Re-Composing Anime:
Drawing on the Aesthetic Qualities of Anime to Inform a Folio of Musical Compositions

A folio of compositions and written exegesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from the
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

by

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2014
Abstract

This portfolio of compositions and written exegesis explores the way aesthetic characteristics of Japanese anime can inform contemporary musical composition. As a highly nuanced medium, anime presents as a collection of visual traits that depict the world from a unique perspective. These visual depictions of concepts, characters, locations, narratives, gestures and emotions are the creative impetus for me as a composer. My music responds to, rearticulates, explores, is informed by and influenced by anime.

By watching anime and engaging with literature that analyses anime, my music explores anime from a number of perspectives. The musical gestures and choices I have made throughout the compositional process range from different forms of image-painting, story-painting and word-painting to more conceptual acknowledgements of the specific way anime depicts complex psychological issues such as sanity and sexuality. My music artistically expresses anime in a way no other form of research could. It also looks at anime as both an extension of Japanese art traditions and aesthetics as well as a 20th century technological development that exists in a global setting.

To frame my approach to the compositions in the portfolio, I explore the complex relationship between music and representation. The concept that opens up this discussion is 'ekphrasis', the process by which one art form remediates another. When attached to music a continuum is created where the degree of representation can be gauged from suggestive programmatic music to a fully ekphrastic musical depiction of an existing artwork such as a painting, poem, sculpture or anime.

The interplay between artforms and the mutability of expression through verbal, visual and aural iterations are at the core of my process as a composer. As an artist I am influenced by my own medium, music, but also in the way that other media articulate complex concepts. These articulations can be used by me and by other artists to inform the way we practice/create. In the instance of this folio, anime and music communicate abstractly and both are enhanced by the process.
Acknowledgement

The past four years have been a productive, intense, insightful and meaningful period of learning. During this time I have depended on many people. Thankfully, support and guidance have never been in drought.

I am endlessly grateful to my supervisors, Diana Blom and John Encarnacao, for their tireless efforts to bolster my work with insights of clarity and understanding even when things for me were at their most confusing.

I am indebted to the many musicians who have taken my scores and performed them. In doing so they have added a level of artistry for which I was often unprepared and by which I was further inspired. Particularly to soprano, Taryn Srhoj, whose voice and friendship inspired my song cycle, *Evanescence*, and pianist Antonietta Loffredo, who has been ever-supportive of my keyboard composing.

To Michelle Stead, Jake Leonard, Alexis Bergantz and Naomi Degabriele, I thank for the time taken from their own research and lives to help finalise aspects of my work over the years and for many conversations on the topic, whether welcomed or not.

Finally, I am grateful to my parents for their long term support and pushiness and my nearest and dearest friends who have heard endlessly about this complicated journey with smiles on their faces.
Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.
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Part 1: Music
Score Notes

Part 1 of the thesis comprises the full scores I have composed drawing on the aesthetic qualities of Japanese anime. The exegesis that follows refers to the compositions as either examples of the broader thinking of the research project or to demonstrate particular processes and practices I have employed. It is for this reason that the works are presented first in full and explored sectionally in Part 2. All pieces in the folio are presented at concert pitch. The scores are ordered by size of instrumentation starting with solo works.

While these opening text pages and Part 2 have been presented single sided, the scores are submitted as though they were published with title pages and program notes when appropriate followed by double sided scores.
CD Track lists

Three CDs have been submitted with the thesis as both reference material and to demonstrate how the pieces have been realised.

CD #1 – Performer Realisations

This CD contains all works from the folio which have been recorded either in a live performance setting or studio setting. Performance credits listed below.

1. Kawaii Suite ~ I. Mokona – Antonietta Loffredo, Piano
2. Kawaii Suite ~ II. Ponyo – Antonietta Loffredo, Piano
3. Tides of Falling Leaves – Paul Smith, Piano
4. Iceberg Variations – Antonietta Loffredo, Toy Piano
5. Clow Card Variations – Jane Duncan, Flute; Emma Hunt, Clarinet; Andrew Smith, Saxophone
6. Broken Reflection 1 – Lisa Stewart – Violin I; Myee Clohessy, Violin II; Stefan Duwe, Viola; Anna Martin-Scrase, Cello
7. Broken Reflection 2 – Lisa Stewart – Violin I; Myee Clohessy, Violin II; Stefan Duwe, Viola; Anna Martin-Scrase, Cello
8. Evanescence ~ II. In Bloom – Taryn Srhoj, Soprano; Eleanor McPhee, Bass Clarinet; Naomi Degabriele, Piano
9. Evanescence ~ V. Origami Child - Taryn Srhoj, Soprano; Naomi Degabriele, Piano

CD #2 – MIDI Realisations

This CD contains all works that have not yet been interpreted by live performers but whose MIDI realisations are sufficient to suggest the intention of the work. MIDI generations were exported
from Sibelius 6.0 which was used to notate and edit the scores.

1. Transitions of a Landscape ~ I. Autumn
2. Transitions of a Landscape ~ II. Winter
3. Transitions of a Landscape ~ III. Spring
4. Transitions of a Landscape ~ IV. Summer
5. Anime Interludes ~ I. Innocent Reality
6. Anime Interludes ~ II. Perverse Fantasy
7. Anime Interludes ~ III. Perverse Reality
8. Anime Interludes ~ IV. Innocent Fantasy

CD #3 – References Tracks

This CD contains works whose MIDI interpretations are not fully realised versions of the work or works whose lo-fi recordings are not of a high quality. Movements from the song cycle, for example, would benefit from being heard with the lyrics sung by a human voice. They are included as part of this submission as a reference only. The first track is a home recording made by Antonietta Loffredo.

1. Kawaii Suite ~ III. Kodama – Antonietta Loffredo, Piano
2. Kawaii Suite ~ IV. Pikachu
3. Evanescence ~ I. Waves Toward the Mountain
4. Evanescence ~ III. Chasing Cherry Blossoms
5. Evanescence ~ IV. Children's Tea Ceremony
6. Evanescence ~ VI. Cyborg's Lament
Kawaii Suite

For

Piano
Kawaii translates from Japanese as 'cute' or 'cuteness'. Kawaii culture is a strong presence in Japan and it is rare to not have some aspect of cuteness in a film or TV series. The four characters that inspire the movements of this suite are all examples of different types of kawaii characters and creatures in anime. They are exuberant, charismatic and strongly idolised for their innocent features and exaggerated expression. However, they are often also influential, powerful and important figures in the anime landscapes from which they originate. These pieces respond to the personalities and nuances through cute musical gestures set against grand climaxes.

I. Mokona - CD 1, Track 1

II. Ponyo - CD 1, Track 2

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 189-199, 228, 268-272
II. Ponyo

With Movement $j = 110$

Paul Smith

Piano

Faster

Faster

rubato
Sustain until sounds fades.
Tides of Falling Leaves

For

Piano

CD 1, Track 3

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 257-259
Iceberg Variations

For

Toy Piano

CD 1, Track 4
Exegesis Discussion: p. 278
Clow Card Variations

For

Flute
Clarinet in Bb
Tenor Saxophone
Clow Card Variations is inspired by the different elemental presentations in the anime series, Cardcaptors. The protagonist, Sakura, must save her city from the magical forces of the mischievous and dangerous Clow Cards. The 5 sections of the piece use different textures and gestures by the three wind instruments to respond to anime notions of earth, water, wind, fire, light and dark as they appear in Cardcaptors. The anime presents the elements within specifically personified emotional areas. Wind cards are mostly gentle and mischievous while fire cards are violent and unpredictable. The variation structure allows the movements to explore, musically, the different potential states of a single element through texture, register, melody and articulation. Water, for example, can be fluid or solid, still or flowing involving a range of musical realisations.

CD 1, Track 5

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 228, 237-250, 272-276
Dark and Light
Restrainted $j = 100$
Broken Reflection 1
and
Broken Reflection 2

For

String Quartet
These string quartets explore the darker side of anime. They take as their inspiration films that have shocked audiences with depictions of extreme violence or intense psychological breakdowns. Both broken reflections offer musical explorations of violence and insanity. The string quartet has within its timbral capacity the ability to move quickly between intense pianissimo and jagged harsh fortissimo which is utilised in the works. Number 1 is more chaotic using dissonant harmonies with a loose metre while number 2 employs a driving hemiola and a returning theme juxtaposed with sections of eerie beauty to conjure the complex psychological state of anime's psychotic characters. The two movements can be performed together or as independent quartet pieces.

Broken Reflection 1 - CD 1, Track 6
Broken Reflection 2 - CD 1, Track 7

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 230-233, 261-263
molto rall.

Hymn Like \( \frac{j}{4} = 50 \)

rit.
Transitions of a Landscape

For

SATB Choir

CD 2, Tracks 1-4

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 210-221
Transitions of a Landscape

I. Autumn

Kare eda ni / karasu no tomariki keri / aki no kure

On a withered branch
A crow is perched
An autumn evening.
(Trans. by Aitken)

Longingly $\frac{m}{f} = 70$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soprano</th>
<th>Alto</th>
<th>Tenor</th>
<th>Bass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ka-re eda ni, karasu no toma-ri keri, aki no kure.</td>
<td>Ka-re eda ni, karasu no toma-ri keri, aki no kure.</td>
<td>Ka-re eda ni, karasu no toma-ri keri, aki no kure.</td>
<td>Ka-re eda ni, karasu no toma-ri keri, aki no kure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Music by Paul Smith
Haiku by Matsuo Basho
II. Winter

Music by Paul Smith
Haiku by Masaaki Shiki

Ikutabi mo / yuki wo fukasa wo / tazune keri

How many, many times
I asked about the deepness
Of the snow!
(Trans. by Aitken)

Anticipatingly \( \text{f} = 60 \)

Soprano

I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo i - ku-ta i-ku-ta-bi mo,

Alto

I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo,

Tenor

I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo,

Bass

I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo I - ku-ta, i-ku-ta-bi mo,
III. Spring

*Harusame ya / neko ni odoriki / oshieru ko*

The spring rain-
A little girl is teaching
A cat how to dance.
(Trans. Aitken)

Music by Paul Smith
Haiku by Kobayashi Issa

---

Soprano

\[ \text{Peacefully } \| \text{ } \mathrm{f=100} \]

\[ \text{Harusame ya, } \text{Harusame ya, } \text{Oshieru ko, } \]

Alto

\[ \text{Harusame ya, } \text{Harusame ya, } \text{Oshieru Oshieru ko, } \]

Tenor

\[ \text{Harusame ya, } \text{Neko ni odorito, } \text{Oshieru ko, } \]

Bass

\[ \text{Mmm (a bright hum) } \]

---

S.

\[ \text{Neiko ni odorito, } \text{Neiko ni odorito, } \text{Neiko ni odorito, } \]

A.

\[ \text{Neiko, Neiko, Neiko, Neiko, Neiko, } \]

T.

\[ \text{Neiko ni odorito, O odorito, Neiko ni odorito, Neiko ni odorito, } \]

B.

\[ \text{Neiko ni odorito, Neiko ni odorito, Neiko ni odorito, } \]
18
S.
\[\text{to-o-o, o-shi-e-ru ko, ha-ru-sa-me ya, ne-ko ni,} \]

A.
\[\text{ko-o-o, ne-ko ni o-do-ri to, ha-ru-sa-me ya, o-shi-e-ru ko,} \]

T.
\[\text{to-o-o o-shi-e-ru ko, ha-ru-sa-me ya, ne-ko ni,} \]

B.
\[\text{ko, o-shi-e-ru ko o-o-o ha-ru-sa-me ya, o-shi-e-ru ko,} \]

26
S.
\[\text{ne-ko ni, ha-ru-sa-me, ha-ru-sa-me ya, ya,} \]

A.
\[\text{o-shi-e-ru ko, ha-ru-sa-me, ha-ru-sa-me ya, ya,} \]

T.
\[\text{ne-ko ni, ha-ru-sa-me ya, ha-ru-} \]

B.
\[\text{o-shi-e-ru ko, ha-ru-sa-me, ya, ya, ya, ha-} \]

31
S.
\[\text{ha-ru-sa-me ya, o-shi-e-ru ko.} \]

A.
\[\text{ha-ru-sa-me ya, o-shi-e-ru ko.} \]

T.
\[\text{sa-me ya, o-shi-e-ru ko.} \]

B.
\[\text{ya, o-shi-e-ru ko.} \]
What a pleasure
Wading the summer stream,
Sandals in hand.
(Trans. by Atiken)
テニゾウリ、ナツガワを、

うれしけれ、テニゾウリ、テニゾウリ、

テニゾウリ、ナツガワを、

テニゾウリ、ナツガワを、

テニゾウリ、ナツガワを、
Evanescence

For

Soprano
Clarinet/Bass Clarinet
Viola
French Horn
Piano
The song cycle, Evanescence, comes from the notion of evanescence and how it is imbued into most forms of Japanese art. Evanescence is synonymous with transience and ephemerality. It has connections with Buddhism in that nothing is permanent. The movements of the song cycle use varying instrumentations throughout and lyrically explore evanescence in Japanese art forms such as origami, woodblock printing and flower arranging. The songs' lyrics make references to anime that depict these art forms in their suggestive imagery and also explore impermanence in the shifting instrumentations and textures.

Performance Notes

Only the first and last movements use the entire ensemble. Between songs it is advised that the resting instrumentalists do not leave the stage but remain part of the performance. The audience should view the entire ensemble throughout and see the changing organisations perform the different movements.

II. In Bloom - CD 1, Track 8

V. Origami Child - CD 1, Track 9

Exegesis Discussion: pp. 200-209, 222-223, 228-229, 251-255, 276-277
Deep.

Pizz.

mf

fff

ff

mf

mp

mf

mp
Tinted with white

Always

seen, you, tinted with blue.
Distance between you and I,
Far from you, I curl by the wave.
I, white. You, blue. White, Crash, for you I reach.
Crash, for you...

curl and reach.

Distance between us.
while you watch!
II. In Bloom

Words and Music by Paul Smith

Broadly $j = 60$

A step joins heaven and earth. Blooms in

Soprano

Bass Clarinet in B♭

molto rubato

Piano

mf

S.

up ward quests. His soul is shown, reaching for light.

B. Cl.

Pno.

sostenuto pedal

mf

f
Giving life to blooms, born, they yearn then fade a-

way. Caught! Caught! Balance is lost while in bloom. He, stumbling a-
round, waiting to wilt

One soul takes flight,

ff

one world to the next

Step, he cannot speak. Step.

Step

expressive

Yearn.

Nature, he.

Yearn, upward
III. Chasing Cherry Blossoms

Words and Music by Paul Smith

Energetically $\frac{3}{4} = 140$

Soprano

Viola

Horn in F

Bass Clarinet

in Bb

6

fall. Watch them turn, swirl.

B. Cl.

14

ff

Fall, we fall, we fall. As we chase we, we fall.
Turn, turn. They turn and swirl.

and swirrl. Co - lours

will blend, pe - tals fall from limbs.

will blend, petals fall from limbs. The

long de - scent is cold, your hands are warm, Held.

long descent is cold, your hands are warm, Held.
Longingly \( \text{\textit{s} = 60} \)

Melody:

1. Turn your face. Fall from limbs. Swirl in you.
2. Swirl in me. Fall, we fall. We fall.
IV. Children's Tea Ceremony

Paul Smith

Clarinet in Bb

Horn in F

Cl. 6

Hn. 6

Cl. 12

Hn. 12

Cl. 17

Hn. 17

Cl. 23

Hn. 23
V. Origami Child

Words and Music by Paul Smith

Soprano

Slowly $\frac{\dot{\}}{4} = 60$

Through the fold she sits.

Valleys and mounts.

One arm then two.

Tears her heart as she sits.

Cuts her skin a drop of blood,

stain.

Through the brocade face she sees her life.

Through the paper, thin.

Edge

Piano
meets edge, point meets point meets point. Crease, valley fold down.

One foot, then two, one eye, then two, for her.
I am suspended in wire.
molto accel.

S.  

A web of wire inside my flesh, my throat, my brain.

Cl.  

Vla.  

Hn.  

Pno.  

j = 130
Pan-ick-ing now, I

see a light, I hear a switch! My limbs of
iron shake. The wires tight-en the charged blood cours-es, and the lights.

My wires! A shock, it feels like home. A
surge and I'm home again

My cracked vision

blurs. I walk the landscape of my memories. My ghost.
1.28: "pinned in flesh... A net of"

1.35: "flesh surrounds my wires, my iron,"

Music notation for strings and piano.
my charged blood
Anime Interludes

For

Orchestra
Instrumentation

Piccolo
Flute 1
Flute 2
Oboe
Cor Anglais
Clarinet in Bb 1
Clarinet in Bb 2
Bass Clarinet in Bb
Bassoon
Horn in F 1
Horn in F 2
Trumpet
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Piano
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Contrabass

Instrument Notes

Clarinet 2 doubles Bass Clarinet in Mvmts II and IV
Flute 1 doubles Piccolo in Mvmt IV
Percussion lines are marked as instruments. No more than two percussion items are used in a single movement therefore percussionists do not change instruments mid movement.
The four movements of *Anime Interludes* for orchestra explore two spectra of anime I see as broad measures for the variety of plot, character and style content. Firstly, anime exists between fantasy and reality. Some anime are placed within entirely fictional worlds while others are grounded in day-to-day life of metropolitan Tokyo. This is in contrast to other films and television series which have magical elements to an otherwise everyday story. The other spectrum the piece explores is that between innocence and perversion. Some anime are aimed at young audiences. They are playful, naïve, cute and childish. An often surprising area of anime, however, especially for Western audiences, is the horrifically violent, pornographic or psychological anime. These can be unsettling, shocking and macabre. The movements of *Anime Interludes* explore four possible intersections of these spectra. The notions of fantasy, reality, innocence and perversity as explored by anime are depicted in the textures of the orchestra and harmonic material. Overtly noticeable is that the innocent movements use rich tonal gestures and playful compound metres in a fairytale fashion while the perverse movements use more atonal clusters and sparse textures. Similarly, the fantasy movements are more exuberant and detailed responding to the lush and charismatic scenery of anime fantasy while the reality movements are subtle and reserved, pianissimo held chords and repeated harmonic material, much like the difference in the anime of these styles.

CD 2, Tracks 5-8

*Exegesis Discussion:* pp. 223-226, 232, 264-266, 279-284
II. Perverse Fantasy
Part 2: Exegesis
Chapter 1

Introduction and Context

Introduction

As a child, part of my daily routine involved watching cartoons before going to school in the morning. I was particularly interested in cartoons whose story progressed from day to day, ensuring that I had to regularly tune in to keep up with the plot. These cartoons that followed a longer and larger narrative were anime, from Japan. At the time I was not aware that these were specifically Japanese, however, I was generally more captivated by the characters and design than that of other cartoons, which I now know to be of Western origin. In my late teens I started engaging with anime made for older audiences and am still transfixed with the themes and artistry in many new films and series. Given anime's strong presence in my life from such a young age there is no question that it has informed my work as a composer. This project, therefore, focuses deliberately and directly on the impact of anime on my compositional process through a folio of compositions whose musical material is informed by anime characters, genres, themes, gestures, tropes and aesthetics. The folio and the accompanying exegetical thesis demonstrate how I have drawn on anime as an impetus for new creative work.

The Western canon of music contains many examples of composers who have drawn from non-musical sources as inspiration for the structure and/or material of their compositions. This is a theme that has appears throughout the broad periods of classical music. Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* (1723) and Holst's *The Planets* (1916) are well-known and popular examples where the composers have taken inspiration from a concept that is part of the natural world. Their music becomes a musical depiction of these abstract understandings about summer, spring, Mercury, Jupiter and others. The Holst example was also influenced by Roman mythology. A more recent example is Ludovico Einaudi's *Le Onde* (The Waves) (1996) in which the composer attempts to evoke with his music the feeling of waves against the shore, being partly inspired by Virginia Wolf's book *The Waves* (1931) (Einaudi, 2005). His piece is an example of the over-arching notion of 'musical ekphrasis', which will be further explained later in the thesis, where a piece of music is heavily informed by a work of art lying outside the musical medium. In addition to
these examples of composers looking away from music for their practice, there are a number of examples from the 20th century of composers and visual artists often either collaborating or finding inspiration in each other’s work as they explored inter-disciplinary artistic territory - Schoenberg and Kandinsky is an often cited relationship (Boehmer, 1993; Loomis, 2001; Teachout. 2004). Within what could be seen as a range of possible relationships between non-musical and musical outcomes, my own folio is interested in this blurring of the boundaries between different media parameters. It suggests that the lines between the different sensory art forms (literature, painting and music for example) are less strict than we might perceive them to be.

My research is built around the relationship between anime and myself, as a composer. The remainder of this chapter is divided into two sections that introduce these two in more detail. The first section explains what anime fully refers to and includes some of its history and breadth. The second section outlines my personal aesthetic by exploring my dominant compositional influences. This is followed by a brief exegesis chapter summary.

**Anime – Why and How**

Anime is a form of animation in Japan that was developed predominantly during the post WWI period as Japanese technology became increasingly influenced by the West. In many ways, Japan's is a culture of borrowed concepts – written language from China (Varley, 2000: 4), religion from Korea (Varley, 2000: 20) and photography from France (Hu, 2010: 22), for example. Early photographic technologies were borrowed during what Hu describes as “the framing of seiyo (the West) as a collective progressive civilisation model to be followed” (22), a period during and post the Meiji restoration in Japan (1868-1912). These photographic technologies developed into animation technologies and France and Japan still share a unique history in these developments. During the latter half of the 20th century, exponents of anime, such as Osamu Tezuka1 (1928-1989), famous for *Astro Boy*, and Hayao Miyazaki (1941- ) and Isao Takahata (1935-), founders of the productive Studio Ghibli, started exploring the variety of narratives that could be depicted using anime. Anime, as cartoons, were not only produced as children's entertainment in Japan but would often depict complex adult themes for a mature

---

1 All Japanese names appear with family name second. In this case Tezuka is the family name.
audience. Napier (2001) argues that anime’s “complex story lines challenge the viewer used to the predictability of Disney while its often dark tone and content may surprise audiences” (9). The narratives and tones of anime are highly varied and it is not uncommon to observe within the work of a single director disparate themes and intended audiences. Given this, it can be too reductive to view anime as just a sub-genre of animation; it moves beyond a single visual aesthetic. There are those that would argue for common identifiable visual traits, but the varied employment of anime rarely conforms to any dominant design practice. Napier addresses the idea of an 'anime style' suggesting that it ranges from “the broadly grotesque drawings of shrunken torsos and oversized heads to the elongated figures with huge eyes and flowing hair” (9). However, there is a considerable body of anime by those such as Satoshi Kon (1963-2010) that opts for more realistic and nuanced character design. These offer an anime palette that operates under neither the fantastic nor the exaggerated. Napier also points out a distinct difference in works that are set in Japan and depict Japanese features and those that exemplify a “deliberate de-Japanizing” in their blonde hair and “Western” looks (12). This highlights further variety within the broad anime oeuvre.

In light of these disparate aesthetics that represent a multiplicity of anime, Hu (2010) offers the hybrid term of “medium-genre” to describe anime (2). This acknowledges anime's distinctive visual aesthetic but also that it can be adopted to convey different messages or articulate different visual gestures. Hu positions anime first as a 'language-medium', arguing it as a new communicative model and then as a 'medium-genre' “because it has acquired unique recognisable characteristics” (2). It is a platform for expression where animators, authors, writers, composers and actors come together to create narratives and visuals. Different groups of people will use anime in different ways to great disparity and therefore, it is of no value to pocket anime into a collection of clichés that highlight any one trait above the possibility of others.

When composing a piece of music for the folio my course of action has not been to address anime as a whole. Given the varied employment assessed above, the pieces respond to and are influenced by specific characters, films, scenes or themes. I watch anime and as I watch, the events on screen suggest to me musical ideas, in a manner similar to that of Tim Whitehead and Charles Denler, both of whom have written music that has been inspired by paintings. Whitehead has taken an improvisatory approach, inspired by the works of JMW Turner. He describes how
he was “seated in front of the paintings with keyboard, minidisc recorder, mixer and headphones” (Whitehead, 2010). Denler's 1st Symphony is titled *Portraits of Colorado* and was inspired by a painting by Jerry Malzahn after visiting the artist's gallery (Bahr, 2013). This results in a number of direct associations between musical figures and visual gestures. I have also reflected on the specific themes of an anime or its structure to inform a composition's overall tone or musical arc. Often a musical idea, once suggested by anime, is then explored using different musical techniques. Throughout the work musical parameters such as texture, rhythm and harmony are used to vary and develop ideas that have come from my viewing of an anime. The entire folio presents a number of different ways I have responded to anime. It contributes at different times within my process and in different ways. An effect of this has been a range of languages throughout the folio. Some pieces are quite tonal and metric while others are much more gestural, rhythmically, and atonally centred. Some pieces use modes as opposed to major/minor relationships and many are uniquely structured based on their source anime. It could be generally argued that the tone or overall aesthetic of the compositions in my folio is determined by each individual anime.

While it may not be productive to essentialise the visual qualities of anime, there are three dominant distribution methods for anime. These carry with them certain qualities which can normally be presumed relating to style, production values and scope. Firstly, many anime are released in cinemas along with any other generally released film and it is not expected that these will be marketed towards families or children. Anime are mainstream films and cater to high audience numbers. Napier (2001) informs that “in 1988 roughly 40 percent of Japanese studio releases were animated. In 1999... at least half of all releases were animated” (15). High profile films such as those released by mega-studio Studio Ghibli expect record breaking sales. In 1997 Japan's highest grossing box office film was Hayao Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke*. Secondly, a number of anime films are released directly into the retail market. These films are known as OVA (original video animation) and often have lower budgets than films and are geared towards particular demographics. OVAs are often niche-oriented and are marketed towards reliable fans of specific sub-genres. Thirdly, and perhaps most productively, are anime made as television series. Anime series vary from low budget and low quality to lengthy epic stories produced over many years. The starkest difference between anime series and Western cartoon series, as outlined in my introduction, is that anime will rarely remain static. The characters age and progress. Each
season of the series demonstrates a progression of the characters both mentally and physically. Western animated series often offer portraits of characters or situations and explore the many iterations of a single network of relationships. Consider *The Simpsons* (1989-present) where Bart and Lisa Simpson have been in the 6th and 4th grade respectively for over 24 years. In contrast, characters in long anime series such as the popular *Dragon Ball Z* franchise (1986-1997) will age, begin and end relationships, have families and die. The propensity for large transitional narrative structures is a key informing factor for my research into how music may respond to anime. The development and change of characters over time often informed the tone of particular works.

