

Joanna Leach (1937–2011)
A Most Remarkable Woman

Joanna Leach:
A Most Remarkable Woman

(a title based on an idea from her friend Bob Speer)

Reflections on the life of pianist and record producer Joanna Leach; told in her own words and the words of her friends.

Collated and compiled, with linking commentary (in sans-serif text) by her 4 husband **Mike Beville**

Cover photo: ***Richard Austin.*** *Lyme Regis*

This book is dedicated to the many friends Jo held so dear.



Visit the new Memorial website:

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Foreword

As the story tells, **Joanna Leach** changed the lives of her close friends, while uplifting and enriching the lives of those who crossed her path.

Her playing expressed her love and joy of life, and her passion for music. Her recordings have touched many people she never knew. One record reviewer was so enchanted as to suggest that “listening to Joanna Leach playing the *Field Nocturnes,* might change your life.” Jo’s 3rd husband David Turner was ‘struck by lightening’ when she cast her magical spell at a Wigmore Hall concert, or in the words of his friend Bob, he experienced a “*coup de foudre;”* an intense, passionate, relationship that was destined to change and fulfil both their lives.

Indeed, it was when listening to her impassioned performance of the Liszt *Dante Sonata* that I first recognised my deeper feelings for Jo, and a parting kiss transformed my life. As her business partner, lover, and finally 4th husband, I was privileged to have my life changed and to share the last sixteen years of Jo's life, when together we created, explored, and experienced so much; finally, dealing with the ongoing challenges presented by the terminal illness of a beloved partner.

Mike Beville

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PART ONE
The Formative Years

Joanna's Musical Heritage



Bessie & Belle Brown, aged 14
Oil on porcelain (1882) F.M. Reetz

Prior to the 1914-18 War, part of the American side of Joanna's family were living in Berlin and through her pianist grandmother, Bessie Krause and her twin sister, Belle G. Brown who had a lovely singing voice, had connections to some illustrious musical figures such as Theodor Leschetizky, Edvard Grieg, Benno Moiseiwitsch and Mme. Désirée Artôt de Padilla.

From **The Grieg Journal June 2011:**

'In Memoriam of Joanna Leach'



"Edvard Grieg Norwegian Composer taken by me (Belle G. Brown) in Paris France in Mme.Artôt's house party"
One of several photos passed to the Grieg Society from the family heirlooms left to Jo.

"...One of the guests on that May evening in 1894 in Paris was a Bostonian American. During the 1890s Belle G. Brown studied singing in Europe and one of her several significant teachers was Désirée Artôt de Padilla... Miss Brown

remained enthusiastically committed to music and corresponded with a number of leading figures over the years, further more collecting a series of prints and photographs depicting famous musicians. She donated her collection spanning 1865-1912 to the Library of Congress in 1933-34."

Lionel Carley



Julian Thompson

Growing up in British India

Julian Thomson (Jo's older brother): Jo spent the first eight years of her life in India. She was born on the 1st October 1937 in Calcutta, where our father was an architect. We were fortunate to have loving parents. But we had to spend long periods away from them in the cool of the hills because of the suffocating heat of Calcutta; usually in the care of our English nanny.

Dajeeling then, was a wonderful place, not plagued by pollution as it is now. There were wonderful views of the mountains, including Kanchenjunga, the third largest mountain in the world. Jo would talk about this with me for the rest of her life. Bizarrely had it not been for the Second World War, we would have been sent back to England much earlier, as was the



Joanna in India, 1945

custom of the time. Luckily for us, because the war was on, our parents decided not to risk us on U-boat infested seas. So we were able to experience so many of the sights and sounds of India: like watching a tiger cross the road in the headlights of a car in Assam; like seeing elephants at night from a train in the moonlight.

One of my earliest memories of travelling with Jo (she must have been about three and I about six), was being invited to share the same bunk, head to toe. She pulled the sheet up and I pulled the sheet up and she pulled the sheet up and I pulled the sheet up – and she won! All I got was a rocket from Nanny.

Joanna told the story of how, when Julian was a baby, he and his parents returned to the UK. On the voyage Julian became very distressed and a doctor was called. He diagnosed heroin withdrawal symptoms! Apparently Indian Ayahs had a reputation for being 'good' with babies; they used to place a little heroin under the thumbnail to comfort the child!



Trecking in Sikkim

Julian: When Jo was about seven [1944], our parents took

us trekking in Sikkim, which involved walking and riding on the mountain pass. She was totally fearless, riding a pony on those narrow paths, which I must say, I was not. Another of my early memories of her dark brown eyes, almost black at times, flashing in defiance, when she thought she was being unfairly treated. At that stage of her life, she was always an ace at winning my parents round, a lesson that I took much longer to learn.

The 'Homecoming'

Joanna (*in a conversation with Jeremy Robson*)**:**

We came back from India at the very end of '45. We arrived on Christmas Eve at Tilbury Docks in ghastly, awful, cold, misty weather and I thought, '*Is this meant to be this wonderful place called Home?'*



What a contrast: England in the grips of food rationing, along with post–war devastation and dilapidation, compared with the gracious cosseted life of the British Raj; what a culture shock!

Joanna: My father went back to India in '46 to wind up his business. In the meantime we were living in three different places in Sussex fairly near the aunts – my father's sisters. We were staying in rented houses until my father got back from India in '47. Then



Trewarne Manor

they were house-hunting. My mother said '*I don't care what it's like as long as its warm*'. They looked all over the place and finally found *Trewarne* [near Trelill, Cornwall]. And when they saw *Trewarne* my father fell completely in love with it. I think my mother did too. It was just about the least warm house you could possibly imagine! But it was the most enchanting place really, especially in the summer, when it wasn't freezing cold.



The Dining Room at Trewarne

School Days



Julian and Joanna were sent off for a boarding education Julian to *Sherborne* while Jo, from ages 10 13, went to *The Hall School* in Somerset.

Julian: As we were both at boarding school, we only met during holidays; the weekly exeat was not known in those days. We had a wonderful time, particularly in the summer, swimming and surfing in the north coast sea.



Tessa Davies [*Flemming***]:** Yes I went when I was nine. You must have come the next term.

Joanna: Yes, I came in the Spring Term and the next term **Mel** [*Melanie Petre*] came, because I know she was a new girl one term after me. She was very frightened because she had never been to a school before; she had always had governesses at home and I sort of took her under my wing. I knew what it was like being a new girl, having been to countless new schools all the time.

Tessa: I remember her hair which she had dead straight with a little fringe. She had it permed. For a long time I thought that it was natural, the way it curled like that...

Melanie Petre: Joanna was a wonderful friend to me and to Tessa for over 60 years. We all met at the Hall School, Somerset, when we were ten. I never did discover why, when her family lived in Cornwall, Jo was sent to boarding school in Somerset (Tessa and I were locals.) It was a very happy school, with an emphasis on art, handwork and music and Jo always showed a shining musical talent, playing the piano most beautifully and inspiring a lot of us with her love of classical music.



School life was pretty uncomfortable; one dormitory held 23 of us and was called *The Roosters.* Lessons took place in Nissen huts which were incredibly cold in winter and we all got chilblains.

Joanna: I remember all the beds were pushed so close together so that when the School Inspectors came round they had to remove some, because there wasn't enough space legally.

Tessa: It was so cold!

Joanna: It was cold, and we used to tell each other ghost

stories and get into bed with each other to keep warm! We had to go miles to wash in freezing cold passages.

Tessa and I were both rather mavericks and we weren't actually going to fit in.

Joff Davies [*Tessa's husband*]**:** You can say that about Tessa, she was very maverick!

Joanna: I was always being told how 'un-public spirited' I was, but Tessa went one stage further. You accepted a dare didn't you...

Tessa: Yes I did, I did. Because there wasn't room for everyone to sleep at the school, we slept in a little house at the end of the village which was called *The Old Rectory*. There was a little lane up to it; a muddy little lane with lots of cows wandering up and down it. The whole bet was that when we had finished our mock 'O' Levels, on the way to bed, this other girl and I would run up this hill with nothing on. Which we did! We had gum-boots on – in those days we didn't realise that gum-boots were slightly kinky – nothing on except gum-boots! The gum–boots were there purely to protect us from...

Joanna: ...the cow-shit!

Tessa: Yes...

Joff: The funniest part of that was that the Headmistress rang up Tessa's mother and said,*"I'm sorry we are going to have to expel your daughter"* so her mother thought the worst, you know – pregnant or something – and said "*Well, what has she done?*" And the woman said "*Oh, it's too*

awful; I can't tell you over the telephone.

Joanna: You were only found out because of that horrible prefect Jennifer... whats-her-name.

Tessa: Well, that was part of the bet to do it in front of Jennifer, who was Head-girl. So she immediately reported us to the Headmistress.

Joff: That Head-girl was idiotic!

Joanna: But the funny bit is that they later wanted you to...

Tessa: ...be a Governor! When we came back to live in Somerset, I met this person at a party, he was a Governor at the school. I said "*Oh, funny, I was there"*.

"*Oh, were you really,"* he said, "*You're a Magistrate, aren't you? You're the sort of person we want to be a Governor. Would you think about it?"*

I thought poor old Miss Brooks would be spinning in her grave. So, no I didn't tell him, I very quietly backed out.

Melanie: I often used to stay with Jo in Cornwall, at her parents' magical old house, *Trewarne.* At Christmas time, in the stone flagged dining room, there would be a huge Christmas tree decorated entirely in white and silver. Jo even then was a great cook and one speciality was corn fritters and mushroom sauce. We listened to music and played the piano, read a lot of books and played cards and darts – there was, of course, no television in the late Forties.

On one visit I unfortunately developed measles, which Jo promptly caught and her very kind and dear mother had to



Hall School – Senior Girls 'Swan Lake' Tableau

nurse both of us for at least a fortnight. I remember her reading to us, rather appropriately, *Bleak House.*

Jo's father was great fun and would come out with some splendidly dismissive one-liners. *"They hunt with the Heythrop and fish with Macfisheries"* always made me laugh. The Thompson family had two Dachshunds, Topper and Truffle, in whose honour they all successfully backed Royal Tan in the 1954 Grand National. They also had guinea pigs called Lord Palmerston and Highly Molasses.

In the summer we would go surfing at Polzeath, find small, out of the way coves to swim in and try (unsuccessfully) to catch crabs and lobsters by hand."

Julian: After passing my driving test, we would sometimes sneak out of the house and go midnight swimming and I would "borrow" the car, rolling it down the hill, hoping I had not been overheard by anybody.

Then we would go down to the beach, taking a wind-up gramophone with us and dance and jive to classical jazz. I'm afraid my music was always 'a bit downmarket' compared with Jo's kind of music.



Melanie: I don't remember grownups being present on these forays – children were allowed so much independence in those days. Julian was usually there, often with a friend staying and I remember him taking Jo and me out rabbit shooting. For target practice we took pot shots at telegraph poles – a bit dangerous, perhaps, General?



The Petre family home: Stourhead

Joanna would come and stay with me and we were often joined by Tessa. I had ponies so we rode a lot. Jo, having ridden in India where it seemed the horses had no brakes, used to disappear fearlessly at full gallop – we all decided she had an 'electric bottom'. Jo was altogether very special and it was a great privilege to have been her friend.

From what Jo said later, it may well have been the horse in control, rather than Jo. Jo told how, when visiting Mel at *Stourhead,* the Petre family home; that while there was a great deal of freedom in what they could do, she found the formalities and routines of such a large household somewhat daunting.

At the age of 14 Jo moved to *Sydenham House* for five terms, where she met up with Caroline 'Carotts' Norman. They became bosom friends and remained so throughout their lives.

Carrots: The name Carrots came about long before Jo came to Sydenham when I called another girl, named Penny Emanuel, Beetroot, for some reason lost in the mists of time. She responded by calling me Carrots, which, as you know stuck forever!

I actually joined Sydenham in 1944 in the war, when Jo, presumably was still in India, and it was I, being the youngest girl in the school, who got to light the Victory Bonfire!

At the end of the term before Jo's arrival we were summoned by our then form mistress who informed us that *"Next term, dears, there will be a girl joining us who* ***thinks*** *she is a brilliant pianist and musician. Nobody should be unkind, but we all know how to deal with little madams like that, don't we dears".* This did not augur well for Jo's future as you can imagine, and it immediately determined me that I was going to be a good friend to this interesting-sounding newcomer. I took Jo under my wing and of course she did do the same for me in a big way in



Michael Robson, Jo & Julian

years to come.

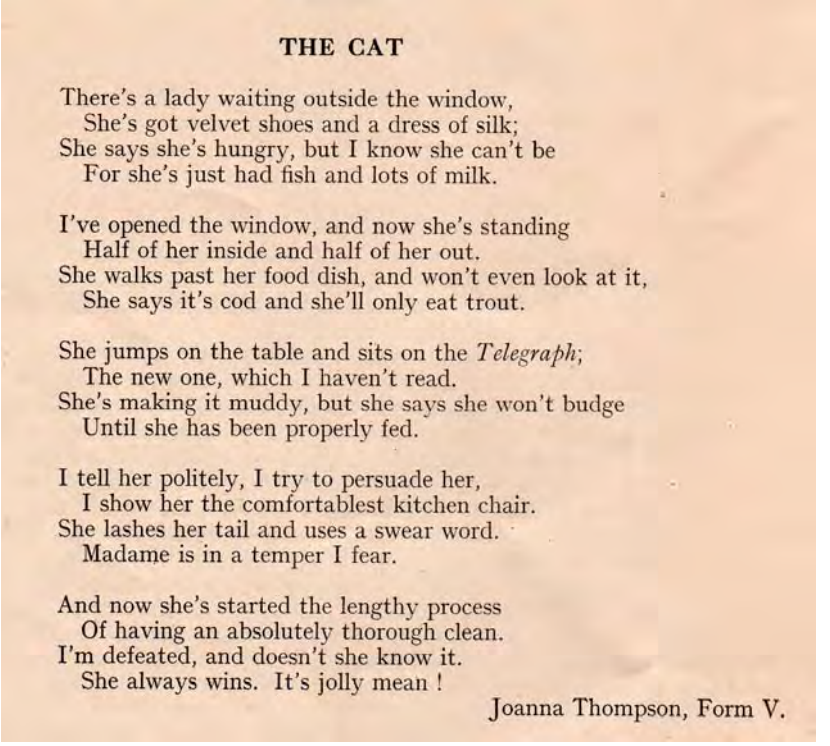
At school, excelling in anything can attract teasing and even bullying. Fortunately her brother Julian had shown Jo how to deal with bullies and, being something of a tom boy, she quickly delivered a bloody nose to one of her tormentors that had the effect of developing a healthy respect for her thereafter.

Jo unfairly gained the reputation of an *enfant terrible* after a younger girl developed a crush on her that she had not encouraged.

Carrots: The incident concerning the girl who had a crush on Jo actually took place at Sydenham House. I remember it well as Joanna and I were sleeping in the same room, the State Room, at the time when this girl, Susan by name, crept in, in the middle of the night and got into Jo's bed. Jo woke up, and there followed a considerable furore for which she was most unfairly blamed. Subsequently, it turns out, this particular girl caused grief to other members

of the school as well, and one does wonder what became of her as an adult.

Joanna left the school in the summer just before her 16th birthday.



THE CAT

There's a lady waiting outside the window,
She's got velvet shoes and a dress of silk;
She says she's hungry, but I know she can't be
For she's just had fish and lots of milk.

I've opened the window, and now she's standing
Half of her inside and half of her out.
She walks past her food dish, and won't even look at it,
She says it's cod and she'll only eat trout.

She jumps on the table and sits on the *Telegraph*;
The new one, which I haven't read.
She's making it muddy, but she says she won't budge
Until she has been properly fed.

I tell her politely, I try to persuade her,
I show her the comfortablest kitchen chair.
She lashes her tail and uses a swear word.
Madame is in a temper I fear.

And now she's started the lengthy process
Of having an absolutely thorough clean.
I'm defeated, and doesn't she know it.
She always wins. It's jolly mean !

Joanna Thompson, Form V.

Michael Robson: Jo's mother and mine [Diana Robson] had been close friends in Calcutta in the 1930s, but had lost contact after we had moved to Cape Town from 1942. Six years later, and by an extraordinary coincidence, Jo's older brother Julian and I found ourselves at the same boarding school. Our two families were reunited and for several years my mother, my brother Jeremy and I stayed at

Trewarne each summer; these visits were high points in our family's life.

I so clearly recall meeting Jo for the first time on our arrival at Trewarne. She was about 11 and although naturally shy to begin with, was at once engaging and an absolute delight to be with. I can still hear her infectious laugh (which sometimes followed a mildly outrageous remark, particularly as she grew older). Initially I think she may have felt a bit 'surrounded' at times by three young males – her brother, Jeremy (my younger brother) and me – but this did not constrain her from organising us and cooking delicious suppers with a no-fuss assurance. (The grown-ups ate later, after their cocktail hour). We would go on daily excursions to one of the many beaches, which in those days were mostly relatively uncrowded. We all swam a lot, in all weathers (no wet suits of course!). They were happy times.

Julian: One of my memories, is of the sun shining through the big seventeenth century mullion windows at *Trewarne*, and the sound of Jo playing the piano. And of course as we all know, music became her life-long passion.

Michael's abiding memories are also connected with *Trewarne's* beautiful drawing room:

Michael: At one end stood the magnificent grand piano on which Jo's special talents flowered year by year. Her progress was dazzling, with a developing mastery of a growing range of increasingly demanding piano music.

I remember hovering around the passage outside the drawing room listening to her practicing (as she did for most of the mornings). In fact there were not many parts of

the house where her playing could not be heard as she tackled pieces calling for a wide range of interpretations; sometimes played with passion, sometimes with sensitive fluidity and at other times with that almost effortless clarity from rapid finger work which became a hallmark of her later playing on her square pianos."

Jo later told how at 13, she found herself in awe of Michael.

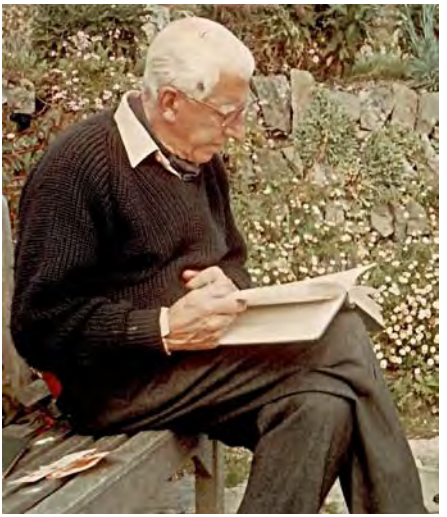


Joanna (*talking to Jeremy Robson*): Of course I was potty about Michael because he was a huge wonderful god. Julian was the same age as him. I was looking forward so much to Diana coming down each year and bringing you and Michael for a wonderful holiday with us all together, going to Gully and the Giant's Chair, and you younger than me; but a *boy*, with that mop of red hair.

Michael rather admired my piano playing. I didn't know this until Julian told me, "*Oh, he listens outside the door when you are practising your Bach".* Of course I fell flat on my face with all this adulation. I thought he was so wonderful and I couldn't hear a word he said when he spoke to me because I went immediately quite deaf! I looked forward so much every year; I was absolutely smitten! But he never made any move towards me, so we never touched hands,

kissed or anything at all. So when I went off to Vienna I was still feeling smitten for Michael. Then I met Jerry, my first husband to be, and of course I was full of female hormones and he was full of male hormones and we got together.

Musical Influences



Henry Wynn Wernick

Joanna *(talking with Andreas Boyde)***:** I had a wonderful teacher called Henry Wynn Wernick in Cornwall, who taught me how to relax in such a way that I didn't get tendinitis and various things and he was very keen on my playing. Actually he was a little bit in love with me I think.

Perhaps more than 'a little'; Jo said that on one occasion she had to deal with an amorous advance.

He actually picked up on this intuitive thing. I think its just part of my imaginative character; I always was a very imaginative child.

Henry Wynn-Wernick, had studied in Leipzig with Robert Teichmüller (1863-1939) before the 1914-18 War. Teichmüller was said to have been a student of Liszt. Jo was very conscious of this musical lineage to Liszt through Wynn Wernick. He laid particular emphasis on an expressive and delicate style of playing, teaching the flexibility, that combined with precise finger control, was to prove so invaluable when it came to performing on

early pianos with their light action.

