



original works by
Michael Kieran
Harvey

PSYCHOSONATA

Michael Kieran Harvey | piano

with

Alister Barker | cello

Natsuko Yoshimoto | violin

Eugene Ughetti | percussion

Tristram Williams | trumpet

Ashley William Smith | bass clarinet

PSYCHOSONATA

A collection of Michael Kieran Harvey's compositions from 2007-2013 ranging in mood from the relatively serious to cheerful pastiche. Harvey is joined by the very brightest young instrumentalists Australia has to offer.



Psychosonata

(Piano Sonata #2) (27'43")

- 1 first section 9'42"
- 2 second section 9'09"
- 3 third section 8'50"

- 4 **Kursk** (poem) 1'04"
- 5 **Kursk**
(for cello and piano) 8'19"
- 6 **Fear**
(for violin and piano)
10'31"
- 7 **Makzurka**
(for solo piano) 3'02"
- 8 **Homage to Liszt**
(for percussion and piano)
8'19"
- 9 **Etude for Trumpet** in C
(for trumpet and piano)
6'14"
- 10 **City of Snakes**
(for B flat bass clarinet,
piano, bass and drums)
5'15"

All compositions by
Michael Kieran Harvey (b. 1961)



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Psychosonata (Piano Sonata #2, 2012)

Psychosonata was commissioned by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, and premiered at the RANZCP 2012 Congress in Hobart, 22 May 2012.

I was always fascinated with the work of Francis Bacon, and my musical choices and interpretations gravitated to works that had a similar primeval anarchy, but within a highly rigorous discipline. The cover art of Brett Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* I found very compelling as an allegory of the respectably dressed Ayn Rand corporate monster. In this sonata I had also in mind something of the dark thickly-layered use of colour of Frank Auerbach, especially his paintings of heads, where he tries to depict psychological intensity with a veritable catatonia of lines and colour. The structure, the head, is the sonata form - in three distinct sections - but the storm engulfing it is a restless sequence of numbers, occasionally shot through with scarifying lightning and abrupt silences.

There is no narrative. The

entire work is constructed on the bijective numeration system, that is, all nine Hindu-Arabic numerals without the concept of zero. There is an obsessive exploration of these numerals which constrains and controls the musical terrain in an artificial and additive fashion - almost robotic - rather like what I understand to be the unsympathetic thought processes of the psychopath, or the seemingly disordered thought of the psychotic.

I: crotchet = 120
II: minim = 35 (with optional improvised cadenza)
III: dotted crotchet = 120

Kursk (for cello and piano, 2007)

This work is dedicated to my cellist sister-in-law Clara Tenniswood. I am indebted to Alister Barker for his fierce advocacy of the work, premiering it in Melbourne in 2007 and recording it here in 2013. The work explores the psychological impact of a nightmarish situation confronting the hapless crew of the Kursk. Brutal technology fails, giving way to terror and the consolations of memory, here represented by amorphous fragments of Bach.

The work ends in a mood of rage and defiance. There are three main sections: an

asymmetrical moto perpetuo which gives way to a more sentimental counterpoint incorporating a virtuosic cello cadenza, the finale bubbling into desperate gasps for breath. The work was inspired by Saxby Pridmore's gripping poem of the same name. He is also the narrator on this recording.

KURSK

We only have one torch.
We are keeping it turned off
Most of the time.

We are lying on top bunks
We have the air in front of us
Our backs against the Barents
Sea.

We have children in Murmansk.
We are in a metal case
On the ice floor.

We only have one torch
We are keeping it turned off
Most of the time.

We are living up our oxygen.
We felt the piss of terror first
But we are over that.

We have faithful wives waiting.
We only hope
The batteries don't run out.

We only have one torch
We don't want to die
In the dark.

Saxby Pridmore
Quadrant July-August 2006

"The Kursk was a nuclear powered submarine; the pride of the Russian Navy. It was four stories high and the largest attack submarine ever built. It was named after the Russian city, famous for the Battle of Kursk, in 1943, the largest tank battle ever fought.

