

MEDIA RELEASE

Level 5, 10 Hickson Road The Rocks
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
Phone 61 2 8248 6500 Fax 61 2 8248 6599
sydneyfestival.org.au



Lubomyr Melnyk

AUSTRALIAN EXCLUSIVE
Ukraine



Photo: Aleksandra Kawka

“iridescent notes that could be a thousand wind chimes, caught between turmoil and serenity.... Melnyk’s truly defining quality is surely the constant tingle that his music leaves in your heart.”

★★★★★

The Guardian

“His shifting chords and rising crescendos will click easily for those who follow post-rock bands like Godspeed You! Black Emperor or Explosions in the Sky”

Pitchfork

Lubomyr Melnyk is the fastest pianist in the world – Guinness world record verified. He can play nearly twenty notes per second, a near-overwhelming but perfectly controlled roil that blurs into a gorgeously cohesive whole.

Lauded for his ability to create a symphony of sound with a single instrument, Melnyk has spent 40 years developing his unique piano technique. Described as ‘continuous music’, the style combines the soaring density of post-rock and the virtuosic delicacy of minimal-classical. What results is a meditative, mind-bending cloud of abstract sound, with clear emotions and images appearing out of the pointillist flurry.

Lubomyr Melnyk’s music was born of hunger — not dramatic, existential hunger, but actual, physical starvation. At the time, in the 1970s, Melnyk was a young Ukrainian-Canadian musician living in Paris, a budding pianist and an admirer of **Terry Riley** and **John McLaughlin**. Often, he says, he went days without eating and lived in the streets sometimes. At one point, though, he found work as a janitor at the Paris Opera, which is where he met dancer **Carolyn Carlson**. Carlson had heard of Melnyk’s piano playing and asked him to score a piece she was choreographing. He sat down at the piano and found the music.

The piano technique is based on extremely rapid notes and complex note-series, usually with the sustain pedal held down to generate overtones and sympathetic resonances. These overtones blend or clash according to harmonic changes. The rapid sequences, coupled with Melnyk’s awe-inspiring ability of playing up to 19 notes per second with each hand simultaneously create a tapestry of sound that transcends sonic waves into a physical experience. Most of his music is for piano, but he has also composed chamber and orchestral works.

Off the back of a record deal with Erased Tapes (alongside fellow artists **Ólafur Arnalds** and **Nils Frahm**), Melnyk is finally playing shows to breathless audiences in sold-out spaces.

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Where City Recital Hall

When 28 January at 8pm

Duration 75 mins

Tickets Premium \$60
 A Reserve \$50/\$45
 B Reserve \$36
 + booking fee

Bookings Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876
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