

ROBERT IOLINI

1960

Robert Iolini is a media artist, video artist, radio artist, composer and producer. His experience incorporates fifteen years of producing innovative and meaningful time-based media works that are stylistically diverse, and united by a philosophical approach. Iolini makes work about humans and how we behave in contemporary cultural environments. His artworks embrace music, cinema, poetry, anthropology, video art, sound art and documentary. His 2008 work *The Hong Kong Agent* is representative of his multiform approach: It exists as video art series, gallery installation, radio feature, online interactive & locative media. The work has been exhibited in Hong Kong and Australia. Iolini's sound work *City in Between* was a prize winner in the Soundscapes (be) for(e) 2000 festival in Amsterdam.



Commissions include major works for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona, Danish National Radio, Netherlands Program Service, Big hArt Inc. Iolini has completed a Master of Arts degree in advanced composition at Macquarie University, Sydney Australia. His thesis was on Simultaneity in Music.

WORK

2009

The Masked Woman of Kyoto

Video Art work. Commissioned by Extra/Ordinary Dress Code conference and exhibition Hong Kong. *Today in Kyoto and elsewhere on planet earth. A woman dons a black mask and gloves and ventures out into to a bright and dangerous world. The mysterious qualities of her dark accessories render her impenetrable to all.....including herself.*

The Veena: Instrument of Devotion

A documentary music feature for radio and web which focuses on the life and music of renowned 87 year old female veena virtuoso Kalpakam Swaminathan. She is amongst a dwindling group of older generation Carnatic (South Indian) musicians dedicated to maintaining, through teaching and performing, the 500 year lineage of Carnatic music tradition. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Dream City 2020

A mobile phone video art work about the future of Kyoto City, Japan. For Kyoto City Hall *'Imagine you + Kyoto in 10 years'*.

2007 - 2008

The Hong Kong Agent

A cross-media multi-platform art project. Accessible via interactive/video-on-demand, handheld devices, installation, radio, cinema. At the heart of the project is a collection of audio-visual episodes. Each episode follows the adventures of an enigmatic protagonist, simply referred to as 'The Agent'. His poetic renderings of what he experiences, and the stories and dialogues of numerous characters reveal the richly layered complex world of Hong Kong.

Silk on Wood

A poetic music feature for radio and web. The work explores the cultural milieu surrounding the Qin (chin) with silk strings, a 3,000-year-old, seven-stringed, fret-less Chinese zither. Silk on Wood focuses on a small group of musician scholars living in Hong Kong, dedicated to maintaining the Qin tradition. Listeners are afforded the rare privilege of entering the very private world of the only surviving Silk String Qin society, to witness the dedication and resilience of this reclusive community in the face of the behemoth that is New China. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

2006

The Holographic Ear - Short film

Mn is sleeping in bed. The sun is rising on another apparently normal day, outside the birds are singing. He begins to stir, there's something odd about the birdsong - sounding more like a complex musical composition it gradually builds in intensity, as it reaches a crescendo Mn wakes up with a start. Thus begins a journey of transformation in which Mn is subjected to a series of extraordinary encounters which force him to confront the nature of reality and perception.

Vaganza Malti (Maltese Holiday)

A video art work produced as part of The Wounding Song cross-media project. Shot entirely on location in Malta & Gozo in 2004. Vaganza Malti (Maltese Holiday) is a poetic audio visual montage exploring contrasting aspects of Maltese culture. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The Wounding Song

A cross-media project including a music feature for radio and website exploring the vibrant phenomenon of Ghana (pronounced /a:na/), Maltese vernacular singing. Ghana is a living art - simultaneously music, song and performance, deriving its vitality from immediacy and context. Ghana contains a passion, which reflects the heartbeat of the people, and their endurance through the years as a nation. Ghana is music of survival, from quaint rural setting, to gritty dockland bar, to a backyard garage in an Australian suburb. Commissioned and produced for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Rise above the Living

