



EDWARD COWIE ROCK MUSIC

Piano Sonatas 1-3

Roderick Chadwick, piano

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1. Sonata No. 1, Igneous	32:11
2. Sonata No. 2, Sedimentary	22:20
Sonata No. 3, Metamorphic	
3. I. Theme - Protolith(s)	1:55
4. II. Metamorphosis 1	1:27
5. III. Metamorphosis 2	2:27
6. IV. Metamorphosis 3	1:43
7. V. Metamorphosis 4	2:35
8. VI. Metamorphosis 5	3:09
9. VII. Metamorphosis 6	1:22
10. VIII. Metamorphosis 7	1:52
11. IX. Metamorphosis 8	1:44
12. X. Metamorphosis 9	3:06
13. XI. Metamorphosis 10	1:45
14. XII. Metamorphosis 11	2:44
15. XIII. Metamorphosis 12	4:09
Total Playing Time 84:46	

PIANO SONATA NO 1

'Igneous'

The first piano sonata is the beginning of a trinity/trilogy/triptych of sonatas- each inspired by one of the ways in which the earth's rocks are formed. Commissioned by my great friend and collaborator, Roderick Chadwick, (by the time this is recorded he will already have recorded at least three major duo works of mine), I see these three works as both separate and together. This isn't the first time I've written something with the title *sonata*, but it's the first time when I have wanted to have the original form so prominent in my thinking about how to order and in **what** order the musical materials and ideas should unfold, (geological pun intended!).

I've chosen, in fact, to imagine a giant three-movement sonata in which the classical idea of a fast movement (in modified sonata forms) is played-out in **Sonata no 1**. This followed by a slow (fantasia) movement (**Sonata no 2**). Then a final movement: again fast and in the form of theme(s) and variations- **Sonata no 3**. In fact what we have is three separate and independent sonatas which collectively make up something like a **single** classical sonata.

Igneous rock (in its extrusive state), is born of and in fire, eruptions and explosions. There is, from the very outset of this work, a tremendous build-up of pressure which includes both harmonic and rhythmic tension. Several times, the music seems to virtually crush or shake itself apart. Ultimately, the mounting pressure (the force of the magma deep in the earth's crust), reaches just *below the surface of exposition* (explosion!). The inevitable volcanic (sonic) explosion happens about two thirds of the way through the sonata with several 'after-shocks'. Until this moment, the music has been igneous in the living and dynamic state.

But after these great eruptions, we move to the seemingly static remains of what igneous processes have produced. But looking at the stillness of strip-lava; at the wreckage of volcanic eruption (pyroclastics); the columnar basalt (usually hexagonal in form) and 'old' (extinct) craters and volcanic plugs, the dynamism is still there. The closing episodes of the sonata represent movement-in-stillness: even heat in cold. There is still one more allusion to original sonata form and that is the use (always in my mind as I composed these works) of the term *grande*. These are indeed **big** pieces and on a scale that might once have been called *heroic* or *romantic*. Above all- and perhaps the most presumptive thing I've ever written about my music- at all times when working on these sonatas, the final three sonatas of Beethoven have been on my piano stand and, (as well as my technical skills will allow), in my mind and hands....

PIANO SONATA NO 2

‘Sedimentary’

Sedimentary rocks can be seen on the face and in cross-sections of many cliffs along coastlines and valleys in the UK and the rest of the world. Until I researched this form of rock-building, and I sought and got expert advice from my ex-field-geologist wife, Heather Cowie, I’d wrongly assumed that this type of rock was only formed by means of deposits of fine grains of sand in the course of millions of years of layering in and on the beds of oceans, river, and lakes. But of course such actions of layering and depositing also take place in deserts and even glaciers! Moreover, the raining-down of fragments hurled from volcanic eruptions can also create sedimentary layers.