Anime operates within a variety of global and local situations. For me, anime is not necessarily a Japanese construct. My first experiences with anime occurred as a young boy watching early morning cartoons in my home west of Sydney. Thinking of anime as Japanese did not happen until I later learned what was Japanese within the story and about the characters. Anime has many homes. It can be seen, for example, on the big screen in the US, on the small screen in Europe or in information videos on Japanese public transport. It is not limited to any one specific type of screen. Furthermore, qualities of anime are increasingly being adopted by animators outside of Japan. Whether or not these films can be considered anime is a hotly contested issue by anime fans (sodahead.com, 2009). Should anime remain an art form within Japan only? There is no denying, though, that many artists from a variety of disciplines have been influenced by anime. The exaggerated aesthetic of anime has been the subject of a number of parodies by Western cartoons such as *Futurama*\(^2\) and *The Simpsons*\(^3\). There are also examples beyond the satirical. Director Quentin Tarentino has incorporated anime-like sequences into his films such as *Kill Bill Vol I* (2003) as a way to explore the past of a *yakuza* (Japanese mafia) member. Japanese sculptor Takashi Murakami uses anime characters to explore notions of gender, sexuality and material culture in Japan. His sculpted characters wield absurd sexual items such as a lasso of semen or a hula-hoop of breast milk. The anime aesthetic is a way for him to articulate certain artistic messages.

\(^2\) In season 6, episode 26, 'Reincarnation', a short story depicts the main characters as anime parodies of themselves.

\(^3\) In season 10, episode 27, 'Thirty Minutes Over Tokyo', the Simpson family travel to Japan and watch an anime series of television that causes them to have seizures. This is in reference to an episode of the anime *Pokemon* that was reported to cause seizures in some Japanese school children.
Rather than adopting the visual traits of the anime aesthetic like these artists do, I take notes while I watch anime and record the different responses I have. Visual articulations, unique characterisations and events and anime realisations of the world all produce artistic inspirations for me. I am inspired by how the anime aesthetic visualises things. These inspirations and responses can then be used to both effect or affect my musical material.

Anime has been well-explored by Western academics from a variety of disciplines including sociology, cultural studies, philosophy and art theory. Two complementary threads of discourse position anime differently. Some cultural theorists position anime as an extension of Japanese tradition and examine the ways it conforms to traditional notions of Japanese aesthetics. This act groups it with other art forms such as origami, ikebana (flower arranging) and haikultanka (poetry). Hu (2010) traces a lineage of Japanese performance art in relation to anime. Her book, *Frames of Anime*, dedicates a chapter to the 'visualness' of Japanese stage traditions arguing that “the visual and playful elements in kabuki are in turn embodied in a 'toon' form” (35). This positioning of anime as a Japanese art form has encouraged me to explore texts that describe Japanese visual art forms throughout history often giving new ideas and insights into potential structures. This will be further addressed during the analysis chapters of the thesis.

However, as I have addressed the multiplicity of anime's presence in a 'glocal' environment there are equally a number of theorists who do not assess anime as an intrinsically Japanese art form. Again, for me anime was never anything particularly Japanese. That was a learned association. Rather than analysing anime from a specific disciplinary standpoint, anime itself can give rise to a body of unique knowledge. Brophy (2005) suggests that anime “allows one to 'unconsider' cinema and its anthropological documentarian fix which returns us too predictably to the real and the natural” (7). The narratives, characters and aesthetic qualities of anime have proven to be a rich source of material for analysts who draw from the films and television series a number of observations ranging from gender representations to cyborg questions of humanity. McCarthy (1999), for example, has looked intensively at the oeuvre of exponent Miyazaki. For each of his films she explores the origin, art, characters and story followed by her analytical commentary. In her commentary of *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), for example, in which an apprentice witch tries to start her career in a foreign town, McCarthy assesses the metaphor of “flight” explaining

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4 I use glocal to describe the varying local iterations of a global presence.
that it is depicted “with a triple purpose – for independence, for the loneliness of being different and for talent of any kind” (157). The way, then, that Miyazaki has articulated the concept of 'flight' can become artistic source material for my music. Rather than write a piece of music that explores flying as I perceive it, the initial anime articulation becomes the instigator for further artistic reflection by me (or potentially other artists).

Similarly to this articulation of a concept or idea through the anime medium, there is also a strong relationship to broadly accepted genres. While anime expresses an autonomy of expression it is undeniable that the works can often be organised into genres that suit a Western film taxonomy. Adventure, drama, horror, coming-of-age and comedy are all comfortable labels for anime films. However, when operating within these genre, I would contend that anime still flexes its unique mode of presentation. The aesthetic qualities of anime and the Japanese context in which they have been created inform aspects of how this genre is articulated. For example in the following chapter, the idea of horror will be discussed when anime becomes an example of this genre. What are the differences? What are the unique expressions and how can these then be used as part of my composing process?

It is not my intention to side with the merits of any particular frame for viewing anime. While I do not personally see the necessity in positioning anime within an essentially Japanese context, partly because this invites the impossible discussion of defining 'Japanese', I acknowledge that books such as Poitras's *The Anime Companion: What's Japanese in Anime* (1999) are immensely popular among Western audiences as they try to decipher the cultural code embedded within the narratives and visuals. For this reason, no one paradigm is a more appropriate consideration of anime.

Two further classifications of anime must be made as part of the preface to the exegesis. Firstly, the way in which the music written for anime is being addressed. When drawing from anime, the purpose of my research has been to investigate how music, as an aural art form, can be informed by a dominantly visual art form. Anime, however, as a film, OVA or TV series, is more than just a series of visuals. The voice acting, diegetic sounds, musical score and other sonic elements form part of what is the entire visual. I've also no doubt that the way I receive the aesthetic of anime is affected by the music, by that I mean that the film *is* a combination of visuals and
music. However, the music in terms of its intrinsic compositional aesthetic and devices has not been influential to me as a composer. The scores for higher budget anime often adopt common Western film music structures and textures. Joe Hisaishi, who frequently composes for the films of Miyazaki, writes grand sweeping orchestral scores that would equally suit grand adventure Tolkein-esque films. Lower budget TV series often employ more popular accompaniments. They are often synthesised and casually set mood and tone for the scenes. Both of these musical devices do not offer any necessarily new ideas to the composer. However, I am aware of how they do in no small way contribute to what constitutes the final product of an anime and how the music can further articulate narrative and character.

It is these sonic elements that introduce the second clarification. Anime has a sister medium known as manga. Manga are Japanese comic books. The origins of manga can be traced back to 12th century scrolls, however, manga as we know it today developed, like anime, in an early 20th century when Japan was embracing new technologies from the West. Manga is often a testing ground for new works that, if popular, will be turned into a television series. There are a number of crossover artists and studios that create both anime and manga. However, manga has not been included in the research. While anime and manga are often grouped together both commercially and academically, there are a large number of differences between the two which have encouraged me to draw from anime specifically. The audiences of anime and manga tend to differ. While the design and aesthetic can be assessed as similar, anime and manga still operate as animated and literary media, respectively, and as such draw different audiences in the same way that novels and films do. Also, anime is a temporal form. Much like music, anime is a work of art that exists in time. Finally, the concept of 'motion' as it is articulated within anime has proved important for my compositional process. The way a visual gestures moves on the screen often dictates either, how a musical technique is sounded, or how the musician should play their instrument for a certain note/passage in the piece. The movement of anime can inform the intensity and material of the work quite directly.

To conclude this introduction to anime, I will respond to a question often addressed by anime academics. Why anime? The first chapter to Napier's often cited seminal Western text on anime addresses this very question. It would seem necessary for one to justify what makes anime worth the time it takes to explore its many intricacies and indeed the amount of anime that has been
produced offers many intricacies to be explored. Napier (2001) mentions the “arresting visual style...in which distinctive elements combine with an array of generic, thematic, and philosophical structures to produce a unique aesthetic world” (10). I, too, find this world arresting and have for many years. The unique palette of anime that Napier discusses is what causes me to consider the ways in which it can influence the composition of my music. If indeed the elements of construction intrinsic to anime are so unique in the way they form structure, motion, character, how then might they inform individual pieces of music and the way they are 'composed'?

**Compositional Environment**

My compositional environment is the music that has informed and continues to inform my personal aesthetic. My 'voice' as a composer is something that has been developing prior to this research and has gone through some significant shifts including when I started learning piano at 10 and when I started classical singing at 19. This body of musical influence is still growing and changing. I am not attempting to definitively categorise it but to explore some of the dominant composers who have influenced my musical voice. The later chapters of the exegesis do not address the aspects of the folio that do not relate to anime. The purpose, then, of this part of the chapter is to establish a general understanding of my musical influences. A number of other Australian composers define and discuss their musical influences. Matthew Hindson's program notes often indicate the origins of his works in popular music, video game music or progressive rock music (Lewis, 1998; Hindson, 2013). Anne Boyd often discusses the Asian musical influences her music has had from the early 70s while studying in New York (Grenfell, 2003: 12). Boyd and Hindson take inspiration from non-musical sources as well, however, they also locate themselves musically. What, then, are my musical influences? The aesthetic environment suggested here will musically position the pieces of the folio. The manipulations and arrangements of this environment in relation to anime will be further explained in chapters 3 and 4.

There are two dominant influences on my musical aesthetic which have developed from two different parts of my life. This aesthetic foundation does not suggest that my compositional voice is restricted to these or that it is contained within their strong stylistic parameters, rather, that my
identity as a composer can be assessed as a mixture of these predominant and other elements.

Early 20th Century Works

From the age of ten I trained as a classical pianist. I systematically worked through Australia's AMEB grade system and playing areas of the greater western canon of piano pieces. The beginnings of my personal musical aesthetic are located here, as a teenage pianist playing the pieces of the canonised composers such as Schubert, Beethoven and Chopin. From this, I developed a great interest in the late romantic and 20th century works of a handful of composers from Russia, France and England. The developing and changing figures of harmonic organisation and the reconsideration of fixed musical structures and techniques were approaches to music that I found exciting as a pianist. This was compounded when I began training as a classical singer and worked through the operatic and art song canon of the West, again finding great interest in the late romantic and 20th century works. The three composers I wish to focus on in this section are Sergei Prokofiev, Benjamin Britten and Béla Bartók.

Guillaumier (2011) claims that Prokofiev's music “displayed a scepticism of tradition that earned him the image of an iconoclast and made him a favourite with the St Petersburg avant-garde” (25). As a prominent composer and pianist in a pre-war Soviet Union, Prokofiev's catalogue of piano works is regularly cited as hallmarks of an early modernism in music. Often, he would take classical forms and reinvent them using his own musical language. His first symphony, for example, known as the 'classical symphony', was his interpretation of old forms. I also draw on the classical structures I was taught as a pianist, especially theme and variations. His piano works, though, were where I came to learn about his specific writing style. Prokofiev highlighted and extended the role of rhythm in his piano sonatas and collections of shorter works. My compositions often vary the beat in a way that echoes the subdivisions and syncopations Prokofiev used. One suite of works, Vision Fugitives (1907), is a collection of 20 piano miniatures that often employ dissonant harmonies, chord clusters, non-harmonic additions to cadences and doubling chord types on top of one another. These are often placed in contrast to longer melodies that exhibit an angular construction often consisting of large, chromatic intervals (Example 1.1). My own piano writing often makes use of these angular melodies and dissonant harmonies, particularly in the Kawaii Suite. Chord clusters feature in Tides of Falling Leaves.
Example 1.1: Prokofiev, 'I', Vision Fugitives, bars 1-5

Benjamin Britten's oeuvre covers a broad range of classical music forms and genres. As one of the most prolific exponents of the 20th century he contributed to many genres including operas, folk song arrangements, orchestral works, string quartets, piano solo works and a number of concerti. For me, Britten's music presents an effective use of soft and sparse textures. Many of Britten's compositions often stand in the canon as calmer works, such as his String Quartet No. 2 (1945) and Symphony for Cello and Orchestra (1963). Speaking of his Gloriana (1953), Moore (2011) states that it “seems to be held together by soft thunder from the bass drum” (93). This does not exclude Britten from writing tempestuous music. The 3rd movement of his Four Sea Interludes (1945) is anything but calm, however, my observations of Britten's scores highlight a propensity for the reflective. Much of his vocal work, often for tenor, also does not attempt to force a great sound. Britten's partner, the tenor Peter Pears, was known for his light lyric British voice. Many songs and folk arrangements were intended for Pears and are quite lyric in style.

In Britten's opera Billy Budd (1951), an opera from which I have sung a number of extracts, there are many moments of quiet reflection. The generally quiet accompaniment of the singers evokes the ocean. The compound metre throughout Billy's lament in the second act, suggests the uneven rocking of the ship (Example 1.2) as Billy considers how his actions and those of others have meant that he will be hanged.
With Britten, I am influenced not only as a listener but also as a performer. Singing against the soft accompaniment has helped me understand the different functions of these textures. The disturbing Claggart, during his aria 'Handsomely done, my lad', is underscored by low brass, low strings and percussion in what is a smoulderingly tense condemnation of “beauty, handsomeness and goodness”. The entre'act between acts 1 and 2 consists of 35 differently spelled semibreve chords with no rhythmic variation, again suggesting the sparse sea at night (Example 1.3). It is Britten's ways of using quiet musical gestures that has worked its way into my aesthetic. A number of my works employ similar quiet gestures to a range of different effects in response to the anime aesthetic.
Example 1.3: Britten, 'Interlude', *Billy Budd*

Britten's interest in British folksong style and his many arrangements of the songs for piano and voice has in part influenced my use of the compound metre. The use of 6/8, 9/8 and 12/8 throughout my folio is often an association of folksong with the Japanese countryside setting of a number of famous anime by Hayao Miyazaki such as *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988).

It is the harmonic material of Bartók's chamber music which has most influenced aspects of my own writing style. Bartók's string quartets have become well-established in the repertoire, and all six are considered seminal 20th century works. Bartók refers to his own style as 'polymodal chromaticism'. His works often centre around a single tone rather than a single key/mode area. Cooper (1998) suggests that his music is of interest to analysts as there is an “apparent retention of residual tonal centricity within a musical context which is sometimes densely chromatic” (22). Some works in my folio adopt a similar approach to tonality. After listening to a number of
Bartók's works, especially his string quartets, I became more interested in moving from tonal to atonal gestures sometimes in the same work. For example, *Broken Reflections 1 & 2* demonstrates quite different approaches to tonality. Not composed chronologically, I composed number 2 earlier in the research period, while number 1 demonstrates less tonal centricity than number 2.

**Video Game Music**

Video game music has influenced me in three ways. Firstly, it formed much of my performance material as a young pianist. I would often purchase sheet music of pieces from my favourite video games to learn and perform. This was facilitated by the popular *Final Fantasy* series (1987-present) which produces an album of piano arrangements based on selected tracks from each game released. Secondly, as an avid gamer during my teenage years I was constantly surrounded by the music, not only while I played but also through buying the albums of music and listening to them separate from the act of playing the game. Thirdly, I engaged with video game music academically during my honours thesis in a 45 minute chamber opera which drew on aspects of video games and their music. The characters, plot and music all developed from aspects of video games. It should be stated that the music I refer to is predominantly from the video games of my childhood and those which I examined during my past research. These examples often originate in Japan and are dated from 1990 to the present day. Video game music is widely varied in terms of style, approach and function.

Common to much video game music is the subdivision of beats into complex hemiolas. These often act as a way to heighten and dramatise battle scenes giving a disjointed and dynamic feel to an otherwise strict time signature. The different instruments or synthesised sounds that constitute the background music often use different subdivisions to create further rhythmic contrasts. Video game music often functions on a loop system so that a player may hear constant accompaniment even when stationary. These varying sub-divisions of 5/4, 4/4 and 3/4 measures allow the music to retain interest while being repeated at infinitum. The manipulation of rhythm has become a recurring theme of my compositions. The unexpected movement of pulse and metre, which in video games creates an excited mood, is a favoured way of exploring melodic and harmonic ideas. I often break up my melodies and repeat them in different ways.
While the more aggressive battle music often adopts simple metre time signatures, it is common for more serene and subdued music which might accompany a quiet village or act as the theme for a docile character to use compound metre. The lilting breakdown of the pulse is a regular musical device to highlight playful and domestic association tapping into the nursery rhyme and folk allusions that 6/8 and 9/8 time signatures give. Given the amount of this material I played, the use of compound time signatures has become a prominent feature in my folio particularly when the music is more melodic and playful.

A common tool of video game music exponent Nobuo Uematsu is the borrowing of styles and devices from many genres of music. The scores he has written for the Final Fantasy series adopt structures that take advantage of musical associations in an effort to accompany the varied locations and events of the games. Examples 1.4 and 1.5 show extracts from Eric Satie's Gymnopedie No. 1 (1888) and Uematsu's Bran Bal the Soulless Village (2000). The latter piece adopts the Satie's signature Gymnopedie texture in an effort to reflect the serene atmosphere of the village in the video game. Uematsu will commonly draw on existing textures, instrumentations and genres to evoke certain cultural/period associations and moods. I find this association of tone and mood without being restricted to a certain style or musical aesthetic quite freeing. I see this as Uematsu allowing the individual video game locations to give to rise to their own unique musical atmosphere. He then draws on whichever composer, style or period he needs to depict this. Another work from the same video game as the above example is Sleepless City Treno (2000), for which Uematsu draws on a 1920s-1940s Harlem stride piano style. This style enhances the all-night gambling and drinking atmosphere of the city and is a strong contrast to Bran Bal the Soulless Village.

Example 1.4: Satie, Gymnopedie No. 1, bars 1-6
My own research demonstrates a comparable device where my musical material is being informed by an outside source. This differs from film scores where often a single musical aesthetic dominates the film. It is not uncommon for a video game to have over four hours of unique music. While my music does not move between different styles, I feel that Uematsu's breadth of compositions have inspired me to look at music as a vehicle for expression and response to non-musical instigators from a broader position.

In addition to this, video games, like anime, act as a genre-medium, the interactivity being a common thread necessary to each video game while still being used by a variety of different artists/game-makers in any number of ways. The video games I explored during my past research mainly came from Japan, and there are some allusions to the aesthetic qualities of anime and manga, but video games tend to work on a range of technological operating systems and thus are strongly varied. Also, while anime narratives explore issues far-removed from the western canon, video games commonly subscribe to the 'good guy/bad guy' structure.
Exegesis Structure

This chapter has introduced and explained anime and how I watch and engage with it as a composer. This chapter has also outlined my compositional environment, that is, some of the broader areas which have influenced me as a way of denoting some parameters of my personal music aesthetic. Chapter two establishes my methodology. The project is an example of the relationship between the complementary methodologies practice-led research and research-led practice. The development of practice-related research is discussed as it is relevant to my research. Chapters three and four analyse the 23 compositions within the folio and how they have been informed by anime from two different perspectives. Chapter three focuses on anime as part of the Japanese cultural aesthetic. It will specifically look at the ways anime conforms to traditional notions of Japanese art and how that has informed my music. Chapter four focuses on anime as a contemporary construct separate from cultural ties. The themes and gestures intrinsic to anime have also informed a number of aspects of the compositions. Chapter five of the thesis introduces and explores the two foundational theories pertinent to the conceptual basis of the thesis, ekphrasis and translation. Ekphrasis denotes when one art form remediates another. Musical ekphrasis closely describes a type of program music where a piece responds directly to a visual or verbal artwork. This invites questions about the representational/non-representational aspects of music. A broad definition of translation describes it as the moving of something from one medium to another, in this instance anime to music. The literature surrounding these concepts provides a theoretical foundation that benefits the scope of this research. The final chapter of the exegesis, chapter six, draws together the broad themes of my research as a brief discussion on the implications of an intermedia approach to musical composition.

List of Compositions

The following is a list of compositions that make up Part 1. The pieces are ordered by number of instruments, starting with solo items. Throughout the exegesis the pieces are referred to as examples only.

*Kawaii Suite* – Piano
I. Mokona
II. Ponyo
III. Kodama
IV. Pikachu

*Tides of Falling Leaves* – Piano

*Iceberg Variations* – Toy Piano

*Clow Card Variations* – Flute, Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone

*Broken Reflection 1 & Broken Reflection 2* – String Quartet

*Transitions of a Landscape* – SATB Choir
I. Autumn
II. Winter
III. Spring
IV. Summer

*Evanescence* – Soprano, Clarinet/Bass Clarinet, Viola, French Horn, Piano
I. Waves Toward the Mountain
II. In Bloom
III. Chasing Cherry Blossoms
IV. Children's Tea Ceremony
V. Origami Child
VI. Cyborg's Lament

*Anime Interludes* – Orchestra
I. Innocent Reality
II. Perverse Fantasy
III. Perverse Reality
IV. Innocent Fantasy
Chapter 2

Methodology: Research Related Practice

Introduction

This chapter addresses the methodological relationship between practice and research as it presents in this thesis. Both anime and literature surrounding anime are an involved part of my compositional process rather than acting as a foundation or preface. Therefore, this chapter explains how the literature is involved with my practice as a composer, how this has negated the use of a traditional literature review as a preface to the project and how literature is woven with my composing, resulting in this material better serving an analysis of the folio and its inspirations. Other bodies of literature concerning ekphrasis, translation and representation, three concepts mentioned in chapter 1, are explored as a way of reframing my compositions in chapter 5 after the analyses. As part of a growing and changing field of projects that are led by practitioners, the structure of this exegesis is one that exemplifies how research can inform practice and how practice can inform research. Given the variety of artists and practitioners within this field the ratio/relationship of practice and research can differ greatly from project to project. This chapter explains the specific nuances of these two actions for my project. In addition, the chapter sets out an explanation for the structure of the following three chapters as they are linked to the methodology.

Research and Practice

There has been over the past decade a resistance to the concept of research relating to practice. Bell (2006) acknowledges the difficulties of conducting research from “within” (53). Many of the key criticisms of practice-related research site a lack of evidence orientation (Mason, 2008) or a probable misinterpretation of traditional humanities' methodologies, the bias relating to an inside investigation (Bell, 2006). In a stern review of a 2010 publication by Hazel Smith and Roger Dean, Practice-led Research and Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts, Hecq and Banagan (2010) argue that only because an artwork is new doesn't make it original or ground-breaking in terms of knowledge production (para. 6). Smith and Dean do make the point in their
book that for an artwork to be considered research it must contain new knowledge. There is a tension in this acknowledgement, how do artists prove or convey that their work contains new knowledge. One assessment of arts practice finds that it is itself a site of knowledge. Blom, Bennett & Wright (2011) interviewed a number of arts practitioner-researchers who claim that “the artistic process is research involving aspects of the unexpected, intuitive, mysterious, and serendipitous” (362). This paradigm of practice-related research has been discussed in recent years by a number of authors, both practitioners and non-practitioners, creating what are more constructively seen as practice-related methodologies, rather than one approach. By enacting a project that involves me as a composer, I situate the research within the approaches which are practice-related, that is, only the practitioner can undertake the formation of knowledge.

Linda Candy (2006) documents that the first practice-related PhD programs began in Australia in 1984 when the University of Technology Sydney and the University of Wollongong allowed doctorates in creative writing (4). Since this time, there has been a slow development in the variety of ways that a creative or practice-related research project could be undertaken. One of the results of this disparity of modes of study has been a lack of common language between researchers. As individual disciplines and, indeed, individual practitioners use a variety of vernaculars to describe, clarify, explain and justify their work it can be difficult to collate discourse of how practice and research are related for the artist. If research relies on regularity of process and systematic investigation then the dynamic nature of practice undermines this. Reiner and Fox (2003) suggest that not all compositional research is undertaken under these conditions but observe that the compositions plus discussion allow doctoral candidates to consider their practice “in order to lift their creative work to the level of research” (5). I feel that I have considered the conditions under which I compose and the aims of the production of my folio, as this thesis expounds, in order to 'lift' my creative work.

Again drawing on Hecq and Banagan's critique, they argue, using terms from the Smith and Dean book, that practice-led research struggles with a lack of regularity. They assess that “what is one writer's 'Practice-Led Research' (7) may be another's 'fossicking' (8), while another's 'ecosophical praxis' (187) is allegedly in line with someone else's 'creation of new knowledge' (260)” (para. 8). Throughout my exegesis, too, there is a unique vernacular for explaining the way I have been influenced by anime. Dominant academic anime discourse as well as terms
lifted from anime culture and examples of anime all mix with my music to create a new compositional knowledge base and a hybrid language which locates and explains my process and my research. While music is considered an abstract form of expression, there is instilled in the works a site of knowledge indicative of how one art form, anime, can be understood through musical parameters. This aspect of the thesis will be further explored in chapter 5. The essence of anime is explored musically and by that process expressed in a way no other research could. Candy attempts to allow for this multiplicity by effecting a further breaking down of practice-related research into specific parameters for ‘practice-led’ and ‘practice-based’. While this does acknowledge different modes of research, it does not tie together the ‘methodologies’ that already exist among practitioners writing about their research. It would seem up to the reader or audience of the research to understand the difference. Alternatively, Smith and Dean do not shy away from this lack of commonality among practical researchers. The overarching theme of their book, which groups together a number of practitioner/researchers' self-assessments, is to embrace this plurality and position it as the main contribution of practice-related research. If a lack of common language highlights the highly individualised and unique artistic offerings, then it must also highlight the unique ways a concept can be expressed and new knowledge can be sought. The individualism of artistic response within art does not undermine the literary or numerical data, which are themselves also organised symbols, but seeks to expand upon possible expressions of knowledge. I feel that the folio I have composed, too, acts in this way. I am one of many artists who may use anime as inspiration to inform their practice to a variety of effects.

For this advance of the dynamic relationship between research and practice, Smith and Dean have created a graphic web which they have termed the 'iterative cyclic web' (Figure 2.1). It shows the multitude of potential relationships between practice-led and research-led methodologies and traditional academic research. They have placed a variety of outcomes around the cycle, outlining that here there are a number of ways in which contributions can be assessed or categorised depending on the level of involvement/location practice has within the methodology.
Figure 2.1: Smith and Dean, 2010, Iterative Cyclic Web
One can follow the flow of the diagram starting with idea generation at the top of the cycle and then investigate this idea through academic research to the left or practice to the right. If the reader follows the path to the right, outcomes will be new art works and also the documentation surrounding that art work. Research-led practice is on the other side of the cycle, opposite to 'idea generation', so Smith and Dean suggest that once other research has been carried out (by ourselves or by others) this can then be put into our practice to achieve new results. The academic research that I engage with is done by others, I view this as the academic anime research that I engage with that I then use to inform my practice.

My research contains aspects of both the practice-led and research-led models. As a practice-led project, the idea of composing music that draws on anime has created a number of questions about my process and the way it can respond to other forms of art. This has then led to further discussion and questions on the nature of all inter-media art. There are key issues which are produced in this process about how art forms might respond to one another. These issues are linked to ekphrasis, a device mentioned in chapter 1 that denotes when one art form remediates another, and could be easily addressed by a non-practitioner and indeed they usually are. However, it is my position as a practitioner that has forced me to consider these issues as they relate to my music. Is knowledge of anime required to ‘understand’ one of my pieces? Part of adopting a practice-related research project, I feel, is addressing these questions as they arise. Throughout my candidature they have altered the way I conceive of my practice and, by doing so, have become integral to the research. It is for this reason that chapter five of the exegesis discusses these questions and draws on a body of literature different from previous chapters that establishes a fluid approach to inter-media art practice. In addition to ekphrasis, related questions of translation are addressed. This chapter then becomes a reframing of the folio after it has been presented and discussed. It questions how the music should be considered and the nature of the relationship between music and anime. These questions arose at different points during the research period and evolved with my own description of my works as remediations, translations or ekphrases. While reflecting on my music and also presenting individual papers at conferences, realisations on and about my practice began to surface.

