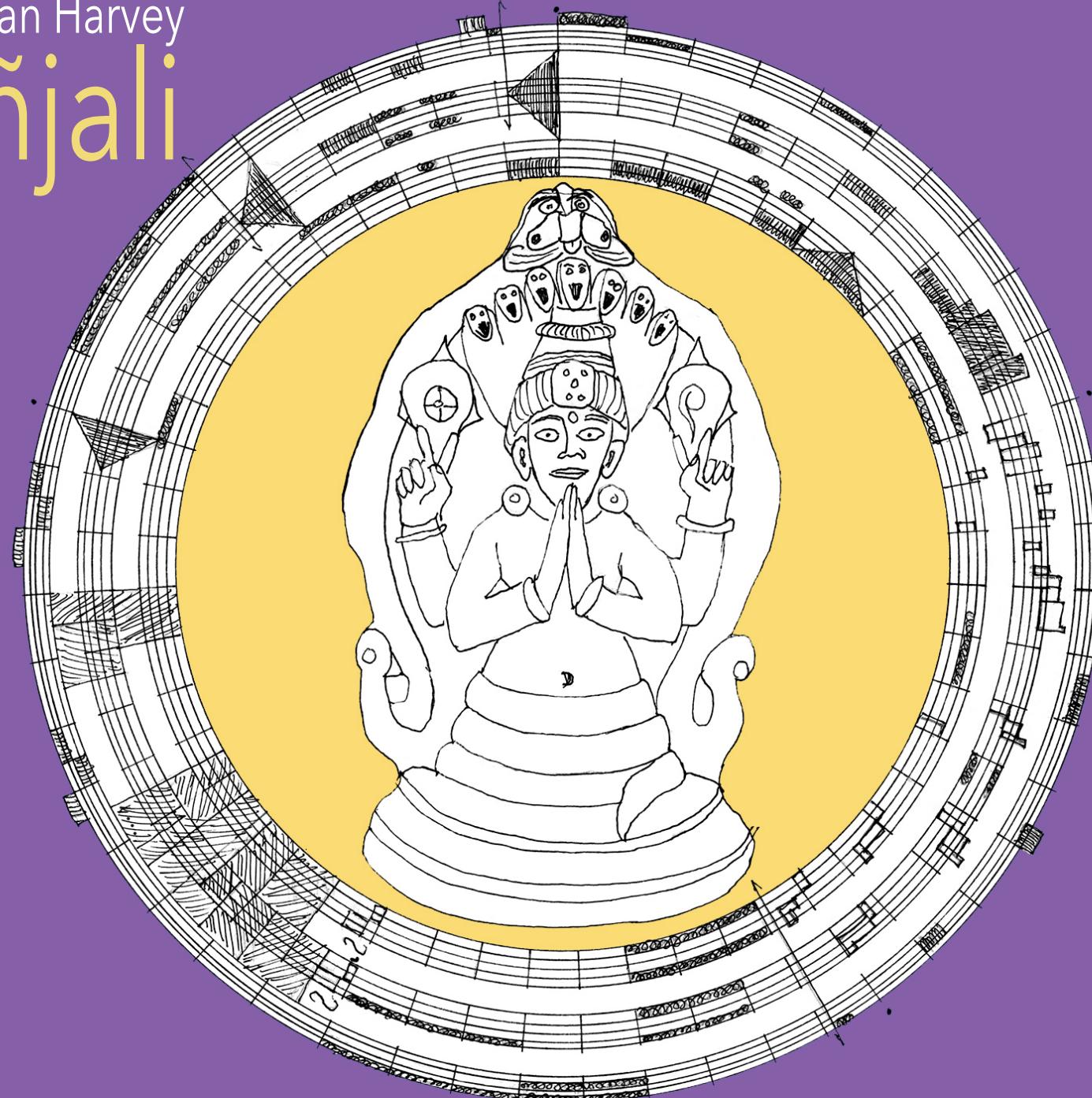


Michael Kieran Harvey

move

# Patañjali



A celebration of Patañjali's Yoga-Sūtra in music and āsana

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a celebration of Patañjali's Yoga-Sūtra in music and āsana (2015)  
composed by Michael Kieran Harvey



Michael Kieran Harvey | keyboards

Eugene Ughetti | percussion

Arabella Teniswood-Harvey | piano

Arjun von Caemmerer | āsana

**1 I – Samādhi Pāda (Meditative Absorption)** 14'56"

Recording total playing time 48'39"

**2 II – Sādhana Pāda (Practice)** 12'55"

Performance video playing time 57'13"  
(see the Move website for information)

**3 III – Vibhūti Pāda (Mystic Powers)** 5'25"

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**4 IV – Kaivalya Pāda (Absolute Independence)** 8'55"

**5 V – Conclusion (Mandala)** 6'09"

# Patañjali – for two keyboards and percussion (2015)

A celebration of Patañjali's Yoga-Sūtra in music and āsana dedicated to Dr Arjun von Caemmerer

The trio Patañjali is a musical interpretation of Patañjali's classical treatise on the yogic understanding of mind and consciousness, as syncretized in Dr von Caemmerer's book *Pieces of 8 – versions of Patañjali's Yoga-Sūtra*.

