

# LIBRETTO of “THE REDFERN ORATORIO”

**This libretto by Pamela Traynor is inspired by the speech delivered by The Honourable Paul Keating, Australia’s former Prime Minister, on December 10, 1992.**

Imagine ..... Imagine ..... Imagine if we can  
Open our hearts and know the pain  
And contemplate the suffering of the  
First people of this land.

We must acknowledge and confront the past  
Recognise the cruel injustice  
And feel their degradation.  
Feel their subjugation and dislocation.

We took their lands  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)  
We took their children  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)  
And their mothers grieved  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)

We gave them alcohol  
We gave them missions  
We mocked their elders  
And we mocked their traditions.

Imagine ..... Imagine ..... Imagine if we can  
Sixty thousand years of understanding and knowing this land.  
This ancient culture in all its dignity  
Has shaped us all and our identity.

Fundamental truth must now be conceded  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)  
Acceptance of history so long denied  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)  
Condemning injustice, compensating past crimes.

Imagine ..... Imagine ..... Imagine  
Moving forward together to a future with pride.  
Reach out now for we are all one and share humanity  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)

Imagine ..... Imagine ..... Imagine  
There can be no separation  
Reach out now for we are all one and share humanity  
There can be no separation from our Aboriginal past and present  
Seeing it clearly through their eyes, so clearly through their eyes.  
Reach out, reach out, for we are all one.

This nation has been enriched by their care  
Never forgetting their greatness  
In wartime, in peace and in ecology  
In sport, in art and in their music,  
No, never forget their dance.  
This nation has been enriched by their care.

If we can imagine injustice  
Then we can imagine the opposite  
The process has begun  
Imagine, imagine all this  
Equality and equity for us all.

For their spirit is everywhere  
And their spirit is everlasting.  
Imagine this .....

The dispossessed move out of the shadows.  
We cannot imagine that we will fail.  
Imagine, imagine  
(Nanga mai, nanga mai)