Joanna (*8th Oct 1954, in a letter to her parents, a few days after her 17th birthday*):

Wynn told me in my lesson before I went on Monday, that I wasn't to play the ... Moszkowski to Franz Osborne unless everything was perfect and alright and he asked for something showy... I am really feeling quite sick with nerves about playing to Franz Osborne this afternoon.



Everything has gone all right. Franz Osborne was terribly nice. We spent an hour there. He said I was relaxed and gifted, also I had a good warm tone. He liked my concentration and said, *"Very good and excellent hands."* I am just picking out phrases he used. He said I needed confidence to play more easily. He said to definitely go on with it. And when I said I wanted to be a concert pianist, he said he thought it was quite possible. He gave me several tips and interesting exercises. He said, *"Come and play again sometime. Play and listen as much as possible."* We chatted quite a bit and he was awfully nice. Said he could

tell my teacher was very good. I was especially pleased about the tone.

Mary, Joanna's mother, was very keen that she should follow grandmother Bessie by studying in Vienna. So, in spite of Joanna's pleadings that she did not feel ready to cope, arrangements were made for lessons with Joseph Dickler and in 1955, at barely eighteen, Jo was sent to study in Vienna.



Jo with her mother Mary at Trewarne,

She found herself under a lot of pressure to learn pieces quickly and became quite seriously ill; a difficulty compounded by being on her own with no real support, feeling too ill to get up and having little knowledge of the language.

Her time in Vienna eventually led to romance, pregnancy and (as was the custom in those days) to an inevitable

marriage – with **Jeryl (Jerry)**, a young American, who liked to think of himself as a bohemian artist with the free-loving, relaxed, laid-back life-style that implied. Although Joanna went along with it in a spirit of adventure, the relationship soon proved troublesome, emotionally painful and a major distraction to her artistic aspirations. The relationship ended two years later, when she was back in the UK, aged 21. He left her penniless with their child, returning to America and committing bigamy. Joanna was finally able to get a divorce in May, 1961.

In an undated letter (c.1998) to her dear friend Derek Bell, Joanna wrote of meeting Jerry...

Joanna: …and now another bombshell for me... Susan has found her father, Jerry, on the Internet and they had lots of emotional talks on the phone. Then he came over to see her... I had them both for supper on Sunday. Derek, I had not seen this first husband for 38 years and there were terrible memories of what had happened between us hanging over me; so I was really frightened to see him again. But I did want to see him because Susan was so happy to have found her father. I wanted to lay some ghosts and give him the opportunity to see me too.

Anyway, they came and he was terrified that I would not welcome him. He looked the same, only older and balder, and all the memories changed into a mixture of good times as well as nightmares. As he talked I knew he had been through terrible self-condemnation and as I was moving about the kitchen getting the meal he burst into floods of tears. I found I had to put my arms around him and comfort

him and tell him it was now alright. He said I had the same movements and facial expressions and was so much still the young girl he had met at 18 and he couldn't bear to hear how much he had hurt me. I know it was wonderful for Susan to see us together being nice to each other.

Peter Katin



Peter Katin in concert 1960s

6 Aug 1957 A letter from **Alasdair Graham:**

I spoke to Peter Katin about lessons and he said he'd turned so many people down but that he'd hear you Jo, although he couldn't promise regular lessons; it sounded quite hopeful. He's away all this week and next, so perhaps after, when he isn't so busy, the best thing would be to write him. He remembers seeing you at the concert. I explained that you had a baby and that you wouldn't be wanting weekly lessons.

Peter Katin: I think it was in the late fifties when Jo first played to me and I took her on as a pupil... her enthusiasm was infectious.

It was during this period of her life that Joanna found pleasure and relief from domestic pressures in a steamy

passionate affair with Simon, a 19 year old flute player she fancied. Unfortunately his youthful immaturity undermined the relationship and she tired of his possessiveness and violent outbursts and finally disentangled herself from the relationship. Even when married and into retirement, Simon continued to phone her once a year for a friendly chat. As Joanna said, *"I don't think any of the men I have been with are ever going to forget me."*

3 Feb 1960, Joanna (22) in a letter to her mother:

I had a rather extraordinary music lesson the other day. I arrived in the morning at my appointed time, but so did all the removal men (Peter has changed his studio from downstairs to upstairs). They were supposed to come in the afternoon, but as usual had messed it up. Peter was going to be teaching all morning, so the house was full of students and Peter frantically pacing, while his two pianos went up the stairs. Finally I got a lesson after spending the whole day with them complete with an hilarious lunch with wine.

I may be able to get some small recitals quite soon, in clubs or there is the Lycee French Institute, probably part of one sharing with a singer. I don't expect I will get paid but it will be experience. I have nearly got the Beethoven complete from memory, but as Peter says, "*It is a hard nut to crack*."

20 Sept 1960, a letter from **Peter Katin:**

I am sorry if you had a bad time yesterday. I was determined to find out the underlying cause of your memory defects

and I am sure that I have found it. Please don't despair... Never think I am being hard on you because I want you to be hard on yourself, but you must always remember that the fight is for music not for oneself.

Around this time, Joanna seems to have met up again with **John Leach**.

Joanna: John and I had first met when we were both students in Vienna in 1956. I had just started my affair with a young American artist, Jerry... I found John rather strange and was annoyed when he asked me what I was studying and then said, "*Why on earth do you want to play the piano?"*

In this letter Joanna mentions seeing John play at the Festival Hall...

11 June 1961, in a letter to her parents,:

Heard Rubinstein that evening (Monday). In some things he was marvellous. In others I wasn't so mad about it. He played the Schumann *Fantasiestücke: Des Abends* which starts off wonderfully, so quiet and soft. His Liszt *Sonata* was poetic, but lacked precision. The Prokofiev was marvellous. The *Ballade* did not quite come up to expectations, but the *Studies* were out of this world.

The next evening I went to supper with Tessa. She is getting married on June 21st at a register office and I am going to the reception afterwards, a cocktail party at the Hyde Park Hotel. Very nice and civilised. I like Joff, her fiancé, very much.

On Wednesday evening I went to hear Claudio Arrau play Chopin No.1 Concerto in E minor, Beethoven 4th G major, and the Brahms D minor. The Chopin and Brahms, especially the Brahms were fantastique. One can't imagine it any more wonderfully played. Real power, tremendous. He was completely in the music. The Beethoven I didn't like so much. The slow movement not at all.

On Thursday I went to the Royal Ballet dancing at Streatham Hill Theatre. The ballet included *The Invitation,* a new ballet, which is marvellous. I expect you have read reviews about it.

On Friday I went to the Festival Hall again. Three times in one week! This time to hear the *Hary Janos Suite* with John playing the cimbalom in it – and Annie Fischer playing the Bartok No.3 concerto which I am just starting.



John Leach playing a cimbalom

I am going to try to get into this competition I told you about. I have written to Clifford Curzon and Maria Donska asking for auditions, for recommendations I shall probably play the Chopin *Nocturne* to them and possibly a *Study*. I have the Bartok all right anyway.

21 Jul 1961: Tomorrow morning I am having a lesson on the Beethoven with Maria Donska which I hope will be

helpful. She specialises in Beethoven. My lesson with Peter went off all right. We tape recorded some of the things and one learns a lot like that.

Tomorrow evening there is a musical party at Peter's. I may play some Chopin. I am going over after the lesson with Maria to help get things ready...

18 Aug 1961: My lesson was instructive and helpful, and I feel I can tackle the *Barcarolle* better now. Lots of technical points cleared up. I am also just starting a heavenly Beethoven *Sonata F sharp major* (I think) which is quite lovely and I've always wanted to play. So I have four beautiful things to work at. The Schumann Concerto (to polish) and the Beethoven *Sonata*, Chopin *Barcarolle* and *Nocturne* to learn.

> This was a desperate time for Joanna. She was sharing a flat with two unmarried mothers who received benefit payments. Joanna discovered that the generosity of the state, did not extend to benefits for a married woman with a child, whose husband (even if he was a bigamist and lived in America), was expected to pay! Reluctantly she had to accept an allowance of £4 from her mother that covered the basic rent and left £2 per week on which to live! Like many others struggling before her, she managed to earn money as a life-model for drawing classes while she focused on the teaching diploma.

2 May 1962: I am modelling this evening which is a bore, but only for two hours; child's play after the four hour sessions last term. Tomorrow evening I am going to a recital and reception at the Hungarian Embassy, so will

have a chance to look 'ever so glamorous'.

I haven't heard about my exam yet, the bastards.

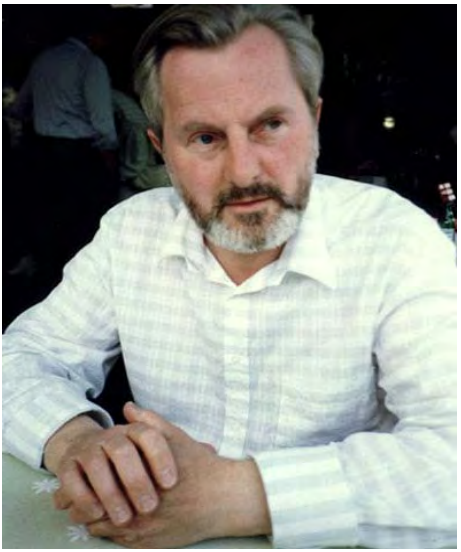
The exam referred to was probably the LRAM teaching diploma. Being well accomplished on the performance side, Joanna completed what was normally a three year LRAM home study course in one year and qualified to teach. Joanna (now 25) had just failed to get into the finals of the Mozart Competition.

30 October 1962: Peter Katin wrote: I did hear you play all of the concerto a few days before and that was enough to convince me that you were quite capable of giving a really fine performance of it in any hall. If I were an impresario I would in fact give you the chance of doing so, but as I am not, I would like to give some token of how I admire the way in which you have successfully battled with so many obstacles, both musical and personal. Will you allow me to give you one year's lessons without fee.

I believe very strongly that you are a real artiste and are limited, in my view, by lack of self-confidence and to a certain extent by your actual technique. The former can be a crippling thing and while it seems to me you are slowly overcoming it, you will have to triumph over it before you can really develop your talent to the full.

Joanna spoke of Peter's generosity, at this financially difficult time of her life. She was later to repay him with the enthusiasm and commitment that she put into the production of five acclaimed CDs, released on Joanna's ***Athene*** label.

PART TWO



John Leach 1931–2014

'The Third Man'

Although a cimbalom is not quite a zither, **John Leach** was the third man in Joanna's life. After living together for a while, their relationship led to marriage in 1963. John, by then an established orchestral player, was also clearly something of a musical entrepreneur and was becoming increasingly well connected in the business. He saw opportunities and seized them.

Joanna: John's mother [*Mutti*] was born in Czechoslovakia very near the Austrian border; in fact it was all German speaking at the time and was considered by many as part of Austria. Her sister, John's aunt, had married an Austrian vet and they lived in Lembach. John had been a student for some time before 1956 when, post-war, Austria was still partitioned. During his holiday breaks John used to go and stay in Lembach with his Aunt, some distance away from Vienna and in the Russian Zone at this time.

His family connections to Eastern Europe and his role as an orchestral player would have made him realise the potential for an almost solo role for one who could play the cimbalom. Its use in an increasing number of popular compositions, coupled with the fact that ethnic players at the time could not read music, meant such a player would be in considerable demand as a concert and session musician.

Daily Telegraph Obituary:

“Spotting a professional opportunity, he began to study the instrument, and in 1958 travelled to Budapest to have lessons and to meet the cimbalom maker Bohak Lajos. He was invited to tea with Zoltán Kodály, composer of the

opera Háry János, which makes prominent use of the cimbalom, notably in the well–known Intermezzo. In the composer's flat, Leach went through all the parts the composer had written for the instrument. From this date onwards he saw Kodály every year on his annual visits to London, and played for him with the London Symphony Orchestra. He treasured a pair of cimbalom sticks the composer had given him."

John, had a close connection with the UK Hungarian Institute with its large ready-made audience. He was something of an entrepreneurial concert promoter. Together with his Austrian friend Robert Hüffler and Robert's folk group, they would perform a series of concerts each year in London. They took advantage of state sponsored cultural visits behind the *Iron Curtain* to Budapest. John was among the first to compose for the fledgling music library business (publishers such as *KPM* and *de Wolf*) with musical sequences cut in varying lengths to be used in advertising and mood music. John's friend George Fenton credits John with introducing him to this format. Joanna wrote some of the pieces and John was



Joanna: *Some cimbaloms were heavy and difficult to load and handle*

always scrupulous in sending her share of the royalties each year until her death.

John was a growing success in terms of his orchestral career. Perhaps a significant part of his attraction for Joanna was that, unlike her philandering, work-shy, sponging first husband Jerry, John seemed to have a firm grip on life and knew where he was going. To John, Joanna must have seemed the ideal mate: socially sophisticated, a good cook and entertainer, with a strong

British composer and cimbalom player Janos Lehar, aka **John Leach**, made a career in classical, soundtrack and library music. In the 1960s, he was working for the BBC and had already started collecting exotic and unusual instruments from around the world (like santur, koto, cheng or kantele). Leach is a well–respected interpreter of cimbalom classical music by the likes of Stravinski, Debussy and Zoltán Kodály and wrote several academic articles on cimbalom and dulcimer between 1968 and 72. He collaborated with John Barry on *The Ipcress File* (1965) and *The Persuaders* (1970) soundtracks, played santur on Mike Batt's soundtrack to James Fargo's 1978 film *Caravan*, and contributed cimbalom notes to John Williams' *Raiders of the Lost Ark* 1981 soundtrack. Leach plays cimbalom on Basil Kirchin's *Worlds Within Worlds* 1971 LP, and cimbalom and kantele on Alan Parsons Project's LPs *Tales of Mystery and Imagination,* 1976 and *I Robot*, 1977. He also collaborated with Jeff Wayne and George Fenton on several library music LPs, like the *Medieval Music* LP on KPM in 1972. *Wikipedia*

libido, as well as being a useful performer in support of his role as organiser and concert promoter.

As Joanna told it, their family backgrounds and sensitivities could not have been more different. His father, Bert was from a working class background; John's mother, from a peasant background in Czechoslovakia. Bert, used his earnings for his own pleasures and left his wife, Mutti, struggling with menial work to earn money in order to put food on the table.

Joanna was from a professional middle class family who had enjoyed a privileged life in the British Raj and, through the Brown family, could claim to be 'Daughters of the American Revolution' and had connections to high society in America and Berlin. Indeed, the distinction of a great great great great... grandmother being hanged as a witch, a victim of paranoia in the Salem disaster; later to be recognised as a serious miscarriage of Justice and (somewhat too late) was pardoned by King George IV!

When John became orchestral manager of the Philharmonia Orchestra in 1963, he returned home saying that they *"had to get married"* as he had told the interview board that they *were* married in order to take advantage of the marriage tax allowance available at that time.

Perhaps Joanna should have remembered John's dismissive comment when they first met in Vienna as students:

"Why on earth do you want to play the *piano?* "

Clearly John saw himself as the breadwinner and the

> *professional* musician whose career was to be the focus of their joint efforts, with Joanna very much in a supporting role as ensemble player, wife, mother, instrument porter and chauffeur (John did not drive). His almost total reliance on her driving him, together with his instruments, to and from engagements seems to have set him against wishing her success as a soloist in her own right; a success that perhaps might conflict with his own requirements. If he considered her aspirations as a concert pianist, he seems to have dismissed them as 'pointless'. Perhaps after she had failed to get into the finals of the Mozart competition.

Joanna: I was not keen to marry after my previous unhappy experience, but couldn't really think of a good enough reason to refuse and his parents were delighted and my mother thought at last I would settle down to a more conventional life instead of being a penniless bohemian. We had got on well enough before that, but I noticed a change after we married and I tried to ignore the fact that John was becoming increasingly demanding and controlling.

> It should be remembered that in the context of the '30s-60s, male egotistical dominance and chauvinism were characteristics all too common and 'normalised' in society; characteristics handed down through families of all classes that went largely unquestioned until the '70s and '80s. The concept of ‘abuse’, let alone ‘mental abuse’, had not entered social consciousness. There was the tendency for women to be seen in a domestic role and as being untutored for worldly affairs.

During WW2, many children had seriously disturbed childhoods – Bert, his father was clearly not a good role-model and John's evacuation at the age 10 to a strict controlling Quaker family, would not have helped. Although they encouraged him to learn the piano, their strict attitude to behaviour, coupled with freely used corporal punishment, might not have encouraged emotional development, or feelings of affection. Perhaps being conditioned by controlling parental behaviour, coupled with feelings of insecurity and an inhibited sense of empathy, can prove to be a disastrous combination in subsequent family relationships. Unable to see a point-of-view other than their own, it is difficult for the person concerned to understand the damage accruing to others and become aware of 'the need to change'.

Joanna *(talking with Jeremy Robson)***:** At first he wasn't too bad at all and I was very interested in all the cimbalom business and these exotic instruments he played. I went along, as I have always been one who has tried to *'please my man'*. I was unselfish to the point of giving up my own life. Of course I had had rather a ghastly time with my first husband, Jerry. John seemed quite grown up and all the rest of it. But he was actually someone who never said anything nice much, and he certainly never said anything nice about my playing. Then he actually started saying really nasty things about it. When someone said *"Oh, I didn't know you played the piano,"* John said, *"Oh, she doesn't really play, she just bashes around on it; you don't want to hear her."* Yet he would use me in concerts to play with him. Then

eventually I was playing whole Liszt Rhapsodies because he wanted to show how Liszt had been influenced when he was writing his Hungarian Rhapsodies and been completely influenced by the cimbalom players, which is quite true. But when it was for the concert, I was allowed to practice; for the rest of the time if I went to the piano, I was discouraged. He delighted in spoiling my day in all sorts of ways. He didn't like anybody giving me any kind of praise: *"Oh, you do look nice this evening."* He would say, *"Come away, come away, you mustn't talk to that man."*

John was musical, but I think he was slightly jealous of me, because I don't think he had quite the intuition part. Whereas, I couldn't possibly have been an orchestral player because I would have lost my way; he was very very good at that sort of thing.

Joanna wrote in 1994: It wasn't until I married my second husband, the composer and cimbalom player John Leach, that I began to learn about recording. He often worked in a studio environment and I used to go along and watch the engineer balance the sound and mix as they went along. It was very basic then, because this was during the 1960s and the technology was quite simple, but it gave me an insight into what was possible. John and I worked together on some film music and we also did some concerts.

During this period, Joanna gave recitals both as soloist and chamber musician at the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, St. John's Smith Square and also at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest.

In a conversation with **Eleanor Bailie** (author & pianist),

Joanna talks of how her introduction to the *cimbalom* deepened her musical understanding and interpretation of Liszt in particular:

Joanna: At one time John was the only person this side of the *Iron Curtain* who could read music and play the cimbalom. There were a few people who had come from Hungary who played in cafes and restaurants. They improvised on Hungarian tunes, but did not know how to read music and play in an orchestra. So whenever it was *Hari Janos* or Stravinsky's *Renard,* or a cimbalom was needed in the orchestra, John was called in.

What I did discover, was very enlightening: I realised – and we did in our concerts bring out this aspect – how cimbalom music affected Liszt's piano writing, particularly the Hungarian piano music. When I hear people playing, who have never heard a cimbalom, they play in a completely different way from what I think Liszt really meant; because he wanted to imitate the cimbalom. He actually puts *'á la cimbalom'* sometimes on his Liszt Rhapsodies. And with things like the rapid tremolos, a cimbalom will always start off slower and then increase the pace. Some pianists just do a tremolo fast, right from the beginning - exactly the same, the whole way through. This isn't expressive, like its meant to be.

Later I remember going to Morley College in the master classes there, where people would sometimes play Bartok's Romanian Dances. They would do a big diminuendo and rallentando at the end of each fast piece; I was able to say - of course typical me, putting my hand up and chipping in, *"Look sorry this is not how its meant to be! In Romanian*

music they go belting up to the end absolutely fast, without any rallentando, then stop suddenly. That is the right way to do it."

In 1965 tragedy struck: .

