

RECORDINGS IN NATURAL CAVES

AUSTRALIA

Jenolan Caves – Lucas Cave & Cathedral Cave

Jenolan, New South Wales

Introduction

The Cathedral Chamber is 54m (163 feet) high, the highest room at Jenolan and biggest room in the Lucas Cave. Concerts are held regularly in this great hall where the acoustics are exceptionally good. "As to the quality of the echo, no amplification is needed here; the large size of the hall with the hard rock surface amplifies the music so well and clear, we can hear in the last row as if the performers are sitting just next to us. What is different to other large halls is, that most have flat (stone) surfaces resulting in a clearly defined echo, which interferes with the clarity of the sound... But here the Cathedral Chamber is exceptional: the surface is naturally uneven, many side caverns are going off, no flat surface can reflect a clear image – instead all sounds are naturally diffused. The sounds spread irregularly in all directions and give us a natural warmth. The echo of the Cathedral Chamber is very strong and very short – about 1.5 seconds – then we have silence again." (Anon., n.d) The photo of the Cathedral Chamber is by Michael Small.



concerts regularly in the Cathedral Cave and has recorded there and released three CDs (only one before 2005).

Ref: Anon. n.d., The Famous Acoustics in the Cathedral Chamber, [georgcello](#)
Dunlop, B. T. 1950 (1977), *Jenolan Caves*, Department of Tourism, Sydney, p. 50-56

RIC-AU1 Australia ca.1970s

DONALD SMITH, AUSTRALIAN OPERA SINGER, SINGS IN THE CATHEDRAL CAVE, JENOLAN CAVES *

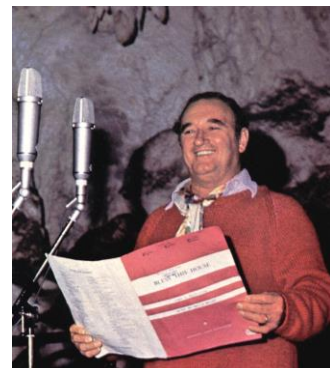
RIC – Vocal – Cave Pic Cover

Selections:

Side One – 1. Bless This House/ 2. At the End of the Day

Side Two – 1. The Story of Jenolan

Perf: Donald **SMITH** (vocal)



(with organ)

Prod. Co: Sheard & Co. Pty. Ltd. & New South Wales Depart. Of Tourism; Sidney

Rec. Co: Black Inc. Recorders Pty. Ltd.

Liner Notes: (12-page booklet on the cave)

Time: (?)

EP: DONALD SMITH, AUSTRALIAN OPERA SINGER, SINGS IN THE CATHEDRAL CAVE,
JENOLAN CAVES

Label: (No label) RRCS-1913 A (stereo)

Spec: 7" 45rpm (Gatefold cover) (Sides 1 & 2)

Notes: A live recording of two songs from a recital given by the Australian opera singer in the Cathedral Chamber of the Lucas Cave.

This souvenir packet contains 6 color slides and a 15-photo foldout-sheet.

Side two, the recorded cave description, is discussed under Spoken Word – Documentary – Australia.

Ref: Cathedral Chamber, Jenolan Caves, [jenolancaves](http://jenolancaves.com)

Donald Smith (Tenor), Biography, Wikipedia

Donald Smith, Australian Opera Singer, Sings in the Cathedral Cave, Jenolan Caves, worldcat & nsw.gov

Holland, Ernst 1989, Personal communication, 10th UIS Congress, Budapest, Hungary, Aug. 1989

Jenolan Caves, Description, Wikipedia

RIC-AU2 Australia 1994

NESTING OF THE CRANES *

RIC – World – Ethnic – Japanese – Instrumental

Selections:

1. Tsuru no Sugomori (Nesting of the Cranes) – 15:41/ 2. Mumonkan (Gateless Barrier) – 3:10/ 3. Taihei Manzai Raku (Eternal Peace) – 15:18/ 4. Kumoi Jishi (Cloud Lion) – 4:38/ 5. Mushi Kuyô (Memorial Service of the Insects) – 10:26/ 6. Shin'ya (Deep Night) – 3:22/ 7. Shika no Tône (Distant Call of the Deer) – 13:19

