

BENJAMIN SKEPPER

“Embodying classical aesthetic, music and culture, Benjamin Skepper is a musician with an extraordinary sense of the contemporary” (M. Pugliese, Director Museo 900 for Rolling Stone Italy)

Benjamin Skepper creates cutting edge experimental artworks that seek to challenge our perception, and collapse the borders that divide us. He is particularly focused on the application of new technologies and scientific innovations within the context of contemporary sound and visual arts practice, exploring the human body as a musical instrument, human identity, the relationship of sound and medicine and human healing.

A Melbourne born classically trained musician, he operates at the confluence of art, medical science, technology, fashion, modern classical and the avant-garde. He is a composer, a performer, an art director, published scientific researcher, and cultural advocate, with deep interests in Russia and Japan. His talent and curiosity have taken him across musical boundaries and artistic borders for which he has garnered international acclaim.

A child prodigy, who commenced piano studies at two years of age, Benjamin began touring by seven, as a solo pianist, boy soprano, ballet dancer and the youngest self-taught harpsichordist in Australia. He embarked on his first international solo piano tour at 10 years old, performing a Mozart concerto with full orchestra in New Zealand, as a Suzuki Music Young Ambassador. His passion continued with studies in the violoncello, touring and performing with symphonic orchestras and chamber ensembles nationwide.

Alongside his two decade long professional classical career, Benjamin also completed an Arts/Law degree with Honours at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Public and International Law, specialising in Children’s Rights. A qualified solicitor, he remains actively involved in human rights and children’s policy, working and travelling extensively in Asia and Europe, volunteering with NGOs and donating his work to charities and organistaions including Médecins Sans Frontières and Red Cross Japan.

In 2009 he established “contrapuntal” in Tokyo, envisaged as an artist collective and creative think-tank, which has since branched out globally. Over the past decade, he has established an international practice in site-specific multi artform installations, spanning large scale commissions and live performances, Art Direction for major brands and product activations, sound composition, and creative production. Clients include Museums, Festivals, commercial and luxury brands, fashion, TV, theatre, film and government organisations.

In 2008, he launched his independent music label under contrapuntal, with five self-produced solo releases, licensing original music for film, commercials and online digital content, collaborating with major record labels, including Colombia Music, Ninja Tunes, and a music video exclusive with VICE (THUMP) Australia.

In the field of contemporary art, he has presented performance art works and sound installations worldwide, most recently at the National Gallery of Australia with Nakaya Fujiko (Canberra), the inaugural contemporary Art Bienial “Astana Art Show” (Kazakhstan), Museo del Novecento (Milan), “Culture Warriors”, Australia’s first Indigenous Art Triennial at the National Gallery of Australia (Canberra), as artist in residence at “No Mans Land” (French Embassy, Tokyo), “Sight & Sound: Music & Abstraction in Australian Art” (Arts Centre, Melbourne), “Rooms” International Fashion and Design Trade Fair (Tokyo), White Trade Fair (Milan), “Art After Dark” for the National Gallery of Victoria’s exhibition “Napoleon: Revolution to Empire” (Melbourne), and as a headline performer at MONA FOMA 2013 (Tasmania), dubbed a festival highlight by curator Brian Ritchie. By special invitation from The Hermitage Foundation (Russia), Benjamin performed at the opening of Manifesta 10, The European Biennial of Contemporary Art (Saint Petersburg). He recently undertook a residency at Klanghaus (Austria), and particiapted in an underground sound-art exhibition in Tokyo with Yoko Ono.

In the emerging field of Art + Science, his sound work was commissioned for transmission into Outer Space at MONA (2015). In 2016 he was appointed a Fellow of the Moscow State Conservatory of Music, working in the ground breaking field of music and genetics, with the Russian Academy of Sciences. As Ambassador to that project, he presented a world premiere in Vienna at the Symmetry Festival (2016). A published researcher and scholar, his article recently appeared in MIT Leonardo Journal (2020), and he is currently developing a Music + Genetics App. In 2017, he became the first resident artist at Science Gallery Melbourne, securing a commision to create a new live performance artwork for the inaugural exhibition opening “Blood” (2017). Benjamin continues to explore the human body as a musical instrument, taking innovations in science and medicine, and applying them in an artist context.