Joanna: John and I were both devastated when our baby James died after only one day. He had been born at home, in the evening the day before, and had been taken to hospital with breathing difficulties. The post mortem diagnosis was a hyaline membrane. It was a dreadful time for us, John was very good to me as we shared our grief. I still feel grateful to him for this. It was the only time he had showed me tenderness except for the very early days of our relationship.

Joanna conceived again and in the following year, 1966, Jenny was born. Jenny's arrival, whilst delighting them both, put Jo increasingly back into the domestic role with little time for essential practice. The house in Felden Street was bought with a deposit from Joanna's mother in the latter part of that same year.

Joanna wrote: John only really liked me to play or practise the piano when we were working for a concert together. I was rather like a side-kick on these occasions and not expected to be any sort of success on my own. Any praise for my playing was quickly squashed.

Joanna (*talking to Eleanor*): There was a time in my life when I didn't really meet other musicians; I was rather under John's shadow all the time helping him and I was very much in the background. And therefore I just couldn't really tell whether I was any good, or whether I was like

some of the pupils I have taught: who thought they were much better than they were. It is very difficult to know unless other people tell you; people who you respect and trust and are going to tell the truth and not just butter you up – that's very important – there are people who flatter all the time and it doesn't mean anything really.

Eleanor: But I do have to say – I want to say so much – I have always said that you are such a fantastic natural musician; that I have always felt, well... slightly in awe! No, I do, because you have this incredible instinct and natural rhythm and sense of rubato, texture, intense emotion – every single thing you have – and it seems so natural. *And that is what is so marvellous.* And you encompass so many fields; I mean you play early music, you play Liszt and Chopin and you have a vast span.

Joanna: Oh. thank you Eleanor... well, it means so much to me because I admire your sense of taste and your knowledge. A lot of people say, 'Oh isn't it lovely when you play,' or something; I'm very pleased if I please people, but they probably think that of lots of pianists, who I don't think actually play terribly well. And so one is always sort of wondering, whether one's one of those people or not.

All I can say is that I am very glad if I have the effect of giving anybody any pleasure at all with my playing, because I enjoy playing. It isn't a question of wanting to play *to* people; *I just enjoy playing the music.* If it does work out that people find there is more in it – something different, something a bit more special – then that is fantastic; that's really the whole *raison d'etre.*

Eleanor: It is, this is the whole point: you give this impression that you are doing it because you love it. An awful lot of players don't. You know, you feel they are digging away at it, striving and everything, and you just feel as if you are right in it and you are actually enjoying what you are doing and I am sure this is what people pick up from your playing.

Joanna *(to Jeremy Robson):* I don't regret the bad experiences, because they highlight the good ones.

Jeremy: I hadn't realised you were in a sort of – I can't think of the right word – had this seventeen years married to John, which I guess to begin with was fine, then at some point it became 'unfine'. Then there was a sort of desert, a musical desert; you were controlled and prevented from expressing your musical personality. It is extraordinary! I can't imagine you Jo – because you are quite a powerful personality – allowing yourself to be trodden on so much.

Joanna: Well, it's very funny: sometimes people manage when they are mental abusers – I realise *now* that a lot of it *was* mental abuse – they manage somehow to make you feel that it's *your* fault; that *you* haven't tried hard enough. If you fall down in any respect… I used to try and sometimes everything was perfect: I had his meal ready; I had everything done; I had everything perfect and he would be looking round for something to complain about. If he didn't find anything he was quite angry about it. I used to then put something out of place, so he would find it. He would row with me to such an extent; it was awful. I'm sure it was terribly bad for the children; very bad for both the

children. When I finally lost my temper after being prodded and tortured for days sometime...

Jeremy: Goaded is the word...

Joanna: Yes, goaded... I'd lose my temper, then he'd calm down; he had got what he wanted. He was satisfied that he had won the day, upset me and got me really angry.

There was a point where he hit me in an intimate moment... telling me to, *"Shut up you stupid bitch!"* I suddenly thought, '*that's it, we have finally reached the end, I'm never ever going to give this man my emotional… I'm not going to try any more, I'm making a wall between him and me emotionally'*.

Jeremy: But why did you stay with him?

Joanna: I stayed with him because of Jenny. The other thing is that I had had the experience of being left with a child with no money, and Jerry just whizzing off and me trying to find somewhere to live and living in pretty grotty bedsits. I would not have been able to manage then had my mother not given me a small allowance. And I did all sorts of odd jobs, modelling for art classes and doing baby sitting to earn a penny. I was very very poor for a time and it was very difficult with a child. I thought, '*If I walk out of this door with Jenny, I'm suddenly going to find myself back in the same situation... I'm going to put up with this man, but I'm not going to be nice; I'm going to do what I like!'*.

And she did!

Lieder Interests

Joanna's interest in Lieder seems to have been brought to a poignant focus by the visit of **Herbert Pürchenfellner** from *Lembach* in Austria, in the early '70s following her emotional separation from John. Herbert, a close friend of John's, had a wonderful tenor voice and was a Lieder enthusiast. He had come over for a long stay to brush up on his English (he was about to teach English at his school the following term).



Lieder session: Jo & Herbert Pürchenfellner

Joanna: ...I wasn't looking forward to his visit. I was not quite sure whether John and Herbert would gang up against me. But Herbert turned out to be extremely nice, a lovely big cuddly man – a big bear of a man.

I did sometimes manage to get to the piano and play just for my own pleasure, usually when John was out of

earshot. On one of these occasions, when I knew John and Herbert were out, I took the opportunity and was in the middle of a Mozart Sonata when they returned. Herbert rushed up to me saying, "*Go on playing, please"* and stood there listening. John butted in, "Y*ou don't want to hear Jo playing that rubbish.*" Herbert said, "*Be quiet John, I want to hear her"* and made me go on with the Mozart in spite of John's continual interruptions and derogatory remarks. John was hopping mad.

Herbert had a good voice and had been well trained; he suggested that I should accompany him singing some Schubert songs. The first song we did together was *Das Fischermädchen* from the *Schwanengesang* cycle. I felt very nervous at first but Herbert was so kind and encouraging that I soon felt confident.

It was wonderful to be enjoying this beautiful music together. John was furious, but we took no notice of him. Herbert was firm with him and he had to give in. This was a new experience for me; being able to disregard John's dislike of my playing and his annoyance of any attention that was not for himself, for once. It was marvellous for me to have Herbert's support and enjoy this freedom.

> Jo found, in the sentiment and expression, especially of the *Songs of Longing*, a romantic and appreciative element that seemed to be lacking in her own life.

Joanna: Anyway, Herbert started getting rather sentimental about me. He was so nice to me – and I hadn't had anybody being nice to me for so long – I fell flat on my face. I just fell in love with him, because he was nice! Of course, then he went back to Austria and I didn't see him for a year. It

turned out that he was someone who enjoyed being affectionate, but he didn't want to be committed. The result was when he realised how keen I was on him, he started backing off. That hurt me very much, I was desperately unhappy... It was a time in my life that I was desperately unhappy.

It was not until some years later, on the death of her mother in 1978, Joanna became financially independent and later obtained her divorce and settlement with John by providing him with a deposit on a house nearby.

Eiglersdorf



Jo & Uta

Uta Spitzenberger: I first met Joanna in 1965, when I was staying in Austria with my Great Grand Uncle, who was married with John Leach's Aunt. It was just after Jo and John`s baby had died and they took a holiday in Austria to aid Jo's recovery.

I was eleven years old and had only been learning English for half a year. Uncle Hans expected me to interpret, but this was difficult for me and I was very shy. Jo encouraged me and was so nice and friendly that I admired her at once.

We became good friends when a few years later, in 1972 when I was 18, Jo invited me to stay with her in London

with the idea of improving my English. I knew very little about music, but she played the piano to me and we listened to records together and talked about music.

I soon realised that Jo´s marriage to John was not a happy one.

When Joanna's Aunt Betty died in 1976, she went over to Boston, USA to sort out her affairs and in due course received a small inheritance. Her friendship with Herbert and others in *Lembach* and with Uta, not so far away, coupled with the possibility of getting a break from John, prompted her to buy a romantic run-down farmhouse in the small nearby hamlet of *Eiglersdorf*. *note*: The locals normally knock these houses down and rebuild on the plot . Jo and the children would visit for a long stay during the summer months, often having friends, join them.

Uta: From then on we kept in touch by writing letters to each other and would meet up together every year, mostly in Austria (Eiglersdorf) where Jo and John had bought an old house. My husband helped in renovating it and did all the electrical installation. Jo and I loved to cook together. I learnt from her how to make fudge and Christmas Pudding and I showed her how to make Semmelknödels.

We spent lovely evenings with Herbert Pürchenfellner, a mutual friend of ours and drank excellent Austrian wines. Jo smoked John Players Special; things she gave up, when she became ill some years later. Herbert sang Schubert-Lieder and Jo accompanied him on the piano. At that time Jo`s favourite song was *Ich frage keine Blume* (Die schöne

Müllerin). I enjoyed these ‘Hausmusik’ evenings so much, I loved the Schubert-Lieder and learnt the texts by heart. Sometimes we were invited to dinner with other families in the village and Jo would play the piano. Jo always came by car to Austria and when driving back she would stay-over for a couple of days in my house in Bavaria. We met nearly every year and so enjoyed each others company.



Jo's farmhouse in Eiglersdorf

I very often think of Jo. I remember our last telephone call a few days before she died. She was a very strong person, a very amiable person and I am grateful to have known her, to have learnt so much from her and to have been a close friend and confidant.

PART THREE
The Lightning Flash

David Turner

David Turner worked at Imperial College with **Dr. Bob Speer.** Bob had had extraordinary academic success and his work had attracted a number of major grants. Being 'self-funded', he was allowed to employ an assistant...



David Turner

“At least," says Bob, "that was how the University saw it. After a few months it seemed more appropriate that I should be working for Dave".



Dr. Bob Speer

But with all this focus on academic achievement, Bob was now acutely aware of a gaping hole in his life.

Bob: I was in my early thirties and I was still at the stage where I didn't know how to get a woman into bed – it sounds rather pathetic, but that's how it was in the 60s. I felt I was a character in an Iris Murdoch novel; I don't know if any of you have read *The Black Prince,* [*laughing*] but whole chunks of it is Bob Speer.

In a word coined by A. A. Gill – Bob refers to himself as a

Tristram:

Bob: An academic, educated beyond his intelligence, who knows there's a gaping hole at the centre of his life; but doesn't quite know what it is... But is frantically trying to open doors, so that whatever it is, will walk in.



***Bob Speer** and **David Turner** – awarded by **The Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers.** Presentation by – Professor Lord Flowers*

Into this scene walks this Peter Finch character, who you will hear a lot about from Jo, and who changed her life (*laughing*) and, as a mere act of passing, changed mine very profoundly!

Well now, how do you describe Dave Turner in thirty seconds flat? He had this *look*... (*laughing*) he had this look that he had just come from a party that had gone on all night and you wish you'd been invited, but you weren't. (*laughing*) He had bags under his eyes and a slightly post orgy look.

Dave and I were very successful, building things called *Grazing Incidence Spectrographs*. These are instruments to study light at very short wavelengths... the Soft X-Ray Region of the spectrum. It was state of the art at the time and our work was taken up by NASA. Dave was a superb experimenter and engineer who won a very, very big prize

in a project that he did with me – a very, very prestigious national prize – and who women seemed to be drawn, like to a pot of honey.

I had to give a lecture at the *Royal Institution* and Dave Turner was my assistant; at least that's how the *Royal Institution* saw it. After this lecture this stunningly beautiful woman came up to me and handed me a note saying, would I give this to my assistant. This had happened a couple of times before: on one occasion being given a phone number, on another, asking me "who that man was?" My frame of mind was, 'why weren't women giving notes to Dave Turner for him to pass to me?' (*laughing*) It took me a long time to realise that you had either got this thing called *sex appeal,* or you hadn't, and if you hadn't the only recourse was hard work (*laughing*).

> It was probably in 1972 when Jo was 35, Dave Turner was attending a concert at the Wigmore Hall. As Jo came onto the stage and cast her musical spell, she acquired an instant admirer. Sitting in the audience, Dave felt a tingle run down his spine. In that moment he knew... *Thats her!* he said to himself. It was '*Love at First Sight*' – or in the opinion of his close friend and colleague Bob: a *coupe de foudre*.
>
> Dave made sure to introduce himself to Jo after the concert; going round to meet and congratulate her in the Green Room – and Jo too recalled immediately being attracted to him.

Bob: This is forty [now in 2020, fifty] years ago and I remember it absolutely clearly; instead of coming in in his white coat, and settling down to run the day's experiments,

he came in late, which was annoying – I remember being annoyed – and he sat down and said "I've met this woman".

Here Bob digresses and talks about a '*coup de foudre*'; telling how he had seen this remarkable affect before, in his nephew's relationship.



Bob: Here was my colleague, my co-worker, my co-director in a small company we had set up – and it was as if he had been struck by lightning. He was absolutely paralysed with what had hit him and all day – I think he left early – but all day he carried on to me about this woman, who I gathered was a musician and he had been to a concert and he had spoken to her afterwards and there was chemistry – didn't sound like chemistry to me – sounded more like an nuclear explosion. Anyway, this pianist who I met, maybe two weeks later, was Jo Leach.

Dave had been invited to the concert by mutual friends of Jo's who also worked at Imperial College, so there was a connection that he could use in order to see her and develop the relationship.

Joanna (*from a conversation with Jeremy Robson*)**:** Dave fell desperately in love with me and wrote me a love letter and everything, and I said, "But you're married, I can't possibly have anything to do with you!"

Dave's photographic and recording expertise brought them together on occasions. But Jo says that it was a further three years before she allowed the relationship to develop fully; a relationship that was to change her life, fulfilling it, both musically and personally, in a way she had never imagined possible.



Jo, late '30s – a film-star likeness?

Joanna: Three years later [probably in 1975] Dave did another recording and by that time I had got over my feelings for Herbert. We were both desperately unhappy in our respective marriages. Dave sort of felt, *'is this all there is to life*?' He had already been married a couple of times before [3 times actually]. He was an alcoholic and he was trying to get off alcohol; occasionally he did. Then he would go into a deep depression and he would go back on it again.

Anyway, he said, "I still feel the same way about you." I looked at him during the recording session and I thought to myself, '*I am so unhappy and there is this really lovely man; he's very unhappy – why am I refusing to have anything to do with him?*' So I said to him, "I think I have made a mistake". He then walked towards me and put his arms around me and said, "I just can't believe this! I don't

mind if I die now, this moment is enough." He never touched any drink again. We had the most passionate and incredibly intense love affair for about eight-and-a-half years, before he finally got kicked out by his wife and came to live with me. Then a year or so after, in 1985, I got breast cancer.

Bob and Dave were now 50:50 partners in the company they had just set up, and on the advice of their accountant, an ex chair of Tax Inspectors for Richmond, the company rented a flat as their 'factory' and Bob would receive a 'benefit in kind' by being able to live in the flat free of charge.

Bob: After this was done and I got back and told Dave about the arrangement, he very gently pointed out that he and I owned 50 shares each. What was in it for him?... Because Dave Turner's – I won't say affair – Dave Turner's *love* for Jo and her for him, had moved on to a place that I barely knew existed before I met them, in terms of what I could *sense* was being experienced – and what I wanted some of! It resulted in a curious situation in which they had nowhere to go...

Anyway the outcome of it was that Dave and I negotiated that, '*Yes Bob, you can live there in the flat – 50 yards from Harrods – but my piece of the cake is that at any time of day or night – and that means any time – at thirty minutes notice you vacate the flat for us to use*.'

Readers may recall the 1960 film, *The Apartment,* starring Jack Lemmon and Shirley MacLaine, in which Jack

> Lemmon plays an ambitious insurance middle-management worker, who is inveigled into a Kafkaesque arrangement, letting his bosses use his flat for clandestine affairs, while he finds himself outside hanging about in all weathers, not knowing when he will be able to get in...

Bob: So here was I, a significant part in an unfolding love story, that was of such quality and intensity that one almost got sun-tanned in the white heat of it. Looking back on it I can see that I felt I was a character in a Graham Greene novel. For a couple of years Dave would say to me, "Well, look, I can't run the experiment on Tuesday because Jo can get away from 3 until 6 and I'm just not here Bob. But you can't come back to your flat because we'll be there!"

These were great events! The arrangement was that only when the lights flashed on and off three times in the main room, would I know it was alright to go back in [mobile phones as yet unheard of]. So I couldn't go off for four hours and have a lovely meal in *Harrods,* [*continuous laughter*] because I had to sit in *Hans Gardens* outside the flat waiting for the light to go on and off, otherwise I didn't know when to go back in. And Dave was true to his word: it could be ten o'clock at night, when I had just had a bath and had to get dressed and go out again; or it could be at 8 in the morning, when I hadn't got up. But a promise was a promise, and my payment in kind was a handsome flat that really was just a knock-out.

These were very character forming events. For two years I was part of this white heat of passion that reluctantly I have come to the conclusion very few people know about. If you

are blest for it to happen to you, then that's wonderful. But for me, it was *drama* - it wasn't a rehearsal, *that's the point!* This wasn't something I knew about. Every week was a new experience – *this was the real thing!* If you like, you were on stage in a play and you hadn't got a prompter and you hadn't learned the lines; you were making them up as you went along, but you knew you were with *stars*; you knew you were up there with the best that humanity could produce. *That's how I felt!* Looking back I still feel it, because I gradually got to know Joanna Leach.

As I got to know Jo more and more, I realised that getting sackfuls of mail from prospective young ladies wasn't quite the most intelligent way of filling this gaping hole in my life.

> As a scientific experiment Bob had been advertising in *Forum* and *TIme Out*. He got sackfuls of mail from interested women and would select one to meet up with every couple of weeks...

Bob: I would show a girlfriend where I lived; I would take them out to dinner at *Harrods* and I might spend a little money on clothes for them. I would tell them what a lovely evening it had been as Dave had taught me. You never let on that *sex* was anything *remotely* on your mind. It was the farthest thing on your mind (*laughing*); whereas in fact the testosterone was giving you heartburn. I had learnt my lesson well from Dave, so that by the third time I'd met a woman, the time would be ripe. Anyway, (*helpless laughter*) I'm sitting in *Hans Garden* outside in the dark, waiting for the lights to go on and off. I must have failed to

spot my girlfriend of the day going into the building. She goes up to my flat (*laughing*) she arrived at my door – 50 yards from *Harrods* – and knocks on the door. All she could hear coming through the door are these frantic sounds of ecstasy.and consummated passion – she told me later on; I only saw her once again! From her point of view, I was inside with another and nothing on earth would shift her from that view. Dave said she banged on the door for something like 10-15 minutes: "You 'effing bastard... 'effing this... 'effing that… you double timing…" For the poor girl, it was me inside, when in fact it was Dave and Joanna (*laughter*).

I decided that it might be better to listen to Jo. I had already listened to Dave for two years and most of what he had said had sunk in and changed Bob beyond recognition. *But I was still living alone.* Here were these two people conducting a love affair in the stratosphere. It had elements of high opera; it had elements of Gilbert & Sullivan; it has great chunks out of great literature – Iris Murdoch comes to mind, who Jo admired greatly and I came to admire.
My perception of what happened was that Jo realised that I was worthy of something better than the string of nubile young women who kept appearing on my arm and two weeks later were replaced by another. I've never asked, but I think something clicked with Jo that I was clearly ploughing the wrong field. Finding a mate isn't an experiment in physics; it might have to do with something like having a good friend who loved you enough to invite you and someone else out together to the theatre, having sussed out who might be very very suitable.

At that very time I'd sat down in the university refectory and, quite by accident, met the most stunning French scientist, petite, fabulously beautiful, who could talk to me in the language I understood – mathematics & physics – and, it emerged, unhappily married. She was unhappily married to a French diplomat. We hit if off like a house on fire. I discussed this with Dave and words like '*be careful, Bob'*, because the husband was a very high powered diplomat in the French embassy. So I thought. '*I had better be careful*'. Because I kept raving on about her and, just as Jo had become the centre of David's life, so for several weeks this remarkable French female became the centre of my life. I couldn't talk about anything else, I couldn't focus on anything else, I lost my thread in lectures, I'd spend days when I wouldn't come in to work and I didn't know what was happening. At this juncture Jo says, "Well, lets have lunch in your flat – Dave and I, and you invite this nymph along". So I found myself in a foursome having lunch, overlooking *Hans Gardens*, behind *Harrods* on a Wednesday. It emerged that her two young children were in a kindergarten around the corner to be collected at 4pm.

