

INK GAMES
presented in April 2016 by



Friday 8th, Polish Consulate

Friday 15th, Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House

Ink Games – Blank Music (2016), Andrew Kennedy (Australia)

Ecosaisse (2007), Kristofer Spike (Australia)

Ink Games – Interpretation (2016)

Edward Harvey Portrait (1993), Alan Holley (Australia)

Double Concerto for Viola and Clarinet (1911), Max Bruch (Germany)

INTERVAL (15 mins)

Frenzy and Folly, Fire and Joy (2004), Graeme Hair (Australia)

Ink Games – Busking (2016)

Sonata for Flute and Piano (1953), Tadeusz Szeligowski (Poland)

Ink Games – Octopus (2016)

Ink Games – Last Goodbye (2016)

Michelle Urquhart	viola/violin	Gregory Kinda	piano
Andrew Kennedy	clarinet/artistic director	Ewa Kowalski	flute

In tonight's performance, you will be aware of the different relationships between performer and composer, divided or brought together by certain intervals of space, culture, time. You are invited to decide for yourself how that changes the experience.

The next Hourglass Ensemble appearance in Sydney will be a collaboration with the Barega Saxophone Quartet – SUNDAY 31 JULY, 2.30PM, Utzon Room, Sydney Opera house.

Ink Games – flute, clarinet, viola, piano

(world premiere)

1. Blank Music
2. Interpretation
3. Busking
4. Octopus
5. The Last Goodbye

The piece can be played by any number of performers but ideally four to six musicians with different instruments and no more than one vocalist. The movements are intended to appear interspersed through a concert program, and to be altered and interpreted in any manner by the performers.

The use of ink in art and communication is ubiquitous through cultures, countries and ages. **Andrew Kennedy** (born 1978, Brisbane) was pondering whether following a musical manuscript from up to 500 years ago was somehow stale, not ever able to truly represent the composer's vision. The concept of **Ink Games** is, therefore, to show an immediate interaction with performers and composer, indeed, for music to be played the moment it is written down. It's also to draw a distinction between recorded music and live music, where there are many more possibilities to create an experience for the audience, planned or random, theatrical, formal, or fun.

The result is an understanding for all that not only are all musicians composers, but the piece of music is actually a dialogue between composer, performer, and listener, unique to any particular combination of those three. **Ink Games** is in the end an observation of how writing and design can record sound and emotion.

There are five "Games":

1. Blank music – the performers have totally blank pages, and the composer writes something spontaneously; the group must perform it immediately, *with the ink still wet*, and work out how it fits together without rehearsing or discussing
2. Interpretation – the performers find *designs in ink* in their environment, on fabric, skin, elsewhere, and translate them from visual to auditory art, a kind of demonstration of synaesthesia for the audience
3. International Busking – colourful *bank notes* of different countries are offered to each performer, provoking them to change to folk music of the matching country
4. Octopus – some animals use *ink as a defense mechanism*, so in this piece, everything is in eights – the time signatures, the scales (eight tones instead of the usual seven), ...
5. The Last Goodbye – actually slightly inspired by Jeff Buckley's famous song, and representing a scene soon after a relationship has ended, where some *final thoughts and feelings* are exchanged using ink

Ecossaise – flute solo, with clarinet, violin, piano

Sydney-based composer **Kristofer Spike** (born 1959) has a large output of chamber music written on themes related to heritage, conservation, sustainability and the environment, such as works devoted to his heroes Mahatma Gandhi and former Greens Senator Bob Brown, or describing beautiful Australian places like Kanangra Falls. **Ecossaise** certainly sounds as ethereal and atmospheric as many of these pieces, but the title would imply a "Scottish" country dance, much like a square dance or bush dance, popular in Britain and France around 1800 and coopted by Beethoven, Chopin, and Schubert amongst other luminaries.

