



Magnetic Pig Productions Presents  
a concert performance of



Magnetic Pig Productions

Magnetic Pig Productions ACN 068185035

Lindsay Vickery's

# Rendez-vous: an opera-noir

8pm April 11 and 12

Music Auditorium WA Academy of Performing Arts  
2 Bradford Street Mount Lawley



The State of Western Australia  
has made an investment in this  
project through **ArtsWA**.



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acknowledges the generous support of  
the WA Academy of Performing Arts  
and the UWA School of Music





# Synopsis

## Opening: Paris - the present

A Film-Noir style voice-over informs us that a man (Simon Lecoœur aka Boris) has disappeared leaving only a manuscript ('99 pages typed double -spaced'). What follows is the story of the text.

## Scene I: an Abandoned warehouse

Simon Lecoœur enters a warehouse. He has come in answer to a mysterious advert in the paper to meet someone called Jean. He sees a man dressed in great coat and trilby and introduces himself. To his surprise Jean (Djinn) is a woman. They converse, but as he approaches he realises the figure is a manikin with a loudspeaker concealed inside it. The manikin instructs him to climb to the next floor. Here the ground floor scene is exactly repeated. He approaches the manikin and reaches out to touch it : this time it is 'Djinn' herself. He tries to leave but is prevented by Laura, Djinn's hench-person' who has moved up behind him. Djinn gives him a note with instructions to meet with a passenger from Amsterdam at the Gare du Nord train station.

## Scene II: a café

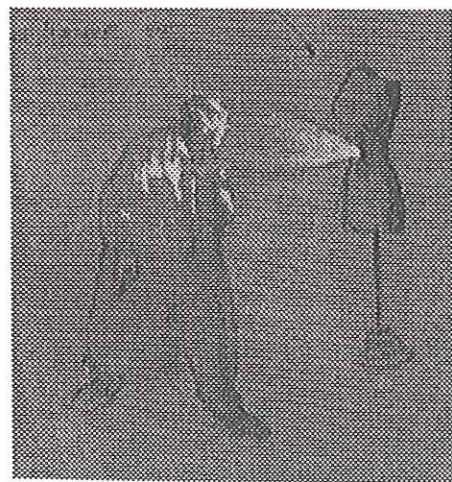
Simon decides to stop for a coffee on the way to the train station. A medical student seated at another table informs him that he is going to be late for his 'rendez-vous'. Simon tries to find out what part she plays in the organisation, but is merely given instructions on the shortcut to the railway station.

## Scene III: the street/an apartment

When Simon takes the shortcut, a young boy runs out in front of him and falls. To his amazement Simon discovers the boy (Jean) has died. He carries the boy back to the apartment from which he ran. The apartment is furnished in 1880's style and occupied only by a young girl, Marie, also dressed as though from the last century. An odd conversation ensues in which Marie insists Jean is her husband and that he dies often. She directs him to a note addressed to him, stuck in the corner of a portrait of her father: a Russian sailor who was lost at sea. The note explains that the Amsterdam train was a false track and that the children will lead him to where he is supposed to go. At this Jean comes to life and they all go to the cafe.

## Scene IV: a café

Simon asks Marie about her fondness for lying and a lying contest ensues, where the virtuoso Marie demonstrates her prowess by discussing the lying classes she takes at school, how the waiter (Dr Morgan) is actually a ghost who haunts the cafe because his mistress once worked there and finally how Simon is actually her father, but that he doesn't remember because gypsies stole them both as children. Now it's Simon's turn to tell a story, so he tells a ludicrous tale of a mediaeval robot and his gullible bride. At its conclusion the children dress Simon as a blind man and Jean leads him to his true Rendez-vous.



It is a manikin: Dan Potra

## Scene V: the street/ a taxi-cab

The boy leads him to a waiting cab driven by Dr Morgan. During the ride the boy offers Simon a mint. He takes it and then falls into a deep sleep.