We had this lovely lunch and Jo suddenly looked at her watch and said, "My god, Dave we've forgotten..." an appointment or something. He was a good actor too and said "My god, you're right – we've got to rush." It was so convincing, I was completely taken by it.

And so I found myself alone with this nymph who I could talk to. A*nd that is the point at which Jo changed my life!* Because 'I too have been to *Arcadie'* – as the saying goes; I

too have known what it's like. I'm no longer the observer; this is the real thing! And for that, I have the most eternal gratitude to Jo because in the farther reaches of human nature, there lies the potential for an ecstasy that is so intense that you literally swoon; you literally pass out and in my language as a physicist, you take a trip around the universe and land back by parachute about fifty minutes later. Ah, well, thank you Jo; those were wonderful years!

Bob said that he had in mind a book he would have liked to have written. There would have been ten women in ten chapters, entitled...

Meetings with Remarkable Women



Dave & Jo in Austria

Bob: ...and, like a good novel, the high point – the denouement – the climbing Mount Everest and reaching the summit, would be reserved for Jo; because I defy you, I defy anybody to meet a more humane and wonderful, life enhancing, human being, than Joanna Leach. Its been a privilege, Jo. And this *Tristram* is now in his seventies and every time he reads A. A. Gill, he thinks, *'there but for the grace of Jo go I* ' Because Jo caught me just in time!

The Morley College Years



Jenny Stern (Bach) thinks that it was probably in 1981 that Jo joined the Advanced Piano Class run by **Martino Tirimo** and **Gwenneth Pryor** at Morley College. Jenny and Jo became good friends and supported each other in their recitals and regularly played together as duet partners.

Martino: My first meeting with Joanna Leach was at Morley College, when she decided to join my piano class there. Her exceptional musicality was clear from the first moment, but what pleased me particularly was her strong individual expression. For example, in works like the *Janacek Sonata* her passionate attunement elicited an emotionally powerful interpretation that few pianists can attain. This was an expression of the highest order. Her playing also had a lyrical and poetic quality, which was most moving.

Jenny: We travelled to Austria and stayed at the old farmhouse you had bought in Eiglersdorf as a holiday retreat. I remember we had such fun playing Lieder with Herbert. Do you remember that wonderful evening with Herbert and his singer friend, the miller. It's one of the fond, fond memories I have?

Joanna: Hansi Müller – he was the actual local miller.

Jenny: With them singing and us playing, it was the most fantastic setting and evening; just totally informal – it was wonderful



Jenny Stern, Jo & Herbert

Joanna: And to be able to accompany a singer, singing the *schöene Müllerin* when he actually was a müller himself, was something very special

Jenny: We became good friends and had such wonderful times together. I would go round to your house in Fulham every week to run through some of our extensive duet repertoire. We have shared many special things and I have such admiration for your ability to take everything and make the absolute most of whatever it was you found yourself in and particularly musically, you would leave nothing unturned in terms of the understanding, the feeling and the emotion. You know, occasionally you would throw these 'outrageous' – not really outrageous – ideas into the class at Morley. And people would all go 'ahhh!' in absolute surprise. It was totally heart-felt, absolutely so compelling and whatever you did was with total conviction. It was just so special, so special.

PART FOUR
The Music Business

D & J Recording Ltd

Having survived the breast cancer in 1985 along with its very unpleasant but effective treatment, in 1987 Joanna and Dave set up **D & J Recording Ltd,** making a substantial investment in recording equipment to provide recording facilities for classical artistes.

Joanna: Dave saw me through the cancer and we started the recording business. We were already doing quite a lot of recording and had embarked on a major Debussy project with Martino.

Martino Tirimo: We soon became friends and when Joanna, together with her husband Dave Turner, turned her attention to producing recordings, it followed quite naturally that we would record something together before too long. After an initial *Piano Encores* recording, the opportunity arose to work on Debussy's complete works. This was a project which was close to my heart, but it was also close to Jo's heart for she played quite a number of these works and thus knew them intimately. This cannot be said for too many producers! Her deep knowledge meant that we could have detailed discussions, even during the sessions, and this was most stimulating for me. Throughout these recordings, sessions and post-production, her expertise and wonderfully positive attitude much contributed to the final result and the consequent success of this project. It was a happy collaboration that I treasure greatly.

The complete piano works of Debussy played by **Martino Tirimo**, recorded by Dave, produced and edited by

Joanna was released on four CDs.

This acclaimed Debussy set was originally released on the *Pickwick* label; currently this four-disc set is to be found in the catalogue of *Alto CD*. Three of these CDs were the first to be edited in-house using their newly acquired ***SoundMaestro*** digital editor.

The SoundMaestro Digital Editor

Mike Beville *(to Joanna)*: I think we are going to talk about how we first met – and how that changed your life!

Joanna: *(laughing)* ...and changed your life!

Mike: *(laughing)* Later, certainly.



David and Joanna made, what was for them, a big purchasing decision when they bought the ***SoundMaestro*** digital editor, manufactured by *Audio & Design Recording Ltd,* the very first of a new generation of hard-disc based designs.

Previously cutting and splicing tape provided only limited possibilities in editing classical music. It was not until visual display digital editing became a reality that the possibilities were fully realised. Joanna and David had found the cost of renting digital editing facilities from service providers prohibitively expensive, inconvenient,

rather basic and lacking flexibility. The only digital editor before the hard-disc based *SoundMaestro* was the *Sony U-matic Editor,* using video cassettes as the audio recording medium, trundling backwards and forwards. It was cumbersome, slow (3-4 edits an hour, costing £20-£25 per edit) with a play-on and off overhead of over 3-4 hours for a CD and editing source tracks. The system cost in the region of £40,000.

Sony had also introduced the first low cost digital recording system using the Betamax tape format, known as the Sony F1 format which was increasingly being used for classical recording and Dave had bought a recorder in the mid 80s. This format had in turn stimulated the development of the 'low cost' *SoundMaestro* editing system.



Mike Beville

Joanna *(talking to Andreas Boyde)***:** We found Mike with his wonderful digital editing machine. We bought his system and it changed our lives completely because it gave us the possibility of providing full in-house digital editing facilities to professional clients, such as yourself. It was wonderful; we had so much interesting work.

It was assumed that because it was a computer system (and Jo was not very conversant with computers) that it would be Dave who would do the editing. But Jo found it so frustrating in attempting to direct operations without

> actually being 'hands-on'. So it was she who finally became the expert music editor; her own pianistic intuition and awareness combined to produce an extraordinary ability to achieve the very best for the artistes for whom she acted as producer and editor. It was also the start of a working relationship with Mike Beville*;* a relationship that was destined to change his life as well!

Mike: Dave and I had a lot in common, both being interested in the technical aspects of recording, and we found much to talk about. Dave was very much the perfectionist and had a flair for invention. When I took my son Stephen to the Junior academy on a Saturday I would drop in regularly every week. I needed somewhere to spend the time before picking him up again in the afternoon, so I would pop over to Fulham – the traffic was much easier then. Jo provided lunch in exchange for additional technical support, as it were.

I was so impressed with the detailed editing that Jo was able to do with the system. Hitherto tape editing and splicing had been quite crude and limited to convenient pauses in the music. I had really no idea of the expertise that Jo was able to develop. Being a pianist herself she really understood what other pianists were trying to achieve. She was able to combine subtle phrases from several takes to produce the finest performance from the recording session; rarely achieved in one take.

The weak link in those early days was the 1Gig hard disks needed for a CD. We had numerous problems, having to map out sectors, or with drives even failing to operate altogether and having to be exchanged. On one occasion

when Dave and Jo were rushing to get out a CD master, they had a problem with one of their discs, they came down that evening to Reading to put it together on a system at my home. I went off to bed leaving them to it, only to come down at 6am to find them still struggling, having had problems with a duff sector of disk that was preventing a clean play-out. I managed to isolate it and we finally got their master off onto a DAT tape to be sent for CD manufacture. Pioneering technology had its frustrations!

The English Square Piano

But it was not until meeting **Andrew Lancaster**, that Joanna's prodigious talents found full expression, when she discovered her love for the ***English Square Piano*** (1785–1840).



Andrew Lancaster: I first met Jo in the late 1980's when asked to quote on the restoration of an inherited Clementi piano. I told her it was not going to be the piano it had been in its prime. However, Jo liked the result, but I knew it was never going to change her life.

This was the beginning of one of the closest and most important friendships of my life, a friendship which I am

sure will never be equalled. I hadn't known Jo very long before I realised what a truly remarkable and exceptional person she was. We had many interests in common: I am an avid reader and a great Jane Austen fan; so was Jo. Cooking is a great interest of mine; also of Jo's. In fact, Jo's excellent cooking has given Dennis and I great pleasure over the years. Her steak and kidney pie is Dennis' absolute favourite!

Later that year, I invited Jo and Dave to an antiques fair in Guildford, where I was showing a particularly fine Regency Broadwood. Jo walked into the fair, followed by Dave, who was heavily weighted down with bags of music. Jo placed some music on the piano, sat herself on the stool and began to play. The effect was electrifying as the notes tripped from her fingers and the piano came to life. Visitors began to gather round, forming a crowd in the aisles and the balcony above. She was playing the *Rondo all Turka* from Mozart's *Sonata in A, K331*. When Jo, who was unaware of the crowd, stopped playing, she was both startled and delighted by the sudden loud, enthusiastic applause. Initially she was too embarrassed to carry on, then when the crowd had dispersed, she began to play again. Another crowd began to form.

This was to be the pattern followed at many subsequent antiques fairs. The effect of that Broadwood piano on Jo was profound. I think she felt instinctively that the square piano and her playing were a perfect match. Sadly, the Broadwood was already sold and I was charged with finding a piano as good for Jo. Hearing her playing that

piano also had a profound effect on me; it was a revelation to find how a square piano could sound when played by a pianist of Jo's calibre. From then on my yardstick for restorations became, *'Would Jo like playing on this piano?'*



"*Stodart Jo*"

Jo and Dave looked very doubtful when I showed them the Stodart I had found for her, with its rusty strings all tangled inside. But it was the piano Jo came to prefer in her collection and on which she played and recorded the most; in fact, loved so much that her moniker on Skype was *StodartJo.*

David was so taken with the sound of the pianos, as restored by Andrew and played by Jo, that he insisted they should start a record label specifically to make recordings of pianos of this period. And so ***Athene Records*** was conceived in 1991.

After living together for seven years and conscious of his developing heart problem, Dave wanted to ensure that should anything happen to him, Jo would receive a widow's pension from Imperial College. So Jo married for the third time and Dave for the fourth, on September 9 .



The first CD issued by ***Athene*** was of Jo playing *John Field Nocturnes* on three square pianos.

Peter Grahame Woolf, for *Classical Music on the Web:*

"I would urge readers to listen to Joanna Leach's recording of Field's nocturnes played on square pianos – ***it might change their lives,"***

"Highly poetic"

BBC Music Magazine, February 2010 (John Field Composer of the Month). ***Recommended disc.***

Bryce Morrison of *Gramophone* was equally encouraging:

"She most persuasively suggests an intimacy and transparency hard to parallel on more modern instruments... Any singer hearing these performances would surely congratulate Leach on her 'vocal line', so richly and delicately embellished."



Peter Katin

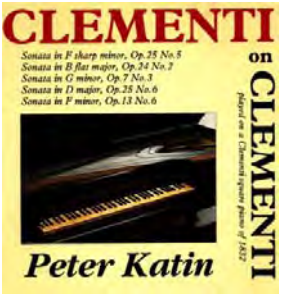
This was the start of a series of CDs that exemplify her unique approach to repertoire, performed within an authentic setting.

On hearing the pre-release recordings of the *Field Nocturnes,* **Peter Katin** expressed the wish to explore for himself the delights of

these instruments in relation to music of the period. He found, as Jo had, that the character of the pianos suggested the influences on composers and how their music *would have been heard*. This perhaps presents a different perception to how the character of music might be interpreted on modern instruments.

Joanna: Throughout this time we saw quite a lot of Mike; he was very helpful and he and Dave got on terribly well. I was pleased that Dave had someone to talk to about technical things, because I knew nothing about that. I saw Dave getting weaker and weaker with his heart disease.

David had to struggle with the recording sessions for Peter Katin's first Athene CD, *Clementi on Clementi*. It had been edited and finalised for release and the CD sent for replication just before David went into hospital for a long overdue by-pass operation. The discs were delivered just before his operation and he was able to hear it on headphones. But sadly after ten days in intensive care – before knowing of the accolades subsequently heaped upon the recording – David died at the age of 64 on 2nd August, 1993.



The Clementi CD was selected as one of ***BBC Music's*** choices for the year and a track was used by the **BPI** on a UK promotional CD for the ***1995 Midem Exhibition***.

Joanna: I was absolutely grief stricken. Mike came over every week to help me out with the business. I knew that one of the

things that worried Dave was that I would not be able to carry on because I wouldn't have an engineer. Mike just said, *"I'll do it"* and stepped into the shoes. He was such a support, and we were still just friends.

Mike: Jo was totally shattered by Dave's death. Apart from the emotional loss of a deeply beloved partner, she was so worried that she would not be able to continue the record label without Dave's expertise. I had known Jo and Dave for four years, often visiting on a weekly basis. It seemed quite natural for me to volunteer to take on his role as recording engineer and then later, when I retired in 1995, to become Jo's partner in the business.

It was clear that this was a labour of love and the sheer joy of producing a quality product. When I took on the role of partner and financial adviser, I remember saying to Jo, that it was a strange 'business', like no other I had experienced: I had been used to taking money *out* of the business each month rather than putting money *in!* But by liquidating the old company Jo was able to offset substantial accumulated losses over ten years, against capital gains on her inherited USA fund. As a partnership, we never made much profit, but losses were modest, and we were able to set them off against personal tax when they arose.



Dave was a difficult act to follow after the success of the earlier recordings; particularly the *Field Nocturnes, Haydn Sonatas,* and the *Clementi on Clementi* – CDs that had put ***Athene Records*** 'on the map'. Peter Katin's

Schubert Impromptus (my first recording for ***Athene)*** followed by the *Schubert Piano Works* were well received.

Gramophone: Shut your eyes and you could be sitting around a piano at a Schubertiard, melted by yet fresh wonders, from the composer's own hand.

Harpsichord & Fortepiano: If this recording is at all representative, it is a recording company to listen out for...

Peter Katin: Working on the Schubert Impromptus for Athene involved me in the business of forgetting that I had played them for years on a modern piano, because the phrasing, pedalling, and even to an extent the fingering, had to be re-thought if it was to be effective on a period instrument. It has proved that the square piano is an instrument in its own right.

The change to the very different qualities of a square piano has made me aware of yet further possibilities in tonal colouring. The results might belie the fact that the square pianos were not designed for large halls but for a rather more intimate atmosphere. This is why I decided to record the Impromptus in my own studio.

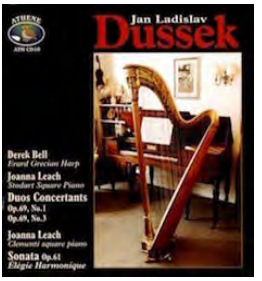
Peter later bought his own *Collard & Collard* (c.1836) square piano for his 4 CD, **Chopin: *First & Last.***

Joanna's longstanding friendship with *Derek Bell* (of *Chieftains* fame) led to the recording of *Dussek's* piano *Sonata in F sharp minor* and the *Duo Concertants* for harp and piano, using an *Erard* harp of the period along with the *Stodart* square piano.

Derek Bell wrote (in a letter 14th Nov, 1996): There is not

another pianist in the world who could possibly get such a full range of free expression out of a rickety piano or fortepiano as your good self! You are rightly the star of the whole record, which would not have been possible without Mike's microphone placing, and your brilliant 'sly' editing! The "pathetic" parts of the Sonata are ravishing in sheer beauty of phrasing and tone, and the wild passionate bits are wonderfully strong and frightening at times. The upward scales are immaculate and the awkward syncopation in the finale, is spot on and very exciting. The sheer feeling behind all your playing is riveting that never can one stop listening to it – the whole way through. It's magnetic! I ought to have some lessons from you, but I don't think what I most admire and covet in your marvellous playing *could* be imparted!!

Joanna wrote about the impact of square pianos on interpretation and performance:



Part of the excitement of exploring a period piano, is to realise the sounds that the composer had in his inner ear. For instance, Dussek would not have expected his *Duos*, written for harp and piano, to be played on two tonally dissimilar instruments, such as the modern piano and harp. Played on the appropriate period instruments, the music blends and comes to life in an unexpected manner for us today, but in a way that Dussek obviously intended.

Performers may well find that the piano itself seems to

dictate many subtleties of interpretation which would not be self-evident on a modern instrument. For example the Field Nocturnes sound so much more delicate and charming when played on an original piano of the period and the varying character of the "voice-parts" within the compass of the piano, invite the player to utilise these distinctive tonal qualities to bring to life the conversational, almost operatic aspect, developed by composers such as Haydn. The light shallow touch makes repetition and rapid ornaments feel particularly delightful under the fingers and much easier to play on a really well restored instrument.

It was only when the piano evolved with thicker strings and heavier hammers that it became necessary to make the mechanism more complicated to avoid the hammers rebounding. Contrary to popular belief, rapid intricate passages are perfectly possible and indeed sometimes much easier to play than on the modern piano. The pianist's touch must be adapted to the light and shallow action in order to achieve the most beautiful sound from the instrument. Even in forte passages use of heavy arm-weight results in ugly tone. One is able to use more energy in the forte passages to generate excitement, which on a modern instrument would seem somewhat overblown.

Bear in mind that 'forte' dynamic markings in compositions of the period, are entirely appropriate when applied using period pianos, whilst the same markings played on a modern piano will often appear 'Wagnerian'. The soft silvery tone of the treble is more effective when not played with a 'bedding-the-keys' super legato touch. Newly

restored instruments must be played-in to achieve their natural beautiful tone.

Andreas Boyde & Athene-Minerva

It was shortly after David's death that through Derek Shiel (a mutual friend), Jo was introduced to **Andreas Boyde**; Derek describing him as *"a marvellous pianist"*.



Andreas and Jo in Zurich

Andreas Boyde: Derek said the same to me "*You must meet this wonderful pianist."* How right he was!

Andreas lived in Fulham, only five minutes walk away. Jo, naturally sceptical of glowing descriptions, was keen to hear him play on her Steinway. When he did, within the space of a few bars, she immediately realised that here was someone *very special* and was immediately captivated by his touch, phrasing and imaginative playing. It was a respect that grew to be mutual.

Andreas: I had just finished my studies and moved into this new flat in Fulham. It was wonderful to walk just a few meters, to have this wonderful neighbour.



Joanna: It was just after my darling Dave had died. We met in the Autumn, I think. You were a great support to me; you were around, saying, let's go to a film, let's go for a walk or we'll go and have a meal. That's the sort of thing that helped me a tremendous lot at that difficult time. We were able to talk about music and we soon found that we had a lots of ideas in common. You were streets ahead of me in performance, but our musical ideas seemed to be compatible

Andreas: You opened up a whole new world for me. For the first time I was able to try out these square pianos. It really changes your perception of music, especially towards music that was written to be performed on these pianos – an eye opener.

It was wonderful to talk with you about music, life – your wonderful and the problematic periods in your life – that was a whole new chapter in *my* life.

Joanna: There are many people who have enhanced my life and you are definitely one of the top lot. And through you, I have not only been able to hear the fantastic music you have made, and we have done a lot of recording

together. I was producing and editing your work and got to know your playing very well through that medium. But also you introduced me to a whole series of marvellous, interesting people – wonderful musicians in their own right – that sharpened up my own critical faculties for my own playing.

I was so pleased when you played the little *Longman & Broderip* [1786], which you took to, like a 'duck to water.' You played a little bit of a Mozart concerto and I was amazed that you managed to do it straight away without the difficulties of adjusting your touch to the very fine and extremely small keys with such a light and shallow action. What was wonderful was that you said that experience helped mould your idea of the interpretation of Mozart and increased your appreciation of the delicacy of the pianos that he must have played. And when I heard you playing a Mozart concerto at quite a big occasion, it was beautifully delicate and wonderful and I hoped it was partly because of the Longman.