Here the evocation of nature is inescapable. Trickling and floating figures from the piano support the soloist, whose lines are full of a winsome kind of lightness. The violin part at times is a delicate filigree of memory, and otherwise lends strength and tenacity to the flute, while the clarinet acts as either an echo or a well-blended close harmony.

Edward Harvey Portrait – flute, clarinet, violin

Alan Holley (born 1954) is a trumpeter and conductor, with a successful composition career spanning 40 years and almost every imaginable genre, including oboe and trumpet concertos commissioned by the Sydney Symphony, chamber operas, and unaccompanied solos for most instruments. Particularly noticeable in the latter group is his regular inspiration from nature – “much of my music is a response to the birds in our garden throughout the year”.

In other works, like the **Edward Harvey Portrait**, the music has explicit real-world inspiration but thorough abstract expression. This is auditory art where texture, collage, and peaks and troughs of tension are more important than a melody, harmony, or rhythm. In the sheet music we can read that the piece is a commission from Melbourne painter Graeme Rowe, in memory of one of his close relatives who was “always an outsider, something of a loner, with a strong sense of social justice.” However, we don’t get introduced to Edward by way of biography or photograph, and it leaves a bit of scope for us to interpret the music according to knowledge of another Edward in our lives, or perhaps someone who is an outsider.

Double Concerto for clarinet and viola – clarinet, viola, piano

Dr Andrew Kennedy and Michelle Urquhart will be performing this work with the NSW Doctors Orchestra in aid of the charity, Lions Save Sight Foundation, on Sunday 15 May at 2.30pm at Chatswood Concourse

1. Andante con moto
2. Allegro moderato
3. Allegro molto

Were it not for his son being a magnificent clarinet player, we may never have heard anything other than solos for stringed instrument by **Bruch** (1838-1920), as many of his earlier and less grand pieces have been lost. Possibly surviving due to their late date and position as a family heirloom, the *Eight Pieces*, for the same soloists with piano, and the **Double Concerto** both use a rare combination of two instruments with nearly identical ranges and remarkable blending qualities. Inevitably, therefore, the clarinet and viola treated as equals. They soliloquize, converse, reflect, and affirm each other throughout.

At the outset Bruch writes an introduction of declamatory wizardry for each instrument, letting the listener familiarise themselves with the two personalities, before the more complex episodes of opposition and teamwork begin. Listen and watch for the musicians alternating as soloist, sometimes passing the tune more or less rapidly to create either serenity or intensity, and at other times uniting to fill out glorious or melancholy harmony. This is best achieved in live performance where the audience can readily grasp the warm connection and intimate teamwork between the musicians. In this work the piano must represent the accompanying orchestra, usually supporting, occasionally embellishing like a rippling harp, sighing over the top like flutes and oboes, scurrying like violins, or providing a huge brass-like force at climactic points.

The first movement could be seen as a sad epic tale, with much longer melodic lines and an inescapable sense of tragedy. A quick break and the mood changes rapidly to an outdoor garden party and gentle waltz in the second movement, drifting into the cool night and a walk of two lovers away to a secluded place in the dark. In the final, the piano replaces the seemingly ominous trumpet and drum fanfare, soon giving way to slick, vibrant, ecstatic flourishes from the "violins", which preface jolly turns from the two soloists. A smile will never be far from your face as you see children imitating overly-serious soldiers in their innocent joyful games.

Frenzy and Folly, Fire and Joy – clarinet solo

Graham Hair (born 1943) has been a professor at Monash University (Australia) and Glasgow University (Scotland) and has penned music for essentially any combination of voices and instruments, as well as writing books and essays on composers, and done research in microtonal music and engineering. Written for clarinetist Ros Dunlop, **Frenzy and Folly, Fire and Joy** is a “concert study”, which seems to imply it’s deliberately difficult and designed to dominate the stage. In another kind of “Ink Game”, Hair has written this fast, flashy, and vertiginously contrasting piece after reading a poem by **John Shaw Neilson**, “The Dream is Deep”. The poetry is about indulging in and prolonging pleasures in the prime of life (in the two opening stanzas, below), how the dream in the heart of a man is far away from both death and heaven, and the contemplation of how one might get from the former to the latter.

