

“ISLAND SONG”¹

By
Stuart Boag

**EACH SWEET BREATH
.....A PURE NOTE
EVERY STEP
.....A CLEAR CHORD
MAY YOUR LIVING SYMPHONY
BE FILLED WITH JOY AND HAPPINESS**

All praise to those whose loving kindness and compassionate wisdom is a window for the soul to look through. Our simple and open-hearted desire is that all might attain true joy, happiness and peace . May that which follows flow through time and space to all who seek to quench their thirst - a listening bowl of clear light.

**AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL ARTISTRY INTENSIVE
Kingfisher Bay Resort
Fraser Island, 20 August 2005**

¹ The poetry performance titled “*Island Song*” was developed specifically for an Australian Social Artistry Intensive and includes excerpts from two tone poems by Stuart Boag specifically modified for this event by the author. The two source poems are: *The Sound Angel* (2004) and *Illumination* (2005). The *Island Song* performance dramatic treatment was by Stuart Boag and Peter Rickert. Musical concepts, arrangements and direction were by Peter Rickert. *Illumination* was also written to form part of an experiential retreat on Fraser Island titled *K'gari Sings* as conceived by Alison and Peter Rickert.

BACKGROUND

Island Song draws heavily upon the tone poem **Illumination** - originally conceived as a performance work for Peter Rickert and Stuart Boag, **Illumination** melded poetry with the unique sound of ancient Himalayan singing bowls, the sounds of nature and other instrumentals. In geographic terms the listener journeys along the western shoreline of the island, across the hinterland and then to Lake Bowarrady - the island's most remote freshwater lake.

Illumination is a poem on discovering communion with Nature. It describes a journey across Fraser Island – a World Heritage National Park situated off the coast of SE Queensland and just south of the Tropic of Capricorn. It is the largest sand island in the world and its unique ecology makes it the biggest living sand mandala on Earth. At another level, **Illumination** is also a journey into the realms of the unconscious – it engages the listener in the events and experiences which arise under the spell of the island's "place magic". Perhaps one key to the island's powerful sense of place is found in the mythology of the Butchella people – the aboriginal tribe who were the original inhabitants forcibly removed from the island throughout the 19th century.

To the aboriginal people Fraser Island is known as K'gari. The legend goes that when humans were created and needed a place to live the Great God who lived in the sky sent his special messenger Yendingie, together with the beautiful white goddess K'gari, down from heaven to create the land and mountains, the rivers and sea. Yet K'gari fell so in love with this earthly place that she did not want to leave it. So at her request, Yendingie changed her into a heavenly island - Fraser Island. The crystal creeks are her voice and the especially mirrored lakes became "sky-windows" so that she is always able to see what was passing in the heavenly realms.

LIBRETTO

PROLOGUE	<i>"Tides of Life" Meditation</i>	3
ACT 1		
Scene 1	<i>Beginnings</i>	4
Scene 2	<i>Realization</i>	7
ACT 2		
Scene 1	<i>Inside</i>	9
Scene 2	<i>Discovering</i>	11
Scene 3	<i>Illumination</i>	13

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE - GUIDED MEDITATION

GUIDE

- ◆ find yourself in a comfortable place - perhaps sitting or perhaps lying peacefully***relax your body and just quiet your mind before we begin.
- ◆ we will begin with the chiming of a very special bowl***when this bowl sounds it will be the signal that you may relax more deeply***when you hear the bowl sounding a second time you will know that you are completely relaxed, alert and ready to listen to the story of Illumination.