Methodologically, my practice appears in a variety of circumstances, all of which lie at different points on the cyclic web. Firstly, and most traditionally, it is a site for new creative works. My
practice leads to compositions. Secondly, it is led in some ways by research in that the compositions are affected by anime literature. Thirdly, it has led to further theoretical literature that sees me explore notions of inter-media and inter-art relationships. Lastly, it is also an example of research that is concerned with practice and expands notions of source material for the composer. It encourages the exploration of established art forms and allows the non-musical to inform the musical. As a research-led project, in the cyclic web it can be defined as “application of theories or techniques to new creative works” (Smith & Dean, 20). The research of anime theorists is fed into my creative practice and has a tangible effect on my practice. For example, to fully articulate the notion of cuteness or kawaii within anime designed for children or simply in anime employing some kawaii elements, an aspect I explored with the Kawaii Suite for piano, I needed to understand the cultural phenomenon that is kawaii. This informed understanding then led to compositional choices for how I could musically articulate it.

While my practice as a composer was the focus during the compositional period and while my methodology was not always at the forefront of my thoughts, I may reflect on the candidature as a period in which the practice and research dynamic is apparent. Acknowledging this and framing the exegesis in this way will, I feel, better prepare those accessing the research to understand its intentions and motivations within an academic paradigm. The compositions exist as artistic offerings, ones that may be performed well away from any connection to anime, but it is in their construction that they become abstract examples of new knowledge, ones that explore the inter-media possibilities between anime and music. The adopted structure of the exegesis is the best way to articulate this position of both practice and research.

There are three defining attributes during the compositional process of this research: my compositional voice, anime and the musical integrity of the composition. The three act together, creating a triad of influence none more important than another, and at times one aspect has had to be reconsidered to be cohesive with the other two. While the purpose of my research and of the two analysis chapters is to explore how one attribute, anime, informs the composition I would like to briefly discuss how the three attributes, voice, anime and integrity, relate as a preface to analysis. These are best considered chronologically. Although they act dynamically throughout the process there is still the suggestion of an order.
Firstly, my compositional voice, which has been explored in chapter 1, is a palette of existing musical language and knowledge. Devices adopted come from compositional tutelage and interests as a composer and performer. While I may employ, extend, alter, rewrite or interpret any of these devices, my musical language is my own and anime informs how it is employed. It would be difficult to establish in my research the idea that there is a universal prescribed correlation between the visuals of anime and music. Such specifics are bound to problematic notions of fixed meaning. My musical knowledge and anime work on different sensory systems and as such cannot directly correspond to one another. To employ a visual metaphor, were I a painter, I would be bound by the paints that I have in my studio. I can mix them and employ them in a variety of ways, but I cannot look to something outside of the studio in the hope of creating a brand new colour or paint. What anime does, though, is help me think and create beyond my usual compositional aesthetic. It guides my process and allows me to figure my music in a way that addresses non-musical parameters in sound.

Secondly, anime informs and reshapes my compositional voice and thinking including aspects such as the instrumentation for which I am writing, structure, texture. Throughout chapters 3 and 4 two dominant types of visual to aural responses are addressed and can be divided into 'literal responses' and 'conceptual responses'. Literal responses correspond to a specifically animated gesture which has been interpreted directly from anime to the score. This has to do particularly with the equal temporality of both anime and music. The visual arc of an anime gesture can be remediated into a musical one. So, for example, a flash of light may be translated as a staccato chord, both depicting a sudden disruption. If the flash is violent, it may be musically atonal. Other contextual details give specifics such as register, harmony, texture or extended techniques. Visual objects which are highly detailed may be written musically with clear articulation, while blurry objects may forgo harmonic or textural detail in favour of other elements. Conceptual responses are those which do not have a specific animated event or gesture from which their inspiration arises. Neither is it necessary for there to be a specific musical gesture which embodies it. These are the types of responses which require more detailed explanation. When writing a piece, for example, I might be influenced by the personality of a character whose temperament informs the tonal world of the piece. Philosophical, cultural and sociological facets of anime are also encompassed here. These two different types of responses – literal and conceptual – are apparent within the analysis of the pieces.
Thirdly, I consider the musical integrity of each piece. While anime informs and articulates the most important parts of each work’s unique gestures, this must not come at the expense of my instincts as a composer concerning what I consider to be musically cohesive. This does not mean that the pieces pander to general musical doctrines, but rather that musical coherency is an important consideration. The choices made for when to use melody, harmony or texture, for example, to portray an idea are necessary to compose a well-structured and effective composition. At times anime will inform the melodic detail, for example, and other parameters will be composed to support this association or influence. This is exemplified by first and second drafts of a piece from the folio, *Clow Card Variations*, which explores the different ways anime articulates the natural elements, fire, earth, wind, water, light and dark using a large number of variations in five groups. At first the variations were placed in the order given by the anime *CardcaptorS* (1998-2000). The goal of the piece, to explore these different elemental depictions, was, however, lost as the order taken from the anime did not allow for a clear musical exploration of the elements. Rather, the different musical responses were mixed resulting in an unclear structure that contained sudden disjointed changes in texture and tone. It was when addressing the piece's musical integrity that I decided to employ a structure that would best communicate the purpose of this composition, moving away slightly from the order given in the anime to one that would better suit the needs of the composition.

While my musical influences have already been discussed in chapter 1, the following two chapters look predominantly at the anime influence of the compositions, which are the focus of this research. The many ways in which anime has been incorporated into my creative practice will be explored through both dominant and unique anime aesthetic qualities.
Chapter 3

Analysis Part 1: Anime and the Past

Introduction

At the time I started engaging with anime as a teenager, I had no other general interest in Japanese culture. Anime became the way I was slowly introduced to the customs of Japanese society. Anime became a portal through which I could access Japanese traditions and aesthetic considerations and these were an important influence on my music during my research. As outlined in Chapter 1, there are two predominant ways to consider anime, one as an extension of Japanese tradition or as a contemporary expression of Japanese culture, the other as its own medium-genre, not rooted to any particular culture but observable as a development beyond cultural ties. To structure the analyses of the compositions, this and the next chapter will look at these two dominant paradigms of anime. Chapter three will specifically look at how the works reflect aspects of the anime and its relationship with Japanese tradition.

There is a variety of ways in which cultural concepts and aspects of anime have informed my compositions. The format for the two analysis chapters will be to introduce a concept, describe its relationship to anime, then describe how the aspect is present within different compositions in the folio. While each concept may be the particular focus of a single composition, that concept may also be a relevant part of discussion for other pieces.

Religion and Lore

The dominant religion in Japan is Shinto. It is practised by over 80% of the population. Buddhism, too, is a commonly observed religion in Japan and is commonly involved with Shinto, many Japanese following an amalgamation of the two (Hirai, 1960: 4). Confucianism and Christianity were both woven into the Japanese religious tapestry between the 6th and 16th centuries. The Shinto and Buddhist doctrines are considered to be the principles on which the country was founded (Tomoeda, 1930: 343/4). Unlike many other religions, Shinto belief systems and Buddhism are commonly depicted in anime. Shinto is not based on a particular text
of doctrine and is thus not as prescriptive as those connected with a particular episteme (such as the Bible) or religious figure (such as Buddha). According to Hirai (1960), “Shinto has existed in Japan without any founder since the time the ancestors of the Japanese people began living in this land. According to this view, therefore, the core of Shinto belief is the individual religious experience accumulated in the actual lives of the Japanese for many centuries” (304). By this definition Shinto is highly dependent upon individual experiences and lives, and incorporated differently into anime depending on the tone of the anime and the nature of the authors.

Inouye (2008) connects Shinto with an awareness of space. Space, here, is not only a reference to sacred spaces such as shrines and temples but also lounge rooms, class rooms and hallways. He positions space as “a cultural constant that is, nevertheless, constantly changing... It explains Japanese lyricism, which is an expression of the closeness of person and context” (57). Inouye further suggests that this explains Japanese formality - the constant awareness of person and space dictates social norms, such as not wearing shoes in the house, using specific phrases during meals. Of course other cultures also adhere to formalities and codes such as these, however, it is the religious mentality with which they are observed in Japan that is specific to both Shinto and their depiction in anime. When cultural formalities are animated it not only imbues the films with a Japanese realism, but also with an underlying presentation of this relationship between person and space. For example the phrase *itadakimasu* (we shall receive), stated before eating meals, is as much an acknowledgement of the eating area as well as an expression of good dining manners such as the European *bon appetite*. From my perspective, it differs from saying grace within the Christian religion as it is not directed at a transcendent being but rather is a phrase that responds to a presence and situation. Understanding or at least being aware of this formality and difference between Japanese and non-Japanese cultures has been integral in my response to anime, both in the music that I write which can adopt and play with precise rhythms, textures and melodies but also in that it encourages me to consider the formal classical music codes under which I was taught piano and music theory.

An extension of this personal reverence of space is one that ties in with the literal definition of Shinto, also known as *kami-no-michi*, meaning 'way of the gods'. Shinto is associated with a multiplicity of deities, not only those that are mythologically linked with the creation of the world but also those that reside in any and all natural spaces. Hirai (1960) explains the term *kami*
as having a “wide range of meaning: gods, spirits, sacred and superhuman nature or beings. It refers to all beings—both good and evil—that possess extraordinary qualities and that are awesome and worthy of reverence. The early Japanese are believed to have found *kami* everywhere: in the heavens, in the air, in the forests, in the rocks, in the streams, in animals, and in human beings” (233). Inouye (2008) further explains that “*Kami* were multiple rather than singular (and exclusive), they were available and plentiful, rather than transcendent and rare” (33). They occupied Japan as people did and were not separate from it. This prevalence has become an important part of some popular anime films and television series, many of which include high numbers of different iterations of magical beings. This multitude of characters in anime and the use of *kami*, often as a structural device, resonates with me musically. The variations of the creatures, spirits, entities, ghosts and monsters and the way that they relate have all been inspirational for me from a compositional perspective.

The popular franchise, *Pokemon*, contains examples of this *kami* mentality. *Pokemon* exists in number of different forms: the original video games followed by the anime series, manga, films, playing cards and merchandise. *Pokemon*, the anime, has run from 1997 and is still being produced currently in tandem with new video games being released. In addition, a running total of 15 films have been animated. *Pokemon* experienced its most popular period in the late 1990's when it became a commercial craze outside of Japan, predominantly in the US (Tobin, 2004: 11). The title *'Poke-mon' is an abbreviation of 'pocket monsters', the name referencing the creatures which inhabit the Pokemon world that can be captured and contained in tiny balls.

Pokemon are reminiscent of the Shinto *kami* in that they exist in nature and respond in personality and design to their surroundings or 'place'. They are, too, not depicted as transcendent but are plentiful. They are depicted as fantastic creatures, coming in many shapes and sizes. Within the world in which *Pokemon* is set, they may be collected, photographed, bred or most commonly trained to fight. As the show is marketed predominantly to children, I drew on this program and on one specific Pokemon, Pikachu, as part of the *Kawaii Suite*. During the 1990s Pikachu became the face of *Pokemon* in the west, particularly as it was the most featured Pokemon in the television series serving as the protagonist's pokemon-partner.

The piece based on the depiction of Pikachu draws on its supernatural ability to control
electricity. It is a *Pokemon* that exists in relation to thunderstorms and power lines, a mixture of natural and man-made locations. Part of the Shinto code of customs allows for new technology and contemporary culture to be involved as part of its religion. The way Pikachu moves in the anime and the way it conducts electricity is used to inform the development of the musical material. The structure takes on the form of a theme and variations due to the many ways Pikachu can employ electricity. From staggeringly enormous lightning bolts, to visible energetic strands of jagged electricity that flicker as Pikachu sleeps or rests, the piece depicts the electricity in a number of different ways. Speaking on visible energies, Brophy (2005) suggests that it “is manifested as the registering, graphing and recording of the invisible... Anime exploits the dynamism of movement to affect the real world directly and physically, and to graphically thrust upon us this collision between energy and its depiction” (9). This is similar to my own conceptual thinking. The dramatic nature of this employment of visual energy is highlighted at a number of key points during the piano work, bars 12, 23 (Example 3.01) and 63-66 making use of stabbing chords which break register and flow, often coming after quaver or quaver triplet passages. Depicted energy is not only forceful; Brophy connects graphic energy, bodies and Zen when he states that “anime's depiction of any personified or objectified container is the result of 'rewiring its synaptic systems' so that the body of a character is capable of being hyper-sensitive to invisible changes occurring in spatial environments” (10).

**Example 3.01** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Pikachu', bars 12, 22-24

There exists, here, a sensitivity to space as was explored above in relation to Shinto. The energy Pikachu commands is often highly responsive to space and situation and as such the piece also explores a number of ways in which the energy is depicted as smaller energised gestures. For example, the final section of the piece, from bar 77 onwards, responds to this with a number of
smaller gestures echoing the main theme of the piece played amongst a new musical environment of quavers in a lilting 6/8 time signature (Example 3.02). Here I was influenced by the way Pikachu occasionally crackles with electricity when tired, hurt or annoyed as opposed to the more dramatic intense bolts.

Example 3.02 Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Pikachu', bars 103-115

The oeuvre of anime director Hayao Miyazaki often draws on the Shinto and animist history of Japan, incorporating a number of spirits into his fantastic tales. Of his works it is *Mononoke Hime* (Princess Mononoke) (1997) that draws most strongly on the themes of 'place'. The film is set in a Muromachi period of Japan (1336-1557) and depicts a love story during a war between man and nature. This film sees a departure from most of Miyazaki's works, which are generally promoted as children's films, as it addresses a number of complex issues. In this film, which includes many extended sequences in the forest, we see a number of kami depicted representing nature. When choosing characters for the *Kawaii Suite*, I decided to include one particular group of kami from this film, the kodama. The piece 'Kodama' draws from the many tiny tree spirits that inhabit the forest in the film. McCarthy (1999) explains that their “eerie appearance scares some humans, but they are entirely harmless... In the trees of their forest they watch the strangers

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5 The English translation of *Mononoke Hime* is generally marketed as Princess Mononoke since *mononoke* is a concept surrounded by much debate and defies a simple translation. Some would argue that the title means 'possessed princess' citing *mononoke*’s connection with the source of all kami.
passing through their world” (188). The *kodama* have roots in Japanese folklore and Napier (2001) suggests that they are more akin to *bakemono* (ghosts), explaining that they “exist in opposition to the human realm. The marginals represent the abjected other, the untamable supernatural other” (234).

Initially, while drafting ‘Kodama’, I was influenced by the overt visual characteristic of the creatures in the anime. The visual tic, assigned by the animators, is a movement of its head back and forth as though attached to a spring. There is no mention of this in Japanese folklore, but rather this nervous action is used to identify the creature within the film. I chose to interpret this movement as a trill on the piano. As each kodama is drawn slightly differently from the last in the anime, iterations of a common form, each trill differs in pitch, interval or dynamic marking. It appears through a variety of different intervals and registers on the piano (Example 3.03).

**Example 3.03** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Kodama', bars 14-22

As Inouye suggests, kami are also plentiful and scenes in the anime depict hundreds of kodama all grouped together. The visual texture created during these scenes is markedly different, highlighting the difference between one tree and an entire forest. This became my compositional impetus for the two climaxes in the piece which build upon the initial musical material of a trill and expand it in two different ways (Examples 3.04 and 3.05). The symbolism of the spiritual power of the forest as a natural space inspired the way I extended the gestures. The first increases the number of trills, playing them closer together, rhythmically, while moving to the outer registers of the piano. The second stretches the interval out so that the left hand uses the
semiquavers to cover wider distances while the right hand echoes the opening theme which was played in bars 17-18.

**Example 3.04** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Kodama', bars 44-48

![Example 3.04 musical notation]

**Example 3.05** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Kodama', bars 86-88

![Example 3.05 musical notation]

**Evanescent**

Inouye (2008) discusses Japanese aesthetics by offering the concept of 'evanescence'. He suggests that the concept has a history in both Japanese art traditions and Japanese cultural practices and he further uses evanescence as a way to view contemporary Japan, including establishing links between the anime of Miyazaki and the concept. Evanescence connects with associations of formality and change. Inouye suggests that life is evanescent, "brief, fleeting,
ever-changing, unpredictable, and fragile” (1). It is in constant tension with, and the reason for, an over-arching formality in Japanese culture. Inouye connects Japan's predilection for earthquakes with evanescence saying they “are another reminder of constant change... Massive, seemingly immovable mountains remind that nothing is permanent” (6). It is nature that gives form to evanescence, in moving mountains, in the scattering of cherry blossom petals from branches and in the cicada shells which remain after the cicada has taken a new skin, a life of impermanence. Napier (2001) reinforces this idea stating that “various geographic and climactic factors peculiar to the Japanese archipelago have supported a philosophy based on transience and the imminence of destruction [and] the fragility of human civilisation” (253). In response to a culture of evanescence, Inouye argues that a codification of spaces and situations occurs. For example, events such as the Japanese tea ceremony, with a strict order of operations and observations of customs in relation to the guests, the room, the tea, the utensils, are just “one aspect of a larger attempt to simplify the complexity of natural phenomena” (Inouye, 2008: 7). Anime, as with other forms of Japanese art, are reminders of both formality and change. It is within their codified structures that they observe change. Given that many anime incorporate fantastic elements in their characters and plots, a variety of bizarre and other-worldly transitions and changes are depicted. This also connects to one of the differences between most Japanese and English animations, which is that anime is commonly based in a progressing time sphere. Anime that take place on television over years have characters that are not static but age and evolve with each season of the series.

In my folio, evanescence directly informs the song cycle for ensemble and soprano and also became the title of that work - *Evanescence*. However it also provides a conceptual frame through which we can assess the anime influence in a number of other compositions. Before exploring the song cycle in detail this section looks at two pieces in the *Kawaii Suite* that use evanescence as part of the development of their musical material, 'Mokona' and 'Ponyo'.

'Mokona', the opening movement of the *Kawaii Suite*, is based on a character from the anime series *Tsubasa Chronicle* (2007-2008) which, in turn, is based on the manga created by the all-female manga group CLAMP. The story follows a group of travellers searching for the memories of one of the friends who cannot remember her past. These memories take the form of golden feathers. In order to find them a character known as the Dimension Witch provides them with a
magical creature, Mokona, who will serve as their guide through a number of alternate realities where they can search for memory feathers before moving on to the next reality. Mokona's purpose in the show (as well as being a form of comedic relief) is to take the travellers from one world to the next, to move them to new environments and new challenges. Mokona becomes an embodiment of progression and change.

I structured the piece of music around the events that take place when Mokona and the travellers are moving to a new world. Mokona signifies that the travellers are near a feather by yelling the word 'me-kyo' repeatedly to get their attention. Once the feather is obtained Mokona summons a portal through which the travellers are roughly transported to a new world. When they arrive they are often confronted with a strange new environment that must be examined and understood. This progression inspired me to compose three sections which respond to these scenes in the anime. The structure of the work acts to tell a story similar to that within the anime. 'Mokona' is a mixture of three types of response to anime: it depicts the personality of Mokona with its vibrant, bright and exuberant beginning; it depicts the visuals of the anime when musically depicting the vortex and the variety of colourful textures it employs; and it depicts a narrative contained within the anime as it is structured around three chronological movements based on Mokona's function in the anime.

The piece opens with heralding, repetitive semiquavers. This fanfare was influenced by Mokona's relentless use of word 'mek-yo'. The semiquavers move over different chords and time signatures suggesting different inflections and intentions (Example 3.06). The portals that Mokona conjure are swirling masses of brightly coloured patterns. They seem quite dangerous and are moderately aggressive in how they transport the travellers from world to world. There is a level of uncertainty and danger in this process as they are unsure of where they are about to head. The second part of the piece uses a repeated note-cycle in the bass over which a number of chords and scale passages from different key areas are played depicting the variety of visual patterns and textures used when animating the vortex. The bass pattern is disrupted sporadically by a number of syncopated bars, and here, again, I am responding to the idea of a chaotic vortex that does not present itself as visually stable (Example 3.07). These syncopations become more integrated building to a low chord cluster which is left to resound signifying that the travellers have arrived at their new destination. In this new environment they are left to discover the
intricacies of a new reality. When considering the way the travellers interact with each new world I was interested in musically responding to their hesitation and cautious investigation.

**Example 3.06** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Mokona', bars 6-9

![Example 3.06](image)

**Example 3.07** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Mokona', bars 38-42

![Example 3.07](image)

For the third section of the work I composed sequences of a descending chromatic scale. This scale is moved around the right and left hands with harmonic and melodic gestures and textures accompanying it. This was my way of highlighting the visual differences each new world's aesthetic had to offer (Example 3.08). I wanted to evoke the sense of uncertainty and hesitance the characters feel when they first arrive in a new reality. There is also a sense of magical wonder in moving between dimensions as depicted in the anime, the tone of this final section responds to
this. The piece ends harmonically ambiguous with two arpeggiated augmented triads, the same that introduced the third section, symbolising that each world gives way to newer worlds again in the future. This progression from world to world is an example of evanescence within anime and how it can inform characters and plots and therefore my music.

Example 3.08 Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Mokona', 70-74

Another piece from the Kawaii suite is also connected with evanescence. 'Ponyo' depicts an anime character that moves fluidly between the forms of a fish and a little girl. The character comes from the Miyazaki film *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea* (2008) which follows the tale of a magical ocean fish who makes her way to the coast where she is found and taken home by a young boy, Satsuke. While on land she begins her transformation from a fish into a little girl and towards the end of the film changes back and forth again a number of times. The mutability of human and animal is again linked with some aspects of Shinto animist beliefs and highlights the evanescent nature of existence. The story, also written by Miyazaki, forces us to reconsider the difference between animal and human and creates a character who transgresses these boundaries. I structured the piece around these two disparate identities that form a cohesive whole when musically explored together. I adopted two contrasting sections which are played in an ABA'B''A''B'' structure. Each subsequent section explores the musical material in more ways than the last and throughout the piece there is inter-play between the material through musical allusions to each other. The 'fish' movements (A) are built around glissandi and long sustained bass notes (Example 3.09) while the 'human' movements (B) are built around syncopated staccato rhythms, sudden gestures and melody fragments (Example 3.10). The contrasting nature of the movements responds to the different visual depictions of Ponyo in these two forms. As a fish, Ponyo is agile and moves through water with dexterity and fluidity. As a human, she is unsteady in an environment with a very different density and often struggles to balance on two
legs. I was particularly influenced by the difference in the gestures and movements of Ponyo and have recreated some of these allusions in the texture and articulations of the contrasting sections.

**Example 3.09** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Ponyo', 1-6

As the film progresses though she becomes more agile as a human and eventually is seen in human form smoothly and effortlessly riding large fantastic fish through tumultuous seas (Figure 3.1). Bars 32-33, 46-47 and the last section of the work beginning at bar 64 show examples of mixing the material of both sections, A and B (Examples 3.11 and 3.12). The section beginning at bar 64 uses pedal work and syncopations to join the sections, the repeated arpeggio chords and acciaccaturas suggest both fluidity and unexpected movements. This mixing is a musical reference to evanescence. The material is not strictly separate but combines to form a cohesive whole. Neither fish Ponyo nor human Ponyo is the true Ponyo; rather, she exists in both forms. The transitions between fish and human changed my compositional thinking, conceptually. The A and B sections became tools with which I could respond to the changing between states, at first through sudden juxtapositions and then later through the mixing of material.
Apart from these two associations in 'Ponyo' and 'Mokona', the piece that overtly responds to the concept of evanescence is the aptly titled *Evanescence*, a song cycle for soprano and ensemble. This piece draws on anime and its connections with many traditional forms of Japanese art. Inouye connects art forms including Noh theatre, *tanka* and *haiku* poetry and *ukiyo* (scroll printing) with the concept of evanescence. He emphasises “the important tie between nature and
poetry (and between change and form)” (2008: 8), suggesting that the formality of poetry exists in response to the unpredictability of nature. As with haiku, there is the importance of pinning down a 'moment' in time. Beyond change and evanescence, a haiku should formally recount a 'moment'. In regard to ukiyo paintings, Inouye suggests two complementary definitions connecting with evanescence, citing both its origins as a Buddhist expression of impermanence but also pointing to its evolution as “an evolving attempt to make something good of a bad situation: that life is short and unpredictable” (70). Evanescence becomes a foundation for viewing Japanese art forms, of which anime is a contemporary example. This cycle is an acknowledgement that anime is in many ways an extension of the traditional art aesthetics of Japan. The movements of the song cycle lyrically and musically respond to the connection between evanescence and other traditional art forms of Japan. This is also the sole work for which I wrote the lyrics. While some of the songs directly allude to the different art forms from which they are inspired they work in tandem with the musical material to depict and respond to anime and evanescence. For this analysis I will move through each of the movements in order, as each uniquely responds to evanescence and traditional art through music.

Evanescence is the first work in which I venture to write my own lyrics. As with the music, the lyrics draw on anime in some way either responding to a single visual or a short story/scene. Some lyrics are directly tied to an anime I have seen while others respond to broader anime themes or origins. These are discussed in more detail in the movement breakdown.

I. 'Waves Toward the Mountain'
Soprano, Clarinet in Bb, Viola, French Horn and Piano

While there are many unique aspects to the anime/manga aesthetic, its qualities are reminiscent of traditional woodblock prints. Hu (2010) makes the direct connection between “Utamaro's masterpiece, Woman Bathing, the sleek linear profile of a fully nude female body... and the lady robot in director Mamoru Oshii's anime film Ghost in the Shell (1995)” (32). The connection discussed refers to the reminiscence in some anime directors of the visual structures and figures of classic woodblock prints. The first movement of my song cycle responds to these origins of anime by taking as its inspiration the iconic print by Hokusai Under the Wave Off Kanagawa (approx. 1830-1831) seen in figure 3.2. The print exhibits movement in its stillness in that the
wave seems to be moving. This movement is contrasted by the stoic depiction of Mount Fuji in the background. I responded to these types of movement and stillness and the present balance and tension between them. Evans (2005) suggests in a brief analysis of the work that its “visual composition has a dynamic balance or symmetry in the picture plane” (13).

