

Berklee College of Music

# **The Making of Rangi and Papa: A Reflective Paper**

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Degree of  
Masters of Music in Scoring for Film TV and Video Games

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## Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
1. The Assignment	1
2. Finding a Story	4
2.1 Rangī and Papa - The Story	7
3. In the Beginning	10
4. Research - Scores of the Masters	11
5. The Piece - Inspiration	13
5.1 Writing Rangī and Papa	17
6. London - Recording at Air.	19
6.1 The Mix	21
7. On Reflection	23
Multimedia Resources	24
Appendix A	25

## Abstract

This project represents the culmination of a years worth of study, the end of the most intense and rewarding learning experiences of my life. This paper is an account of how I came to conceive, research and write my final piece for my Masters in Scoring for Film, TV and Video Games and a reflection on the recording session and the year as a whole. For this project I had to source a piece of media to write for, research orchestration and form in classical music and film scoring and prepare to deliver parts to the recording session as well as conduct the session. the result of this project is that I now have the skills and confidence to write for large orchestra, I can conduct the session and communicate in a professional manner with the musicians, I have experience of potential common mistakes made and I am now prepared to undertake such a project should it arise in the future.

*Keywords:* Film Scoring, Orchestration, composition, conducting.

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Thank you to Tania Valle for reminding me that the world is full of fantastic stories waiting to be found and pointing me in the right direction.

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# The Making of Rangi and Papa

## 1. The Assignment

The assignment was to create a 3 minute piece of music for orchestra, written for picture, text or still image. Before the start of the course it was clear that our final assignment was going to be special. The chance to record with a world class orchestra in a world class studio would be one of the highlights of my career. I looked at it not so much as an assignment but more like the over all reason I came to Berklee, the opportunity to add a piece of work to my portfolio that would outshine all others.

While deciding whether to come to Berklee I watched videos of previous students and read the syllabus and it seemed to me that even taking in to account the high cost of tuition, to have, at the end of the year a piece recorded at a top studio and with outstanding musicians would be such an incredible thing. We live in a time when musicians must promote themselves in order to get work. We need websites and Facebook profiles plus many other avenues to advertise ourselves and make people aware of our abilities. The end product of this assignment would be such a compelling piece of promotion that it would generate interest and work enough to justify the cost and possibly pay it back many times over.

My experience of writing for orchestra before Berklee was non-existent. I had written for big band and small jazz ensembles plus some music for solo piano or piano trio but never anything on this scale. Writing a 3 minute piece of music for fifty-two professional musicians seemed like a daunting task. The process of learning how to not only write for orchestra but also produce the printed music and prepare the session for the engineers was, looking back, over in a flash. In fact there were many different elements that came together during the course of the year that culminated in the skill necessary to produce a piece of work on this huge scale. Our orchestration classes of the first semester introduced the principles of idiomatic writing. We learned through the experience of real musicians what works well, what is difficult and what is completely impossible for each major instrument of the orchestra. We learnt what they like to play and what is tedious, how much stamina, air, strength is involved in playing each instrument and when to let players rest and recuperate. We also learned about composing simply through the process of writing. Each week we were asked to write another short composition with a mood and theme to follow or interpret as we saw fit. Through this we engaged the writing muscles and started to form our own ideas about style and form in our own compositions. I see this now as an essential building block that allowed me to feel confident in my writing, we started small but in the end each small step combined into a feeling of security and belief in my abilities.

It is important to know that I was already fairly secure in my abilities as a musician, I already had a highly developed set of skills, albeit a completely different set. I come from a background of live music, I am primarily a jazz musician and educator. So at this early stage

in the year I could sit at the piano and play the blues all day but I was now faced with a whole new set of challenges.

Having reached the time to start thinking about writing the London Piece I was faced with a few important decisions. What kind of music should I write? It was clear that I had a choice, I could look for video or media content that would enable me to take one of several different directions. I had seen previous students write a piece full of energy, something bombastic to blow the head off any potential new collaborator. I could write something heartfelt and beautiful, something to tug on the heart strings and show the tenderness and beauty of the orchestra or I could try to find my own compositional voice and write something that came from a place of more pure creativity. In the end the decision came down to a matter of balance. I decided the most important thing would be to have a balanced portfolio, one that would showcase my talents in as many different styles as possible. In a way the decision was made for me, I was selected to be involved in writing music for another project, Lifetime - an animated short movie by the Valencian animation school Primer Frame. For this project I wrote music for two scenes that were due to be recorded remotely with the Budapest Art orchestra. As luck would have it, I would have to write for two scenes that called for romantic music. while at the same time most of my fellow classmates were writing for a chase or a duel. Once I heard the sound of the orchestra and the exciting music they had written I knew that I had to try and write something that would be the most exciting of my portfolio so far. The balance of the portfolio called for it as did my eagerness to try and write something as exciting as what I had been hearing from my peers.

