

UNASSUMING POET, COMPOSER, SINGER AND MUSICIAN, AND ASSOCIATE ARTIST



Pat H. Wilson, *The Advertiser*
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FROM Little Things, Big Things Grow didn't get performed. Nor was *To Her Door*.

But jam-packed devotees displayed all the attentiveness of lieder enthusiasts as Adelaide-born Paul Kelly, accompanied by piano genius Paul Grabowsky, served a platter of diverse musical delicacies.

The timber temple is a pitch-perfect venue for this unassuming poet, composer, singer and musician, and his associate artist – more an agent provocateur than an accompanist.

Kelly's spare frame, clad in a grey suit, blue dress shirt and no tie, stands to deliver his songs. He sings with no evident exertion; he simply recounts his stories in a natural, unaffected way. Only immense discipline and years of experience can make it look this easy and sound so good.

He gestures with huge hands. His eyes are so deeply set that we presume them. He exudes authority with no discernible effort.



Kelly sang *If I Could Start Today Again* with simple sincerity.

His subversive reading of *Gonna be Good* was bolstered by Grabowsky's muscular gospel rock.

Kelly's setting of a Shakespeare sonnet (*No. 138*) was performed with wry wit and swing.

To celebrate of Sylvia Plath's birthday, Kelly sang his setting of her poem *Mushrooms* with equal parts tenderness and threat.

Little Aches and Pains was pure jazz gospel.

Grabowsky's introduction to *How To Make Gravy*, reminiscent of Tom Waits's *Tom Traubert's Blues*, framed this understated narrative.

Filled with imagery, *Winter Coat* was spare and moody.

A vigorous *A Bastard Like Me* honoured Charles Perkins.

Grabowsky's magisterial gospel accompaniment illuminated *Gathering Storm*.

Grabowsky's two piano solos (*Star Crossed Lovers* by Billy Strayhorn and Ellington's *I Got It Bad*) were master classes in intelligent artistry and visceral execution.

This partnership of two Pauls is artistically successful; they encourage, provoke, challenge and support each other. The resulting performances are intensely satisfying.

Paul Kelly with Paul Grabowsky

UKARIA Cultural Centre

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