This variety in sedimentation caused me to think afresh on the content of a second ‘rock music’ sonata that had, in the very early stages, seemed to me to suit the idea of a slow and rather gentle piece of music. The opening of the work does indeed propose the idea of rather gently floated and deposited musical materials- light-weight and aerial before dropping to lower registers where they (sonically) rest on top of each other. But sedimentation isn’t as simple as the layering of sponge and fruit in a cake! Forces of heat and pressure are also at work on these horizontal layers, causing them to fold, buckle, bend and even fracture.

Like the music of my First Sonata, however, I do trace the evolution of rocks from their active and moving stages to something close to an entropic conclusion where the rocks seem to be at rest in a static form. But that active phase- when settled in vast aeons of geological time-remains in the form of the contortions, fractures, faults and amalgams that are visible today. TS Eliot writes- in *Burnt Norton* from his *Four Quartets*-

*‘Only by the form, the pattern
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness’*

This is why this sonata hovers (or alternates) between many forms of turbulence and stillness and why it fluctuates between periods of harmonic and rhythmic calm and enormous forces of disruption and disturbance. But in the fullness of its 20 minutes duration, the ‘layers’ ultimately crystallise into a series of high-and-low-spaced pairs of very quiet triads....‘still yet moving in their strata of time and change’....

PIANO SONATA NO 3

'Metamorphic'

This third and final piano sonata in a closely connected sonic trilogy is rightly dedicated to the pianist, Roderick Chadwick. Without his exquisite interpretations of earlier works featuring the piano and one other instruments (the 'Bird Portraits' suites numbers 1-3, and released on Metier Divine Arts label), and his tireless championing of my music, I very much doubt I'd have had the fortitude and focus to carry a massive project like this to fruition!

As it is, we have three sonatas inspired by (in this order) **igneous-sedimentary-metamorphic** rocks, being the three main types of rock found on this planet. Being married to an ex field-geologist, (Heather Cowie- many of whose paintings feature on the covers of my CDs!), has had far-reaching consequences to someone relentlessly curious about how our planet works in both organic and inorganic domains. In the **first sonata**, we are thrown into the earth in a 'temper of heat': magmatic, gaseous and in the end often violently explosive. Igneous rock in a state of completion still often show- frozen in time as it were- the twisting and contorted patterns of lava-flows or the layering of strata of ash and pumice. Much of this work is fast and literally furious.

The **second sonata** is inspired by the phenomenon of accretion and layering- whether in the form of fragments and beads of tiny rocks carried in sandstorms; by furious stream of wind- or the over-folding and deposition of layers of lava or mud and rockslides. And though there are often episodes of flashing and cascading ripples of sound at high speeds, the overall sensation of the work is a steady and often slow envelopment of one mass of sound over and on top of another.

This sonata is a kind of summation of the entire cycle of three sonatas. I always knew that although I was going to write three independent sonatas, the triad would somehow echo many aspects of **classical sonata form**. Thus, the first sonata has some of the structural features of a typical first-movement in a classical sonata. The second sonata is like those delicious slow fantasias of Beethoven- lugubrious, often curvilinear in form, and always taken at a steady pulse.

Missing-out the classical third movement (often in the form of a minuet and trio), I adopted the more 'advanced classical form' of a sonata-rondo but framed within a structure consisting of a **theme** (which I also call **protolith**) with 12 variations **metamorphoses**. The theme consists

of three connecting yet distinctively different types of materials as a consequence of the number **three** of sonatas and also the **third movement** of this work. In fact the number **three** forms a kind of numerical and proportional matrix for the entire cycle of sonatas but for this one especially! Towards the end- after many transformations of the theme, just as pressure and 'cooking' change the 'original rocks' (protoliths), that themselves consist of igneous or sedimentary of course- echoes and 'virtual' quotation of the first two sonatas emerges. Though the end product of metamorphosis might appear (as it does in **all** rocks in some kind of final form), static- the music that pervades and ends this sonata is always explosive and loaded with harmonic, motivic and rhythmic pressure. In my mind, there is no doubt that this is the most virtuosic (and indeed longest) of the sonatas! Throughout the composition of these works, I continued to study and to play (badly!), the last three piano sonatas of Beethoven. The 'quotations' from his music in these sonatas are not deliberate, but rather a natural consequence of *igneous, sedimentary* and *metamorphic* assimilation of the great Master's masterpieces!

