***across the veiled distance***was written for a large collaborative project *one thousand curves ten thousand colours*. The initial spark came from Marguerite Yourcenar‘s story How Wang-Fo Was Saved based on a Chinese legend. Wang-Fo is a Han Dynasty painter who is able to see to the very essence of nature and paint it with an astonishing vividness. The Emperor‘s son grows up isolated in the imperial palace surrounded by Wang-Fo‘s paintings. On the death of his father he leaves the palace and sees only ugliness in the real world. He then summons Wang-Fo to the palace to have him paint one more painting before he is blinded and behanded as punishment for deceiving him. Ling, Wang-Fo‘s disciple who has abandoned his fragile young wife and left all his worldly belongings behind to follow and serve him, is killed by the soldiers while trying to save his master. As he begins to paint the ocean scene, water gradually rises about him in the palace and a boat appears in the distance. With Ling‘s words‚’you being alive, how could I have died?’, he then steps into a boat and is rowed away into his painting by his disciple.

The intermingling of fantasy and reality is an integral part of the creative artist’s perception and understanding of the world. The artist‘s work acts as a door through which we pass to reach a more profound understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live. *One thousand curves ten thousand colours* is a musical and visual environment in which acoustic and electroacoustic music, poetry, drama and animated visual images are unified to express and amplify the story in a manner which is relevant to and reflects our time. Related to Ling‘s dream, a*cross the veiled distances* has four sections played as one continuous movement: *I. being II. growth III. seeking IV. transformation*. Sections III and IV were performed with axiO (alternative expressive input object), a MIDI controller, when this work is presented as part of *one thousand curves ten thousand colours*.

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***and the end is the beginning*** is the eleventh piece in the *Voices in Time* cycle. Since 1979, Hope Lee has been studying Chinese music, medieval and classical poetry, in particular the ideology, philosophy and notation of guqin (Chinese 7-string zither) music. The knowledge absorbed and material collected have integrated and become an important part of her creative voice and to-date, ten pieces have been completed in a projected eleven-piece cycle, with each reflecting on a particular time in Chinese history which in turn, echoes our own existence. All the compositions in the cycle seeks for a balance between elements of continuity and elements of change and is a reflection of  "heaven, earth, and men are one" in Chinese philosophy. Accordion has been used in many works to resemble the Chinese sheng, a wind instrument used widely in both folk and ceremonial music.

*and the end is the beginning*is commissioned by Stefan Hussong through a Canada Council grant and is dedicated to this most inspiring musician.

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***arrow of being arrow of becoming***was commissioned by Innovation in Concerts in Montréal for the Canadian tour of the Smith Quartet from Britain with financial support provided by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

In Plato's work Timaeus, he made the distinction of the world of Becoming (journey) - "the object of opinion and irrational sensation, coming to be and ceasing to be, but never fully real" and the world of Being (destination) - a fundamental world "apprehensible by intelligence with the aid of reasoning, being eternally the same", claiming only the latter was real. In life, we reach our destination (being) by taking a journey (becoming) in the realm of time. Music, is a reflection of such a journey. This is the seventh piece in the *Voices in Time* cycle.

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***Ballade of Endless Woe*** is based upon the poem with the title by the Tang dynasty poet Po Chü-I about the tragic love between the Yang Kwei-Fei, a beautiful poor peasant girl who is brought into the harem, and Ming-Huang, the emperor of the Tang Dynasty. The two live in blissful happiness in the palace. During this time, Kwei-Fei’s relatives are given important posts in the imperial court. However, an uprising in the north upset their state of contentment and Ming-Huang is obligated to lead the imperial soldiers to suppress the revolt. The soldiers however blaming Kwei-Fei and her family on the poor state of their empire, refuse to fight unless she’s executed. Ming-Huang, with deep grief, is then forced to have her hanged to placate the soldiers. Many years have passed since Ming-Huang and Kwei-Fei parted. In dreary gloom his life wears on. Day and night, he waits her spirit to come. One day, there comes a wandering Taoist monk. In pity of Ming-Huang’s grief, he promises to seek the soul of his love. The sage searches in the heaven and the underworld until at last he finds her in the mystical island of P’eng-Lai in the Easten Sea. There Kwei-Fee gives the Taoist sage a message saying that one day in some future existence, they will be reunited.  As the Taoist monk is leaving, she sends another tender message, it tells of a vow known only to their two hearts, made on the seventh day of the seventh month in Ch’ang-Sheng Palace:
                                    *“In Heaven we shall be two birds with the wings of one;*
*on earth two tress with branches intertwined”*