Andreas: I even remember some Schumann: you have parts of the *Waldszenen Abschied* where you actually have a full hand accompanying just one melody and on a modern Steinway it's really a bit difficult, because you have to keep these chords on a really tight kind of *pianissimo.* It's much easier on these square pianos.

Joanna: Things like the low trills in the late Schubert *Sonata B flat* – its very difficult to control on a modern piano, and it's very easy to play cleanly on the squares. Just experiencing them adds a lot to one's interpretation.

Andreas writing of the influence the square pianos had on his playing:

"Jo always felt passionate about Haydn, a composer who deserves at least as much recognition as Mozart. Haydn's originality and humour came to life when Jo performed and recorded his sonatas and variations. A great source of inspiration was her collection of square pianos, the type of instruments on which these works would have been originally composed. Playing the repertoire of this era on them helped me to find the unique character of the period."



On hearing Andreas' Steinway recordings of several remarkable *live* concert broadcasts (a Schumann recital and piano concertos by Dvorak and Tchaikovsky), Jo was determined that these should be released and reach a wider audience. So in 1995 the remit of ***Athene*** was expanded to include recordings of contemporary instruments under the label ***Athene-Minerva.*** The first of a series of live recordings, was the Schumann programme, including *Carnaval,* broadcast by WDR.

Andreas: This is how it began: Joanna Leach issued the live recording of my *Carnaval* performance on her label. It was Athene's first release of modern instrument recordings and the beginning of a wonderful artistic collaboration.

Later under the banner **Outstanding Concert Performances**, the ***Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.2,*** the ***Dvorak Piano Concerto in G minor*** and the European Premiere of the ***Schoenfield Piano Concerto***

were released.

Fono Forum: Boyde's interpretation of Tchaikovsky's 2nd Concerto in its original version is a stroke of genius hardly to be exceeded. He shows that he is not simply a pyro-technician but, supported by Boyde's subtle touch, achieves more than Shukov on the same technical level... His exciting performance is unique in its balance of musicality and technical bravura.

Two studio recordings were also released to critical acclaim: ***Pictures & Reflections*** – Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Ravel: *Miroirs,* followed by the Schumann & Brahms: ***Variations***.

Athene put on two Wigmore Hall recitals for Andreas and released his wonderfully successful European premier performance of Schönefield's *Four Parables* piano concerto. They certainly are wonderful performances and a great credit to Andreas, a natural and committed concert performer, who so inspires the orchestral players with whom he works.

Raymond Clark - Havergal Brian



Horizons were broadened in an unlikely direction when Athene was commissioned to record the complete piano works of Havergal Brian with pianist **Raymond Clark** and the post production voice of **Tessa Spong** speaking those strange commentaries set with piano accompaniment: the *Three Illuminations*.

BBC Music Magazine: ...Athene's recording [is] crystaline and beautifully atmospheric.

Mathias / Pickard Sonatas

This collaboration led to meeting composer **John Pickard** and a disc of William Mathias piano sonatas coupled with two powerful piano works by John.



"The piece is a revelation. The recording is spell-binding; the performances staggering. Clark is in complete control... absolutely astonishing."

Classic Music on the Web

"The furious toccata-like conclusion [of John Pickard's Sonata] is quite an experience… First-rate recording: an excellent disc of contemporary British piano music." – *BBC Music Magazine (1998)*

"... a really important composition… profoundly impressive and deeply musical… Mathias's Sonatas both exceptionally well written. The recording is excellent" – *Robert Matthew-Walker (Musical Opinion) (2005)*

A further two CDs of **Shostakovitch** and **Szymonowski** were recorded with Raymond prior to his unfortunate accident. Both CDs were in a distinctive class of their own and received considerable acclaim for performance and sound quality.



Shostakovitch CD: "This disc is an absolute winner, a real cracker. I have

Shostakovich played by a myriad of pianists, including the 'famous names', but, after hearing Raymond Clarke's performances, they can all be relegated into the second division. The recording sound is brilliant, close, vibrant and it has a very exciting attack. The performances are legendary and superlative. I do not want to hear anyone else play these pieces again. These are the definitive versions." ***David Wright, (MusicWeb)***



Mike: I remember that the launch of the **Szymonovski CD** was coupled with the publication of a book about the composer. It was held at the Polish Cultural Centre. We planned to play the 3rd Sonata from the CD. But the sound system was so poor that I felt obliged to announce that it was not doing justice to the recording.

At this point, a frustrated Raymond leaped to his feet at the back of the room, and with his head swaddled in bandages [as a result of his accident], this mummified looking figure marched to the front, sat at the piano and promptly played an incredible rendering of this technically very difficult work, to great applause! It was quite extraordinary to witness, and Raymond's bravura literally saved the day.

Mike: Jo and I were planning to move from her Fulham home to the West Country. We had been in the process of buying a property in Shute, East Devon for almost a year, but the vendor had had difficulty finding a place at the right price, into which to move. In 1999, property prices were moving up fast; this was especially so in London. The

Fulham property rose in value by an extraordinary 50% over that year! Consequently we were able to offer a higher price to help lubricate our purchase to completion.

The Pickard Piano Concerto

In 1999 Jo commissioned John Pickard to write a piano concerto for Andreas, to be premiered in 2000 at a concert with the Dresdner Sinfoniker. It was given its first performance in the Kulturpalast Dresden to a packed audience and broadcast nationwide across Germany and beyond.

Although enthusiastically received at its first performance, the piano part was at times overwhelmed in the concert hall. However the broadcast balance was able to compensate with spot microphones and bring out the piano . Sadly, the composer withheld permission for the recording to be released on the *Athene-Minerva* label because of a minor mishap in the percussion section at the end of the work.

There is much to be said for the excitement and spontaneity of that immense first public performance which would not have happened but for Jo's generous commission and the support of Andreas who spent several months preparing for this performance.

We were disappointed not to be able to couple it with the *Schoenfield Concerto,* which would have been an ideal combination on CD. It can be heard on Jo's website – to be found under **Record Producer – *Athene Minerva – Artistes' Discography – Andreas Boyde.***



PART FIVE
Shute House



Joanna Leach

Shute House

Shute House was completed around 1790 for the *De la Pole* family. It is situated at a height of 300ft, overlooking the Ax valley, with views down to the sea at Seaton. There are three wings on either side of the main house. Before the war, and until the early 1970s, Shute House was used as a girls school. In the late 70s it was subsequently divided into eight freehold properties.



The West Wing

Around 1860, a first floor was added to the West wing to become a 50ft long ballroom, this was linked to the

main house by a covered walk way and was ideal for after dinner musical entertainments and the line dances of the period. Some years later the North East wing was converted into a small theatre with stage, proscenium, orchestra pit with raked audience seating.

Joanna: When I saw the ballroom I fell in love with it immediately. I knew it was the right place for me and the square pianos; I knew I would be happy here.

Mike: I was not so sure about it: my first impression was of a mile-long drive in poor condition that would be expensive to maintain; a dilapidated listed 200 year old wing that had been rather carelessly thought through and cheaply converted to a separate property, and had subsequently been allowed to deteriorate further. The ballroom was in a state of dilapidation with many of the plaster casts damaged (no chandeliers then), plus a noisy rookery outside that I did not think would make for a good recording venue.



The divided 'Ballroom' before our changes. We moved the stairs and the partitioning wall back and reinstated the plaster casts.

I felt it was not going to be the recording studio I had envisaged.

Joanna: I just thought, *I don't care if it is uncomfortable*, which it wasn't, because of your planning, it turned

out to be absolutely wonderfully comfortable. The point is I thought, *'this is where I want to live',* and I hadn't felt like that about any of the other places we had seen and I knew I was going to be happy here.

Mike: And unfortunately, do you remember, that night developed into an awful row.

> The only time we had a serious difference of opinion. I quickly came round when I saw how much it meant to Jo and that she was totally set on buying it. I realised it was I who was being unreasonable.

Joanna: Yes... and I said well it's my money that is buying the house, because I'm selling Felden Street...

Mike: ...which was very true.

Joanna: [*laughing*] I'm sorry if you don't like it, I'm just going to live there anyway!

Mike: I just didn't see it as my recording studio. I had these visions of a Steinway 'D'.



Craning the Steinway in

Joanna: Yes, but that house we nearly bought in Chippenham, which we were going to extend to make a studio would have cost an absolute fortune. And in fact...

Mike: ...we had all this for less than the money we would have paid for the Chippenham House and the extension.

Joanna: You're sometimes

very enthusiastic about a project you want to do, but I think I could see some of the disadvantages. One being that if we had a proper recording studio; to keep it going at great expense we would have had to take on all kinds of recording work, that we didn't particularly want to do.



The Music Room at Shute – from the south
1832 Clementi left foreground; 1823 Stodart right;
1910 Steinway distant left; 1786 Longman & Broderip distant right;

Mike: So setting aside my dream of having a 'proper' studio, I set to on the computer reorganising the interior of the house to suit our needs. When it was converted in the late 70s to a separate property, stairs had been put in that ran directly up out of the kitchen into the middle of the ballroom, taking the kitchen smells with it and a great

chunk out of the room. The long Ballroom had been divided 30/20 to provide a large bedroom.

My plan extended the ballroom more towards its original length, reducing the size of the bedroom and relocating the stairway so as to rise at the side of the room and, more conventionally, from out of the hall. When the roof work was done, we took the opportunity of laying a multi-core mic cable along the ceiling apex to the far-end of the room and one to the near-end, both terminating in the adjoining room that was to be our recording control room.

Initially the control room ceiling was very low, so this was raised revealing old beams to make for a better acoustic. It was fitted with secondary glazing to ensure that at least we had a quiet editing environment. We would have to record when rooks were not courting or scrapping for nesting space.

> The place was almost totally stripped and even the builders began to wonder if they would ever get it back together again. Yet after initial planning delays, awaiting the approval of British Heritage in Bristol, amazingly the interior was completed in just over three months and we were able to move in. The whole project was wonderfully choreographed by Nick Whittaker – his first major contract after just having set up on his own.

Mike: Of course Jo's instincts were absolutely right and together we created a wonderful home, in the beautiful Devon countryside; a home that we enjoyed for eleven years before her death; a home in which the square pianos came to life at Jo's fingertips and in the surroundings of their own period.



The Music Room – from the north
Longman & Broderip (left foreground);
Stodart (disrance left; *Clementi* (distance right)

Mike: (*to Jo*): So together we produced this wonderful house that we enjoy now.

Joanna: And what's nice about it too, is that not only are we happy here and love coming home when we have been away, but also other people enjoy coming – we have lots of friends and we have family coming – and everybody finds that they really enjoy their visits; it's very relaxed, with the peace and quiet of the countryside. Even someone who is really keen on living in London, like Andreas, loves to come down.

Ovarian Cancer 2002

Joanna: Unfortunately I started getting ovarian cancer fairly soon after we came here and of course you have been looking after me ever since.

Mike: Jo and I had noticed a gradual swelling of her tummy. It could have been middle-aged spread, but it worried me because at the same time as getting bigger, she seemed to be loosing weight – it occurred to me that it might be something ominous and I prompted her to see Johnny Halford our doctor. He referred Jo to **Yvonne Hodges** their gynaecology specialist.

Joanna (*in conversation with Yvonne*)**:** I remember we immediately hit it off because you loved music and you've got a daughter, Susie, who sings. We were both talking about music and how much we liked it and you realised that I didn't think much of Charlotte Church.

Yvonne: Nor do I...

Joanna: [*laughing*] ...and that immediately established an affinity between us.

You're one of the very important people who changed my life, because you saved my life by immediately diagnosing Ovarian Cancer. If that blood test hadn't been taken and sent off promptly to the right people, I wouldn't be here. I'm very aware of that and you have looked after me ever since and become the most wonderful friend."

Yvonne: That's very kind of you.

Joanna: It's not kind, it's true! The following day, Mike and I went off for three days to do a recording with Bernard d'Ascoli in Sussex. I was feeling pretty kind of big and almost pregnant with this – what turned out to be – ascites. It might have been just middle-age spread as far as I was concerned. We did the recording session – I was producing it – and when we came back we had a message to contact the Surgery. You rang up and said, "We'd like to come round and see you." Early the following morning, in your own time before breakfast, you both came and gently told me that I had Ovarian Cancer. It was a bit of a shock, but it was so nice that you came to our house and told us, instead of us having to come to the Surgery. That was so understanding and sensitive of you.

Mike: It was such a thoughtful and supportive way of delivering that awful diagnosis of Ovarian Cancer. It was a truly shocking moment for us. By the time Jo went into hospital in February, her tummy looked like a full term pregnancy. They drained seven litres of fluid in preparation for a serious major operation, involving a full

hysterectomy, removal of the omentum tummy lining and cleaning growths from along the length of the intestine.

The full extent of the disease became obvious when, the surgeon, Mr. Renninson had all Jo's innards laid out on the table and had to strip away adhesions in a long operation.



Jo's life was certainly extended by Mr. Renninson's skilful ministrations. As is often the case with this form of cancer, it is not diagnosed until it has really taken hold and seeded throughout the abdomen. It was assessed as *late Stage III Ovarian Cancer*. At that time the chances were of 30% surviving beyond 5 years – not an encouraging prospect in the circumstances.

I remember waiting for Jo to be brought down from *Recovery* after the operation and, as the anticipated time came and went, becoming increasing worried that something might have gone wrong. When she did finally arrive she was blue and shivering with shock; I felt such an intense concern for her. I think this moment really brought home the reality of the disease and the frailty of Jo's mortality.

Yvonne even arranged for us to meet up with a patient who was a few weeks ahead of us and having the same

chemotherapy as planned for Jo. It was very reassuring to be able to talk with her about her experience of the treatment and its side-effects.

When later treatment involved regular visits (even weekly ones for a few months) to the Marsden in London, we were always made welcome to stay over with Jo's brother, Julian and Janie in Fulham. We owe them many thanks for making it that much easier for us to cope with the long journeys.

The Fourth Marriage



Cutting the Cake

Mike: Having 'looked death in the face' so to speak, I realised that should Jo die all her cash would be swallowed by Death Duties so that nothing would pass to her children until I died. Thus it was for a pragmatic reason that we decided to get married in 2002; Jo for the fourth time. Looking back one sees Jo, 'the intrepid romantic', actually always marrying ostensibly for rather practical and mundane reasons – a baby, a marriage allowance, a pension and lastly to defer Death Duties. Jo made a point of helping her children financially in the years that followed. We were just perfect as we were and probably would never have thought of getting married.

Joanna (*to Yvonne*)**:** You and Simon, your husband, were at our wedding...

Yvonne: Absolutely, a wonderful day.

Joanna: You actually made a little lunch for us afterwards that Susie brought up. I think it was really, really lovely.

Yvonne: It was a lovely day – sunny and gorgeous, wasn't



Roland & Pat Whiteside, Mike & Jo, Simon & Yvonne Hodges

it.

Mike: Afterwards in the evening, we all attended a concert at the Minster (Susie was singing I remember). We had wine on the Green with other members of the audience – rather like our own wedding reception – all for the price of two tickets! What a beautiful evening that was!

We didn't invite family; because of the chemotherapy we didn't know how Jo would be from one day to the next. The

Registrar had said we could call in at short notice, cancel and re-book, if she didn't feel up to it.

Joanna (*in conversation with Mike*)**:** A lot of people wonder how I manage this difficult situation that I'm in. I know that it's because of your support; mainly you... and the support of many of my friends, but of course I am with you all the time; that's even *more* important. Most important is the person you're *with* all the time and I just couldn't have managed. I can't imagine what my life would have been like if I hadn't had you there. It would have been very different and it wouldn't have been anything like so easy or so wonderful.

Mike: It's certainly been a challenge, for both of us and there have been times when it has been pretty terrible with you thought to be dying and various things...

Joanna: I seem to be dying every year – and then not! I can't help feeling that I'm like one of these prima-donnas who come back positively for the last time every year to do another season!

I know its been very hard for you and I felt very bad, that I've given you pain and worry.

Mike: mmm... I think I have given you a share of that too.

Joanna: Anyway, thank you Mike, thank you for everything! Because you are one of the most wonderfully tolerant and lovely people.

Mike: I remember you said how for the first time you could *really be yourself* with me; which I think is the biggest compliment anyone could pay me.

Joanna: You don't mind when I reminisce about Dave, and how much I loved him and how passionate our love affair was – and our marriage eventually; you don't ever feel jealous and don't mind me still feeling what I feel about Dave. But there's room for me to love you deeply – it's a slightly different way, but its got its very good points and one of them is, that I can be completely myself. I was a little bit anxious not to 'behave badly' in front of Dave, because he would have minded. But I can let it all hang out with you and you're so sweet and forgiving and everything... you never kind of resent it; you never go away and sulk and that's a big thing. You're so big hearted, Mike!



Jo and Mike – "comfortable together"

Mike: [*chuckles*] Thanks...

Joanna: We are comfortable together...

Mike: And its been wonderful; the time we have had together has totally changed my life and I have explored so many new things with you...

Joanna: Well, there's another thing. You're very cuddly and lovely and are also nice to my children; you have been such a help to them in very practical ways.

Mike: I've become very fond of Susan and Jenny. They have both had their share of pain and difficulties over the time I have known them.



Jenny and Jo – togetherness



Susan enjoying the sun

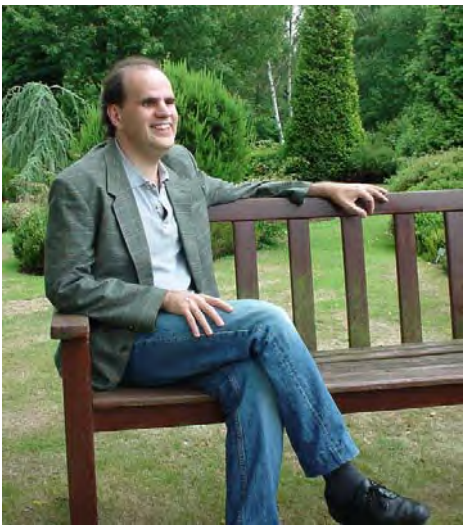
Joanna: I wouldn't have been able to have done it myself, because I wouldn't have had the know-how. And also the fact that you love them means that there's never any feeling of competition between what I feel about you and what I feel about the children. I feel I can relax – you're a support; a partner in our relationship with them.

The 'Champs Hill' Recordings

Joanna (*in conversation with Bernard d'Ascoli):* We had this Chopin project that we were going to do and finally we set up to record it at Champs Hill...

Bernard: That's right, you came to Petworth.

Eleanor Harris, Bernard d'Ascoli's partner (also a fine pianist) had a family connection with Mary and David Bowerman who owned *Champs Hill*. They had built what was primarily an art gallery, to display their art collection, but it also doubled as a large recital room, complete with professional kitchen facilities.



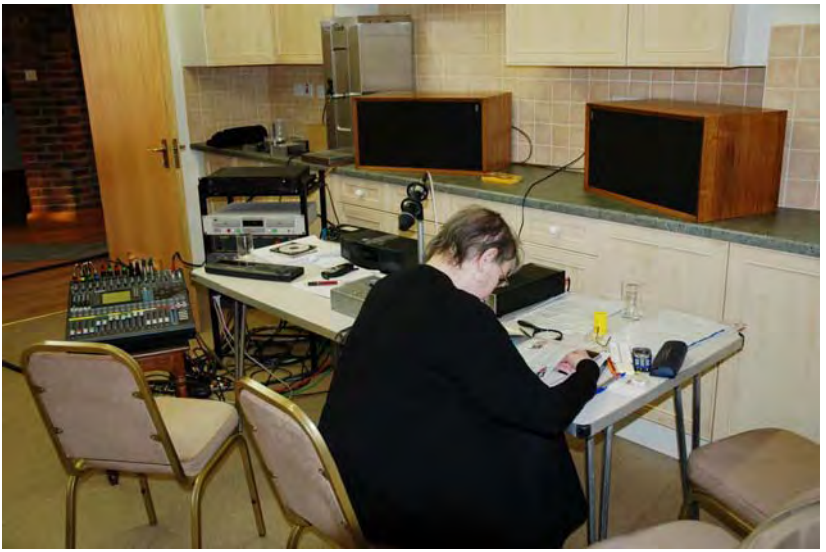
Bernard reclaxing at Champs Hill

They had a beautiful Steinway Concert Grand which is available with the venue. Because of their charitable aims, *Champs Hill* provided an inexpensive venue that small labels like ours could afford. We embarked upon several sessions spread over two years recording the Chopin *Nocturnes*, *Schertzi* and *Impromptus*. *W*hen they were finally released in 2005, the *Nocturne* CD *(*released as a two disc set), was selected by the Editor of BBC

Music as his choice for ***Recording of the Month.***

Joanna: We did some wonderful Chopin discs – the ***Nocturnes*** on two discs and later the ***Schertzi*** and ***Impromptus*** on another. And I remember that actually it was that first recording session, when I was very close to finding out that I had ovarian cancer.