AFTERWORDS

In late September of 2023, I sat in the Ayriel Studios in North Yorkshire and listened, in a state of awe and astonishment, to the extraordinary and brilliant interpretations of these three sonatas by Roderick Chadwick. It might seem pretentious for a composer to write that there's always a hope that a performer will physically and mentally realise the vast collective of thoughts, sensations, and experiences as close to the composer's own journey of realisation as possible. It's an improbable and probably nonsensical expectation of course, and yet as the recordings of this triptych of sonatas progressed, I realised just how intensely, thoroughly, sensitively and creatively Roderick had blended his own unique interpretations with my own intentions embedded in the manuscript(s).

More than in any other recording of my music- and this is only the second piece I have composed with a geological inspirational core (pun intended!), the earliest (other) being my 'Vulcan' for chamber ensemble (the score long-since lost), of 1971- I've sensed just how far a musician can go in emulating and inhabiting the action and activity of an exploration geologist! The eye, (a listening eye), traverses the 'surface' of a vast sonic habitat. The notes are the 'crust' of materials that run long and deep within and **beneath** the surface of musical instructions and signs in the published score. I write this because I am always aware of the difference between

looking at musical notation as a set of precise and immutable instructions, (like a blue-print for some kind of fabulously complex machine or engine), instead of seeing the score as **indicative, inviting, and suggesting**.

Like the work of an exploration geologist (my distinguished visual arts wife, Heather Cowie, began her professional career as an exploration geologist), the player 'sees' and 'reads' the signs (the musical notes and instructions), but during the process of realisation uses the arts of interpretation to 'drill-deep' into the layers of form and meaning that lie beneath the surface. It is time- here and in the context of these three sonatas- to acknowledge the huge influences of the mind and imagination of Heather Cowie, (one of her works is on the cover of this CD like almost all the others released by Métier) on not only my music, but **the way I explore musical possibilities** in a manner influenced by how she worked as a geologist and now as a visual artist.

I don't think any sentient human-being can ever lose the kind of sensory and thinking activities and actions of childhood. Heather and I have always agreed that the study and exploration of the Natural World offers a repertoire of form far greater than manifested in the creative arts alone. These three sonatas, then, are a summation (albeit one with open-ended futures), of simple/complex relationships between muses, musicians and the vast panoply of forms and dynamical actions in nature. My body consists in a great deal of matter drawn from the earth itself. Perhaps there was, after all, an interaction between my geological atomic self and the music for a (grand) piano. Without Heather's and Roderick's experiences and visions, this project could never have flowered in the way it has.

Edward Cowie. Armidale, NSW. July, 2024



Roderick Chadwick, recording at Ayriel Studios 2023

NOTES ON THE RECORDING

Roderick Chadwick

What if a recording represents not final thoughts, or a well-appointed station on an interpretative journey, but a broiling first encounter, an early coalescing of ideas? The latter describes my relationship with these Sonatas at the time of recording, and seems analogous with the 'state of possession...some kind of abandonment into a well-worn panoply of knowledge and experience of *music*' that Edward experienced in writing them, as he told me during a post-recording session email exchange – extracts from which appear below.

In order to harness this impressionistic experience of the music and help it come to fruition, I took to writing – in the 1st Sonata, which seemed to most need this approach – page-mottos: statements attributed according to the randomness of page divisions but nevertheless in response to changing aspects of the music.¹ This is a selection of them:

Magma robbery
Unpredictable time
They wonder what the world's like above us
Creatures will feel the earth
Canto, canto
Sandy's counterpoint
5 is close to 4?
'The supreme arbiter and law-giver'
Interesting stratification
Stephen Hough
They will be laid to rest
Molten larva of the lovers (that licks your boots away)
Young George's favourite intervals
Snatches of *Sur Incises* disease
Shades of *Szeherazada*
Interval games
Turning in for the long night