## Scene VI: the warehouse

The boy wakes Simon up and leads him to a meeting. The geography seems to suggest it is at the warehouse in the first scene. He hears the voice of Djinn delivering a speech about her organization's struggle against mechanism. Simon manages to dislodge his glasses a little and discovers that the room is filled with likenesses of himself, dressed as blind-men with a young boy leading them. He then sees that it is not Djinn, but a tape machine and loudspeaker delivering the speech. The person next to him tries to pass him a note. Simon tries to reach his hand but is knocked out by Dr. Morgan who has entered behind him.



Clockhead: Dan Potra

## Scene VII: a warehouse

Simon awakes in the warehouse from scene one. He is disoriented and cannot remember the order of the events in his recent past. He decides to get a coffee and some aspirin.

## Scene VIII: a café

He goes to the same cafe. This time an old woman is serving. She tells him she is called Marie and that he can't have been there yesterday because they were closed. He sees the photo of the Russian sailor on the wall. The waitress tells him it is her father who was lost at sea. He sees the dark glasses and walking cane and decides to put them on. He walks out into the street.

## Scene IX: the street

A young boy (Jean) offers to help him across the road. Simon tells him that he is trying to get to the railway station to meet the Amsterdam train. The boy tells him he is going to be late and they hurry down a short-cut the boy knows. The boy stumbles and falls: he dies again.

## Scene X: an apartment

Simon carries the boy into the 1880's style apartment and is met by Djinn. She supplies a far fetched explanation of Simon's strange experiences: they are both part of the boy's afflicted memory. Simon is from his future and she from his past. They only exist together because the boy is dreaming and when he awakens they will both return to their proper time. She shows him the photograph of the Russian sailor: it is Simon. When Simon tries to show the flaws in her explanation she ridicules him as being too 'positivist and Cartesian'. Out of exasperation (and perhaps desire) he grabs her and they fall onto the bed, knocking over a lit candelabra. The room bursts into flames....

## Scene XI: a story...

Djinn speaks directly to the audience about her strange experiences in Paris with this crazy guy who was always making the kind of stories you would find in science fiction novels. As she tells her story it becomes obvious that some of the details in previous scenes must be true and soon she leads herself back into the action, arriving at the train station to meet her friend Caroline from Amsterdam.

## Scene XII: the Gare du Nord train station

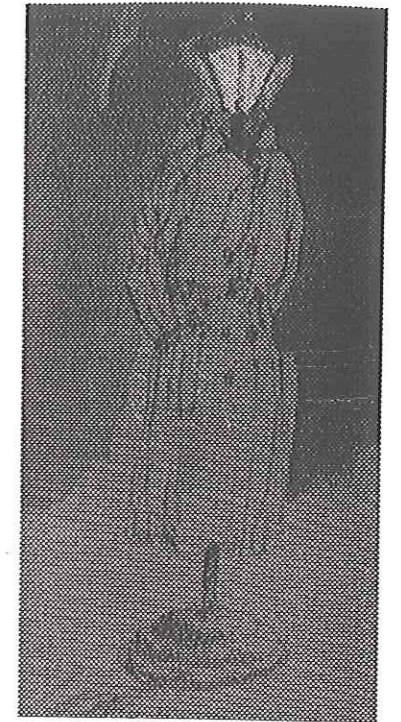
Djinn meets her friend who has arrived with two small children, Marie and Jean, who have spent their vacation with their uncle Boris an officer in the Russian Navy. Marie begins to explain how he is really a Russian spy, but as she is speaking Djinn sees Simon and Dr. Morgan approach and stand staring at her. When Caroline notices her friend's agitation, Marie begins to explain how Dr. Morgan is obviously a sexual deviant who has been following them since Amsterdam with his 'little suitcase full of knives'. As Caroline reluctantly corroborates her story Djinn passes out.

## Scene XIII: a warehouse

Djinn awakes on the second floor of the warehouse from scene one. She is disoriented and can't remember the order of the events in her recent past. She sees a manikin lying on the ground. It is lying in a pool of real blood. She runs down the stairs and sees another manikin. She slowly approaches it....