Bernard: That's right, I remember you went home and rang me the day after you got back and told me the terrible news... "That's almost ten years ago now. You were not sure that you would have the energy to do the editing.



Recording in the kitchen at Champs Hill

Joanna: That's right...

Bernard: That's why we decided that I would choose the versions, so you wouldn't have to do all the demanding process of going through the sessions and finding the best possible take for each bit.

Joanna: That saved me a lot of time. And I felt I was going to be doing what you wanted, which was the whole point.

Bernard: We managed to plan the subsequent sessions in between your chemotherapy – and it worked!

Joanna: Well I hope you got what you wanted.

Bernard: I certainly got more than I expected. No, it was wonderful; it was always understood from within, because you just know the music more than anybody else. And Chopin in particular. We just didn't have to say; you understood what I preferred, why I preferred it and you understood why it was important to do an edit before the change of pedal, or just after. It was great.

Joanna: Well it was wonderful working with you Bernard...

Champs Hill – Dichterlieder



Stephan Loges & Alexander Schmalcz relaxing at Champs Hill

Mike: Later Stephan Loges and Alex Schmalcz asked us to record *Dichterlieder* by Schumann, and other Lieder by Franz and Brahms. We approached the Bowermans for permission to use their facilities again. Mary and David are enthusiastic supporters of

singers in particular, so they were delighted to assist us in the project offering to accommodate the artistes while we (producer and recording engineer) 'slummed it' in a local B&B.

For myself, I think I found most personal satisfaction in this Lieder CD recorded with Stephan and Alex. Rather than record vocalist and pianist in the usual stage presentation, I arranged the microphones so that the vocalist faced the pianist. This gave greater separation and subsequent control over the balance of the voice and piano.



Lieder Recording set-up at Champs Hill – vocalist facing pianist

I had finally mastered the new (for me) multi-track recording set-up and it proved ideal to attain the very fine balance that is required between the singer and piano.

Stephan and Alex were subsequently able to join us at Shute for the stereo mix-down session prior to editing. We

were able to re-balance the recording in the comfort and known acoustics of our control room, with complete control over the voice-piano balance and the mix of studio acoustic and were able to get that precise balance that the artistes were looking for, with the full dynamics of the piano unimpeded, yet never masking the voice.

I think this *Lieder* recording turned out to be among my finest efforts: the masterly accompaniment by Alex, complimenting Stephan's fine voice and interpretation; creating a wonderfully convincing performance of which we can all be proud.

Musical Opinion

"Exceptional performances, excellent recordings.. beautifully presented account of Dichterliebe… Robert Franz settings…each an individual vocal jewel." – *Denby Richards*

American Record Guide

"Loges' singing quality is very beautiful… Alexander Schmalcz is a very fine accompanist. This is a great release all round."

International Record Review

"A consistent, thought-through interpretation… Loges and his admirable partner are beautifully recorded… a stimulating recital." – *Piers Burton-Page*

Joanna's ***Athene Records*** released 26 top quality CDs – mostly over the ten years '92-'02 – 12 recorded on period pianos and 14 on the ***Minerva*** label using modern Steinways.

The Marsden KUDOS Trial *(Oct 2007)*

***The Independent on Sunday,* 4th Oct 2007:**

The Patient

Joanna Leach, 72, from Devon, was diagnosed with an aggressive form of ovarian cancer in 2002, The cancer returned four times and chemo finally sent her body into anaphylectic shock. There were no more options. But doctors at the Royal Marsden discovered she had the faulty BRCA2 gene, and in October 2007 she started on the experimental drug Olaparib. “Instead of exhausting chemo I now take four capsules, twice a day. The side-effects are nil. My daughter, who is about to have a mastectomy, also has the faulty gene.”



Mike: Looking at Jo's Oncology history (p.275): following her major operation in February 2002, her first treatment was with Taxols and Carboplatin. The Taxols meant a loss of hair, but also there was concern that it might affect her finger-tip sensitivity and consequently her playing – fortunately it didn't. But it did produce a 16 month remission to October 2003. I seem to remember being told that she might only have 18-months to live, which we found disturbing with a growing concern that the 2nd relapse (June 2005) might be the last. But there was a further remission of 12 months (from the conclusion of the cycle of treatment) until a 3rd relapse in September, 2006.

To add to our trials, in June 2004, after attending a Morley College party thrown by Gwenneth Pryor. Jo suddenly developed the further complication of gall-stones. The gripping pain of a gall stone attack is one of the most painful experiences. The sufferer curls up into a ball, writhing around in order to find some sort of relief. But for Jo there were to be more complications. As well as periodic gall-stone attacks, there were hospital admissions because the gall bladder itself had become infected.

There were times when Jo had been writhing in such intense pain, sometimes in screaming agony. Other than giving her a pain-killer and waiting 15 minutes for it to work, I could only stand by. In those moments of real need I felt utter anguish at being unable to help her and stop the pain. We always carried Voltarol pain-killer suppositories. During a car journey to London Jo had an attack. We were desperately looking for a quiet spot off the route. With Jo kneeling along the back seat, the door open, skirt up, pants

down; bare bottom exposed to the world, I popped one in.

For three-years until July 2007, she suffered from occasional gall-stone attacks and bouts of intense pain that could only be relieved after minutes of agony. Due to adhesions caused by the cancer there were complications in addressing the problem surgically. In the end, what started out as keyhole surgery became a very difficult major operation to finally remove the gall bladder.

It was during the 4th cycle of treatment after a 3rd relapse in September 2006 that an anaphylactic shock allergic reaction was triggered half-way through the cycle. This seemed to us to be 'the end of the road'. No more chemo was possible and we were desperate to find an alternate treatment. Fortunately the Marsden had taken an interest as Jo was one of a group of people who had the BRCA2 gene – predisposing them to both breast and ovarian cancer. It gradually emerged that there was the possibility of joining a trial – a treatment specifically aimed at this gene defective group. We started travelling up to the Marsden each week for tests and monitoring, but we could not start the trial until the disease was *proven* to have definitely returned. Paradoxically, we found ourselves praying for the disease to come back quickly!

In early September *we knew* the cancer had returned because of Jo's feelings - a specific form of back pain that she had identified with the disease. A blood-test confirmed a rising CA125 marker. There was still uncertainty about being accepted and the real fear that the trial might close before the cancer's return was confirmed. We seemed to

get differing messages from the staff, invariably seeing a new doctor each time. Fluid was building up again in Jo's abdomen. On the 26th Sept she went in for a few nights for it to be drained.

Finally with the fluid testing positive, to great relief, Jo started on the Kudos trial on 16 October 2007.

Mike: Jo started taking the ***Olaparib*** pills and initially had a slight feeling of nausea, but that soon passed and for her there really were no obvious side-effects at all. It started to work quickly, the CA125 progressively coming down.

Looking it up now, years later, the list of possible side-effects seems alarming. Jo was extremely lucky to have avoided any.

We continued weekly visits from Shute up to the Marsden until 12th December when we were put on a four-week clinic routine with a scan the week before. It seemed a miracle drug, but for how long would it be effective? No one had any idea, nor were they sure of any long term side effects. However, we were assured that for as long as the treatment was to Jo's benefit, the capsules would still to be supplied free of charge, even if the trial should end.

We learned on our recent visit (July 2009) that out of an initial 98 participants on the trial, Jo is one of six still surviving; with one other person who had survived for two years. At this point, Jo was close to two years herself.

In fact Joanna would benefit from taking it for two years and nine months, before being taken off the Olaparib, with a further eight months dealing with the Leukaemia

that was to finally end her fight for life, on the 8 April 2011. It was suggested that the Leukaemia was probably due to all the radiotherapy, scans and chemo she had endured in 1985 with breast cancer and since from 2002 onwards.

PART SIX
Conversations with Joanna

Remembering with Jeremy Robson

The Robson family had also been in Calcutta during the war years and had met up with the Thompsons and become good friends. Diana (Jeremy's mother) had lost her husband in a plane crash in Burma when on a mysterious diplomatic flight to China. They lost contact when the families moved to the UK and South Africa, but were reunited by chance when Michael Robson and Julian found themselves at *Sherbourne* together.



When we were young

Jeremy: You said on the video there that you had a great imagination; that you lived in a sort of fantasy world. I can't exactly remember how you described it. Will you expand on it?

Joanna: I was busy being Greek heroes in the garden all day. I think a lot of children do, but these days it is rather put out of them, because they are so keen on watching 'the

box', which is actually not their imagination, but what the producer thinks they ought to be imagining. I don't think it's always conducive to bringing out their own natural imagination.



"Bastard..."

(*to Mike*) Oh, darling you're not taping now are you? ... *Bastard !!*

Jeremy: (*amused*) Yes, he is. (*laughing*)

Joanna: Honestly, I can't get away from this camera.

Jeremy: You're enjoying every moment of it!

Mike: I thought as you were starting to talk about your childhood that it would be interesting.

Joanna: My parents used to read to us even when we were quite old and able to read for ourselves. At *Trewarne* we used to settle down in the library and read; there were books that Julian had to read over the holidays, for school. Quite often Dickens and Thackery – I remember *Vanity Fair,* for instance. I was a bit young, but had been brought up to sit and listen, and I took it all in. I developed a great love for literature.

Jeremy: When did you go to *Trewarne*?

Joanna: When I was ten.

Jeremy: Let me work this out... you're 73 now... '46... no '47.

Joanna: Yes, we came back from India at the end of '45.

We arrived on Christmas Eve at Tilbury Docks, in this awful, ghastly, horrible, cold misty weather. I thought this was supposed to be this wonderful place, called 'Home'.

Jeremy: So in '46 you were back; so when did you go to *Trewarne*.

Joanna: Well my father went back to India to wind up his business and we lived in three different places near 'the Aunts'.

Jeremy: What Gracey...

Joanna: Yes, Gracey, Hilder and my father's sister. We were staying in rented houses and my father got back from India in '47. My parents went house hunting...

Jeremy: Why did they go for Cornwall?

Joanna: They looked all over the place. My mother said, "I don't mind what it's like as long as it's warm." Then they were looking around, rather like we did – all over the place – then they saw *Trewarne* and my father fell completely in love with it. I think my mother did too, but it was about the least warm house you could possibly imagine. It was the most enchanting place really, wasn't it.

Jeremy: It was lovely.

Joanna: And especially in the summer when it wasn't freezing cold and the gardens were lovely. Of course I was always looking forward so much to Diana coming and bringing you and Michael down with her...

Jeremy: (*chuckles*) I'm sure you were.

Joanna: ...for a wonderful, wonderful holiday with us altogether, going to *Gully* and the *Giant's Chair.* You were younger than me with a mop of red hair.

Bianca [*Jeremy's wife, busy cooking as we chatted in the kitchen* **:** You know you can talk to Diana endlessly about Gully and Cornwall, because she can remember that.

Joanna: I know...

Diana was in her nineties. She and Joanna had a special rapport and been very close friends for years. We always used to call in and see her when en route to, or from, London.

Having met Diana through Jo it was during a chance conversation, that we discovered that the Rev. Veasey Roome (my first wife, Joan's father), had been the vicar of Swallowcliffe, where Diana had lived for many years, and had known Joan as a child and the Roome family of six daughters.

Joanna: Of course I was potty about Michael; he was a sort of huge wonderful god. (*laughter*) Julian was the same age, and Michael admired my piano playing. I didn't know this until Julian told me, *"He listens outside the door when you're practicing your Bach"*. Of course I fell flat on my face with all this adulation, even though told second hand. I thought he was so wonderful that when he spoke to me, I couldn't hear a word he said! When he spoke, I went immediately quite deaf.

Jeremy: (*Laughing*) What a lovely story!

Joanna: I thought he was wonderful and looked forward to his coming every year. I was completely smitten. Of course you were only a little boy...

Jeremy: ...a little boy.

Joanna: But we did have great fun. I remember we did a wonderful performance for the parents, the aunts and uncles.

Jeremy: (*bursts into song playing an imaginary ukulele*)

Old folks, young folks, everybody there...
Jonah was a prophet he went for a sail,
He bought a first class passage in a transatlantic whale
But the humid atmosphere was too much on his chest
So he gave the whale a wallop and whaley did the rest.
Oh, Old folks, young folks, everybody there...

Do you remember that?

Joanna: Yes... (*together in perfect sychonicity*)

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego
Disobeyed the King
And so they had to go
Into the fiery furnace... ???
They wore asbestos underpants
So they had the final laugh. (*much laughter*)

Or something like that. Oh, it was great fun... I know we were all singing to ukuleles, and then you and Michael had to play a duet. I had to play...

Jeremy: ...some wonderful Chopin or Mozart...

Joanna: ...some Chopin, while Michael and Julian did a ballet. Michael was wearing a white tee-shirt – he was 6ft 8in or something – with a couple of rolled up rugger socks as breasts that kept slipping down, with an old tennis skirt. He was the ballerina; he was prancing around, while Julian, very much smaller, was the male dancer in black tights, treading on his toes. They did a complete skit.

Jeremy: I can't imagine Michael being so free and easy.

Joanna: He was, he was. But he never made any move towards me. We never touched hands or kissed or anything.

Jeremy: Oh, Jo that's so disappointing.

Joanna: I went off to Vienna to study and I was still feeling smitten for Michael...

Jeremy: Oh, dear. Oh, dear!

Joanna: Then I met my first husband to be, Jerry (Jeryl). I was full of female hormones and he full of male hormones; so we got together.

The conversation goes on to discuss Jo's husbands – "two bad and two good". The relevant sections are used in Parts 1, 2 & 3 of the book.

This conversation along with others can be heard on the website.

Joanna in conversation with Andrew Lancaster

December 2010



Andrew specialised in the restoration of English square pianos (1780-1840)

Joanna: Well Andrew, you completely changed my life, with the square pianos.

You had asked me down to Guildford to play the Broadwood you had on show. I thought it would be rather fun to have one, but I hadn't thought of recording on it at that stage.

I remember I sat down and played this wonderful Broadwood you had just restored and I felt, *'This is my instrument'*.

A year previously Joanna had had a dream...

Joanna: You know how sometimes dreams can be very vivid, and you remember them in absolutely every detail. I was riding with a group of young friends through a

woodland. I was dressed in a wonderful Regency green velvet dress and riding habit, riding side-saddle. We came across a very old deserted country house. We got off our horses and went into the house. All the window shutters were closed and all the furniture covered with white covers. We opened the shutters and let in the light.

The light was filtered though the green leaves, giving a rather unearthly greenish light. In the corner was a long piano. I didn't know anything about early pianos at the time, but this was long shaped with straight strings. I remember thinking this was a strange shape for a piano.

Andrew: They do look longer because the keyboard is so much smaller.

Joanna: I sat down and music just flowed out of my fingers as I played, and I felt so happy; the piano just opened its heart to me and poured out all this wonderful music which I played. I felt so happy playing it.

Then suddenly the dream just finished.

Now when I came to Guildford and sat at that piano, I had the same feeling as in that dream. I immediately said, *"Please, please find me another piano like this."*

Finding the Stodart

Andrew: And we did. I wanted one that was really special, because I had this idea that you would perhaps record on it. I particularly hoped that you would record Field's Nocturnes, which I like and would suit it so well. At breakfast one day I suddenly thought 'There's a square piano here for sale in East Sussex at an auction'. I said to

Dennis, “We’ll just have to ring round the auction rooms to find it.” Eventually we found one in an auction in Crowborough...

Joanna: But you had no idea beforehand...

Andrew: No, I had no idea. I said “Do you have an auction?” They said yes they did. I said, “Do you have a square piano.” “Yes.” they said. “what time is it coming up?” I asked. “About 2 o’clock.”



The Stodart 1823 became Jo’s favourite

So we drove over to Crowborough and pretty well bought it ‘unseen’. That was the *Stodart.* Do you remember when you first saw it...

Joanna: You said, “This is going to be a wonderful piano.” then pinged a note and said, “Listen to that timbre”. I

thought, *'What on earth is he going to do with that?'* There were bits of wire coming of out it. It looked an absolute mess...

Andrew: Your face was 'a study'. You looked so completely sceptical.

Joanna: I couldn't imagine you ever being able to make anything out of it. I didn't realise at the time (I hadn't known you long then) that all the pianos you had restored had been in this sort of mess before. When I played Field Nocturnes on your pianos at exhibitions, everyone was enchanted. It was obvious to me that it would be good for you, if we brought out a disc of the Nocturnes, played on your pianos, as a sort of sales aid.

Andrew: So that people could actually hear what they sound like.

Joanna: Then Dave, who was very good at recording, decided we should record them all.

> This was the CD that inspired the launch of ***Athene Records*** to specialise in pianos of the period 1785-1835 and has been a 'best seller' ever since.

Joanna: Because the music is so special and the pianos so suitable to the music; it was so easy to play them in the style that obviously Field felt.

The influence of the pianos on performance

Andrew: Did the early pianos change your perception of music; you said it changed Andreas' perception of playing Mozart.

Joanna: Oh yes - not only just the pianos that *I* have - I have three in this room. I have played yours and had others that have come and gone. I have played a lot of them and they are all different.

Andrew: But has it changed the way, for example, that you play the Steinway?



Jo at her Clementi Piano

Joanna: Yes

Andrew: Even later pieces of music - Liszt or Chopin...

Joanna: Maybe not so much Liszt, its a completely different thing. I can change from one to the other [*Steinway to squares*] fairly easily, but it has changed my conception of things like Haydn and Mozart - the character that is brought out on the early pianos, with the different parts of the piano speaking in different ways, like characters [*in an opera*].

Andrew: Yes, you can get very different voices.

Joanna: And you soon realise that its rather boring to sit down at a *Steinway* and just play the tune and keep the left hand rather quiet, so it doesn't sort of interfere. On the square pianos you can actually have the different colours going more or less at the same dynamic if you want to,

without interfering with each other.

Andrew: So you get a conversation.

Joanna: You get a conversation; there is so much more. And if you do what the composer actually says, even the phrasing and little slurs and things; square pianos - your square pianos that you have done - are extremely sensitive to nuances of that sort.

Andrew: When you have learnt these little nuances, do they translate to what you play on the *Steinway*?

Joanna: Yes, but sometimes you really have to do it a little more self-consciously on the *Steinway*, because you actually *have to do it,* whereas on the squares, the piano almost *does it for you*. I have found that I don't really like certain pieces played any more on the *Steinway*. I use the *Steinway* – I love it – for quite a number of pieces, but when I get onto the squares, suddenly the whole thing comes to life again.

Andrew: Well, when you're recording, certainly, for example that Schubert - the Hungarian melody - that completely comes to life.

Joanna*:* Well of course, on a modern piano, that is quite an exciting piece; but its not got that sort of twang to it, that gives it that slightly oriental... its so easy. And when I did *Die schöne Müllerin* [with *Richard Edgar Wilson*], I'm very pleased to say some very good people, like **Alexander Schmalcz**, admired the sound I got from the ***Clementi.*** Its so much easier on that piano to make the hunting horn calls, the brook, the mill wheel and things. All have a

completely different character of their own and you can play out quite loudly and passionately in the passionate bits, without drowning the singer. So you can actually put more into it; whereas you have to hold back on a big piano, otherwise the poor old singer...

Andrew: ...otherwise you would be drowning the soloist. But what I particularly like is in the accompaniment, it starts off as sort of innocent, inexperienced, and by the end of it... the anguish, its so sad...

Joanna: ...devastated - and in fact he kills himself in the river.

Andrew: I don't think he meant to do that; probably just slipped!

