



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas
College of Music

Doctoral Lecture Recital | Sunday, February 25, 2024 | 2:00 pm | Recital Hall

Christopher Curcuruto, bass-baritone
Stephen Dubberly, piano

WHAT LIES BENEATH (AND BETWEEN):
AN EXPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE HON. JUSTICE GEORGE PALMER'S
AUSTRALIAN SONG CYCLE *LETTERS FROM A BLACK SNAKE*

Letters from a Black Snake is a song cycle by living Australian composer and former Justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, George Palmer. The cycle sets curated excerpts of text taken from letters written or dictated by Australia's most notorious bushranger (highwayman) turned folk hero, Edward "Ned" Kelly (1854–1880), creating a cohesive narrative arc that establishes and explores Kelly's character through the precipitating events of his short life, exclusively in his own words. But what happens when the narrator doesn't tell the whole story? Framed as an expositional analysis of *Letters from a Black Snake*, this lecture explores the importance of context on the interpretation and reception of this, and narrative song cycles generally, demonstrating one possible performance approach, and proposing an expansion of Palmer's work.

Letters from a Black Snake (2007) George Palmer (b. 1947)

1. To Sergeant Babington
2. They know I have been wronged
3. Bullock Creek
4. The murder
5. In conclusion

Five hundred sixteenth program of the 2023–2024 season
Photography and videography are prohibited