**Figure 3.2** Hokusai, *Under the Wave Off Kanagawa*

I composed both the mirroring of shapes and visual symmetry into the song cycle as material is moved around the instruments of the ensemble. The ensemble comprises instruments from different orchestral families (string, woodwind, brass, percussion) allowing for a wide variety of different textures. This movement employs all the instruments in an effort to articulate the different emotions evoked by the print. Short melodic fragments are moved to different instruments from bar to bar. I was inspired by the recurring shapes and similar arcs drawn in the painting when distributing the melodic material. The wave in the lower left of the picture mirrors Mount Fuji in the background and the cloud in the upper right mirrors the prominent wave to the left. In response to this I composed the different melody lines to mirror one another. This feature is particular prominent in bars 8-10 and 130-141. If the print is divided in half, vertically, the left depicts an aggressive wave with many splintered white foam fingers crashing to towards the right while the right side of the print depicts a much calmer sea with smooth water and a calm
cloud in the sky above the serene Mount Fuji. These different visual gestures are explored through the four sections of the piece. Primarily responding to the left hand side of the print are the first and last sections. They depict rhythmic momentum with the piano providing a driving quaver pulse (Example 3.13). This pulse is enhanced in the last section from bar 191 when each crotchet beat is divided into quaver triplets, a rapid repetitive figure offset by the other instruments which all play longer marked chords in rhythmic unison above (Example 3.14), reminiscent of the stoic Mount Fuji that sits in the distance away from the crashing wave. In the two middle sections I was attracted to the calmer scene on the right hand side of the print. Through the long sustained bass drones of the piano in bars 37, 41 and 46 and the legato melodies in the viola in bars 58-68 of the second section (Example 3.15) I evoke the serene distant figure and long smooth lines of the waves. This is also present in the repeated chord pattern and forceful down beats of the 3rd section.

Example 3.13 Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Waves Toward the Mountain', bars 1-3

![Example 3.13](image)

Example 3.14 Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Waves Toward the Mountain', bars 192-195

![Example 3.14](image)
Example 3.15 Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Waves Toward the Mountain', bars 61-64

The lyrics of the work explore the visual depth of the print in the distance depicted by both the wave up-close and the mountain distant and cold, almost indifferent. The repeated line, “The distance between you and I” refers to both the geographical distance but also the difference in mood visually suggested by the two contrasting subjects in the wave and the mountain. Colours are also mentioned, blue and white, and the way the print intertwines the two. Some of the suggested shapes in the print are also explored as in the line, “white, curled fingers grasp”, which comments on the hand-like figures in the white parts of the dramatic wave.

II. 'In Bloom'
Soprano, Bass Clarinet and Piano

Flowers and blossoms are a strong part of Japanese aesthetics; cherry blossoms are a national symbol; the emperor lineage in Japan is known as the Chrysanthemum Throne; flowers are used to signify seasons in Japanese poetry; as well as the traditional formal practice of *ikebana* (flower arranging). Flowers become a symbol for evanescence, their visual progression through stages of life, either growing from the ground then wilting back to the earth or blossoming on trees and falling from the branches. The piece 'In Bloom' responds to the symbolism of flowers and includes a number of allusions to the doctrines of *ikebana* as well as a specific *kami* of Japanese folklore, the *shishigami*, or forest god of life and death, a god of evanescence.

My musical thinking for this piece was informed by the highly evocative themes of life and death that are present in both *ikebana* and many anime that employ flowers as symbols. The instrumentation, melodic contours and tone are all influenced by this notion of transition. The *shishigami* is the giver and taker of life. To visualise this power in the anime *Mononoke Hime*, director Miyazaki depicts the *shishigami* as a deer with an ornate display of antlers sprouting from its head and a face resembling a traditional theatre mask (Figure 3.3). As it walks through
the forest flowers sprout, bloom and wilt with each of the creature's footsteps. Napier (2001) explains that the *shishigami* is unconcerned with moral implications - life and death are its only concerns regardless of circumstance (236). At the conclusion to the film the *shishigami*, who has been decapitated by aggressive humans, purges the entire forest of life and then restores it to a fully green state in a matter of minutes. This process, Napier claims, leaves ambiguous currents underneath the surface about restoration and death (236). Indeed in this case, life and death do not oppose but rather give way to one another. Beyond any form of reincarnation when life and death are shown in quick succession, such as they are demonstrated here, there is an arc, a rising and falling or growing and wilting. There is play with register in the piano and during the work which responds to this growing and wilting, particularly from bar 41 to the end where large leap are made between clusters of low chords and high, bright, broken arpeggios. These suggest the wilting and growing of plants.

**Figure 3.3** Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, The Shishigami

This relationship between flowers and the life death arc resonates with *ikebana*, a tradition which observes the specific placement and design of minimalist flower arrangements. *Ikebana* adopts three floral stems, the three stems signifying earth, human and the afterlife. “It is precisely by severing the living flower from its roots in the soil that the designer exhibits its authentic nature as a transient entity” (Cavallaro, 2012: 25). The placement of the stems, types of flowers and size and shape of the vase all indicate different types of the movement from earth to the after-life, the
journey of a human spirit. The three levels have informed In Bloom, with the three stems suggesting three states. For this reason I chose to have three instruments for the movement. The interplay between the voices and the movement of material between them comes from me being influenced by the notion of three flowers depicting a story. Within the piano, too, there are three voices; for this movement I employed the sostenuto pedal from bars 7-10 where the piano on its own depicts the earth as long held bass notes played out of sync with the human and afterlife registers playing chords in unison suggesting the ascent to the afterlife (Example 3.16).

Example 3.16 Smith, Evanescence, 'In Bloom', bars 8-10

The lyrics, too, respond to both the shishigami and ikebana symbolism. Allusions to the flowers the shishigami sprouts and its power over life and death, metaphorically depicted in its steps, give the opening line “A step joins heaven and earth”. While 'after-life' and 'heaven' are not synonymous, and ikebana does not respond to a Judeo-Christian notion of 'heaven', I use the latter term because 'after-life' (responding to one of the symbolic floral stems) was slightly too cumbersome and less poetic than other options. The song suggests a narrative because as the tone of the music changes the words respond accordingly. In the film the shishigami is decapitated and becomes hostile and reckless, and so the mood of the movement changes from the calm rubato opening to a faster passage driven by semiquavers from the piano, at this point the singer commenting on the change of mood, “Caught! Caught! Balance is lost while in bloom.” This piece becomes then an example of responding to the story of Mononoke Hime as well as other conceptual and literal ideas.
The general structure of the anime *Mononoke Hime* is suggestive of evanescence, the characters, plot and themes depicting many different forms of change and transience such as nature and industry, human and animal, life and death. Underpinning these is the protagonist's name, Ashitaka, which can be understood as one word 'ashita' and one particle 'ka'. The word *ashita* means 'tomorrow' while the particle *ka* is used at the end of a sentence to inform that the previous statement was a question. Thus the protagonist becomes 'tomorrow?' and as the viewer follows his journey he can be seen as a metaphor and catalyst which forces those he comes into contact with to reconsider what they may think is a clearly defined path for their future. I found these different levels of meaning rewarding while considering the end of *In Bloom*. The hesitant final few bars responds to these uncertainties and questions. The piece ends with the soprano repeating the word 'step' as all three lines move towards a new key area, from a Db Major tonal centre to Ab Major. This is the first time the piece moves in this harmonic direction as though questioning the future.

III. 'Origami Child'
Soprano and Piano

This song responds to the tradition of paper folding, *origami*. “The name [derives] from two Japanese words, 'ori' meaning to fold, and 'kami' meaning paper” (Beech, 2001: 6). It is a tradition where a piece of paper, usually a square, is folded to resemble an animal, person or thing. There is evanescence in origami. The origin of most designs is a universal square and from this square an unlimited number of creations are possible. There is no predetermined end point. A square can become a fish and then continue to be folded and turn into a bird. One could fold the image of a man kneeling, unfold a number of creases and continue to depict an elephant. There are no definitives in *origami*. In the preface to one of her instructional books, Fuse (2006) writes that “A slight change in the method produces different patterns, like a kaleidoscope” (1). The origins of origami, like many cultural associations with Japan, are on mainland Asia, in this instance in China around the 1st or 2nd century AD before moving to Japan in the 6th century (Beech, 2001: 10).

‘Origami Child’ differs somewhat from the other pieces in the cycle due to its rigidity both rhythmically and in its atonality. While notions of evanescence suggest in the other works
sections of rubato and space, 'Origami Child' is somewhat mechanical by comparison. This responds to the geometric reliance origami presents. This geometry is based initially in two dimensions. The paper used is flat. For this reason, I chose to use only piano and vocals. “Origami is, by its very nature, based on geometry – every crease is a straight line” (Beech, 2001: 12). The beats of each bar are clearly marked during the work, bars 9-16 employing strict crotchets with the time signatures changing with the chords (Example 3.17).

**Example 3.17** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Origami Child', bars 10-14

This rhythmic precision is also used in bars 20-24 where the two voices of the piano inter-lock in between beats while still maintaining a clear sense of pulse. Also taken from origami practice is repetition with many designs requiring repeated tiny folds that are used to create different 2-dimensional or 3-dimensional effects. In responding to origami practice I incorporated aspects of this repetition into the piano line by repeating notes at a number of key moments. These are also used to create specific musical textures that symbolise the introspective nature of origami practice. (Example 3.18)

**Example 3.18** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Origami Child', bars 31-33
Lyrically, this piece and one other, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms,' discuss the actual art form which is being drawn on. 'Origami Child' uses terms from origami instruction books and relates them to the setting of a woman who has lost her child. In a quiet room she is folding a new child from a square of paper. The result is a juxtaposition of technical terms and emotional language. Origami is, though, an art form where great works of beauty come from highly specific mathematical instructions. Lyrics such as “Edge meets edge, point meets point meets point. Crease, valley fold down” are sung after lines such as “One arm, then two, tears her heart as she sits” juxtaposing these two parameters of the art form. The lyrics, therefore, respond to different aspects of origami than the music.

IV. 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms'
Soprano, Bass Clarinet, Viola, French Horn

This movement, and the two which follow, will be discussed later in this chapter under 'The Seasons', 'spring' section. The relationship between flowers/seasons and evanescence has been established. Relevant in this part of the chapter is that the piano has been omitted from the ensemble for this work. I did this as I wanted the movement to only respond to the visuals of falling petals, as four single line instruments (ignoring the occasional harmonic use of the viola). The interplay between the instruments and vocalist respond to the falling petals and the variety of movements they make as they fall to the ground. Each line offers individual brief gestures spaced throughout this section of the song. The bass clarinet and viola often have fast flourishes of notes. This is depicted using the texture during bars 44-65 (example 3.19).

**Example 3.19** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms', 43-45
V. 'Children's Tea Ceremony'

French Horn, Clarinet

The analysis for this work will also be held for the following chapter. It will better serve to illustrate a strong aesthetic aspect to anime which has been influential in a number of works, particular this movement. The aesthetic is known as *kawaii* and it encompasses cuteness, naivety and innocence. This piece responds to an anime scene of my own invention where two young children attempt the formal Japanese art of a tea ceremony.

VI. 'Cyborg's Lament'

Soprano, Clarinet, Viola, French Horn and Piano

The analysis for this work will be held for the following chapter. As the final work of the song cycle I decided to draw not on a traditional form of evanescence but one that more readily appears in anime as a contemporary example. The piece draws on the common anime plot and character foundation of cyborgs, people/creations that exist between the states of human and machine. Cyborgs are a 20th century form of evanescence and one that has developed in part through the anime medium.

The themes of 'Cyborg's Lament' invite the consideration of the macro structure of the song cycle. For a movement concerned with the concept of evanescence and the changing and transient nature of existence, it seemed fitting for me to include a shift at the end of the work. This is a progression away from the iconic traditional aesthetics such as wood block printing which was the inspiration for the first movement and towards a contemporary form of evanescence. The use of different organisations of the musical ensemble was used to show the varied potential relationships between the instruments. They are not just a whole group but also have unique inner relationships and these relationships change depending on the organisation.

**The Seasons**

Japan's environment has four very distinct seasonal aesthetics. As a strong part of Japanese tradition, the seasons carry with them specific events and festivals as well as clearly codified
emotions and tones. Within the visual arts there is a differentiation between the palettes of the seasons. The coloured hues of each season move between the pinks of spring, the greens of summer, the ambers and oranges of autumn and the white of winter. Anime similarly often adopts strong colour differentiation to distinguish between the seasons, and many include seasonal visuals to add hidden information drawing on the many cultural symbols inherent in each season. A flashback sequence for example will often take place in a particular season to highlight the tone of the scene being depicted. The anime Cardcaptors commonly explores the season of spring. The protagonist of the anime is a girl named Sakura and her name translates as the highly evocative spring flower, the cherry blossom. The cherry blossom is one of the most celebrated flowers in Japan and the epitome of the Japanese spring.

The distinct aesthetics and colour palettes of the seasons helped evoke certain moods and compositional ideas. Different compositions and movements of compositions in the folio have responded to these seasonal aesthetics as they translate from anime that are representative of these codes. Much anime is imbued with an acknowledgement of the season and so, in turn, are some of my compositions. The piece most influenced is the choral cycle, Transitions of a Landscape. The title refers to the Adachi Museum of Art and Garden, a location I visited during a 2012 trip to Japan. The garden is located in the Shimane Prefecture on the Island of Honshu and describes itself as “six gardens, with about 165,000 square meters in total, [that] show you various sceneries by season” (http://www.adachi-museum.or.jp/e/garden.html). Figure 3.4 is a photo taken of a poster at the garden and highlights the importance of the seasons for the garden’s aesthetic potential. Each part of the garden is constructed so that it presents a different visual each season. The location of the garden ensures that the variety of Japanese climates are fully visualised. The approach to the garden inspired me to assess the way that anime depicts the seasons. How can the moods, gestures and palettes of each season move about gardens, anime and music? While looking at a number of anime videos online that used the seasons as a dominant part of their aesthetic, I came across a fan-made video on Youtube which had edited a large number of anime clips into a collection based on the four seasons (VermillionZer0, 2012). This video highlights the way different anime depict the seasons, aesthetically, in a similar fashion. While exploring these depictions, I decided to involve another Japanese art form that draws heavily from the seasons to inform its practice, haiku.
Transitions of a Landscape takes the form of a cycle of four movements, one for each of the seasons. The text for these works comes from the catalogue of haiku, one poem selected for each of the movements. Because haiku are short, verbally restrained works and because anime often display the season either as a brief 'outdoor' shot to demonstrate time/place or as background to an emotional outdoor scene, I wrote the movements as choral miniatures not lasting more than two minutes each. In them the haiku text is sung through once in Japanese by the choir and then broken up and explored musically depending on anime visual articulations. Given the codified nature of the seasons in Japan, the way the seasons are presented in anime often aligns with the
tone of the individual *haiku*. It is these emotional allusions that informed my compositional thinking when incorporating aspects of the season into my works.

*Haiku*, developed as an extension of *waka* (song writing), are strongly related to the relationship between human and nature and particular aspects of Zen within Buddhism (Blythe, 1981: 2). The dominant *haiku* figure of the 17th century was a poet named Basho. Many of his works are cited as hallmarks of the poetic unity between human and nature and of a Zen concept Blythe describes as “absolute spiritual poverty in which, having nothing, we possess all” (2). The poem's brevity and condensation mean that “*haiku* rarely provide details. The *haiku* poet draws only an outline or highly selective image, and the reader must complete the vision” (Hakutani, 2009: 2). The art of *haiku* has within it a juxtaposition of spontaneity and meticulousness. I decided that short choral works could also function in this way, fusing vocal spontaneity and harmonic meticulousness, particularly in relation to the different seasons. Part of the Zen approach to *haiku* is to fully remove the human element out of observation, so that within spontaneity there is no form of intellectualism or emotionalism that might mar the poem’s depiction of nature. One of the reasons *haiku* became so popular in a post-medieval Japan is that their brevity and accessibility meant that only the very “inarticulate person remained incapable of an extemporary verse” (3). However in the hands of poets such as Basho, as well as other canonised poets Issa, Buson and Shiki, a high level of conscious thought could go into forming a poem in which no word was indispensable. This notion was appealing to me as a composer. How might I, in my short choral works, compose pieces where each note is indispensable?

The relationship that *haiku* have to the seasons is that classic *haiku* writing must always include a mention of, in some way, the season in which the poem is set. This may either be by including the season name itself within the poem (this is the common practice) or by mentioning an animal, event, climate or flower that is strongly associated with the intended season. For example, “the frog is traditionally a *kigo* (seasonal word) of spring” (9). By doing this within the strict *haiku* parameters, and with the strong aesthetic association the season has in Japan, the author can impart a number of visual and tonal associations without expressing them verbally. *Haiku* catalogues of highly productive classical poets are commonly organised by the four seasons and the period of New Year, which is a category of itself, also known as the solstice period. These five categories house different emotions and themes that the seasons have been
culturally and socially ascribed. While writing the movements of the choral cycle, these contrasting emotional associations were in my mind. For *Transitions of a Landscape* I only chose haiku relating to the four seasons as these are what are commonly used in anime, New Year is not a commonly animated event, nor does it carry as substantive emotional qualities as the seasons.

The following are the four poems I chose to set for the cycle.

**Autumn**

*kare eda ni / karasu no tomari keri / aki no kure*[^6]

On a withered branch
a crow is perched
an autumn evening.

(Basho trans. Aitken, 2011: 9)

**Winter**

*ikutabi mo / yuki wo fukasa wo / yazune keri*

How many, many times
I asked about the deepness
of the snow!

(Shiki trans. Aitken, 2011: 193)

**Spring**

*harusame ya / neko ni odori ya / oshieru ko*

[^6]: In this haiku, Basho specifically employs more syllables than usual - 9 rather than 7 - in the middle line of the poem. It was not uncommon for poets to deviate occasionally from the strict rules, much like classical music conventions.
The spring rain–
a little girl is teaching
a cat how to dance.

(Issa trans. Aitken, 2011: 145)

Summer

*natsugawa wo / kosu ureshisa yo / teni zouri*

What a pleasure
wading the summer stream,
sandals in hand!

(Buson trans. Aitken, 2011: 119)

A relevant aspect of the Japanese language, here, is that its syllables lack essential stresses. Many Japanese songs will move words around various beats and off-beats in a bar and it will not affect the way the word is understood, Manabe (2006) explains that “Japanese verbal arts have not traditionally emphasised rhyming, and the language lacks stress accents” (1). This is in contrast to English in which words and phrases will have natural cadences and stresses which are part of the understanding for the listener. Setting English to music requires the composer to consider the cadences of the language, while for Japanese the relationship is different. Therefore, in the choral works, the lines of the poems are repeated while words are moved around beats and given different stresses, often by different voice types.

The following analysis details how the seasons, as they are used in anime and traditional Japanese aesthetics, have informed the broader qualities of *Transitions of a Landscape* including its macro and micro structure, vocal articulations and broad harmonic choices. The seasons have also informed other works in the folio given that they are a common visual device across much anime. I did not need to seek out specific anime that use the seasons as it is regularly observed or acknowledged, much like it is with other forms of Japanese art especially writing and poetry. For
this reason there are other works whose aspects are informed by the use of the seasons. I will discuss these individually following *Transitions of a Landscape*.

The movements are ordered from autumn to summer. Given that each season carries with it different emotional aesthetics, I responded to these with the specific tones of the movements. Moving from autumn to summer can roughly be observed as moving from a period of introspection and isolation to one of fun and celebration, which is reflected in the poems above. Basho's iconic autumn haiku observes a crow on a withered branch while Buson's summer haiku remarks about the joy of playing in a stream. Regarding the autumn haiku, Hakutani (2009) writes, “The image of a crow is followed by the coming of an autumn nightfall, a feeling of future. The poet may be feeling lonely. Present and future, thing and feeling, humanity and nature, each defining the other, are united” (19). It was analyses such as these that assisted with my musical response to the poems. The harmonic material during the cycle starts non-centered during 'Autumn'. Autumn is in many ways a directionless and lonely season. It is most strongly associated with stillness and isolation both in *haiku* poetry and other forms of Japanese visual art. Figure 3.5 shows a photograph of a print depicting autumn. The artist has chosen to focus on the graded earth tones and only use the tree as a decoration at the top of the image. The tree and leaves are not the focus. The centre and bottom third segments are largely blank. Much anime tends to treat autumn in line with this introspective emotion - still images of characters who have been rejected stand among deciduous trees and the motion of leaves often move slowly or are shown symbolically breaking from branches (Figure 3.6).
During the opening phrase of 'Autumn', each chord is held for a unique amount of time by the choir and the harmonies move around a number of key areas (Example 3.20). I was particularly interested in responding to the sense of isolation. After the initial statement of the poem the choir parts act contrapuntally with each singing the lines of the poem independently of the other or
occasionally with two double the same movement. Given the sparse visual texture of autumn in anime I wanted some of the gestures to be individual, separate and sombre.

**Example 3.20** Smith, *Transitions of a Landscape*, 'Autumn', bars 1-6

For the second movement of the cycle, 'Winter', the harmonic material is more centred and often uses whole tones to separate the different voices. Winter in Japan often brings heavy snowfall in many of its prefectures. The wash of white is not commonly used as a background for anime, but can be poignantly employed by some animators during specific scenes, such as those set in the past, and used to evoke certain delicate moods. These scenes are often set at night and quite melancholy, similar to autumn. The movement uses these melancholy and delicate snowfall visuals as its main influence (Figure 3.7). The vocal lines begin on a held chord and slowly breakaway with small intervals (Example 3.21). The feeling is still introspective and somewhat lonely but there is more harmonic security. The poem, which questions the deepness of the snow is also not overtly sad or happy but merely questioning, a mood I evoke with the increasingly sparse textures of the opening phrases where all the voices begin each phrase but stop singing leaving a lone vocal part.
Figure 3.7 Shinkai, *5 Centimetres Per Second*, a character in a winter scene.

Example 3.21 Smith, *Transition of a Landscape*, 'Winter', bars 1-2

\[ \text{\textbf{SOPRANO}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{pp}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{i - ku-ta,}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{ALTO}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{pp}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{i - ku-ta,}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{TENOR}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{pp}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{i - ku-ta,}} \]

\[ \text{\textbf{BASS}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{pp}} \]
\[ \text{\textit{i - ku-ta,}} \]

The third movement, 'Spring', responds to a period in Japan most commonly drawn on in anime. The abundance of petals in the wind, on the ground during and falling from the trees in spring in Japan is often realised in anime by large pink washes (Figure 3.8) or individual petal trails. I wanted to evoke the serenity that spring brings to anime. The movement is underscored by a calm and quiet open fifth which is sung on a hum by a divided bass part. Above this the other
parts move relatively independently of one another, sometimes in harmony, at other points with contrapuntal lines (Example 3.22). The melodies are tranquil and the harmonies are consonant moving predominantly around a C7 chord within F Major. The harmonic centre is clear in this movement while there are occasionally some 9th and 11th extensions to certain triads and some modulation into C Major (bars 2-26) and Bb Major (bars 12-17).

**Figure 3.8** Shinkai, *5 Centimetres per Second*, Spring petals

**Example 3.22** Smith, *Transitions of a Landscape*, 'Spring', bars 1-3
Summer is somewhat of an anomaly as a season in Japan as it receives comparatively little visual depiction in traditional art and in anime. This is due mainly to the fact that it has few codified visual or cultural features to be noticeably articulated. While the other seasons have a vivid colour scheme, summer remains quite green. Fig 3.4 (above) highlights how there are a variety of hues in the other three seasons as opposed to the green-ness of summer. As a result, when summer is addressed in anime it is usually at night given that summer is the period of a number of night festivals and markets and most notably fireworks. The fireworks of the Japanese summer, as often depicted in anime, form the basis of the 4th movement of the choral cycle. Like the season visually, the piece differs in temperament from the other three movements. The movement is celebratory and rhythmically driven by strident, confident exclamations of the lines of the poem (example 3.23).

**Example 3.23** Smith, *Transitions of a Landscape*, 'Summer', bars 1-3

Rather than the reflective and lyrical tones of the other movements, the brightness of summer and idea of festival and firework were the inspiration for this piece. After the initial statement of the poem by the voices in unison, they begin singing the lines contrapuntally (example 3.24). The movement is divided in half harmonically, firstly in F# Major and then in Bb Major to finish. In a strong contrast to the opening phrase of 'Autumn', this movement ends with a bright flourish and a staccato Bb major chord. The cycle of the seasons is complete and change has
The seasons are often used in anime to suggest different time periods in the past or the general passing of time. Certain *kigo* might be animated to inform the audience that we have moved into a new season, thus have moved further in time. As the entire work depicts a progression through tone and harmonic centre, I wanted the end of the movements to suggest a final shifting. 'Autumn', 'Winter' and 'Spring' all have a small harmonic shift in their final few bars. In 'Autumn', the phrase that opens the movement, in bars 1 and 2, and is repeated a third high in bars 7 and 8 is repeated twice again at the end of the movement. The last time it is heard, the ending is changed and instead of all parts singing unison on the last two notes of the phrase the alto and tenor lines remain the same while the soprano and bass parts move down a semi-tone and tone respectively in a surprising final harmonic shift. Similarly at the end of 'Winter', the soprano and alto lines repeat the line 'tazune keri' three times, each time the alto changes how it harmonises and on the second repeat the syllable 'ke-' is held longer before the tenor and bass parts join for the second half of the word, '-ri'. When all parts sing together on this final syllable there is a semitone shift and the piece, which has been centred around C major and F major, ends on an F# major chord. In 'Spring', as the four parts sing the final line of the *haiku*, 'oshieru ko', in a manner that heralds the coming summer movement, there is again a small harmonic shift and the piece which was largely in F major ends on a bright D major 7 chord. These subtle shifts at the ends of three of the movements were a way of suggesting the impending coming movement.
and continuation of the cycle.

A number of other works in the folio also allude to the seasons. Often drawing on the dominant visual aesthetic and coded emotions that are associated with each season. The details of unique responses are below.

In the song cycle, *Evanescence*, the fourth song, ‘Chasing Cherry Blossoms’, draws on the season of spring in anime to inform some of its gestures. *Hanami* is used as an impetus and the text, written by me, is explicitly in its response to the common depiction of spring as a time for exploring romance. Aitken (2003) explain that “cherry-blossom time is a special event for Japanese people. They make up picnic lunches on one of the few days the flowers are in their prime and promenade and picnic under the trees” (102). In the song a young couple are playing among the falling leaves and the singer inhabits one of these characters who reflects on the romantic imagery of the season. The flurry of blossom petals suggested to me a rapid triplet movement. I used this device to open the piece in the viola line (Example 3.25) and with the staccato quaver passages in the bass clarinet line. This is an example in the folio of word-painting in which the music directly interprets the visuals from an anime. The flurry of petals is remediated as a flurry of notes in the various instrumental parts. More than this though the way the anime screen is washed with pink hues and the dynamic direction of scenes involving cherry blossoms prompted me to score a piece that had a rhythmic drive and the use of a 5/4 time signature at times evoked this vibrant, fun and excited period.

**Example 3.25** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms', bars 1-3

![Example 3.25](image)

The lyrics of the song use a number of terms which are meant to respond to the moving petals in the wind including “turn”, “swirl” and “fall”. The turning and falling of the petals is highlighted in the rhythmic device, used in all the parts, of a short note that quickly moves away by differing intervals and is sustained. The bass clarinet and viola respond to these common “swirling”

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7 *Hanami* is the act of going out to view cherry blossoms when they are in bloom in Japan.
visuals with long rapid phrases, examples include the bass clarinet bars 45-47 (Example 3.26) and the viola bars 50-52.