## 2. Finding a Story

Once I had decided on the style and approach to the piece I needed to find some media to match my vision. I still had a few options.

- Find a pre-existing video to re-score
- contact a young director to approach
- write a story or script of my own
- find an inspiring myth or legend to write for
- search for a painting or illustration that would be suitable

I started my search on Vimeo, it's a platform that generally attracts serious film makers and young directors to showcase their work, it also has a messaging system where you can send a message directly to the film maker. I looked at Vimeo for a while and saw that there were a number of extremely beautiful videos and also some quite special animations. I started to try and contact directors both through the website and by finding the individual websites of directors and production companies. I got no replies. It's hard to say what the problem was, perhaps the message I sent was too vague or too specific or perhaps the videos I targeted were too popular. Who knows, my attempt was unsuccessful and after a few days trying I decided to change strategy.



During the course of the year we had been told many times about the importance of contacting young up and coming directors and forging relationships with them that may bear fruit in the professional world. With this in mind I decided to try and contact some film schools in the UK and America to see if I could work with some masters students. I contacted a variety of places, Met Film School, Bournemouth University Animation School, The Royal College of Art and The National Film and Television School. All of which I got responses from. The most successful was the national Film and Television school which has a dedicated alumni page and from which I got in contact with a number of different directors especially in field of animation. I found communicating with directors to be hit and miss, films tended to be either too much dialogue, too long or completely unsuitable for the type of big orchestral sound I was looking for. The large orchestra was becoming both a blessing and a burden. I was struggling to find a film in which I would be able to fully use the orchestra to it's potential and at the same time serve the picture with appropriate music. For example one student sent me a beautiful film about a young dancer struggling to prepare for a performance and gain the approval of her demanding dance teacher. It was a very beautiful film, with a good story arc and fairly high production values. I would have loved to score the movie but I felt restricted in my choice because I still needed to find that balance in my portfolio. I already had the romance part covered in the previous recording session from Budapest so I had to keep looking.

My next idea came from a trip to an art gallery I had in 2016. I visited the Whitney Museum of American Art in Manhattan NY in which there was a portrait exhibition entitled Human Interest. It was a fascinating exhibition full of strikingly honest portraits, one of which particularly caught my eye. It was hard to miss.

Standing 8 foot tall, this sculpture by Urs Fischer's of artist-director Julian Schnabel is instantly impressive. After a second look I realised that the huge figure was made out of wax and at the top of its head was a flame, the sculpture was a giant candle. This strong image of an impressive man seemingly immovable and impenetrable slowly melting and evaporating in to thin air was completely fascinating for me.



Fig 1. Standing Julian by Urs Fischer

I was intrigued by the idea and wondered if I should base my piece on this image. As soon as I started a hundred different questions came to mind, what are the central ideas behind the work? Which of those themes could I portray musically and how? I am not shamed to say that I immediately decided against the idea. No matter how fascinating it was, it still didn't satisfy the criteria I had set myself. I wanted epic music so my subject matter had to be epic too.

History is full of legends, St George and the Dragon, King Arthur and the knights of the round table, Aladdin's Cave, the list is endless. These stories contain action, romance intrigue and deception. What better to base an epic piece of orchestral music on? I didn't realise this until one of my fellow class mates, Tania Valle from Lima, Peru, suggested that I look for a legend. She was basing her piece on a Peruvian traditional story based around the gods of the indigenous people of Peru and Lake Titicaca. This sparked my imagination as some years before I had heard the a story of creation from somewhere in the south pacific, I remembered that these stories are completely different from any other creation story we are used to in Europe and the West. Being mostly christian Europe does not have variety in it's stories about the creation of the world or the universe. The beliefs of the people of the South Pacific tend often to be polytheistic stories that feature gods that are associated with the land sea and air, these societies are based upon the elements and peoples relationship with tthe land that traditionally sustained them. A contrast with Europe where Christianity replaced the original Pagan religions and gods such as Ostara -the Pagan god of spring- have been forgotten. I started to research creation stories from these exotic places and came across the story of Ranginui and Papatūānuku.

