

## Piano

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

international / prose/poetry / literature

(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.]*

🔊 [In My Life - The Beatles](#)

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-2609.html>