

# The Advertiser

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Entertainment

## Gabriella Smart celebrates US composer Alvin Curran in weekend of music

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Adelaide pianist Gabriella Smart played a five and a quarter hour recital of works by US composer Alvin Curran at Bonython Hall.

Source: News Limited

### Alvin Curran in Adelaide

#### Bonython Hall

#### Friday, August 23 and Saturday, August 24

An inveterate globetrotter, American composer Alvin Curran hit town earlier this week hot on his Australian trail from Perth to the Eastern States, his residency in Adelaide courtesy of Soundstream Collective plus associated arts bodies.

Noted for his involvement with Musica Elettronica Viva and for playing up out of school alongside contemporaries such as LaMonte Young and Earle Brown out of Charles Ives, Harry Partch et al, Curran comes from a distinguished line whose mission in life has been to shake some of the complacency from classical music.

Curran's *Oh Man, Oh Mankind, Oh Yeah* had its Australian premier on Friday in Bonython Hall, the pastiche Tudor ambience adding to a visual spectacle of 50 or so singers, some with harmonicas, an instrumental ensemble and the composer playing a Rams horn, or Shofar. Fragmented vocalisation derived from John Cage's *Norton Lectures*, moments of harmonic purity mixed with accidental sonic collision created a riveting mix.

Curran's gift for both strong structure and musical immediacy proved a heady combination, both forthright and persuasive.

His *Fake Book* for piano and keyboard that followed in the intimate setting of the Madley Rehearsal Space showed both his technical virtuosity as a performer and immense personal drive. Walls of sound, scrapbook reminiscences from everywhere and an unerring sense of placement were hallmarks of this memorable recital.

Finally, the indefatigable Gabriella Smart's marathon performance of Curran's multiple piece five and a quarter hour cycle *Inner Cities* the following day back in Bonython Hall took personal drive to another level.

One grand piano, a hall uncluttered by chairs but with scattered bean bags for trancelike listening, proved a real magnet for aficionados who came and went as they pleased. Once again this was music brought to our metaphorical doorstep and all the more potent for it.

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