But time will not forget the crime that was committed when Ming-Huang sacrificed his beloved to the soldiers.  The last line of the poem reads:
                                    *“The heaven is vast and earth is old,*
*And time will wear away,*
*But this their endless sorrow*
*Shall never know decay”.*

*Ballade of Endless Woe* is Hope Lee’s first large ensemble work. It won the CAPAC Williams St. Clair Low Awards Gold Award and the PRO Canada Young Composers' Contest first prize in 1979.  The world premiere performance took place at McGill University, Montréal, with a vocal quartet: Kathleen Anderson, soprano, Elise Bédard, alto, Winston Purdy, baritone, Nicolas Desjardins, bass, and the McGill Percussion Ensemble, conducted by Pierre Béluse.

***Ballad of Endless Woe***is a vocal quartet and piano version of *Ballade of Endless Woe*.

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***Chan Chan*** (Chinese: sound or motion of flowing water), is the first piece of *Onomatopoeia* (1979-81). The musical material of *Onomatopoeia* is built out of the idiomatic translation of the expression “Home Sweet Home" into twenty-four world languages. In the central piece, *Jia Yuan* for children's choir with fifteen instruments, the text is presented in manifold ways: original form, non-sense syllables, and in reconstructed words. Its semantic and phonetic transformation and transference into composed musical shape, becomes the basis of building material (rhythm, melodic segment, harmony, form, musical gesture) for *Chan Chan* and the last piece *Tiao Tiao* for chamber orchestra.
Music is a functional language, for expression and for communication. To express ideas through children's simplicity, to communicate by means of children's spontaneous creativity, these were the main objects in composing *Jia Yuan*.  In *Chan Chan* and *Tiao Tiao*, the main goals were to develop simple material in many directions and dimensions and to create variegated contrasts within the fluidity of music.  While *Jia Yuan* expresses 'home', *Chan Chan* and *Tiao Tiao* subtly suggest ‘homeland’. 1979, the year when this project first began, was the International Year of the Child.  *Onomatopoeia*is dedicated to the children of the world, especially the ones who lost their home, homeland or, their lives due to human folly.

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***Days Beyond***

                        *Spring deep dream*
*unaware of dawn*
*All around*
*birds singing*
*Through the night*
*wind rushing, rain whispering*
*Falling petals*
*how many?*
                                                Meng Hao-jan (689-740)  *Spring Dawn*
                                                translated by Hope Lee

*Day Beyond* was commissioned by Jamie Syer and Jeremy Brown with financial support by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. This is the second duet composed between 2000-2003, each reflects a stage of the cycle in nature.

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***dancing shadow autumn moon***
                        *briefly I cavort with the moon and my shadow:*
*I sing and the moon goes back and forth,*
*I dance and my shadow falls at random.*
*When sober we seek pleasure in fellowship,*
*When drunk we go each our own way.*
*Then let us pledge a friendship without human ties*
*And meet again at the far end of the Milky Way.*

                                                            Li Po (701-762)*Beneath the Moon Drinking Alone*
                                                            translated by Irving Y. Lo

*dancing shadow autumn moon* was commissioned by Han Mei and Randy Rainer-Reusch with the assistance of a Canada Council grant. This is the third duet composed between 2000-2003, each reflects a stage of the cycle in nature.

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***Dindle*** focus on the importance of silence in music and the meaning contained in a single tone. In this piece, where silence creates unspeakable tension, suggesting the mystery of uncertainty, sound is destined to thrill.

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***Duo Solista*** was commissioned by Olga Kotova and Dmitry Nesterov with financial support by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. This is the first duet composed between 2000-2003, each reflects a stage of the cycle in nature. Several images came to me while writing this piece: glistening icicles in the sun, crushing sound of falling icicles in the silence of a dark night, melting icicles under a cloudless blue sky, then comes the first sign of spring…