
OPTICAL IDENTITY

by Theatre Cryptic & T'ang Quartet



Sights and sounds from around the world combine to create a 'ravishing' musical journey by Glasgow-based Theatre Cryptic and Singapore's highly acclaimed T'ang Quartet in Optical Identity.

Combining chamber music repertoire with outstanding contemporary compositions, including Kevin Volans' South African-influenced *White Man Sleeps*, Norwegian electro-acoustic composer Rolf Wallin's elemental *Phonotope 1*, with its oriental twists, and composer Joby Talbot's *Manual Override*, *Optical Identity* is a daring work which presents music to be looked at as well as listened to.

This unique work was commissioned by and premièred at Singapore Arts Festival in June 2007. It then became the first co-presentation between Singapore Arts Festival and Edinburgh International Festival in August 2007.

Critics praised the Edinburgh production as a wonderful platform for the T'ang Quartet's talents and described "flashes of inspired synchronicity that fired the senses into overdrive, even euphoria."

Artistic Director Cathie Boyd aims to blast open the frontiers of musical performance, and present it as a more intoxicating experience illuminated by visual and theatrical interpretation. Using sculptural sets by internationally-renowned designer Jason Ong, costumes by Singapore fashion designer BAYLENE and visuals created by Swiss digital artist Jasch, she has succeeded brilliantly.

Optical Identity immerses its audience in a sensory world of escape from the moment the T'ang Quartet emerge from the dark and, dressed in striking white costumes, begin their intense, high energy performance, playing their instruments off score with passion and tremendous skill, in a series of choreographed movements. Elsewhere, there are deeply affecting passages, including cellist Leslie Tan's dark solo meditation at the opening and close of Azerbaijani composer Franghiz Ali-Zadeh's *Mugam Sayagi*.

Following an ecstatically received performance at the Alicante Contemporary Music Festival in Spain in September, *Optical Identity* tours here in October and November as part of the Scottish Arts Council's exciting Tune Up programme.