

Attachment (iv) **blackBOX: A digital media script**

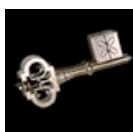
blackBOX *A digital media script*

By Tatiana pentes



SPLASH page

Splash page commences and the journey begins. From a black screen surface the *blackBOX* titles appear & disappear, followed by the emergence of a strip of animated photographic icons (resembling film moving through the gates of a projector).



Interactivity: an image of the old Key to the gates of Moscow upon the visual surface of screen triggers entry into the program. (SFX: an old gothic Key in a lock). [This key icon is the trigger opening pathways.]



Chinese Box Icon – interactive Voice-text

Jewel Box Icon - interactive Voice-text

Pandora's Box Icon - interactive Voice-text

Credit Text Icon - interactive Voice-text

Memory Box Icon - interactive Voice-text



This digital filmstrip forms a menu of visual triggers that writing that contextualizes the/areas of narrative content & the methodology & rationale. They include the credits for this work.

Screen Image: Nina Philadelphoff passing through a red gateway/doorway. There is a note on the door that says:

Text: "Darling gone to the City".



Nina Voice: [*trans-Atlantic accent: this is a late night message(confessional) to her lover left on an answer machine, digital tones, beeps, explaining where she has gone*]: Darling I've gone to the city...don't wait up...I am going to Chinatown...they say that's the best place to start a journey...the electric lights & lanterns should dazzle...& maybe I might be myself again...in the Metropolis...

Sound Atmos: the spark of electric neon turned on, sparks, lanterns tinkling in the wind, urban street sounds, Chinese chattering, a fog horn, traffic, the sounds of a metropolis.

Moving Image: [super-imposed over Nina] flashes of pictures from an Eastern journey, a Malaysian cityscape, through the window of a moving car, a paddy field in Indonesia, a Hindu temple Orissa (India), a Chinese pagoda Sydney & a Lotus pond in the Yu Yuan gardens, Shanghai.



BlackBOX TITLES

Interface Design: An oriental pattern (mandarin red, gold, silver & black) frames a digital *blackBOX* titles sequence. This creates a consistent immersive screen environment. In these screen places interaction with events occur through ornamental Chinese/ Deco (modern) window frames. The journey appears and disappears inside this set of modern Chinese 1930s inspired frames. The player/participant interacts with the surface of the screen, engaging with a series of icons revealing hotspots that unveil the narrative.

Moving Image: An image of Nina leaving her urban apartment, her face fractures into multiple identities as the titles are composited across the screen. An antique Greek image of Pandora & her Box appears & disappears.

Nina Voice: [*trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is newsreader/anchor woman*]: ...blackBOX... **Nina Voice2:** [*trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is newsreader/anchor woman*]: ...years ago a speck was torn from the mystery of China & became Shanghai ...a legendary City...a fantasized vision...Hollywood illusion...whispered tales from this *blackBOX*... echo opium wars...of White Russians washed up on its shores...dance halls & gun-runners...from this glittering oriental façade...the search begins...



Icon: CHINESE BOX – the North tile from a mahjong game. **SFX:** a Chinese gong.



chineseBOX TITLES

Location: The Chinese Gardens, Sydney & Shanghai, China

Performance: Russian Jazz from Shanghai Performance

Pathway icon: North wind pieces from a Mah Jong game

Visual trigger: Nina's hands open a Chinese box of émigré objects

Sound: Audio montage of Serge Ermoll's "Over The Rosy Sea" & 1930s Shanghai pop tunes

Storyline This story unfolds from observations of the protagonist/ and the protagonist's point of view - through movement around the Chinese Gardens, Sydney. As the girl, explores the various aspects of the garden – a reflective pond, the Willow trees, a Pagoda, Rock gardens, & a Tea House we are reminded of the original site in Shanghai (Yu Yuan gardens), and the legendary Willow Pattern motif, repeatedly imprinted upon ceramic. The design symbolizes the dialogue between the Orient & the West. The legendary teahouse in Shanghai was the location of the first projection of cinema in China (Lumiere Brothers 1896). The girl's imaginary & dreams of Shanghai (her grandmother Xenia & Rose, the cabaret dancer) haunt the surface of the garden, reflecting imagery of a time long past. What is the girl searching for, and why the sojourn in the garden? She finds an elaborate Chinese Box containing photographs, in opening the box she unlocks a conjured performance of Russian Jazz from Shanghai & the dance of Rose Sting, a dancer in the club

Movement No# 1 CHINESE BOX Songs of Sorrow Absence [The Father]



A set of red & silver fans glide across the screen to reveal chineseBOX titles. A black lacquer Chinese box lies open, its mirror becomes a screen. Reflected in the mirror, Nina transforms into a Chinese girl wandering around the Yu Yuan gardens in a traditional Cheong Sam dress. A woman's hand holds an old fashioned key in her palm. Russian émigré objects from China spill from the box. The screen cursor is a gold Chinese dragon.

Interaction with the mirror triggers a close-up of this simulated film sequence & voice text: ...chineseBOX...

