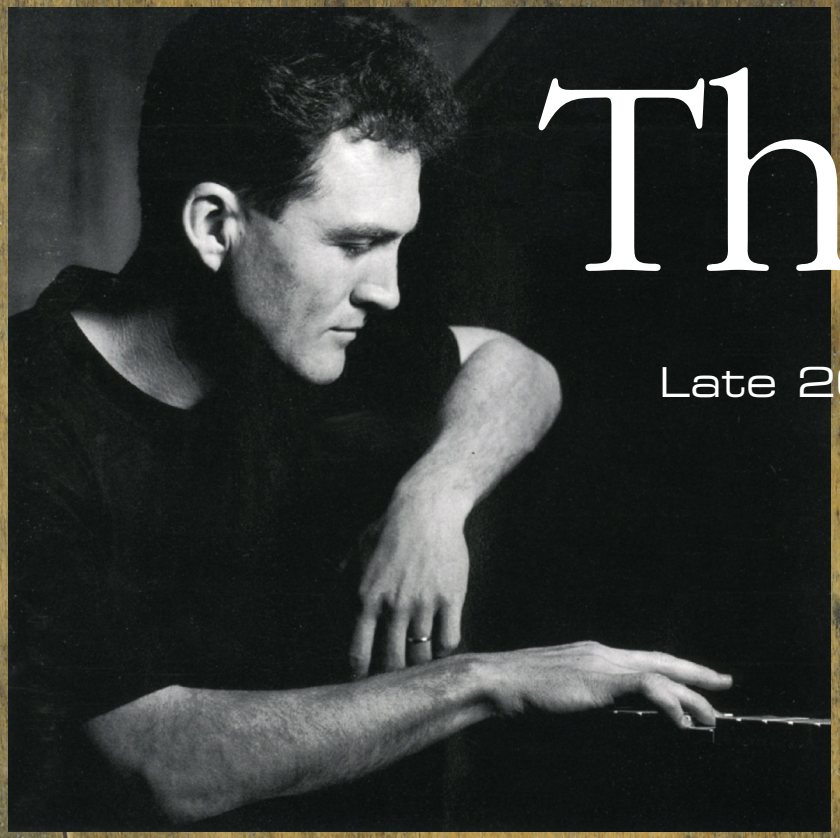


Threnody

Late 20th century Australian masterworks

Michael Kieran Harvey Collection

move

Threnody

Michael Kieran Harvey | *piano*

Michael Kieran Harvey:
1 ***Toccata DNA*** (1993) 8'13"

Carl Vine:
Five Bagatelles (1994)
2 i. Darkly 2'44"
3 ii. Leggiero e legato 1'11"
4 iii. Gentle 1'43"
5 iv. (untitled) 1'11"

Stuart Campbell:
6 ***Quaquaversal*** (1994) 7'17"

John McCaughey:
Eight preludes (1991-3)
7 i. Fluent 0'39"
8 ii. Presto segreto 1'06"
9 iii. Animated, hastening 0'41"
10 iv. Quick 0'59"
11 v. A sense of slow background tempo 1'36"
12 vi. Semplice 0'43"
13 vii. Leggiero, recitativo 1'02"
14 viii Serene 1'38"

Andrew Byrne:
15 ***Within Stanzas*** (1993) 7'17" †

Keith Humble:
Eight Bagatelles (1992)
16 i. Fast 0'36"
17 ii. Slow 0'53"
18 iii. For Tony P., very slow, motto rubato 2'25"
19 iv. Move it 0'31"
20 v. Agitato 0'54"
21 vi. EKE Bounce easily (and naturally) 0'26"
22 vii. Slow 1'17"
23 viii. Very fast 0'30"

James Anderson:
24 ***Reveria im Neuen Stil*** (1994) 6'23" †

Michael Kieran Harvey:
25 ***Addict*** (1994) 7'17" §

Carl Vine:
Five Bagatelles (1994)
26 v. Threnody – for all the innocent victims 3'28"

Total playing time 62'17"