A catalogue of yoga āsanas (yoga postures) was performed live by Dr von Caemmerer, his tribute to Yogāchārya Sri BKS Iyengar (1918–2014). Accompanying these āsanas was a trio of instrumentalists performing the score.

The music does not seek to follow any particular fashion, whether it be a postmodern deconstruction of The Yoga-Sūtra or a faithful transcription of Indian music into a Westernized context, but instead is a personal response to the wealth of ideas and structural inspiration inherent in the texts. The stylistic contrasts within the cycle are therefore deliberately extreme.

The interaction within the work between acoustic and electronic sounds is a metaphor of the dominance of the latter over the former in Western societies, and increasingly in developing societies.

The complete text of The Yoga-Sūtra was used as a template for opening out musical possibilities that may or may not be complete in themselves. This idea reflects the multiple interpretational possibilities of the Sanskrit texts into English as evidenced in *Pieces of 8*. The proportions of the groupings of the sūtras generate the entire musical parameters of the work, from the opening chords to the closing interference pattern. The approach to interpretation of the texts is of

constant variation, in the manner of the "hermeneutic circle", where interpretation and the music itself are in constant exchange, defying definitive resolution.

Central to the understanding of the Yoga sūtras are the following concepts, grouped in fives, which give the composition its formal skeleton of five movements:

- 1 Five Tanmātra – the infra-atomic potentialities of: smell, taste, sight, touch and hearing;
- 2 Five Bhūta – the gross and great elements: earth, water, fire, air and space;
- 3 Five Kośas – the sheaths: structural, physiologic, mental/emotional, intellectual, spiritual;
- 4 Five Jñānendriya – the senses of perception: nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears;
- 5 Five Karmendriya – the organs of action for: prehension/manipulation, locomotion, communication, generation and excretion;
- 6 Five Vrittis – the fields of cogitation: valid knowledge, erroneous knowledge, imagination, sleep and memory;
- 7 Five Kleśas – the sources of affliction: ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion and the fear of extinction;
- 8 Five "Yogic Vitamins" (Iyengar) – the aids to practice: trust, fortitude, recollection, meditative absorption and insight;
- 9 Five Yama – the components of external discipline: non-violence, truthfulness, not stealing, moderation and absence of grasping;
- 10 Five Niyama – the components of internal discipline: clarity, contentment, application, investigation and surrender.

As can be seen, the number five is of deep significance in the taxonomy of qualities according to The Yoga Sūtra. It is perhaps not coincidental that there are five fingers on the human hand, and ten in total. The entire work has a duration of 50 (5x10) minutes, within which the durations of the individual movements 1–4 are in proportion to the structure of the groupings of the sūtras in "Pieces of 8". The last movement is an ecstatic dance, an active mandala or concluding meditation on the sūtras, which takes the real-time duration of the cycle to a multiple of five (in this case 50 minutes, once short breaks between movements are taken into account).

The āsanas were not choreographed to the music, nor was the music composed with the specific āsanas in mind that were used in the premiere performances. There were practical as well as artistic reasons for this: complete artistic freedom to react to the music was granted to Arjun von Caemmerer as his expertise as a yoga practitioner demanded such respect. Also, avoidance of injury and the question of stamina during the 50-minute work were considerations of high priority. However, the sequence of postures was carefully conceived over many months to coincide with the computer mock-up of the work, hence the precise timings required in performance. If the work is to be performed without the āsanas, then these timing restrictions may be relaxed. The effect of the music with the visual aspect of the āsanas was designed to offset any preconceptions about what an "appropriate" accompanying musical score should sound like. It was hoped that a more surprising and unconventional outcome would ensue with the combination of these disparate elements of a Western "art music" score with the traditional Indian āsanas.

The motivation behind the composition of *Patañjali* arose from a desire to offer another interpretation of

The Yoga-Sūtra, framing the ancient text within the Western artmusic tradition. The structure of The Yoga-Sūtra therefore became re-interpreted as a purely instrumental musical structure. This response was in the manner of the hermeneutic circle, as expressed in fragment 181 of Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* (1901), where the 'positivism which halts at phenomena' is refuted in the proclamation: 'No, facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations.'