"In 2000 an accidental explosion caused the sinking of the Kursk in the Barents Sea.

"Rescue expertise was offered by British and Norwegian teams, but these were refused by Russia. The Russian President did not interrupt his holiday on the Black Sea.

"All this emerged later. The poem was based on the first news reports and written for the condemned crew, who were alive at the time."

Saxby Pridmore

Fear (for violin and piano, 2011)

I am grateful to Arjun von Caemmerer for the inspiration and rhythmic template for this piece through his collection of haiku entitled *Tripples*. I am thankful also to Natsuko Yoshimoto for encouraging me to write a piece for her superb violin artistry. I am indebted to Edwin Paling for his editorial advice on aspects of violin technique. *Fear* was commissioned and premiered as part of the AGSA's 2011 conference at the ABC studios in Adelaide. Apart from a few devices such as a restricted range of the piano (only sounding above C4) and frequent time changes, the title of this duo can best be summed up in these words:

"Other passions besides self-esteem are common sources of error; of these perhaps the most important is fear. Fear sometimes operates directly, by inventing rumors of disaster in war-time, or by imagining objects of terror, such as ghosts; sometimes it operates indirectly, by creating belief in something comforting, such as the

elixir of life, or heaven for ourselves and hell for our enemies. Fear has many forms — fear of death, fear of the dark, fear of the herd, and that vague generalized fear that comes to those who conceal from themselves their more specific terrors. Until you have admitted your own fears to yourself, and have guarded yourself by a difficult effort of will against their mythmaking power, you cannot hope to think truly about many matters of great importance, especially those with which religious beliefs are concerned.

"Fear is the main source of superstition and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom, in the pursuit of truth as in the endeavor after a worthy manner of life."
— Bertrand Russell: *An outline of Intellectual Rubbish* (1943)

Makzurka (for solo piano, 2011)

Makzurka was commissioned by the Melbourne Recital Centre for the 70th Birthday concert of the great Australian musician, Stephen McIntyre, on 27 May 2012.

This work is seventy bars long and is based on the idea of Chopin's *Berceuse*, a work particularly esteemed by Professor McIntyre.

Homage to Liszt (for percussion and piano, 2011)

This work for piano and percussion was premiered in May 2011 at ANAM (Australian National Academy of Music) and began as fragments of information shuttled between myself and Eugene Ughetti via the internet. Such use of technology in the compositional process we considered to be what Liszt might be doing if still alive in his 200th year.

The high impact of Liszt on the evolution of modernist music cannot be overestimated. He was a catalyst for freeing music of its constraint and conservatism, foreseeing many of the critical theory and technological innovations of the 20th century artform.

This *Homage* is a work of genuine admiration, gratitude, humour and barefaced plagiarism in memory of the great Ferenc Liszt. It is in four sections: *Ballade* (based on Liszt's favourite interval, the diminished fifth alternating with stacked fifth chords); *Waltz* (a re-imagining of his *Transcendental etude* no.11 with Dr Arjun von Caemmerer performing *Liszt Fever*); *Csardas* (a frenetic Hungarian peasant workout); and *Consolation* (which uses a 12-tone serial note-row referencing Liszt's

For MKH

LISZT FEVER

In stolid Berlin in cold December

Franz' thirty years spark *Liszt Fever*; newborn!
Locketts and brooches clasp close His Hair torn
(Lustrous mementos that flame *Remember!*)

Hands prize His Gloves, which another adorn,
And swooning and mooning, Flora and Faun
Hoard His Cigars, extinct of red ember,
To fill their clefts (and annex His Member...)

Strings that Liszt snapped are purloined for a wrist;
Dregs of His Coffee—secreted in glass:
Such germs fed this Fever. Is it now past?

Flashy jocks strut with electric guitar,
Fretboard *frottage* that fuels fancies of tryst—
Orbiters merely: His Star burns afar.