- ◆ be very aware of the passage of your breath - inhale....now, gently exhale*** all the while listening to the sound of the bowl, getting softer and softer

- ◆ now you are aware only of your breath - gently rising and falling - like a calm ocean
- ◆ imagine that you are beside the ocean, perhaps in the sand-dunes or on the beach and as you listen to your breath you can also hear the sound of the waves washing the shoreline***steadily, and in time to the relaxed rhythm of your breathing the waves caress the shore

- ◆ it is evening and the moon is rising above the water - listening to the waves you have a sense of vastness, wholeness - as though through your breath you are part of the ocean

- ◆ you, your breath, the waves flowing onto the shoreline are as one

- ◆ now, be the shore - your breath like gentle surf falls upon your body, quenching your thirst, embracing you***as just a single grain of sand, enjoy the soothing sense of waves washing over you - cleansing your heart, refreshing your inner self

- ◆ still being mindful of the rhythm of your breathing, you have that feeling of Natural Great Peace***you feel wholeness, you are totally spacious and all the while your breathing reminds you that you are at one with this scene

- ◆ in your imagination, you can see a round full moon cast its silvery light upon the surface of the sea - the surf sparkles silver, each and every grain of sand is glistening

- ◆ focussing once again on the sound of your breathing - you can realise that the sound of your breath is magic - these special sounds are very simple yet also quite mysterious *** bringing you this inner feeling of spaciousness and great peace*** the sense of being completely at one

- ◆ at one with the ocean of life - at one with passage of time

- ◆ time passes and in your imagination a new light is rising, dawn approaches, and as the sky lightens your breath stirs the air like a freshening breeze**you begin to awaken

ISLAND SPIRIT INVOCATION

GUIDE

The door is opening
Don't go back to sleep!
A Goddess comes!!

Enlightened Being in island form - whose loving kindness and compassionate wisdom is a window for the soul to look through.

REFLECTION

*AWAKE, ARISE AND FEEL FREE TO FOLLOW.
SOUND HERALDS A BEGINNING, WHAT WAS DARK IS COMING LIGHT
SWEET SOUND SINGS TO YOU ACROSS THE VOID
AND OUT OF EMPTINESS WISDOM IS SURFACING
A DISCOVERING JOURNEY
UPON THE WINGS OF MYSTERIOUS SOUND
BEYOND YOUR VERY PUBLIC HERE AND NOW AND INTO THE WIDER
REACHES OF
OUR GREAT AND UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS - THAT IS LIKE AN OCEAN
WHEREIN OUR SMALL MOMENTS OF AWARENESS, OF REALISATION AND
TRUE SELF
GATHER TOGETHER AS DROPS OF WATER AND MERGE INTO THE WIDER ONE
REJOICE!!!! ILLUMINATION COMES!!!
BE ONE WITH ME IN WELCOMING!!!*

SCENE ONE - *BEGINNING*

GUIDE

To begin.....
we are on an island beach, on a journey. Taking some time-out from the concrete pattern of the mainland world
entering into island time.....
In between, letting go, re-discovering the magic of place
steadily flowing into a contented stream of simply being, so that another light might shine through....
An illumination.....so to speak.
Please take some time out to listen and share something of the view that is the unique and magic power of this vast island mandala of sand

POET

*elemental force
has shaped a mandala of sand*

*in island form
upon a slowly shifting planet crust
within the universal sea
winds of change
echo something of a name
k'Gariiiiiiiiiii, k'gariiii, garrriiii, gurry.....
a name whose simple meaning is paradise*

GUIDE

**we walk the shoreline at low tide.
vast, meditative and hypnotic is the wash of waves and the glitter of sun on blue water.....
there are splendid creek washouts like Amazonian basins in miniature, painted in coloured mud and postmarked by a gathering of sea birds.....
fresh water creeks run just behind the dunes, lush green pastures of water weeds stir sensuously within a liquid crystal freshwater current.....
here and there, shells appear underfoot – mollusc bones bask in the fresh air sun.....**

REFLECTION:

***YOU KNOW.....
THE WHAT OF WHO WE REALLY ARE
IS LIKE THE SWEET SEA SONG
INSIDE THE WONDROUS SHELLS UPON THE OCEAN SHORE
LOOK AND LISTEN
OPEN YOUR EYES***

GUIDE

**aloft upon the breeze, flying beneath the turquoise arch of a sub-tropical sky, another witness eye drifts in parallel and glides ahead and then behind.
this magnificent sky-borne feathered cloud is a welcoming sign (from K'gari)**

POET

*sea eagle keen eye
living witness of the sky
gazing upon
mother nature's children
playing here- upon the sand*

