

*Processes and Concepts in Present-Day  
Transcultural Violin Performance Practice*

A Ph.D. by Creative Practice

A dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy, The University of New England, Australia

September 2013

Kerry Watson, B.Mus. Dip. Ed. B.Ed. Special Ed. (U.N.E.)

## List of Thesis Components

1. Written Exegesis.
2. Portfolio of Notated Compositions and Arrangements.
3. Audio CD of Compositions and Arrangements (including unscored arrangements) – located at the rear of the Portfolio of Notated Compositions and Arrangements.
4. DVD-1: Recital One, St. Patrick's Day Concert, 17 March 2010 – located at the rear of the exegesis.
5. DVD-2: Recital Two, with Macquarie University Gamelan, 17 November 2011 – located at the rear of the exegesis.

## Written Exegesis Component

### Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	vi
List of Tables and Charts	vii
List of Items on the Audio CD	viii
List of Items on DVD-1	ix
List of Items on DVD-2	x
Abstract	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Global Cultural Flows and the Violin	2
1.2 A Brief Overview of the Celtic Violin as World Instrument	5
1.3 The Violin in Indonesia	10
1.4 The Research Questions: Tradition and Authenticity	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review	13
2.1 Disciplinary Perspectives	13
2.2 Celtic Music, Commodification and Global Music Exchange	18
2.3 Modern Sundanese Gamelan Traditions of Indonesia	24
2.4 Performance and Composition Studies: Traditional, Modern and Transcultural Approaches to Transmission	27

Chapter 3: The Aural and the Written in Celtic Music Performance: Transcribing, Arranging and Composing	32
3.1 National Ideologies and the Notation of Music	34
3.2 Collections of Irish Melodies	37
3.3 Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Collections of Scottish Tunes	43
3.4 Some Issues Influencing the Process of Transcription	49
3.5 Contemporary Scores: A Reconsideration of Notation's Role	57
Chapter 4: Expanding the Performance Practice Approach	66
4.1 Performance Practice in Celtic Music Traditions	66
4.2 Aural Transcription and Imitation	82
4.3 Adapting the Violin to Indonesian Gamelan	85
Chapter 5: Epilogue: Continuing Negotiations Between Tradition and Contemporary Performance	107
5.1 A Word on Commercialized Modern Celtic Performance	108
5.2 The Acoustic Session	111
5.3 Performance, Arrangement and Composition	112
Appendix 1: Ornamentation Examples: Left Hand Articulation	120
Appendix 2: Bohong Ach! Unpublished Transcription	121
Bibliography	128

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to all the musicians who contributed to the recorded performances and collaborated on arrangements throughout the course of this Ph.D. project:

- Malcolm Boyd
- Dave Carr
- Wendy Griffiths
- Michael Houlahan
- Efendi Jaenudin
- Evan Lewis
- Christopher Purcell
- Stephen Tafra
- Stephen Thorneycroft

And to the ensemble members of:

- Annarchie
- Jenny Noble's Highland Dancers
- The Macquarie University Gamelan (MQUG) ensemble.
- *Swara Naga*
- WirryCow

For technical support and CD/DVD production, thanks to:

DVD-1 Recital One:

- Ian Harvey ('Audio Chap') - Sound Engineer/Audio Recording.
- The Armidale T.A.F.E Film & Television School Film Crew, filming/lights.
- Rob Trendal, Producer.
- Kaelem Burgess, Coordinator/Editor/Post-production.
- Col Mac and Staff at The Imperial Hotel, Armidale.

DVD-2 Recital Two:

- Mr. Chris Walkerden for sound engineering at the concert.
- Macquarie University Studio for the venue.

Audio CD of Compositions and Arrangements:

- Malcolm Boyd, Stephen Tafra, Stephen Thorneycroft and David Hackett (Sound Engineering/Audio Recording/CD Post-production).

Special thanks to Principal Supervisor Dr. Andrew Alter, for his guidance and support throughout this Ph.D. project.

## **List of Tables and Charts**

Table 1: Sundanese Solfege Syllables	92
Table 2: A Comparison of the University of New England's Gamelan Degung Ensemble Pitches to the Equal Tempered Western Equivalent Pitches	93
Chart 1: U.N.E. Gamelan and Equal Temperament Pitch Positions on the Violin	97

## List of Items on the Audio CD

1. *The Cradle Song Set*: The Cradle Song/Devil in the Kitchen/Tail Toddle – Arr. K. Watson. Live concert recording, 2010: K. Watson (5-string violin), E. Lewis (GHB) & M. Boyd (electric keyboard).
2. *The Phoenix Set*: Phoenix Lament/The Rising – K. Watson. Arr. K. Watson/M. Boyd. Live concert recording, 2010: K. Watson (5-string violin), S. Thorneycroft (guitar) & M. Boyd (electric keyboard).
3. *Celtic Trade*: Fond Farewell/Crooked Trail/The Gathering/Freygish Encounter/Abhaile - K. Watson. Live concert recording, 2010: K. Watson (violin) & guitar duo EphenStephen (S. Thorneycroft & S. Tafra).
4. *Petit Fiddle Suite*: 1. Follow Me – K. Watson. Live studio recording, 2009: K. Watson (violin), M. Houlahan (guitar) & W. Griffiths (double bass).
5. *Petit Fiddle Suite*: 2. Gentle, Gentle - K. Watson. Live studio recording, 2013: K. Watson (violin) & S. Tafra (guitar).
6. *Petit Fiddle Suite*: 3. Gypsy Melody - K. Watson. Live studio recording, 2009: K. Watson (violin), M. Houlahan (guitar) & W. Griffiths (double bass).
7. *Selamat Tidur Gunung Merapi* – composed/all parts performed by K. Watson. Studio recording, 2013.
8. *Baggy Pants* – K. Watson. Live concert recording, 2011: K. Watson (violin), Dr. J. Game-Lopata (Bb Clarinet), Efendi Jaenudin (*kendang*) & Members of *Swara Naga* and The Macquarie University Gamelan ensemble.
9. *The Barren Rocks Set*: The Barren Rocks of Aden (Trad.)/Garster's Dream (Trad.)/Inverness County (Trad.)/Nessy's Folly (S.Tafra) – unscored WorryCow arrangement (K. Watson/S. Tafra/S. Thorneycroft). Live studio recording, 2013: WorryCow.
10. *The Whiskey Set*: Whiskey Snap (S.Thorneycroft)/The Humours of Whiskey (Trad.)/Jug of Brown Ale (Trad.)/Rolling in the Barrel (Trad.) – unscored WorryCow arrangement (K. Watson/S. Tafra/S. Thorneycroft). Live studio recording, 2013: WorryCow.

