford, *Limelight*, Jan 2004)

9790202521519 Tenor, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn (Score)

**World Premiere: 30 Jan 2001**

Philharmonie, Kammermusiksaal, Berlin, Germany

Scott Weir, tenor; Philharmonisches Bläserquintett Berlin

Conductor: Hermann Bäumer

## Wolf-Lieder

(Wolf Songs)

**2006**

22 min

for soprano and ensemble

Text: Emanuel Geibel, Hugo Wolf, Jana de Boniface, Charles Bukowski, Paul Heyse (G)

1.1.2.1/1.1.1.0/2 perc, hp, pno/ strings

*"Dean's five-movement cycle is a hyper-sensitive, thrillingly imaginative exploration of Wolf's music and his madness. The Canadian soprano Valdine Anderson internalised its challenging vocal writing so entirely that, even in its first performance, she made it deeply expressive... At its heart is the poem that sparked Dean's imagination, When Hugo Wolf went mad, by the American beat poet Charles Bukowski. Its brutal and violent lines juxtapose Wolf's dementia with the scarcely less deranged reaction of a fictitious landlady. Vibraphone and harp reverberate through a whirling vortex of dark bass woodwind and strings. Sound is constantly bent and refracted as Dean creates a fusion of three viewpoints: that of the suffering composer, the landlady, and of us, the horrified onlookers. The five pieces together form a beautifully ordered collage of a disordered mind. The music expires in string tremolos and a voice that is little more than a death rattle. To achieve all this with such subtlety reveals the true stature of a composer whose violin and viola concertos will be premiered this year." (Hilary Finch, *The Times*, 17 Jan 2007)*

*"The five-movement cycle begins and ends with transcriptions for a resourcefully-deployed chamber orchestra of songs by the composer [Wolf] himself, the concluding one becoming particularly poignant in the context of the deterioration we have witnessed. Along the way Dean draws a richness of scoring reminiscent of the achievements of Wolf's contemporaries Schoenberg, Berg and Webern in their familiarising reductions of major orchestral works by Mahler, Debussy and others. At one point he provides a rippling underlay evocative of the drowning of Berg's Wozzeck, and elsewhere expressionistic wispy textures provides nightmarish textures." (Christopher Morley, *The Birmingham Post*, 16 Jan 2007)*

*"Brett Dean's striking new song cycle is a portrait of the 19th-century Austrian composer, Hugo Wolf, who ended his days in a Viennese asylum... Dean creates a vivid portrait of crumbling sanity... The highly charged soprano lines are surrounded by instrumental textures that are always in flux, whether whirling past in high speed, interlocking skeins, or melting into amorphous masses of pitches and pulses... the meshing of the two elements [voice & instruments] was precise, and the psychological state they suggested vivid." (Andrew Clements, *The Guardian*, 18 Jan 2007)*

**World Premiere: 14 Jan 2007**

CBSO Centre, Birmingham, United Kingdom

Valdine Anderson, soprano; Birmingham Contemporary Music Group

Conductor: Sakari Oramo

**PIANO(S)**

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**Equality**

**2004**

3 min

for solo piano with speaking part

Text: Michael Leunig (E)

9790202531679 **Piano**

**World Premiere: 10 Jul 2004**

Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham, United Kingdom

Sara Nicolls, piano;

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**Prayer**

**2005**

3 min

for solo piano with speaking part

Text: Michael Leunig (E)

## INSTRUMENTAL

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### Demons

2004

7 min

for solo flute

9790202531662 Flute

**World Premiere: 02 May 2004**

Seoul, Korea

Sharon Bezaly, flute;

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### Huntington Eulogy

2001

15 min

for cello and piano

9790202530658 Cello, Piano

**World Premiere: 17 Jan 2002**

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, United Kingdom

Alban Gerhardt, cello; Steven Osborne, piano

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### Intimate Decisions

1996

10 min

for solo viola

*"Intimate Decisions communicated fervor and mastery of instrumental colour." (Melbourne Age, 30 Jun 1997)*

*"The work evolved from a series of bare intervals into an unstoppable wave of energy. The climax was an impassioned outburst, but the end of the piece returned to the private unease of the opening: a haunting melody, played with whistle-like harmonics, which gradually ebbed into silence." (The Guardian, May 2002)*

9790202519943 Viola

**World Premiere: 21 Jun 1997**

Leicester, United Kingdom

Brett Dean, viola;

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### Three Caprichos after Goya

**I. Que sacrificio!; II. Dios la perdone: Y era su madre; III. No te escaparás**

2003/04

5 min 30 sec

for solo guitar

9790202531914 Guitar

**World Premiere: 06 Sep 2003**

Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Germany

Jürgen Ruck, guitar;

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VOCAL

**Poems and Prayers**

**2006** 15 min

for mezzo-soprano and piano

Text: Michael Leunig (E)

**World Premiere: 07 Aug 2006**

Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria

Magdalena Kozena, mezzo-soprano; Malcolm Martineau, piano

**Sparge la morte**

**2006** 14 min

for solo cello, vocal consort of five voices and tape, after Gesualdo's madrigal

Text: Gesualdo's madrigal of the same title, from his 4th book of madrigals (I)

**World Premiere: 09 Mar 2006**

Carnegie Hall, Zankel Hall, New York, NY, USA

Maya Beiser, cello; Lionheart Vocal Ensemble

## CHORAL

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### Katz und Spatz

1999/2002

8 min

for eight-part mixed chorus

Text: Sophia von Wilcken, and excerpts from Adolf Hoffmeister's libretto for Hans Krása's opera "Brundibár" (G)

*"Dean's brief work has a centred emotional impact, due partly to the muttered sounds that pepper the opening pages and the later oscillation between sudden strident bursts and very quiet passages. There is no attempt to mimic the physical awfulness of the Jewish Holocaust experience; rather, the work makes its impact by understatement, hinting at horrors rather than spelling them out and reaching its final bars by snuffing out the various individual voices until an awful silence prevails; a highly effective and affecting piece."* (Melbourne Age)

9790202530689 **SSAA, TTBB**

**World Premiere: 13 Apr 2002**

Stockholm, Sweden

Swedish Radio Choir

Conductor: Tonu Kaljuste

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### Now Comes the Dawn

2007

3 min 30 sec

for mixed chorus

Text: Richard Watson Gilder (E)

treble I/II, alto, tenor, bass; may also be performed by SSATB choir

9790202532089 **(Choral Score)**

**World Premiere: 24 Dec 2007**

King's College Chapel, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Choir of King's College

Conductor: Stephen Cleobury

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### Tracks and Traces

2002

9 min

Four songs for children's choir, based on texts by indigenous Australians

Text: Ernie Dingo, Debby Barben, Grandfather Koori, Michael Leunig (E)

three- and four-part treble choir

**World Premiere: 25 Jan 2003**

Angel Place Recital Hall, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Gondwana Voices

Conductor: Lyn Williams

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MISCELLANEOUS

**hundreds and thousands**

**1999**

39 min

for five-track tape

Text: Alistair Noon (E)

**World Premiere: 30 Dec 1999**

Kulturforum, Berlin, Germany

Berliner Philharmoniker (sound installation)