A music/sound/text composition. The work is a response to Iolini's experiences while working at John Northcott Place, the first high-rise public housing estate in Sydney, Australia. Rise above the Living traces the history of Northcott told from the point of view of the building itself - the Building as a living organism, a witness - keeper of secrets and knowledge. The music is a mixture of melodic electronic chamber music and musique concrete. Iolini was musical director/composer on Big hArt multi-media theatre production, for the 2006 Festival of Sydney. Commissioned and produced for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

2005

The Holographic Ear - Radiophonic composition

An audio visual cross-media work. This work explores the nature of psychic transformation using sound as the catalyst. Radiophonic component commissioned and produced for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Black Sheep

Video Art. Through the extraordinary testimonies of aboriginal teenagers we become witnesses to a world in which the interviewees are continually told that they are surplus to requirements.

Black Sheep uses materials gleaned from an arts project I was involved with involving young people in and around the notorious Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre situated in Darwin, Australia. The project was run by Big hArt Inc a non-profit arts organisation that collaborates with communities, groups and individuals to produce art with people experiencing the effects of marginalisation

in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia. Photographer Randy Larcombe and I collected image and sound material for the project. This material has also been used to produce a multimedia theatre work, a radiophonic composition and sound/image installation work.

Songs from Hurt

International release of Iolini's second solo album on British avant garde music label ReR Megacorp. Available now online from *ReR website*. 'Songs from Hurt is a troubling masterpiece'~ François Couture, All Music Guide.

Radio Holiday

Iolini produces 16 short sound works for BighArt inc. and Tasmanian arts festival 'Ten Days On The Island'. Radio Holiday is a multi-art form project combining sound works, video, photography, painting and theatre around the subject of 'shacks'. Across Australia, shacks in isolated locations have held a unique place in our culture. They are often the keepers of secrets, the location for celebration, symbols of individualism over the state, improvised architecture, hideouts, places for growing up, and sponges for nostalgia. As avarism sweeps the coastal fringe, shacks are falling victim to the national retreat from community to individualism.

A Shack at the Edge of the World

A radio feature based on Iolini's experiences in Tasmania's remote north west shack communities. Commissioned by Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Shacks

An experimental radio feature exploring the idea of home. Commissioned by Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

2004

Zeppelin Sound & Media Art Festival

Iolini is invited to this annual sound art festival in Barcelona to present his latest sound/image/text work in progress *The City That Never Was* (video) and to conduct a series of workshops.

Forat de La Vergonya

Media work. Forat de La Vergonya is Catalan for hole of shame. The work is the result of a 3 day workshop Iolini gave at the Zeppelin 2004 Sound & Media Art Festival in Barcelona. The work focuses on the fragile gardens that squatters and locals of a soon to be demolished neighbourhood in Barcelona's tourist zone planted. The gardens are a poignant symbol of both resistance and resilience as they struggle to survive in the hostile environment of Forat de la Vergonya.

The Sound of Forgetting - Sonic Artifacts #1

An experimental radiophonic composition. *The Sound of Forgetting* is a non linear narrative work that uses 'lost sounds' from Sydney's past, media archives and scripted dialogues to explore issues of identity - property ownership - denial of history - corporate greed - legal and illegal violence - government cynicism - loss of self, function and place - mass media - the relevance of art - colonialism - surveillance - social engineering - public space. Produced while Iolini was New Media Artist in residence at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's acoustic arts program *The Listening Room*.

2003

Beasty Grrl

Iolini composes music and sound design for this multimedia play about the life of Errol Flynn as an allegory for the apparent self destructive tendency of humankind. Iolini's vision for this project is to allow realtime interactive performance between actor, musician and video artist. *Beasty Grrl* is written and directed by Scott Rankin. The play is toured nationally throughout 2003 and wins the 'Green Room' award for best innovative theatre for 2003.