Joanna: I must say that I have never ever played a piano that has been restored by anybody else with anything like the pleasure that I get when playing your pianos. I don't think I could have recorded a lot of the music that I have done quite successfully; the subtle nuances and things, just would not have been possible on some of the other pianos.

Joanna & Jenny Stern (Bach)
Duet partners



Jenny and Joanna in younger days

Jenny: Gosh, I remember the day you first came to Morley College. Do you remember?

Joanna: I do.

Jenny: Gwyneth [Pryor] was taking the class, not Martino. I remember you had your black briefcase. You came through the door and you looked quite austere, but you were probably actually terrified. I don't know whether you had been to any classes before.

Joanna: No, it was like being a new girl.

Jenny: I think I came over and welcomed you, or something.

Joanna: I was put to sit next to you and you said you were called Jenny. I said, "Oh I will remember that as my daughter is called Jenny." Ann McLaughlin was playing Schubert, I think. I wasn't quite sure whether I would fit in or not. You were very very nice to me and I felt quite at

ease after a very short time.

Very soon after that we got together to play duets.

Jenny: Do you remember the first works we played?

Joanna: I think it was Dvorak...

Jenny: The *Slavonic Dances,* and Brahms as well.

Joanna: Then we went on and did a lot of Schubert including the one we recorded – *Lebensstürma.* We also played in concerts. We played the wonderful *Fantasie.*

Jenny: The *Weiner Dances...*

Joanna: Wonderful

Jenny: Do you remember that concert we did at the Festival Hall in the middle of the night. Some sort of fund raising...

Joanna: ...a piano marathon going on and they had to keep playing all the time.

I remember a concert we played at the RSBP bird place...

Jenny: Gosh your memory... at Arundel. Do you remember the page turner leaping across. She was absolutely frightful because her arms weren't long enough to stretch...

Joanna: ...stopping us from seeing the notes.

Jenny: It was a wonderful venue.

Joanna: Yes it was. Do you know I have in the car some evening dresses I'm taking up for Lizzy. There was one dress that belonged to my mother, made of black watered silk, and I wore that with a belt and a blouse; the waist is ***so tiny!*** And I thought, *'did I ever have a waist like that?'*

Jenny: Yes, you did.

Joanna: I remember I wore that skirt because Dave was rather taken with that outfit. He said, "You look very good in that." I came across it the other day and it immediately took me back to that recital. We played the *Dolly Suite...*

Jenny: ...and the *Berceuse.*

Joanna: We did a lot of the Slavonic and Hungarian pieces. I was very glad at having had those ghastly years with John as I did learn a lot about Hungarian music. We were listening to and playing a lot of their music. We went to Hungary and heard Hungarians playing gypsy music. I think that helped when one had to learn a classical piece – like Liszt or the *Divertissement Angloise...*

Jenny: You sort of sparked me up. It was fantastic playing with you, feeling the energy and the musical inevitability of phrases. They just had to be that way.

Joanna: I can be quite bossy sometimes, but you did a lot for me. You mopped up some of my extrovert bits that perhaps weren't quite right, or a little bit flabby technically. You did a tremendous lot to pull me together. With you it was like playing with a really good tennis player. One plays better when against a good player; it ups one's game. We never needed to count ourselves in; we didn't look at each other. There was a tremendous telepathic communication because we both *started together.* Quite often, even *en passant,* in the concert we would do something slightly different and I always felt that we *moved together,* like two fish.

Jenny: ...Pilot fish with sharks. I totally agree, and it was an absolute treat and a pleasure. I think one of the most

special pieces, apart from the big repertoire, was the wonderful, wonderful, Schubert *Polonaise*; it was just exquisite.

Joanna: It was lovely, I have heard it played by other people and thought, *'well, I don't know, we put a bit more joie de vivre into it.'*

I used to turn over for you, because you did a lot more concerts than me. I hadn't done many solo concerts since my earlier days of playing. You played a lot of concerts, very difficult stuff, I had to be jolly careful to turn over. I don't think I could do it now, my sight's not good enough. But my goodness you played fantastically well.

Jenny: I just hope I never hissed at you!

Joanna: I think I got used to where to turn for you. I also accompanied you in playing concerti that you were doing at Hastings for the piano concerto competition.

Jenny: ...the Grieg...

Joanna: We did the Grieg and several Mozart; we did one Beethoven...

Jenny: ...and the Schumann

Joanna: ...then you played the second piano when I played the Schumann.

Jenny: That's right, and having to count that last movement and how difficult it was.

Joanna: Gosh, yes. I could usually play it without much difficulty because I knew very little about the actual form of the music, so I didn't worry. Andreas says that last movement is frightfully difficult to remember, but as long

as I didn't go off the rails, I could do it without having to know what I was playing. I just did it by ear.

You were such a support to me musically too. I had been through a rather difficult time when I hadn't really known many pianists. We just knew why we wanted to play the piano.

Jenny: We didn't have to explain it; we knew about technical grounding. I used to come from college on a Saturday to Felden Street and we would spend a couple of hours together...

Joanna: ...and we'd practice for the next concert, or look through some music. I really felt hungry for companionship of a musical nature, after years of being excluded from other pianists. The Morley class was wonderful for that.

Jenny: We have shared many special things and I have such admiration for your ability to take everything and make the absolute most of whatever it was you found yourself in, particularly musically you would leave nothing unturned in terms of the understanding, the feeling, and the emotion. You know, occasionally you would throw these 'outrageous' – not really outrageous – ideas into the class at Morley. And people would all go 'ahhh!' in absolute surprise. It was totally heart-felt, absolutely so compelling and whatever you did was with total conviction. It was just so special, so special.

Joanna: Thank you, thank you. I remember getting up and showing everyone how to dance a polonaise, because I got fed up with people playing things too fast. I sometimes must have been rather a nuisance; I did rather speak my

mind too clearly on occasions.

Jenny: Not at all, it's those things we will always remember *(laugher)*.

Joanna: We have also been though a lot, because we have both have had cancer. I felt very pleased when you confided in me that you were ill. I felt you knew I understood as I had been through it myself. I was pleased I could be of some help. It draws one close together, doesn't it, when you share experiences?

Jenny: Absolutely.

Joanna: Even if they are not very nice experiences. I would have hated it, if you didn't have anyone to lean on then.

Jenny: No, I was just so grateful. You were always so fantastically magnanimous in saying that I'd been through so much more than you had. We'd both been through things, but different things. As you say, an opportunity to share very difficult times...

Joanna:...intimate

Jenny: ...totally, totally. I will always treasure... *(tears)*

Joanna: Ah, Jenny, dear Jenny. I'm not going to go yet.

Jenny: I know you're not, because you have defied everybody and everything always and you will do it again. That is my wish for you.

Joanna: What I feel is, one must live for the moment and coming to visit you is a pleasure and that's not to be upset by thinking... *(laughter)*

Jenny: Shall I put the kettle on?

Joanna & Mike Reminisce



A life-changing relationship

Mike: I think we are going to talk about how we first met. And how that changed your life...

Joanna: (*laughing*) And how it changed yours!

Mike: (*laughs*) Later, certainly...

Dave and Joanna had bought the ***SoundMaestro****:* the first computer based professional digital editing system; at that time a defining development in editing facilities.

Mike: I used to bring Stephen up to the Junior Academy, I'd drop him off and come over and spend much of the day with you and Dave. We became good friends. As Dave and I enjoyed each others company, it became quite a regular thing. You always cooked a very nice lunch. I'd leave around three o'clock to pick Steve up.

Joanna: And I was very pleased because it was nice for Dave to have a friend who was on the same sort of

wavelength, as far as recording was concerned, and you could chat about all these things that didn't mean anything to me at all.

Mike: And I remember that together Dave and I did a few recording sessions, which I found exciting because I was longing to get back into recording. And of course we did the Junior Academy orchestra every term. I did it for about ten years, which surprised me.

Joanna: Later on, I used to come and help you.

Mike: You did.

Joanna: It was nice having you there and we were friends, but I didn't have any kind of feelings of fancying you or anything and I don't think you had any feelings of fancying me.

Mike: No, we were just friends.

Joanna: Dave and I were a very strong couple; but it was lovely to have someone he could talk to. This happened over quite a long time – you coming up.

I remember Dave got very very ill and very tired; it was extremely difficult for him to walk anywhere and I tried to make it easier for him, but it was obvious that he was really going down hill fast. I was trying to get him into hospital; he had been attending St. Georges Hospital for years because of his heart.

> The previous year during the summer of '92, Joanna and Dave had joined Joan and me for a day, when we had taken a boating holiday on the Thames. We cruised together from Pangbourne to Goring, having a picnic

lunch on the way, and ending with a special dinner at the prestigious waterside Swan Diplomat Hotel (as it was then). Dave was obviously struggling and was already very weak.

Mike: It must have been quite a trial for Dave to do that last recording with Peter Katin – the *Clementi on Clementi;* which turned out to be a wonderful CD.

Joanna: He was very involved in it and I think that helped him. He wanted to do it, but I think it was pretty exhausting.

Dave's Operation

Joanna: Finally Dave went into hospital for a heart by-pass operation. You and I went and bought a little portable CD player so he could hear the new ***Clementi*** CD which had just been pressed. He was listening to it and was so thrilled. Then after the op he was ten days in intensive care, sedated and unable to speak or anything.

Mike: We were on holiday in Yorkshire and you phoned telling us that the doctors did not hold out much hope. We came down a day or two earlier to see Dave and give you some support in that difficult time.

Joanna: You certainly did – I think Joan and Steve were there too – and it was on the day that they tried to take him off the respirator and he couldn't breathe. He got very frightened and they kept on trying to get him to breathe and asking me to help. I still remember that horrible, horrible experience and him panicking because he couldn't breathe. It was such agony to see him struggling. In the end they

increased the sedation and put him back on.

I just never want to have a day like that again.

> Although the operation had been technically successful, Dave's major organs had apparently failed to cope with the stresses of the procedure and were fast deteriorating. The situation was deemed to be hopeless and the life-support systems were finally withdrawn.

Joanna: I was absolutely shattered. Julian was very good, he came to the hospital and took me home. I stayed with them for a week, because I was literally in shock. But I kept on going back home to run the business.

Mike: It's a shame Dave didn't live to see the accolades heaped on the Clementi recording – it was *Record of the Month...*

Joanna: ...with BBC Music magazine...

Mike: ...and how a track was used by the BPI in a British promotional CD at the '95 MIDEM Exhibition – or indeed, the Haydn and Four Square recital CDs issued by Athene that had been given very good reviews around that time.

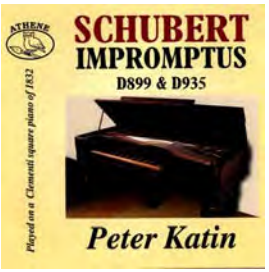
Joanna: It was very successful. But I became very upset when I saw a fantastic review of my *John Field Nocturnes* recording by Bryce Morrison, in the Gramophone. He was terribly, terribly complimentary and I know that Dave would have been so thrilled. I cried because I just wished he had known about it; then I thought, *'perhaps he does know'.*

Anyway, I was really stuck and I was thinking, *'Oh, God, I won't be able to carry on with the recording business. I can*

play and edit; I can produce other people, but I can't do the engineering.' And I knew I wouldn't be able to, as it's so complex.

Mike: I remember it must have been about the time Steve finished at the Academy, but I still kept coming up on Saturdays to help out.

Joanna: You were still working at your own manufacturing business in Pangbourne. Anyway I found it an immense help because you were there to help me in my struggle. I said, "We were going to do Schubert with Peter." And you said, "Well, I'll do it; I'll do it with you". I realised that you were going to step in and help me, and that I was going to be able to carry on with it. I knew Dave wanted that. One of the things he was worried about was that I would be able to manage to keep the business going. I did; but I did need your help.



The first disc we did together at Peter's, was the [Schubert] *Impromptus*. It got very very good reviews. You did all the recording and everything and I did the editing and we produced it. It was having that project that saved me from going into a completely useless, hopeless state. And because of you I was able to get on and do that; I just could not imagine myself sitting with my knitting.

In Deepest Grief

Mike: I remember you saying 'how long the days seemed'.

Joanna: The days seemed incredibly long because each

day was an agony to get through. Fortunately I slept very well; that was a good thing. But I'd wake up every morning and suddenly realise what had happened and... the terrible grief goes in waves... and Andrew and Dennis and several others, were a marvellous help... they were very very helpful.

Mike: And Andreas I think was very supportive...

Joanna: Andreas came on the scene a few months later; he was very supportive. But as far as the work was concerned you were the most support in that way. You helped chose the music for Dave's funeral. And all sorts of things that would have been difficult for me.

Mike: Yes, I remember consoling you from time to time with a cuddle...

Joanna: You did, and I found that very nice. One missed very much having... of course my children were very nice and they gave me a lot of support and physical contact.

Mike: Our friendship grew, didn't it.

Our Friendship Grew

Joanna: We really enjoyed working together and I found it a great solace, but even so I kept occasionally bursting into terrible grief.

Mike: What I found was that I enjoyed working to high standards with top quality musicians. And my efforts were appreciated, which was very important...

> [I had come to feel that after 35 years of marriage and raising four children, that at home my efforts were not

appreciated.**]**

Joanna: ...working with people like Peter Katin and Andreas. We were able to talk on the same level about getting the results musically and so on.

[I had first seen Peter Katin, when my mother had taken me to hear him play a Tchaikovsky concerto in the '50s in the new Festival Hall. Who would have guessed I would be recording him fifty years later.**]**

Joanna: Although you don't actually play an instrument, you've got a very good ear indeed.

Mike: I was for many years a frustrated recording engineer. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to explore that aspect of my talents.

Joanna: Of course it actually completely changed my life and saved me from the most awful despair. I was well aware of that and... (*laughs*) I remember one time when you were thinking of moving away from Reading – further west; in fact near where we are now – I realised that you might be moving away from my life, although you said you didn't think that.

Mike: The idea was that I would spend three or four days in London with you and a long weekend at home with Joan. (*chuckles*) I don't know what Joan thought of that.

Joanna: When you were first talking about it, we had been working together for about fifteen months. I remember I said to you, "Oh Mike, what am I going to do without you? I'm so grateful for all you've done" and you said in a very sort of leery way, "*How grateful?!*"... (*laughter*).

Mike: I think, if there was a moment when I fell in love with you it was listening to your recording of the *Danté Sonata.* I found it so wonderfully passionate and exciting...

Joanna: You said, "Do you actually feel like it sounds you feel when you are playing the Danté." I tried to be sort of... [*laid-back, cool?*] and said, "Well you don't think about that sort of thing when your playing, what you are actually thinking about is how to get your fingers around the notes." I didn't want to encourage you too much... I wasn't quite sure that I ought to... I wasn't at all sure that I ought to... I had reservations about encouraging you. I could see that you were rather 'taken with me'.

Mike: I think that my weakness is that I could never resist a maiden in distress... (*laughter*) I have this idea of saving the women in my life.

Joanna: (*laughing*) Well I hope another maiden doesn't suddenly turn up and you go off with her to save her.

The thing is that in the end, you often gave me a little cuddle and I found that very nice, because physical contact is a great solace. Then one time you tried to kiss me... a bit more than on the cheek...

Mike: I was just leaving.

Joanna: Oh, no. There had been occasions before when you had been trying to kiss me a bit more properly than just on the cheek, and I had slightly avoided this. I thought I would be encouraging you too much. Then there was an occasion when you were leaving and you started to kiss

me...

Mike: You initially turned your head to one side...

Joanna: I felt this lovely warm cuddly man, a big bear you know... I'm inclined to fall for big bears... and you felt GOOD, resting against you... you had your arms around me and it felt *sooo good*...

The Kiss



"With that kiss, the die was cast!"

Anyway, I suddenly thought *'gosh I feel hungry for something a bit more than this'* and gave you a really proper kiss – which startled you absolutely and completely...

Mike: [*laughing*] Yes, it certainly did! And I remember as I left, that I felt I was floating on air, saying "We are going to have to think seriously about this". But with that kiss, the die was cast!

Joanna: I realised that you had probably not been kissed like that for quite a long time, if ever... and I felt... well I felt I had made a [big] step. In fact I am very naughty because with Dave, it was me in the end who said, "I think I've made a mistake." Although he had been longing for several years to become my lover; he wasn't going to ask again because I had had reservations for so long. In this

case I also instigated it in a way. So I think it is right that the female does the choosing.

Mike: [*laughing*] Yes, yes.

That all happened on my last visit before Christmas. Joanna came and stayed with us for the '95 New Year. We were to tour local churches searching for a suitable recording venue for *Die schöne Müllerin*.

Mike: Since Joanna had arrived to stay with us, she and I had not had an opportunity to discuss the new situation. I was playing with a very 'straight bat', which may have confused Joanna a little, thinking perhaps that I had cooled off over Christmas. But on leaving the house to start our search, we got into the car and with the doors closed, the world outside ceased to exist. We were suddenly cocooned once more in our own private dimension. Meeting for the first time in our newly acknowledged relationship, Joanna said in a deep seductive and sexy voice,"*Hello Mike!"* I was suddenly tingling with excitement. It was a wonderful moment after all the anticipation over Christmas and I responded with touching and holding her hand, and a "*Helloo Jo!"* before driving off.

It was a thrilling day travelling around together. As we visited the different churches, I took every opportunity, to hold Joanna close and allow sensual feelings of arousal to take over. As we sat discussing our new found relationship and its implications on our lives and the lives others. Joanna wickedly warned that like the rose in the Franz Schubert song, *Heiden Rőslein...*

"If you pluck me, I will prick you with my thorns so that you will never forget me!"



Mike: An exciting prospect! How I longed to pluck her and be pierced by those thorns!

I told Jo that although pretty fed up with home life, with my youngest son now grown up and in university, I could still not bring myself to leave Joan after 35 years. I thought it best to try to lead parallel lives to minimise the hurt to all involved; everyone was used to me going up to Fulham to help out on Saturdays, so we would continue the same basic routine. Joanna agreed and said that she was not looking for me to be a prospective full-time live-in partner. But neither of us could deny the opportunity to explore those wonderful youthful feelings of a passionate *aliveness* that our relationship had rediscovered.

It was on Saturday, January 4th 1995, when I took Joanna up to Fulham, that we finally had the opportunity to consummate our relationship.

Not having found a suitable location for recording *Die schöne Müllerin* around Reading, a casual conversation with Tessa Davies (Joanna's life-long friend from school days), prompted thoughts of Tessa's home, Whatley House, near Frome, being a suitable venue.

The large drawing room with its high ceiling height was typical of the spacious sort of location in which such musical activities might have occurred. What is more the house was set in a quiet location – not easily come by these days. Tessa offered to put up the recording team for the three or four nights it was thought it might take. There would be five in the team: Joanna and Richard Edgar-Wilson, the artists; Alasdair Graham, producer, Martin Ness, tuning and Mike as recording engineer.



Mike: Some weeks later we met up at Tessa's house for the recording session. She had thoughtfully accommodated Joanna and me away from the main house, in the splendid isolation of the coach-house annexe. This enabled us to freely pursue and express our ecstatic feelings. I remember there were some beautiful moonlit nights that added a silvery romantic touch to our love making. Recording had been a passion in my life and I now realised, after all the manufacturing and corporate activity of the last two decades or so, that I had really missed it. For me recording was back on the agenda and along with it the rekindling of a youthful romantic passion – I had been half-dead; ***now I was alive once more!***

Mike: It was a wonderful enlivening relationship. I remember I'd leave home at 5.45am and drive up to Fulham. It took forty-five minutes pretty precisely and I'd arrive almost spot-on at 6.30. You would have just woken up probably and heard the key turn in the lock.

Joanna: I actually woke up just before; I sort of sensed you were coming, or I must have anticipated it...



Mike: (*laughing*) I'd race up the stairs saying to myself '*Young Lochinvar has come out of the West.'* A sort of lover's mantra.

Young Lochinvar is come out of the west...

"Young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war.
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar..."

Joanna: Yes, obviously thinking of yourself as a wonderful young man riding across the meadow...

Mike: ...and I'd leap into bed. It was a wonderful, wonderful time.

Joanna: We had a lovely time, but we also worked a lot together doing many projects. I had done a lot of editing for other people as well, apart from our own Athene ones.