Comp: (Nos. 1 & 5) Sakai Chikuho I; (Nos. 2 & 6) Riley Lee; (No. 3 & 7) Classical Honkyoku of Buddhist priests; & (No. 4) Traditional

Perf: Riley **LEE** & Andrew **MacGREGOR**
(shakuhachi flutes)

Prod. Co: New World Productions;
Bardon, Queensland

Rec. Co: Cathedral Cavern, Jenolan Caves
& National Acoustics Laboratory, NSW

Rec. Eng: Michael Gissing

Time: (See above) Total – 65:56

A. Australian Releases:

1. Original **CD:** NESTING OF THE CRANES

New World NWCD 713

2. Reissue **CD:** NESTING OF THE CRANES (Different Cover)

New World NWCD 713

B. Dutch Reissue **CD:** NESTING OF THE CRANES (1996)

Oreade Music ORW 5422-2

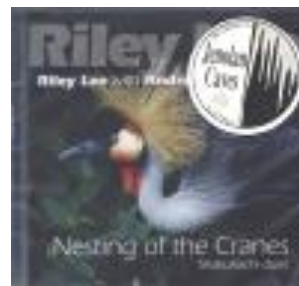
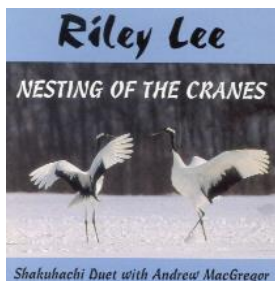
Notes: These are classic duets for the Japanese shakuhachi, which is a bamboo end-blown flute with five finger holes. Riley Lee began playing the shakuhachi in Japan in 1971 and he eventually became the first non-Japanese to attain the rank of *dai shihan* (grand master) in the shakuhachi tradition. Around 1978 “he founded the Chikuho School of Shakuhachi of Hawaii. He was a lecturer of the shakuhachi at the University of Hawai’i until leaving for Australia in 1986 to take up a PhD fellowship at the University of Sydney.” (Anon. 2003)

This was Riley Lee’s first release of music recorded in Jenolan Caves. The later editions of this Australian CD had a different cover photo, showing a close-up of a yellow-crested crane, and some of these later editions also had a circular sticker labeled “Jenolan Caves” in the upper right quarter with stylized stalactites on the right side, indicating that the CD was probably sold at the cave.

Ref: Anon. 2003, Riley Lee, Biography, [rileylee](http://rileylee.com)

Kliebhan, Bernd 1998, Spelão Musik, (Unpublished list of recorded cave music), p. 15

Nesting of the Cranes CD, The International Shakuhachi Society, [komuso](http://komuso.com)



Riley Lee, Discography, Shakuhachi Recordings, [shakuhachii](#)
Riley Lee, Nesting of the Cranes CD, Tk 2 – *Muumonkan/ Gateless Barrier*, [rileylee](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)
Riley Lee, Sound of Bamboo, Home Site & Discography, [rileylee](#)

RIC-AU3 Australia 1994

MOUNTAIN VALLEY *

RIC – World – Ethnic – Japanese – Instrumental

Selections:

1. San'ya (Mountain Valley) – 12:00/ 2.Tsuru no Sugomori (Suzuru – Nesting of the Cranes) – 6:30/ 3. Nagashi Reibo ('Yearning for the Bell' While Begging for Alms) – 17:07/ 4. Asuka Reibo (Yearning for the Bell of Asuka) – 3:48/ 5. Oshu Nagashi (Wandering through the Inner Provinces) – 5:23/ 6. Ryuhei (Exile) – 10:32/ 7. Taki Ochi (Cascading Waterfall Piece) – 13:45

Comp: (No. 6) Sakai Chikuho I

Perf: Riley **LEE** (shakuhachi flute)

Prod. Co: New World Productions; Bardon, Queensland

Time: (See above)

CD: MOUNTAIN VALLEY

New World NWCD 715

Notes: These are all pieces for the Japanese bamboo flute the shakuhachi.

This was the second album of Riley Lee performing in the Jenolan Caves.

