

Nicholas Vines (b.1976, Sydney) is an Australian composer particularly active at home and in the US. Described as “exquisite” (Gramophone), “riveting” (The New York Times), “arresting” (The Boston Globe), “compellingly original” (Boston Phoenix), “full, extravagant and wild” (Sydney Morning Herald), and “edgy, bright and entertaining as hell” (NewMusicBox), his music has been performed in Australia, North America, the UK, Europe, China and Japan. Interpreters of his work range from high school students to specialist new music ensembles. He has been commissioned by organisations around the world, including Callithumpian Consort, Guerilla Opera, counter)induction, ChamberMade Opera, the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Acacia Quartet, Abbotsleigh School, Ensemble Apex, the Australia Council, Duo Young Music, mmm..., Faber Music and the Tait Memorial Trust.

Vines’ compositions have received prizes from the US, UK and Poland, as well as Australian honours such as APRA AMCOS & AMC Art Music Awards. In 2010, he was a Fellow in Composition at the Tanglewood Music Center. His compositions are published by Faber Music, Wirripang and the Australian Music Centre; the AMC has also selected his works as official submissions to the ISCM World Music Days. From 2007 to 2021, he ran the New Works Program for New England Conservatory’s Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice. A festival of Australian music centred on his work for chorus and orchestra, *An Essayist’s Prayer*, was held at Abbotsleigh School in October 2017.

In July 2018, *Hipster Zombies from Mars* – a compilation of Vines piano music performed by Ryan MacEvoy McCullough – came out on Navona Records. Reception has been strong: BBC Music Magazine thought it “wacky, but well-delivered” and *Ihr Opernratgeber* “a rewarding sonic experience, inspiring for the reviewer.” Since going live, it has been streamed on Spotify a respectable 21 000 times. He also has two earlier releases with Navona, *Loose, Wet, Perforated* and *Torrid Nature Scenes*, hailed respectively as “dazzling” (Gramophone) and “damn good” (Limelight Magazine).

At the University of Sydney, Vines studied with the likes of Peter Sculthorpe, receiving a BMus, MMus and the university medal. He completed the AM/PhD programme in composition at Harvard University in 2007, having been awarded the Sir Robert Gordon Menzies Scholarship and various Harvard fellowships. While there, he worked with such compositional luminaries as Julian Anderson, Lee Hyla, Judith Weir, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Brian Ferneyhough and Helmut Lachenmann. More recently, he completed a Graduate Diploma in Education at the University of New England.

Formerly a lecturer in music at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Vines has also worked for Wellesley College, the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and the Australian International Conservatorium. He is currently Senior Master of Academic Extension (Music) at Sydney Grammar School. Additionally, Vines has worked in legal contexts, most notably as an expert witness in musicology for Boomerang/Harry Vanda and the Estate of George Young.

In recent years, Vines has been actively involved in mentorship of young composers through the Artology Fanfare Project (2014-21) – which won the 2016 APRA AMCOS & AMC Art Music Award for Excellence in Music Education – and the 2015, 2017 & 2019 Santa Sabina College Australian Music Seminars. An educational kit for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate, based on his chorus & orchestra work *An Essayist’s Prayer*, was released by the Australian Music Centre in April 2020.

Vines has participated in operas, choirs and choral productions as a tenor, bass-baritone and countertenor, and orchestras as a French hornist. Currently, he is working on *Quartets for the End of History*, an album including *The Law of the Tongue*, *Confessions of a Pangolin* and *Ghost Rails*; and a substantial song cycle for soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbons and pianist Ryan MacEvoy McCullough, based on bespoke poetry by author Nikki Gemmell.