All recorded at Ron Craig Studios, Mittagong NSW in 1995 except:
† recorded by Michael Hewes at ABC Southbank, Victoria in 1995
§ recorded live by Michael Hewes at ABC Southbank, Victoria in 1994

Original release by Astra Chamber Music Society in 1995
Remastered by Martin Wright, Move Records 2024
This edition Ⓟ 2024 Move Records

Website — **move.com.au**
MD 3475

Carl Vine:

Five Bagatelles -

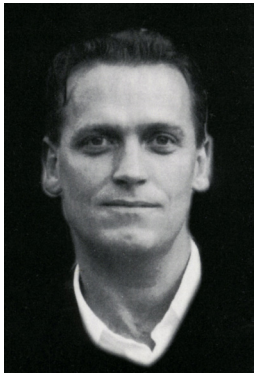
2 i. Darkly

3 ii. Leggiero e legato

4 iii. Gentle

5 iv. (untitled)

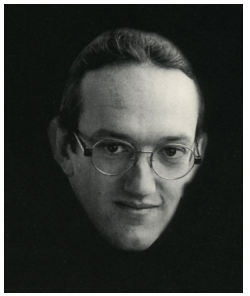
26 v. Threnody – for all the innocent victims



Carl Vine is one of Australia's most prolific and successful composers. Several of his early works have been premiered at Astra concerts, including *Elegy* for the Flederman ensemble, *Love Song* for trombone and tape, and Piano Sonata No 1, all of which have subsequently appeared on CD. *Piano Sonata No 1*, premiered by and dedicated to Michael Kieran Harvey, formed part of his final recital in the International Solo Piano Competition (known as The Ivo Pogorelich Competition) held in Pasadena in 1993 and has been widely performed by him internationally. The *Five Bagatelles* took shape from a request to Carl Vine to perform for the Australian National AIDS Trust at their annual fund-raising dinner in 1994 for which he wrote and performed the *Threnody* (Bagatelle number 5), later adding the four preceding Bagatelles. Since this premiere recording the Vine bagatelles have become hugely popular and are regarded, like Piano Sonata No 1, as a classic 20th century Australian piano work.

Stuart Campbell:

6 ***Quaquaversal***



Stuart Campbell, originally from New Zealand, was Lecturer in Music at La Trobe University at the time of this recording and a well-known keyboard performer and composer in a variety of areas including jazz and improvisation. He described 1994's *Quaquaversal* as "a very demanding piece that was written expressly to extend and exploit the sensibilities of the commissioner Michael Kieran Harvey…Counterpoint, set theory and numerology feature as principles for the construction, the numbers 5 and 7 being the "prime" contenders…The work is sectionalised into four parts but the emphasis is more on flow and continuity than contrast. It opens with contrapuntal polyrhythm and multiple modal superimpositions which eventually give way to a more lyrical giga."

John McCaughey:

Eight preludes

7 i. Fluent

8 ii. Presto segreto

9 iii. Animated, hastening

10 iv. Quick

11 v. A sense of slow background tempo

12 vi. Semplice

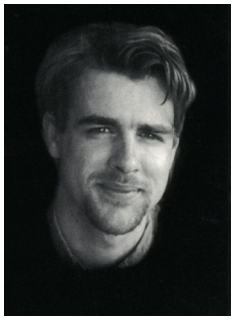
13 vii. Leggiero, recitativo

14 viii Serene

John McCaughey is Musical Director of the Astra Chamber Music Society in Melbourne conducting their annual concert series of contemporary choral, instrumental and electro-acoustic music, recently sharing this role with Andrew Byrne. McCaughey was formerly on the staff of the Music Department at La Trobe University, also teaching contemporary music theory at the Folkwang University of the Arts, Essen. The *Eight Preludes* were completed during a period in Germany between 1991 and 1993 and first performed at concerts in Vishnigorad and Essen. They take their general character from traditional aspects of the prelude, each piece creating a kind of sequential continuity within which diverse shapes and ideas try to "find a place". Elements in each piece also resurface elsewhere in the cycle to create points of linking and collision.