Music therefore becomes another method of interpretation of these texts, at once looking at the whole 196 sūtras in their translated forms as the book *Pieces of 8*, through the various four pādas or chapters, down to the individual sūtras, and even further (in movement two) to the level of the individual syllables of the sūtras.

### **Movement 1 – I – Samādhi Pāda (Meditative Absorption) 14'56"**

This movement is overture-like, processional, with a chiasmus (inverted mirror) form, and an overall feeling of deceleration emphasized through several passages of tempo modulation. The pitch material is derived from a sequence of chords stated in bar one. These chords are derived from the text proportions of the Patañjali sūtras (the four Pādas, or chapters), according to techniques outlined in the Schillinger method, which manipulates mathematical proportions to extract a musical result. All subsequent rhythmic material is in turn derived from these primary chords, using techniques of time-point and durational sets, among others.

Surrounding the central section, which is an organum-style treatment of the opening melodic material, are two sections of static organ chords, which shift and intermingle across the acoustic space

reminiscent of spiced perfumes. The use of traditional Indian musical devices such as tālas (rhythmic patterns or motives) and rāgas (scales or modes) is avoided throughout the entire work, as a reflection of the palimpsest-like nature of the eight translations into English of the original Sanskrit sūtras. The music seeks to reflect the same interpretive freedom as the multi-layered English text, without changing the essential meaning.

### **Movement 2 – II – Sādhana Pāda (Practice) 12'55"**

This is a contrastingly ruminative duet between harmonium, a traditional Indian instrument, and marimba, an instrument long associated with Africa. Both these fixed pitch instruments have restricted and overlapping ranges, but greatly contrasting methods of sound production. The connection of the harmonium with Protestant colonial imperialism in the form of drone-like hymns is an inevitable association in this movement.

The rhythmic scheme is based on a transcription of The Yoga-Sūtra chant (as intoned by Pandit Sri ST Nāgarāj on a recording issued in 2006 by the Ramāmani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, Pune). This produces a constantly varying meter regulated by recurring subgroupings akin to the flow of speech, resulting in a variety of asymmetrical phrases which are then embellished in free counterpoint.

The melodic and harmonic schemes are based on the chords of the first movement exposition. The overall form is dominated by the proportions of the Fibonacci sequence. The movement is 13 minutes duration, beginning low and quietly. Referring to passages from the first movement the parts build in complexity to a climax point at the 8 minute mark (bar

313) employing clusters and extreme dissonance.

This is followed by a disintegration of the relationship between the two instruments over the remaining 5 minutes, first manifest as virtuosic solo cadenzas, then with increasingly sparse interchanges between the parts. There is a distant reference to Indian music in the use of sitar-like drone figures in the harmonium part, albeit with ambiguous and constantly shifting tonal centers.

At the very end, where the disintegration is almost complete, some very high harmonium notes provide an "inverted" pedal-point signalling the coda of the work but also a counter-balance to the low drone which has featured against the *cantus firmus*.

### **Movement 3 – III – Vibhūti Pāda (Mystic Powers) 5'25"**

The graphic score of movement three, showing the seated figure of Patañjali surrounded by a wheel representing the music, can be played as an alternative score or used as a template for improvisation, *ad libitum*.

Fibonacci proportions continue to direct the shape of the music through real time in this movement. The pulse is now a regular 6/4 and the crotchet is equal to the duration of a second. The entire movement lasts 5 minutes. Each of the five sections is ten bars long. The gestures are stark and simplified, condensed from material presented in the previous two movements.

The illustration represents the circle of repeated life and death - *samsāra*. Within the circle is the seated figure of Patañjali, surrounded by the seven serpents. The number five represents the pentagram, a symbol of life, the third number in the Fibonacci sequence, and also of central importance to the ideas of The Yoga-Sūtra.

Out of the sound of the 3 finger cymbals emerge the deep gong-like tones of the piano, the upper partials refracted by its electronic counterpart. The slow dwelling on each of the reified harmonies of movement one in itself is an interpretation of the Sanskrit of the third Pāda, which is a more internalized focus on the “mystic powers” of The Yoga-Sūtra.

Percussive objects foreign to the concert hall introduce anarchy and represent the dispossessed. Stasis and decay are constantly catalyzed, first intertwined with passages of quintuplet counterpoint, then massive cluster blows at the golden section of 3 minutes, then torn apart by shredding gestures. A brief trumpet melody struggles to survive in the void, but is crushed.