Markings in the music include “as fast as possible with well marked accents”, “as sweet as possible”, “shimmering”, and “with all force”...

*“Sing me the song that never dies,
Of little Love blinded and bold
Blossoms unblemished and blue skies
And the green going into gold.*

*All the uproarious pipes we played!
Frenzy and Folly, Fire and Joy:
Carols we caught up for a maid
And ballads boisterous for a boy.*

Sonata for Flute and Piano – flute, piano

1. Allegro moderato
2. Andante cantabile

3. Allegro con brio
4. Molto vivace

Lawyer, composer, teacher, writer, **Tadeusz Szeligowski** (1896-1963) was a very prominent Polish composer whose style, like others of his time, included elements of folk, neoclassicism, neoromanticism, and impressionism. In the **Flute Sonata** these styles can be seen right up next to each other, a pastiche collage with plenty of charm and wit, and rolling energy and occasional sparks.

Although the music is abstract, there can be several ways to read the intention of the composer. The first movement seems like some kind of sweet and surreal train ride across a snowy landscape, followed by an idea of a distant, desperate song floating over a misty frozen lake in the andante movement. Next is a crazy elated dash in a sled with a few near-misses, before the flurry of a snowball fight in the fourth and final movement.

Ink Games order

IG #1 – blank music

Prior to concert, put your Spike, Holley, and Bruch music on the stage on a table (not on your stand). Make sure Andrew can write on your stand. Blank music. Greg has his phone turned on but silent.

IG 1 - Andrew walks on and starts writing flute part, then Ewa comes on when she feels like it. Come on stage when Andrew has started writing your part, and play it. Remember to play in bars and tempo together.

Spike (8 mins) – all

Andrew speaking/welcoming, collect your music. Play Spike and then **Change your SPIKE music for your HOLLEY**. Greg turns his phone onto loud.

IG #2 – tattoo interpretation

IG 2 – Make sure Holley music is available. Andrew asks, “so, who here has a tattoo that means something special to them?” and when we find some people, Ewa and Michelle take note and go and interpret it in music; Greg plays from random images on his mobile phone sent by Andrew

Holley (9 mins) – EK AK MU

Michelle terminates this with HOLLEY. Greg stays on stage and turns phone off.

Bruch (20 mins) – AK MU GK

INTERVAL

Interval – put your foreign folk song BUSKING music up; and make sure you have the foreign cash. Have Szeligowski and Kennedy music too.

Hair (6 mins) - AK alone

I did ask the Consul to speak just after the interval for 2 mins. It might be appropriate for Greg and Ewa to stand on stage to thank her.

IG #3 – busking (5 mins) - all

Andrew walks out and plays HAIR alone (5 mins), then stops and waits with his hat out; Ewa comes and puts Polish money in his hat; then Michelle puts money in Ewa’s case; and Greg puts money in Michelle’s handbag

Szeligowski (15 mins) – EK GK

At the end, put up your Szeligowski or Last Goodbye Music

Ewa speaks a greeting in Polish and plays the sonata with Greg

Michelle brings on her viola and puts it aside. She moves a writing table into position (good place for a viola) for Andrew

IG #4 – octopus (5 mins) - all

Andrew says something about the Ink Games and the nature of performer and composer relationship; then Ewa and Michelle walk calmly to the piano and start playing

Octopus ends with Greg and Andrew playing an F sharp minor chord.

IG #5 – last goodbye (5 mins) – MU GK

PAUSE. Wait for silence. Move Ewa’s table. Ewa and Andrew move to tables, Ewa puts her flute down and starts to write. When Ewa has written a little bit, Greg starts the last piece, Last Goodbye.

When Ewa hears the characteristic part, she finishes writing, slowly gets up, calmly walks out.