

MICHAEL SALVATORE GREBLA (b.1989)

FULL COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

Spreading music described as “a testament to the universal strength and endurance of the human spirit” by Cut-Common Magazine, Michael is an international award-winning emerging composer from Western Australia based in New York City. With a deep conviction for the role music play as a unifying mechanism in society, constructing identity and building community, he endeavours to create meaningful and inclusive cultural experiences, bridging tradition and the present through his music. In recent years his works have dealt with ideas of journey, displacement, transience, and spirituality, offering his own deeply introspective expression and examination of the human experience, touching audiences throughout recital venues in Australia, the United States, Europe and Asia.

His work has been recognised with awards from the New York Composer’s Circle, the Zodiac Music Festival in France, as well as with grants from the Australia Council for the Arts and the Australian America Association. In addition to working with institutions to create new music, Michael is entrusted and supported by a diverse community of patrons and co-commissioners to deliver an engaging season of works, projects and appearances each year through his annual ‘crowd-commissioning’ initiative.

His compositional interests rest largely with the creation of concert music. He is an avid writer of chamber and orchestral musical and an active contributor to international music festivals. Michael has presented works at TUTTI Festival, Alba Festival, Connecticut Summerfest, Atlantic Music Festival, Tura New Music’s “Total Huge New Music Festival”, The Australian Youth Orchestra’s National Music Camp, Charlotte New Music Festival and shortly also Indiana State University’s Music Now Festival. At the heart of his career is a joy for collaboration with other artists which has led to projects internationally with groups including ETHEL, Hub New Music, Beo String Quartet, the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Youth Orchestra, Atlantic Contemporary Ensemble and the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra.

Knowledge and expertise from other fields have permeated and shaped Michael's compositions. The idea for his sinfonietta "Euler's Music" was inspired during his study of mechanics while completing his Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering Degree at the University of Western Australia. Described as "imaginatively constructed" by The West Australian upon its premiere by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra Sinfonietta, the music explored the mechanical principles of gyroscopic precession (demonstrated by the science education toy "Euler's Disk") as a guiding structure for pitch, harmonic rhythm and form. Music reciprocally inspired his engineering research. He earned high distinction for his honours research dissertation, an acoustical examination of the interactions of a grand piano's lid angle with the frequency response of a venue and its implications when accompanying other performers.

In part due to his activities as a photographer, Michael's earlier works heavily explored the incorporation of extramusical influences, particularly visual art, to create cross media pieces with the goal of generating new innovations in musical expression and more engaging and meaningful concert experiences. During this time, he received a commission from the Laurence Wilson Art Gallery to contribute a musical work influenced by the exhibition's theme "Memento Mori". His work "Respiration" for solo bass clarinet was recorded and subsequently published on the album "Memento Mori Compositions" displayed alongside works in the gallery. The work was premiered by Ashley Smith as part of Michael's first public recital and photography exhibition "Portraits of the University of Western Australia," a series of musical and photographic portraits of the grounds, and wildlife of the iconic Perth campus. One work in the series was a commission from St George's College, a work for solo piano titled "Youth" premiered by Adam Pinto for the inauguration of their new Concert Grand Fazioli the year prior. Beyond composing, musical intersections with visual art became the subject of his academic writing at the time. His honours dissertation and research project "Music and visual art in the post-tonal era: a semiotic exploration of Roger Smalley's Diptych: Homage to Brian Blanchflower" investigated the ability of visual art to provide structure to music through examination of a work by composer Roger Smalley that was influenced by the visual art of Brian Blanchflower.

Composition collaborations have also extended outside of concert music to film makers. He has provided soundtracks to documentaries, short films and branded

content both in the United States and Australia. Recently he completed the score for the short film “The Statue” in New York collaborating with director Elina Street, as well as the sound-tracks of a series of mini-documentaries for French Perfumer “Robertet” collaborating with New York director Louise de Nexon. In Australia, Michael’s work has appeared in the soundtracks for projects with the Australian Square Kilometre Array and the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research.

Michael completed a Master of Music with Honours at the New England Conservatory where he studied with Kati Agocs with the support of highly competitive scholarships from the General Sir John Monash Foundation, The New England Conservatory and American Australian Association. Prior, he completed a Bachelor of Music at the University of Western Australia with First Class Honours studying with Christopher Tonkin and James Ledger and was awarded the University’s Matilda Prize for Cultural Excellence and the West Australian Wagner Societies Bayreuth Prize. He was resident during his studies at St George’s College where he resided as the Wolff Scholar (2011, 2012, 2013) and Knight Scholar (2014).

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