

Hornarama Code: 22183

Head Banger

by Michael Kallstrom (b. 1956)

for horn quartet

About the Work

Head Banger was composed for the TransAtlantic Horn Quartet and they often play it to begin the second half of their concerts. As the title suggests, Headbanger is about powerful rhythmic and melodic motives over a strong and steady pulse. The opening features two of the horns providing the motivic underpinning with the remaining two playing a longer, melodic theme in unison. While three of the horns maintain these rhythmic motives in parallel motion to evoke the riffs typical of heavy metal bands, another solos aggressively over this accompaniment in the middle section. After a quiet and more tranquil interlude, the opening texture returns and the work comes to a close with quartet pounding out statements of the rhythmic motive.

About the Composer

Michael Kallstrom is an active composer and performer, and the creator of *Electric Opera*, a series of five solo musical theater works with electronic tape, puppets and videos that have been performed over 200 times in the U.S. and Canada. *Tell Me Your Name*, a music theater work for solo voice, electronics, videotape projections and shadow puppets and the fifth work in the *Electric Opera* series, was premiered in Kentucky in February 2005 and also performed in Ohio at [Mt. Union College](#), [Denison University](#) and the [Southeastern Composers' League](#) Forum in Louisiana.

His other works have been performed in Russia, Spain, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Italy, England, Japan, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Kenya. He has received a [Meet the Composer](#) grant, two [Kentucky Arts Council](#) Fellowships, a [Ragdale Foundation](#) Residency, a [Ucross Foundation](#) Residency, an Interarts Colony Residency, a University Award for Outstanding Faculty Achievement in Research/Creative Activity, and has been the [Kentucky Music Teachers' Association](#) Commissioned Composer of the Year. His music is available on compact discs from [Capstone Records](#), Editioni della Fondazione, and from the TransAtlantic Horn Quartet and is published by RM Williams Publishing.

His ballet score, *Frankenstein*, was premiered by the [Fort Wayne Ballet](#) in September 2002 and produced again for the 2003 season. An electronic composition, *Forward Drive*, was choreographed and premiered for the [American College Dance Festival Association](#) conference held at [Emory University](#) in Atlanta. *Paun I Kolo*, was premiered by the [Bowling Green Chamber Orchestra](#) as part of the "Bowling Green Suite." The suite featured the music of five local composers, each adapting a folk from the different cultures that are part of the Bowling Green area to create an orchestral suite. He was a featured guest composer for the annual [Heidelberg College](#) New Music Festival where he performed excerpts from *Tell Me Your Name*, for bass voice, electronics, videotape projections and shadow puppets, and sections from his children's opera, *School's Out*, were performed by local elementary school students for the festival. *School's Out*, a collaborative work created with the students and faculty of [McNeill Elementary](#) was commissioned and premiered in November 2001. The TransAtlantic Horn Quartet commissioned and premiered [Starflame](#) in London, England and also performed it for the [Tanglewood Summer Music Festival](#), the [Royal Academy of Music](#) in London, the [Benjamin Britten—Peter Pears Music Festival](#), and a [BBC](#) radio broadcast that was also heard world-wide via the internet. The TAHQ and the [Macon Symphony](#) premiered *Jeepers*, for horn quartet and string orchestra. *Crazy Rhythm*, for horn quartet, a commission from the [Quadre](#) quartet was premiered in Los Angeles in 2001. His children's opera, *Sunday Pages*, a full-scale opera, was given a four evening premiere at [Western Kentucky University](#) in 1999. Hornist and [Fulbright](#) Fellow Paul Basler recorded his *Around the Clock* in a version for horn and full orchestra with the [Moravian Symphony](#) in the Czech

Republic. The work was funded by grants from the [Meir Rimon Commissioning Fund](#) of the [International Horn Society](#) and the [University of Florida](#). *Inner Flame*, a work for solo alto saxophone, was premiered for the World Saxophone Congress in Madrid, Spain. A chamber work concerning the homeless, with audience participation, *Nocturne*, was commissioned and premiered by the ensemble Epicycle for the Work Project Authority Festival of the Arts in Cleveland, Ohio, and was performed for the [Music Educators National Convention](#) in Cincinnati.

Dr. Kallstrom is currently Professor of Music and Coordinator of Composition and Theory at Western Kentucky University (Bowling Green), and has taught previously at [Westminster Choir College \(Princeton, NJ\)](#) and [Florida A&M University \(Tallahassee\)](#). He holds degrees in Composition from the [Florida State University](#) (DM), the [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) (MM), and the [University of Miami, Florida](#) (BM). He has studied composition with Roger Hannay and John Boda.