Ref: Mountain Valley, The International Shakuhachi Society, [komuso](#)

Riley Lee, Discography, Shakuhachi Recordings, [shakuhachii](#)

Riley Lee, Mountain Valley CD, Tk 4 – *Asuka Reibo/ Yearning for the Bell*, [rileylee](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



RIC-AU4 Australia 1994

VOICES OF THE NIGHT *

RIC – New Age – Instrumental & Vocal

Selections:

1. Voices of the Night – 11:30/ 2.Sooty Owl – 7:08/ 3. Sea Grass Dancing – 6:49/ 4. Cloud Lullaby – 4:02/ 5. Moonson – 5:54/ 6. Antarctic Starscapes – 6:52/ 7. Chant – Before the Dawn – 6:22/ 8. Spirits Calling – 3:47/ 9. Dream Odyssey – 4:50

Comp: (?)

Perf: Riley **LEE** (shakuhachi flute)

& Michael **ATHERTON**

(with waterphone, lute, African and Balinese drum, chime, synthesizer, gong, & vocal)

Prod. Co: New World Productions; Brisbane, Queensland

Time: (See above)

CD: VOICES OF THE NIGHT

New World NWCD (?)

Notes: These are New Age pieces for the Japanese flute, shakuhachi, together with other ethnic instruments, synthesizer, and voice.

This was the third album of Riley Lee performing in the Jenolan Caves.

Ref: Riley Lee, Discography, Shakuhachi Recordings, [shakuhachii](#)

Riley Lee, Voices of the Night CD, [Allmusic](#)

Riley Lee, Voices of the Night CD, Tk 8 – *Spirits Calling*, [rileylee](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)



RIC-AU6 Australia 2000

RIC – Contemporary – Instrumental – Cave Pic Cover

MUSIC AT THE JENOLAN CAVES *

Selections:

1. Suite I-Prelude (J.S. Bach) – 2:45/ 2. Menuet 1 & 2 (Bach) – 2:18/ 3. JENOLAN CIANCONNA (G. Mertens-Moussa) – 5:24/ 4. Suite II-Prelude (Bach) – 3:49/ 5. Sarabande (Bach) – 3:24/ 6. Menuet 1 & 2 (Bach) – 2:24/ 7. FANTASY ON CATHEDRAL CAVE (G. Mertens-Moussa) – 5:43/ 8. Suite III-Prelude (Bach) – 3:48/ 9. Bourree 1 & 2 (Bach) – 2:55/ 10. Vocalise (Rachmaninov) – 4:37/ 11. Suite IV-Prelude (Bach) – 3:48/ 12. Suite V-Allemande (Bach) – 4:20/ 13. Nana (M. de Falla) – 2:03/ 14. Suite VI-Prelude (Bach) – 5:03/ 15. Poor Maiden Me (M. Forster) – 1:26

Comp: (As indicated above)

Perf: Georg **MERTENS-MOUSSA** (cello)

Prod. Co: Jenolan Caves (?)

Rec. Eng:

Time: (see above)

CD: MUSIC AT THE JENOLAN CAVES

(?) (Tk 1 to 15)

Notes: Fifteen cello pieces recorded live in the Cathedral Cave, part of the Lucas Cave section of this world-class show cave: ten Bach pieces, three other pieces, and two cello pieces inspired and composed specially for the Cathedral Cave.

“Particularly in the Cello Concert you can hear several compositions – newly composed or transcribed – especially using the potential of the acoustics of the Cathedral Chamber...The Cello Concert in the caves [by Georg Mertens-Moussa] started in 1997 as a series cello recitals of the Suites for cello solo by J.S. Bach. In September 2007 we celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the Cello Concerts in the cave.” (Anon. n.d.) This occasion gave the Cathedral Cave Cello Concerts the record as the longest series of cello concerts in history, more than 130 monthly recitals over more than 10 years.

After having performed regularly Bach and other classical music composers, “cellist Georg Mertens started to compose music especially written for this special venue. For this recording he selected two compositions, the popular "Jenolan Ciaconna" and "Fantasy on Cathedral Cave.” (Anon. 2000)

The running times for each selection given here are the correct times. The times given on the back of this CD are incorrect, nearly all a bit short.

For detailed information about the compositions “Jenolan Ciaconna” see under Classical Music – Baroque – [CL-BA4](#) and for “Fantasy on Cathedral Cave” see under Contemporary Art Music – Chamber Music – [CT-CH3](#).

Georg Mertens-Moussa performs regularly in the Cathedral Cave. This photo of him performing in the cave is by Rob Whyte. For more information about [his discography](#) which includes later recordings in this cave (in 2007 & 2009) and his current schedule go to [his site](#).