*with the low tide
our path
along the beach is marked
by footprints - one step at a time in straggling lines
leading towards a destination
imprinted testaments to transience
since this small evidence of a passing by
surrenders all into the wash of the next high tide.....*

eyes down, pressing forwards, walking on

*stars spangle in the rippling sands
are these some other constellations to navigate by?*

REFLECTION

*TIDAL SANDS SPEAK STRONGLY OF IMPERMANENCE AND
INTERDEPENDENCY. OUR FEET LEAVE FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND AND
WAVES CARRY THESE AWAY.....
THE SEA BREEZES MIX WITH OUR BREATH AND BLOW AWAY ACROSS THIS
EARTHLY PLANE...
THE LAPPING WATER'S EDGE REMINDS US THAT NOTHING REMAINS THE
SAME....
IS CHANGE THE ONLY CONSTANT HERE?
YET A UNIVERSAL HUE SHINES THROUGH THE CRACKS OF
CONSCIOUSNESS.....
GLIMPSES OF SOME WIDER DIMENSIONS.....
WHERE PLANETS DRIFT AS MOTES OF DUST UPON THE STELLAR
SEA.....*

POET

*now churning thoughts and emotions commence a constant sifting of why's and
wherefores
to the tune of sea waves chanting.....
this clearing of the mind
lets the deeper peaceful being come home again
and so contentment will arise*
*just let it happen
sand-castles of conflicted feeling and compulsion are shovelled into the mental bucket,
then tipped out all upside-down upon the beach....*

*reach deep
let the open heart
fathom the sands of time past
- the fistfuls of infinity
grains connected
spirit songs coalescent
the beach-forested understorey
tells her story
sand, fathoms deep - the soul mine
being one with the vast patterning of the shore washing it all away.....*

*upon eternity's loom
like fireflies shifting in the dark
life's light flickers
from what was, to what is, to what will be*

REFLECTION

*TO ACTUALLY BELIEVE THAT EXPERIENCES CAN BE HELD AND HOARDED
IS AS FUTILE AS HOLDING YOUR LAST BREATH FOREVER*

LIFE FLOWS
IN A PULSING RHYTHM OF BREATH, AFTER BREATH
GRASPING AT THE MOMENTS PASSING
WITH AN ANXIOUS EFFORT TO CHERISH AND SOMEHOW HOLD
WE LOSE ALL GRIP OF THE ETERNAL VIEW
THAT EFFORTLESSLY ARISES
FROM THE OPENING HEART
UNCOMMON GATHERING
THIS MIRACLE OF COINCIDENT BEING
IN SACRED SPACE
INTERWEAVING, INTERPLAYING, INTER.....EVERYTHING
IS IT SIMPLY FATE UPON DESTINY'S LOOM
THAT BRINGS FORTH INTERSECTING MANDALAS?
LISTEN UP
SENSE THE PRESENT TENSE BETWEEN SHARED BREATHS
THIS ISLAND IS US, WE ARE ISLAND
MAGIC HAPPENS.....

SCENE TWO - REALISATION

GUIDE

We are camped upon the shore.....
Sleeping through dream fragments that scratch at our consciousness.....
sleepers are awakening.....
samsara is behind us and our real journey is about to begin.....

REFLECTION

LISTEN
WAKE UP.....OPEN YOUR EYES
K'GARI SINGS A SWEET LULLABY (zither arpeggios)
BABY MANDALA UPON GAIA'S BREAST
WHOSE PLANET HEART BEATS
WITH THE SEASON'S TURNING
SUNRISE AND SUNSETS PULSE INTO BEING AND PASS
FULFILLING CYCLES OF AZURE AND GOLD
INSIDE THE BLACK THEATRE OF OUTER SPACE (large bowl to ecdho)
TIDES TURNING EBB AND FLOW
MOONPULLING RHYTHMS LIGHTING
FLOWER FORESTS BRIGHT SILVER
GOSSAMER DRIFTS OF SPIDER SILK IN MOONLIT LOG HOLLOW
SPIRITS SINGING, SANDS SHIFTING
HYPNOTIC PATTERNING
LEADS THE SEEKER DEEPER
INTO UNITY'S FOLD
WHERE ALL ARE ONE AND ONE IS WHOLE
COMPLETE AND AT PEACE

