

Mistika

Linda Ceff



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1 Prelude
Op.17, No.3 (1896)
Alexander Skryabin —
piano solo 1'56"

2 Prelude
Op.22, No.4 (1897)
Alexander Skryabin —
piano solo 0'40"

3 Prelude and
Variations (1991)
Linda Ceff
— multitrack piano
7'45"

4 Hymn (1925)
Igor Stravinsky
— piano solo 3'22"

5 Carillon for Sacha
(1990) Mark Pollard
— piano solo 2'37"

6 Bells and Glock
(1992) Linda Ceff
— tubular bells and
glockenspiel 3'54"

7 Baby Orang Utan
(1990) Thomas Reiner
— piano solo 0'21"

8 First Communion
of the Virgin (1944)
Olivier Messiaen
— piano solo 7'39"

9 Baby Born to Love
(1992) Linda Ceff
— processed voice &
synthesizer 7'23"

10 Newbells (1993)
Linda Ceff
— tubular bells
sounds 8'35"

11 Prelude
Op.74, No.1 (1915)
Alexander Skryabin
— piano solo 1'35"

12 Prelude
Op.74, No.2 (1915)
Alexander Skryabin
— piano solo 1'20"

13 White Mass Sonata
Sonata No.7 (1912)
Alexander Skryabin
— piano solo 14'01"

14 Ripple (1996) Linda
Ceff
— multi-track piano
1'26"

15 Mystic (1994) Linda
Ceff
— processed
multitrack piano 2'01"

16 Mistika (1994)
Linda Ceff
— piano & tape 7'19"

All music performed by
Linda Ceff

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1 Prelude Op.17, No. 3 (1896) Alexander Skryabin
1'56" piano solo

2 Prelude Op.22, No. 4 (1897) Alexander Skryabin 0'40" piano solo
Skryabin lived 1872-1915, mostly in Moscow, with periods in Europe and America. His preludes of the 1890s are represented in these first two tracks, with a Romantic and tonal style. The descending upper melodic line, rising arpeggiation and crossrhythms are typical of Skryabin's ethereal style. The chromaticism highlights sonorities that became fundamental to his later music.

3 Prelude and Variations (1991)
Linda Ceff 7'45" multitrack piano
Resonant piano sounds are featured; harmony is retained with the middle pedal, and some strings are plucked inside the piano. Timbre is explored within the resonance of the harmonies.

4 Hymn from Serenade in A (1925)
Igor Stravinsky 3'22" piano solo

Stravinsky was born in St. Petersburg in 1882, and like Skryabin, lived in Russia and various parts of Europe. The Serenade was composed in France, before he moved to America in 1939 where he died in 1971.

Russian keyboard style is present in the large chords and long melodic lines. Stravinsky's style is evident in the articulation and restraint. The harmonic language has a bell-like complexity, with modal consonances predominating the chromatic texture, arising from the linear movement of the counterpoint.

5 Carillon for Sacha (1991)
Mark Pollard 2'37" piano solo
Mark Pollard was born in Australia in 1957 and lives in Melbourne. This piece was composed for his first daughter, now the eldest of four. As a one page miniature, extended duration is achieved by multiple repeat signs for various sections in the score. The style relates to javanese gamelan music.

6 Bells and Glock (1992)

Linda Ceff 3'54" tubular bells and glockenspiel I steady II with classical flourish III lively
For this recording the manuscript sends midi information from the computer to a sampler, set up to play tubular bells and glockenspiel.

7 Baby Orang Utan (1990)

Thomas Reiner 0'21" piano solo
Thomas Reiner was born in Germany in 1959, and moved to Australia in the early 1980s. The harmonic and rhythmic subtlety in this miniature captures an aspiration to an infant animal condition.

8 First Communion of the Virgin

'Premiere communion de la Vierge', from Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus (Twenty Views on Baby Jesus) (1944) Olivier Messiaen 7'39" piano solo
Each piece in Messiaen's set represents an aspect of Christ's birth from a different point of view, and has a title and written introduction. This scene is of the pregnant mother surrounded by a luminous aura ... between conception and birth: this is the first and greatest of all blessings. The child's heartbeat is represented in a passage with repeated lower pulsations. Messiaen also identifies themes such as the rhythmic 'Magnificat' in the second section, and the opening and closing four chord sequence 'Theme of God'. My love is without the sound of words.

9 Baby Born to Love (1992)

Linda Ceff 7'23" processed voice and synthesizer
Spoken phrases are played with two midi keyboards, a sampler and tape track.

