



**ENSEMBLE
OFFSPRING**

Songbirds

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1. Fiona Loader

Lorikeet Corroboree (2015) 5'36

for flute, clarinet and vibraphone

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale, Jason Noble,
Claire Edwardes

2. Hollis Taylor / Jon Rose

Owen Springs Reserve 2014 (2015) 6'29

for vibraphone and field recording

Performed by Claire Edwardes

3. Brett Dean

Notes from the Twittersphere (2015) 2'59

I. Poco agitato, intimo

II. Misterioso

III. Presto

for piccolo

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale

4. Jane Stanley

Desert Rose (from *Four Desert Flowers*) (2010) 2'40

for flute and vibraphone

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale, Claire Edwardes

5. Felicity Wilcox

People of This Place (2016) 7'56

for bass clarinet

Performed by Jason Noble

6. Tristan Coelho

Daybreak (2018) 9'33

for flute and live electronics

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale

Gerard Brophy

Beautiful Birds (2019) 15'20

7. I. Lyrebirds 4'01

8. II. Flamingos 5'23

9. III. Hummingbirds 5'56

for flute/alto flute, bass clarinet and vibraphone

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale,
Jason Noble, Claire Edwardes

10. Hollis Taylor / Jon Rose

Bitter Springs Creek 2014 (2019) 7'44

for flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone and field recording

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale,
Jason Noble, Claire Edwardes

11. Kate Moore

Blackbird Song (2018) 9'29

for alto flute, bass clarinet and vibraphone

Performed by Lamorna Nightingale,
Jason Noble, Claire Edwardes

TOTAL DURATION: 67'46

Fiona Loader

Lorikeet Corroboree (2015)

for flute, clarinet and vibraphone

Lorikeet Corroboree was written for Ensemble Offspring in 2015 during a residency at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. It was inspired by the beautiful rainbow lorikeets that visit me every morning and who dance after a feeding frenzy. This led me to many hours of documenting birdcall and transcribing melodic fragments derived from not only lorikeets but also other Australian birds including butcherbirds, magpies, and even a nightingale (also a musical reference to Lamorna Nightingale, Ensemble Offspring's flautist). There is much melodic dialogue between the parts in *Lorikeet Corroboree* just as birds in the forest do not sing in isolation but in melodic collaboration, by answering each other's musical sentences.

Fiona Loader is an accompanist, singer and freelance composer. She completed her master's degree in Composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2016, studying with Paul Stanhope. She was a music fellow (composer in residence) at Trinity Grammar School in 2016. She has had works performed and commissioned by numerous ensembles such as Halcyon Ensemble, Sydney Conservatorium of Music's Early Music Ensemble, and Leichhardt Espresso Chorus. Her works have been recorded for broadcast by ABC Classic, Fine Music and presented as part of Musica Viva Festival and the Four Winds Festival.

Hollis Taylor / Jon Rose

Owen Springs Reserve 2014 (2015)

for vibraphone and field recording

Based on a pied butcherbird's nocturnal song recorded west of Alice Springs (5:20am, 27 August), *Owen Springs Reserve 2014* belongs to the twenty-first century to be sure, but the music sung by these birds is ancient, extending back millions of years. Although they may share some phrases, each bird has its unique songs that develop and transform from season to season. Paired with the original recording, a degree of what we may describe as improvisation pertains to each performance and this quality of flexibility is key to our oeuvre of birdsong works.

Hollis Taylor is a violinist/composer, ornithologist, and author living in The Blue Mountains. Her practice takes in sound and radiophonic arts, and performing (re)compositions of Australian pied butcherbird songs on violin with outback field recordings. Her book, *Is Birdsong Music? Outback Encounters with an Australian Songbird*, and her double CD, *Absolute Bird*, were recently released. These works are a collaboration with her partner Jon.

Jon Rose is an iconic experimental violinist, composer and improviser. He has created large environmental multimedia works, engaging with interactive electronic systems, building experimental musical instruments, and creating radiophonic works. In 2009 the Kronos Quartet commissioned him to write and build *Music from 4 Fences* for the Sydney Opera House and in 2012 he was awarded the Don Banks Award for lifetime achievement and contribution to Australian music.