Goddesses & Rabbits

A music/sound/text composition. *Goddesses and Rabbits* is Iolini's homage to his mother, to all mothers and to Malta - the island of the Great Goddess. Iolini takes us on a personal and at times surreal voyage of (re)discovery to his mother's

homeland, the island of Malta. Along the way we encounter mysterious 7000-year-old megalithic goddess temples, Madonna cults, rabbit restaurants, and an eclectic assortment of characters. This is a work that is simultaneously travelogue, drama, fiction, documentary, biography and contemporary opera! *Goddesses and Rabbits* extends the boundaries of what traditionally defines a musical composition, using spoken word, songs, field recordings, electro-acoustic textures, improvised and detailed scored performances. Commissioned by Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

2002

Malta: In-Land

A sound work commissioned by the Dutch broadcaster Netherlands Program Service (NPS) for their new music program Supplement. The work is Iolini's personal response to Ghana (pronounced /a:na/). The living folk music practice of the Maltese. For this project Iolini travelled from Australia to his mother's homeland, the island of Malta, to record Ghana practitioners, aficionados, commentators and environments.

Leaves Falling At Midnight

Iolini is musical director, composer and sound designer for Scott Rankin and Glynn Nicholas' multimedia play.

2001

IOLINI solo album

International release of Iolini's first solo album on British avant garde music label ReR Megacorp. Available now online from *ReR website*. "Iolini represents a new breed of electroacoustic composer who puts his heart as well as his intellect into his work, and composes from a broad cultural perspective." Bill Tilland BBC.

Black Sheep

A music/sound/text composition. Based on Iolini's experiences working in Darwin with young people in and around the Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre. The work asks questions about Mandatory sentencing, society's youth persecution complex, lack of adequate communication and interpreting systems for indigenous people, why so many indigenous people in custody? Commissioned by Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Heartwork

A large scale composition. exploring important issues facing marginalised young people in the Australian community. The work centres around eight 'songs' each containing a recording of a young person narrating an experience of family violence or dysfunction. The vocal recordings were taken from the film soundtrack of 'Hurt' the award winning feature length docu film directed by Phillip Crawford. For *Heartwork* the music in each song was derived from the rhythmic and melodic patterns inherent in each speaker's speech patterns. The piece is partly composed of materials gathered during the development and final production of the 'Big hArt Works' project performed at the 2000 Adelaide Festival, Australia. Commissioned by Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

2000

Okinawa

Composition for violin, piano, bass clarinet and cello. Commissioned by Danish New Music Ensemble *Nordlys*. The piece is based on an Okinawan folk song. Premiered in Copenhagen 18 June 2000 with Iolini in attendance.

Big hArt Works

Iolini directs and composes the music and sound design for this large scale multimedia theatre piece for award winning outsider theatre company Big hArt Inc. The work focuses on cruelty, beauty and isolation as seen through young eyes. It premieres at the Adelaide International Arts Festival 2000 and is one of four critically acclaimed shows at the festival.

Wrong way Go back!

Iolini is commissioned by award winning outsider theatre company Big hArt Inc to compose and direct the music and sound for this multimedia theatre piece. The work is based on the experiences of inmates, former inmates and potential inmates of Darwin's notorious Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre. Iolini acts as arts mentor (composition, recording & production) to the core group of young people involved in the project both inside Don Dale and in Palmerston City. The project is funded by the Australian Immigration Department as part of its Living in Harmony initiative. It is premiered at the Darwin Entertainment Centre on August 23.

Fire, Water, Speed

Three short electronic pieces composed in collaboration with writer Scott Rankin through workshops with young people in Palmerston, Darwin as part of the local government's Literacy Week. The pieces were broadcast on ABC's national youth radio 2JJJ.