Andrew Byrne:

15 ***Within Stanzas***

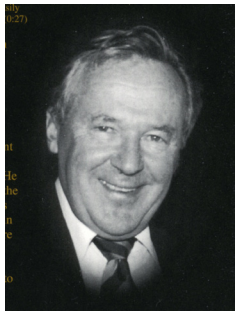


Andrew Byrne completed music and postgraduate studies at La Trobe University, then studied and taught at Columbia University in New York before becoming festivals director at Carnegie Hall. *Within Stanzas* (1993) was composed before his departure and premiered in an earlier version at an Astra concert by Michael Kieran Harvey. It is a single-movement work in which a number of source-sections, the stanzas of the title, unravel into intervening character-piece sections then fold back into each other. Specific harmonic colours and rhythmic speeds replace traditional themes or motives as the basic material for the piece.

Keith Humble:

Eight Bagatelles

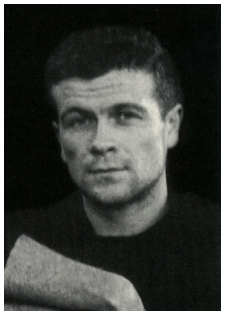
16 i. Fast
17 ii. Slow
18 iii. For Tony P., very slow, motto rubato
19 iv. Move
20 v. Agitato
21 vi. EKE Bounce easily (and naturally)
22 vii. Slow
23 viii. Very fast



Keith Humble combined composition with conducting and piano performance over a long career in France, the USA and Australia, and was Emeritus Professor of Music at La Trobe University. The *Eight Bagatelles* (1992) belong to a large number of works written towards the end of his life and reflect his interest in two important musical sources. He wrote: "A basic set announced as a chord in the first bagatelle and utilised in all the others is derived from motives frequently employed in the late piano works of Franz Liszt, and more recently as a motto in many of the works of Béla Bartók." Keith Humble died in Melbourne just prior to the release of the original CD recording.

James Anderson:

24 Reveria im Neuen Stil

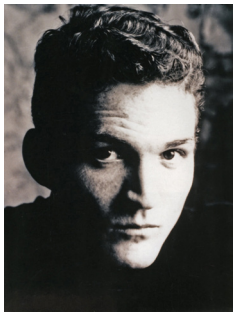


James Anderson was living in Melbourne at the time of this recording, where he was active as a composer, poet and pianist contributing much to the new music scene in Melbourne. The suspended nature of opening and closing chord sequences in *Reveria im neuen Stil* (1994) represents an attempt to capture the residue of a fleeting harmonies aura. The setting down of this musical "absence" suggests several layers of superimposition wherein harmonic values remain absolute and so become their own negative, or double-negative. *Reveria im neuen Stil* was written for Michael Kieran Harvey in the winter of 1994.

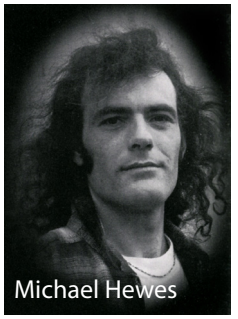
Michael Kieran Harvey:

1 Toccata DNA

25 Addict



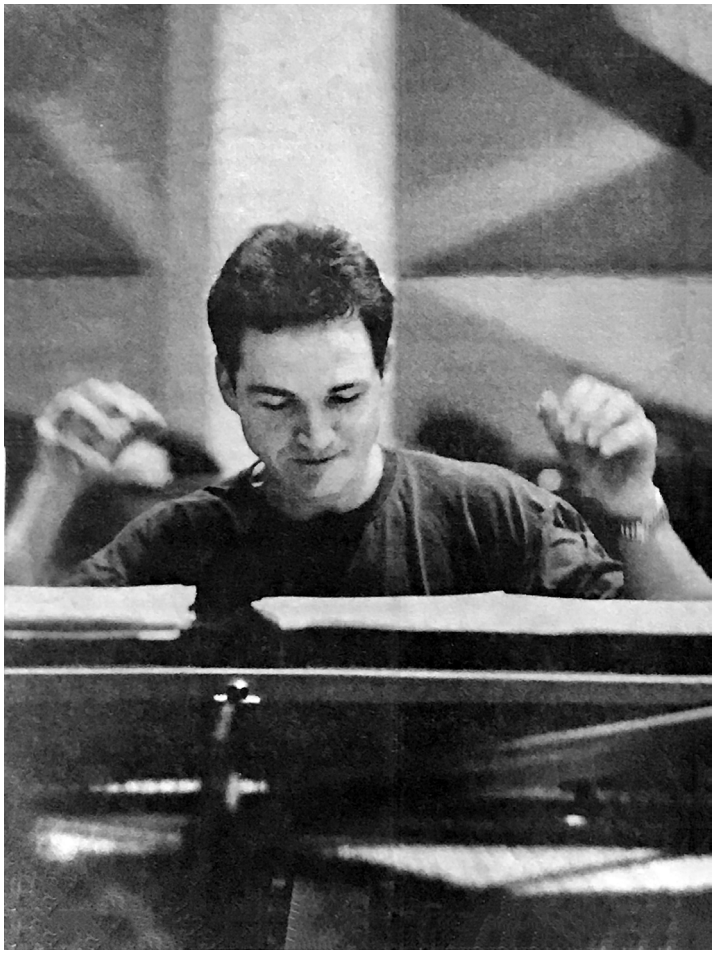
Michael Kieran Harvey wrote *Toccata DNA* in early 1993 and premiered it in an ABC FM live broadcast that year. The title refers to the chain of nuclei acids that pass on instructions for hereditary characteristics in animals. Slight changes in the double helix have profound consequences; similarly the pitch material in *Toccata DNA* metamorphoses in character, while retaining its basic interrelationships. *Toccata DNA* is dedicated to Francis Harvey.



Michael Hewes

Addict continues Harvey's early collaboration with composer and sound engineer Michael Hewes, involving computer sound-processing do the piano. Their first collaboration, *Elektra*, was presented at an Astra concert in 1992, and a further collaboration, *Spindrift*, premiered at the 1995 Warsaw Autumn Festival of Contemporary Music. *Addict* tests left hand stamina to the limit, and is less concerned with compositional method than with the overall emotional effect in music of the state of addiction. The penultimate section in *Addict* incorporates flashbacks to other music on this CD.

The recordings for this CD were funded by The Ian Potter Foundation and produced with the support of Ron Craig and Yamaha Australia. Thanks to John McCaughey and the Astra Chamber Music Society for permission to release this new edition of *Threnody*. The re-mastering involved taking the original recordings which were recorded in different locations to make them more consistent in both imaging and ambience.



After Harvey's US debut at Pasadena's Ambassador Centre in 1994 critic Alan Rich wrote: "In intermission conversation at Michael Kieran Harvey's U.S. debut recital the name of Glenn Gould was often heard, and with reason. Not since the heyday of the late flamboyant Canadian had a pianist come forward with such extraordinary technique combined with so vibrant a gift for stirring up controversy. Like him or not -- both factions were represented -- it had to be one of the most stimulating debut recitals within anyone's memory…This was one hell of an interesting concert".

Michael Kieran Harvey Collection

PRTZL

Chamber works composed by Michael Kieran Harvey

According to critic Clive O'Connell in *The Age*: "Few Australian pianists can touch Michael Kieran Harvey, one of the most exciting exponents of contemporary music in the country".

The opening track ***Toccata DNA*** (1994) is also available in a revised version (2017) on the CD PRTZL" released on Move. *Toccata DNA* – originally for piano – the revised version, in trio format, "is a triumph for all involved, a marvel of synchronicity and a startling internal transition from a simplicity that is almost tonal to detonations of agility from each sound source – which, in (percussionist) Peter Neville's case, is quite a few" (Clive O'Connell). Peter Sheridan's flute rounds out the trio.

move.com.au/disc/michael-kieran-harvey-prtzl