## Closing

The voice-over (that we now recognize as Dr Morgan) returns and informs us that the manuscript ends here. He tells of the subsequent investigation (including a theory that Djinn and Simon were in fact the same person) and how the police were able to trace little Marie (who did exist) back to the cafe and how police tailed her back to the abandoned alleyway where 'some of our people stepped in. Having quietly intercepted that overzealous guardian of law and order, they brought him back, once more to square one.'



Lamphead: Dan Potra



Candelabrahead: Dan Potra



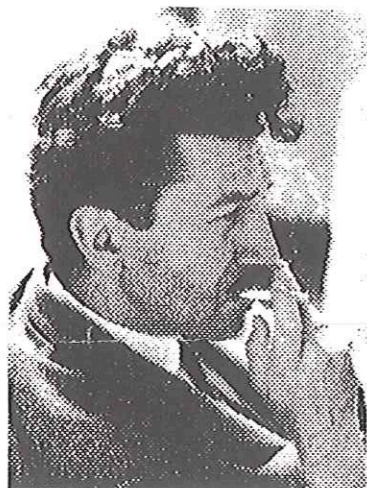
# Rendez-Vous: an Opera-Noir

## The Novel

Rendez-vous is based on Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel **Djinn**. Described as a haunting, disorienting and brilliantly constructed novel, it is the story of a young man who joins a clandestine organisation under the command of an alluring, androgynous American girl Jean (Djinn). Having agreed to wear dark glasses and carry a cane like a blind man, he comes to realise, through bizarre encounters, recurring visual images and fractured time sequences that he is, in a sense, helplessly blind. His search for the meaning of his mission and for possible clues as to the identity of the mysterious Djinn, becomes a quest for his own identity in an ever-shifting reality.

## The Opera

Rendez-Vous' subject matter, full of allusions to 'Film-Noir' and the detective novel is at once familiar and strange. Composer Lindsay Vickery has attempted to mirror this in the music which has simultaneously a familiar 'soundtrack-ambience' and a serial-structuralist level underpinning and undermining it. Through the use of electronic instruments, the traditional purpose of soundtrack sound effects is subverted by incorporating them into the structure of the work.



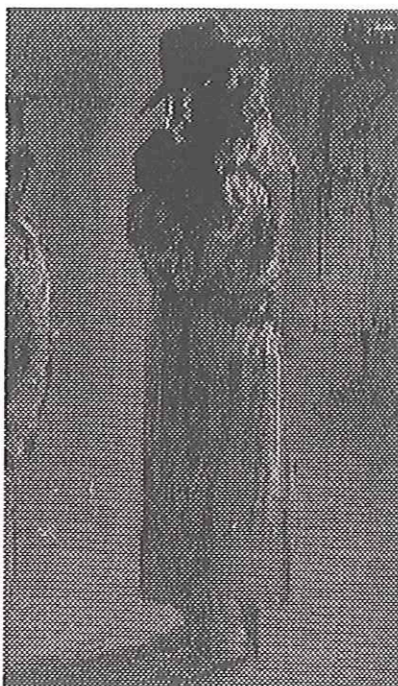
## The Author

Alain Robbe-Grillet is one of the leading writers of the European Avant Garde. He is acknowledged as the father of the French school 'Nouveau Roman' (New Novel) a movement that challenges traditional notions of plot, narrative and even the novel itself. Djinn is a succinct and tightly constructed exploration of all of these themes. It was originally written to function both as an introduction to French for American students and as a novel for public release in France, and manages to integrate its didactic purpose (of gradually increasing language complexity) as an element of the plot. The text's ambivalent origins were seized upon by Robbe-Grillet to create what is perhaps one of the only true examples of an 'anti-novel': where the reader is never certain whether the text is a language exercise or part of an elaborate mystery.

## The Composer

Perth-based composer Lindsay Vickery has written over forty works for concert, dance and theatre. His music reflects interests in structural processes, collage and ready-mades, electronic and more recently interactive electronics. In 1989 he received a Sounds Australian Award for his contribution to Australian Music. In 1995 he was selected as a Churchill Fellow to study electronic music at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies at the University of California, Berkeley and at STEIM in Amsterdam, internationally renowned for their research into alternative electronic controller instruments.