1 I had in mind the headlines from the newspaper office scene in *Ulysses*.

Oh en em 'ell KJ
Form under most strain
A trademark crescendo
H₂O from above
Beethovenian ongoing development
“I only do species now...”
Looking at future tonal regions

These involve personal associations to a greater or lesser extent – readers may detect some of my musical tastes, the Boulez reference concerning performance practices in his music, rather than being a response to the piece. The 1st Sonata's dedicatee Alexander Goehr has a presence, partly due to visits I paid him in 2022/23 during which he claimed his only composing activities were daily species counterpoint exercises (mentioned in a room that also contained an exercise bike!).

Goehr, the doyen of composer-analysts (his *Little Symphony* feeding off analytical study of Mussorgsky's *Catacombs*) often attracts the dedication of works that grapple with substantial forms – Peter Maxwell Davies's six-movement Naxos Quartet No. 6 being a further example. In 'Igneous' the geological events vie with conventions of sonata process, the aftermath of the volcanic (sonic) explosion perhaps describable as a succession of false recapitulations; or a 'reprise' that is truly deceptive, followed by aftershocks of limited force. The latter exemplifies the experiential mode of understanding.

Edward and I broke into discussion with the inexorable, less wrought Sonata No. 2, 'Sedimentary':

RC: You're right, there is a magic about No. 2 – in the final third, it's the first time I've listened to the results of a session and heard them as not-myself, just writing of great potency and fabulously original.

There's excitement also in your achieving, with Sedimentary, exactly what you were hoping: a dual function of middle movement and Sonata in its own right. I remember you being excited about this effect at Ayriel Studios, (the recording venue).

No. 1: I'm pleased with most of the recording; its ruggedness is very compelling, and it's a brilliantly original structure (more than that – it's too powerful to call it a 'structure'!).

EC: My dear friend,
Just listened to the 3rd Sonata.....

It's a work of epic grandeur for sure but it takes an exceptional musician to relocate those notes into an actual physical dimension of equal power...

Taken as a giant triptych, these three sonatas have been realised...have been created...to form something like a sensory and intellectual leviathan.

I want to write to you and describe and explain why my early composing years..steeped in Analysis...diverted me away from a more natural feel for FORM. And how much of an enduring conflict and crisis there was in reconciling my conditional understanding of 'form' from musical history as opposed to a transportation of natural forms into a sonic cosmos....

These three sonatas represent an absolute pinnacle of achievement for me as a composer.. albeit one constantly plagued by doubt...

You mentioned listening to number 2 as though it wasn't you playing it.

...Interesting....

I composed these pieces in a state of possession...some kind of abandonment into a well-worn panoply of knowledge and experience of 'music'. Like a Renaissance trainee, I've somehow managed to compose a trio of Masterpieces that will continue to free me from self destruction and to go on writing more and more 'natural music'..

RC: Having done one pass at the editing process I'm now taking the chance to review the Sonatas by playing and studying them afresh, and with the luxury of time going in reverse order, so starting with the colossus of No. 3. With this one I feel like I'm flying very low - it may be influenced by the wonderful image [for the album cover] of Heather's you sent

yesterday (ideal!), but I think it's more in the nature of the music. As you write at the beginning, 'Protolith(s)': it's the multiplicity of ideas at the opening (are the last 6 bars of this THEME part of the third type, or an attractive coda? The latter, it seems to me, containing features of all 3 types) that make the subsequent variations such a fascinating, complex journey. It seems very mature music, in the best sense: not given to excessive or dutiful displays of structural delineation, but proceeding with purpose and intensity to form a great aggregate - one with palpable musical sense.

To get a sense of that 'sense', I'm focussing in particular on how the music changes guises between the Protoliths - sometimes swiftly, sometimes slowly, transforming them - and this working in counterpoint with the recurrences of E flat minor (my favourite key!), often but not always at the beginning of Variations: the *brillante* last section of Metamorphosis 8 and arrival at No. 9; the delay of E flat-ness until the early climax (dynamically at least) of No. 4. AND THEN the rugged pedantry of No. 11, which returns to wrap up all-new No. 12. This seems a really great example of material taking hold, and dictating, or firmly guiding, very much on its own terms.