## 2.1 Rangi and Papa - The Story

New Zealand was populated by Polynesian people who arrived before 1300AD these people then forged their own language and culture and became known as the tangata whenua - the people of the land. Their theology reflects this name and in their story of creation we see the how the people of the land associate with the world around them. In essence the story of how the Maori universe came to be revolves around Rangi the sky father and Papa the

earth mother. It also features their children who are the gods of all the elements of day to day life for the Maori. We have the god of cultivated food, wild food, the air, water, earthquakes, war that all come together to tell the story of how the world came to be. This text is compiled from online resources and describes the story (parts of it) of creation as the Maori imagined it.

Ranginui and Papatūānuku are the primordial parents, the sky father and the earth mother who lie locked together in a tight embrace. They have many children all of whom are male, who are forced to live in the cramped darkness between them. These children grow and discuss among themselves what it would be like to live in the light. Tūmatauenga, the fiercest of the children, proposes that the best solution to their predicament is to kill their parents. But his brother Tāne, god of forests and birds, disagrees, suggesting that it is better to push them apart, to let Ranginui be as a stranger to them in the sky above while Papatūānuku will remain below to nurture them.

The others put their plans into action - Rongo, the god of cultivated food, tries to push his parents apart, then Tangaroa, the god of the sea, and his sibling Haumia-tiketike, the god of wild food, joins him. In spite of their joint efforts Ranginui and Papatūānuku remain close together in their loving embrace. After many attempts Tāne forces his parents apart. Instead of standing upright and pushing with his hands as his brothers have done, he lies on his back and pushes with his strong legs. Stretching every sinew Tāne pushes and pushes until, with cries of grief and surprise, Ranginui and Papatūānuku were pried apart.

Tāwhirimātea, the god of storms and winds, is angered that the parents have been torn apart. He cannot bear to hear the cries of his parents nor see the tears of Ranginui as they are parted, he promises his siblings that from henceforth they will have to deal with his anger. To fight his brothers, Tāwhirimātea gathers an army of his children—winds and clouds of different kinds, including fierce squalls, whirlwinds, gloomy thick clouds, fiery clouds, hurricane clouds and thunderstorm clouds, and rain, mists and fog. As these winds show their might the dust flies and the great forest trees of Tāne are smashed under the attack and fall to the ground. Then Tāwhirimātea attacks the oceans and huge waves rise, whirlpools form, and Tangaroa, the god of the sea, flees in panic.

Tāne searched for heavenly bodies as lights so that his father would be appropriately dressed. He obtained the stars and threw them up, along with the moon and the sun. At last Ranginui looked handsome. And so the children of Ranginui and Papatūanuku saw light and had space to move for the first time.

Ranginui and Papatūanuku continue to grieve for each other to this day. Ranginui's tears fall towards Papatūanuku to show how much he loves her. Sometimes Papatūanuku heaves and strains and almost breaks herself apart to reach her beloved partner again but it is to no avail. When mist rises from the forests, these are Papatūanuku's sighs as the warmth of her body yearns for Ranginui and continues to nurture mankind.

It is an epic story with many of the element we see in a modern Hollywood movie. The love story, sibling rivalry and an epic battle of superhuman beings. It's a story that

immediately peaked my interest. I felt that it contained all the ingredients I was looking for to make my final piece impressive, memorable, exciting but also with some emotional content that would hopefully help to add some emotional depth to the composition. I was wary that for film music especially it is very easy to get caught up in the action of the music, this ‘epic’ orchestral sound that we hear so often. I wanted to try and avoid being just another ‘epic’ film music cue and to try and bring something more to the piece. With this story as my inspiration I thought that I had found something original, a subject that perhaps had not been written about and a story that had not been heard, at least in Europe.

### 3. In the Beginning

As I read through the story naturally musical ideas came to mind. With this kind of dramatic writing you cannot help but imagine the scene, picturing the characters, land scape and the action. With that comes musical snapshots, I tend to have ideas pop in to my head for textures and moods rather than melodies. I can imagine orchestral textures and their orchestration, for example will the violins be *sul tasto* or *sul pont*? Do we have a the celli *pizzicato* or with the bow, *slurred* or *staccato*. All these things are suggested by the picture that arrives from reading the text. The story of Rangi and Papa has such visceral emotion and action that it’s very easy to picture the mood of the story as it goes along, from the beginning of time to the struggle for light and the battle between rival sibling gods.