10 Newbells (1993)

Linda Ceff 8'35" tubular bells sounds
Initially composed for a performance 'Is it bells or is it a computer?' as accompaniment to the painting Scatter

Shift II, by Richard Larter, in the National Gallery of Victoria (presented by the NGV and the Contemporary Music Events Company, 1993). Tubular bells sounds are played interactively with a computer.

11 Prelude Op.74, No. 1 (1915)

Alexander Skryabin 1'35" piano solo

12 Prelude Op.74 No. 2 (1915)

Alexander Skryabin 1'20" piano solo
From Skryabin's final opus, the musical language has matured significantly since the earlier Preludes. A harmonic structure developed by Skryabin and known as the 'mystic' chord is a prototype for a family of chords or note sets that have special properties due to an internal symmetrical structure, as well as close relationship to extended dominant harmonies. This enables both tonal and serial compositional procedures to be employed. These chords relate to the harmonic series and the timbral quality of bells sounds. Tracks 11–16 on this disc include various implementations of this compositional approach.

13 White Mass Sonata –

Piano Sonata No.7, Op.64 (1912)

Alexander Skryabin 14'01" piano solo
Subtitled the 'White Mass', this sonata is from the middle of Skryabin's late period. It typifies his unique and structured use of harmonic language, as well as a light and linear kind of rhythmic movement.

14 Ripple (1996)

Linda Ceff 1'26" multitrack piano
Various trills are mixed in multitrack stereo.

15 Mystic (1994)

Linda Ceff 2'01" processed multitrack piano

16 Mistika (1994)

Linda Ceff 7'19" piano and tape
Digital signal processing focusses on movement within the spectrum, affecting the timbral quality of the piano sound.

Cover photo by Sharnah Thompson.

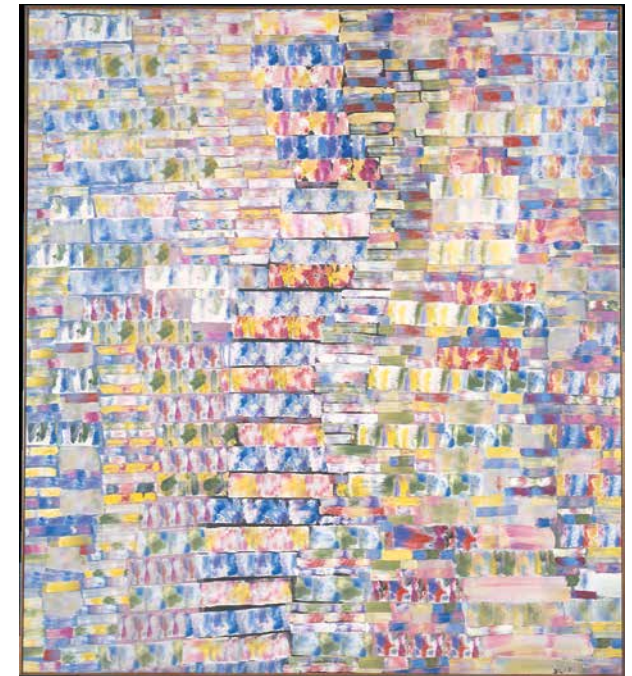
Inside photos by Linda Ceff, Sarah Gunn, Robert Agnew, Meredith Simpson and James Nellis.

Piano provided by Allans, Melbourne, Australia.

