Hanging Betsy, stereo audio piece by Roger Dean and Hazel Smith (austraLSYSIS), 2007.
(A component from their 27 minute sound technodrama **The Afterlives of Betsy Scott**, with text by Hazel Smith, sound by Roger Dean. This was commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and realised in June 2007 in their studios in Sydney).

The Afterlives of Betsy Scott interweaves spoken text, sound and technological manipulation of voice and sound. The work focuses on events leading up to the hanging in 1863 of Elizabeth Scott, who was the first woman to be executed in the state of Victoria, Australia. Elizabeth was accused, together with her alleged co-conspirators David Gedge and Julian Cross, of murdering her husband. But there was no direct evidence to convict her, and there were mitigating circumstances. The piece explores the ambiguities around the case and Elizabeth's character, and mixes historical documentation with fiction. Combining drama, narrative and poetry, it moves in and out of time and between real and unreal environments.

Hanging Betsy is a freestanding version of three segments of the radio piece, in which several transformed versions of a small number of phrases written and performed by Hazel Smith are mixed together with the performed original.
   The first segment original text is:

   no place for a woman, woman as place
   the bush thick-filled with high pitched murmuring
   woman as vampire or victim of praise
   lives which have never morphed into legend

   The second segment is:
   they cannot talk but the record marks them
   the warp of tongues threads the weft of fiction
   one voice morphs, several voices are one
   is this me or Elizabeth speaking?

   The third is:
   not for what she did but for who she was
   not for what she did but for how she seemed
   not for what she did but because colonial law
   closed its ears and crushed her

   the writer becomes the words she has written
   what has been loses itself in what is
   the creator kills but dying revives
   a miscegenation of fact and fiction

These texts appear sequentially in **Hanging Betsy**, together with transformations carried out in **MEAP** software. The first is segmented on the basis of pitch gradients; the second on the basis of spectral flatness and chunk power; the third primarily on chunk power but together with beats (which of course are not present in the original in the normal musical sense of the word beats). The **MEAP** composer algorithms used were primarily SimpleSort, IntraChunk and Headbang, but multiple processing of

each text was undertaken, and an edited selection is used. The **MEAP** products are also juxtaposed in the audio space with two other transformed text phrases: 'I too am both dead and alive', and 'the roles you can play, the spaces you can shape, the presumptions you can rearrange', both of which are processed by time-variant vocoding in SoundHack. The whole was mixed in ProTools, and there are distinct audio environments for some of the components, characterised by reverberation properties.