

D A I

F U J I K U R A

**M I N A**



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M I N A

1. MINA

CONCERTO FOR 5 SOLOISTS AND ORCHESTRA (LIVE RECORDING)

*performed by International Contemporary Ensemble (Claire Chase [flute, bass flute], Nick Masterson [oboe, bells], Joshua Rubin [clarinet, bass clarinet, bells], Rebekah Heller [bassoon, bells], Nathan Davis [hammered dulcimer]), Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor: Martyn Brabbins*

2. PRISM SPECTRA

FOR VIOLA AND ELECTRONICS (STUDIO RECORDING)

*performed by Miranda Cuckson (viola) + David Adamcyk (electronics)*

3. FOLLOWING

FOR BASSOON (STUDIO RECORDING)

*performed by Rebekah Heller*

4. THE SPIRIT OF BEINGS

FOR CELLO AND ELECTRONICS (STUDIO RECORDING)

*performed by Matthew Barley*

5. RECORDER CONCERTO

(LIVE RECORDING)

*performed by Ensemble Resonanz, Jeremias Schwarzer (recorder)  
conducted by Peter Rundel*

6. WONDROUS STEPS

FOR 6 PLAYERS (LIVE RECORDING)

*performed by LUCERNE FESTIVAL Ensemble  
conducted by Chin-Chao Lin*

M I N A

*This is the first piece I composed after the birth of my first child. I started a month after she (“Mina”) was born. When I completed the piece, she was a five-month-old baby!*

*I was truly inspired by attending the childbirth (not that I did anything there), especially by the sight of a newborn baby. I was amazed how one’s life on earth starts so suddenly. This piece also begins as if it starts in the middle; the soloists play together at first, as if they were one instrument. I wanted to show how rapidly the mood of the music shifts from one mood to another, just as if you were looking at the baby’s face, which displays four expressions in one second...*

*Also in the middle of the piece, the bass flute solo is accompanied by prepared dulcimer and bells and so on; I imagined it as a dreaming section. It is strange, looking at a one-month-old baby: you can tell clearly she is dreaming, but about what, I wonder. She has only been here for a month; what can she see, to make her smile or cry, so vivid is her dream. I found this experience both mysterious and peaceful, looking over the crib she is sleeping in.*

*Mina was commissioned by the Seattle Symphony Orchestra and co-commissioned by Bamberg Symphony Orchestra and Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra. This piece was written for an orchestra with five soloists who are from ICE—a chamber ensemble with whom I have long-standing relationship and with whom I can work most intimately. Despite the fact we have a vast ocean between us (I live in London, ICE is in New York), we communicated via Skype and email, recording samples on phones and computers and sending them back and forth; I felt as if they were in my room in London while I composed. I think that this is the best composer-player relationship you can ask for!*

*The orchestra’s role is to surround the soloists, almost like parents do to their children; they react, sometimes initiate the reaction, sometimes there are five different concerti playing simultaneously with specific coupling between the solo instrument and orchestral instruments.*

*So obviously this piece was written in very special time of my life.*

*Dai Fujikura*

P R I S M  
S P E C T R A

*My initial idea was to create a virtual string orchestra which would be controlled by the solo violist. I thought that this would be every violist's dream!!!*

*Sometimes being a composer - a wizard who aims to make an instrumentalist's dream come true - is challenging. This virtual string orchestra had some 'ego' problems. Sometimes they don't obey the soloist, sometimes they are late, sometimes they play much louder than they should and sometimes they play out of tune...so in this sense, it is really a virtual orchestra!*

*I also decided to add another layer to the piece and decided to use semi-improvised live electronics. While I was working in the studio with my sound designer, Manuel Poletti, I referred to these electronic elements as my -"friends". I designed them to behave like fish in a tropical sea. Sometimes they swim through the piece in a shoal sometimes they dart past like little rays of light coming in and out of shady coral.*

*All of these sounds are generated in response to the soloist, so the viola controls almost everything.*

*Dai Fujikura (edited by Harry Ross)*

F O L L O W I N G

*A follow-up to solo Bassoon piece, Calling (2011), and using motives from my Bassoon Concerto (2012), Following focuses on the velvet, fluid tone of the bassoon. Like viewing a river from above, with the sun reflected on its surface, this piece flows with smooth, strong curves. Sometimes the river is thin and sharp, sometimes thick and churning, but the water always flows with determined tranquility.*

*Dai Fujikura (edited by Rebekah Heller)*

T H E  
S P I R I T  
O F  
B E I N G S

*This piece was written for cellist Matthew Barley's Britten Centenary tour. In this tour this work will be performed in over 30 different venues from concert halls to lighthouse, old swimming pool, possibly prisons, a woodland, pubs, churches, cathedrals, schools, conservatoires and library at The Red House, where Britten lived. Therefore I needed this piece to work in any location, so I decided to use quite practical technology for the electronics part. This is a departure from my other electronic works which I have produced in IRCAM and Experimentalstudio SWR as they use much more complex technology.*