Liszt Fever (also known as *Lisztomania*) was a contagion of fan frenzy directed towards the famous concert pianist Franz Liszt that began in Berlin in 1841 and swept across Europe. *Liszt Fever* preceded the mass hysteria of *Beatlemania* by over a century. — Dr Arjun von Caemmerer

later work) - framed by a be-bop-influenced *Prologue* (a 7-against-8 beat "Gaussian clock" cycle) and *Epilogue* (this is a retrograde prime number sequence from 19).

In this version I have used programmed percussion

sounds with the piano. A later version for solo piano and poet was presented in the Hobart Town Hall honouring the great environmentalist Peter Cundall, to whom the work is dedicated.

Etude for Trumpet in C (2011)

Etude for Trumpet is dedicated to my trumpeter son Raphael Harvey. This recording by Tristram Williams and myself is the premiere performance, and I am grateful to Tristram for his heroic advocacy of the work, which makes supreme demands on the technique of the trumpeter. The etude requires a high degree of synchronisation between the two parts, and is in four sections: two dance-like passages exploring the Fibonacci sequence (3, 5, 8, 13) in all musical parameters frame a 13-beat mock Latin-American section followed by a muted jazz trumpet section. The etude explores issues of stamina and accuracy as well as stylistic and rhythmic understanding and requires a mature virtuoso technique.

City of Snakes (for B flat bass clarinet, piano, bass and drums, 2013)

Dedicated to my daughter, Isabella Harvey, *City of Snakes* was a commission by the Tasmanian video artist and musician Leigh Hobba. This version of the piece was premiered by the acclaimed Australian clarinettist Ashley Smith on 1st August 2013 at the University of West Australia. The title refers to the city of Hobart, regularly encircled by fire, with a nod to Zappa's *City of Tiny Lites*.

The style is unrelentingly commercial, but within an asymmetrical time signature of 5/4, thereby making it difficult to dance to. The work allows for extended bass clarinet techniques such as slap-tonguing and optional improvisation at the performer's discretion.



Australian pianist and composer **Michael Kieran Harvey** was born in Sydney and studied piano with Alan Jenkins, Gordon Watson, and at the Liszt Academy, Budapest, under Sándor Falvai. Based in Tasmania, his career has been notable for its diversity and wide repertoire. He has especially promoted the works of Australian and contemporary composers and recorded many solo CDs on various labels. As a pianist Harvey's awards include the Grand Prix in the Ivo Pogorelich Competition, USA (1993 - the world's richest at the time), the Debussy Medal, Paris (1986), the Australian government's Centenary Medal (2002) and the 2009

APRA award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music. His compositions have been performed in Europe, the UK, North and South America and Asia, in addition to major Australian festivals. The Michael Kieran Harvey Scholarship was established in 2006 to encourage future directions in Australian keyboard art music. His compositions are held at the AMC, while a list of his recordings can be found at www.mkharvey.com

Alister Barker studied at the Royal Northern College of Music with Kim Bak Dinitzen and Karine Georgian. Since returning to Australia in 2005, he has performed frequently in Melbourne as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. Alister attended the Australian National Academy of Music between 2007 and 2009 where he commissioned Harvey's "Kursk" amongst other Australian compositions. He performs with Orchestra Victoria, Victorian Opera, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, The Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and numerous other organisations. Further details about Alister can be found at www.alisterbarker.com



Born in Japan, **Natsuko Yoshimoto** began playing the violin at the age of three. She studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and Royal Northern College of Music in England and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. She received direct guidance and teaching under Lord Menuhin and Wen Zhou Li. She has won many awards and prizes in international competitions including the Gold Medal in both the prestigious 1994 Shell/London Symphony Orchestra Competition and the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa Award. In 2007 Natsuko was presented with the Iwaki Award for outstanding achievement as a Japanese artist. In great demand as a soloist, she has appeared with many world renowned orchestras.



Natsuko is currently the Concertmaster with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. She was the leader of the Australian String Quartet and then the Grainger Quartet until the end of 2008.

She has given many world premieres of works by Australia's most prominent composers and has recorded for Virgin Classics, ABC Classics, Melba Records and Tall Poppies.

Natsuko plays on a Nicolo Amati dated 1650.