**Example 3.26** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms', bars 45-47

Summer vistas of Japan were influential in the second half of the last movement of my orchestral work, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Fantasy'. From bar 83 the piece's metre changes from an additive compound metre to a more strident cut common time, with occasional 3/4 bars. With this second half of the piece I deliberately play with some early Romantic musical language which evokes the Japanese countryside. This is particularly noticeable in the lyrical woodwind melodies (Example 3.27) and the high tremolo strings which accompany some staccato flute and oboe semiquavers (Example 3.28).

**Example 3.27** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Fantasy', bars 92-95
Example 3.28 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Fantasy', bars 89-90

In the scene the piece draws on, from *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988), the protagonists are flying through the Japanese countryside. I wanted to evoke the same sense of happy, bright grandeur. This grandeur is scattered with moments of unexpected rhythmic division in the 3/4 bars. The
instrument choice/timbre, major harmonic movements and rollicking cut common time signature
all developed from the seasonal depiction of summer from this scene. I wanted to capture the
same visual feeling of flying through a bright summer landscape. The semiquaver violin
passages (Example 3.29), too, developed from this wild momentum through a bright day.

Example 3.29 Smith, Anime Interludes, 'Innocent Fantasy', bars 98-101

The scene from the anime 5 centimetres per second is the setting for another orchestral
movement, 'Innocent Reality'. It draws on the use of winter in this film. The scene follows the
difficult journey of a young boy travelling to see a girl who lives in rural Japan. A harsh winter
forces all the trains to be constantly delayed and he finally arrives late at night. Here the anime
shows a number of different winter vistas of the countryside in the moonlight. Often small lights
illuminate streets and house far out of the cities of Japan, the images still and often shown from
two or three perspectives. Some linger while others are shown for a brief moment. The opening
chords of the movement are played on the strings with one or two accompanying instruments
from the woodwind or brass section. The movement from these other sections implies the
changing perspectives of the images while each chord is held for a different number of beats. The
indication of 'tranquil' coupled with the changing pulse of the metre creates an effect that the
piece not be too strict, rhythmically and each harmony should form its own moment. This takes
place for the first 13 bars (Example 3.30). I was influenced by the stasis of the winter scenes and
wanted to evoke the same sense of contemplation and observation of an image from different
perspectives, as occurs in the anime.
Example 3.30 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Reality', bars 1-9

The entire folio presents few pieces or movements which could be described as 'upbeat' and/or 'happy'. Even those that could be described as such, 'Pikachu', 'Mokona', 'Kodama', 'Innocent Fantasy' and 'Children's Tea Ceremony', often have a number of moments or sections that suggest sadder or darker themes. There exists a connection to a broader Japanese concept known as *mono no aware*. The details of this concept and its effects are explained by a number of different authors, however, the following paragraph gives a summary of its general themes. This concept resounded with my personal compositional aesthetic which is influenced by many pieces that have darker musical themes and tonalities. It could even be that what draws me to anime is the inclusion of these sadder or darker themes, something I find I gravitate towards in my musical tastes a well.

*Mono no aware* is connected to a range of ideas and emotions including nostalgia, memory, pitifulness, sadness, beauty, transience, awareness, melancholy and the vague phrase “incommunicable feeling” (Hu, 2005: 131). Of course, like many concepts whose cultural
meaning goes beyond the simplicity of the words' direct translation it is a complex collection of all of these. Odin (2010) offers the phrase “the sad beauty of perishability” (261) which complements and adds to Napier's (2001) more general description, “the sadness of things” (253). Tsunoda, Bary and Keene (1958) explain that the term aware has had a number of meanings since the 8th century, “in old texts we find it used as an exclamation of surprise or delight... Gradually, aware became tinged with sadness... adding not so much a meaning as a gentle sorrow” (172). Given that the term responds to things passing or changing it is connected to the concept of evanescence, however, there is in this case the added complex emotion of an awareness to the end of something. Any process of change is the moving away from something. Mono no aware then becomes a specific focus on change, as one season gives way to another, one observes the passing of the cherry blossom as the end of Spring, not the beginning of summer.

Napier (2001) suggest that mono no aware provides a frame to understand the common use of destruction and apocalypse in anime (253). This form of extreme transition is not the most common; however, what is observable in most anime is the incorporation or foundation of bitter-sweet nostalgia. Cardcaptors, for example, while generally following the adventures of Sakura as she battles Clow Cards in Tokyo, also includes in most episodes softer moments where Sakura talks to a picture of her deceased mother. My Neighbour Totoro, too, while generally following the childish adventures of two young sisters with forest spirits, is underscored by the sickness of a mother figure. Illness and death are not inappropriate themes for children's anime, rather, as the concept mono no aware dictates, there is beauty in this fragility of life. Both the withered branch and the ill mother are complex artistic constructions which inform the narratives and tones of many anime.

The music of my folio also exhibits aspects of mono no aware, a musical exploration of the beauty in sadness. The broader understanding of mono no aware has connections with classic Western fairy tales, which often incorporate grim circumstances amongst lighter themes. This suggests a universality of the connection between sadness and beauty or innocence. A number of key musical moments, I feel, exhibit this throughout the folio. These often occur at the end of works to leave the listener with these lingering emotions.
Firstly, the final section of *Mokona* (bars to 67-82) exhibits in its atonality and chromatic descending scale a quiet reverence for a slow progressing change. Each different 4-note section of the descending scale is accompanied using different textures and gestures, a complex mixture of consonance and dissonance and spaced and close intervals. This variety of moods evokes the sad nostalgia associated with *mono no aware*. Secondly, the final 8 bars of the *Evanescence* movement, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms', deals with the complex emotions that come with the cherry blossoms as a symbol of new love. In bars 79 to 82 each ends with a held minim where the viola changes from *pizzicato* to *arco*. This change of timbre stops the momentum of the bar creating a nostalgic lilting effect which is repeated. The last four bars evoke a sparse texture that moves away from the momentum which has dominated the rest of the movement. The first moment of uninterrupted stillness carries with it the sense of *mono no aware* (example 3.31).

**Example 3.31** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Chasing Cherry Blossoms', bars 83-86

Thirdly, the final section of *Clow Card Variations*, the Light/Dark section, also carries with it a complex nostalgia and sadness. The delicate balance between light and dark is illustrated in the hesitant swelling of the chords made by the three instruments. Fading in from and out to silence the chords evoke a feeling of passing (Example 3.32). The short tenuto quaver moments, too, are delicate, played quietly and with a cautious rise and fall in bars 246, 251 and 255. To end the piece, a short figure is played (bars 273-274) and then repeated as notes and part of the duration of notes are slowly stripped away. The way light and dark give way to each other is symbolised by this. The result is a melancholic erasure of an idea.
Lastly, another movement of the song cycle, *Evanescence*, 'Cyborg's Lament', incorporates similar musical themes. Throughout the work there are a number of moments when the frenzied and percussive drive of the piano is halted and the tempo slows to a much more contemplative speed; this first occurs at bar 34, then again at bars 82 and 124 (Example 3.33). The passages that follow these interruptions again evoke the mixture of sadness and melancholy and the lyrics suggest a moment of awareness, again linked with the concept of *mono no aware*.

**Example 3.32** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 254-257

**Example 3.33** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Cyborg's Lament', bars 119-125
Horror Narrative Structures

One distinction I've noticed between Asian and Western horror narratives is that Western horror films often employ an outside evil which ravages a city, home or person, while Asian horror films often employ an internal evil. This focus in which something that comes from within the family or more commonly within oneself is the source of horror has influenced my compositional thinking. The horror is not abrupt, it develops over time. In light of this, Broken Reflection 1, for string quartet, also develops material over time and becomes more horrific throughout the piece. Ma (2008) comments on this introspective tendency, and the relationship between Asian horror and the self, through a metaphor of the telephone: “The cell phone, in effect, becomes a surrogate or mirror image for the human body” (188). Ma further suggests that this connection between 'self' and 'cell' is utilised in Asian horror films and cites examples including Ringu (1998), The Eye (2002), Old Boy (2003) and Ju-On (2003) that “implicate the cell-, telephone-, and computer-user in a web of bondage, a pandemic of evil (187).”

This specific type of horror that develops from within one's world became a strong compositional impetus for me. A number of moments in Broken Reflections 1 & 2 respond to the notion of a changing and distorting intimate environment. An unravelling of identity, logic, reality and sanity, from an internal perspective, were always in my compositional thoughts when I approached the harmonic structure of Broken Reflection 1 and some articulations in sections of Broken Reflection 2. The above examples of the telephone and computer as evil reinforce this unexpected mode of horror - the everyday becomes frightening over time. In Broken Reflection 1, to respond to this narrative trait musically, I have composed lyrical sections that begin within a major key area but become less and less tonal as the phrase progresses. This first happens at the beginning of the piece where the opening chord of a D Major triad modulates and ends on a dissonant tritone between D# and A with a rogue E creating further tensions as a minor second against the D# (example 3.34). This type of modulation occurs twice again in the piece between bars 27-35 and bars 61-65. These evoke the unravelling and insecurity I witness in the tones of the film. Something that seems secure can slowly become macabre or twisted. In Broken Reflection 2 I have included a number of slow glissandi across entire bars to evoke the unsettling slow-shifting mood of an internal environment. These appear from bars 52-64 in the violin I, violin II and viola lines (example 3.35). The way the glissandi are played over semi-breves or
melodically between a few notes highlights the drawn out nature of these narratives. This technique is revisited later in the piece when the cello plays a melody which incorporates these glissandi.

**Example 3.34** Smith, *Broken Reflection 1*, bars 1-4

![Example Music Notation](image1.png)

**Example 3.35** Smith, *Broken Reflection 2*, bars 52-59

![Example Music Notation](image2.png)

I was also influenced by the way that anime incorporates visual depictions similar to classic 'slasher' films. Aggressive and swift violent movements are commonly animated into climactic
horror scenes much as they would be in Western horror films. I composed with these ideas in 'Perverse Fantasy'. The acciaccaturas of the wind section of the opening 10 bars (Example 3.36) and then again in the cello section between bars 58 to 70 are inspired by these sharp movements (Example 3.37).

**Example 3.36** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 1-6

![Example 3.36](image)

**Example 3.37** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 57-63

![Example 3.37](image)

*Broken Reflection 1* uses similar gestures throughout the work in the form of staggered staccato atonal chords. These are revisited constantly throughout the work and are used structurally to separate the less aggressive gestures (Example 3.38).
Anime has a strong connection to its Japanese origins. The development of aesthetics and traditional considerations has caused me to involve some aspects of Japanese tradition into my music, insofar as they are presented through the anime lens. Parts of the folio have resonances with Japanese culture due to the ties to their inspiring material as detailed in this chapter. These resonances do not determine my compositions entirely but have been a large part of the consideration for how anime can inform my music. Given the undeniable connections between anime and traditional Japanese aesthetics it was necessary to explore how this presents in my music. The next chapter looks at anime not as a Japanese construct but as its own 20th century art medium with a unique aesthetic quality of its own invention and how these assessments of anime as autonomous have informed my composing.
Chapter 4

Analysis Part 2: Anime and the Present

Introduction

Anime is not only an example of greater Japanese art culture. The origins of animation in France and Europe, coupled with the advent of anime in an increasingly globalised second half of the 20th century, have resulted in what is in many ways a unique art medium. While the previous chapter explored the ways anime does respond to traditional notions of Japanese culture, the focus of this chapter will be on the intrinsic anime modes of expression and how this has inspired and informed my musical composition.

Literature such as *Anime and Philosophy* (2010), part of the 'Popular Culture and Philosophy' series, conforms to a type of analysis that utilises anime as a subject or example of theoretical and philosophical paradigms. Classical philosophies of Descartes, economic capitalist paradigms or specific notions such as consequentialism and post-humanism can be applied to anime and explored. Alternatively, authors such as Susan Napier and Thomas Lamarre pioneer the idea that it is within anime itself that theories might be developed. Therefore, beyond example material, anime output provides perspective, discussion, critique and exploration of many abstract concepts as well as giving rise to new ones. Napier (2001) explains that anime “merits serious consideration as a narrative art form, and not simply for its arresting visual style. Anime is a medium in which distinctive visual elements combine with an array of generic, thematic, and philosophical structures to produce a unique aesthetic world” (10).

Perhaps the most overt device that distances anime from other forms of Japanese art and tradition is that the characters are not generally drawn with Japanese features. While some commentators have asked the question of why characters in anime 'look' Western, Napier suggests that “the characters are drawn in what might be called an ‘anime’ style” (25). It is not that they are Western, it is that they are ‘not-Japanese’. They exist outside of Western and Eastern appearance. This contributes to the *mukokuseki* of anime which translates as “‘stateless’ or essentially without national identity” (24). Anime characters exist in their own unique cultural environment that
while having many parallels with Japan cannot be essentially viewed as congruous with it.

Lamarre (2009) suggests that we consider anime as a plurality. He argues that “so dynamic and diverse are the worlds that unfold around anime that we do better to think always in the plural, in terms of animations” (15). This is so for the setting of anime films. For every one specifically set in feudal, pre-feudal or contemporary Japan there are just as many films set in gothic Europe or modern France. To limit anime to Asian influences is to ignore its breadth and exploration of disparate cultural histories. Each of these also carries with it unique depictions that create observations, critiques and perspectives. For me as composer, these pluralities offer new considerations of concepts that might be explored uniquely in light of anime expressions. The sections of this chapter address how the anime model has articulated something to me in a specific framework and my compositions then respond to both the concept and anime framework.

I stress that while there are many similarities between manga and anime, they operate in quite different ways. Manga is a fixed object while anime is temporal. Although many anime are developed from popular manga series, any act of remediation effectively changes the way the characters and plot are articulated. Also, anime artists such as Satoshi Kon have been cited claiming that more animated films and series should not rely on being adapted from manga but developed for the animated medium from the beginning. Kon is known for writing and directing films with anime in mind for what it can bring to a story (Napier, 2006: 24). His film *Perfect Blue* (1997) was one of the first anime to deal with complex psychological adult themes. Napier explains that this resulted in some critics paying the “ultimate backhanded compliment, suggesting that the film's contemporary urban setting, sophisticated narrative, and highly realistic visuals made it more like a live action film than a conventional anime” (23-24) as though the anime was a copy of a live action film. *Perfect Blue* will be revisited later in this chapter as these psychological aspects have informed two works in the folio. Kon's anime ideology is similar to my own in that while he is interested in how anime can uniquely realise a narrative, I'm composing with anime in mind for what it can bring to my music.

The idea of anime as a sub-set of cinema is inverted by Brophy (2005) who suggests that anime acts as a unique lens which refigures the world through a range of its own parameters. He states
that anime “constitutes a specific cultural mode of production so much so that [it] can be regarded a meta-set within which cinema is a subset” (5). Brophy positions anime beyond cinema, and indeed, as discussed in the introductory chapter, anime takes many forms within local Japanese and global contexts. The disparate types of anime content present a form with intricacies and nuances that can promote aesthetic reconsiderations in all artists and this is especially relevant to the composition portfolio in my thesis. Brophy offers a metaphor for figuring anime as an extension of the 'body'. When engaging with anime the audience is forced to reconsider logical and natural human form. Five operations of corporeality are defined:

- the **energised form** created by rewiring the synaptic system
- the **calligraphic momentum** activated by extending the musculatory system
- the **sonic aura** arising from retuning the auditory system
- the **decorative surface** rendered by realigning the optical system
- the **mannequinned form** shaped from re-armaturing the skeletal system (8)

The corporeal modes of expression that anime employs both require and create a discourse of their own and in turn provide me with a unique foundation for my creative practice. My thesis documents how these modes of expression can be utilised by an artist not of the anime medium. My compositions contain within them aspects of the calligraphic momentum within individual string articulations and of the decorative surface in the specific orchestral textures I employ for *Anime Intertludes*. It also plays with the energised form in that it readdresses traditional musical structures in new ways such as *Iceberg Variations* and *Clow Card Variations*. The sonic aura concerns my research project more broadly in that I am suggesting that the act of writing music can arise from another artist's non-musical invention. I have retuned my own auditory system during this process.

Brophy adds that it is in anime that “the dynamic interaction between gesture, event, sound and image reaches its apogee” (6). When interactions like this occur I have inferred from them new observations and perspectives of concepts such as technology, nature, gender or identity. This chapter will look at how these models of visual and conceptual structure and gesture have inspired and informed the compositions in the folio. The chapter is divided into sections that look at some of the common themes that anime develops and how these themes musically present
As this chapter looks at how anime as a medium can uniquely explore concepts and ideas, its opening analysis will look at only one composition in the folio, *Clow Card Variations*. The structure of this piece responds to 52 different anime depictions of different concepts and objects as they are animated in the series *Card Captor Sakura* (1998-2000). *Card Captor Sakura* follows the adventures of a young girl, Sakura, in Tokyo. While looking through her basement one day she stumbles across an old book with her father's things. Her father teaches history at a local university and the book contains a deck of cards, one of which has fallen out. Sakura picks up the stray card and reads the word on the card, which is written in English, 'Windy'. Suddenly a powerful and magical gust of wind erupts in the basement and the cards are sent flying out of a window cast in many directions out of the house. We come to learn that these magical cards are called Clow cards and it is up to Sakura to use her newly discovered magical powers to seek out and capture the mischievous, dangerous and quirky magical creatures that are contained within the cards. These contained creatures are spirits that embody natural and conceptual parts of the world. Examples of the cards include: the Sword card, the Dream card, the Rain card and the Jump card. The cards represent a mixture of concepts, object, states and actions. These are uniquely articulated in the series both through the physical magical creatures that appear in Tokyo and through the way their power is employed. The Shadow card (Figure 4.1), for example, is depicted in the series as a pitch black figure covered in a mysterious flowing robe. However, it is also depicted through moving the two-dimensional shadows of object which causes the three-dimensional object to move as well. It may lift the shadow of a table for example causing the table to fly into the air. For each of the cards that Sakura episodically encounters, the audience first witnesses their power, which is some sort of supernatural disturbance, and second, a physical appearance where the Clow card's embodied form is materialised. *Clow Card Variations* explores the multitude of different embodiments throughout the series.
Card Captor Sakura has not escaped the attention of scholars. Given its popularity in the West it is often mentioned as part of the 90s anime boom and as the series that located the members of all-girl manga/anime group CLAMP as key figures in the animating landscape of Japan. CLAMP has become a commonly cited figure in anime research with some looking to their work as examples of those that have “opened up new approaches for anime” (Napier, 2001: xvii). The series is acknowledged as “a regular presence in American life. Children are growing up on [anime] in the form of Pokemon, Card Captor Sakura and Yu-Gi-Oh” (Levi, 2006: 45). It draws from examples of the ‘magical girl’ sub-genre that came before it, however, Cavallaro (2012) highlights that the show offers a narrative where “the trials and tribulations endured by the young on the path to adulthood are portrayed with both disarming frankness and an elating sense of irony” (26). This highlights another element of the show, that the cards being featured in the episodes of the anime often double as metaphors for Sakura and her friends' personal life lessons. Cavallaro continues to note that the structure of the show is palpably conveyed with a “fantasy adventure mood” and that this “motif of the staged quest … derives both emotional depth and dramatic impactfulness from the diversified cast of characters involved in the mission alongside the charismatic heroine” (82). It is a visually and emotionally rich series that provides much
artistic material for me to draw from in its eclectic and fantastic design aesthetic.

In my composition for wind trio, *Clow Card Variations*, the episodic structure of the series and the categorisation of the 52 cards gives rise to the work’s structure. The musical concept of variations has a strong presence in the Western art canon. Although prominent in the Classical and early Romantic periods, the structure has been readdressed and reshaped a number of times since then in the 20th century notably by Rachmaninoff with his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934) and in 1967 with Lukas Foss's *Baroque Variations*. I was attracted to the seamless approach of these two examples. As *Clow Card Variations* plays there are no breaks between the variations. For each of the five sections of the work I composed a clear opening theme to which different compositional techniques were applied which explore the possibilities of the melody or other musical idea. The Clow cards are structured similarly in the anime. The 52 cards are divided into six categories that respond to six elemental cards: Earthy, Watery, Windy, Fiery, Light and Dark. Each of these elements has 7 or 8 sub-cards which reflect an object or concept that responds to its particular element. These 'variations' on the elements include examples such as the Freeze card existing underneath the Watery card and the Sand card existing under the Earthy card. *Clow Card Variations* musically explores these visual variations. The piece is divided into 5 sections. Figure 4.2 shows the order and which elements are depicted in which sections. The last section combines two elements, Light and Dark, and this is due to the fact that Light and Dark are always seen together in the show. It is stated that Light and Dark cannot exist without each other. I found this card ‘rule’ impelling and decided to group these cards together in one section of the composition which explores this connection. The cards that fall under the category of Light and Dark are also more abstract than the other elements, such as the Illusion card and the Change card, and the way they are visualised suggests less musical variation.
Each section opens with musical material that responds directly to the way the elemental card is depicted in the anime. This material is then varied depending on how each card's iterations vary. I was interested in whether the personality or tone of a card differed greatly from its mother card, such as one being docile and one being violent. If so I composed this into the musical material. This process can be seen in all of the variations in the piece. The way the card is animated informed the way I treated the musical material. Not every card is present in the variations. This is either because the card was not animated into the series or because two or three cards' visual realisations were highly similar and did not require separate variations. The Power card and the Fight card, for example, largely employ the same ability and are visually very similar (Figures 4.3 and 4.4). When reflecting on how I might respond to the anime I saw similar musical gestures were coming from my viewing of these cards and chose to explore them at the same time. The following analysis does not explain how each individual card is varied, instead it explores how different musical parameters were varied throughout the piece's sections. The subheadings refer to the movements of the piece. Each card from the anime that falls under that elemental group is also listed as a heading to give an idea of the range of source materials.
Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 CLAMP, *Card Captor Sakura*, 'The Power' and 'The Fight'

Earth

Cards: Earthy, Flower, Libra, Lock, Loop, Maze, Mirror, Sand, Shield

The section that opens the *Clow Card Variations* responds to the earth element Clow cards. Only two of the cards are violent (Earthly and Sand) while the others offer Sakura protective and useful functions when captured. In the chronology of the series the Earthy is the last card that Sakura captures. It is also stated that it is the strongest of all the cards. When active, the Earthy card takes over much of downtown Tokyo. As Sakura flies over the city she is shocked to find many eruptions of earth sticking out of the ground damaging houses, temples and trains. The Earthy card is a card of disruption. It is able to break terrain. This disruption, destruction and lack of control is a useful musical concept and in the first 19 bars of the work, the instruments play acciaccaturas around a dissonant chord made with the notes G, G# and C# creating both an augmented 4\textsuperscript{th} and an augmented unison again the G. The aggressiveness of the card is realised in the staccato jabs of the instruments while the ability to effect sudden mountains of earth out of the ground is explored in the large leaps the three players make in this section (Example 4.1). Each instrument disrupts the established register with a sudden note two octaves above.
Example 4.1 Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 11-16

The variations on this material respond to the different states of earth. Earth can be solid and impenetrable exemplified in the Lock and Shield cards. I felt that recurring low register staccato gestures suggested a stoic, solid and dense sound which reflected this aspect of earth. The recurring chord cluster (G, G# and C#) is played regularly throughout the section to reinforce the rigidity of earth. Example 4.2 shows the Maze variation in which one instrument follows a melodic path only to be met with an impenetrable wall, the cluster, a musical response that I felt characterised the way the characters attempted to deal with the maze in the episode, repeatedly running down passages only to be met with a frustrating dead end. The frustration is also depicted using the dissonance of the cluster.

Example 4.2 Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 50-53
The stoic strength of all the cards in the Earth section is something that differentiates them from the other elements. However earth can also be complex and ever changing. When responding to the Sand card and the Loop card, I wrote changing semiquaver broken chords to move the texture from fixed and immobile to one of movement. The semiquavers loop in a repetitive cycle and the rapid pace responds to the dexterous Sand card which is able to move more discretely than other cards within this section (Example 4.3).

**Example 4.3** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 64-65

Water

Cards: Watery, Bubbles, Cloud, Freeze, Mist, Rain, Snow, Wave, Wood

The water section contains the most cohesive set of cards with the connection between the cards readily apparent as they all contain water or moisture in a direct way. Unlike other sections that include some abstract realisation of the elements, the musical material here operates around very similar devices as I found the visual material very similar from card to card. Many of the harmonies in this section are taken from the whole-tone scale. The way that most of the cards are depicted is through large even spreads of one visual texture, bubbles, mist, snow, even wood is depicted in this way. I wanted this section to use intervals which suggested equal distance between the instruments, harmonically. There are moments of closer semi-tone harmonies during certain phrases, throughout the work, often when all three instruments articulate a new note at the same time a tone apart (Example 4.4), creating
Example 4.4 Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 87-88

The Watery card is a violent card. In the series it attempts to drown people at Sakura's local aquarium. It is primarily depicted, though, as suspicious disturbances in bodies of water at the aquarium. This ominous visual depiction informs the beginning of the section. I composed demi-semi-quavers as short trills and up-beats along with the suggested C Minor tonal centre building a musical mood reflecting the Watery card's cunning and devious personality. The variations explore how the other cards lack the Watery's violent tendencies but instead are generally benign cards that embellish situations to their own pleasure. For example, The Wood card sprouts trees, the Bubbles card creates bubbles and the Rain card is depicted as a tiny girl on a small floating cloud who suddenly, and comically rains on people's heads. They are mischievous at worst. Given this, the middle third of this section remains subdued and delicate to reflect their non-aggressive nature. Bars 97-101 respond to the delicate animation of individual bubbles by using short single instrument gestures (Example 4.5). There is a dramatic change of mood toward the end of the section, however, this will be discussed later in the chapter to better illustrate another anime concept.
Wind

Cards: Windy, Dash, Float, Fly, Jump, Move, Song, Storm, Voice

In the anime, these cards are the least physically realised of the elements. While most other cards take a physical form in the world of Cardcaptors, most of the wind cards act invisibly. They affect people and things often in relation to gravity or the way they move while remaining unseen. Because of this general invisibility, the opening of this section depicts the Windy with only the flute. For this section I mostly employ only one instrument at a time so that the music presents an outline of the wind cards' figures. The section is the rhythmically freest of the entire piece and there is often much space between the musical gestures. Cards such as Dash, Jump, Move and Fly are about points of contact. They operate in the show as cards that can affect how and when something makes contact with the ground. This suggested to me sparse and light staccato quavers with two note acciaccaturas (Example 4.6). These quavers move around the register of the flute and clarinet lines. The acciaccaturas function to give a playful personality to the material as most of the cards are not malicious. The scale runs in the different parts (Example 4.7) also respond to this free movement through space whether jumping long distances, floating into the sky or sprinting down the road.
Fire

Cards: Firey, Arrow, Fight, Power, Shot, Sword, Through, Thunder, Twin

Of all the elemental groups, the Fire cards are the most violent. Aside from the Twin and Through cards, they are hostile or predominantly used for hostile purposes. The cards demonstrate a mixture of precision and chaos in their destructive exploits. I chose to depict this with syncopation and interlocking rhythmic patterns between the parts. I was interested in musically exploring the precision and decisive nature of the cards. In response to the propensity for agile, quick movements that these cards have, bars 204-212 set up a regular repeating pattern which is randomly struck with sudden loud runs of triplet semi-quavers leading to a short quaver (Example 4.8). These vary ascending and descending but are played by all instruments and are
played considerably louder in dynamic and higher in register than the repeating material.

