

Scenes Vol. 1

Jeremy Cullen

Recorded at Roundhead Studios
Auckland, New Zealand
25th August, 2015

All music composed and performed by Jeremy Cullen (Piano),
except *Avenue des Gobelins* – performed by Jeremy Cullen
with Maria Grigoryeva (Viola) and Lyudmila Kadyrbaeva (Cello)

Album Description/Bio:

Scenes Vol. 1 is the first album from New Zealand composer and pianist Jeremy Cullen. Recorded in a single day on the Steinway piano at Neil Finn's Roundhead Studios, the album is the first in a series of releases featuring music composed for and inspired by various film, photography and theatre projects.

Jeremy is a composer and sound designer based in Wellington with credits including original music and sound editing for numerous short and feature films, working as music editor for composer Howard Shore's orchestral score for *The Hobbit: Battle of the Five Armies*, and music editing for Nick Cave and Warren Ellis' score for the film *West of Memphis*.

Track 1 – Notes/Poems/Dreams (from *Gordon Crook, A Life of Art*) (2010):

Gordon Crook: A Life of Art is a documentary made by film-maker Clare O'Leary about Wellington artist Gordon Crook, who made vivid and colourful paintings, tapestries and collages, including several on display in prominent public spaces.

Tracks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18 – from *24 Preludes* (2013-14):

In 2013/14 I wrote a set of *24 Preludes* in every major/minor key (10 of which appear on this album) as a relief from writing the film/commercial work that I often do – they are purely music I would like to play and/or listen to.

Track 3 - Valse Nostalgique (from *The World of Eugène Atget*) (2013)

Track 5 - Gymnopédie (from *The World of Eugène Atget*) (2011)

Track 7 - Avenue des Gobelins (from *The World of Eugène Atget*) (2015):

There is no actual documentary called *The World of Eugène Atget* but if there was I'd like to think these three pieces would be on the soundtrack!

I saw an exhibition of his photography at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco and was captivated by his photos of Paris from the early 20th Century. He viewed his work as public records and documents rather than "art" but they are exceptionally atmospheric and were an influence on the surrealists.

Track 9 - Waltz on a Theme by Alban Berg (2014):

The theme in question is from Berg's Piano Sonata Op. 1. I love this sonata but for some reason whenever I hear the opening I imagine it taking a different path and turning into a simple waltz rather than a tortured expressionistic maze...

Track 11 - Accompaniment to a Film Scene (2014):

Accompaniment to a Film Scene was written as a theme for a film called *Butterflies*. I ended up being over committed working as music editor on *The Hobbit* at the time and didn't end up doing the score, but I liked the theme so kept it filed away.

Track 13 - Theme from *Letter to Hope* (2013):

Letter to Hope is a New Zealand short film that I composed the score for in 2013.

Track 17 - Chorale (2013):

This calm and meditative piece uses the simple device of mirroring the music in the pianist's left and right hands.

Track 19-29 - Theme and Variations (2015/16):

The idea behind this set of *Theme and Variations* was the challenge of writing a work where all of the musical material is created by manipulating a recording of a simple original piano theme. No other sound sources or instruments were allowed. I tried to make the transformations obvious to start with (using simple processes such as delay and reverb), but also wanted to take the theme on a significant journey by the time it returns at the conclusion.

Track 30 - Tuis, Hataitai (2015):

The creation in central Wellington of a predator-free zone (i.e. no rats, possums or stoats) called *Zealandia* has enabled the return of many native bird species to suburban gardens and parks. The Tui is one of the birds that have thrived – their constantly inventive song is a mixture of electronic sounding chirps and buzzes and surprisingly tonal fanfares and flourishes. This piece is one result of the many transcriptions I have made of their songs.

Further information is available at: www.jeremycullen.com