

The Meaning of Water

Septet for Harps

"Let the most absent-minded of men be plunged into deepest reveries and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be." Herman Melville

Andrew Schultz

Composer's note

The Meaning of Water is an eight-minute piece for seven harps commissioned by Alice Giles for her harp ensemble, the Kioloa Harp Ensemble. The work was written with assistance from ArtsACT in December 2005 and January 2006. The potentially unusual sonorities of seven harps in ensemble seemed fitting for a piece with this title.

The title, *The Meaning of Water*, is one I have had in mind for four or five years since first considering it as possibly appropriate for a piece I wrote for choir and orchestra to a text by Margaret Scott. That piece eventually became *Southern Ocean* instead. I like the symbolic and literal aspects implicit in the title, *The Meaning of Water*. It strikes me that water, like music, is ineffable and unstoppable and at its best and worst when uncontained and unowned. A New Zealand based scientist, Veronica Strang, has recently published a fascinating book with the same title about aspects of water ownership and water's densely encoded spiritual, environmental and symbolic meanings.

Biographical details for Andrew Schultz can be found at www.andrewschultz.net

Duration – approximately 8 minutes.

Andrew Schultz February 2006, Keiraville.