**Example 4.8** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 204-212

I employ harsh dissonances towards the end of the section again responding to the violent nature that these cards possess. The mighty blows that the Shot and Thunder cards can inflict in the work of *Card Captor Sakura* I composed into the score through rapid ascending scales in the flute and clarinet line that climax with harsh dissonant harmonies (Example 4.9). I drew here on the western tradition of musical thunder storms within which composers such as Haydn and Vivaldi have written gestures into their music that depict or relate to storms. This is my anime version of that practice.
Of the five sections of the piece, the Light/Dark one offered the most challenges in terms of considering how the cards affected my compositional thinking. Light and Dark are captured by Sakura at the same time in the series and are depicted as sisters. They both appear as warm maternal figures. The way I responded to these Clow cards is through an attention to dynamics and articulation. Many of the cards deal with proportions of an object and its attributes such as size, luminescence and tangibility. Inspired by these changing proportions, it was important to me that this section used dynamics which move from one extreme to another (Example 4.10). Also playing with proportion, I started the section by using chords that swell only to be cut off after moving to a new louder chord.
In bars 253-272, I was influenced by the dark cards, Silent, Sleep, Dream and Change, as well as the light card, Glow. In these bars the flute and clarinet slowly fade in and out overlapping their crescendo and decrescendos. The slowing of breathing, the fading of light and the changing of physical shapes all suggested to me soft swells of individual notes. There are moments when the ear cannot detect when one instrument has started and the other has stopped (Example 4.11).

**Example 4.11** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 254-257

The end of the work takes the Erase card as its impetus. A simple two bar figure is played (Example 4.12) and then systematically broken down. Notes and parts of notes' durations are stripped away leaving only remains of the original figure. A very quiet final chord is played with a small swell in dynamic and fade to silence as though Light and Dark have given in to each other.

**Example 4.12** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 273-274
An explanation of *Clow Card Variations* points to the way anime uniquely articulates the world, which I have then interpreted through my music. This piece takes as its inspiration the visual and conceptual gestures that *Card Captor Sakura* provides about the elements and the categorisation of the elements. The result is a work in which I have explored a breadth of material which remains cohesive due to my common aesthetic. Brophy (2005) calls on anime's “fantastic flexibility” (9) that enacts a “re-imaging, re-inventing and reconfiguring” (15). Each individual Clow card becomes a 're-invented' articulation of a concept by the anime medium. The music responds to the commonalities within the different elemental groups. I was generally attracted to two attributes of the cards, those that were destructive and those that were docile. The variations offer a variety of interpretations of destructive tendencies. These include the low cluster during the earth section, the rapid triplets and angular melody of the water section and the pulsed triplet runs of the fire section. More docile cards are often sustained and use a range of dynamics including the individual solo lines of the water section, the sparse melodies of the wind section and the dynamic fading of the light/dark section.

**Themes in anime**

As stated in chapter 1, anime is a medium of art employed by many different types of directors and writers. The breadth of themes they engage with addresses many highly nuanced areas. Not only across the different anime film makers but even within their individual oeuvres do we see disparate themes. This has not gone unobserved. Researchers often unpick how the characters and narratives of anime develop, critique and expand these issues. This section of the chapter will discuss how compositions in the folio respond to the ways that anime explores concepts and themes of cyborgs and posthuman creatures, yaoi and sexuality, identity and cuteness and *kawaii* culture. These responses are more abstract than others in the previous chapter. In particular I am responding to the emotional and esoteric articulations of characters and relationships in anime. The changing dynamic between fantasy and reality, human and non-human, childishness and maturity were most informative in these pieces or aspects of pieces.
Posthumanism and Cyborgs

The final movement of the song cycle for soprano and ensemble, *Evanescence*, is 'Cyborg's Lament'. It develops upon a common anime character device: the cyborg. Themes of posthumanism and technology are common in anime, often referred to as the subgenre, 'mecha anime'. Silvio (2006) explains the term posthuman in relation to anime by describing it as a highly mutable concept that is often associated with the 'cyborg'.

“Cyborgs, as they exist in the world of mecha anime and science fiction in general, usually are humans who have had their bodies or minds artificially augmented with technology, though inorganic thinking robots who exhibit human or human-like behaviours and abilities count in this category as well.” (115)

Mecha anime and the cyborg explore the place in between human and robot. This resonates with the concept of evanescence explored in the last chapter, which is why it was included in the song cycle. The states of 'natural' and 'constructed' become fluid and can change, they are not fixed. I find that while other examples of evanescence have traditional and cultural origins, such as the changing seasons or the symbolic cicada shell, the concept of the cyborg is an evanescent being developed in the 20th century. There are, of course, other cultural examples of the cyborg, with Frankenstein's monster, for example, a recycled narrative model. However, the quantity of output of mecha anime, and the way that it visually and conceptually deals with the themes of the cyborg, positions it at the forefront of cyborg exploration. Orbaugh (2006) suggests that this has developed from the “scores of novels in [the] new technophilic genre so popular in post-war Japan” (84). Starting with the 1962 televised series *Astro Boy* by Ozuka, the robot-boy, robot-woman and robot-human have become tropes of the anime narrative.

I find that these ideas about the cyborg mentality give rise to a unique tension between highly contrasting states of existence. My movement that explores this tension, 'Cyborg's Lament', responds specifically to the 1995 film *Ghost in the Shell* directed and written by Mamoru Oshii. The song deals with the issues of emotional instability that are depicted in this film and in others with similar themes. The cyborg is rarely portrayed as simply a human with added technological benefits. With cyborg status comes many ideological crises about identity and humanity. The
extended instrumental opening establishes a mood of unrest. *Ghost in the Shell* often visually juxtaposes pieces of flesh with wires and broken metal (Figure 4.5). Static electricity crackles around what are often up-close shots of machinery. Care and precision are rarely part of creating a cyborg, it is more about forcing flesh and technology together. I was intrigued by this notion of forcing contrasting parts together. This inspired the opening marked statements in the first two bars. They are the only moments of cohesion between the instruments in the introduction, however, they are blunt and dissonant (Example 4.13).

**Figure 4.5** Tezuka, *Metropolis*, Iconic figure of the cyborg exposing its technological makeup
Example 4.13 Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Cyborg's Lament', bars 1-2

Following this, bars 3 to 11, in an effort to reinforce the tension between the different material the cyborg brings together, do not allow any of the parts to harmonise or play similar musical phrases. The clarinet, viola, horn and piano are operating individually. The polyphonic texture created by the instruments is chaotic and blurs harmony and dissonance. Here I am attracted to the many different movements of the cyborg, powerful, fluid, unexpected, malfunctioning or precise. I am also drawing from the internal battle that the cyborg presents; machine against flesh and wires against veins.

Napier (2001) explains the tension that some cyborgs exhibit in anime stating that “the narratives themselves often focus to a surprising extent on the human inside the machinery. It is this contrast between the vulnerable, emotionally complex and often youthful human being … and the awesome power he/she wields vicariously that makes for the most important tension in many *mecha* dramas” (87). *Ghost in the Shell's* protagonist, Major Kusanagi, is a completely artificial
being except for her brain which provides her with a 'ghost' or last distinguishing feature from the purely android. It is revealed that many people who inhabit this world have had their 'ghost', memories and personalities installed in them by artificial means as well. Kusanagi “wonders whether her own ghost is real and original, or whether everything she thinks she knows about herself is, like her body, completely artificial” (Orbaugh, 2006: 94). The piece incorporates this tension from bars 11 to 33 with the piano starting a repetitive staccato crotchet playing a quiet, diminished octave. This dissonance rises in pitch and becomes more complex, harmonically, while other instruments play short phrases and the horn echoes the opening 2-bar statement (Example 4.14). The texture is revisited with the vocal line added between bars 101-124.

Example 4.14 Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Cyborg's Lament', bars 14-18

These sections of dissonant polyphony and musical tension are interspersed with passages of light consonant refrain. Towards the end of the film while she is connecting to the vast matrix of her world the creator explains that she might experience the network as a bright white light.
Light is a theme of the film appearing as headlights but also emitting from various screens. It juxtaposes the dark and gritty tone of the film. I wanted to explore these moments during two transitions to a sparser texture from the piano and a harmonic shift toward more consonant sounds (Example 4.15).

**Example 4.15** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Cyborg's Lament', bars 119-127

The lyrics of this song draw from a vocabulary of terms associated with the cyborg. Artificial and natural concepts such as 'flesh' and 'wires' are juxtaposed and used interchangeably in the text. I wrote the text in the present tense to evoke an immediacy of the thought progressions the cyborg experiences. In the film, Kusanagi’s surroundings force her to question her identity. I wanted the narrative of the song to reflect these uncertainties and borrow terminology from the film such as when the singer repeats the phrase 'my ghost' three times with increasing dynamic intensity.
The notion of the cyborg connects well with the discussion of anime and gender/sexuality. This area is of interest to me as anime offers to young (particularly Western) audiences a vastly different gender landscape than other forms of animation or indeed other narrative forms. When I was younger these non-stereotypical presentations of male and female helped me start to consider un-fixed notions of masculine and feminine. Harraway's (1991) cyborg manifesto states that the cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; the cyborgs refusal to fit into any oppressive category of gender is “liberatory” (150). The cyborg is at once organic and technological. The frequent use of this type of character such as in the anime Chobits, Metropolis and Ghost in the Shell, allows for an animated destabilisation of gender. Lamarre (2006) supports this and explores how bending gender and gender stereotypes is an intrinsic part of anime and manga subculture and has been since the early 1950s. He cites Tezuka Osamu's manga Metropolis which features a cyborg, Michi, who changes from boy to girl with the flick of a switch (48). This criticism of gender can also be extended to the audience reception of anime and manga. Lamarre criticises the viewing of anime and manga as having two distinct sub genres of shonen (boy's genre) and shojo (girl's genre) saying it ignores the complexity and subversive attempts of much anime to be accessible to both boys and girls (47). Dominant discourse would suppose a unitary shonen genre and a unitary shojo genre that equates genre and gender. This attempts to reinforce hetero-normative stereotypes of gender through genre, a classification much anime would trouble to fit. Lamarre, however, notes that the categorical breakdown of these two branches shows a shifting field of expectations and a mutable form of address to readers or viewers.

Within this blurring of gender boundaries comes the category of manga and anime known as yaoi. Yaoi refers to works whose narratives involve the relationship, romantic or sexual, between two men. Levi (2010) explains the odd origin of the term as a “sardonic acronym for Yama-nashi, Ochi-nashi, Imi-nashi (no climax, no point, no meaning) [which] usually comprised of a collection of scenes and episodes lacking any overarching structure” (2). This homosexual-themed genre earns attention as it is predominantly heterosexual women writing stories about homosexual men for an audience of other heterosexual women (1). Meyer (2010) suggests that the allure of homosexual relationships for women is that “by identifying with one or more of the gay characters in a manga [or anime], the fans/artists cannot just take on a traditionally male
gender role, but a traditionally male sexual position” (232). *Yaoi* often dichotomises the male protagonists as dominant and submissive, rarely deviating from the commonly accepted emotional and personal traits that essentially come with these sexual roles.

My piece for solo piano in the folio, *Tides of Falling Leaves*, draws from the dominant visual and structural devices found within *yaoi*. The idea that the narratives have no point and my use of a collection of scenes resulted in me composing a work that employs a collection of related gestures rather than an integrated musical through-line. The work uses 3-4 bar phrases played to create a mood rather than a strong developing narrative. The work does contain a climax, however this is more a tongue-in-cheek musical allusion to the inevitable sexual relations in which the characters in *yaoi* engage. This is musically realised with high register clusters being played repeatedly at the end of the work (Example 4.16).

**Example 4.16** Smith, *Tides of Falling Leaves*, bars 80-82

Other gestures I composed exhibit simple, sparse and consonant arpeggios (Example 4.17) and unsettlingly dissonant chords (Example 4.18). These dissonance range in dynamic level but are often consonant intervals that are upset by the addition of a diminished or augmented note or two consonant intervals which are a semitone apart played at the same time.

**Example 4.17** Smith, *Tides of Falling Leaves*, bars 13-14
Example 4.18 Smith, *Tides of Falling Leaves*, bars 17-20

The men, especially the *uke* (submissive character), are drawn with long, lithe, feminine bodies, always hairless with 'pretty' faces and generally very few details. It is only the outline of their figures that are important. These characters are known as *bishounen*, meaning 'beautiful boy'. Image 4.6 shows a typical *bishounen*. Meyer explains that *yaoi* “emphasizes the 'feminine' qualities, such as expressive eyes, harmonious features, hairless skin, and sometimes beautiful outfits” (236). I found the simple design fascinating and in response wrote the gestures that sit in this high register, including the arpeggiated chords and light tremolo figures. In contrast to this, when in moments of sexual submission, the *uke* is often depicted in pain. His face shows agony and added visual details including cross shading to indicate pain and sweat are drawn. Image 4.7 shows an example of a young male *uke* taken from the manga *My Sweet Little Cat* (year/author unknown)8. This is what led me to compose the dissonant material that appears throughout the piece. I was influenced by the fact that a big part of these 'love stories' is an obvious discomfort. It is, however, the mixture of pleasure and pain which spurred me to compose these dissonances often only quietly. Both the *bishounen* gestures and the submissive gestures are extended during the climax of the work. The plot of most *yaoi* works involve two *bishounen* meeting and then working through a circumstantial difficulty to finally be together. This may be one of the characters struggling with their sexuality or the difficult personality of one of the characters. The end result is often a mixture of beauty and pain, a mood the isolated gestures of *Tides of Falling Leaves* depicts, musically.

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8 The manga shown is an example of a *doujinshi*. A *doujinshi* is a fan-made manga. These are often self-published and many details, including the year and author, are not included in the publication details. *My Sweet Little Cat* was purchased in Japan during a trip I undertook in July, 2012.
Identity and Sanity

Two pieces in the folio use as their inspiration the psychological works of Satoshi Kon (1963-2010), particularly his film *Perfect Blue* (1997). Mentioned in the introduction to this chapter,
Kon was a firm believer in works that are conceived for the anime medium, rather than those adapted from manga or other sources. During his career he worked as a writer, animator and director and left one film unfinished at the time of his early death in 2010. His works blur the lines of reality and fantasy and utilise the potential for anime to distort perception. Scenes often amalgamate fantasy and reality, which has become part of his signature. Kon uses this play with real and unreal to undermine both the characters and audiences expectations. In *Perfect Blue* and *Millenium Actress* (2002), reality is mixed with film and television so that parallel themes become intertwined on and off camera. In *Paprika* (2006), the title character has the ability to inhabit people's dreams, a place where reality is dealt with in the realms of fantasy. In *Broken Reflection* numbers 1 and 2 and the 'Perverse Fantasy' movement of my orchestral work, *Anime Interludes*, I was interested in responding to Kon's style and films.

Both pieces look at the graphically violent depictions of murder and insanity in *Perfect Blue*. The arching narrative of this work is one that becomes increasingly disjointed and it is the narrative that informs the compositions. In summary, the protagonist, Mima, is a pop singer who wishes to pursue a career in acting. After obtaining a small role in a TV drama series, Mima begins to question if she has made the right choice and we see a splintering of her identity as the actress she wants to be and the pop idol she once was. A string of murders occur around her of people involved with the TV series. Mima continues to slip, mentally, when her role is changed to that of a serial killer and she starts to suspect herself as a serial killer in the both the series and the real world. The climax of the film reveals one of Mima's managers, Rumi, to be the real world serial killer. Rumi was obsessed with the pop idol Mima and, driven to insanity, wanted to force Mima to become a pop idol again. In a dramatic chase through the streets of Tokyo a deranged Rumi, dressed in Mima's singing costume, stabs Mima with an umbrella after Mima screams, “I am me!” The title of the work comes from this scene when at one point Rumi stands over shards of broken glass reflecting her face from a number of angles (Figure 4.8). Rumi is then almost hit by a truck whose headlights she mistakes for stage lights but is saved by Mima. 'Perverse Fantasy' responds to the chase scene, while *Broken Reflections 1 & 2* responds to the overarching narrative. They both draw on the film's ability to exploit, what Brophy (2005) calls, “‘double' characters in mind-bending ways” (176)
Figure 4.8 Kon, *Perfect Blue*, Rumi reflected in broken glass clutches her wig

*Broken Reflection 2* draws on *Perfect Blue*. The driving hemiola that starts the work is repeated in between sections of other material. The chaotic questions of Mima's identity constantly re-surface in the film, even when she feels she has worked out her situation. l chose the rhythmic device of hemiola to reflect this uncertainty yet every time it appears in the work it has changed slightly, not rhythmically, but one or more of the parts now playing something more complicated suggesting an increasingly complex and chaotic situation. The cello part particularly moves away from playing chord tones on each of the hemiola beats to playing semiquaver and quaver arpeggios. At one point the pattern appears in pizzicato, which takes on a macabre tone given the established mood of the piece. Example 4.19 and 4.20 show how the pattern has become more erratic incorporating more complex breakdowns of the pulse and larger melodic intervals in the cello line.

Example 4.19 Smith, *Broken Reflection 2*, bars 1-2
Example 4.20 Smith, *Broken Reflection* 2, bar 71

For long stretches of time Mima appears listless, living her life in deadpan. When she sees herself reflected in any surface she sees a bright smiling pop-star looking back at her. The pop-star, while beautiful, often mocks Mima, using foul language and calling her a whore for taking part in an erotic photo shoot. From bars 52-64 trills and sliding are used to further establish an unsure harmonic area. The sliding chords and notes also contribute to reflecting Mima's destabilised sanity. The piece responds to the harsh violence of the piece as well. The final section of the work is ethereal and consonant. It is played in the higher tessitura of the violins and viola to add to the heavenly mood (Example 4.21). A poignant and climactic moment in the film comes at the end of the chase when a psychotic Rumi is pushed into the street by Mima. When the truck barrels towards Rumi, she sees in its headlights the bright stage lights of a popstar. The street sounds fade and the viewer is brought into Rumi’s fantasy world where an adoring audience cheers for her. This is bitter sweet as it is not the true pop-idol existence that has been depicted throughout the film. I used this quasi-chorale texture and harmony in the four strings to create an other-worldly tone. Rumi exists outside of reality and the musical phrases suggest this.
Example 4.21 Smith, *Broken Reflection 2*, bars 25-31

This section does suggest the macabre moments as well. The harmony shifts into a dissonant area momentarily (Example 4.22) before all the parts climb and end on an ominous major triad which for me evokes the same conflicting irony of the applause Rumi hears from the fake audience. This final chord makes a final dramatic swell in dynamic before cutting off, further adding to the deranged mixture of material in the piece.

Example 4.22 Smith, *Broken Reflection 2*, bars 158-161
The 'Perverse Fantasy' movement in the *Anime Interludes* also draws on *Perfect Blue*, specifically the moment Mima discovers that Rumi is the psychotic one and she starts attacking her and chasing her through the streets. For me this intense scene of the film includes a number of evocative images and gestures. Mima's heavy breathing is a constant underscore to the scene with her occasional screams for help piercing the otherwise quiet Tokyo night. Both Mima and Rumi are deeply psychologically disturbed by this point. Although Mima knows it is Rumi attacking her she only sees the image of herself as a pop star perversely giggling with a bright smile while trying to stab her. Both the aggressive violence and dexterity the pop star image of Mima embodies is explored in the opening bars. The glissandi and acciaccaturas in all the parts of the orchestra suggest the wild swings of the knife however everything stays on the direct pulses of the 4/4 time signature. Mima only ever sees Rumi in reflected surfaces, continuing their thematic employment in the film. When she does see Rumi in these reflected surfaces there is complex disjunction of fantasy and reality for Mima. Throughout the movement these disjoints appear as high chord clusters made by the wind or string sections (Example 4.23).

**Example 4.23** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 6-8
I also responded to the depiction of the two characters running through the streets of Tokyo. The piano is used percussively from bar 72 playing rapid semiquavers in changing meters (Example 4.24) which for me creates the same jagged movements and fast panning camera movements. Wind instruments play long scale passages with the piano creating a chaotic texture echoing the bright lights and maze-like structure of Tokyo's alleys.

**Example 4.24** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 73-76

Moments of reprieve in the chase are used to mark the violent sections. The musical textures change to moments of beauty, much like in *Broken Reflection 2*, during bars 23-24 and bars 40-45. Again the visual juxtaposition of the serene and beautiful fantasy Mima as a pop star works against the context of her being the manifestation of a delusional and homicidal Rumi. The echoes of her former life, the pop-star veneer of Japan that represents everything that Mima does not want to be, inspired these bars. Sweet piano chords in bars 23 and 24 (Examples 4.25) and a lyrical horn melody in bars 40-45 respond to this (Example 4.26).
Example 4.25 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 23-24

Example 4.26 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Fantasy', bars 40-43

Kawaii

A dominant Japanese aesthetic known as *kawaii*, developed during the late 20th century, translates directly as 'cuteness'. However, the breadth and character of this aesthetic is much debated within the academic sphere and goes beyond a simple verbal translation. Notions of *kawaii* appear throughout other parts of Asia, though it is most closely associated with Japan, and has taken on a cult status within popular culture. *Kawaii* culture “celebrates the material as opposed to the abstract side of existence insofar as cute images explicitly eschew metaphysical aspirations” (Cavallaro, 2010: 24). Characteristically, *kawaii* is associated with youthfulness, vulnerability, innocence, gentleness and immaturity. The way these combine “encompasses a multiplicity of meaning” (Barber, Bryce and Davis, 2010: 23). Furry animals, enormous expressive eyes and detailed colourful costumery are all part of the *kawaii* aesthetic. Despite the contemporaneity of *kawaii*, artist Takashi Murakami does suggest links with the historical term *yurui* (laziness). Papp (2010) explains Murakami’s theory and claims that “the contemporary transition to *kawaii* from *yurui* indicates a sense of sexual incapacity and impotence” (6). From
WWII onward, with events such as the symbolic naming of the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 as 'little boy', an infantilisation occurred in Japan.

The metaphor of 'little boy' is apt not only as a significant turning point in a 20th century Japan but also in addressing a second complexity associated with the notion of kawaii. The juxtaposition of an infantile name for such a catastrophic instrument of power highlights its often inherent contradiction - especially for kawaii in anime. When observed in relation to marketing and material culture, kawaii favours a particular Japanese demographic and adheres to certain cultural expectations of design. It has become an ingrained part of the Japanese commercial landscape. “The passion for cuteness has escalated to endemic proportion, operating as a key marketing force behind the dissemination of a plethora of both good and bad attitudes” (Cavallaro, 2010: 22). Those that analyse kawaii in relation to anime, however, are exposed to a more complex situation. When employed within anime, kawaii can be twisted beyond a purely visual expression. What is presented as cute, naive and vulnerable may in fact be malicious, mature, powerful or dangerous. The kawaii aesthetic in anime is often the visual veneer of a character within a plot and the external depiction does not always match the internal personality. The plot of the series Gunslinger Girl (2003), for example, follows a group of female cyborg assassins. It has been observed that “when they're not engaged in physical combat or murder, the Gunslinger Girl cyborgs are adorable and seem utterly innocent, gentle and childlike. When such a pretty child shoots a defenceless, innocent boy [which occurs in the series] there is a resounding visual and psychological clash” (Barber, Bryce and Davis, 2010: 23). These instances are not rare - Brophy (2005) explains that “this is the deeper meaning of kawaii culture... nothing is singularly gendered; everything is multi-sexed” (188). As there are often magical/technological parameters to anime plots, the power contained within a cute design can be unexpectedly disproportionate. The way that kawaii appears in the folio responds to this 'visual and psychological clash'. It also moves the music away from being cute in and of itself. I was not trying to write 'cute' music, but musically explore the way that cuteness is used within anime. I wanted to write music about cuteness that is not necessarily itself cute. The kawaii aesthetic is also often employed humorously within anime. I was then aware of trying to write music that was influenced by kawaii but did not come across as crass, childish or funny. The different results in different compositions in the folio exemplify the results of this kawaii involvement.
In composing musical portraits of the characters, three of the four pieces within the Kawaii Suite for solo piano exhibit examples of this juxtaposition of appearance and character. While being inspired by the complex array of mannerisms and gestures the characters exhibit, the dichotomy of vulnerable cuteness and internal strength of varying forms has become part of the music. 'Ponyo' is the only work to not incorporate a moment of sudden or unexpected change in tone towards the dramatic or violent. The flourish at the end, which remains very positive in tone, responds instead to the development of Ponyo's cuteness in the film rather than the development of a hidden power or 'other' meaning to her cuteness. 'Pikachu', 'Kodama' and 'Mokona', meanwhile, all have musical moments which move away from a juvenile or naïve musical nature, harmonically and texturally. The kawaii expressions are when I was responding to the characters' funny or youthful personalities and I interpreted these as moments of clear harmonic movement, phrases with only one clear melodic line, thinly textured sections and the common use of the upper and brighter register of the piano. These are juxtaposed with moments of dissonance, aggression, unclear voice leading and unexpected harmonic progressions as I was attracted to the potential damage or powerful resonance these creatures could present.

Pikachu, as stated in the previous chapter, is a pokemon who can conduct electricity. While Pikachu is often cute and calm (Figure 4.9), it can also be destructive and violent (Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10 Yuyama, Pokemon, 'Kawaii Pikachu' and 'Battling Pikachu'
I joined the many sections of this piece with a 3 note motif which I use responding to the way Pokemon communicate. Pokemon are only able to say their own name. The way that they inflect the pronunciation of their name gives clearer indication as to their mood or what phrase they might be trying to suggest. I composed this 3 note motif to signify the way Pikachu says its name, with an emphasis on the middle syllable, 'pi-KA-chu'. Musically, the motif contains a ninth up and then a fifth down (Example 4.27), which gives the middle note the pitch accent regardless of where it is placed against the beat.

**Example 4.27** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Pikachu', motif

To depict the *kawaii* state of Pikachu the interval is played within a simple single line melody that is accompanied by sparse chords (Example 4.28). The dynamic marking is soft and the tone is calm and pleasant. This sits against the rapid and jagged treatment of the motif when played as chords against a dramatic quaver bass figure in the left hand in an unsteady 5/4 time signature (Example 4.29). Here I was influenced by Pikachu when engaged in battle and using its electrical power forcefully. There are similarities again with the use of thunderstorms in the classical canon. Vivaldi's use of driving quavers in the 'Summer – Storm' movement of his *The Four Seasons* was part of the musical influence in this passage.