I note that you don't say you've abandoned traditional forms, rather avoided being constrained by them as before. As yet the sonata-rondo element of 'Metamorphic' isn't greatly apparent to me; I'm going to search for it, as that awareness may well add a further dimension in performance!

EC: Hi Roderick,

Fascinating observations and I'll write more fully shortly when we arrive in Victoria for a week of family and friend visits.

But just to share something a little lighter...

When I was doing my A level Music, I was already beyond Diploma level on the violin but only Grade 7 on Piano. This was Associated Examining Board when you had to play on first and second instruments.

Imagine my horror when one of the piano set works was the Chopin E flat minor Prelude. For

two months I had no regular school teacher of music so nobody thought to question this until I went to Gloucester for my bi-monthly private piano lesson.

'This can't be right', my teacher mused. I'd learned the bloody thing but was still terrified but also in love with it. She contacted the Board who quickly assured her that my school HAD been notified of the error. It should have been 'E minor' not the E flat!

I've adored the key ever since and used it in several major works, including my massive Choral Symphony...using this tonality in the Turner 'Peace, Burial at Sea' movement and in my elegiac 4th string quartet.

I'll unscramble Sonata Rondo in my next epistle...

Your interpretation of these is absolutely Hobbesian!

RC: Hobbesian in a dog-eat-dog sense (material grabbing the wheel), or that I see sonata structures as well-oiled machines?

EC: In the sense (cause), of an imposed order and treatment of order in form that mitigates against freedom (effect). The 'sovereign' authority of precedence versus a more 'democratic' view of form...

RC: I think there is a sense in which a performer has to relate to, inject or impose a subject of some kind within a sonata, which has motivations and actions – whatever the extent to which it's in the composer's imagination originally. This could lead us on to fascinating differences between the two roles!

EC: Subject to subjective!

In some senses...in the composer's mind, a 'subject' isn't an hypothesis but an 'answer' demanding a process of discovery that might lead to the question that appointed an answer...

No doubt the performer may discover roots and routes that differ from those taken by the composer.

Or the materials themselves are only made thoroughly consequential when realised by the performer and not the composer...

It's often a case of the student instructing the teacher...certainly I feel, listening to you play my music...that you are teaching ME because realisation is more flexible than discovery!

Paradoxically, I feel I had less choices in composing than you have found in performing....

Something that concerned me throughout...the 'sonata'...SOUNDING is the crucible in which ideas about sound can be tested..

Sound is less without form and form is less without carefully reasoned sounding...

RC: Of course that subject could be EXTREMELY negligible in comparison with the environment it's negotiating/expressing, but there nevertheless...

EC: 'Scale isn't a matter of size or dimensions, but rather as a result of the number of marks made upon a surface'

Henry Moore On Sculpture...

A subject without scale(s)...complex pun intended...is indeed negligible and I'm fascinated by the degree to which a sonic habitat can influence weight and substance to the development of ideas..

In the third sonata especially, the environment takes precedence over subject...sometimes!

RC: That's very interesting; my interest in the precedent forms is partly (I think) to find a locus for the subject that is a musically consequential response to its environment, and partly the analyst-within-me's desire for a replete understanding of the music. The question is whether the latter (quest) starts to eclipse the best artistic instincts. It's probably why the notion of false recapitulation fascinated me a lot in Igneous: a device with clear precedent in tradition, but also universal applicability. Nature tends to appear teleological when you zoom out (right?), but more random at a local level – some events just peter out, blind alleys are taken...

Processes eventually take shape....

How does this relate to H Moore? I am wondering!

But anyway, I don't see the conventional forms as being paramount, even if it seems so from what I'm writing!

EC: Roderick dear friend, there's a whole cosmos to unfurl on the 'scale' (Moore) aspects and paradigms...