1999

Marking Time

Music/sound/text composition. In a world constantly on the brink of, and undergoing, minor and major apocalypses, the periods before and after the new millennium act as focal points. These periods allow an intensification of multiple simultaneous apocalyptic activity, both actual and rhetorical. Why do humans, particularly in western culture, feel the need to manifest such apocalyptic activity? *Marking Time* delves into the human condition with particular focus on the nature of power, change and transformation. *Marking Time* was nominated for the 2000 Karl Sczuka Prize.

Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Excerpt released on solo album IOLINI *electroacoustic, chamber ensemble, soundscapes and works for radio*. Available now online from *ReR website*.

The Cavern of I.

Composition for Violin, piano & electronics. Commissioned by Danish duo Musica Mirabilis. World Premier at The Copenhagen Radio Hall. Denmark. 9th May 1999.

1998

Silent Motion

Composition for voice, keyboards and sampler. "Silent Motion is a lyrical, critical, and often amusing guide to society's expectations as to the proper place of music in film. Focusing on the silent film era as an historical juncture which all but sealed the fate of film scoring, Iolini adjusts the lens and turns up the volume to assert music's potential as more than just a supporting player. Iolini creates strange, wonderful and at times touching music from sampled projectors, pianos and a 1927 fotoplayer. *Silent Motion* lampoons those who would set up hierarchies in art." *Limelight Magazine* Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Released on Iolini's 2005 solo album 'Songs from Hurt'. Available now online from *ReR website*.

Happy Water Sad Water

Surround sound installation for voices, found sounds and five CD players. Commissioned by Big hArt for the Manly Arts Festival and Carnivale. Sydney, Australia.

1997

The Edwin Armstrong Overture

Electroacoustic composition. Edwin Armstrong was the inventor of the frequency modulation (FM) system. The basis for almost all radio, radar, and television reception. His story is one of genius, obsession, betrayal and tragedy. After inventing FM, Armstrong had a vision of replacing the then inferior AM system with the far superior FM. Unfortunately, the Radio Corporation of America, under

the advice of David Sarnoff, a twenty-five year friend of Armstrong's and president of RCA, had other plans. Even though they had funded Armstrong's research, RCA decided it would be unprofitable for them to switch from AM to FM. And so began the endless legal battles over patents, between Armstrong and RCA. Even when RCA developed television, which relied on FM for its reception and transmission, they refused to pay Armstrong his rightful royalties. Twenty-three years to the day after patenting FM, exhausted and out of hope, frustrated by all the litigation, Armstrong put on his hat, coat, scarf and gloves and walked out of his apartment window, 13 floors to his death. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Released on solo album IOLINI *electroacoustic, chamber ensemble, soundscapes and works for radio*. Available now online from *ReR website*.

Hong Kong: City in Between

1997 has become a focus a cause, a point in space a date to live by. At midnight of June 30 1997, the British colony of Hong Kong reverted to Chinese sovereignty. As the 'Pearl of the Orient' however, it is a jewel that must be both incorporated into the body of China, and sealed off from it. The political and public ritual of the handover has been well documented. *City in Between* transforms into music and sound, the more subjective experiences and ambiguities experienced by Hong Kong people. The work is based on field recordings made by musician & social researcher Dr. Phillip Mar, who was in Hong Kong conducting PhD research on Hong Kong emigration. Robert Iolini has collaborated with Phillip to create a work in which Hong Kong voices and sounds, transmuted by sampling, manipulated as elements for further improvisation and composition, trace the trajectory of a city and people whose destiny remains unknown. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Released on solo album IOLINI *electroacoustic, chamber ensemble, soundscapes and works for radio*. Available now online from *ReR website*.

1996

Impermanence

Composition voice, flute, violin; hurdy-gurdy, soprano and alto saxophones, Qin (Chinese zither), guitar midi controller, emax sampler. The piece focuses on the inevitability of change and the concept of impermanence as a kind of meditation. Arising from a deeply-felt concern about humankind's inability to come to terms with these facts, *Impermanence* draws on a range of textual sources, primarily Ted Hughes' poem 'A Disaster', and words from Jean-Luc Godard's films *Vivre sa Vie* and *Le Mepris*. It also makes extensive use of directed improvisation. The work seeks to generate a symbiotic relationship between music, sound and text, where music functions not merely as an accompaniment to narrative, but where the two are inextricably interwoven. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Nominated for the 1996 Prix Italia, Naples, Italy.