Lindsay has been very active in the Perth Scene. In 1988 he formed Alea New Music Ensemble with Cathie Travers and Paul Tanner. Since 1992 Lindsay has performed and composed for the electronic music group Magnetic Pig, with Travers, Tanner and cellist Iain Grandage. Lindsay has had a strong association with the Academy of Performing Arts and UWA's School of Music over the past five years. He currently works as a lecturer for the Academy's Conservatorium.



## The Soloists (in alphabetical order)



**Mark Alderson:** Mark received his Bachelor of Music, with Honours, from the University of Western Australia in 1996, studying voice with Molly McGurk and Andrew Foote. He has appeared as soloist with many of the prominent choral groups in Perth, in performing works such as Bach's **Magnificat**, Charpentier's **Te Deum** and **Midnight Mass**, Durullé's **Requiem**, Haydn's **Nelson Mass** and **St. Nicholas Mass**, Mozart's **Vespers** and **Requiem** and Schubert's popular **Mass in G**.

Mark's association with St. George's Cathedral and its director Simon Lawford, began in December of 1996 with a performance of Handel's **Messiah**. More recently Mark sang the part of Christ and the bass Arias in Bach's **St. John Passion**, and Vaughan William's **Five Mystical Songs**.

Appearances with the **New I Voci** and the **Perth Pops Orchestra** include two best of British concerts, a Best of Christmas and in 1996 their **Kern, Gershwin and Berlin** concert, all at the Perth Concert Hall. In April this year he will take part in their **Starlight Serenade** out of doors at the Araluen Country Club.

As a regular chorus member of the Western Australian Opera, Mark has been involved in their productions of Donizetti's **The Elixir of Love** and Verdi's **Falstaff**. This year he will be part of Bizet's **Carmen** and Verdi's **La Traviata**.

**Taryn Fiebig:** Taryn's music career began at the early age of three singing, "We all live in a yellow submarine" at her kindergarten in Sydney. Her love of music and the stage grew from there to a Bachelor of Music performance at U.W.A. Taryn has been fortunate in being able to combine careers in both cello and singing. During her time at U.W.A. Taryn was a member of the Australian Youth Orchestra and toured to Sydney, Melbourne, Tasmania, and New Zealand. In 1992 Taryn became the principal cellist of the orchestra and lead the cello section on a very successful tour to Japan. She has also been a vocal soloist with **Collegium Musicum, P.U.C.S., Perth Oratorio Choir** and the **Perth Pops Orchestra**.

Taryn has worked in many contemporary music projects with local composers and artists, both as a cellist & singer, sometimes simultaneously. These include John McLaughlin/Lindsay Vickery's **Vendor**, Fieldworks' **Why Can't Emus Fly**, Iain Grandage's **Fragments of O'Flaherty**, songs from Cathie Travers' **Seeya Next Century**, David Pye/Lee Buddle's **Desert Song**. The spontaneous element of new music today is very appealing to Taryn, who finds nothing more satisfying than the opportunity to perform contemporary music live.

Taryn's other passion is early music. Last year Taryn received a scholarship to attend the Dartington International Summer School where she studied with Early Music icons Emma Kirkby, Anthony Rooley and Evelyn Tubb. Taryn sang the lead female role of Marcella in Purcell's musical **Don Quixote** and as a result of her success in this role has been invited back on a full scholarship again this year.



**Sara Macliver:** Since graduating from UWA's School of Music, Sara Macliver has been in demand as one of Western Australia's most popular female vocalists. She has performed as a guest artist with all the major choirs and orchestras in Perth. As a soloist Sara has performed the major works in the choral concert repertoire and has twice been a national finalist in the ABC Young Performer's Awards.

Sara made her debut with the WA Opera in 1992 understudying and performing Michaela in **Carmen**. Since then she has performed the role of First Spirit and understudied Papagena in **The Magic Flute**, understudied and performed the role of Giannetta in **The Elixir of Love** and understudied Zerlina in the Australian Opera's production of **Don Giovanni**. In 1996, Sara was a Young Artist with the WA Opera and performed the roles of Morgana in **Alcina**, Ida in **Fledermaus** and Nannetta in **Falstaff**.

