

Spirit of the Plains



Bradley Kunda, GUITAR
Laura van Rijn, FLUTE



Spirit of the Plains (Bradley Kunda, 2015)

- I. Pan
- II. The West Wind
- III. Fantasy

Spirit of the Plains is inspired by the paintings of Sydney Long (1871-1955). Long remains a unique voice in Australian art, particularly for his rendering of the Australian landscape in the European Art Nouveau style; he extends the branches of gum trees into flowing lines with sinuous curves, and he decorates the bush with mythical figures – fauns, nymphs and satyrs. Brolgas and magpies are enchanted by the flute, played by Pan, the Greek god of nature, shepherds, flocks, and pastoral music (*Pan*, 1989), or by a similarly evocative feminine spirit (*The Spirit of the Plains*, 1897/1914; *The West Wind*, 1909). The iconographic Art Nouveau image of spirited dancing girls with flowing dresses is a feature of Long's work *Fantasy* (c. 1914), where the figures are engulfed by Long's dreamy and imaginative depiction of trees and moonlight.

The musical language of *Spirit of the Plains* for flute and guitar draws particularly on the French music of Long's day, especially that of Maurice Ravel, whose meandering lines and lush textures are a fitting allusion to the Art Nouveau style. In the spirit of Long's appropriation, however, this characteristic style is re-imagined through an Australian lens; the overtone-rich and colourful sound of the Australian classical guitar evokes its own harmonic and textural sound world, which pairs beautifully with Pan's own instrument – the flute – in an Australian re-imagining of the musical and visual world of the *fin de siècle*.

Recorded 6 September 2015

Studio C, Fine Music 102.5, Sydney

Recording engineer: Jayson McBride

Editing: Bradley Kunda

Mastering: Bob Scott

Special thanks to Laura van Rijn, Rebecca MacCallion, Tania & Peter Kunda, Tim Kain, and Frank and Leanne Koonce.

Cover image:

Sydney Long *The Spirit of the Plains* 1914 (detail), oil on canvas, 76.8 x 153.7 cm, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, purchased 1971. Reproduced with the kind permission of the Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia

Bradley Kunda guitar/composition

Australian classical guitarist Bradley Kunda has been lauded 'among the best of his generation of world-class performers.' To date his concert career has seen him perform with some of Australia's leading ensembles and instrumentalists; he is a member of Australia's premier guitar quartet Guitar Trek, as well as the Brew Guitar Duo, and he has collaborated with a diverse range of artists in many of Australia's most prestigious festivals, including the Adelaide and Darwin International Guitar Festivals, the Canberra International Music Festival, and the Tyalgum Festival of Classical Music. Bradley was a frequent artist in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's pre-eminent Sunday Live series, and has given concerts for Musica Viva Countrywide.

2013 saw Bradley as a finalist for the Music Council of Australia's Freedman Fellowship for Classical Music, placing him alongside the most promising of young Australian classical musicians. Among his many awards include First Prize in the Fifth International Competition "Festival de Córdoba" (Spain), a Canberra Critic's Circle Award (Australia), and the audience prize in the Nikšić International Guitar Competition (Montenegro).

A passionate exponent of contemporary Australian classical music, Bradley has premiered new works by composers including Peter Sculthorpe, Robert Davidson, Marc Isaacs and Richard Charlton. A talented arranger and composer himself, he has been featured in ABC Classic FM's Young Australian Composers series celebrating "Australian Music Month," and has been commissioned to write for various celebrated instrumentalists, including William Barton and Anthony Garcia.

Bradley holds a doctorate in guitar performance from the Australian National University, where his mentor was eminent guitarist and pedagogue, Timothy Kain AM. He has taught into the degree programs at The Australian National University and the University of Newcastle. Since late-2014 he has been mentored by Australia's most esteemed musical educator, Richard Gill OAM, in conducting, musical analysis, and piano accompaniment.

Bradley's recordings are available on ABC Classics (Australia) and Soundset Recordings (USA)



Laura van Rijn flute

Laura van Rijn is currently completing a doctorate in Music Performance at the Australian National University, studying with Virginia Taylor and Vernon Hill. She previously completed a Bachelor of Music degree with first class honours at the University of Western Australia (studying with Neil Fisenden) and also holds a master's degree from ANU. During 2013 she was the flute fellow in the prestigious Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program, performing across New South Wales with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and chamber music groups. In 2014 Laura performed with the Auckland Philharmonia in the roles of Principal and Associate Principal Flute.

Throughout her career Laura has performed with many orchestras including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Sinfonia, Auckland Philharmonia, Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Canberra International Music Festival Orchestra, Llewellyn Choir Orchestra and the Australian Youth Orchestra. She was also selected by the ANU to perform in Shanghai at the World Expo in 2010 with guitarist Andrey Lebedev and in 2011 won the Australian International Flute Festival Competition, which she was invited back to adjudicate in 2013.

The WAYO Travelling scholarship and Lenard and Margaret Doman bursary allowed Laura to further her studies in England at the Oxford and Woldingham flute summer schools, and to participate in masterclasses with world-renowned musicians Michael Cox, Reinhard Goebel, Ian Clarke, Paul Edmund-Davies, Peter Lloyd, Felix Renggli and Wendy Quinlan.



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www.bradleykunda.com

REFERENCES

Long, Sydney. 1897. *The Spirit Of The Plains*. Oil on canvas on wood. Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery.

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