## List of Items on DVD-1

This concert was recorded on March 17, 2010 at The Imperial Hotel, Armidale.

The order of items performed is as follows:

1. *The Cradle Song Set*: The Cradle Song (J.S.Skinner)/Devil in the Kitchen (Trad,)/Tail Toddle (Trad.) arranged by K. Watson for great highland bagpipes, electric 5-string violin and electric keyboard.
2. *Caoineadh Cú Chulainn (Cú Chulainn's lament)* - composed by Bill Whelan/arranged by K. Watson for electric violin and electric keyboard.
3. *Bovaglie's Plaid*– composed by J.S. Skinner/arranged by K. Watson & M. Boyd for violin and electric keyboard.
4. *The Ashplant Set*: Fleur de Mandagore (Michel Bordeleau)/The Ash Plant (Trad.)/Siobhán O'Donnell's (S. O'Donnell) - arranged by K.Watson for violin, steel string guitar, tin whistle and bass guitar.
5. *Celtic Trade*: Fond Farewell/Crooked Trail/The Gathering/Freygish Encounter/Abhaile - composed by K. Watson for violin and guitar duo.
6. *The Phoenix set*: Phoenix Lament/The Rising - composed by K. Watson/arranged by K. Watson & M. Boyd for electric 5-string violin, acoustic guitar and electric keyboard.
7. *Mom's Jig Set*: The Northside Kitchen (Trad.)/Mom's Jig (Jerry Holland)/A Deanadh Im (Paul MacNeil) - arranged by K. Watson for electric violin and 'Ceilidh style' rock band.
8. *Dick Gossip's Set*: Dick Gossip's Reel (Trad.)/Paddy's Leather Breeches (Trad.)/The Congress Reel (Trad.) – arranged by K. Watson for electric violin, 'Ceilidh style' rock band and Scottish Highland/Irish dancers.



## List of Items on DVD-2

This concert was recorded on November 17, 2011 at the Macquarie University (Sydney) film studio. The set of Sundanese *gamelan degung* instruments used in the concert were specially commissioned by David Goldsworthy for the University of New England in 1990<sup>1</sup>. The repertoire was performed by the Macquarie University Gamelan ensemble (MQUG), directed by Dr. Andrew Alter, alongside members of *Swara Naga*<sup>2</sup> and Sundanese *kendang* player Mr. Efendi Jaenudin. The concert programme included eight pieces featuring the violin (Sundanese translation ‘biola’) as one of the solo instruments.

The order of items performed is as follows:

1. *Selamat Tidur Gunung Merapi* (‘Sleep Well Mount Merapi’) - composed by Kerry Watson for *gamelan degung (madenda)* and violin.
2. *Bohong Ach!* - composed by Wahyu Roche for *gamelan degung (madenda)*, saxophone and violin.
3. *Sulanaga* - composed by Tik Setiawan/arranged by Wahyu Roche for *gamelan degung*, saxophone and violin.
4. *Sweet Talking with Oling* - composed by Efiq Zulfiqar/arranged by Kerry Watson for *gamelan degung*, clarinet and violin.
5. *Sabilulungan* - arranged by Tik Setiawan/Kerry Watson for *gamelan degung*, clarinet and violin.
6. *Baggy Pants* - composed/arranged by Kerry Watson for *gamelan degung (madenda)*, clarinet & violin.
7. *Kembangtanjung* (Trad.) - arranged by Wahyu Roche for *gamelan degung (madenda)*, saxophone and violin.
8. *Tari Sungai* - composed by Dr. Andrew Alter/arranged by K. Watson for *gamelan degung* and violin.
9. *Gambir Sawit* (Trad.) for *gamelan degung*.

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: *Selamat Tidur Gunung Merapi* was recorded for the audio CD on a different set of *gamelan degung* instruments in 2013.

<sup>2</sup> *Swara Naga* members: Dr. Goldsworthy, Dr. Jennifer Game-Lopata, Mal Boyd and Kerry Watson (current director of *Swara Naga*).

## **Abstract**

This thesis is a creative practice project that examines the role of the violin in transcultural locations of musical engagement. The project focuses on repertoire associated with two disparate locations of practice, northwest European (Irish/Scottish) Celtic fiddling and Indonesian hybrid creations. By examining, performing and creating repertoire for violin, the music itself is viewed not only as a product of transculturation, but also as a process in which the technical and symbolic features of the violin are expressed through repertoire in different cultural locations. The thesis incorporates performance, composition and an exegesis and focuses on the way performance practice is influenced by aural and written modes of musical expression.