Let me get back to Wollongong next week and I'll update that...

The discussion continues – to be published in due course – alongside much more composing, and the live sounding of these Sonatas (perhaps one day underground...).

Edward Cowie

‘Considered by many to be the greatest living composer directly inspired by the Natural World’

Edward Cowie's first Prom commission was *Leviathan*; a large scale orchestral work premiered by the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1975. It marked the first major event in a career that was to gain him national and international recognition for a new kind of ‘voice’ in the music world. Its title, arising from a conjunction between the mighty whale and a book by Hobbes with the same name can be seen as a signal of a composer whose imagination is deeply embedded in and inspired by the forces of nature. Throughout the 1970s and beyond, a stream of works inspired by wild places on this planet flowed into being, works like his sumptuous *Gesangbuch* (1975/6), (just released on Signum Classics), the *American Symphony* (1984), *Mount Keira Duets* (1985), and his powerful *Choral Symphony*, ‘*Symphonies of Rain, Steam and Speed*’. This immersion in the study of nature was born of a childhood spent in rural Suffolk and the Cotswolds and continues to form the core of his fertile imagination today.

But two further strands underpin and inspire Cowie's musical practice and ideas. His undergraduate studies in Physics and practical studies in Painting have been integrated into a kind of ‘fusion-world’ of ideas where science, the visual arts and music coalesce in a kind of creative continuum. In recent years, he has increasingly worked towards his music by means of ‘field studies’, theoretical research and painting-drawing. Studies and collaborations with leading physicists, for example, have not only seen exhibitions of his pre-compositional drawings, but have added a body of new music that directly translates scientific theory and experiment into music. His monumental solo piano series *Rutherford's Lights* was inspired by a study of the relationships between theories of light and colour, and his more recent *Particle Partita* for two violins – with a sonic time-line of the history of particle physics.

These ‘fusions’ of disciplines, the bridges between study and practice are an essential part of the composer's quest for new ways of forming. Parallels can be found between the linear and pointillist textures, forms, and motifs in his music with the writings and paintings of Klee and Kandinsky. During his period as first Composer in Association with the BBC Singers (2002-5), Cowie produced a string of large and small-scale pieces that moved through landscapes and

natural habitats all over the world. Gaia, INhabitAT, Lyre Bird Motet, Bell Bird Motet are classic examples of a music that engages with all of the senses in a profound respect for the power that nature has to move us.

Cowie was the first Granada Composer/Conductor with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra between 1982/4. This led to many conducting dates with other orchestras including the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra; the BBC Singers, ABC symphony orchestras of Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland and Tasmania and the Seymour Group and the Australia Ensemble. He was the first Composer in Association with the BBC Singers between 2003/5 and first Artist in Residence with The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) for the same period. His work for television has included a major film on Edward Lear for Granada TV and his acclaimed BBCTV2 film Leonardo of 1986. He has also written and presented major radio series commissioned by ABC FM Australia as well as for BBC Radio 3 and 4.

Major public lectures include the Gertrude Langer Memorial Lectures in Australia, and the Kate Springett Memorial Lecture in London as well as a Ruskin Lecture at Oxford. He has been invited to give keynote lectures and recitals all over the world. As a visual artist he has had over 40 one-man shows in important galleries in the UK, Germany, USA, Australia and New Zealand and his paintings and drawings are in public and private collections in 19 countries. Other musical honours have included a Gulbenkian Award to study at The Royal Ballet; The Radcliffe International Composer's Prize and a Chopin Fellowship to study with Lutoslawski in Poland. Cowie acknowledges Alexander Goehr as a major influence (as Cowie's professor and teacher) on his life and work- an acknowledgement that continues in a warm and ongoing friendship.