Ref: Anon. 2000, Georg Mertens-Moussa, Notes & Biography, [CDBaby](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLES)

Cello Concerts in the Cave – History, Homepage of Georg Mertens, [georgcello](#)

Georg Mertens-Moussa, Didgeridoo Concert for Cello in Cathedral Cave (4:22), Date Unknown, [YouTube](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLE)

Georg Mertens-Moussa, Discography, Home Site, [georgcello](#)



Jenolan Caves – Devil’s Coachhouse, Temple of Baal Cave, & Lucas Cave

Jenolan, New South Wales

RIC-AU5 Australia 1996

WATER INTO STONE *

RIC – Contemporary – World – Experimental – Avant-garde – Instrumental & Vocal – Cave Pic Cover

Selections:

1. Dawn – 6:53/ 2. ENTERING THE MOUNTAIN – 2:32/ 3. First Sight – 3:33/ 4. FLOWSTONE – 6:53/ 5. TIME AND MASS (A CAMBRIAN CORALE) – 15:10/ 6. HELICTITES (sic) – 5:28/ 7. THE RIVER STYX – 4:39/ 8. ANGEL’S WINGS – 7:56

Comp: Colin OFFORD

Perf: Colin **OFFORD** (Conch shells, Thai mouth organ, double flutes, windpipes, moonbells, & vocal)

Prod. Co: Spiral Sound; Katoomba, New South Wales

Rec. Co: Windwood Studios

Rec. Eng: Terry Cox

Liner Notes: (24-page booklet) Janet Pelly

Time: (See above) Total – 53:06

CD: WATER INTO STONE
Spiral Sound 004



Notes: These are difficult-to-classify pieces inspired by the Jenolan Caves and recorded in three of the caves there: Devil's Coachhouse Cave, Temple of Baal Cave, and on the Slide in the Lucas Cave.

Judging by the titles of some selections it is possible to precisely locate some of the other caves that inspired him: "Entering the Mountain" could be the Grand Arch, the natural tunnel that separates the various cave sections and where it is possible to drive through the mountain; "Helectites" can be found in several of the caves; "The River Styx" is in the River Cave; and the "Angel's Wings" drapery is in The Temple of Baal. (Dunlop 1950)

The 24-page liner notes booklet comes with many nice photos of the cave (see under Cave Picture Covers – Australia – Jenolan Caves).

For information about each cave-inspired piece on this album see under Contemporary Music – Avant-garde – *Water into Stone*

Ref: Colin Offord, Biogaphy, [colinofford](http://colinofford.com) & Recordings, [colinofford](http://colinofford.com)

Colin Offord, *Water into Stone* CD, National Library of Australia, [nla.gov](http://nla.gov.au)

Dunlop, B. T. 1950 (1977) *Jenolan Caves*, Dept. of Tourism, Sydney, p. 50-56

Unidentified Sydney Harbour Cave

Sydney Harbour, New South Wales

RIC-AU7 United States 1993

GOONDIWINDI *

RIC – Nature Sounds

Rec. Eng: Rik Rue

Prod. Co: Tall Poppies Records; Glebe, New South Wales

Time: (?)

CD: OCEAN FLOWS

Tall Poppies TP 036 (Tk 3)

Notes: This is the third and last track on the album of field recorded soundscapes. Goondiwindi is an Aboriginal word meaning "water flowing over rocks." This track was recorded "at beaches and in crevices, channels and caves, in and around Sydney Harbour." (Brooks n.d.) Nothing further is known.

As for the caves in the Sydney Harbour, we are told – "In April 1789, twelve months after the departure from Botany Bay by the French expedition led by Jean-François de Galaup, comte de La Pérouse, a catastrophic epidemic of smallpox (or possibly chicken pox) spread through the Eora people [Australian Aborigines] and surrounding groups, with the result that local Aborigines died in their hundreds, and bodies could be seen in the water in Sydney Harbour and lying on beaches and in adjacent caves." (Anon. 2013)

Ref: Anon. 2013, History of Sydney, Wikipedia

Brooks, Andrew n.d., *Caves & Caving in the UK*, Music Recorded Underground, dundee.ac.uk

Ocean Flows CD, Tall Poppies Records, iinet.net.au



caveinspiredmusic.com