Even Bodhisattvas get the Blues & Meetings with Him

Two compositions for Trombone, Vibes and Cello or Piano. Commissioned by the Australian new music ensemble Pipeline.

1995

Whyitiso & Lingo Babel & Congo & Zimbabwe

Four compositions arranged for Australian ensemble Synergy Percussion. Premiered at The Enmore Theatre, Sydney 29 October, 1995.

1994

Vanunu

An opera for radio for three singers, samplers, digital editor and radio archival material. In 1986, Mordechai Vanunu revealed to Britain's Sunday Times, corroborated with photographic evidence gathered while employed as a technician in Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor, that Israel was engaged in the production of

offensive nuclear weapons, unknown to the rest of the world and unknown to the population of Israel itself. He was kidnapped by Israel's secret service and returned to face trial. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison and is currently in his 6th year of solitary confinement.

The story of Vanunu embraces a comprehensive array of 20th Century obsessions and phobias - nuclear war, technology, religion, racism, human rights, democracy - in particular raising questions about the meaning of democracy without freedom of information and freedom of speech. It also embodies issues of individual conscience, risk, sacrifice and the enactment of ideology.

Co-written with D. Nerlich. Commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Carne Bianca & Lingo Babel

Two compositions for violin, piano, bass clarinet and saxophone. Commissioned by Australian new music ensemble australYSIS . Performed, 27 August 1994.

1993

Anyong Arrirang

Composition for violin and piano. Premier performance by Musica Mirabilis at Toldkammeret, Elsinore. Denmark. 19 May 1999.

ARTIST RESIDENCIES + FELLOWSHIPS

2007

Hong Kong Artist's Residency

Four month artist residency in Hong Kong @ Robert Black College The University of Hong Kong - Residency supported by Australia-China Council.

Hong Kong Artist's Residency

Three month artist Residency in Hong Kong @ ACO (Arts & Culture Outreach) Foo Tak Building Wan Chai - Residency supported by Asialink (funded by the Australia Council, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body)

The University of Hong Kong Visiting Scholar

Seven months as Visiting Scholar/Professional @ Journalism & Media Studies Centre The University of Hong Kong.

2003 - 2004

Barcelona Artist's Residency

Iolini is artist in residence at Orquestra del Caos an organisation dedicated to artistic research in the field of sound & media art. Based at CCCB (Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona). For six months beginning in October 2003 Iolini researches and develops skills, focusing on the theme of 'narrative in new media'. He investigates what new languages can result from the layering and juxtaposition of sound and image. The project is made possible with the assistance of The Australia Council for the Arts New Media Fund.

The Listening Room - New Media Artist's Residency

The Australia Council for the Arts and Australian Broadcasting Corporation appoint Iolini as New Media Artist in residence at The Listening Room. Iolini develops The Sound of Forgetting (sound) and The City That Never Was (video) . These large scale works juxtapose sound image and text to create new meanings. They are in minutely detailed works presented in episodic form. The Sound of Forgetting was the nominated for the 2005 Karl Sczuka Prize.

EXHIBITIONS | BROADCASTS

2010

The Veena: Instrument of Devotion

Radio Broadcast + Online: Into The Music program ABC RN 1 May 2010.