As a cultural advocate and creative consultant, he has worked closely with local and federal government bodies to research and identify international collaborations and exchange opporunities as Australia’s Cultural Ambassador to Russia. Artist features include Rolling Stone Italy + Russia, AMICA Italy, GQ Japan, L’Officiel Kazakhstan, and Good Weekend Magazine (Australia). He also holds multiple Brand Ambassadorships and endorsements, most recently with YAMAHA Music and Ableton (Germany).

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ARTIST CHRONOLOGY (SELECTED WORKS)

MUSIC AND LIVE PERFORMANCE ART

- 2020 Signal Asia (Bali)
Festival No.23 (Melbourne)
- 2019 National Gallery of Australia with Nakaya Fujiko (Canberra)
Moscow State Conservatory Solo Concert (Moscow)
Fields Festival (Moscow)
Cosmoscow Art Fair (Moscow)
- 2018 Astana Art Show (Astana)
Signal Festival Nikola-Lenivets (Moscow)
VIVID Festival Installation at the Botanical Gardens (Sydney)
"Noise and Fury" Festival 17th edition at DOM (Moscow)
- 2017 Science Gallery Melbourne Commission "Pump up your Blood"
Progressive Ginza Festival (Tokyo)
Acoustic Village Festival (Tokyo)
- 2016 MARS Center (Центр МАРС) (Moscow)
Experimental Music & Art Expo at Vadima Sidur Museum (Moscow)
Wall&Wall "Future Ambient" Launch (Tokyo)
Noor Bar (Moscow)
Klanghaus Festival (Vienna)
Symmetry Festival (Vienna)
TECTONIC global launch at St Stephens Anglican Church (Melbourne)
Bennetts Lane Jazz Club (Melbourne)
- 2015 Federation Square "Beyond the Bright Black Edge of Nowhere" (Melbourne)
Ormond Hall (Melbourne)
Super Deluxe (Tokyo)
- 2014 The Hermitage Foundation - Manifesta 10 EU Biennial of Contemporary Art
(Saint Petersburg, Russia)
The Kelvin Club (Melbourne)
- 2013 MONA FOMA Festival Headline Performance (Tasmania)
Midsummer Nights Dream Festival (Moscow)
Bennetts Lane Jazz Club (Melbourne)
The Corner Hotel (Melbourne)
Theatre Royal (Victoria)
- 2012 National Gallery of Victoria "Napoleon: Revolution to Empire" Featured Artist
for Art After Dark (Melbourne)
Palazzo Serbelloni x AMICA Magazine 50th Anniversary (Milan)
Venice Carnivale - "The Forbidden Pleasures of Cassnova" (Venice)
Theatre Royal (Victoria)
The Toff in Town (Melbourne)
- 2011 Museo del Novecento Sunday sound interventions (Milan)
Fondazione Alda FENDI -Esperimenti di Quaresima (Rome)
Promotional Video for Fabriano Jazz Festival Umbria (Rome)
"Rooms 22" Japan Fashion and Design Trade Fair Sound Installation (Tokyo)
Chapel Off Chapel "Inimitable" album launch (Melbourne)
- 2010 Museo del Novecento Art Museum Inauguration (Milan)
"Gallery on the Hill" Opening (Tokyo)
"United Nations Museum" opening performance (Tokyo)
2nd Tokyo Photographic Art Fair - Opening Night Performance (Tokyo)
ExperIstanbul at 60m2 (Istanbul)
amfAR Gala Vienna Life Ball VIP event (Vienna)
- 2007 FINA International Swimming Championships at BWM Edge Federation Square
(Melbourne)
"Culture Warriors" at the National Gallery of Australia Indigenous Triennial of
Art (Canberra)

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- 2006-2007 “Bright Fires” at Gertrudes Contemporary Art Spaces (Melbourne)
Meredith Music Festival, Rainbow Serpent Festival, Folk Rhythm and Life Festival, St. Kilda Festival, Tasmanian Forest Festival (Australia) Revolver Upstairs (Melbourne), Abercrombie, Beach Hotel (Sydney), Solbar (Brisbane), Mojoes Bar, Civic Hotel (Perth), Northcote Social Club (Melbourne), Corner Hotel (Melbourne), Esplanade Hotel (Melbourne), Evelyn Hotel (Melbourne), East Brunswick Club (Melbourne), Sidney Myer Music Bowl (Melbourne)
- 2003-2004 Environ Sessions with Uberlingua at Loop Bar (Melbourne)
- 1991 International Music tour as Suzuki Music Ambassador (New Zealand)
- 1987-1995 National tours with Carinya Strings Melbourne, The National Boys Choir, Percy Grainger Youth Orchestra, Melbourne String Ensemble and as a soloist.

