

the firm 2003

CONCERT SEVEN

LEIGH HARROLD

piano

DAVID KOTLOWY  
MONDAY NOVEMBER 17, 2003

**RAYMOND CHAPMAN SMITH**  
Nach(t)schriften, Part Two

**DAVID KOTLOWY**  
Final Fragments

**JOHN POLGLASE**  
Preludes and Sonatas, 4 & 5

INTERVAL

**JOHN POLGLASE**  
Prelude and Sonata, 6

**QUINCY SD GRANT**  
Angels

**LEOS JANACEK**  
Piano Sonata in E-flat minor

## RAYMOND CHAPMAN SMITH

### Nach(t)schriften, Part Two

- No.14 D major, Andante cantabile
- No.15 B minor, Tranquillo
- No.16 G major, Andante amabile e con moto
- No.17 E minor, Allegro ma non troppo
- No.18 C major, Adagio molto semplice e cantabile
- No.19 A minor, Allegretto
- No.20 F major, Vivace moderato
- No.21 D minor, Un poco agitato
- No.22 B flat major, Adagio sostenuto
- No.23 G minor, Molto passionato, ma non troppo allegro
- No.24 E flat major, Dolce ed intimo
- No.25 C minor, Andante con moto
- No.26 A flat major, Allegretto moderato

Goethe, to start....

#### To All Who Are Original

"A certain So and so declares: 'I belong to no school, and nothing could be further from me than to have learnt anything from the dead.' That is to say (if I have understood him aright): I am a fool after my own fashion."

Goethe, to finish....

"Denn edlen Seelen vorzufühlen Istwünschenswertester Beruf."

(To devise patterns of feeling for noble souls is the most desirable of all callings.)

## DAVID KOTLOWY

### Final Fragments

I recently asked myself, "Could I write a short piece of music? What is the essence of my longer works; is it possible to distil and present it within a shorter time-span?" The distilling process brings obscured symbolism to the fore, and in my mind, tonight's piece relates to many others.

My most recent composition for piano – the song cycle *Three Pieces in Pali* – had the pianist "excavate sounds from the piano's interior." The archaeological dig is here continued, and five fragments are revealed. (Are these dirty fingernails a consequence of my work in Ruined pianos?)

The working title has been *Five Ways of Looking at the Moon*, connecting it to my last string quartet, *Moon, perse*, and to my Tasmanian-born colleague's more expansive composition on solar viewing, Although the *Fragments* are uncharacteristically brief, they still conform to my aesthetic of focusing on one thing at a time. One piece, one idea; however, the bitter, cloudy nights of my winter allow for only fleeting views. (Typically, the haiku poet Basho saw clouds more optimistically – Clouds now and then / giving necks relief / from moon-viewing – and so inspired a composition from Richard Meale.)

Finally, one might find in this pithy music a suggestion of Satie, Feldman, Kurtag, and our Posthumous Composer-in-Residence, Leos Janáček. The title, *Final Fragments*, is a play on Feldman's *Last Pieces*. His short piano pieces, written in 1959, did not predict the end of his creativity; rather, they are part of his early mature period. I can only hope that this piece fits similarly into the chronology of my oeuvre.

**JOHN POLGLASE**  
Preludes and Sonatas, 4-6

Despite regularly using prominent piano parts in my chamber music it has been some 13 odd years since I have composed for the instrument on which I trained, that work being the large and demanding *Quiet this Metal*. The result was a delightful time writing these six, paired movements; the last three of which are premiered tonight.

Each Sonata follows the Scarlatti formal model falling into two sections, each repeated. This composer's hundreds of late Baroque harpsichord sonatas have always amazed and inspired me. The content of my sonatas vary widely from one to the next, but each remains consistently concerned with the exploration of a 'style' or way of playing - not in the sense of a formal study or etude but more a single, abstract musical idea.

These Sonatas are each anticipated by a short prelude, more of a bagatelle really, which sits in a little world of its own.

**QUINCY SD GRANT**  
Angels

.... beauty is nothing  
but the beginning of terror, which we can just barely endure,  
and we stand in awe of it as it coolly distains  
to destroy us. Every angel is terrifying.