One part in particular that I had a strong initial reaction to was the opening. The idea that the world was encapsulated in the space between two loving parents who through their love for each other were unknowingly depriving their children of space and light, a space

before the existence of light in the world, before even the sky and the earth as we know them came in to being. This idea brought to mind a feeling of oppressive tension, an energy with huge latent potential ready to burst at the seams. I think this kind of imagery is gold for any composer, the combination of the emotional content and the imagery provides such a strong starting point for writing it makes the process exciting and enjoyable from the first beat of bar one.

## 4. Research - Scores of the Masters

Even before I started the search for a story I had decided to spend at least one afternoon per week during our hectic schedule to study scores. Reading scores was not a new concept to me however until the beginning of our second semester I had never had the chance to devote any serious time to studying orchestration or listening to classical music with scores. It was a serious gap in my knowledge and so what better time to try and improve these skills that through my career I had not as yet needed and which had remained undeveloped . I started by asking my classmates about how they learnt to study scores, I imagined that there should be a method to studying scores and that there somehow was a secret to unravelling the mysteries of music hidden on the page. The answer was of course that there was no special key to unlocking, the key was purely hard work and dedication. I learnt from a good friend and classmate, Ana Krstajic from Belgrade, Serbia, one analysis method that involved taking any passage of music that was interesting for any reason and transcribing all the instruments that were playing on to four or six staves, writing each note at concert pitch and noting who plays what. From there you can see all the detail of the

orchestration, who is playing what and who is doubling who. You can also then play the passage on the piano much more easily. This kind of translation from a large score to a more manageable chunk of information really helps to simplify what is happening in the music. You can then try and assimilate the sound that you are hearing perhaps by understanding the movement of the harmony or my picking out the crucial combinations of instruments that is making a particular interesting sound. In general for me, studying scores is about quantifying the sounds that we are used to hearing from an orchestra. For example when we hear something that sounds sad or silky we instantly know or feel that but only by looking at a score and studying the orchestration, harmony and structure of the melody can we begin to be able to associate those sounds or textures with a particular technique or combination of instruments. Here is an example of the type of transcription work I was doing, I chose this extract from Mercury because it has some very interesting harmony and a flowing woodwind texture with repeating fast lines.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for an extract from 'Mercury' in Gustav Holst's 'The Planets'. The score is written on five staves. The top staff is labeled 'Vlc. Bs I' and contains a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics. The second staff is labeled 'Bs II' and 'Bs Vc' and contains a bass line. The third staff is labeled 'Vln II' and contains a melodic line. The fourth and fifth staves are partially visible and contain additional musical notation. The score is annotated with various musical symbols, including dynamics like 'p' and 'f', and articulation marks like 'acc' and 'trill'.

Fig 2. Mercury from The Planets by Gustav Holst



## 5. The Piece - Inspiration

It was time to start writing, this was the time I could bring together all my experiences so far and combine them to write what could be the most important piece of music I had written in my life. Although that sounds a little over dramatic it was probably in fact true. When you take in to consideration that with the money spent on tuition which you could have used to put a deposit on a house or live quite happily for a year in almost any city the world, this piece represented the culmination of a significant gamble. My classmates and I had come here hoping to learn enough and meet enough people that by the time we graduated we would be in a position to earn enough money to make the fees not only justifiable but small in comparison. This meant pressure, the pressure that comes with sitting down to be creative but knowing that it must be good and not only good but excellent, impressive, fabulous. For me this would be the centre piece of my new identity as not just a piano player but also a composer of film music.

As I started writing I had a plan, I would borrow from the masters as much as I could, follow the events and dramatic arc of the story and try to make my music original. I had already worked on themes as part of another orchestration assignment and had written themes starting out for each of the main characters in the story. In the end I went with this as my main theme. A simple theme that I imagined for the two lovers Rangī and Papa



Fig 3. Rangi and Papa main Theme



Fig 4. Tane theme

Next I wanted a theme for Tane, the son who pushes them apart. I wanted to show his effort in pushing the apart but without malice or aggression, simply working for the good of his siblings.