Brett Dean

Notes from the Twittersphere (2015)
for piccolo

Notes from the Twittersphere was composed as a gift for fellow Brisbane native, flautist Tim Munro on the occasion of his departure from eighth blackbird in 2015. Cast as a miniature – or a tiny collection of three miniatures – for solo piccolo, the piece was inspired by songs heard in the courtyard of my apartment in Berlin. Nothing too exotic: magpies, finches, starlings, etc. Being a surprisingly green city, Berlin has been described as an unlikely haven for birders and even twitchers out to spot rare birds. So, in writing three tiny pieces that started with birdsong, the title's link to the strange world of short missives that we live in with Twitter was there to be had.

Australian composer **Brett Dean's** work draws from literary, political or visual stimuli. Initially composing for film, radio and improvisatory projects, Dean became established as a composer in his own right through works such as *Ariel's Music* – a clarinet concerto which won an award from the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers, the piano quintet *Voices of Angels* (1996) and *Twelve Angry Men* (1996) for 12 cellos. In 2001 he won the Paul Lowin Song Cycle Prize for *Winter Songs*, and in 2002-3 was Artist in Residence with the Melbourne Symphony and Composer in Residence at the Cheltenham Festival. Now based in London, Brett Dean is also a respected viola player and conductor.

Jane Stanley

Desert Rose (from *Four Desert Flowers*) (2010)
for flute and vibraphone

Desert Rose is the first movement of *Four Desert Flowers*, a suite of character pieces inspired by the names of wildflowers found in Australia. Named after Sturt's Desert Rose, this movement functions as a short prelude. It features oscillating, breeze-like melodic motion in the flute, supported by arid, undulating figures in the vibraphone. The movement concludes with a solitary high sustained note played by the flute depicting the innate stillness of the desert.

Jane Stanley is an Australian composer based in Scotland. She is Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of Glasgow, specialising in composition for acoustic media. She received her PhD from the University of Sydney and in 2004-5 was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University. Her teachers include Anne Boyd, Peter Sculthorpe and Ross Edwards. Her music has been recorded for release by artists in Australia and the UK and she has received commissions from Tanglewood, Musica Viva, Bernadette Harvey, Continuum Sax, and Halcyon. She is a founding member of the Young Academy of Scotland and is a represented composer at the Australian Music Centre.

Felicity Wilcox

People of This Place (2016)

for bass clarinet

This work for solo bass clarinet was written for Jason Noble. It is an expression of my sense of shared place. It contains multiple influences that reflect the echoes of nature and the blend of lives lived in this beautiful country of birds, bush, grasses, sandstone and sea. D'harawal man Gawain Bodkin-Andrews was consulted on the creation of work that considers Indigenous spaces and perspectives, and a highly collaborative approach was taken with Jason to develop new approaches to bass clarinet multiphonics and other extended techniques for the instrument. In presenting *People of This Place*, the composer and performer acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation as traditional owners of the land that inspired it, and to whom the work is dedicated. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal people.

Felicity Wilcox is an interdisciplinary composer and academic whose output encompasses concert music, film music, songwriting and improvisation, music for theatre, installation, live events, dance and radio. She teaches music and sound design at the University of Technology, Sydney and is an award-winning composer, with over sixty scores for Australian film and television productions, as well as concert works for leading ensembles and festivals, including The Australia Ensemble, Australian Piano Quartet, Ensemble Offspring, Ironwood, Decibel, Canberra International Music Festival, Sydney Festival and Vivid Sydney. Her scholarly research focuses on screen composers and gender equity in music.

Tristan Coelho

Daybreak (2018)

for flute and live electronics

Daybreak, for flute and live electronics is based on the idea of birdsong mimicry and draws from experiences I've had exploring and appreciating the sounds of nature. Transcribed birdsong is woven into the piece as well as additional song-like musical ideas inspired directly from the lines conjured up by birds. The electronics take snapshots of the live flute sounds and manipulate them in real-time to create an evolving and immersive sound world. What emerges is a dialogue between the flute and electronics as the sounds work in imitation and swirl around the listener; the parts effectively mimic each other. The music begins with a sense of peace and quiet focusing on a spaciousness of sound with occasional soft utterances. This gradually gives rise to joyous, dance-like sections evoking the busy dawn chorus.

