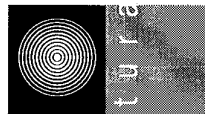


# Roger Smalley: 60!



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(NEW MUSIC)



**Roger Smalley** was born near Manchester, England in 1943. At the Royal College of Music, London, he studied piano with Antony Hopkins and composition with Peter Racine Fricker and John White. He also took private lessons with Alexander Goehr and furthered his studies with Karlheinz Stockhausen on the Cologne Course for New Music.

Widely recognised for his performances of contemporary piano music, Roger Smalley was a prizewinner in the International Competition for Interpreters of Contemporary Music (Utrecht, 1966) and received the Harriet Cohen International Music Award for contemporary music performance in 1968.

In 1969, together with Tim Souster, he formed *Intermodulation*, an ensemble specialising in works involving improvisation and live-electronics, which performed throughout England and Europe until 1976.

In 1968 he was appointed first Artist-in-Residence at King's College Cambridge where he subsequently held a 3-year research fellowship. He spent three months as Composer-in-Residence at the University of Western Australia in 1974, returning 2 years later to become a research fellow and is currently Professorial Fellow.

He continues to perform a wide variety of solo and chamber music as a member of the Australian Piano Quartet. He has recorded CDs of Australian piano music and Schumann song-cycles (with Gerald English) for the Tall Poppies label. Since 1989 he has been Artistic Director and conductor of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra's New Music Ensemble. In 1991 he was the recipient of ArtsWA's Creative Development Fellowship and was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. In 1994 he was awarded the Australia Council's prestigious Don Banks Fellowship "in recognition of his distinguished contribution to Australian music". In 1995-96 he was Composer-in-Residence with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

Roger Smalley's compositions have been performed and broadcast worldwide. He has been commissioned by many organisations and ensembles, including the BBC, ABC, West German Radio, the Festival of Perth, London Sinfonietta, Fires of London, Flederman, Nova Ensemble, Seymour Group, and Australia Ensemble. Thirteen of his pieces are currently available on CD. His Piano Concerto, a BBC commission for European Music Year (1985), was the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's entry in the annual International Rostrum of Composers (UNESCO) in 1987. It won the top recommendation, the first time an Australian entry was declared the "recommended" work.

Future commissions include a Second Piano Concerto and a Piano Quintet which he will premiere with the Australian String Quartet at the 2004 Adelaide Festival. Further to his own accomplishments, Roger has been a major influence on young and emerging West Australian composers, many of whom have gone on to international careers themselves, strengthening the place of New Music in Western Australian cultural life.

## TRIO FOR HORN, VIOLIN AND PIANO (2001-02)

- i Allegro energico
- ii Mirror – Variation
- iii Allegro molto

The chamber music combination of horn, violin and piano was initiated by Brahms in his wonderful Trio of 1865. Since then surprisingly few composers have added to the genre. When Darryl Poulsen suggested that I might write such a trio for himself, Paul Wright and myself to play I was immediately enthusiastic about the idea. The first two movements were composed during the first half of 2001 and the third movement early in 2002. Darryl Poulsen commissioned the work, with funding from ArtsWA, and I have dedicated the score to him and Paul Wright.

The entire work is based on a melody which is played on the harp at the very end of my Contra Bassoon Concerto (1998). In each of the three movements of the horn trio it is treated in a different way. The complete theme (played unaccompanied on the horn) is heard at the beginning of the second movement. There follow seventeen variations which lead the theme through many and varied landscapes, eventually arriving at a violent climax marked by descending scales and horn glissandi. From this point the music gradually unwinds through a violin solo and a variation for horn and violin only to a nostalgic recall of the original theme as an inverted canon between violin and horn. The notes of the theme are then conflated to form a Chorale (on the piano) with which the movement ends indecisively. I gave this movement (retrospectively) the title Mirror-Variations when I noticed how often the theme was accompanied or followed in canon by its own inversion (mirror-image).

The first movement is based on a 12-tone row extracted from the theme. In the third movement this tone-row is reinterpreted as a sequence of tonalities. In fact the finale began as an attempt to recompose the (atonal) first movement in tonal terms, though it eventually deviated from this plan.

Behind the first movement lies the ghost of sonata form, including a truncated recapitulation of all the opening material. The finale is a complex rondo-like structure, the most obvious manifestation of which is the lyrical episode heard first on the horn and later in the movement on violin.

## SIX MINUTES FOR SMALLEY (2003)

This work will be introduced from the stage

### VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF CHOPIN (1988-89)

The 'theme' of these variations is the whole of Chopin's Mazurka in B flat minor Opus 24 No4, although only the first six bars are actually quoted at the beginning of the work – just enough to remind the listener of the original piece. These bars form a series of progressively diminishing intervals from an octave down to a minor second. In each of the 12 short variations elements of the theme are transformed through the prism of one of these intervals – for example the first variation is exclusively in octaves, the second uses major and minor seconds in the right hand, rhythmically displaced against the original left-hand part, and the third concentrates on major and minor sixths.

