



Dom Turner

"Renowned for captivating live shows, Dom Turner's achievements with ARIA nominees The Backsliders over 25 years includes iTunes Australian Blues and Roots album of the year winners,

Australian Blues Awards Songwriter of the Year, and Rhythms' Magazine Readers Poll Blues Album of the Year (2002). Doug Mulray says 'this is the best acoustic blues band in the country' and Rhythms Magazine calls them '... Australia's top blues act' (Byron Bay Blues Fest)



Phil Wiggins

"Phil Wiggins is arguably America's foremost blues harmonica virtuoso. While rooted in the melodic Piedmont or 'Tidewater' blues of the Chesapeake region, his mastery of the instrument

now transcends stylistic boundaries. Born in Washington D.C. in 1954, Phil Wiggins achieved worldwide acclaim over three decades as one half of the premier Piedmont blues duo of Cephas & Wiggins." (National Council for the Traditional Arts)



Sean Heim

"One would perhaps imagine that the dedication of a work to the Dalai Lama would suggest a calm, still piece, possibly suitable for meditation. Once again, in sô pa, Heim challenges our perceptions

... "sô pa is a Tibetan word associated with the ethic of virtue ... its literal meaning is 'able to bear' or 'able to withstand' ... There is a real sense of struggle here; an emotional struggle against the forces of evil. There is also an unquestionable sense of resolve which finally defeats its unseen opponent, relaxing into focused calm and tranquility in the closing sections." (Music Web International)

ART OF SOUND COMPOSER-PERFORMER FORUMS 2015

Living Sonic Traditions of the Land

Two blues musicians and one American art music composer discuss sonic *living-traditions* and influences within their Australian-American blues fusion and Native American/Southeast Asian composition



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Dom Turner
(Australian guitarist/singer)

& Phil Wiggins
(US harmonica player)

19 March

Sean Heim
(Los Angeles, Associate
Professor of Composition)

26-27 March

Penrith Campus
(Kingswood site)

The Playhouse (DG.19)

Performance-Workshop Forum:
1-2pm, 19 March Thursday

Lecture-Panel Forum:
1-2pm, 26 March Thursday

Composition Lecture:
9-10am, 27 March Friday



ART OF SOUND COMPOSER-PERFORMER FORUMS Living Sonic Traditions of the Land

Organiser: Bruce Crossman

"A sense of mystery pervades gong sounds associated with rituals, ceremonies and communications with spirits; and a fundamental element that characterises these sounds appears in a concept of drone or ostinato, as this is present in many if not most gong ensembles of Southeast Asia." (José Maceda 1986)

"The closer the time came for going home, the stronger my mother's southern brogue got. Whenever my mother used the word "home" she was talking about Titusville. . . I would walk my grandmother around the corner to the church on Thursday evenings for prayer meeting. I would wait outside and hear the elder women of the church singing prayers and praises. The context was religious, but the sound was deep blues." (Phil Wiggins 2014)

"Aura that encircled Buddha's head during his enlightened state and, of course, it is quite fabricated by me. It might not be true but what I really want personally is to be in touch at first with the physical dimension. I believe that through the physical dimension, one can perhaps have a glimpse of spirituality, in this case, its music. . . you know it's almost like trance-like music." (Chinary Ung 2008)

These forums draw on the idea of music as both a physicality of sound—made in the moment—and drawn from the people's heart felt expression and sense of spirit in the landscape, especially related to early American blues, Southeast Asian and native American musical traditions. Blues artists Dom Turner and Phil Wiggins explore the Piedmont blues tradition and beyond, hewn from traditional Appalachian Mountain music and gospel sounds born of a religious context. Whilst contemporary American art music composer Sean Heim, discusses his interpretation of Southeast Asian spiritual influences and native American sensibility of spirit within the spaciousness of the American landscape.