So in order to follow the first part of my plan I started to identify parts of pieces of music that I could identify as moods that would suit sections of my piece. from these selections I would analyse the structure and orchestration to use it in my own way in my piece. One such section was the opening to Prokofiev's Promethee: Le Poeme de Feu, I spent some time listening to the opening chord. It has a fascinating, dark unsettled feeling to it with low woodwinds playing in the low register and strings holding a long sustained tremolo. Harmonically it is also very interesting as it is made of what Jazz musicians would describe as an A13b9#11/G chord.



This chord combines the openness of 4ths in the upper register with close dark intervals in the lower voices. But the real magic of the opening of this piece is the low pedal played on the timpani and accompanied by the bass drum. It creates a low rumble that continues for many bars and creates this tension that persists until it is almost unbearable. This is one of the elements I wanted to create in my piece, the feeling that there is a huge power lurking just under the surface.

I played with many different variations of this chord, combining two different tonalities until settled on using a combination of B and C major triads with the all important orchestration borrowed from Poeme de Feu.

In the first movement of Mahler's 9th symphony I encountered writing for string section like I had never seen before. Mahler used the strings in such creative formations and structures, creating textures and counter melodies that I had not encountered, especially in film scores. In particular the following extract got my attention.

Fig 5. Mahler's 9th Symphony

The basses are playing pizzicato on the first beat every two bars and the harmony is split between the celli, violas and occasionally the 2nd violins. The tremolo between two notes creates a feeling of movement in the harmony, it outlines the chord but with an unsettled feeling, nothing is stationary apart from the double bass which anchors the music rhythmically. Add to this that the harmonic tremolos are passed around the string section creating a further stereo panning effect that further adds to the motion of the music. The final addition to this texture puzzle is the harp that plays low in its register which is less often associated with the harp. In film music we are used to hearing the harp used as harmonic filler, playing arpeggios or as an accent with high glissandos. In this section we have the harp playing low chords adding to the darkness of the timbre and bringing a round bounce and added weight to the pizzicatos.

For my battle scene I decided to dip in to the world of film scoring and who better to learn from than the master John Williams. I studied the score from a piece called The Asteroid Field which comes from a collection called The Star Wars Saga. What struck me about this piece was the use of one or two rhythmic cells that continued through out the piece. In the case of The Asteroid Field Williams chose an extremely simple rhythm.



Fig 6. John Williams' clave from The Asteroid Field

It is the way that he manipulates the orchestration and structure of the music to highlight the rhythm in a variety of different ways that really makes the piece impressive. It is

also a great example of how a simple rhythm can give a piece energy and drive. I think we often associate exciting music with complex rhythm and odd time signatures but this is a perfect example of less is more, the rhythmic cell is straight to the point while allowing space for the piece to have flare and variety.

There are many other pieces that I listened to in the time I spent researching my piece, they are too numerous to write about them all but a few more are worth a special mention. Stravinsky's Rite of Spring and the Firebird, Scriabin Prometheus and Poeme d'Extase, Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra, Daphnise and Chloe, Elgar's Nimrod, Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony. Alongside listening to these pieces I went see both the Rite of Spring and Tchaikovsky's 6th in concert at the Palau de la Musica here in Valencia. There is something so special about seeing the pieces performed live, especially for someone like me with a huge appreciation but not necessarily a huge experience of the sound of the orchestra. Watching these pieces be performed taught me so much about the timbre and dynamics of each section and the orchestra as a whole.

## 5.1 Writing Rangi and Papa

My piece came together like a puzzle, each prepared piece fell in to place. I took around 7 days to write the piece spending around 3 or 4 hours each day working on the outline then the more detailed orchestration following the script I had written (see appendix A) I chose this time to work exclusively in Sibelius, normally we had a requirement to produce a presentable mockup of our music to submit along side the score however this time it was not a requirement. My background in live music meant that I am not a natural score reader, it takes me time to transpose and to remember the ranges of certain instruments. I am