My variations attempt to mirror the structure of the original Mazurka, which changes markedly in character towards the end, introducing new material and slowly winding down in a long coda. The first 8 variations are extremely dynamic, but the ninth variation puts a brake on the music and the work ends with three much slower variations. The twelfth and final variation (an improvisatory melody over a shifting drone bass) is the most extended, drawing ever closer to the original, until the last two bars turn out to be the same as Chopin's. *Variations on a theme of Chopin* was commissioned by the Arnolfini Arts Centre in Bristol (UK) and was first performed there by Ian Munro in March 1989.

UWA Music and Tura Events in association with the Australian Piano Quartet present

## Roger Smalley: 60!

Piano Pieces I – V (1962-65)

Roger Smalley - piano

*Barcarolle* (1986)

Roger Smalley - piano

*Echo II* (1978)

Jon Tooby - cello

Cathie Travers: *The Tower* (2003) - World Premiere

Australian Piano Quartet

Jessica Ipkendanz - guest violin, Berian Evans - viola,  
Michael Goldschlager - cello, Roger Smalley - piano

### INTERVAL

*Music for an Imaginary Ballet* (1993-94)

Paul Tanner - percussion

*Variations on a Theme of Chopin* (1988-89)

Adam Pinto - piano

Trio for Horn, Violin and Piano (2001-02)

Roger Smalley - piano, Paul Wright - violin, Darryl Poulsen - horn

*Six Minutes for Smalley* (2003)

A celebratory suite of birthday tribute pieces by

Lindsay Vickery, Cathie Travers, Paul Tanner,  
James Ledger, Iain Grandage and Evan Kennea.

Catherine Cahill - clarinet, Iain Grandage - cello,  
Emily Green-Armytage - piano, Evan Kennea - piano, James Ledger - piano,  
Darryl Poulsen - horn, Paul Tanner - marimba, Cathie Travers - accordion

### PIANO PIECES I-V (1962-65)

These five brief pieces were written at various times between 1962 and 1965, whilst I was a student at the Royal College of Music. The first two were originally entitled *Bells* and eventually formed part of a work (now withdrawn) based on Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem *The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo* (1964). The first piece is obviously 'golden' and the second 'leaden'. The third piece is a miniature rondo (form: ABACA Coda) and the fourth is written in a proportional notation which allows the performer considerable flexibility of rhythmic interpretation. The most highly developed piece is the fifth, consisting of three canons which gradually descend from the highest to the lowest register of the piano. (1994)

### BARCAROLLE (1986)

*Barcarolle* was written for John White, one of my composition teachers at the Royal College of Music, on the occasion of his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is a solo piano transcription of an interlude from my music theatre piece *William Derrincourt* (1977-79), originally scored for soprano saxophone, male chorus, two pianos and two percussion. John White introduced me to the works of many late-Romantic composers (Faure, Alkan and Busoni - all of whom wrote Barcarolles - amongst others) and it thus seemed appropriate to allude to their often ambivalent, and slightly sinister, melos and characteristic keyboard textures.

### ECHO II (1978)

*Echo II* was composed in May 1978 for Rohan de Saram, who gave the first performance in July of that year whilst visiting The University of Western Australia as Musician-in-Residence.

The entire piece is performed 'live' - that is, there is no pre-recorded material. Everything the cellist plays is recorded and played back twice, at intervals of 2 1/2 and 5 seconds. The first repeat is heard over the left speaker, the second over the right speaker. The cello itself is amplified over a centrally placed speaker.

From the playing of a basically single-line instrument a continuous 3-part texture is created. Of necessity this must be a strict 2-part canon but, depending on the type of material which the cellist feeds into the system, this canonic effect may be either emphasised or obscured.

Formally the work might be most readily appreciated by hearing it as a process of continuous growth whereby the single sustained notes and gently overlapping chords of the opening are transformed into the elaborate and frenetic 3-part polyphony of the climactic final section. (1994)

### Cathie Travers: *THE TOWER* (2003)

This work will be introduced from the stage

### MUSIC FOR AN IMAGINARY BALLET (1993-94)

The sound-world and structure of this piece were suggested by various forms of South-East Asian and Japanese music-theatre. I imagined the solo percussionist presiding over the performance of a miniature dance-drama in 3 acts, consisting of 3, 4 and 5 scenes respectively.

I	Prelude	Narration 1	Dance 1
II	Interlude 1	Narration 2	Dance 2/3
III	Interlude 2	Narration 3	Dances 4/5/6

The Prelude and two Interludes are peremptory calls to audience attention and are scored for the clangorous sound of 6 brake-drums. Each of these is followed by a Narration in which I visualised the percussionist 'speaking' to the audience (via the medium of a talking drum) and telling them the (imaginary) story to be illustrated by the succeeding Dance(s). These, in contrast to the other scenes, are scored - with one exception (Dance 4) - for pitched percussion instruments.

Dance 1 is for marimbaphone (low to middle register). Dance 2 is for pitched metal instruments (vibraphone, glockenspiel and crotales) whilst Dance 3 is again for marimbaphone (middle to high register). The final group of three dances are for wood-blocks and temple-blocks (Dance 4) vibraphone (Dance 5) and vibraphone plus marimbaphone (Dance 6). This last dance brings the work to a virtuoso conclusion.

*Music for an Imaginary Ballet* was commissioned by Paul Tanner (to whom it is dedicated) and was first performed by him in January 1994.