Eugene Ughetti is a percussionist, composer, conductor and artistic director of Speak Percussion. His work focuses on new chamber music and hybrid-arts collaboration. Eugene has worked with most of Australia's leading new music ensembles including conducting *Elision* in the world premiere of Richard Barrett's *Construction* in the 2011 Huddersfield Festival. He has worked with some of the world's finest composers including Steve Reich and Pierre Boulez and with conductors Valery Gergiev, James Levine and Charles Dutoit. He has composed works for The Australian Ballet, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Bionic Ear Institute.



Tristram Williams maintains a busy international career as a leading young soloist, ensemble musician, improviser and educator.

Williams is particularly interested in new music, and has worked with many international and Australian composers, and has had many solo works composed especially for his unique talent. Williams is also an avid improviser, and has an electro-acoustic group, based at SIAL sound studios at RMIT, called DIODE.

Williams was Associate Principal Trumpet of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at age 21, before resigning in 2006 after 7 years to concentrate on his solo career. He is a laureate of major international trumpet competitions in Brussels and Eindhoven, and was awarded a prize from Karlheinz Stockhausen at the 2006 Stockhausen Interpreters Course. Tristram Williams was the winner of a 2007 Symphony Australia Young Performer Award and a 2008 Churchill Fellowship.



Ashley William Smith has emerged as one of Australia's most exciting young clarinetists.

Ashley has performed as a soloist with several of Australia's major orchestras and his Melbourne premiere of the Lindberg Concerto was ranked amongst The Age's Top 5 Classical Performances. Ashley performs extensively in Australia with the Australian String Quartet, the Syzygy Ensemble, as well as in recital with his duo partner, pianist Aura Go. Internationally, Ashley performs with organisations including Bang on a Can, the Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center and with festivals including the Beijing Modern Music Festival and Tokyo Festival of Experimental Music.

Ashley is a Fellow of the Australian National Academy of Music and a



Freedman Fellow of the Music Council of Australia. He is a graduate of the University of Western Australia and recently received a Master of Music from Yale University and was additionally awarded the Thomas Nyfenger Prize, one of the School of Music's highest honours.



In 2004, **Saxby Pridmore** was Director of Psychological Medicine at the Royal Hobart Hospital, Tasmania. He has been State Advisor, Psychiatric Services for the Tasmanian Department of Health and a senior lecturer in Psychiatry at the University of Tasmania. He lives in Hobart. In 2000 Pridmore published *The Psychiatric Interview: a guide to history taking and the mental state examination*. He has published widely on psychiatry, and is one of Australia's most distinguished and prolific poets. Pridmore's artistic collaboration with

Harvey goes back to the year 2006 when he was the dedicatee of Harvey's first piano sonata, and he was also instrumental in facilitating the RANZCP commission for *Psychosonata* in 2012



Dr Arjun von Caemmerer is a Hobart-based general medical practitioner, writer and teacher of Iyengar Yoga. His work includes poetry (especially concrete/visual), CD review, short story and essay. He has been published in *The Medical Journal of Australia*, *Extempore*, *EXT2012*, *The Rondo Hatton Report*, *australianjazz.net*, *Unusual Work*, *Yoga Rahasya* and on Move Records. Arjun collaborated with composer/pianist Michael Kieran Harvey on his Frank Zappa homage *48 Fugues for Frank*, which premiered at Hobart Mona Foma (2010) and subsequently appeared on Move Records.

Stephen McIntyre is one of Australia's most eminent pianists and teachers. He has performed as soloist and chamber music player in many countries, and is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Music at the University of Melbourne. In 2003, he was the recipient of the Sir Bernard Heinze Award for distinguished contribution to music in Australia, and in 2007 he was made a member of the Order of Australia (AM).



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Photo page 12: Zan Wimberley



Other recordings that include compositions by Michael Kieran Harvey:
MD 3339 – 48 fugues for Frank (homage to Frank Zappa)
MD 3329 – Elektra
MD 3315 – Broadway Boogie
MD 3288 – Rabid Bay



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