In 1996, Sara performed in the Viennese Concerts and the Mozart Requiem with the WA Symphony Orchestra. She appeared as guest soloist in a number of recitals in Sydney with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, one of which included performing for Diana, Princess of Wales at the Victor Chang Memorial Dinner. Earlier this year Sara was soloist in the Opera in the Park and in two performances of the St Matthew Passion with the Melbourne Symphony orchestra.

In May she will perform a series of concerts with the Brandenburg Orchestra in Sydney and Melbourne. Later this year she makes her debut with the Melbourne Chorale, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and the Sydney Philharmonia Choir.

**Samantha Podeu:** Emerging from a background of functional disharmony, Samantha Podeu was sent her first operatic aria from the lap of the gods at the age of eleven. The early realisation that life teaches best and a brief fling with the WA Conservatorium taught Samantha her passion for individuality and learning in the wider avenue of life.

This road has brought her together with a myriad of influences from Spanish Flamenco and African tribal culture through classic opera into industrial techno, trance and meditative new age.

Samatha views vocalists as healers and channels for the universal energy which feeds the consciousness of society. She strives to impart these intangibles, so that the viewer's every sense is combined for a more holistic and personal union with the performance.

Balancing her palate for Jim Hughes' **Fragments**, Samantha has continued to stake this claim, being carried high by slaves during King Street's 90th anniversary celebrations, creating a multicultural link for WA's Oz Concert, warbling with The Custard Divas through the streets of Perth, soul searching for nationally televised documentaries, and sending spirits soaring in performances throughout Australia.

Samantha's aim is to cross the ancient boundaries between lovers of classicism and hard-core modernists. If music remains ensconced in the imperialist formalities it was constructed upon, it cannot hope to entertain the global youth of today. Participation is essential and all lateral collaborations of the soul and mind create the sort of stuff Samantha is made of.







# Magnetic Pig

Magnetic Pig was named after a small pink fridge magnet that happened to be on the desk of former Evos administrator Lynne Mitchell at precisely the moment that she needed to find a name for Evos's proposed new electronic studio. Evos was planning to set up a public access studio and needed to create some 'profile' to increase the chances of industry support and so four Perth composers who were using technology - Cathie Travers, Lindsay Vickery, Paul Tanner and Iain Grandage - were assembled to give a season of performances at Perth's James Street nightclub in October 1992. The public access studio never eventuated, but the group who had already played together in the innovative and eclectic Alea New Music Ensemble, stayed together.

Over the past four years the group has continued its performance schedule which has included major concerts for the Perth and Adelaide Festivals, Artrage Festival, EVOS Music, the University of Western Australia and shared bills with Rik Rue, Julian Knowles, Stevie Wishart, Taryn Fiebig and Axis 21. Magnetic Pig has created a repertoire of over twenty works focusing on the use of technology both as a performance and a compositional tool, mainly by members of the group but also including works by Jonathan Mustard, Midori Takada and Nigel Westlake.

In March 1996 Magnetic Pig performed song cycles by Sydney composer Alan Johns and British composer Lindsay Cooper with Robyn Archer in the Festival of Perth and Adelaide Festival. In 1997 they performed a score by Iain Grandage for the highly acclaimed BlackSwan adaptation of Randolph Stow's **Merry-go-Round in the Sea**. They have also worked with visual artists Paul O'Connor and David Woodland to create specific performance environments both physical and digital. Magnetic Pig will be presenting a series of concerts during 1997, including a series of solo concerts by each member of the band during July-August.