**Example 4.28** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Pikachu', bar 69-70
Example 4.29 Smith, Kawaii Suite, 'Pikachu', bars 9-11

Mokona's cute and entertaining nature is what inspired the melody-dominated homophony between bars 16 and 34 of the opening movement of the suite. The bright melody played in octaves is accompanied by arpeggiated triads in D major (Example 4.30). I purposefully composed little harmonic complexity in the section as Mokona can appear quite vague and will often verbalise the most mundane observations. These tonal chords contrast with the atonality later in the work. The next section was informed by the powerful vortex Mokona can create. I wanted to present a sudden clash of textures and the simple homophony becomes a number of different gestures played around a bass ostinato (Example 4.31). This was to capture the unlikely powerful ability of Mokona in the show from what appears to be a rather silly creature. The nature here is not violent or aggressive, as Pikachu was, but rather tumultuous and unpredictable responding to the mighty vortexes Mokona can open to transport the adventurers it accompanies in the anime. *Kawaii* can be a cover for different forms of power.

Example 4.30 Smith, Kawaii Suite, 'Mokona', bars 18-21
Kodama presents a third and slightly different juxtaposition of kawaii. As explained in the previous chapter, Kodama are spirits of the forest that inhabit trees. In the film Mononoke Hime they are depicted as simply-drawn creatures with similar body frames and few details other than the unique outline of their heads. They are the same greyish colour all over and body parts such as fingers and toes, if they have them, are not defined. Part of their kawaii nature comes from this design, however, it is more apparent in their mischievous and curious behaviour. In the film, the Kodama have a tendency to become interested in those that travel through their forest, however, they remain quite shy. They can be seen running along tree branches or along the forest floor briefly visible before fading away either into a tree trunk or branch. This is shown in the two scale passages which run to a held single note (Example 4.32).

The Kodama's power is not that they exhibit any particular magical abilities but in their symbolic realisation of the energy contained with forest, especially when Kodama are depicted numbering in the hundreds (Figure 4.11). I inferred from this two different musical climaxes in the piece. The first is a non-aggressive awe coming from the breadth of the frame when showing the hundreds of Kodama in the tree-tops. This led to the chord played in bar 50 (Example 4.33).
Secondly, there is the development of the trill motif discussed in the previous chapter was extended after watching many Kodama grouping together, an image with a developing ominous tone (Example 4.34).

**Figure 4.11** Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, Kodama in a large group

![Image of Kodama](image)

**Example 4.33** Smith, *Kawaii Suite*, 'Kodama', bars 50-51

![Musical notation](image)

*Clow Card Variations*, in my response to the many Clow cards depicted in the series *Card Captor Sakura*, also offers the juxtaposition of some *kawaii* elements with strong magical powers. The number of different visual depictions used to form this work has resulted in a number of moments that draw from the *kawaii* nature of some cards. Each card has a different ability, some of them are quite docile and kind, such as the Sweet card (which quite literally makes things taste sweet). As was mentioned earlier in this chapter the cards are grouped
according to the various elements that they fall under as described in the anime. All the cards are equally magical however they choose to exhibit this magic in different ways. Adopting a variations structure illustrates how the *kawaii* cards affect the scoring when juxtaposed with non-*kawaii* cards. The *kawaii* cards inspired simpler musical material, with less dissonance and use of multi-layered textures and gestures.

Two examples of this juxtaposition are prominent in the variations. Firstly, the Bubbles card (Figure 4.12) is a non-threatening card that simply creates bubbles and is captured by Sakura in otherwise non-difficult circumstances. In episode 58, 'Sakura and Double Trouble', she uses the Bubbles card to bathe her magical pet, Kero. Kero is depicted as a *kawaii* creature and he is bathed in a wash of pink bubbles with individual bubbles floating through the air.

**Figure 4.12** CLAMP, *Card Captor Sakura*, 'The Bubbles'

These individual bubbles form a quaint, serene section of the Water section. Musical material from earlier in the movement (double and triple dotted notes followed by a demi-semi-quaver) is used as single brief melodic phrases which are played individually by the three wind instruments.
before being played in soft whole-tone harmonies (Example 4.5, used earlier this chapter). This material is then re-treated when being used to respond to a different card within the water movement the Cloud card. While one might expect the Cloud card to also be a subdued easy-to-deal-with card, on the contrary, it is depicted as a large swirling mass of dense dark clouds and explores the relationship it has with storms rather than those that seem serene, white and fluffy. The double and triple dotted notes that feature in this movement are played high and loudly by the flute while being accompanied by tumultuous semiquaver triplets in the clarinet line (Example 4.34). The *kawaii* juxtaposition is highlighted in these different musical articulations of the material.

**Example 4.34** Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bars 115-116

Secondly, the fire movement is predominantly dramatic. Few of the cards associated with the element fire are depicted with a *kawaii* aesthetic, therefore most of the movement develops around syncopated rhythms and call and response flourishes between the instruments. The opening of the section presents this tone. Bar 184 illustrates how, in a 5/4 time signature, the jagged contours of the parts interlock to create a percussive and unpredictable texture (Example 4.35). Featuring predominantly during this section is the rhythmic pattern of triplet semi-quavers ascending or descending to a staccato quaver. It can be seen in the flute line of bar 184 in example 4.35.
The one card that exhibits the *kawaii* aesthetic under the fire element, the Through card, is not antagonistic and is depicted as a beautiful woman in the long gown with an elaborate hair style (Figure 4.13). When this card is being depicted musically the texture thins and one clear voice, the flute, is used to play the same rhythmic figure as before, a cute version of the once antagonistic musical material. Example 4.36 shows my musical response to the Through card's ability to move through solid objects. Again this juxtaposition illustrates the way the *kawaii* aesthetic can inform the way the music responds to anime.

**Figure 4.13** CLAMP, *Card Captor Sakura*, 'The Through'
Example 4.36 Smith, *Clow Card Variations*, bar 201-203

While anime does contain these types of *kawaii* explorations that look at identity and appearance, there are also a number of creatures, characters and scenes which are, quite simply, cute. Other pieces in the folio specifically respond to moments of *kawaii* that are not coupled with this contradiction or clash of the visual and psychological. The music exhibits a spontaneity, youthfulness, naivety and exaggeration of features associated with a more commercial visual understanding of *kawaii*.

Within the *Evanescence* song cycle, the duet for clarinet and French horn, ‘Children's Tea Ceremony’, is an exploration of the contemporary *kawaii* aesthetic when coupled with the formal nature of Japanese tradition. The piece, which is a duet for clarinet and French horn, develops two contrasting sections throughout the piece. One contains long, measured and even tones that harmonise consonantly (Example 4.37) while the other uses sporadic gestures, intervals and rhythms.

Example 4.37 Smith, *Evanescence*, ‘Children's Tea Ceremony’, bars 1-4
The latter sections respond to the depiction of *kawaii* creatures as impulsive, unpredictable and exaggerated. They can be prone to loud outbursts and are commonly associated with caricature features such as the iconic huge anime eye. To depict this, the piece employs many dynamic changes, a mixture of staccato and legato figures, sudden changes in register and moments of call and response between the instruments that feature close harmonies of a semi-tone. When played, these harmonies sound humorous rather than uncomfortable or atonal as they are not played within a strict harmonic key area. These *kawaii* allusions are shown in Examples 4.38, 4.39 and 4.40 below.

**Example 4.38** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Children's Tea Ceremony', bars 13-15

**Example 4.39** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Children's Tea Ceremony', bars 72-74

**Example 4.40** Smith, *Evanescence*, 'Children's Tea Ceremony', bars 89-93
The other work to respond to the youthful and spontaneous nature of the *kawaii* aesthetic is the short piece for toy piano, *Iceberg Variations*. In using the toy piano I wanted to employ the ill-tempered tuning and overtones of the notes plus the prominent overtones to evoke the sense of childhood associated with *kawaii*. The piece’s playful use of triplet figures and scattered/unexpected 3-note chord clusters were ways for me to create the same sense of heightened colour and exaggeration that *kawaii* exemplifies. These chords clusters appear at the beginning in amongst more melodic phrases (Example 4.41), however, given the degree to which the *kawaii* aesthetic can be taken I wanted to push this beyond a 'cute' place into a more ugly extreme. The end of the work contains these clusters in the upper extreme of the toy piano played repeatedly with atonal acciaccaturas from the left hand (Example 4.42). This differs from the previous example which takes the material to dramatic or aggressive place. The instrument and the material in this work do not suggest something dramatic or aggressive, but rather it is an extension of the vulnerable and youthful gestures to a place that sits just beyond the cute realm.

**Example 4.41** Smith, *Iceberg Variations*, bars 5-6

![Example 4.41](image1)

**Example 4.42** Smith, *Iceberg Variations*, bars 97-100

![Example 4.42](image2)

The *kawaii* aesthetic also provides part of the inspiration for one of the movements of the
orchestral work in my folio, *Anime Interludes*. The movement, 'Innocent Fantasy', responds to a scene from the film *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988) by Hayao Miyazaki. The scene involves four-year-old Mei who has gotten lost while trying to find vegetables for her sick mother. Mei is found and saved by the supernatural Totoro who takes the form of a catbus with the ability to fly. McCarthy (1999) explains that “The catbus is exactly what it says – a cat that’s a bus, or bus that’s a cat (Figure 4.5). It has six pairs of legs, though for delicate situations like running along electrical city cables it just uses the front and back pair” (126).

**Figure 4.5** Miyazaki, *My Neighbour Totoro*, The Catbus in full flight

After being picked up by the catbus and her older sister, Satsuki, Mei is whisked home through the open air above a variety of different Japanese countryside vistas in the summer. To engage with the youthfulness of the protagonists and the bizarre nature of the catbus, I start the piece with a call and response between the flute and piccolo and wood block percussion (Example 4.43). The flute and piccolo play wild melodies against one another which are followed by two bar rhythmic gestures from the wood blocks that are accompanied by low pizzicato strings. I was inspired here by the three main characters of the scene. The additive string rhythms (Example 4.44) that follow this quaint call and response also allude to the cat bus and its odd gestures and sudden movements when in transit, turning, rising, falling and veering with fast reflexes.
Example 4.43 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Fantasy', bars 1-4

Example 4.44 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Innocent Fantasy', bars 17-18
German text:

Anime and manga often deal with different periods of Japanese history. These films and series sometimes reflect on the Japanese position on a grand scale, but more often tell individual stories as an insight into broader themes. Some are more historical such as *Mononoke Hime*, which is based in the Muromachi period (1336-1557), while others deal with Japanese modern history, particularly the events surrounding WWII. One focused on this war is *Barefoot Gen*, a popular manga (1973-1974) turned anime film (1986) set around the events of the bombing of Hiroshima. One of the most critically acclaimed films set during WWII is Takahata's *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988). Film critic Roger Ebert has long been an advocate for the film and credits it with taking animated films out of a singular category of animation, as the fact that it is animated does not define its potential to inspire deep grief in the audience member. In his review (2000), Ebert claims ‘‘Grave of the Fireflies’ is a powerful dramatic film that happens to be animated, and I know what the critic Ernest Rister means when he compares it to 'Schindler’s List'’ (para. 3). In my orchestral work *Anime Interludes*, the movement 'Perverse Reality' responds to what I feel is the most emotionally devastating scene of the film. The film focuses on two young children, Seita, 14, and Setsuko, 5, who have lost both of their parents in the final days of the war in the Kobe fire bombings. Orphaned in a Japan in turmoil, they take refuge in a small cave outside of Kobe with Seita attempting to care for both of them. Despite his best efforts, however, Seita is unable to find enough food for them both and his young sister dies of malnutrition. The film is cited in anime circles as one of the saddest and deeply affecting anime. The reason I wish to draw on this, particularly for the expressive orchestral instrumentation, is because of how emotional the film made me when I first watched it.

Specifically, I drew from the scene in the film after Satsuko has died. A number of long reflective views of Kobe are shown until the screen settles outside the cave the two young children had inhabited. There, the audience is shown fading images of the memories of Satsuko running with butterflies, playing, running and cleaning. Her small frame fades in and out as she goes about these activities. Echoes of her laughter can be heard. The immense sadness of this scene, coupled with the war-torn Kobe inspired the sombre, dark, double-bass solo which plays the movement's motif in the opening bar (Example 4.45). To establish the ravaged landscape of the Japan the motif is moved around the different string parts and extended with the use of quarter-tone
shifting in the violin lines (Example 4.46). In between these long string phrases I have interspersed piano and glockenspiel “bell tolls”. The film deals with death on both a grand and small scale, these percussive gestures repeat throughout the work to add to the funerary atmosphere.

**Example 4.45** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Reality', bar 1

**Example 4.46** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Reality', bars 12-14

There is a sudden change of texture from bar 19. As mentioned in the scene description, images of Satsuko playing fade in and out of fixed view. She is laughing and happy. There is a strong sense of bittersweetness around these images. The audience is grieving for the dead child while watching memories of her having fun. Syncopated, staccato gestures from the woodwind section puncture the silence left from the bell toll in bar 18 and the clarinet plays short playful melodies.
(Example 4.47), which connect to the *kawaii* material in other works of the folio, however, in the context of this piece I composed them to be uncomfortable counter-gestures to the long sad phrases from the strings. Bars 26-30 end this section, again responding to the fading images of Satsuko. I wanted to evoke the moment when Satsuko appears in a different part of the screen, before moving somewhere else and fading away. To do this I composed a mixed ensemble of strings, woodwind and brass playing a chord at first as a short quaver and then after a length of silence again as a slightly longer crotchet (Example 4.48). The effect is to musically recreate these apparitions and fadings. The ensemble decreases in size as this is repeated three times before the original motif is played, now moved to the brass section. I use the high timbre glockenspiel throughout the movement as a specific percussion allusion to Satsuko's youthfulness in a dark, war-torn country. In all other sections of the orchestra for this movement emphasis has been put on the lower instruments, double bass, tuba and lower horn and bassoon and bass-clarinet as well as the low droning A from the piano which repeatedly appears.

**Example 4.47** Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Reality', bars 19-20
Example 4.48 Smith, *Anime Interludes*, 'Perverse Reality', bars 26-28

The consideration of anime not as Japanese has been important for me as I do not necessarily immediately connect anime to Japan. While I have learned about the connection in my teenage years and the depths of the connection during my research as explained in chapter 3, I still view anime as a unique mode of expression able to articulate complex concepts, emotions and characters. The spectrum of anime from innocent to perverse or fantastic to realistic has offered to me as an artist many contemporary gestures, ideas, structures, notions and understandings that have framed the conception and execution of my compositions.
Compositional Choices

While this exegesis has broadly covered a range of influences that anime has had on my music and explored the variety of ways these are visible in my compositions, the stricter, more detailed decision-making behind my composing has not been as fully drawn out in relation to any of the pieces. This section of the thesis is, therefore, a detailed and informative discussion of the musical material found within one specific work from the folio, *Transitions of a Landscape*. The four movements will not be discussed individually as there is much related material between the four but rather I will explain the thoughts behind the music and how this is present throughout the entire work. The structure of each of the movements has been discussed earlier in relation to *haiku* and the seasons. There is a statement of the poem, mostly in rhythmic unison, followed by a contrapuntal exploration where each vocal line takes fragments of the poem and develops them using different compositional ideas. In *Transition of a Landscape*, I wanted to adopt a structure similar to the *haiku* - three connected parts of a whole.

As examples of choral writing, the movements play with vocal articulation, texture and range. There is a balance throughout the movements of legato phrases and staccato / marked rhythmic phrases. These require the choir to articulate the poems in different ways - through smooth open lines, percussive consonants and vowels or short detached phrases. While Autumn is built around shifting harmonies within smooth vocal contours, I included two moments of detached quaver vowels in bars 18 and 19 to prepare what was to develop. This short staccato like effect is then developed in 'Winter' and 'Spring' through more extended gestures. These can be heard in the staccato statement of the last line of the winter *haiku*, 'ikutabi mo', in bars 3 and 6 of 'Winter' and in the percussive extension of the vowels of the spring haiku in bars 18 and 20 of 'Spring'. Similarly the opening line of the spring haiku is sung legato at the start of the movement but then as isolated off-beat crotchets in bars 21-22 and then as staccato quavers in bars 28-30. The tempo, rhythmic and intervalic structure of 'Summer' gives it the least legato feel of the four movements, to balance it with smoother 'Autumn'. The strident 4ths and 5ths throughout the vocal line, the constant use of rapid staccato quavers and the 2/4 and 3/4 metre bars which interrupt the dominant 4/4 metre all encourage the choir to articulate the summer poem in a very different way to the other three movements. While Japanese, the language, is built around the five open vowels, there is also a common use of the closed 'n' and 'm' nasal consonants. I wanted
to incorporate this into the work and have done so by using a 'bright hum' in the bass part which underscores the opening to the spring movement, another articulation device.

Texturally, the piece plays with the ranges of the vocal parts. I have given the upper two lines, soprano and tenor, the melodies, particularly when other parts are acting in a more harmonic manner, for example, tenor in 'Spring', bars 5-8 (Example 4.49). However, the contrapuntal sections of each movement allow each vocal part to act independently and offer its own timbral characteristic to an individual phrase or word from the haiku. For example, I wanted to use the different vocal parts to colour similar musical material in different registers. In 'Autumn' the rising quavers of the phrase, 'karasu no' (trans. crow's), which is first heard in the soprano part in bar 3, is shared around the other vocal parts during the middle of the piece, in the tenor line at bar 11 and the bass part at bar 14 (Example 4.50).

Example 4.49 Smith, Transition of a Landscape, 'Spring', bars 5-8
This device occurs similarly in 'Spring' and 'Summer', showcasing each of the poems in a number of different registers. The outer extremes of each range are explored to vary the texture of the movements. I wanted to make use of the low rumbling notes from the bass part and these can be found in bar 9 of 'Winter' and bar 28 or 'Summer'. Thrilling tenorial high notes pierce through the parts in bar 19 of 'Spring' while the end of the piece in 'Summer' a bright, high soprano Bb exclaims the final tonic triad. This responds to the general idea of the seasons themselves. The brightness of summer and the generalised darkness and coldness of winter.

Harmonically, each movement employs some independent devices and some shared ones. Given the general focus to harmony in much choral writing I have attempted to craft interesting harmonic material but still writing very singable lines for the vocal parts, especially as this work is unaccompanied. The four movements use a mixture of 7\textsuperscript{th} and 9\textsuperscript{th} chord extensions, triads, enharmonic relations, whole tone clusters and unison singing throughout to give variety to the text of the poems in a short space of time.

'Autumn' is built around shifting major-7 chords. Given the tone of autumn in Japanese culture I wanted to move between chords that were not related in the formal sense of functional harmony. This is evidenced in the opening bars 4-6. Four major -7 chords are sung by the four vocal parts.
There is a single common note between each pair of chords, they pivot between one another on these notes. This is outlined in example 4.51. The opening 2 bars similarly shift between two major 7 chords, D major 7 to G major 7, with D in common. This is then repeated and transposed up a minor third in bars 7 and 8, F major 7 to Bb major 7. Bars 25 and 26 repeat the opening movement, D major 7 to G major 7, however, for the final line of the poem and to end the piece, this movement, which has now become familiar, is altered on the final chord presenting an unexpected parallel shift from D major 7 down to C major 7 instead (Example 4.52), with no notes in common.

**Example 4.51** Smith, *Transition of a Landscape*, 'Autumn', bars 4-6

**Example 4.52** Smith, *Transition of a Landscape*, 'Autumn', bars 25-29
'Winter' employs a scattered melody across the vocal lines in the opening 5 bars. The bass, tenor and alto lines sing a whole tone cluster, Bb, C and D, while the soprano has the melody. As each part sings short semiquaver followed by a longer held note a melody is outlined by the relationship between the notes of each part. The semi quaver note of each subsequent part is the same pitch as the held note of the preceding part. For example, the altos sing a semiquaver 'A', which is currently being held by the soprano. The alto then sings a held 'F' which becomes the semiquaver note for the tenor line. The process is done twice outlining two simple melodies. First, 'G-C-A-F-Bb-C', and second, 'F-C-E-A-B-D'. Moving around the voices I wanted these notes of a melody within a simple F major key area to feel somewhat isolated but related at the same time. This idea of pivoting the melody around the vocal parts between shared notes is not dissimilar from the shifting harmonic progression of 'Autumn'. They devices are related. The end of this movement requires the soprano and alto lines, except for the final chord, to repeat the final line of the poem over shifting intervals, firstly in unison, then starting on a minor 3rd, then starting on a major 3rd. The final triad sung by the full chorus is another sudden harmonic shift. It moves away from the predominantly F major key area to finish on F# minor (Example 4.53).

Example 4.53 Smith, Transition of a Landscape, 'Winter', bars 20-23

These close semitone relationships are easy to sing and provide effective contrasting harmonic material within the movements.

'Spring' demonstrates a movement towards a more tonal landscape. The piece is grounded more comfortably in F major, building from the suggested chords of 'Winter'. Sitting over a drone of C and G in the bass part, the opening bars operate around a dominant C7 chord, especially in bar 4. Two modulations occurs in the work, however, these are more prepared than the harmonic
movements in the preceding movements. In bar 22, a C major 7 and a G major add9 announce a B natural and the following section occurs in C major until the Bb returns with a recapitulation of the opening phrase in bars 31-33. In the final two bars there is another sudden shift, like the previous two movements. These recurring unexpected shifts were important in relation to the source material. *Transitions of a Landscape* is about exactly that - 'transitions'. As a result I wrote these small progressions in an effort to similarly herald the idea of seasonal change. In 'Spring', the penultimate bar hears the return of some familiar major chords, Bb major 7 to C major 7 and finally to a chord which makes use of the augmented fourth from the previous chord, D major 7 (Example 4.54). This spring to summer shift, C major 7 to D major 7, is the opposite of the autumn to winter shift, D major 7 to C major 7. These details are subtle and are part of my play with harmony and transition throughout the work.

**Example 4.54** Smith, *Transition of a Landscape*, 'Spring', bars

'Summer' is the fastest of the four movements. After the short initial statement of the poem at the beginning and given I wanted to use a faster pace for this season the contrapuntal exploration of the material is comparatively long. All voices make use of the 3+3+2 quaver breakdown of the bars at times as well as using staccato interjection and some longer held notes. There is a key change halfway through the work, which I composed into the piece in an effort to build intensity through the repeated rhythmic material of the contrapuntal section. There is a sudden shift over bars 22-23 from F# major to the enharmonic median, Bb major. From bars 36-46 there is a brief return to a less harmonically clear area. I did not want the entire movement to be so heavily grounded in clear harmonic movements. In these bars I have scored two long ascending scale in all four vocal parts, starting low in their respective registers, each voice climbs step by step at
different times. This creates ever changing chords as there is always at least one voice changing pitch as they all ascend (Example 4.55). The second time around there are some curious Dbs, which are foreign to the key area. However I have scored these in an effort to suggest the changing harmony that comes toward the end of each of the other movements to give some finiteness to the piece as a whole. This is only hinted at and there is a strong Bb major triad to end with.

**Example 4.55** Smith, *Transition of a Landscape*, 'Summer', bars 46-40

I wanted the work to explore a number of different musical transitions. There is a play throughout the movements with atonality and tonality, legato and staccato, high and low registers and homophony and polyphony. These musical parameters shift as the piece moves through the seasons from autumn to summer while other devices, such as paired chords with notes in common, operate internally within the movements. These devices and characteristics of the movement have been influenced by anime, as explored in chapter 3, however, this section has documented in some detail the main musical choices I have made that are somewhat separate from these influences.

Following the previous two chapters of analysis, chapter 5 offers an exploration of the conceptual frames of my artistic process. Questions surrounding my practice, the relationship between music and anime and the potential for extensions of this dynamic to other artforms are addressed.
Chapter 5

Reflection and Theory

Introduction

Several questions have arisen during my candidature regarding the theoretical foundations of the project. What is this project if not another example of programmatic music? What is the knowledge to be gained in exploring anime through music? What are the compositional influences and to be gained and subverted from exploring anime through music? And, given the abstract nature of music, how can it tangibly articulate or reference a visual construct? Are these questions necessary or productive? When one of the pieces in my folio is performed a number of different models might be explained; an anime character's portrait is painted, the issues dealt with in a specific anime are explored adopting a structure that responds to its narrative or a work has had some interaction with anime that has prescribed one aspect of its attributes. Programmatic music, while often following a narrative, does not always draw from an existing work of art. More commonly it draws from the natural world in a work such as Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony – No.6 (1808) or from a folk tale or legend such as Sibelius’ The Swan of Tuonela (1895) The composer will more commonly use the music to depict a story often of their own invention such as the romantic narrative that accompanies the movements of Berlioz’s Symphony Fantastique (1831). The preceding two chapters presented an analysis of how my compositions have responded to and been influenced by anime. By cataloguing and explaining these connections two iterations of material are formed - the initial/original anime and the musical re-mediation. The complex relationship between these iterations is the topic of this chapter and exploring it has been an important part of my reflective process, particularly when considering where to situate my music in the broader field.

Throughout my candidature, by adopting practice-related research methodologies I have been exploring the nature of my creative output as it responds to anime in relation to notions of originality and influence. While considering these, two concepts have presented themselves as useful frames for positioning the compositions. These concepts, ekphrasis and translation, allow for a viewing of artistic material beyond prescriptive sensory connotations. Ekphrasis, as
outlined in chapter 1, refers to when one artistic medium re-mediates another, such as a painting of a sculpture or a poem about a painting. The discourse surrounding this concept will be used to explore the give and take between my music and anime.

Siglind Bruhn can be credited with bridging the gap between ekphrasis and music. Her seminal text, *A Concert of Paintings, “Musical Ekphrasis” in the 20th Century* (2001), will be referred to along with accompanying analyses surrounding the concept by other writers. The second concept, translation, broadly means moving from one medium to another. It addresses the process of the translator, or in this case, me, as composer. The definition and act of the translator is a contested issue within linguistics and provides some unique frames for viewing my research when observing the composer/translator parallel that exists in my research.

Ekphrasis: The Mutability of Form

Ekphrasis is a term used mainly within academic literary discourse to describe specifically the verbal description of a visual work of art. Within poetry and prose analysis, it is a technique relating to when a real world painting or sculpture, for example, is described in detail by the text of a book or poem thus re-mediating the visual material into verbal material. Barry (2002) states that “the 1990s saw a revival in the critical interest of this practice” (155), which brought it to the attention of non-literary disciplines. One of the earliest forms of ekphrasis is commonly cited as being Homer’s epic rhapsode, the *Iliad*, in which he describes at great length the shield of Achilles. The word *ekphrasis* is of Greek origin and can be broken into two parts *ek* (out) and *phrasis* (speak). This junction, meaning roughly 'out-speaking', suggests that the subject matter to which the artwork refers lies outside of itself “in the parallel universe of art” (115). The artwork is not self-contained. Since visual and verbal symbols are heavily codified within our society one can draw quite distinct parallels between media such as these. Abstract art forms such as music and some avenues of visual art are often marginalised in their potential to enact an ekphrasis. Al-Nakib (2005) informs that 'the more restricted sense of ekphrasis as a verbal representation of a visual representation does not become standard until the fourth century C.E. at the earliest’” (254). It is not limited, though, to these media and a recent focus on the concept has expanded its definition to incorporate a greater number of direct relationships between two artistic objects of different media, which may include music.
Composers are able to respond to material just as poets, novelists and other artists do. While music is reputedly abstract, it can be formed in response to any number of initial representations. Bruhn (2001) claims that composers “may transpose aspects of both structure and content; they may supplement, interpret, respond with associations, problematise, or play with some of the suggestive elements of the original image” (551). Bruhn moves ekphrasis away from the strict symbolic referential status that it holds in literature and suggests that beyond the literal it may encompass the many varied artistic responses an artist may have in an effort to rearticulate another's work. It is possible then to explore a sculpture that embodies a novel, a poem that embodies a painting or a musical composition that embodies an example of manga.