**CONTENTED NOW
SLUMBERING TO SAND MANDALA LULLABY
AWAKE WITH HEART EYES OPEN
WISDOM'S UPWELLING INSIGHT
KNOWS NOW THE ISLAND AND IS KNOWN BY THE ISLAND
MUTUAL RECOGNITION
LISTENING.....K'GARI SINGS
THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS SLEEP
INSPIRATION AWAKENING**

GUIDE

so the night will pass and with this dawning come the next steps along the way....
To a chiming song of dawn birds heard with heart eyes open, the seeker passes through
and into the island mandala.....
k'gari begins to speak out loud.....

POET

*before dawn –
perched horizontal
in this down sleeping-bag roost
nooky dell in the high sand cliffs
listen to the shore speaking
under moonlight the hard sea floor
is taut drum to ocean rhymes
falling steady, thrumming, running
at this shore-line silvering
sundering to and fro
the gentle water thunder calms
the heart and soul of sleepers awakening*

*just at dawn -
moon setting
perched in feathered warmth
a different ilk
the shifting light
squeezes bird song
note by note from the diminishing night
the black tangling heath
begins to chime
syncopated
at first uncertain peeping cheeping
lightens the air with a simple grace
here and there
a rising chorus
rouses the awakening sleeper
warming heart and soul
to meet the day*

*through dawn
upon the sand-cliff roostings
this sea shore thrumming
that joyous bird-song
these scratching dream fragments
all awaken to simply be
as it is truly meant to be
joined in spirit
earth and water
joined in being
sound and motion
joined in dance
moon and sun
cycling, patterning, shining through
a wondrous gift of beauty*

REFLECTION

*SUN RISEN IN NIRVANA
DAWN'S EARLIEST MOMENTS
BRING FORM TO THE DAY-WORLD
CONDENSING DAYDREAMS FOR HEART EYES OPENING
WITH THE DAWN CHORUS
LUMINOUS CLARITY COMES
BUT DAY MERELY CASTS THE EMPTY VOID IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE - INSIDE

GUIDE

Travelling more deeply now into a waking dream where our dreamers forget who or what they are.....

Scribble-bark trees signpost the way through the island's forested slopes and offer further guidance to those eyes opening into k'gari's inner sanctum

REFLECTION

*AWAKE AND STANDING
HEART EYES OPEN WITHIN THIS SACRED SPACE
MORTAL BEING BECOMING ETERNAL CONSCIOUSNESS
DETACHED FROM SELF*

**OUR PHYSICAL VESSELS CHANNEL
SPLENDID BLISS AT ENLIGHTENED BEINGS
CREATION CHIMES UPON EACH BREATH
INSIDE THE MANDALA NOW
LIVING DUST ASTRIDE THE SANDY DUNES.....
HARK, THE ISLAND ANGELS SING
THROUGH WAVE AND WIND AND LEAF
DISTILLING PLACE MAGIC
INTO AN ELIXIR
THAT IS A POTENT WAKE-UP CALL**

POET

*I open heart eyes and see
green light sinking into thick leaf litter (cello peg tune)
illuminating
fallen tree giant rottings
upon the forest floor
where plastic colored fungus orange and pink pop up
through sand and long dead wood
mute things
like living death*

*I open heart eyes and know
cheeky wag-tails, frolicking wee birds
chirruping hello-hello
echo of friendship
unusual companion
within the walking game of solitaire*

*I open heart eyes and witness
the wind is high and low
rustling the leaves of distant canopy
stirring the lake surface
with a gentle rippling hand
catching the light in dense mosaics
of reflected sky
sound windows of earth song*

PERFORMERS IN UNISON

when you forget yourself.....

