

RESEARCH STATEMENT

Original Creative Work

Citation: *The Land of Smiles*, Live performances, Mackay, Friday 6 June and Saturday 7 June, 2003.

Lehar's *Land of Smiles* has not been professionally performed in Australia since the 1950's. It is usually performed in German, as the libretto is written in rhyming couplets. The task of creating a new, singable English version was encouraged by Richard Bonyngne CBE AO.

Research Background:

Original sketches of the libretto were obtained as primary sources from German opera house archives and the Vienna State Library, as well as three existing English language versions. I created a contemporary, singable English translation, which did not adhere to the rhyming couplet stricture. The research question was whether a new performing edition, complete with original translation, faithful to the original German, could show the contemporary audience the manner in which theatre (especially musical theatre) of the early 20th century demonstrated the attitude held by Europeans to the Orient and particularly to Orientals and their values.

Research Contribution:

By adapting a fully orchestral work to a form that is more accessible to modern performance practice, a new performing edition, complete with modern translation, was prepared from primary sources. The edition was rewritten as a piano duo, available to scholars, historians and collectors.

Research Significance:

This performing edition was presented to live audiences, numbering around 200 over 2 performances in Mackay. A fresh, new performing edition, more accessible to performers with an emphasis on the singer performer, was created. The local performances were filmed and recorded. Interviews were conducted with the author by the West Deutsches Rundfunk, ABC Radio National and ABC Tropical Radio.

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