SOLO ALBUM RELEASES – RELEASED by *contrapuntal* RECORDS JAPAN

- 2015 “Apodictic” at Ormond Hall (Melbourne)
- 2013/14 “In The Field” at Konno Hachiman Shrine (Tokyo)
at The Kelvin Club (Melbourne)
- 2012 “Inimitable” at Konno Hachiman Shrine (Tokyo)
at The Toff in Town (Melbourne)
- 2010 “Parnassus” at Konno Hachiman Shrine (Tokyo)
- 2009 “Eika 詠歌” at “Jiyugakuen” Frank Lloyd Wright/T. Ando (Tokyo)

COMPOSITION COMMISSIONS, ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS and FILMWORKS

- 2012 Dom Pérignon composition commission, live multi media installation and Digital Campaign + Creative Direction (Tokyo)
- 2010 “Fairytale in Tokyo” – short film co-producer and Director of Music
Electrolux “UltraSilencer” vacuum cleaner Digital Advertising Campaign + Art and Creative Direction, Press Launch Live event (Japan)
- 2009-2010 “No Mans Land” Documentary Film for the French Embassy (Tokyo)
- 2007 “Boodjarri Business” Documentary Film Music Director for the Western Australian Government Department of Health (Perth)
BGM for “Inflight Entertainment” for Qantas Airways (Australia)
BGM for “First Tuesday Book Club” program for the ABC TV network (Australia)

SOUND ART and ART EXHIBITIONS

- 2016 Cairotronica Multi Media Festival Installation (Cairo)
Symmetry Festival Exhibition Hungarian Institute (Vienna)
- 2015 World Premiere at Siggraph Asia – 16 ch. multimedia installation with NHK, Canon 8K Camera, Tokyo Denki University and The Hokusai Foundation (Kobe)
Sound Art Exhibition C’a D’Oro Gallery Chelsea (New York)
- 2011 “Dirty, Dirty! Sex, Sex!” ArtGig Tokyo Group Exhibition with Yoko Ono (Tokyo)
- 2010 “Sight & Sound: Music & Abstraction in Australian Art” at The Victorian Arts Centre: curator Steven Tonkin (Melbourne)
- 2009-2010 “No Mans Land” at the French Embassy: curator Helene Kelmachter (Tokyo)
- 2009 “requiem d’une marionette” at PLSMIS Art Gallery (Tokyo)
“requiem d’une marionette” at Frank Lloyd Wright’s “Jiyu Gakuen” (Tokyo)
- 2007 National Gallery of Australia 25th Anniversary (Canberra)
Gertrudes Contemporary Art Spaces (Melbourne)

ARTIST RESIDENCIES, FELLOWSHIPS and BRAND AMBASSADORSHIPS

- 2017 Science Gallery Melbourne inaugural artist in residence
- 2016 Klanghaus (Vienna)
Moscow State Conservatory of Music (ongoing) (Russia)
- 2015 St Petersburg State Conservatory of Music (invitation) (Russia)
- 2009-2010 “No Mans Land” residency at the French Embassy (Tokyo)

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FASHION (Represented by D'Management Milan)

2018	FENDI event (Rome)
2016	VOGUE Fashion's Night Out x Tsvetnoy Central Market Installation (Moscow)
2015	Spring Fashion Week (Melbourne)
2014	Milan Fashion Week for Rachel Skepper Millinery at White Trade Show (Milan) Milan Fashion Week for KRIZIA at Palazzo Litta (Milan)
2011	Phillip Treacy Private VIP Fashion Show for Christines (Melbourne) Rooms 22 Fashion and Design Trade Fair – 3 day installation (Tokyo)
2010	Paris Fashion Week for The Viridi-Anne (Paris)
2009	Tokyo Fashion Week for Yohji Yamamoto (Tokyo)

