

## KEITH DAVID HARRIS



Keith Harris with his book  
**The Mandolin Game**

Keith Harris was born on an Australia Day in 1949 in Sydney, began mandolin lessons at the age of 8, applied for his first teaching job when he was 12, and was told to come back when he looked a bit older. He did this at the age of 14 and got the job (yes, you've read it right! , he started [teaching mandolin](#) at the age of 14). In that year he also gave his first live radio recital for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

After a time spent performing in nightclubs and television in Australia and the United Kingdom, he completed a B.A. (pass – oh well...) at Sydney University. Some years later – as an International Fellow of the Australia Council - he received both performance and concert diplomas for the mandolin from the Music University in Cologne.

Keith Harris gave his first major European solo concert in London's Wigmore Hall in 1980 and his first major Asian concert in Tokyo's ABC Hall a year later.

Germany has been his base since 1979, but he has taught, played and conducted wherever in the world the mandolin is popular.

From 1986-1998 he was music director for the BDZ in the German state of Hesse, and from 1990-1998 lecturer in Mandolin (as a major subject) at the Music University in Heidelberg.

In 1990, multiple sclerosis stopped him playing, but not teaching and conducting. Summer 2010 for example saw him holding masterclasses and seminars in Japan, Australia and Scotland, apart from his regular cycle of commitments in Germany, Austria and Holland.

Through his friendship with Norman Levine, whom he had got to know in Belgium in the early 80s, he was instrumental in the planning and establishment of the Classical Mandolin Society of America. He has conducted the CMSA Convention orchestra numerous times, and of course also been repeatedly invited to direct the Australian-New Zealand F.A.M.E. camp. He has performed and taught widely all over the USA, Europe, Australia and Japan.

Of his book **The Mandolin Game** (pub. Trekel, Hamburg, in both English and German), the famous Russian domra player Tamara Volskaya wrote:

“We have never had anything like it. It is essential for every mandolin player, and in fact for anybody who plays a plucked string instrument.”

He is both outspoken and free-thinking on mandolin-related matters. His students agree with his ideas passionately – nearly always...

He has published numerous arrangements and compositions for plucked string ensemble and solo mandolin, and contributes regularly to journals concerned with the instrument and its music.