

# **the firm 2007**

five Adelaide concerts

**concert one**

*THREAD SUNS*

*above the grey-black wilderness.  
A tree -  
high thought  
tunes in to light's pitch: there are  
still songs to be sung on the other side  
of mankind.*

*Paul Celan*

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear  
(northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of  
the performance area.

**James Cuddeford, violin**

**Leigh Harrold, piano**

**Signs, Games and Messages**  
for solo violin

Kurtág

**Untitled**  
for violin and piano

Chapman Smith

**Homage to Kadosa (12 Microludes)**  
for solo piano

Kurtág

**Torn Flight**  
for violin and piano

Grant

(interval)

**Signs, Games and Messages**  
for solo violin

Kurtág

**Nocturne No.4**  
for violin and piano

Altmann

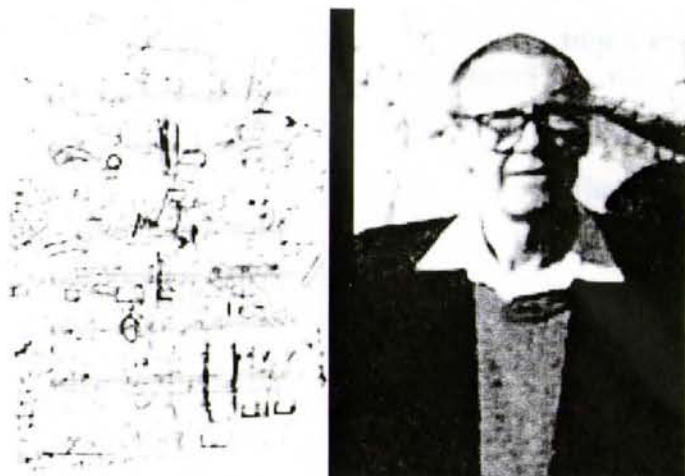
**Tre Pezzi**  
for violin and piano

Kurtág

**György Kurtág** was born on 19th February 1926 at Lugos (Lugoj in Rumanian), in the Bánát, an area which had been ceded to Rumania after World War I

At the Budapest Academy, Kurtág studied the piano with Pál Kadosa, composition with Sándor Veress and Ferenc Farkas and chamber music with Leó Weiner. He became a Hungarian citizen in 1948. He graduated in piano and chamber music in 1951, obtaining his degree in composition in 1955.

1957/58 proved a significant year in Kurtág's life, working in Paris with the Hungarian psychologist Marianne Stein and attending the courses of Olivier Messiaen and Darius Milhaud.



His encounter with the music of Anton Webern whose scores he copied out for himself, the plays of Samuel Beckett, French architecture (e.g. Chartres Cathedral) and nature all combined to generate a profound change

in his musical thinking. The first tangible result of this process was the String Quartet Op. 1 composed after his return to Budapest, in 1959.

Prior to his Opus 33, "Stele", written for Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra Kurtág had composed - apart from choruses - chamber music exclusively, from solo pieces to works for chamber ensemble, growing in size and sophistication.

Many of Kurtág's compositions are for chamber groups. Messages of the late Miss R.V. Trousova op. 17 for soprano and chamber ensemble (on poems of Rimma Dalos) was premiered in Paris in 1981 and established his reputation, while the earlier chamber concerto for soprano and piano Sayings of Péter Bornemisza is also frequently performed. His quasi una fantasia... op. 27 no. 1, first performed in 1988, was the first of several works that exploited spatial effects, an interest that dates back to his encounter with Gruppen in 1958. More recently Kurtág has written for symphonic forces, and among the champions of his larger works is Simon Rattle who programmed Grabstein für Stephan, which surrounds the audience with instruments, with Mahler's Second Symphony in a widely acclaimed Vienna Philharmonic concert at the 1999 Salzburg Festival. This twelve minute work is an elegy for the singer, husband of Kurtág's psychology teacher Marianne Stein.



**Signs, Games and Messages**

for solo violin

Kurtág

- 1- Im Volkston
- 2- Vibrato Lied
- 3- Hommage a John Cage ("Faltering Words")
- 4- Perpetuum mobile
- 5- In memoriam Tamas Blum
- 6- Postcard to Anna Keller

**Untitled**

for violin and piano

Chapman Smith

Six minutes in the tension filled life of a semitone (G/Aflat – for the curious or perfectly pitched) as it travels, microscopically, towards resolution.

The (un)title refers directly, and somewhat as an homage, to the similarly dated and (un)titled, late works on paper by Mark Rothko where closely related colours hover in their very characteristic world of spacial and spectral tension.