also an improviser at heart and so my preferred way of writing for picture is in the DAW with the video in front of me, this way I can hear the real sound (or close to) as I write and my piece is born from sound rather than notation. This has one major drawback for me, it means that I write what I can play. My ideas become governed by the sounds I can make in the DAW. When using synthesizers and other electronic or keyboard instruments this is not a problem, however with orchestral music it is a huge disadvantage. My music becomes limited to the small range of sound that you are able to produce convincingly with sample instruments and also by my own knowledge and technique when it comes to mockups. In reality no matter how good the sample library is you cannot hope to get close to the expression, accuracy and agility of a musician who has been learning their instrument since the age of 4. So for this piece, considering there was no video to follow, I decided to write directly on to the score. My process would be to write at the piano and transfer and orchestrate as I went along. I used themes that I had previously written, took inspiration from the music I had been researching and followed the shape of the story. My biggest problem was that I came to a point near the end where it was clear that I had to start to finish the piece. We were told that the piece must be no longer than 3 minutes and that union rules prohibited even one second more. So I effectively had written myself in to a corner where I didn't have enough time to write an ending without disturbing the flow of the piece. This last 10 bars of music probably took me longer to write than the previous 100 bars put together. In the end I came to a solution that I was less than satisfied with but as I saw it I had no choice. Little did I know at the time that in fact half our class had been given no such restriction and had written pieces that crossed the supposed 3 min barrier by up to 20 seconds.

## 6. London - Recording at Air.

I realise that I had a quite unique perspective when it came to traveling to London to record, I was born there and have lived there all my life and although I had never done anything like this before, certain things would be familiar to me.

I was going home after 5 months away from London, the longest I had ever stayed away from home in one go. I would be heading back to a country where everybody speaks my language and dialect, back to a city that I knew well enough to feel at home in almost any part of it and of course to the place where I grew up and which had formed me as a person through my experiences. This privilege was not lost on me I felt blessed to be able to feel confident in what was an extremely stressful situation and thankful that things had worked out so well.

Our last hours in Valencia were frantic, even with what I thought had been careful planning I had been working right up until the deadline to prepare and submit my parts and scores. There is always pressure to make sure everything is perfect when it comes to parts and scores but this would be different. Our whole year had been building up to these 18 minutes of recording time. If you chose to work out how much we would be spending per minute at Air Studios it would bring a tear to the eye. So our preparation was thorough and the attention to detail had to be meticulous. Any mistake in the parts or Pro Tool session could lead to lost time on the podium, and lost time on the podium leads to unsatisfactory recordings which would be awful after a long year preparing for this moment.

We left Valencia on the first flight and battled our way across London to my home, I had offered to host as many people as I could, the place I have been staying for the past three years belongs to a friend of the family who lives in Brazil. This five bedroom house in South East London would be the base for me and a few of my friends. It became a hive of activity, parts and scores covered almost every surface and every available space was filled with somebody doing part preparation or conducting practice. In comparison to a couple of my classmates I was prepared and relaxed, everything had been put in place and so my only task was to concentrate on preparing to conduct my piece and lead the recording session. We were all anticipating the all important running order for the session at Air Studios, who would be first, who would be after lunch and who would be last. Although in theory all sessions should have been equal in quality irrespective of time of day, in reality it is human nature for concentration and energy levels to rise and fall throughout the day and so the position in the running order was of great interest. In my mentoring sessions in the build up to coming to London I had been told that my piece would be a contender for first up to bat. It was hard but not impossible and energetic but not exhausting, a good piece to warm up the orchestra and get the day off to a good start and so it was that I would be the first student up on the podium at air studios.

One thing that I count as an advantage in situations where I have to speak to musicians is my experience as a professional musician. I have been gigging, teaching and touring for over 10 years and that experience gives me a lot of comfort when speaking to



musicians, I went in to the session knowing that I would be able to make myself understood and get my point across precisely and with a calm and professional manner.

The session itself was a blur, it went by even faster than our tutors had warned us it would. I am thankful for the support of my producers Sergio Lacima and Vanessa Garde because I was completely blown away by hearing my music played by such an awesome orchestra. I had no idea where to start with giving notes on the performance but luckily for me I had two fantastic pairs of ears guiding the session from the control room.

It was a very smooth session with no serious problems. I had a few questions about notation and accidentals but nothing that took up any considerable time. Looking back at the session I don't think I would have changed anything at all, it was a life changing experience that I have learnt a huge amount from. The main lesson I will take away is that my place in a recording session is in the booth, although I enjoy conducting my ears are far more developed and the job of conveying the shape and emotion of the piece should probably be left to someone more experienced.