*I also thought that the fact that the same soloist will play this work 30 times, especially accompanied by a prepared electronic track could give me an opportunity to write movements which could be played in any order so I decided that the work would consist of four movements. Each electronic track for each movement can be played from any type of music player. If the soloist decides he can play the electronics on a device in shuffle mode. This helps the soloist to have a different track order for each performance if he feels like it. This gave me a great challenge - how is it possible for me to structure the whole piece when the*

performer can choose different permutations of movements - making the opening and closing of the piece different in each rendition? Some of the movements have a smooth transition into the next movement if they are placed together. Some do not.

Matthew Barley suggested the concept for this piece - it should be about pre-life. Whilst I was writing this work, my wife and I had our first baby, so this was an apt concept for me to broach musically.

The four movements in the piece are:

Aria

Floating

Awakening

Unending

I imagined that a child is a spirit waiting to be born. The spirit of the child chooses the parent. It floats around, maybe it is bounced around, and somehow, some sort of energies or aura meet. The spirit chooses the mother, from whom the spirit wants to be born ("floating"). While floating, I imagined that the spirit leaves a trace, a path of movement which makes a

beautiful line, which is like a smooth melody ("aria"). When the spirit has decided the parent, I imagined that it locks into the spirit of the mother; cracking the spirit shell of the mother to get inside and start growing ("awakening"). But then these journeys seem endless by nature - a part of reincarnation - so the spirit in turn is unending, just repeatedly preparing to visit the earth, perhaps in different shapes ("unending").

(In this recording, the order of the movements is: Unending, Awakening, Floating, Aria)

Dai Fujikura (edited by Harry Ross)

R E C O R D E R  
C O N C E R T O

*My starting point for this concerto was to research and explore the recorder's unique attributes. I found that the articulation of the players can be directly magnified by the recorder, so I thought I should make a piece in which the string orchestra functions as an amplification of the articulations which come from the recorder. In other words, everything in this work originates from the mouth of the soloist.*

*I also had an image that the recorder player is playing somewhere in the desert and a simoom starts and blows the sands around him, sometimes entangling the recorder sometimes leaving it, sometimes returning.*

*Dai Fujikura (edited by Harry Ross)*

## W O N D E R O U S S T E P S

*For this work, I was asked to base my idea on risk management, a subject I knew nothing about. Consequently I had to study the subject a lot. I also found out that my good friend was actually a professional risk management expert. He recommended many books on the subject. The concept that attracted me the most in these books, was that toddlers are risk management experts! When trying to walk for the first time they do so knowing they will definitely fall over but the curiosity and imagined joy of walking is greater and so the toddler tries, having assessed all of the risks. Because of this, humans can walk on two feet.*

*The piece has a microscopic point of view, and a universal theme, but also is based on an exact toddler, my daughter Mina who was 19 months old when I finished writing this piece.*

*The first section expresses the micro expressions of the toddler trying to walk. Joy and excitement as well as worry and shock. As you can see in a toddler's face, these expressions change very fast. Also, I based the work on my daughter's demeanour when you can't tell what she's feeling, as if she's moving from one emotion to another.*

*In the second section of the piece, she tries to walk. The work accelerates and then suddenly slows down, in a haltering way which is full of joy. The next section of the piece is based on dreaming. The toddler often develops whilst sleeping. Each morning my daughter surprises me, as she can do things which she couldn't the day before, like climbing up the chair or jumping, or walking. By the last section, she has learnt to walk and can run. Actually this is the situation where my daughter was as I finished this work. In the small room where I composed this work, she was running from corner to corner, sometimes she was outside of the room so I could only hear her footsteps coming towards me. Sometimes there was a mysterious silence. Sometimes some sort of noise then cries as she tried something new, like climbing a chair, but couldn't fully execute her plan. Therefore this work is a musical exploration of how a toddler, a risk management expert, develops.*

*Dai Fujikura (edited by Harry Ross)*

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WONDROUS STEPS

*On behalf of Swiss Re Wondrous Steps was commissioned by LUCERNE FESTIVAL and recorded live at its world premiere on 26 September 2013 by the LUCERNE FESTIVAL Ensemble conducted by Chin-Chao Lin at SRE150 The International Quarters, London, UK, as part of „Musik at Risk“ - a commission project launched on the occasion of Swiss Re's 150 years anniversary celebration in 2013.*

RECORDER CONCERTO

*(p) 2014 courtesy of VPRO/The Netherlands*

*All tracks composed, edited, mixed and mastered by Dai Fujikura*



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COMPACT  
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