#### **Movement 4 – IV – Kaivalya Pāda (Absolute Independence) 8'55"**

Movement 4 begins in rhythmic Chaos after the destruction of Movement 3 using a pitch class set and duration set from Movement 1. This 4<sup>th</sup> movement is based on a version of the half-diminished seventh opening chords of Movement 1 now morphed by the addition of a perfect fourth into so-called “Prometheus” chords (named after Scriabin’s piano Symphony based on the myth of Prometheus).

A ballade for two keyboards and vibraphone, the music floats on a sea of resonance, of light, of irradiation provided by the sustaining pedals of all three instruments. The meter is fundamentally 3/4, half the value of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Movement, but stretching out into asymmetrical balloons of rising aggrandizing sequences (7/4, 5/4, 4/4) at the beginning and end. The middle section uses quintuplets to accelerate the pulse through metric modulation. The golden section at bar 88 (from a total of 143) establishes the tonality

briefly of F sharp minor. The climax is a virtuosic fight between the vibraphone and both keyboards at the two-thirds mark (bars 106–107, approximately 6 minutes out of about nine overall), which settles back into a fragmentation of the opening, lightly scored between the instruments.

#### **Movement 5 – V – Conclusion (Mandala) 6'09"**

An ecstatic dance movement scored for drumkit, piano, synthesizer, organ and electric piano ends the cycle. In rondo form, with a meter based on a multiple of five (20/8), an oblique reference to the 20 fingers of the keyboardists, this is an energetic exploration of the juxtaposed half-diminished seventh chords of Movement 1 now embedded in looping one-bar chord sequences.

These sequences represent the labyrinthine qualities of the mandala, but here used to create a feeling of increasing excitement rather than meditation. The antithesis or negation to the formalized processional nature of movement one, movement five is nevertheless related formally and tonally in a number of ways.

There is very little let-up in the energetic momentum of the music. Instead, complex contrapuntal passages are contrasted with unison linear passages that pay homage to the Indian virtuosic classical music tradition. Contrast between sections is achieved through metric modulation, again occurring (as in movement four) through the breakdown of groupings of five to achieve a slower, more deliberate pace at the point in real time approximating to the golden section. Here the pulse “rests” in 4/4, before returning once again to the opening meter via a rapid stacked-hexachord scale.

This recapitulation explores restless modulation

of the material in the first section, and the energy generated is finally released in a coda of ever-accelerating pulses, the whole exploding in a final interference pattern of 9 against 8.

Michael Kieran Harvey, Hobart 1 April 2015



**First performance –**

17 Jan. 2015, Baha'i Centre, Hobart

**Composer, keyboards, percussion –**

Michael Kieran Harvey

**Āsana** – Dr Arjun von Caemmerer

**Percussion soloist** – Eugene Ughetti

**Keyboards and trumpet –**

Dr Arabella Teniswood-Harvey

**Sound** – Blake Stickland

For the CD and DVD:

**Multi-track audio recording** – Blake Stickland

**Mastering CD and DVD** – Martin Wright

**Photos** – Isabella Harvey

**Cover illustration** (a graphic score realisation of movement 3 *Vibhūti Pāda*) – Michael Kieran Harvey

**Video** – Bruno Cayoun

(see the Move website for information about the performance video)

**Instrumentation (amplified):**

**Keyboard 1**

Electric Piano (Kawai ES7)

Synthesizer (Korg KROME)

Found percussion tree - 5 distinctly different metal pipes plus hammer, heavy metal chain, large grate, Tibetan finger cymbals (1 pair)

**Keyboard 2**

Grand piano – Organ (Kawai MP8) – Trumpet

**Percussion**

Drumkit

Marimba

Vibraphone

4 Tympani

3 Gongs

Tam tam

Bowed cymbal

Tibetan finger cymbals (2 pairs)

Swanee whistle

## Michael Kieran Harvey

Michael Kieran Harvey was born in Sydney and studied piano with Alan Jenkins, Gordon Watson, and at the Liszt Academy, Budapest, under Sándor Falvai. 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 CDs on various labels.

Harvey's compositions have been performed in Europe, the UK, North and South America and Asia, in addition to major Australian festivals. His hour-long homage to Zappa **48 Fugues For Frank** was premiered at Mona Foma 2010 and received the AMC Tasmanian state award for composition in 2011. His **Psychosonata** (piano sonata #2) was presented at MONA in their 2012 Synesthesia festival.