CORPORATE AND LUXURY EVENT COMMISSIONS

2018	Coedo Beer Brewery (Japan)
2016	Gazprom (Moscow)
2015	Dulux Color Awards Sound Design and Live Performance (Melbourne) Crown Casino Melbourne VIP Fashion Night Sound Design and Live Performance SENSIS (Melbourne)
2013	Opening of the 4 Seasons Hotel St Petersburg for Blancpain and Tourbillon (St Petersburg)
2011	FIAT 500 by Gucci "Chicnic" VIP Launch at the Italian Embassy (Tokyo)
2008	Claska Hotel (Tokyo)
2007	Australian Greens Federal Political Party Campaign Launch (Melbourne) Government of Victoria Department of Environment Conference (Melbourne)

MAJOR PRESS EDITORIALS

2018	L'Officiel Hommes (Kazakhstan) November Edition
2017	Good Weekend Editorial (Australia)
2015	VICE THUMP AU Interview and Music Video Launch March Edition
2013	Time Out Magazine Russia, July Edition
2012	GQ Japan, December Edition AMICA Italy, May Edition
2011	Rolling Stone Magazine Italy, Edition #91 Rolling Stone Magazine Russia, Edition #84

TELEVISION

2010	MTV Italy Interview (Milan)
2009	Tokyo Television Morning News (3 December, Tokyo) iTunes Japan "Versus" TBS Television Network (Tokyo)
1990	"New Faces" Channel 9 Television Network (Melbourne)
1989-1991	"Carols By Candlelight" with The National Boys Choir (Melbourne)

SELECTED CHARITY WORK

2013	Police Look Beyond – Image donated for a photographic Book to raise money for Médecins Sans Frontières in response to the Sahel emergency in Africa (Italy)
2010	"Black Wave: Help Haiti" Charity Event for the Japan Red Cross (Tokyo) "Mode for Charity" for the White Ribbon Alliance and W.H.O (Tokyo)
2004-2006	Youth Affairs Council Victoria Policy Advisory Group member (Melbourne)
2002	Non-Timber Forest Products NGO Human Rights Advocate (Cambodia)
2006	Fundraising event for the Gyuto Monks of Tibet (Melbourne)
1996	Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria (Melbourne)

PRIVATE PERFORMANCES AND PATRONS

2010	Friends of Le Centre du Pompidou (Tokyo)
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2009	Archduchess of Austria TB-A 21 Chairwoman, Francesca von Hapsburg (Tokyo) Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Nakamatsu (Tokyo)
2007	The Gyuto Monks of Tibet (Melbourne)
1995	Welcome Ceremony for His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet (Melbourne)
1990	Sir Sidney Ballieu Myer (Melbourne)

MUSIC CONFERENCES AND MASTERCLASSES

1994-1996	Melbourne String Ensemble directed by Mr. Fintan Murphy (Melbourne)
1994-1995	Melbourne Youth Music (Melbourne)
1990-1991	“Studio Appia” directed by Mr. Richard Owen (Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney)
1991	Suzuki Music at Cambridge University (New Zealand) Adelaide University with “Carinya Strings” directed by Mr. Andrew Schellhorn patronised by Sir Sidney Ballieu Myer (Adelaide)
1989-1991	“The National Boys Choir Australia” directed by Mr. Peter Casey (Melbourne)

GRANTS + SCHOLARSHIPS

2018	Creative Partnerships Australia MatchLab (\$20,000)
2016	Creative Victoria Quick Start Grant (\$5000)
2002	Melbourne University Exchange Scholarship (\$5000)
2002	Association of International Education Japan Scholarship (\$20,000)

QUALIFICATIONS

2008	JLPT Certificate Level 1 Japanese Language Proficiency
2007	Certificate IV in Small Business Management RMIT University Melbourne
2006	Admitted to the Supreme Court of Victoria as solicitor/barrister
2006	L.L.M University of Melbourne (presently deferred)
2005	B.A / L.L.B (hons) University of Melbourne

PUBLICATIONS

Skepper, B., Stepanian I. (2017). *Bioinformatics: Towards a New Culture of Science and Art*, Journal of Biomedical Radioelectronics, Radiotekhnika, Moscow, Russia.

Quhenberger R, Skepper, B, Stepanian I. (2020) *[C G A T] Epita Matrix Genetics: Toward a Visualization of Genetic Codes via “Genetic Music”*, Leonardo Journal, Volume 53, Issue 1, February 2020 p.88-89.