## 6.1 The Mix

After the session I had no idea of what to expect from the recording, the only feedback I had about the sound of the session was from my classmates who had lots of positive feedback but nothing detailed about the performance or the sound. I had had two days of listening to the orchestra from the gallery in the hall and from the booth so I had an

idea of what to expect. The players were very high level as were the engineer and equipment in the studio. So I was expecting the recording to be perfect or very near perfect. In fact it was less impressive than I had thought. Sometimes as a composer it is hard to be objective about your recordings, they are either not as good as you thought, having got used to the perfectly in tune samples and perfectly in time rhythms or they are much better because of the real life expression of the players. For the London recording I was a little disappointed with the sound, mainly the accuracy of the rhythmic elements and the clarity between sections of the orchestra and I think it is a classic case of falling in love with the clarity of the midi sounds. In reality the orchestration of the piece was very thick and complex, with lots of overlapping rhythms and melodies. I think if I could go back I would try to reign in the urge to keep adding to the composition and try simplify and focus the energy and power of each section of the orchestra. One thing I think my piece lacks is very strong idiomatic writing for each section of the orchestra. However this approach is much more of an academic one, assuming that the piece is being approached as an exercise in writing for orchestra, as a piece of music to be performed I actually think it works really well.

In my mix I tried to concentrate on getting more clarity and definition from each section as well as balancing the sound a little more, cutting out competing mid frequencies and boosting the string while lowering the brass. I added some good reverb and some parallel compression to give a little more punch.

In fact the session needed very little mixing, we were given a pro tools file containing the gain and panning information that Jake Jackson, the engineer for our sessions, used

himself in the studio. With this information and a little basic EQ we were able to get a great mix with very little work needed. This is one of the great benefits of recording at a studio like Air, it has a built in fantastic sound right out of the room.

## 7. On Reflection

As I look back now on the project my over riding emotion is one of pride, I feel that the project as a whole was a success and I am happy with the end product. From the very beginning I planned and prepared well starting with the research and analysis, I then worked solidly and professionally on the writing of the music. The music it's self follows the media well although I have a slight regret that I wasn't able to find a video or artwork to go with my story however I know that this is something that can always be done later on. The session it's self holds good memories, I learnt a lot in those 18 minutes up on the podium, not least how difficult I find it to conduct and listen at the same time. The most satisfying part of the process though was the amount I learnt about orchestration and the way I was able to translate that information into well written orchestral music, that is something that I never imagined would have been possible and I am so thankful for that.

## Multimedia Resources

Rangi and Papa [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rangi\\_and\\_Papa-Wikipedia.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rangi_and_Papa-Wikipedia.com)

Saltz, Jerry “This 8-foot candle portrait mesmerized me” May 16th 2016. <http://www.vulture.com/2016/05/urs-fischer-julian-schnabel-wax-sculpture.html> (Accessed June 2018)

Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, 'Māori', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/maori> (accessed 27 June 2018)

Mahler, Gustav “Ninth Symphony” [imspl.com](https://www.imspl.com) (Accessed april 2018)

## Appendix A

# Rangi and Papa script

Benjamin Burrell

*Animation: Ink droplets on watery canvas.*

0:01 DARKNESS, THE BEGINNING OF TIME AND SPACE. WE SEE  
POWERFUL MUSCULAR GODS CRAMMED TOGETHER IN DARKNESS, RESTLESS.  
MONOTONE BODY SHAPES CURLED IN TO FOETAL POSITIONS REST AND  
SLUMBER.

Ranginui and Papatūānuku are the primordial parents, the sky father and the earth mother who lie locked together in a tight embrace. They have many sons, who are forced to live in the cramped darkness between them.

0:18 WE SEE SOME MOVEMENT, AN IDEA GROWS AND WE SEE A SOFT  
GLOW. THE GODS COMMUNICATE. SOFT SHAPES MOVE BUT ARE  
INDISTINGUISHABLE.

These children grow.

0:24 PANNING SHOT AROUND THE FACES OF THE CIRCLE OF GODS, THEY SIT CROSS LEGGED IN DEEP DISCUSSION, SERIOUS EXPRESSIONS AND GRAVE FACES.

The god children discuss among themselves what it would be like to live in the light. Tūmataunga, the fiercest of the children, proposes that the best solution to their predicament is to kill their parents. But his brother Tāne, god of forests and birds, disagrees, suggesting that it is better to push them apart, to let Ranginui be as a stranger to them in the sky above while Papatūānuku will remain below to nurture them.