As an academic, Cowie has held major professorships in two Australian and one British University as well as Visiting Professorships in Germany and the USA. He has two doctorates- a PhD which includes studies in physics, mathematics, music and fine arts and was awarded the first Doctorate in Music (DMus) from the University of Southampton for his work as a composer. He was awarded a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship for inspirational visits to Africa and California, both leading to major compositional outcomes concerned with bringing music to the world that 'warns of the dangers to the wild and living world through the continuing destruction of it at the hands of humanity'.

Cowie's reputation continues to grow world-wide, and new recordings emerge with high praise and appreciation. His collaborations with major soloists and chamber groups are also enlarging and deepening. He still regards the human voice and the chamber-music mediums as the 'the most fabulously rich and varied palette of possibility in the expression of emotion and sensation'.

Cowie returned to Australia to live there permanently in November 2023. He and his visual artist wife, Heather Cowie, intend to continue their exploration of the natural world as vigorously and comprehensively as ever!



Edward Cowie working with Roderick Chadwick at Ayriel Studios, 2023

Roderick Chadwick, piano

The pianist and writer on music Roderick Chadwick's wide-ranging approach to repertoire over the last three decades has taken him to some of the world's leading venues and festivals. He has performed numerous modern piano classics: Lachenmann's Serynade at the inaugural London Contemporary Music Festival; John McGuire's 48 Variations for Two Pianos with Mark Knop (most recently at l'Auditori in Barcelona), and his recording of Stockhausen's Mantra with Knop and Newton Armstrong on the Hathut label received widespread praise. Other composers recorded include Gloria Coates, Edward Cowie, Maurice Duruflé, Sadie Harrison, Alex Hills, Michael Finnissy, Julian Anderson, Betsy Jolas, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Karol Szymanowski.

Partnerships with several renowned violinists have taken Roderick to Wigmore Hall, Seoul Arts Centre, Auditorium du Louvre, Tokyo Opera City, and he has appeared in a variety of roles at festivals including Aldeburgh, Bergen and Huddersfield. With Peter Sheppard Skaerved he recorded the violin and viola sonatas of Hans Werner Henze, and as a member of Plus-Minus Ensemble he performs throughout the European avant garde scene. His radio broadcasts include live performances during BBC Radio 3's Beethoven and Schubert seasons.

Roderick is an Associate Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, where his research has centred on the music of Messiaen and his students. In 2017 his co-authored book with Peter Hill 'Messiaen's Catalogue d'oiseaux: from conception to performance' was published by Cambridge University Press, and he is currently recording the Catalogue alongside conceptually-related repertoire for the Divine Art label. In 2008 he was artistic advisor to the Academy for their part in the Southbank's Messiaen centenary celebrations. He was made Reader of the University of London in 2013, and looks back to studies with Heather Slade-Lipkin, Charles Hopkins and Hamish Milne as being crucial.

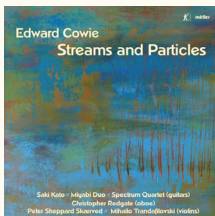
In 2025 several premiere recordings will be released, including Bryn Harrison's Towards a Slowing of the Past with Mark Knop (Another Timbre) and this account of Edward Cowie's Rock Music. He will also chair a distinguished panel at the Royal Academy's Boulez Centenary celebrations this March.

“Possessor of devastating musicality and technique” – *Sunday Times*

“An impressive achievement such as warrants urgent investigation” – *Gramophone*
on 'Souvenirs d'oiseaux'

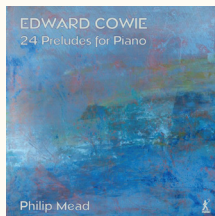
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Streams and Particles

MSV 28612



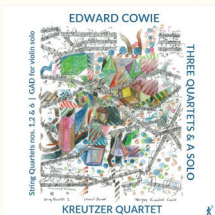
24 Preludes for Piano

MSV 28625



Orchestral Works

MSV 92108



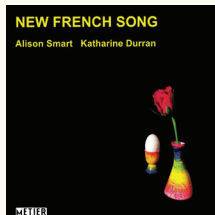
Three Quartets and a Solo

MSV 28603



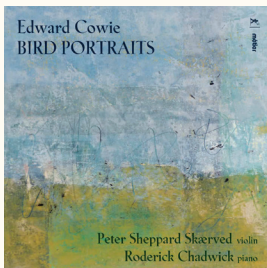
New Music for Oboe Vol. 2

MSV 28531



New French Song

MSV 92100



Bird Portraits

A cycle of 24 'sonic portraits' of different British birds from 4 distinctive habitats. After much study and extensive field-work, Cowie has drawn even closer to composing music that not so much imitates nature, but understands and portrays the birds, how they sing and their environment.