Favoured first prodigies, creation's cherished,  
mountain ranges, peaks, dawn-red ridges  
of all genesis, - pollen of a flowering godhead,  
links of light, corridors, stairs, thrones,  
spaces of being, fields of rapture, torrents  
of unchecked feeling and then suddenly, singly,  
*mirrors* scooping their out-streamed beauty  
back into their peerless faces.

... But the living all make the same mistake: they distinguish too sharply.  
Angels (it is said) often don't know whether they move among  
the living or the dead.

... Praise the world to the Angel, not what is unsayable.  
You can't impress him with lofty emotions; in the cosmos  
that shapes *his* feelings, yours a mere novice. Therefore show him  
some simple object, formed from generation to generation  
until it's truly our own, dwelling near our hands and in our eyes.  
Tell him of things.

Extracts from *Duino Elegies* by Rainer Maria Rilke

## LEOS JANÁČEK

### Piano Sonata in E-flat minor (A Street Scene 1.X.1905)

Janáček lived in a time of considerable political unrest, with the Czechs ruled as part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Piano Sonata was written as a depiction of a day of conflict in his native Brno on November 1st 1905. A mass demonstration by the German-speaking majority clashed with a Czech counter-demonstration and in the ensuing violence a young Czech man was killed. Janáček was present, and so shocked by the events that he put his thoughts into this two movement "sonata". There was a third movement, but the composer grabbed the manuscript at the final rehearsal before its premiere and burnt it (and it is only through the diligence of its first performer who made a copy of it that it survived at all: Janáček proceeded to throw the originals of these two movements in the Moldau).

Its first movement is called *Foreboding*, the second (which begins with a funeral march) was originally entitled *Elegy* but later renamed *Death*.

The first performance took place in January 1906, but the composer was unsure of the work even then, and did not consent to publish it until 1924.

## LEIGH HARROLD

Born in Whyalla, South Australia in 1975, Leigh Harrold began learning organ at age 8 and piano at age 11. After completing a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Chemistry and Materials for which he won the University Medal, he moved to Adelaide in 1996 to commence a Bachelor of Music degree, studying with distinguished concert pianist Gil Sullivan.

Leigh was the recipient of the Patrick Cecil Greenland Scholarship, the Beta-Sigma-Phi Classical Music Award and a Postgraduate Coursework Award during the course of his studies. He graduated from the ordinary degree with High Distinction in 1998 and received First Class Honours in Performance a year later. In 2000 he was awarded a second University Medal. Leigh has had success in several national competitions including national finalist in the 1999 ABC Young Performer Awards, second prize in the Lazard/Recitals Australia National Piano Scholarship and semi-finalist in the 2001 Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition. He is the only person to win the Geoffrey Parsons Memorial Award for Associate Artists outright twice.

As a soloist, Leigh has performed concertos with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, premiered solo works by Australian composers in Llewellyn Hall (Canberra), participated regularly in studio recordings and live-to-air broadcasts for ABC-FM and performed in Recitals Australia's subscription concert series. He has been a regular participant in the Australian National Academy of Music Masterclasses since 1999 and has performed in several showcase concerts there.

As a chamber musician, Leigh has performed in duos and small ensembles with members of the Australian String Quartet and Adelaide Symphony Orchestra (with whom he is a casual member) and has toured throughout much of Australia

with Co-Opera. Other significant studies have been undertaken with pianists Lisa Moore, Aquilles Delle-Vigne, Mamiko Suda and John Damgaard.

A strong interest in contemporary music has led to several successful collaborations, including performances under French-Canadian conductor Lorraine Vaillancourt and English composer Peter Maxwell Davies, as well as an ongoing association with the composers of 'The Firm'. Leigh is pianist in the Elder New Music Ensemble for which Davies wrote the pieces 'A Glass of Frontignac' and 'A Glass of Shiraz' and in June 2002 traveled to the Orkney Islands to perform a concert of Davies' works in the presence of the composer.

Leigh holds a Master of Music degree from Adelaide University. In 2003, he moved to Melbourne to take up a full scholarship on the Australian National Academy of music. He has been awarded a fellowship there for 2004 – the first person in the history of the Academy to have been awarded a fellowship after just one year of study there.



Please join the performers and living composers after the concert for complimentary drinks and a selection of Tortes by Gabriele.

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear (northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of the performance area.

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