A Chinese ornamental window frames a view of the old Shanghai Bund. The British Angel of Victory monument (later demolished by the invading Japanese) faces the waterfront façade & Sir Victor Sassoon's (Iraqi Jew) temple to capitalism

the old deco Cathay Hotel. Digital film sequence of the Chinese girl wandering around the Yu Yuan gardens in a traditional Cheong Sam dress. She discovers an altar with Russian émigré objects from China.

Text: The Cathay Hotel, Shanghai 1930's.

Nina Voice: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is intimate/confessional]:* ...do you remember me?...am I Western? ...am I Asian?... do you remember what I am?...am I Indonesian?...are you Western?...

Interaction with the film sequence triggers a close-up a black lacquer Chinese box that lies open, from its blue interior spills a pile of objects: a Pathe photograph of a Russian orchestra, a jade ring, a red Chinese fan, a silver bracelet, a red Soviet passport, a Chinese Cabaret dancer, a Russian ballerina, & a Willow pattern plate.



Sound Atmos: a pre-revolutionary modern Chinese pop tune (with a dominant Oboe theme) is playing on the radio & the sound of film rushing through the gates of a projector.

Nina Voice: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/memorialising]:* my father was born in China 1943 to Manchurian White Russian parents...they met in the steamy Metropolis of Shanghai...across the ballroom....my grandfather Sergei waving his orchestra leader's baton notices my elegant grandmother Xenia fresh from the Russian revolution... revolving in the arms of another big Taipan on the dance floor of the Cathay Hotel.

Nina Voice2: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/ memorialising]:* Xenia was dancing in the club... selling her Russian jewels on the steps of the Park Hotel, on old Nanjing Dong Lu...she buys a beautiful set of dance outfits & a set of studio portraits ...half her life later her photos & jewels are spread across her bed, all she could bring with her on the Chan Sha ship journey after Mao's red guards seize the Paris of the East....

Interaction with icons triggers the story pathways.

Pathe photograph of a Russian orchestra: triggers SFX fingers zoom across the keyboard of a piano...& drum solo.

Images: A newsprint article of Serge Ermoll & His Orchestra. Xenia is highlighted as "girl of my dreams".

Newsreader (archival voice): And within this city of three & half million Chinese, there's another city, a foreign settlement. Made up of the French Concession & the well known International Settlement. There the various powers, including Great Britain, The United States, & Japan had stationed detachments of troops to assist the police of the Shanghai Municipal Council in the preservation of peace & order & to protect the boundaries of the International Settlement.

North wind Mahjong icon: *[triggers movement to a collage of Serge Ermoll's life/ documents. SFX: Serge's trumpet solo & typing. Moving Image: A montage of Shanghai neon & Serge music documents – President of Shanghai Federation of Musicians.]* **Chinese Cabaret dance icon:** *[triggers movement to Rose cabaret dance sequence.]*

Jade ring icon: *[triggers movement to ballroom scene.]*

Music: Serge singing Cole Porter's "Night & Day" – "Night & day, you are the one, only you between the moon & under the sun, whether near to me or far it's no matter darling where you are....Night & Day". **Images:** Xenia sitting with friends watching Serge at the club. **Moving Image:** A montage of Serge's jazz orchestra is superimposed with dancing girls & Xenia's face. **Screen Text:** Your grandfather gave me the jade ring at the Majestic Hotel, Shanghai 1933. His Band was playing Cole Porter's Night & Day...

Nina Voice: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/ memorialising]:* Xenia kept few things...a string of Faberge

eggs from Babooshka & the jade ring Serge gave her with the Japanese Sakura flower...this may have curried favour...

Red Chinese fan: *[triggers movement to Chinese girl doing traditional dance.]* **Music:** "In Shanghai, In Shanghai", modern Chinese pop tune, lyrics describing the night lights of Shanghai. **Images:** The Chinese girl is opening the Chinese Box. The Chinese girl is dressed in a Japanese Kimono holding an ornamental shade. **Moving Image:** The Chinese girl dances about the place adorned in an ancient traditional outfit. **Screen Text:** There were many Shanghai's. There was the orientalist vision...a Hollywood illusion. The city was a melting pot of Chinese city, Anglo-American Shanghai, a prize of the opium wars - & the infamous French quarter - a mix of wealthy White Russian émigrés & mobster lair of the Chinese Green Gang.

Nina Voice: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/memorialising]:* little Serge's first language after Russian was French...his first school was the French school, located on Rue Albert Mercier in infamous French quarter.

Hollywood femme fatale: You need more than luck in Shanghai!

Silver bracelet icon: *[triggers movement to sepia toned colonial portraits of Xenia & collaged with Serge Ermoll's "Recordando" musical score.]* **Music:** "Pillow Book sounds", modern Chinese pop tune, legendary lyrics describing "Rose Rose I Love You". **Image:** Xenia is dressed in high modern Shanghai fashion - with a string of Faberge eggs around her neck, from Russia. **Moving Image:** Chinese couples dancing in Cheong Sam & Tuxedo suits to jazz music. **Screen Text:** Xenia Ermoll Shanghai (hand-written running writing). Your grandfather Sergei brought this bracelet for me from Harbin, Manchuria. But like me Xenia...it is Russian.