Peter Sheppard Skærved violin

Roderick Chadwick, piano

MSV 28619

"Cowie strives to depict the birdsongs as they really are, and they do often stand out with remarkable clarity"

– British Music Society

Where Song was Born – 24 Australian Bird Portraits

The second of the 'Bird Portraits' cycles featuring 24 of Australia's remarkable birds. Following British *Bird Portraits* (Métier MSV 28619), it contains new music with highly original treatments of the relationships between the bird singers and where and how they sing.

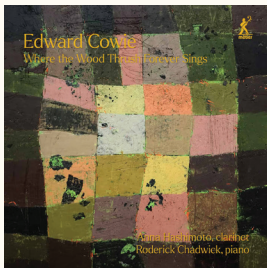
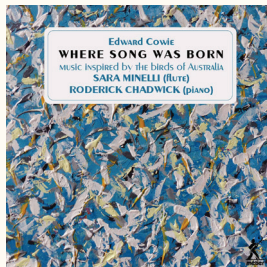
Sara Minelli, flute

Roderick Chadwick, piano

MSV 28620

"Cowie has created a stunning sonic tapestry"

– Fanfare



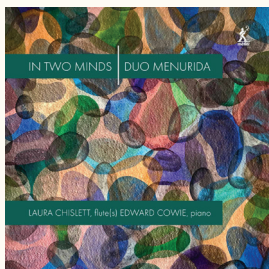
Where the Wood Thrush Forever Sings

The third of the 'Bird Portraits' cycles. In this latest cycle, Cowie draws inspiration from the avian wonders of the Americas, presenting a symphonic ode to 24 distinct bird species.

Anna Hashimoto, clarinet

Roderick Chadwick, piano

MEX 77104



In Two Minds - Duo Menurida

Duo Menurida is the collaboration between composer Edward Cowie (piano) and renowned Australian flautist, Laura Chislett. The album, a testament to their enduring creative connection, offers a unique fusion of musical expression and the natural world

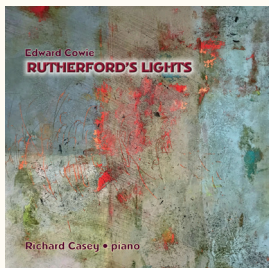
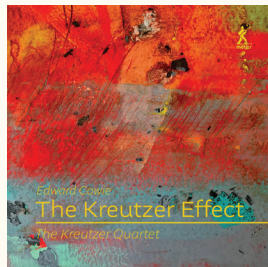
Edward Cowie, piano
Laura Chislett, flutes
MEX 77121

The Kreutzer Effect

Delving into the heart of Australia's rugged landscape, Cowie's quartet captures the awe-inspiring vastness and ancient beauty of Western Australia.

The Kreutzer Quartet
MEX 77103

"...the seventh quartet...is breaking new ground. The Kreutzer Quartet, which specializes in modern music and in particular the music of Edward Cowie, offers technically superior interpretations both in the ensemble and in the solo works." —Uwe Krusch, Pizzicato



Rutherford's Lights

24 studies for solo piano exploring the wonders of light in many states and forms from Simple Wave Motion to Dispersion and Radiation of Electromagnetic Waves. Himself an ex-student of physics, Cowie collaborated with Light Physicist Sir Michael Berry FRS in 'an adventure in illuminations, colours and photons!' The work was commissioned by The Institute of Physics in London, England and premiered and then recorded in 2010.

Richard Casey, piano
MEX 77116

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