*You need not leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. You need not even listen, simply wait, just learn to become quiet, and still, and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked. It has no choice; it will roll in ecstasy at your feet.*

*(Kafka)*

**Homage to Kadosa (12 Microludes)**

for solo piano

Kurtág

*All too often men are betrayed by the word freedom. And as freedom is counted among the most sublime feelings, so the corresponding disillusionment can be also sublime. (K)*

*Human nature, essentially changeable, as unstable as the dust, can endure no restraint; if it binds itself it soon begins to tear madly at its bonds, until it rends everything asunder, the wall, the bonds, and its very self. (K)*

**Torn Flight**  
for violin and piano

Grant

The theme of movement as a basic metaphor for the process of life itself is one which I've explored in a number of pieces. All four sections of Torn Flight emphasise movement without reflection or pause, the frantic, violent movement of living that strives to distance itself from stillness, silence, darkness, annihilation.

*Ascends or  
joins in -*

*At owl's flight, near  
the petrified scabs,  
near  
our fled hands, in  
the latest rejection,  
above  
the rifle-range near  
the buried wall:*

*visible, once  
more: the  
grooves, the*

*choirs at that time, the  
psalms. Ho, ho-  
sanna.*

*Paul Celan*

**Signs, Games and Messages**  
for solo violin

Kurtág

- 1- In Memoriam Laszlo Mensaros
- 2- Zank- Kromatisch
- 3- Calmo, sognando ("Blues")
- 4- In Nomine- all'ongherese

*Concerning this a man once said: Why such reluctance? If you only followed the parables you yourselves would become parables and with that rid of all your daily cares.*

*—Another said: I bet that is also a parable.*

*—The first said: You have won.*

*—The second said: But unfortunately only in parable.*

*—The first said: No, in reality: in parable you have lost. (K)*

**Nocturne No.4**  
for violin and piano

Altmann

This is an addition to an open ended series of Nocturnes. The first three are for cello and piano, and seem to represent the pre-sleep side of night. This work, for violin and piano, is aligned with the mood of waking lightly in a pre-dawn glow and drifting in and out of a dream.

**Tre Pezzi**  
for violin and piano

Kurtág

*Logic is doubtless unshakable, but it cannot withstand  
a man who wants to go on living. (K)*

*Beyond a certain point there is no return. This point  
has to be reached. (K)*

*There is a goal, but no way; but what we call a way is  
hesitation. (K)*

*Several centuries ago the Pope decreed that all the  
Jews had to leave Italy. There was, of course, a huge  
outcry from the Jewish community, so the Pope  
offered a deal. He would have a religious debate with  
a leader of the Jewish community. If the Jewish leader  
won the debate, the Jews would be permitted to stay in  
Italy. If the Pope won, the Jews would have to leave.*

*The Jewish community met and picked an aged rabbi,  
Moishe, to represent them in the debate. Rabbi  
Moishe, however, could not speak Latin and the Pope  
could not speak Yiddish. So it was decided that this  
would be a 'silent' debate.*

*On the day of the great debate the Pope and Rabbi  
Moishe sat opposite each other for a full minute before  
the Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers.  
Rabbi Moishe looked back and raised one finger.*

*Next, the Pope waved his finger around his head.  
Rabbi Moishe pointed to the ground where he sat. The  
Pope then brought out a communion wafer and chalice  
of wine. Rabbi Moishe pulled out an apple. With that,  
the Pope stood up and said, 'I concede the debate.  
This man has bested me. The Jews can stay.'*

*Later, the cardinals gathered round the Pope, asking  
him what had happened. The Pope said, 'First I held  
up three fingers to represent the Trinity. He responded  
by holding up one finger to remind me that there was  
still one God common to both our religions. Then I  
waved my finger around me to show him that God was  
all around us. He responded by pointing to the ground  
to show that God was also right here with us. I pulled*



*out the wine and the wafer to show that God absolved us of our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me of Original Sin. He had an answer for everything. What could I do?'*

*Meanwhile, the Jewish community crowded around Rabbi Moishe, asking what had happened. 'Well,' said Moishe, 'first he said to me, "You Jews have three days to get out of here." So I said to him, "Not one of us is going to leave." Then he tells me the whole city would be cleared of Jews. So I said to him, "Listen here, Mr Pope, the Jews . . . we stay right here!"'*

*'And then?' asked a woman.*

*'Who knows?' said Rabbi Moishe. 'We broke for lunch.'*

You are invited to join us after the concert for complimentary drinks and a selection of Tortes by Gabriele.

## **the firm's next concert**

**8pm Monday, July 2007**

**Lila Brown** *viola*

**David Sharp** *cello*

**Harley Gray** *double bass*

*Signs, Games and Messages  
for solo viola*

KURTÁG

*Signs, Games and Messages  
for solo double bass*

KURTÁG

*Three Movements*

BACH

*Nomura Garden II  
for solo double bass*

CUDDEFORD

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