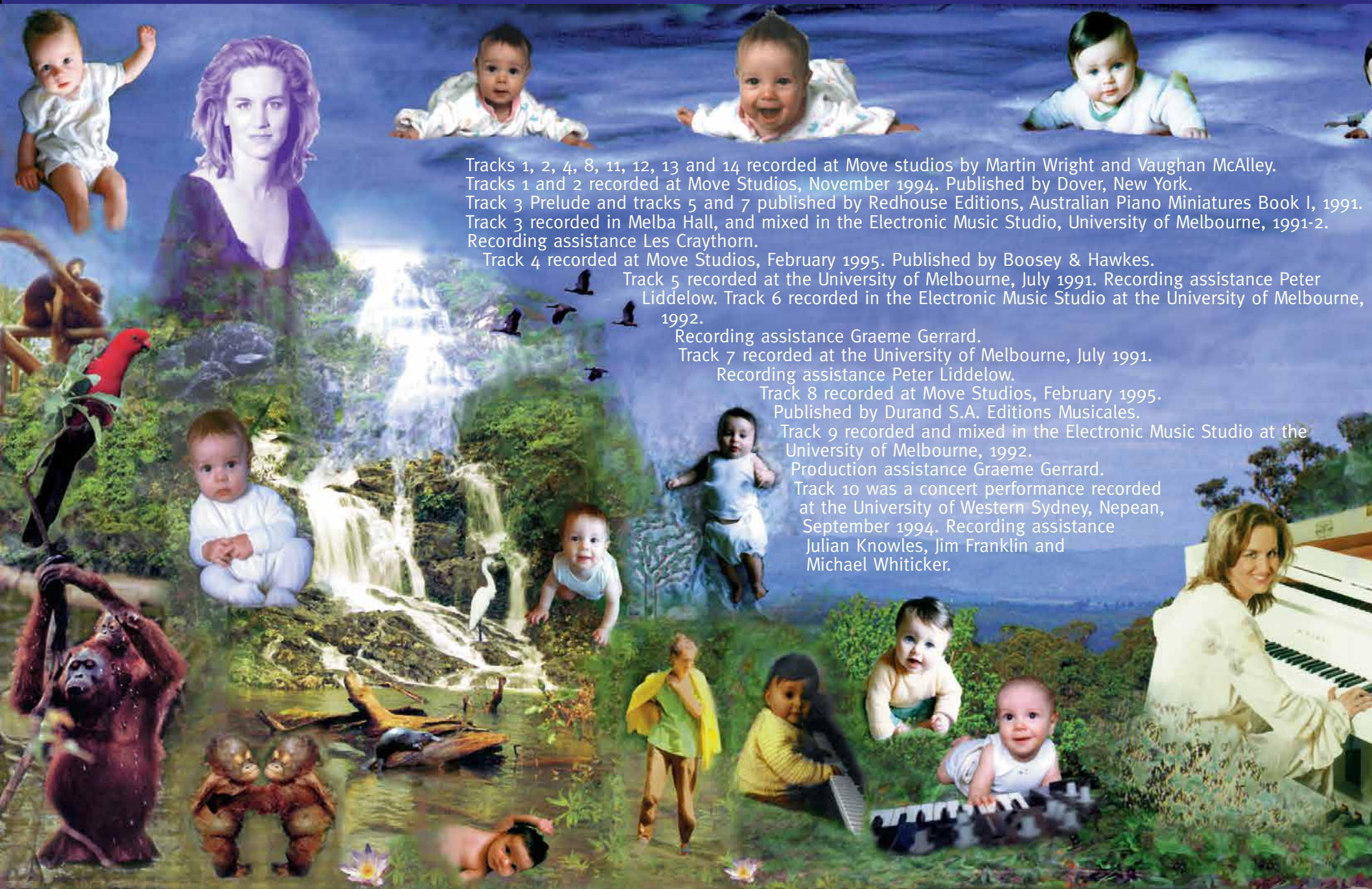
Selected piano paintings by Tobiah Ceff and Brigid Burke.

Cover, mandalas and inside art by Linda Ceff, with assistance from Tobiah Ceff, Sarah Gunn and Simon Wright.

This project has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



Scatter Shift II painting by Richard Larter, born in Australia 1929. Acrylic on canvas 186 x 164 cm. Purchased by the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne in 1981.



Tracks 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14 recorded at Move studios by Martin Wright and Vaughan McAlley.
Tracks 1 and 2 recorded at Move Studios, November 1994. Published by Dover, New York.
Track 3 Prelude and tracks 5 and 7 published by Redhouse Editions, Australian Piano Miniatures Book I, 1991.
Track 3 recorded in Melba Hall, and mixed in the Electronic Music Studio, University of Melbourne, 1991-2.
Recording assistance Les Craythorn.

Track 4 recorded at Move Studios, February 1995. Published by Boosey & Hawkes.

Track 5 recorded at the University of Melbourne, July 1991. Recording assistance Peter Liddelw. Track 6 recorded in the Electronic Music Studio at the University of Melbourne, 1992.

Recording assistance Graeme Gerrard.

Track 7 recorded at the University of Melbourne, July 1991.

Recording assistance Peter Liddelw.

Track 8 recorded at Move Studios, February 1995.

Published by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales.

Track 9 recorded and mixed in the Electronic Music Studio at the University of Melbourne, 1992.

Production assistance Graeme Gerrard.

Track 10 was a concert performance recorded at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean, September 1994. Recording assistance Julian Knowles, Jim Franklin and Michael Whiticker.



Tracks 11 and 12 recorded at Move Studios, November 1994.

Published by Dover, New York

Track 13 recorded at Move Studios, August 1995.

Published by International Music Company, New York.

Track 14 composed with samples recorded at Move studios, August 1995.

Tracks 15 and 16 produced in the Electronic Music Studio at the
University of Melbourne, 1994.

Recording assistance David Collins.