Magnetic Pig's performance line up includes the ubiquitous synthesizer array, complimented by a gradual assimilation of non-keyboard instruments to the digital domain. All of the above mentioned machinery has been used to serve a variety of purposes in the live situation apart from keeping control over a very large number of Patch changes and routings. Magnetic Pig has developed the use of technology in performance in a number of ways: Travers has been involved in a great deal of creative voice writing for synths particularly in relation to pressure/timbre sensitivity - as exemplified by her **Urban Artifacts I and II** (for MIDI Ensemble); effects processing of live instruments has featured in Grandage's **Reptiles** and **The Curve** (both for cello/effects and Tape) and Vickery's **Dicgame** (Clarinet and Effects processor) and **The Giant is Speaking Through You** (electronic and acoustic percussion/effects and tape); Live Computer/Performer interaction in Mustard's **Robo Sax** series (electronic wind controller, computer and synths) and Vickery's **27matrix** (electronic wind controller, computer running MAX and synths). Grandage and Vickery both are currently developing their own MIDI controllers (and enhancements) in the future along the lines of research at STEIM; Travers is getting to know the intricacies of the piano accordion in the hope that it will translate well as an effective MIDI controller in the future.

Members of the group are rapidly expanding their technological and performance frontiers: Paul Tanner received an Australian Postgraduate Research Award to study in San Diego with virtuoso percussion soloist, Steve Schick, Folk Cuba workshops (Havana, Cuba) and Camivale (Olinda, Brazil) and begins a similar tour of Africa in several days. Cathie Travers attended the 1994 IRCAM Summer Academy in Paris and Lindsay Vickery attended the Summer Workshop and studied privately at CNMAT in Berkeley, and had a short residency at STEIM in Amsterdam as part of a Churchill Fellowship during 1995.

# Rendez-vous: an opera noir

## Production History

Rendez-vous was commissioned by Pocket Opera in October 1993. Several scenes were workshopped in May 1994 by Pocket Opera. The workshop was directed by Talya Masel and conducted by Warwick Stengards with members of Pocket Opera Company Peta Gourlay, Fiona Campbell, Mary Attracta-Connolly and Andrew Foote. The part of Dr. Morgan was played by Dickon Oxenburgh. Pocket Opera and Talya Masel at this time also commissioned a set of production designs from Artist Dan Potra. Dan's superb drawings illustrate this programme. The full score was completed in May 1995 and a concert performance was programmed by Evos Music for 1996. Unfortunately this performance had to be cancelled when Evos folded later that year. At this point the production was taken over by Magnetic Pig.

## Tonight's Performance

Tonight's performance is a concert version of the opera. Rehearsals were organised in two sessions: one in February, when Warwick Stengards now resident in Melbourne, was able to direct vocal rehearsals and a second two week period leading up to the performances. There is no staging and only a minute amount of action. For this reason the house lights will be left on to allow the audience to refer to the synopsis when necessary. The part of Dr. Morgan has been prerecorded by actor Dickon Oxenburgh and the role of Jean is played by Sara Macliver. In a full production Dr. Morgan plays the part of the Waiter and the Taxi driver and Laura also plays the Medical Student in the Café, the Waitress and Djinn's friend Caroline. The paranoid perspective of Rendez-vous' protagonist suggested these doublings, where everyone in the story is part of an unknown sinister organisation. There are several events in the narrative that can only be portrayed in action: for example the taxi rides, the fire that engulfs Simon and Djinn and most importantly the discovery of a possibly murdered body in the final scene. Members of the audience are implored to suspend their disbelief a little further at these points.

## Cast

Djinn Samantha Podeú  
Simon Lecoer Mark Alderson  
Marie Taryn Fiebig  
Laura/Waitress/Caroline Sara Macliver  
Dr. Morgan Dickon Oxenburgh  
Jean Sara Macliver

## Magnetic Pig

Violin Kate Dryborough  
Cello Iain Grandage  
Saxophone Lindsay Vickery  
Keyboards Cathie Travers  
Percussion Paul Tanner

## Acknowledgements

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ArtsWA

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Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts  
The Western Australian Conservatorium of Music  
University of Western Australia, School of Music  
Dickon Oxenburgh

Warwick Stengards and Pocket Opera Company  
Talya Masel and Dan Potra

Judy Thönnell  
Chris Murdoch  
Genevieve Wilkins  
Matt Keogh  
Linda Vickery