Tristan Coelho is an award-winning Sydney-based composer whose music draws inspiration largely from either nature, especially the idea of amplifying otherwise soft and delicate sounds, or our digital, data-driven world. His work encompasses concert scores, electronic music, film projects, orchestration and arrangement. Project highlights include *read/write error*, a commission for Ensemble Offspring's 20th year celebrations and finalist selection in the 2016 APRA Art Music Awards, and *Rhythm City*, for piano, live video sampler and electronics toured by Zubin Kanga in 2019. As an educator, Tristan has taught music across the spectrum of ages and abilities and is currently Head of Composition at MLC School, Sydney.

Gerard Brophy

Beautiful Birds (2019)

for flute/alto flute, bass clarinet and vibraphone

Beautiful Birds showcases birds' characteristics in 3 distinctive movements –

- I. *Lyrebirds* – skittish, quirky birds with a mischievous temperament and an astounding penchant for mimicry;
- II. *Flamingos* – elegant, stately yet slightly melancholic creatures;
- III. *Hummingbirds* – fluttering, quivering souls flitting from one gorgeous blossom to the next.

Written for Ensemble Offspring, *Beautiful Birds* is a true exploration of the trio's virtuosity. In this epic three movement work an array of joyous bird calls are interwoven into dexterous lines. While *Lyrebirds* establishes the piece as a highly energetic celebration of sonic colours, *Flamingos* explores delicious and still moments of quiet conversation between the three instruments. The piece finishes with *Hummingbirds*, mimicking the bird's fast yet ever changing humming in an impressive display of swift-flying unison lines.

Gerard Brophy is a composer and educator who teaches at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. After an increasingly musical adolescence, he began his studies in classical guitar at the age of twenty-two. In the late seventies, he worked closely with Brazilian guitarist Turibio Santos and the Argentine composer Mauricio Kagel before studying composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Over recent years he has developed a keen interest in collaborating with artists from other disciplines and he is particularly active in the areas of ballet, dance and electronica.

Hollis Taylor / Jon Rose

Bitter Springs Creek 2014 (2019)

for flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone and field recording

The road from Alice Springs heading out to the East Ranges runs in fits and starts for 80 kilometres before ending at Ross River. The pied butcherbird recording heard in and transcribed for this composition was made at Bitter Springs Creek, 6.6 kilometres before the road terminates. These feathered songsters were recorded nocturnally on 17 August 2014. The work was written for Ensemble Offspring.

Kate Moore

Blackbird Song (2018)

for alto flute, bass clarinet and vibraphone

Blackbird Song is an expansive melody written in response to the early morning cantillation of a Merel. In the earliest twilight hours of the morning, before the sunrise chorus of birds, a tiny unassuming blackbird clad in shiny jet-black feathers, perches upon a high post and sings with all its might an epic melancholic tale of adventure and fantasy with its yellow beak pointed toward the heavens. Without knowing it, the bird has captivated the imagination of the listener, who, despite being unable to understand the vocabulary and grammar of its language, is taken along on a journey of the blackbird's worldly and otherworldly experiences.

Kate Moore is an award-winning Australian composer based in The Netherlands. She specialises in creating surprising performance scenarios that feature virtuosic instrumentalists and musicians set amidst unusual and alternative performance circumstances. Her work has been described as "a giant tsunami of sound" (*New York Times*), "a fascinating exercise in micro- and macro-rhythm" (*The Sydney Morning Herald*). Kate has been awarded prizes including Matthijs Vermeulen Prize (2017), De Komeet Cultural Award (2010) and the Carlsbad Festival of Music Composition Prize (2010) among others.