REFLECTION

**OPEN HEART EYES
WITHIN THIS AWAKENING REMINDER
THAT ALL IS BEAUTY RUNNING
AS A FLOODING STREAM OF REALISATION
WHERE SIMPLY BEING EXISTS**

PERFORMERS IN UNISON

when you simply forget your self, REALLY forget your SELF - you become the Universe

REFLECTION

THE ISLAND GIVES FREELY

ANGEL DUST AND FAIRY LIGHT

CREATIVITY ARISES FROM THE MIND'S EYE

WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

WHERE TIME BOUNDS SPACE AS MERE MOMENTS UPON ETERNITY'S LOOM?

PLACE ITSELF, IS AN ELIXIR OF DISTILLED MOMENTS OF BEING AND

BECOMING.....

BEGINNINGS? BEGINNINGS

THERE ARE NONE

UPON THESE SACRED FIELDS

WITHIN THESE MANDALAS OF ETERNITY

TIME MARCHES UNHEARD

SPACE DISSOLVING INTO A CHARMING SYMPHONY OF RHYTHMIC EVENTS

POET

in the logs fallen

lapsing into understorey humus

crumble

textured earth

and mulch

spider web glistening

with green filtered sunlight now fallen through higher canopies of leaves

upon silent forest floor

the willy wagtail

forever flit hello from dreamtime here and now

crystal creeks sweeten the earth

lake-swimming turtles peak through the water surface

upon the reeded, sandy

shore where generations of man pass by the sentinel sundews.....

travel, travel backwards in time

stand upon the midden and listen to the happy and sad limbo drifters

reach beyond and touch the sacred depths of place – this place

create the magic to inflame sheer wonder

SCENE TWO - DISCOVERING

GUIDE

It is deep velvet black night, no stars shine, only sound

Stand still upon the shell-heaped midden listening to those happy, sad limbo drifting souls and hungry ghosts listening back

POET

*displaced?
this is an age of dispossession
displaced diasporas of human spirits
wandering, wondering
what is missing in amongst all the glitter?
sense of place - a special form of knowing wisdom
belonging replenishes compassion's well*

REFLECTION

**REACH OUT WITH STRONGEST LOVE OF PLACE AND FOLD GENTLY ALL
BEINGS' SUFFERING INTO WIDER WONDER.....
WHERE COMPASSION UPWELLS.....**

**KNOW THAT LOVE IS THE KEY INGREDIENT
TO ENGAGING WITH THIS PLACE
AND
ALL THINGS
KNOW LOVE OPENS MORTAL EYES TO WISDOM
TO TRULY LOVE AND CHERISH
THE SLIPPING SANDS SLIDING
INTO THE TIDAL SHORES
IS THE KEY TO DISCOVERING K'GARI SPEAKING**

**GARDENING WITH COMPASSION WE NURTURE PEACE WITHIN THE SPIRIT
REALMS AND CHANNEL PEACE INTO OUR OWN SELF'S REALM.....**

POET

*seed of realisation
now sown
upon
mandala fields of consciousness
wake up to being gardener*

*united by hope
the landscape and we
shelter in time beneath a sky
that is the lens that looks
upwards towards
the infinite sea.....*

REFLECTION

**INDIVIDUAL, ECCENTRIC, UNIQUE BEINGS ARE WE
EACH OF US, PIECES OF A JIGSAW PUZZLE
SET UPON THE SURFACE OF ETERNITY
THE QUINTESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE**

**TO KNOW SOMETHING OF THE WHOLE
OF WHICH WE ARE A PIECE
AND SOMETHING OF THE TABLE-TOP
UPON WHICH WE COME TOGETHER
IN PATTERNS OF MEANING**

GUIDE

sleep awhile and rise with the call of feathered bards whose dawn chorus turns the mind from dark to light.....

SCENE THREE - ILLUMINATION

GUIDE

This island sand beneath our feet steadily flows away into the wider world, our planet turns into the realm of starshine and we drift along, upon and through eternal seas.....
A happy contentment rises with this dawn's light.....and
It is raining.....