Nina Voice: *[trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/memorialising]:* Xenia was all haute couture & furs...attending Sergei's tea dances at the Majestic Hotel, Paramount, Ladlows Casanova...TsingTao Café...at one time Serge toured the Dutch East Indies & played in Batavia.

Red Soviet passport: *[triggers movement to a collage of a Chinese red fan & a document from the US Navy contracting Serge in China.]* **Music:** Mournful fragment of Serge Piano solo. **Image:** Xenia is wearing a Kimono during the Japanese occupation. **Screen Text:** Soviet citizenship was a blessing in

China after the war...But I was never going back to Russia.

SFX: [Japanese troops drills & soldiers] **Newsreader (archival voice):** The small bon-fires the Japanese lit in Manchuria was to grow & spread with uncontrollable fury [*war soundscape*].

Chinese Cabaret dancer: [*triggers movement to Rose cabaret dance sequence.*] **Screen Text:** ...Rose the dancer in the club where Serge's jazz orchestra played...her mother was Chinese...was her father a Russian musician? **Images:** The ceiling of the Cathay Hotel ballroom adorned with golden Chinese dragons. **Moving Image:** Rose performs a solo exotic dance superimposed over black & white film footage of a jazz orchestra band & couples dancing. Digital video sequences of the interior of a ballroom, chandeliers & stage where Serge's band once played.

Nina Voice: [*trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/memorialising*]: Rose Rose I Love You (*sing song*)....I know you are out there somewhere...I wonder where you are these days? (*sing song*)....

Russian ballerina: [*triggers movement to a collage of Asja Mercoolova the Russian ballerina.*] **Screen Text:** ...Xenia wanted me to be on the stage like Asja...Asja sailed for New York & married a Broadway musical director...her face on Harpers Bazaar 1949. **Images:** Collage of studio portraits of Asja in her ballet tou-tou & the cover of Harpers Bazaar magazine. **Music:** Fragment from Serge Ermoll (piano), Mickey Kaye (drums) & Sergei Korshoon's crooning Eastern European singing the song "Domes of Moscow".

Willow pattern plate: [*triggers movement to a Willow patterned plate.*] **Animated Images:** The design on the willow pattern plate comes to life in animation. The decorative motif of the Tea House is replaced by a colour photograph of the Yu Yuan tea house, the two dimensional Pagoda becomes a photograph of the real thing & interior shots of the blue stained glass windows. Nina is sitting inside the tea House. **Music:** "Firecrackers Shanghai", modern Chinese pop tune, lyrics a Chinese woman's voice. **Moving Image:** Through the window of a train we see a Pagoda & the girl Nina transforms into the Chinese girl. We see her looking at the Russian émigré objects.

Interaction with the Willow pattern plate triggers.

Open red door: [imagery: beautiful modern Chinese cover girls are plastered on a red door, where the Chinese symbol for Fortune should be painted, a Moa Tse Tung icon hanging where a Feng Shui mirror should be.] **Screen Text:** The Willow pattern teahouse (Huxinting Pavilion) Yu Yuan gardens...site for the greatest love story of all time...& location of the first ever projection of cinema in Shanghai, China, by Parisian brothers in early 20th century...the imagery haunts the ceramic surfaces...

Fan Icon: [SFX Chinese chimes] triggers montage of Serge Ermoll & orchestra documents, musical score, a photograph of Charlie Chaplin & Serge, Xenia smoking a cigarette, Chinese identity papers. **Screen text:** my grandfather a jazz big band leader in Shanghai at the majestic ballroom, Cathay Hotel & Astor House...Russian jazz from Shanghai...China. **Music:** "Firecrackers Shanghai", modern Chinese pop tune, lyrics a Chinese woman's voice.

Shanghai SingSong girl Screen: [SFX Chinese chimes] triggers montage of Serge Ermoll & orchestra documents, musical score, a photograph of Charlie Chaplin & Serge, Xenia smoking a cigarette, Chinese identity papers. **Image:** Two red doors are open to reveal a SingSong girl playing a deck of cards at a table. (her face resembles Xenia). Behind the bar is a Western man serving drinks. Plastered on the doors are elegant Shanghai ladies names: Rose & Orchid. A Shanghai dollar floats above the scene. **Screen text:** The SingSong house...Shanghai Lily...House of Sure Satisfaction...Hall of Beauties...

Newsreader (archival voice): And the police get wind of an opium den...the suspected house is surrounded & everybody in it arrested. **Music:** "Firecrackers Shanghai", modern Chinese pop tune, lyrics a Chinese woman's voice.

Nina Voice: [*trans-Atlantic accent echoes, the tone is dreamy/ memorialising*]: Among the most expensive were the quing guanren, the virgin courtesans. They were a kind of apprentice to de=flower whom was the privileged of the very rich...whatever rank, it was the dream of every SingSong girl (with transient blossom) – to become the wife of her patron....