ABOUT ENSEMBLE OFFSPRING

Sydney based Ensemble Offspring are Australia's musical mavericks, championing living new music in all its forms. A group of Australia's most innovative and virtuosic instrumentalists led by acclaimed percussionist, Claire Edwardes, the group celebrates living composers and creates musical experiences that stimulate the senses and pique curiosity. Winners of the 2019 Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award, the 2016 APRA Award for Excellence by an Organisation and touring widely around Australia and internationally, they support emerging and under-represented composers, in particular, championing female and First Nations Australian artists. Over the past 25 years, Ensemble Offspring has fostered the creation of over three hundred works of daring new music.

www.ensembleoffspring.com

CLAIRE EDWARDES percussion

Claire is an internationally acclaimed percussion soloist, chamber musician and Artistic Director of Ensemble Offspring. She is the only Australian musician to win the APRA Art Music Award for Excellence by an Individual three times (2016, 2012, 2007), is the recipient of an Australia Council Fellowship and a Freedman Fellowship and the winner of numerous European competitions, as well as being named 1999 Australian Young Performer of the Year. Recent highlights include a 2019 Residency at Music on Main (Vancouver, Canada), the 2018 presentation of the Australian premiere of James MacMillan's *Percussion Concerto no. 2* with the Sydney Symphony and appearances hosting *Play School* to an audience of thousands.

www.claireedwardes.com

LAMORNA NIGHTINGALE flute

Lamorna has been performing with Ensemble Offspring since 2007 and is a flautist, concert presenter, educator and publisher who is passionate about the future of art music in Australia. She appears regularly with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Opera Australia Orchestra, and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Since 2017 Lamorna has curated and produced a new concert series dedicated to new music in Sydney, called *BackStage Music*. She recently released *Other Voices*, an album of new Australian flute and electronic music with an associated education kit designed to introduce school students to electroacoustic music. Lamorna has also created several pedagogical volumes of repertoire for young flute players through her publishing company, Fluteworthy.

www.lamornanightingale.com

JASON NOBLE clarinet

Jason is a versatile Bondi based musician and a specialist in all members of the clarinet family including the bass clarinet, saxillo, clarinis and glove bagpipe. An integral member of Ensemble Offspring since 2002, he also collaborates with a vast array of popular musicians, the S.I.C.K.O improvising orchestra, Ngarukuruwala – the Indigenous women's choir of the Tiwi Islands, and Nick Wales and the Shaun Parker Dance Company. He has twice travelled to the Afghanistan National Institute of Music in Kabul as an educator and is a passionate clarinet teacher and AMEB examiner.

www.jasonnoble-clarinettist.com



Artistic Director

Claire Edwardes

Producers

Brooke Green (Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Stephen Adams (Track 5)

Oliver Miller/Tristan Coelho (Track 6)

Engineers

Andrew Edgson

Jason Blackwell

Jolen Camilleri

Oliver Miller/Tristan Coelho (Track 6)

Mastered

Virginia Reed

Bob Scott (Tracks 5, 6)

Recording Venues

Eugene Goossens Hall, ABC Ultimo

(Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

University of Western Sydney (Track 6)

Design

Dale Harrison

Photos

Keith Saunders (Page 7)

Chris Frape (Page 9)

All program notes by the composers.

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THANK YOU

We are deeply grateful to our donors and funding partners who have supported the commissions on this recording, many through Ensemble Offspring's 'Noisy Egg Creation Fund'.
Get involved at www.givenow.com.au/noisyegg

Beautiful Birds by Gerard Brophy
was commissioned by Ensemble Offspring's Noisy Egg Creation Fund
and premiered in 2019 at Birdsong at Dusk.

Blackbird Song by Kate Moore
was commissioned by Ensemble Offspring's Noisy Egg Creation Fund
and premiered in 2018 on The Spel Tour.

Bitter Springs Creek 2014 by Hollis Taylor and Jon Rose
was commissioned by Ensemble Offspring's Noisy Egg Creation Fund
with the generous support of Robin Budden and Linda Matthews,
and premiered in 2019 at Birdsong at Dusk.

Daybreak was commissioned with the support of the APRA AMCOS Art Music Fund
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We work and play on Gadigal Land.