Thursday, 19 March

Australian and American Blues Masters: Soul of the Land

Dom Turner (Australia) & Phil Wiggins (USA)

Forum: Turner and Wiggins present ideas of 'living roughness of sound' as expressive of the soul of the land

Workshop-Performance: Dom Turner (vocals/resonator & acoustic guitars) & Phil Wiggins (vocals/harmonica)

Features living blues sounds from their recent album *Owing the Devil a Day's Work* (Rocket Distribution)

Respondent panel: Kate Fagan (poet/singer-songwriter), John Encarnacao (improvising guitarist/composer), Joseph Tabua (improviser/composer) and Jess Graham (singer-songwriter)

Phil Wiggins is an American harmonica player and a carrier of an authentic American blues tradition. During the early years of his development as a musician, Phil was constantly playing with and learning from some of the most notable acoustic blues musicians that made their homes in the Washington area: Flora Molten, Mother Ester Mae Scott, Wilber "Chief" Ellis, John Jackson, Archie Edwards, John Cephas, and others. He was mentored as well by many other musicians who frequented the D.C. area: Johnny Shines, Sam Chapman, Sunnyland Slim, Henry Townsend, Robert Lockwood, John Dee Holeman, Algia Mae Hinton, Howard Armstrong, Ted Bogan, Etta Baker, and others. "I have always been amazed by and grateful for the generosity of these masters of traditional blues."

(see: www.philwiggins.com)

Dom Turner is best known as a guitarist/vocalist, founding member and key songwriter of the iconic Australian blues group, The Backsliders. Dom's influences are many and varied – a blend of delta blues, piedmont blues, rock, dub and sounds of Asia. He is a highly regarded speaker on blues music and has guested on ABC radio programs (including guest presenting Radio National's 'Music Deli') and presented music workshops at festivals and in universities (both nationally and internationally). In 2004 Dom was voted 'Blues Songwriter of the Year' at the Australian Blues Awards. As well as over 30 years of recording and performing blues in Australia and internationally with the Backsliders, Dom has embarked on a variety of solo and collaborative musical projects. Dom has toured as a solo artist in the USA, playing and teaching blues guitar at Augusta Blues week in West Virginia, and in 2006, touring Mexico with US blues greats, Del Ray and Steve James. Dom has been working on a cross-cultural music recording with Vietnamese stringed instrument master, 'Kim Sinh'.

(see: domturner.com.au)

Thursday, 26 March

Sense of Spirit, Spacious Landscape and Living-Colour Sonic Detail

Sean Heim (USA)

Lecture: Heim discusses his musical composition and their Southeast Asian and native American influences related to the traditions of the land—including the sense of the cosmos and human struggles and influences from Buddhist thought, including working with Grawemeyer Award winning composer Chinary Ung. Heim will play recordings of his internationally recognised compositions.

Respondent panel: Sally Macarthur (musicologist), Ian Stevenson (installation artist), Chloe Hulewicz (composer) and Luping Zeng (painter)

Friday, 27 March

Compositional Imagination & Environmental Spirit (Southeast Asian and Native American Traditions)

Composition Lecture: Associate Professor Sean Heim

"The primary focus of Heim's work as a composer has been to develop an imaginative personal language that strongly reflects the compositional techniques and aesthetic of his own western tradition as well as the distillation and infusion of philosophical ideas and musical elements found in numerous cultures. Well aware of the dangers of musical tourism, Heim strives to delve below a mere surface representation of cultural confluence and centers his work upon the deeper truths found in the commonality of human spirit. His work also reflects a deep interest in the visual arts, physics, and the natural world, and it is out of these interests that he has created unique fusions that continually evolve by means of increased aesthetic and technical abstraction."

(see: seanheim.com)

Sean Heim, a distinguished intercultural composer and Associate Professor at Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music, Chapman University (Los Angeles, USA), has studied with Grawemeyer award winning composer Chinary Ung and received numerous awards including from such prestigious institutions as the Fromm Foundation at Harvard, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Meet the Composer, the American Music Center. His intercultural music, which features the spaces of the American wilderness drawing on his native American interests, has been performed by many distinguished performers, such as, the California E.A.R. Unit, the Focus Festival at Juilliard, and the New York Miniaturist Ensemble.