2009

The Masked Woman of Kyoto

Exhibition: Video Art. Videotage Hong Kong. China. 10-24 December

Dream City

Exhibition: Video Art. Kyoto City Hall 'Imagine you + Kyoto in 10 years'
competition. Japan. 27 Oct - 4 November

The Hong Kong Agent

Presentation: Kyoto University Art + Design. Artlink International Salon. 23
October

Radio Broadcast: RAI Radio 3 File Urbani: By Paola De Angelis. Italy, 17
November

Rise Above The Living

Radio Broadcast: Supplement. NPS, Netherlands, January 5

Radio Broadcast: RAI Radio 3 File Urbani: By Paola De Angelis. Italy, 17 October

The Holographic Ear

Exhibition Film: REJECT Festival Rotterdam (NL), January/February

2008

The Hong Kong Agent

Exhibition Installation:

Lismore Regional Gallery, NSW. Australia, December/January

Hong Kong Art Centre, Hong Kong, China, August

Gallery 4A Sydney, Australia, July

Radio Broadcast:

The Night Air program ABCRN, Australia, April

All Day Every Day program Resonance104.4fm, London, UK, May

Silk On Wood

Radio Broadcast + Online: Into The Music program , ABC RN, Australia, May

Museum

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, May

The Holographic Ear

Exhibition Film: The 6th Festival Signes de Nuit – Paris, France, April

Forat de La Vergonya

Exhibition Video Art: Fehva , Byron Bay, Australia, March

2007

City in Between

Exhibition Sound Art:

in midair festival, Hong Kong, China, June/July

1a Space, Hong Kong, China, July

The Holographic Ear

Exhibition Film: The 6th International Kansk Video Festival Kansk, Russia,
September

Limbo

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, June

2006

Rise above the Living

Radio Broadcast : Music up Late program ABC Classic FM, Australia, June

The Wounding Song

Cross-media: ABCRN Online, Australia. Ongoing

Vaganza Malti

Exhibition Film: ABCRN Online, Australia. Ongoing

Shackified

Radio Broadcast: No Place Like Home program Resonance104.4fm, London, UK, October

Shacks

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, June

Blood

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, August

Forat de La Vergonya

Exhibition Video Art:

EXiS 2005 Experimental Film + Video Festival Seoul, Korea

Architects for Peace Melbourne, Australia

2005

Black Sheep

Exhibition Video Art:

Videomedija 9th International Video Festival 2005, Serbia

dEadly diGital scReen aRt tOur 2005 Alice Springs, Australia

Boohoray ABC Digital, Australia, Ongoing.

Radio Holiday

Media Art: Ten Days on the Island Festival & Big hArt, Tasmania, Australia, April.

A Shack at the Edge of the World

Radio Broadcast: Radio Eye program, ABCRN, Australia, October

Shacks

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, October

2004

Forat de La Vergonya

Exhibition Media Art: Zeppelin Festival, Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona(CCCB), Barcelona, Spain, May

A Japanese house, My favourite place, The sky

Exhibition Media Art: Cielo, Todo Alrededor - Sky, All Around. Zeppelin Festival, Centre for Contemporary Culture of Barcelona(CCCB), Barcelona, Spain, May

Black Sheep

Exhibition Installation: 24HRArt Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Australia, November

Blood

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, November

2003

Goddesses & Rabbits

Radio Broadcast: The Listening Room program, ABC Classic FM, Australia.

Limbo

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, June

Museum

Radio Broadcast: The Night Air program , ABCRN, Australia, September

2002

Malta-Inland

Radio Broadcast: The Supplement program, Netherlands Program Service(NPS), The Netherlands.

VIDEOGRAPHY

2004 / Forat De La Vergonya / 3 min / DV
2004 / A Japanese house. My favourite place. The sky / 20 min / DV
2005 / Black Sheep / 4 min / DV
2005 / The City That Never Was / 40 min / DV
2006 / Vaganza Malti / 12 min / DV
2006 / The Holographic Ear / 14 min / DV
2008/ The Hong Kong Agent: Vertical Narratives / 24 min / HDV
2008/ The Hong Kong Agent: Feature Film Version / 80 min / HDV
2009/ Dream City / 3 min / HDV
2009/ The Masked Woman of Kyoto / 6 min / HDV