

Piano

by major mitchell *Thursday, Jul 7 2011, 10:26am*

international / poetry / post

(struck) ivory keys ping and reverberate
through my brain
dredging up past memories
complete with sound, sight and smell;
they merge with the present
forming an unlikely and unwelcome reality;

my being begins to vibrate with the
incongruous imagery and discordant sensory
overload.

i allow myself to swim in that sensory sea,
drowning, re-experiencing images of
Vietnam in Bondi (suffocating) me;
an American legacy made possible
by a servile Australian government.

i had just finished high school
and won the only lottery i never wished to win,
the draft - no one but professional soldiers
wanted to fight that criminal, ideological war.

unknown to me at the time, the Gulf of Tonkin
'incident' -- the 60's version of 9/11 --
was the fabricated excuse the Americans
used to enter this war of Vietnamese Independence
from French colonial rule.

against the odds the French had been
comprehensively defeated
by a determined and fearless Vietnamese
army in the historic battle of Dien Bien Phu.

but the Americans would have none of it,
war is America's vampiric lifeblood
it must kill in order to survive
any excuse for the murdering multi-nationals
to turn a buck.

another key is softly struck --
i am in my favourite den
sucking an opium pipe,

my means of coping
with the constant fear, horror and dread

i did not share my comrades' taste
for booze and numbing hangovers;
opium left me aware, acute but anaesthetised
to the horrors around me
nor did i share the racist sentiments
of the Americans and Aussies
for the brave, noble and tenacious Vietnamese.

i favoured -- some would say loved --
a beautiful Saigon girl
not a whore that soldiers degraded
but a graceful, long-necked, proud Asian woman
she treated me well and i her.

she disappeared one night
while on an errand for her mother;
some say she was a communist
sympathiser, an agent gathering intelligence
a victim of the illegal Phoenix program,
perhaps,
no one knew anything for sure
in those days but i would guess
she refused the advances
of a South Vietnamese officer
who lusted after her
he fiercely objected to her seeing me, a foreigner,
she had warned *me* to be careful many times -
a habit i maintain to this day.

i recall with horror, the senseless killing
the fear of the people and the constant
US bombing -
a non-aggressive nation was transformed
into a living hell

five million civilians and peasants
killed in Indo-China
by the American carpet-bombing
campaign -
reason enough to justify
my pledge to bring down that evil
empire of death and destruction.

today my comrades are younger, the
weapons softer but more effective,
war has changed,
today it is fought invisibly
only Americans and their stupid

(servile) cohorts in crime
fight in the open.

strike another ivory key
transport me
i have been confronted by the realisation
that i loved that girl --

peace to you wherever you are, my darling Ng.

*[my name is major mitchell,
i am not a poet, my young comrades
assisted in this production/transmission.]*

<http://cleaves.zapto.org/news/story-2609.html>

🔊 [In My Life - The Beatles](#)

Underground Oz Poetry. <http://ozpoetry.lingama.net/news/poem-191.html>