Respected musicologist, composer and performer Michael Hannan wrote of Harvey's 2014 **Psychosonata** CD (Move MD 3368): "like many a virtuoso performer turned composer, Harvey's music often stretches the boundaries of performance technique...The **Psychosonata** CD is an enjoyable and often dazzling listening experience." Harvey's Trio Deus est Fabula was premiered at the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's 2014 Metropolis series at the Melbourne Recital Centre. His most recent work is **Patañjali**, a 50-minute ensemble piece to be premiered at Mona Foma 2015.

Harvey gave the 2012 Peggy Glanville-Hicks address on the state of contemporary Australian

artmusic to acclaim and controversy.

As a pianist Harvey's awards include the Grand Prix in the Ivo Pogorelich Piano Competition, USA (1993 - the world's richest at the time), the Debussy Medal, the Guilde Francaise Concours Paris (1986), the Australian Government's Centenary Medal (2002), and the 2009 APRA award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music.

Recent collaborations include the Chinese-Australian Typhoon ensemble with Brian Ritchie, the fluxus-influenced Slave Pianos and Indonesian punk outfit Punkasila, James Hullick and JOLT, and the Plexus piano trio.

The Michael Kieran Harvey Scholarship was established in 2006 to encourage future directions in Australian keyboard art music, and to date has launched the international professional careers of six exceptional Australian musicians.

[mkharvey.com](http://mkharvey.com)

## Eugene Ughetti

"Off on another challenging acoustic adventure, Melbourne percussionist Eugene Ughetti is currently showing why he is one of this country's most talented artists in the field of advanced contemporary music." *The Age*

Eugene Ughetti is a percussionist, composer, conductor and the 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, 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, ABC and Bionic Ear Institute. His works have been presented internationally and have won him a place as a finalist in the APRA/AMCOS and AMC Art Music Awards as well as the Melbourne Prize for Music.

Eugene won the Best Music Award in the 2012 Melbourne Fringe Festival for the AUTOMATION project, and is the winner of the inaugural Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship, OZCO Creative Fellowship (Early Career) and the MCA/Freedman Fellowship for Classical Music.

## Arabella Teniswood-Harvey

Born in Tasmania, Arabella Teniswood-Harvey studied piano in Melbourne where, in 1999, she was one of the few elite young musicians awarded full scholarship for the prestigious Australian National Academy of Music's inaugural Advanced Performance Program. Now teaching classical piano, music history and art theory at the University of Tasmania, Arabella maintains an active performance career as a chamber musician.

Arabella has three CDs available on the Move Records label: *The Ring of Bone: The Piano Music of Elisabeth Lutyens; Lennox Berkeley complete music for violin and piano*, and solo violin; and *Kenneth Leighton music for violin and piano* (the latter two with English violinist Edwin Paling). Alexandra Coghlan reviewed the Leighton CD in Gramophone (2013) writing: "Teniswood-Harvey articulates Leighton's often unexpected rhythms vividly, by turns cushioning and whetting the violin's chromatic blade. Paling finds some rich and blackened shades for the low register of 'Metamorphoses' and the modernist nightscape of 'Nocturne'..." Of the Berkeley CD, Peter Dickinson wrote in Gramophone (2013): "These vivid performances...are outstanding and make the best possible case for a full revival of their discoveries. A revelatory CD, well recorded and documented too."

In addition to her musical talents, Arabella is also an art historian and holds a doctorate degree from the University of Tasmania. Research for her dissertation considered James McNeill Whistler's

interest in music and how it influenced his creation of art. Her articles have been published in The British Art Journal, Music and Art and The Burlington Magazine. She has presented lecture-recitals at the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow, Scotland; the Freer Gallery of Art (Washington DC) and at Colby College Museum of Art (Maine, USA).

## Arjun von Caemmerer

Dr Arjun von Caemmerer is a Hobart-based medical practitioner, Iyengar Yoga practitioner/teacher and writer. In 1995 (with Naomi Cameron) he established The Hobart School of Iyengar Yoga.

Arjun's *Pieces of 8*, written in celebration of Yogāchārya Sri BKS Iyengar's 88th birthday, appropriated and juxtaposed eight different translations of Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtra*. This book served as the initial stimulus for Michael Kieran Harvey's composition *Patañjali*. In a personal tribute to Sri BKS Iyengar (1918-2014), Arjun choreographed and performed a series of yogāsanās (yoga postures) for the premiere performances of *Patañjali* at Hobart MONA FOMA in January 2015.

Arjun's writing has appeared in The Medical Journal of Australia, extempore, Famous Reporter, australianjazz.net, Unusual Work, The Rondo Hatton Report, Yoga Rahasya, and on Michael Kieran Harvey's Move Records CDs *48 Fugues for Frank* and *Psychosonata*. A selection of Arjun's writing, *Vice Versa*, is forthcoming on Collective Effort Press.