Upon initial consideration it may seem as though this technique is not removed from music and that there are many examples of musical ekphrasis in the canon and beyond. However, it may not be as easy as one thinks to ascribe this definition to a piece of music that has a relationship with something 'outside' of itself. The pieces mentioned in the thesis' introduction, Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* and Holst's *The Planets*, have extra-musical influences, certainly, but the artistic impetus is not one that is being drawn from another artist's initial work. A commonly considered example of musical ekphrasis is Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874). The piece is a suite of 10 movements for piano reportedly based on sketches by Viktor Hartmann. Bruhn takes issue with this example claiming that “in the absence of full details about the individual exhibits I find it difficult to appraise to what extent the composition constitutes a series of transmedializations into music” (555). It must be mentioned though that the evidence surrounding the connections between the pieces and the drawings is a compelling argument for their relationship. With this criticism though, she is suggesting that remediating something in the composer’s mind is not a remediation at all. There are issues with Bruhn's requirement for the composer's confirmation that the piece is indeed drawn from another artistic work. Any form of analysis that requires direct authorial validation will remain problematic. There could then be any number of ekphrastic art works which will go unconsidered since we, on the outside, may not be privy to their process. The pieces in my folio have titles which suggest different anime and from this people could infer that they are examples of musical ekphrasis. But I feel that sort of reductive view of ekphrasis does a disservice to what it promotes for composers. It is about the reconsideration of one's music as a means of commentary, analysis or interpretation of another's
art. I revisit the Mussorgsky case shortly in light of these issues, however, here, Bruhn remains the focus.

In an effort to move away from programmatic music, Bruhn firmly positions musical ekphrasis within the realm of representation, suggesting that a three tiered system exists to denote it:

“1. a real or fictitious “text” functioning as a source for artistic representation;
2. a primary representation of that “text” in visual or verbal form; and
3. a re-presentation in musical language of that first (visual or verbal) representation.”

(560)

Bruhn has adapted these tiers for music from her analysis of literary ekphrasis. The reason that most examples of programmatic music do not fit Bruhn's model is because their inspiration, the folk tale for Sibelius or the story of an artist for Berlioz only comply with the first and third tiers of her model. There is no separate artist of another medium who has first interpreted the real or fictitious text. Although Bruhn does not explicitly define the first tier, I feel that the word “text” functions as an idea or inspiration, either a narrative or theme which a visual or verbal artist wishes to explore. The process my research adopts, however, fits these tiers. The real or fictitious text as source comes in the form of any character, emotion, part of the natural world or narrative that is then represented in anime. The most overt of these examples in the folio is the way that the elements, fire, wind, water, earth, light and dark are visualised in the anime Card Captor Sakura. These visualisations were then ekphrastically enacted in my piece Clow Card Variations, where they were re-presented in musical language.

In 2001, at the time of Bruhn's article, it is slightly ironic that she commends artistic discourse for the acknowledgement “that music represent reality” and states that “in recent years, the application to music of the term representation has become more accepted” (560). This irony stems from an avenue of philosophical thought within post-structuralism that has predominantly, for the last decade, moved further away from the concept of representation, highlighting it as a problematic foundation for analysis. According to Belsey (2002), “poststructuralism names a theory, or a group of theories, concerning the relationship between human beings, the world, and the practice of making and reproducing meanings. On the one hand poststructuralists affirm, consciousness is not the origin of the language we speak and the images we recognize, so much
as the product of the meanings we learn and reproduce” (5). Hasty (2010) opens his discussion of the music and representation stating that “music's resistance to representation has long been its curse and its promise” (1). He finds, though, that within this problematic it “can provide a useful vehicle for criticising the doxa of representation” (3). Bruhn’s definition of musical ekphrasis and the tiers she has constructed instigate a clear hierarchy in which the music sits at the bottom in a power relationship riddled with issues of primacy and originality. Colebrook (2002) claims that “Deleuze wants to reverse and undermine this hierarchy [of original and copy]” (1). She is critical of the term 're-presented' and in her discussion on thought as a re-presentation claims that when something re-presents it is as though it were “a passive picture or copy” (1). By employing the terms ‘representation’ and ‘re-presentation’ Bruhn is implying that the resulting piece of music exists only in relation to the source material, a passive imitation. It is also up for scrutiny in terms of its success as being representative of the primary artwork. Given the acknowledged abstract nature of musical gestures, this is problematic and reductive.

For the music of my research, which I certainly position as an example of ekphrasis, the Bruhn model is not fully appropriate in unpacking the results and outcomes when an artist adopts this method. The new work should not only be considered in relation to the perceived 'original', their relationship is more dynamic. The works together invite new information in each other. Unlike programmatic music, where the music and composition period serve an exterior narrative, neither the initial articulation of material nor the musical one is in servitude to the other. The music may develop in response to the original. However, this does not deny its agency to move beyond it or even enhance it in some ways.

If we consider musical ekphrasis within the realm of representation, by implication we are assuming that the composer, or by extension any ekphrastic artist, is attempting to return originals or employ symbolic language, musical or otherwise, that will connote symbols from another medium. Doel (2010) discusses the problem with representation finding it “is bound to a specific form of repetition,... the problematic is constrained to keep these repetitions in order to ensure that they do nothing more than return originals, identities and givens” (117). If we consider musical ekphrasis within the realm of representation by implication we are assuming that the composer, or by extension any ekphrastic artwork, is attempting to return originals or employ symbolic language, musical or otherwise, that will connote symbols from another
medium. Doel comments on this aspect of representation stating that when “one medium is transposed into another, which medium will serve as the original and which the copy is completely arbitrary and contingent” (119). Anime is not the 'original' version of my work (which becomes a copy), nor is it the 'primary'. Ekphrasis beyond representation allows my music to form a relationship with anime which is productive, not reductive. My music does not seek to repeat anime, but rather, to express it in ways that it otherwise could not be. My music opens up anime to a new sensory realm and I view the compositions as existing in dialogue with it not in reliance on it.

A further criticism could be extended towards Bruhn (2001) as she attempts to catalogue the “possible scope (and limitations) of the undertaking to reflect images in tones” (576). She asserts that there is a requirement for the audience member to be aware of the primary work of visual or verbal art since music lacks the ability to connote red or green, for example. Also, that the more connections established between a musical work and its extra-musical stimulus the more 'significant' this awareness becomes. She analyses a collection of eight ekphrastic musical works in an effort to explore potential practices. Citing Respighi's Trittico Botticelliano, which remediates three Botticelli painting, Bruhn highlights his musical quotation of the first movement of Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, 'Primavera' (Spring). This is meant to represent, for the listener, the title of one of the Botticelli paintings, also titled Primavera. This sort of tenuous allusion is not, I feel, a necessary way to catalogue musically ekphrastic practices. There is a hierarchy of listening practices assumed in this analysis. The audience member familiar with the initial art work and Vivaldi’s work will no doubt be able to draw on associations to the composition, but is this a necessary or more appropriate way of listening to the piece? Again this subscribes to the negative aspects of 'representation' and views an ekphrastic musical composition backwards with only what it represents of the original and nothing about the potential new information it reveals. Further, the attempt to codify musical ekphrasis would seem to counter the value of artistic practice's multiplicities of expression. Individual artists will go about an ekphrastic composition in different ways and highlight different aspects of the initial extra-musical art work. Bruhn, too, concludes to some degree that her “close reading of these case studies has convinced [her], no parameter of musical language is unavailable in the service of depicting or referring to an extramusical reality in general and, more specifically, an extramusical work of art with its form and content” (579).
Other possible considerations and applications of ekphrasis highlight productive outcomes that might be observed when ekphrasis is enacted by an artist. Let's reconsider the case of Mussorgsky, which Bruhn dismissed since she was not able to relate the piece back to a tangible exhibition, as it invites a reconsideration of what constitutes an ekphrasis.

Barry (2002) discusses poetic ekphrasis, which shares some similarities with music in its abstract nature, and suggests that a number of different types of ekphrasis might exist in an effort to encompass the variety of processes within the field. He firstly draws on John Hollander's “fundamental subdivision of ekphrasis in to 'actual' ekphrasis, in which a genuine artwork is being described or addressed and 'notional' ekphrasis, in which, he says, the object is a purely fictional painting or sculpture that is indeed brought into being by the poetic language itself” (155). This subdivision would allow pieces with no tangible relationship to visual or other works of art to be considered examples of 'notional' ekphrasis. Expanding from this idea that a tangible art 'object' is not a necessary requirement for ekphrasis, the focus then is moved from the relational representation of music or poetry of another form onto how this compositional device encourages the artist to attempt to use their material to depict something extra to their medium. By remediating another work of art, whether 'actual' or 'notional', the artist is forced to reconsider the way their practice is employed. While considering the possibility of notional ekphrasis, Barry goes to suggest that “ekphrasis may be taken as gesturally emblematic of the condition of all poetry” (156) and by extension, all music. However this universal approach to ekphrasis is not necessarily appropriate for my research as the influence of anime is generally readily apparent.

When I have viewed anime and remediated the visual gestures within it, I feel I have, to an extent, straddled both subdivisions of 'actual' and 'notional'. It is for this reason that Bruhn's definition of the term has been met with some difficulty in my case. As anime is not a fixed visual, but exists in time, the visuals are fragmented within my memory or indeed split into a multitude of gestures which create a unique portrait of events within my mind as composer. For many pieces within the folio it is the notional collection of the images which I have attempted to remediate musically. There are no specific visual stills taken from anime that form the source material and it is also unlikely that the musical work could respond to the whole amount of gestures contained within one anime or for one character. This in-between area will now be
assessed for each of the pieces in the folio:

- For the *Kawaii Suite*, the four characters that form the four pieces were interpreted and analysed before it was decided which aspects of each character would be remediated and how.

- *Tides of Falling Leaves* for solo piano draws on the anime/manga genre known as *yaoi* and engages with its dominant character tropes and narrative structures.

- *Iceberg Variations* for toy piano draws on similar *kawaii* notions as the kawaii suite, exploring, by using the toy piano, aspects of cuteness as they are visually articulated across anime.

- *Clow Card Variations* distilled approximately 46 episodes of the anime *Card Captor Sakura* amassing the different ways the various elements of the show are visually articulated. Each variation though can be connected to something taken from the anime, positioning it squarely within the 'actual' category.

- In *Broken Reflections 1 & 2*, moments from the Satoshi Kon film *Perfect Blue* as well as horror narrative devices were used to form the material which was then explored in the two movements.

- Similar to *Clow Card Variations*, the choral cycle, *Transitions of a Landscape*, explores the four seasons as they are articulated within anime. Again this work is particularly 'notional' as the 'seasons' of the visual work of art that depicts the seasons is aggregated within my mind as I have viewed a number of anime that deal use the season as a specific narrative device. Drawing from traditional Japanese aesthetics the seasons are often an important feature.

- The song cycle in the folio, *Evanescence*, is perhaps the least ekphrastic as it is developed not from the visuals of anime but from the way that it incorporates traditional art forms or rather the way it has developed from traditional art forms of Japan.

- The orchestral work is the least 'notional' of the pieces in the folio. It specifically remediates four scenes taken from anime.

This exploration of my folio with regard to the 'level' of ekphrasis or type of ekphrasis creates a unique spectrum for the composer figure. To what degree have I relied on anime to form the work? How ekphrastic is the composition? Moving within the doxa of representation is the work solely ekphrastic/actual or does it contain aspects of a more traditional programmatic/notional work? I have moved between these positions within my folio and I suspect many composers
regularly do this also as they draw from a host of sources in their life. It may also be that certain figures or parts of a composition subscribe to this spectrum but not the whole composition. I suggested in chapter 1 that my music seeks to convey the aesthetic qualities of certain aspects of anime. This is not always true and I acknowledge that some compositions in the folio, *Transitions of a Landscape*, for example, were born from other ideas. Anime was then involved in the compositional process and aided in the development of the material in a completely different way to the *Kawaii Suite*, for example. What remains a standout aspect of this discussion for me is allowing ekphrasis to exist on this mutable spectrum and to acknowledge that my composing is in different ways and at different levels informed by anime. Goehr describes a by-product of this type of endeavour, which throws down a “double gauntlet: to the theorists of ekphrasis who overly devote their attention to questions of medium and workhood, and to those who persist in treating music as standing apart from the other arts” (2010: 390).

Given the range of ways anime can be incorporated into my compositional process and given the then complex relationship between source material and music as explored under ekphrasis, a key question that arises is how important knowledge of anime is for either the reception of the piece of music by an audience or indeed the possible interpretations. Existing between the problematic terrain of absolute music and program music, my pieces are not specifically 'about' anime but are rather influenced by the anime aesthetic. One could then argue in two opposite directions. One way, that my music, which is not about anime, is open to any number of interpretations from others. I would be lying if I were to argue that aspects of my music do not resonate personally with things that are not anime-related. For example, the hemiola rhythms in Broken Reflection No. 2 are so obviously evocative of video-game battle music and this might be just as important as the anime-inspired structural or harmonic devices in terms of interpreting the music. This though stems from my own compositional voice which was explored at the beginning of the exegesis and is not necessarily at the core of this thesis as an example of how anime could inform music. The other way, is that my music is connected to anime intrinsically and that an understanding of anime can only seek to enhance the music's true interpretation. However, the sensory deviations problematise this from the start as my music exists independent aurally, regardless of the theoretical considerations. The issue here is that ekphrasis then relies on the admission of the composer. I have attempted in this thesis to position ekphrasis not so much as an outside analytical tool but rather as an inside creative one.
Much of the feedback I get from performances of my music comes in the form of images. Often, those who know that my music draws on anime will attempt to decode the images and describe the colours, pictures or scenes that they can see. Of course, they are usually wrong. However, these interpretations are valuable to me, particularly as they fundamentally suggest that there is a personal relationship between sound and pictures regardless of the degree of the 'realness' of those images. To return then to the question of whether anime is important, I would say not. The final compositional stage of musical integrity that was discussed in chapter 1 is in place so that each work can operate as a piece of music. The program note, which I acknowledge has different levels of importance around the world, will be written citing anime as the related material, but it is not a necessity.

In addition to this representational frame, one that does not operate solely from the outside, the dynamic relationship between my music and anime might then be viewed as an example of an exchange, as explored by Al-Nakib (2005). Ekphrasis provides more than one tangential consideration of my music. An exchange involves an interaction between separate and unrelated things. Al-Nakib states that “what can occur in an exchange is not simply a quantitative trade of elements reduced to a single unit of measure but, rather, a qualitative transformation or deterritorialisation that affects both sides and creates something altogether different in the process” (259). Ekphrasis highlights the mutability of forms, whereby an object can be re-expressed, re-mediated or re-articulated in any number of ways. Depending on the different ways this process occurs, the exchange is altered producing different effects on both sides and expanding different aspects of the source material. Anime is then revealed in an original way by the music. In the same way that Respighi reveals Botticelli's painting through his music, the anime source material is equally as affected by the music as the music is by it. Beyond the fact that the anime was conceived and expressed first, newer understandings of it are uniquely arranged by my compositional process. Other ekphrastic works behave in the same way. The structural, harmonic and textural effects that exist in response to dominant or specific anime aesthetics in my compositions work backwards to impart meaning back onto the source material.

Translation: Between Art Contexts
In addition to ekphrasis, which is an established interart concept, an expanded definition of translation will additionally frames the understanding and ramifications of my compositional process. Rather than viewing *Tides of Falling Leaves* as an adaptation or a piece inspired by manga, the remediation acts as a translation. As a composer, I deal with musical language and there is a relationship between the syntax and phrasing of my composition's musical material that responds to the visual language in *yaoi*. My process does not adapt the plot, characters and dialogue for a new medium but rather I translate the work as a whole between the senses, evoking an aural manga.

A dominant mode of western thinking positions the translator of a text below the original author, viewing theirs as a mechanical language-based process that replaces grammatical structures from language X with those from language Y. This establishes a hierarchical relationship between both the author and translator and the original text and translated text. Zeller, a translator, critiques this view, from a practitioner’s perspective, claiming that “translation responds to a deep-seated creative need to explore new territory” (2000: 139). This suggests that a translated product is not a reduced or lesser than original version of something, but takes something beyond its original parameters. Any act of translation is its own act of authorship, as Zeller concludes, “translation is a work of art emanating from another author’s context” (139). What occurs during translation, then, is an act of re-contextualisation, not a distillation of information. Languages are contexts, as are media. Each subsequent translation of a work is its own work. However, the number of articles and online community debates about the merits of certain language translations of books and films, for example, would suggest that this is not an accepted view. This is particularly true within the anime and manga world, where English versions of Japanese 'originals' are highly scrutinised in relation to their attention to cultural and social details by fans. Additionally, Cubbison (2005) explains that “for many sub fans, watching an anime with the Japanese audio track and subtitles is a more authentic experience” (p. 48).

At the core of anti-translator/author discourse is the perception that a translation acts as a representation of an original text. Though Venuti has been an instigator in promoting the translator outside of the invisible realm, he often discusses intertext relations that are reliant upon fundamental binds. He states that every text is fundamentally an intertext, and goes on to suggest that it is within these relations that a text forms its “meaning, value and function” (2009: 157).
He further asserts that “reception is a decisive factor. The reader must possess not only the literary or cultural knowledge to recognize the presence of one text in another, but also the critical competence to formulate the significance of the intertextual relation” (157-158). This is problematic as it assumes that one must be familiar with any text's inherit relations were one to know or assess its value. To use the term 'fundamental' is to, I feel, impose unrealistic restrictions on the act of translation and reception. The pedestal that originals sit upon, from which these 'fundamental' associations stem, are often put there by their authors. Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami (as cited in Kelts, 2013) is fluent in both English and Japanese yet he does not translate his own works into English. He claims that “my books exist in their original Japanese. That’s what’s most important, because that’s how I wrote them” (para. 9). Despite being a translator himself he has publicly positioned the Japanese versions as “most important”. In an ironic twist he often translates other author's novels from English to Japanese.

“Representational thinking suggests that there is an ordered and differentiated world” (Colebrook 2002: 3). The representational paradigm implies that a translated novel, poem, or anime could stay as true as possible to its original. The order from original language text to translated language text is measurable and specific. Doel (2010), however, continues to problematise this view he argues that “representation, by necessity, brings forth more than the same, it is always in excess of itself” (117). In the case of Murakami, the translator might strive to evoke as much of the original Japanese as possible. A more productive stance, I feel, is instead acknowledging that every translator is an inter-translator. To adapt Venuti's assertion, he or she brings with them independent meaning, value and function into the translating process, rather than that of the text itself. By this, I bring my own meaning, value and function to the text.

Indeed, translations occur across a variety of disparate and potentially endless media. To limit it to language is to ignore the variety of expressive material in our society. Anime may translate manga, for example. Many anime are adaptations of a popular (or not-so popular) manga series, and as such are often assessed as 'representations' of the perceived original. Within any act of translation though, there is a necessary familiarity with the media being translated in order for representational judgement to be passed. The more fluent a person is in the media being translated to and from, the more they are in a position to judge the final product as an accurate representation. Is this a worthwhile assessment? For example, when a novel is turned into a film,
as a society with a level of both novel and film literacy, there is often widespread discussion on its success as a representation of the novel. However, were I to read an English translation of a Goethe poem, I cannot speak to the process of translation as I am not fluent in both German and English. Therefore, I take the poem as its own object and not as a representation of the original. In line with Zeller’s stance, the English poem is its own work of art which has emanated from the original German context. I would also argue that a grammatical one is not the only type of language translation. One could visually view the German and choose English words that were visibly similar, or sound them out and choose English would hat were aurally similar, would these not be types of language-based translation as well? For anime, it could be said that when English voice actors dub an anime they are translating the speech patterns of the original since the animation has already been drawn based on the original seiyu (Japanese voice actor). These performances are not listed as translation of an original performance nor viewed as such by the audience, like the script is, the contrary occurs. When the American voice actors who dub over Studio Ghibli anime with English are interviewed for publicity, they are often praised for 'performing' under such strict parameters. Many voice actors even admit to listening to the original Japanese version as a guide for their delivery.

For my research, I obviously must be aware of the anime I am drawing on. For someone to then assess my translation of the anime, they too would need to be familiar with it. This is not always possible, in which case they would judge the piece purely on its own merits and not as a relational object. Zeller's notion of translation as a piece of work arising from another artist's context applies here quite aptly. Anime functions as another artist’s context from which my pieces are then formed. This does not remove my agency as a composer but also gives allusion to the fact that the piece is born of another medium. There are resonances, too, with ekphrasis in that representational difficulties can be ascribed to translations as well.

An added benefit that is afforded by an expanded understanding of translation is that there is a necessary observation of what constitutes my voice. The language with which I translate a primary artistic expression into music is as equally valid as any other voice. To return to Murakami’s translated texts, the often-translator of his novels, Jay Rubin (as cited in Kelts, 2013), claims that the English versions of the works are more his than they are Murakami’s. Rubin states that “When you read Haruki Murakami, you’re reading me, at least ninety-five per
cent of the time, Murakami wrote the names and locations, but the English words are mine” (para. 9) The gestures within anime inform how my musical material is to be distributed much like how in a language-based translation the verbal gestures inform how one would distribute the material of their own language. However, I do not translate with language, I translate with music.

A discussion of this sort has been useful to me as a composer. Considering the potential relationship between artwork from disparate media has reconfigured my understandings of originality, interpretation, inspiration and representation. It allows me to consider my compositional voice as a tool which can be used to aid my artistic response. It has also allowed me to position my compositions as art work that exists in dialogue with other works of art. They are not pieces of music in absolute but hold the possibility to invite the audience to look beyond the music and explore and uncover anime through my musical lens. The concepts of translation and ekphrasis when explored can have effective artistic applications. I view anime, interpret its visual aesthetic and this then leads me to make certain artistic choices which I may not otherwise have considered making. This process pushes my practice. At the same time, my music is a form of commentary. When a specific scene is remediated or a certain character is given a music portrait, the piece of music is my way of artistically exploring the nuances and intricacies of the visual and narratological presentation. Other explorations will favour certain scopes and perspectives; mine favours an artistic musical one. Viewing and hearing music as a new form for visual information has allowed me to address and approach my practice as a composer in a new way. The above discussion on these theoretical frames has been a useful way for me to communicate how this research project has changed my thinking about my compositional practice and the possibilities for other's compositional and artistic practices.

The following and final chapter is not conclusive insofar as the purpose of this thesis has not been to draw conclusions about inter-media art practice or definitive compositional practices. It does, however, summarise and reinforce the dominant ideas this project has explored and rearticulate and emphasise the point of releasing composition from music and in many ways releasing media from medium.
Chapter 6

Discussion: Anime and the Future

The folio of pieces I have composed explores anime in a number of ways. Indeed, the diversity of both anime and my own music mean that there is no one way that I could respond to the medium-genre. The pieces explore a variety of anime aesthetics, sub-genres, concepts and characters. The purpose of the research has not been to identify a single process of remediation, rather, I promote the proliferation of diverse responses one could have when responding to anime and by extension any visual or verbal art form. By exploring my own response and by signposting the influential material via program notes when my pieces are performed I expect the idea that music can respond to nonmusical material to be welcomed and highlighted. There is value in each individual response to a work of art whether that response is critical, academic, personal or artistic is unimportant and should not be forced into a hierarchy.

In writing this folio, I cast a light on the artistic response through my compositional process and the potential way that different media - aural, visual and verbal - can relate for audiences, performers and composers/artists. Musical ekphrasis and my music calls into question both theories of medium and workhood. There is a shared creative vocabulary between disciplines and it would seem foolish to ignore that notions of shape, contour, colour, volume and tone exist in a number of ways across media. Evans (2005) discusses how in a similar way to music students learning about harmony from a Western classical canon perspective, art students, too, learn of visual 'rightness'. This has led him to connect the visual medium with consonance and dissonance. Vision can operate musically as Evans explains, “We can establish visual cadence points. With cadences, we can articulate units of time and so develop larger temporal units such as motifs, periods, and phrases” (13). Then why not the reverse? Music can operate visually.

Dominating the two analysis chapters of this thesis has been what I have dubbed the complimentary I’s - Inform and Inspire. These two terms well underscore my varying response to the breadth of anime. I am a composer who has a particular personal musical aesthetic and it is within this aesthetic that I have musical gestures, textures, melodies and harmonies I wish to explore. My aesthetic is outlined in chapter 1. Anime informs my aesthetic and has dictated many
of my musical choices in the folio. Similarly, anime has also been the point of departure and inspired compositions. It is from an anime that the initial musical gestures for a work are derived, including instrumentation, length and structure. The difference between the two 'I's is nuanced, however, notable in that it occupies quite different points in my process. Anime can be something incorporated into my process as a complimentary contributor to the creative process. For example, the movements of *Evanescence* are informed by anime in that the works are not born directly out of an anime moment. Or anime can be the impetus and beginning moment of a work is connected directly to an anime source. For example, the movements of the *Kawaii Suite* were creatively born from anime characters that I had seen. Neither approach is essentially more or less involved with anime, and neither removes me from the movement of anime to music.

This thesis has two dominant outcomes that contribute to the compositional field of academic research beyond the compositions themselves. The reason I have titled this chapter as a 'discussion' is because I feel that my practice invites further inquiry into these points of interest rather than finitely concluding them. Firstly, the use of musical ekphrasis as a frame for my research highlights the acknowledgement of another artist's expression of an idea/object. This insertion changes the way that my music is analysed. Other musical works or works of art that evolve from this process can be assessed in relation to the middle layer of expression - for example, electricity. How does my music draw on the concept of electricity? How does anime? How does my music relate to the anime and vice versa? What is revealed in the relationship? The relationships between these questions develop material for a music analysis beyond the music and composer, one that invites the informative or inspirational material into the discussion with weight.

The final question of this research remains in some respect as: 'why anime?' While the larger themes of my process are concerned with general compositional practice and its potential involvement with other artforms, what are the specifics of anime that I find appealing and that I think bring something unique to my music? The amount of literature surrounding anime has, I feel, firmly placed it as a worthy site of academic analysis and the amount of anime consumed commercially proves it to be a highly popular expressive medium-genre. The way that anime figures the world, with a complex mixture of photo-realism with flights of visual fantasy, gives it a potent reach into something deeply moving that allows its audience to exist simultaneously
within and without our world. Many artists could benefit from seeing the world through anime eyes. More than only adopting this gaze as a consumer and academic, I have brought this vision to my composing, as an artist, and have instilled within my works parts of what I and others have discerned as anime's unique mode for figuring our reality.
Reference List


Filmography


