Folio of Compositions – Volume II
Master of Music

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Music (Composition)

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music
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The Descent of Doctor Semmelweis
Orchestra, 2016

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Ignaz Semmelweis (Budapest, 1818 – Vienna, 1865) was the Hungarian physician who first proposed the practice of doctors washing their hands whilst working to drastically reduce the mortality rate of patients, particularly for childbed fever. In Semmelweis’ time, his ideas were not accepted by the medical community due to the insinuation that doctors were unclean, and that the thousands of deaths that occurred in hospitals were the fault of the very people trying to prevent them. Semmelweis became increasingly fanatical about his ideas and, in turn, became more and more dismissed by his peers. This rejection eventually caused depression, alcoholism and other mental deterioration. At the age of 47, he was committed to an asylum against his will, where he was severely mistreated. He died two weeks after this.

The Descent of Doctor Semmelweis is an accompaniment to the inner thoughts of Semmelweis through his developing obsession, alienation and eventual death.
Piccolo
Flute
Oboe
Cor anglais
2 Clarinets in B♭
Bassoon
Contrabassoon

2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C

Timpani
Percussion

Harp

Strings

Timpanist:
4 drums - 32”, 29”, 26”, 23”
Tam-tam

Percussionist:
Suspended cymbal
Snare drum
Bass drum
Vibraphone

Duration approx. 9 minutes
The Descent of Doctor Semmelweis

Luke Speedy-Hutton

Lyrical, becoming uneasy, l'istesso tempo

Lyrical, becoming uneasy, l'istesso tempo

Lyrical, becoming uneasy, l'istesso tempo

Lyrical, becoming uneasy, l'istesso tempo

Lyrical, becoming uneasy, l'istesso tempo
With despair
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