0:33 TU THE GOD OF WAR FLEXES HIS MUSCLES AND WE SEE COLOUR FOR THE FIRST TIME, RED EYES AND HANDS

0:41 WE SEE THE FACES OF THE SKY FATHER AND EARTH MOTHER AND THEIR ARMS WRAPPED TIGHTLY AROUND EACH OTHER. RANGI WITH HIS LONG FLOWING HAIR THAT CHANGES FROM DARK BLUE TO LIGHT BLUE AND PAPA WITH HAIR LIKE ROOTS THAT CHANGE TO TREES AND LEAVES AT THE ENDS.

**Rangi and Papa remain locked in their loving embrace.**

1:11 WE SEE RONGO, TANGAROA AND HAUMIA-TIKETIKE MOVING QUICKLY SPIRALLING AROUND EACH AND PUSHING UPWARDS WITH THEIR ARMS.

The others put their plans into action—Rongo, the god of cultivated food, tries to push his parents apart, then Tangaroa, the god of the sea, and his sibling Haumia-tiketike, the god of wild food, joins him.

1:33 WE SEE TANE ON HIS BACK STRAINING AND SWEATING. AS HE PUSHES WE SEE A CRACK OF DAYLIGHT APPEAR IN THE DISTANCE. THE CRACK SLOWLY WIDENS AS RANGI IS PUSHED UPWARDS, THE LIGHT GETS BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER UNTIL DAYLIGHT FLOODS THE SPACE.

After many attempts Tāne forces his parents apart.

Instead of standing upright and pushing with his hands as his brothers have done, he lies on his back and pushes with his strong legs. Stretching every sinew Tāne pushes and pushes until, with cries of grief and surprise, Ranginui and Papatūānuku were pried apart.

1:36 FOCUS ON TĀWHIRIMĀTEA AS HE BECOMES ANGRY. HE SUMMONS THE ELEMENTS TO AID HIM. DARK SKIES GATHER BEHIND HIM BEFORE WE FLIES SKYWARD ACCOMPANIED BY HUGE GREY CLOUDS FULL OF LIGHTNING.

Tāwhirimātea, the god of storms and winds, is angered that the parents have been torn apart. He cannot bear to hear the cries of his parents nor see the tears of Ranginui as they are parted, he promises his siblings that from henceforth they will have to deal with his anger. To fight his brothers, Tāwhirimātea gathers an army of his children—winds and clouds of different kinds, including fierce squalls,

whirlwinds, gloomy thick clouds, fiery clouds, hurricane clouds and thunderstorm clouds, and rain, mists and fog.

1:49 WE SEE A MONTAGE OF DESTRUCTION AND FURY, WITH TĀWHIRIMĀTEA SOARING ABOVE DIRECTING THE MAYHEM.

As these winds show their might the dust flies and the great forest trees of Tāne are smashed under the attack and fall to the ground. Then Tāwhirimātea attacks the oceans and huge waves rise, whirlpools form, and Tangaroa, the god of the sea, flees in panic.

2:25 AS THE BATTLE SUBSIDES WE SEE A TIME IN FAST FORWARD, GREEN SHOOTS BEGIN TO APPEAR WHERE THE TREES WERE KNOCKED DOWN, GRASS STARTS TO COVER THE ROLLING HILLS, THE SEAS CALM AND START TO SPARKLE.

And so the children of Ranginui and Papatūānuku saw light and had space to move for the first time.

2:36 PANNING DOWN AS THE CLOUDS START TO CLEAR WE SEE A WIDE OPEN LANDSCAPE WITH HILLS AND VALLEYS AND BEAUTIFUL OCEAN SPARKLING WITH SUNLIGHT IN THE DISTANCE.

Tāne, in his anguish and pain caused by the separation of his loving parents, searched for heavenly bodies to adorn his robes so that his father would be appropriately dressed. He obtained the stars, using all his strength he gathered the celestial bodies, hauling together the moon and the sun.



2:38 WE SEE TĀNE, A GRIMACE ON HIS FACE LOOKING UP TO HIS FATHER AND DOWN TO HIS MOTHER BOTH OF WHOM WEAR AN EXPRESSION OF GRIEF AND PAIN. TANE THROWS A ROPE AROUND THE SUN MOON AND STARS AND PULLS THEM TO HIM. THEY ARE TINY IN HIS GARGANTUAN GRASP.

3.00

With one final gargantuan effort, he threw them up in to the sky....