

SONG OF THE DAY – 17 MAY



VIEW FROM OLYMPUS by John Psathas

2002 APRA/SOUNZ Award for Best Contemporary Art Music

***Fun Fact** : John Psathas went to Napier Boys' High School and started his post-school music journey as a jazz pianist. He rose to worldwide fame in 2004 when millions of viewers heard his music played as part of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Athens Olympic Games.

Just like Monday, today's "song" is not a song at all, it is the third movement of a doubleconcerto for piano and percussion. A *concerto* is a piece of orchestral music that especially features a soloist – a doubleconcerto features two soloists. The music won Best Contemporary Award in a category that includes orchestral, instrumental, choral and vocal music that has been written for artistic purpose. A lot of people think of it as the modern equivalent of "Classical Music".

This movement is called *Dance of the Maenads*. Maenads are crazy, fairy spirits who serve the Greek God, Dionysus. Dionysus was the ancient Greek god of grape harvest, wine, fertility and ecstasy. He loved to party! His Maenads had the task of luring innocent people over to the party lifestyle, where they would lose control of their sensible side. When I listen I can hear the crazy side of the spirits and the way they try to lure people and put them in a trance.

Imagine a pop song with only one verse, a bridge and a chorus which begins the song and keeps coming back. It might be structured like this

Chorus Verse Chorus Bridge Chorus

The last movement of a concerto is often structured just like that, and it we call it *Rondo Form*. In the case of Dance of The Maenads the form is;

A	B	A	C	A
0:21	1:45	2:53	3:37	5:38
crazy Maenads dancing	luring an innocent person	crazy Maenads dancing	person in a trance, struggling	crazy Maenads win the struggle !

Watch the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra being recorded at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSxWcr7btZk> and look out for all the cool cordophones (including a *hammer dulcimer*), aerophones, idiophones and membranophones.