POET

*birds chiming
in the misting
green forest space
the lens of creativity focuses
simple inspirations
like sweet water flowing
a knowing, connecting eulogy of being
the life streaming in complex symphonic moments
that truly vibrate into eternity.....*

*Perched lakes pool.....
Rain falling.....*

*this magic forest world
all full of dappling dells
and
palm froned tropical dingles
where raindrops plop
into rilling crystal streams
chuckling.....
and blossom, treasures fallen
from the jungle ceiling
amidst, the fertile wrack and ruin of rotting leaves and shy fungus
where sweet, gum-flower scent
clears the mind of nowness
lets the childhood being within*

*awaken into the heart of simple being once again
it takes two wings to fly.....
the sand mandala's living fruit AND a childishly innocent mindfulness*

GUIDE

*perched lakes pool within the denser forests upon k'gari's highlands.....
lake-borne visions sometimes arise.....
as raindrops fall steadily upon the millpond-still lake's surface.....
each drop a mandala, intersecting with others, appearing and dissolving, countless
moments of illumination upon the mirror of consciousness....
You know, this entire island sand mandala is upon the cosmic sea roughly equivalent to
the passing beauty of a single raindrop falling before your eyes.....*

POET

*in the rain
looking upon the lake's still surface
a perfect vision appears
each single drop
begets a perfect mandala
visible for the merest moment
before melting into the wider one
this is a freshwater painting of the universe
wherein k'gari swims
overhead, a rainbow vaults
seven colour bright across a water-falling sky
auspicious blessing to realisation*

GUIDE

*and, at the rainbow's end?
Where coloured arch draws us into the forest heart...
a water-crystal mirror winks through the lens of a pool within a tree stump.....
living legacy from a one-time forest giant*

POET

*deep in the rainforest
a standing pool
of
still water reflection
within a living wooden chalice
makes one stop and think!
all about us here infinities exist
oceans in a single raindrop,
sub-atomic universes in a single grain of sand
photonic forests in a single living leaf
indeed, the whole universe exists
in a single mortal's heart
beating on and on and on....
solitary chests - yet not alone
each breast nurtures the unlikely chalice for this entire creation myth*

*now looking within
this open heart
falling through and into
blissful light and the sung song of eternity*

In the end

*At journey's end, we are at a new beginning
yet somewhat wiser now for hearing the song k'gari sang.....
Life, like our island friend, is a mandala
where this conscious being is merely the most immediate epicentre of realisation
Realisation begets wisdom,
contentment rises,
compassion fosters reconciliation across the various dimensions to existence...*

POET

*mandala teacher
precious community of learning
true self, where self itself is left well behind
chorusing perspectives
join us into the patternings of wisdom rising
whose essence, is unity
upon the threshold of mandala
time and space fall away
sanctity presents in welcoming
the seeker into eternity's nowness
beyond that threshold
beneath this universal vault
illumination rises as bright and clear as any moon or star*

REFLECTION

***SUCH SWEET MANDALAS.
CATHEDRALS OF ILLUMINATION
CENTRED, SAFELY SACRED HAVENS
DEAR FRIENDS, ENTER INTO THE MANDALAS
EXTRACT THE ESSENCES, RECEIVE SPONTANEOUS BLESSINGS
AND WALK ON..***

***EMBRACE THE OPEN HEART, THE SPACIOUS MIND, THE EMPTYING OF TIME
BE STEADY - LIKE SAND FLOWING THROUGH EONS PASSING
BE VERY CLEAR, THE FINITE MOMENT MERELY ANCHORS US WITHIN THE
CIRCLING EDDY OF ETERNITY***

***LIKE GIVING AND RECEIVING LOVING KINDNESS BETWEEN TRUE FRIENDS
SO PROFOUNDLY WILL REALISATION COME
LOVE OF PLACE BEGETS CONTENTEDNESS
THANKYOU K'GARI!***

GUIDE

And, to have experienced a stream of clear light, arising through heart eyes opening within, dissolves us in illumination beyond words

POET

*with heart eyes open, please know
time and place; object and reflection, as one now
being and becoming; doing and done, dissolved away and into one now
seer and seen, understood and understanding
seeker and sought, dissolving now
mind and thought, doer and deed
ALL hopes, ALL fears just gone with contentment rising
All life - all living, all lost and loss are dissolved away
Into Illumination's clear light*

THE END
