

Publication Title: Transformation – Music by Roger Smalley for Percussion, Piano and Electronics

Publication Category: F7.1 Recorded/Rendered Creative Work (major)

Publication Outlet and Details: Tall Poppies Records

Author: Christopher Tonkin (recording engineer, producer, electronics), Adam Pinto (piano), Paul Tanner (percussion)

Date: 2017

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This full-length CD, released by Tall Poppies Records in late 2017, brings together previously unrecorded works for percussion, piano and electronics by composer Roger Smalley (1943 – 2015). Begun in 2015, the recording project preserves the composer’s legacy, bringing otherwise unavailable music into public awareness. The CD (and its digital release) makes these works available for listening, thereby greatly increasing the likelihood of their reintroduction into the performance repertoire of 20th and 21st century Australian art music.

RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

The CD presents three premiere recordings, those of *Transformation*, *Music for an Imaginary Ballet* and *Morceau de Concours*—the first studio recordings of these works and presently the only recordings of any kind publicly available. Of the remaining two works, *Monody and Ceremony I*, the new recordings are at present the only publicly available. Beyond the uniqueness of the recordings themselves, the recording process was itself innovative. *Transformation* and *Monody* represent a first in the digital implementation of the electronic processing, applied with a precision in the studio unachievable in live performance. The works for percussion contrast with regard to microphone technique—where the placement for *Music for an Imaginary Ballet* sought to faithfully capture the arrangement of instruments as placed on the stage, the four parts for *Ceremony I* were separately recorded, then independently spatialised in the studio recreating the movement of the players in the performance space as directed in the composer’s sketches and score.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The album was released on Tall Poppies Records (TP256) in late 2017 and is available for purchase through Buywell, the AMC and iTunes Music Store. The recordings are complemented by performances over 2016/17 (Perth, Shanghai) and the preparation of first edition scores of *Transformation* and *Music for an Imaginary Ballet*.