Mike: In 1994 I had recorded my first CD, the *Schubert Impromptus* with Peter Katin at his home and he was keen to record a further CD of Schubert, piano works. The plan was that after shipping the *Clementi* piano to Tessa's home, the removal van would pick it up later and take it on to Peter's house, ready for our session of the Schubert: *Moments Musiceaux* and *Drei Klavierstücke*.

We travelled around on trips together and I would take time off from my business to cover our various recording sessions in different locations. All my modern Steinway piano recordings (for *Athene-Minerva*) were considered very good, which delighted me.

> "The recording sound is brilliant, close, vibrant and it has a very exciting attack."
>
> "Athene's recording is crystaline and beautifully atmospheric."

Joanna: We did it all: we did the recording, the editing, the post production, the notes written and we designed the booklets and organised the pressing. We weren't really 'booklet people' [we always missed something]. And it was really a lot of work.

Mike: I retired in October '95 [aged 58, same as Jo] and then I came up two days a week [Tuesdays and Thursdays].

Joanna: I think Joan got a bit fed up, because if we were doing something, like when we recorded dear Derek [Bell], you would stay the night.

Mike: Or we could be away on location somewhere.

Joanna: Obviously we had become great friends and I couldn't imagine how I could manage without you. Joan got fed up with you coming up all the time to me and you got kicked out.

Mike: There had been some arguments going on between Joan and two of the 'children'. I had got fed up with all the whining and said, "I'm going up to London." Joan said, "If you do, don't come back." More as a protesting dramatic gesture, I gathered together the basics and left.

Yes, it was a defining moment certainly. I came up. All I had was my brief-case, car and bank files, my cheque book, pension fund records and lap-top computer – my basic survival kit.

Joanna: I'd been out with Jenny. I dropped her off and saw her on the train, then came back. It didn't surprise me that the door was only on the Yale lock, as I knew Andreas was working on the computer...

Mike: I heard the door latch go, and moved to the top of the stairs...

Joanna: The first thing I saw was your briefcase and I thought, *'here we go again!"*

Mike: I was due to come up the following day. I said, "Joan's kicked me out."

Joanna: I said, "Go back, I'm sure she didn't mean it." Stay the night, spend the day as you normally would and then go back as if nothing had happened.

Then the following day she rang and said, she never wanted to see you again. It was quite a relief for you. But I actually felt very uncomfortable, because I knew there was a lot of pressure in your mind as to whether you should go back. Phil was very anxious that you should.

Mike: It wasn't our intention that a split like that should happen.

Joanna: No, I still feel very sorry that Joan has had to cope on her own, because I knew how difficult it would be without you.

Mike: But I think sometimes once things are said in such vehement tones it's... [impossible to go back]

Joanna: It was obvious that she was not going to have you back on any terms other than completely *her* terms, and you weren't prepared to do that.

Mike: And it was surprising, when I put the phone down' how much of a relief it was; as though one had stopped bashing one's head against a wall. Only then did one realise what the stresses and pressures had been.

Joanna: It is always sad when a marriage – in your case a long term marriage – breaks up, but it hadn't been going right for quite a long time; all the children were adult, so I

didn't feel as bad about it, had it been a family of younger children. So I didn't ask you; I never asked Dave either... never asked either of you to leave your wives. You were kicked out, both of you; more or less in the same sort of way. The wife got fed up, understandably. I can understand that; I had been in the same position myself in the past. But I do feel that you should never try to hang on to someone, if they really would prefer to go away and be with someone else. I've never felt one had the right to hang on to people.

Mike: It certainly was a question of one door closing and another opening, because we were really able to plan our lives together, in a way that we weren't able to before.

I remember one amusing occasion when Andrew and Dennis were staying at Shute, we decided to go out for Sunday lunch. The sizeable restaurant of some twenty tables was packed with diners all chatting away in a high ambient noise. We were having to raise our voices to be heard; talking about music and the wonderful feelings it can evoke. When Jo suddenly declaimed in a loud voice, "I'm hooked on ecstasy!" The chatter stopped – silence – people turned their heads, trying to take in what they thought they had heard; no doubt, leaping to the conclusion that Jo was referring to being hooked on the drug.

Joanna Leach

From a Conversation with Andreas Boyde December 2010



Intuition & Academic Training

Andreas: Well, what I realised when we started our first projects, and I started playing several works which I had either learned or played before, I noticed your musical advice was extraordinary. And I think it's something that you might call intuition, or a certain form of instinct... inspiration. How would you describe it? How come your musical judgement was so amazing. It still is of course, and you come up with ideas that are extremely striking.

Joanna: Well its lovely to hear you say that. I actually have never been a highly academically trained musician, because I didn't go to any academies or anything like that. I had one or two extremely marvellous teachers. I had Peter Katin and before him, I had a wonderful teacher called Henry

Wynn Wernick in Cornwall, who taught me how to relax in such a way that I didn't get tendinitis and various things and he was very keen on my playing. Actually he was a little bit in love with me I think. He actually picked up on this intuitive thing. I think its just part of my imaginative character; I always was a very imaginative child. It struck me as being quite normal that one should live in a slight fantasy world most of the time - and music seems to express that to me.

It isn't that I'm going through an actual scenario when I'm playing or listening to a piece, but I feel sometimes – and this is very important, but difficult to express – I feel that one has to take the *essence* of the emotion in the piece. Its almost like a perfume. It isn't the actual situation itself that springs to mind, its the *scent* of it that brings back the emotion; the *scent* in the piece that is almost impossible to express in words. I have always felt that intuitively.

People sometimes say 'how do you decide what to do here?' In my own playing I can't; I'm not academically trained enough to work it all out and sometimes if you have got a strong intuitive imagination, I think its a good thing; because it [academic training] can sometimes get in the way. It could be very helpful and there are large bits of my musical experience that could be enhanced by knowing more about it. I'm inclined to get very panicky and not know where I am in a piece if I get nervous.

Andreas: Well sometimes to be too academic can be 'in your way', right?

Joanna: Well I feel it is with some people. You are very

well academically trained, but I don't think it gets in the way of your intuition. I think that most of the time you have a very strong intuitive thing which guides you more than possibly your very powerful brain and that is what I like about your playing, because it always means more than just the academic notes.

Andreas: Well sometimes I feel when you look at the score, the music jumps at you and I immediately have a very strong picture of how the music should sound and then sometimes its a long journey to end up where you started.

Joanna: Exactly, I feel that too. Its the practising, the hard grind in between. You're aching to get back to your original moment of inspiration and if you feel that somehow you are connecting, possibly with the inspiration of the composer that made him write the piece in the first place (which is almost impossible to put down in the notes); you've got to somehow get through the notes to feel the emotion and the inspiration and it may not be the same inspiration as his. We are not conceited enough to think we are in touch with the composer, but its got to come from one's own heart and one's own conviction, otherwise it is not going to come across to the audience, or anybody who hears you. Its got to mean something.

Andreas: Of course, I think it is very important to have a personal relationship and to say something very personal; not just to give a precise account of the score which, lets face it at the end of the day, is dots and lines and nothing else. Its up to you and to me and every musician to turn it into music which is actually talking to people. Do you think

there should be a story told - a musical story of course?

Joanna: Occasionally, yes, and sometimes the composer himself has actually indicated it: like Schumann for instance, or even Beethoven and various other people. Sometimes it seems to be more pure music without really a story, but there is often a kind of scenario behind. In Scarlatti for instance, we know from the character of his compositions that they were directly influenced by the folk music, the dancing, the religious procession and the loud clashing noises of the drums and trumpets that accompanied these religious processions. I find it is quite easy to discover this in his music. The dance is so important in lots of music.

I have always been interested in dance and I used to love dancing and I never found it difficult to feel myself respond to the rhythm of the music and that is something that comes quite naturally and which I am pleased to say some people like in my playing. You also have a very good sense of phrasing and timing and things. Sometimes people nowadays play extremely fast and extremely brilliantly and I always feel that they are more concerned with playing the difficult bits of the music, rather than doing full justice to the composer's intensions emotionally. I know my own playing is quite old fashioned in some ways; of course, I was brought up on old 78s of various great pianists of the past. I find that perhaps some of my rubato and things is probably based on what I heard as a child. I haven't copied it but it is part of my character now.

Old fashioned Pianists

Andreas: It is interesting talking about old fashioned pianists. Even if you take someone like Horowitz, who I guess was a very modern pianist in his day; there are a number of pianists nowadays who play his transcriptions – Liszt Hungarian Rhapsodies, or even Stars & Stripes – you know, all these highly virtuosic encores. Horowitz has a tendency to take his time, is very witty in his performances, is very poignant, while more contemporary pianists seem to straighten up everything, so that I sometimes feel we have a tendency nowadays to be far more 'straight' – that is perhaps the best word...



Joanna and Andreas at a party in Zurich

Joanna: ...perhaps flashy. Not everybody: I do admire some modern pianists very much indeed. I find it very irritating to hear people taking things fast; too fast in my opinion, and not letting the music breath naturally, particularly in something like Haydn which is so sort of expressive and very nice to play on the early pianos because of the different tone qualities you get throughout the keyboard. But I've heard people playing Haydn at double break speed and it doesn't seem to do anything to me at all. I don't know whether it does to other people. What I find about your playing, and I feel very strongly myself, and we both have in common, is that we never play anything frightfully fast

just for effect. If its fast, its fast because the music demands it and never in any other circumstances; not because its clever and brilliant to play it faster. And you never do that, and I don't think I can [now] anyway! (*laughs)*

Its been a great support to me, because music has obviously been a tremendous thing in my life, but I haven't always had the support *from* people I have been with. In the latter part of my life (the last 27 years I have lived, since my first experience of a major cancer thing), I have actually achieved quite a lot musically and its been partly because I have been in contact with really very good musical people and also people who have appreciated me in a very lovely way, because I wasn't, and am still not really sure that its 'good'. I need the approbation of someone I trust and respect.

Andreas: I think we all need that.

Joanna: We probably do all need it, but its more obvious in your case (*laughing*) that you're all right. I feel I need it and can never be complacent – of course one shouldn't be anyway – never complacent about one's abilities.

Haydn & Expressions of Grief



Andreas: You mentioned Haydn earlier and I very often listen to your *F minor Variations* and I have also heard it in concert with you playing it. Do you have a special relationship; is there a personal story behind it?

Joanna: Yes, I think it is a wonderful work. I heard Ruth

Dyson playing it once and she gave a little talk and pointed out the fact that Haydn composed this work at a certain period of his life, and towards the end of the composition of this piece he heard that his dear friend whom he loved very much – Maria Anna von Gensinger – the wife of the doctor of Prince Esterházy and with whom he had a marvellous relationship (non sexual). She was in a different class from him. She died, and I think towards the end of this piece you suddenly get the grief and tearing out of hair in a terrible kind of feeling of loss, that comes out very strongly and I do identify with that.

When I recorded it I wasn't particularly aware of any emotions. I was more concerned with getting the music as I heard it and felt it. After David died, I played it again: it had been edited and was out on CD and I couldn't believe how deeply it expressed what I was feeling. And I thought to myself that Haydn knew just what it was like to look into the abyss of deep inconsolable grief. Really that piece at the end is more close to my feelings; that and the Janacek Sonata which I also have recorded. When I first heard my own recording of it – fished it out sometime a little bit after Dave died – I just wept and wept; it seemed to express what I felt.

Andreas: Well it still has the effect on many listeners.

The Dante Sonata

Andreas: I played the Dante Sonata a lot as a young student and for me it was – the Hell and Heaven – a very stormy and virtuosic piece. And then I heard your recording that opened a completely new world; obviously a work that

is close to your heart.

Joanna: Yes, my Grandmother Bessie, was a fantastic pianist and studied with Lechtitski in Vienna. She was born in the 1860s and obviously I didn't actually meet her except when I was a baby, but apparently I play very like her. She was probably much better than me because she didn't have to bring up her family without assistance; she could practice when she liked. She was apparently similar to me: not very good at sight reading, but a very intuitive pianist and very much admired by a lot of people including Lechtitski himself.

Of course in those days she wasn't allowed to play in public, She played the Liszt Sonata and several others: St. Francis walking on the waves and quite a lot of Liszt transcriptions of Schubert songs, and very difficult – lots of Beethoven. But one thing she found she couldn't play – or emotionally found she couldn't play – was the Dante Sonata. She would have liked to do it, but she never did. There are one of two bits in it that I thought I had never heard anyone play as I think it should be played, and I wanted to record it. I did learn it and I did record it and thought I had done it for Bessie, and if she is around somewhere, she will be pleased about it.

Andreas: Jo, thats wonderful.

Eleanor Bailie (*pianist and author*)



How we first met

Eleanor: We were trying to think how we first met. I was sitting behind you at this recital at Peter Katin's. I don't know how we got into conversation but we obviously took a liking to each other.

Joanna: Afterwards we got chatting and realised that we were both very very interested in the piano and that I'd been a pupil of Peter's for some time in the past and that you had met him because you had written a book about Chopin and he had written the forward for you.

Eleanor: Yes, but he and I were exact contemporaries at the Academy.

Joanna: You knew him beforehand.

Eleanor: Well, he didn't remember me, but I remembered him because he was *the Star* – you know – and I can see him now as he sat there... as a chap of sixteen or whatever...

and how he played the opening, downward cascade of octaves and things at the beginning of the Grieg Piano Concerto. He just shook them out of his wrists... you know... as if it was the easiest thing in the world.

Joanna: He said afterwards that he didn't have a proper technique, but he did...

Eleanore: Oh he jolly well did...

Joanna: ...he had a brilliant technique! He was able to play the Rachmaninov 3rd Piano Concerto when very few people could play it... except Moira Lypany.

Eleanor: Everybody plays it now...

Joanna: Everybody plays it now, because everybody has learnt from watching everyone else playing it.

Eleanor: And its like the four-minute mile... people get faster...

Joanna: ...and faster.

Eleanor: ...more efficient and everything else!

Joanna: Peter had a wonderful, wonderful Chopin touch, didn't he?

Eleanor: Wonderful!

Joanna: And I remember he played Schumann... the wonderful Schumann *Arabesque.* He played absolutely deliciously. It was that sort of thing he played, apart from all the fireworks that he could do.

Anyway we met and we had this thing in common, then we realised afterwards (I was a friend of Lizzy Hunt – you got to know Lizzy through me) that you and she had a great

friend in common...

Eleanor: A great great friend...

Joanna: Felix Koch

Eleanor: ...who has just died. There have been obituaries everywhere.

Joanna: After that we realised that we both loved music, and you were a marvellous piano teacher. It was nice to exchange ideas with you.

Eleanor: You asked me to dinner. Dave was there and Gwyneth Prior was there. I was so impressed because you had this wonderfully presented dinner with this exquisite quiche, which was not only delicious, but looked beautiful. Everything in that kitchen at Felden Street was so lovely, and we became friends.

Joanna: You were very very sweet to me when Dave died. I came to stay with you. Because I was in a state of wanting to do things, but not wanting to go home and be on my own; it was better that I did things and saw people. You said come and stay, and that was very lovely. I liked that and was very grateful.

Eleanor: Yes, you did come to stay with me.

Joanna: You suggested that we went to one or two concerts together. We discovered how much we liked Haydn. I'd just made this disc with Dave of Haydn Sonatas and you suggested that we go to the Eisenstadt Haydn Festival. Which we did, and had a lovely time going to Eszterhas and went to lots of wonderful performances.

Of course it was all laid out for us and we were bused around everywhere. It was very very nice, and nice to be with you. I met quite a lot of interesting people, and I wouldn't have gone on that trip if it hadn't been for you.

Eleanor: And I remember saying to Robert, the organiser of the trip, "*What nice people there are on this trip."* and him replying , "*Oh yes, it tends to be nice people who like Haydn".* I remember that so well.



"...only nice people": Jo centre, turned away talking to Jonette; Eleanor behind Jo.

But it is a very nice cosy Festival, isn't it? I mean it's not grandiose in any way, and we went to Haydn's house and to the concerts where he used to have his orchestra, and that wonderful mass in that church – I forget what it was called.

The church was exactly as it was in his day.

Joanna: We heard a mass – I think it was the Nelson Mass – it was written to be played in that church, so we heard a mass that had its first performance there. We found out that the names of the players in the orchestra were actually descendants from the original musicians who played in Haydn's time. Something wonderful about the atmosphere there.

Then we went to this lovely puppet opera that a friend of mine, Christopher Leith had devised that we saw at Eszterhas. There had been quite a fashion for having puppet operas.

Eleanor: Apparently so, yes...

Joanna: And they had a puppet opera house at Eszterhas, which unfortunately was now being used for garden tools.



Haydn: Five Sonatas & Capriccio
Joanna in the courtyard of Haydn's house

Anyway they put this on in the Palace, which was a sort of a Greek myth opera, with the gods and various puppets. It was fantastic; very interesting. We actually went to a rehearsal, didn't we. I remember one very amusing bit. Jonette was with us and when they were rehearsing their bows at the end of the performance (which puppet was going to stand where and whatever); while the people managing the puppets up above were all talking to each other, seemingly ignoring what was going on down there on stage among the puppets, who seemed to be having their own little chat with each other. It was

almost a though they were completely separate from 'the parents' above talking to each other and 'the children' playing below. Jonette said, "Look at that!" One puppet had tried to snatch a bit of that fen goose, which had been part of the last scene, from the other puppet. The other puppet slapped it on the wrist! And all this was happening without those 'upstairs' apparently being aware of what was going on!

Eleanor: You have such a fantastic memory. I had forgotten that, but now you recall it, I do indeed remember.

It was such a wonderful building wasn't it. And it was so extraordinary how this prince had built it on this very unfavourable marsh ground. Everyone hated it because it was so cut off. It was probably midge ridden because of the marshes. I think it was never used again much after he died.

Joanna: When the Russians came in the war and took over this part of Hungary (then Austria), they were housed here. It was tragic that they burnt all the old instruments and quite a lot of panelling as firewood.

Just after we moved to Shute in 2001, we went again for a week and Mike joined us. We went to another Mass and to a number of concerts with Haydn type orchestras with instruments with gut strings playing beautifully and it was very very lovely to hear Haydn's music in that setting.

We had such an interesting time and saw all sorts of wonderful things. And then, when coming back...

Eleanor: Oh *y*es*,* I remember we first heard the news on the bus...

Joanna: ...on the bus going to the airport, the bus driver

had a radio on. I was the only person on the bus who could speak German, and I could hear that there was some ghastly disaster. We knew that something awful had happened. When we got to the airport and onto our plane, the air hostesses were really worried, and we found out from them that one of the cabin crew on one of those planes had been murdered and they were all very concerned.

Eleanor: Yes...

Joanna: We were lucky to get back before all the airports closed down. We picked up the car at *Stora-Car* and there in the attendant's cabin we watched a TV with this terrible scene that we have all seen so many times. It was appalling. And then we went back to your house...

Eleanor: We belted back and put the TV on and sat there transfixed... we couldn't believe...

Joanna: We were staying the night because we going to drive down to Devon the next day... and it was just horrifying...

Eleanor: It was absolutely horrifying... You could have almost felt it was a disaster film because it was so unreal and terrible, and as everyone says, it's one of those events that you will always remember exactly when you heard it.

Venice & Budapest – the Orient Express

Joanna: And then we decided we were going to have a lovely holiday together on the Orient Express. We flew to Venice and we were met by a woman who organised all our cases and took us in a water taxi to our hotel. We had a

lovely five days in Venice before boarding the Orient Express for Budapest. And we went to see the Doges Palace...



Palazzo Conarini del Bovolo

Eleanor: We did indeed, and we queued in the sun. I remember that very well. Mike and I queued and I think you went and sat in the shade.

Joanna: Yes, I had only just finished a course of chemotherapy, so was feeling somewhat fragile.

Eleanor: I remember there was some tower or church which was completely out of the way and we dug that out somehow...

Joanna: ...yes, with the spiral staircase.

Eleanor: Yes

Joanna: Then we joined the Orient Express and we all dressed up for dinner



On the Rialto

Eleanor: I remember Mike – I think he'd got a marvellous new tie or something – parading at my house and saying,

"How do I look?" He looked terrific with his beard and this... I think the tie was blue to the best of my recollection. I had got a rather splendid dress in a charity shop *(laughter)* in Kensington, one of those rather posh ones.

Joanna: We've got a picture of you and us all sitting at the table. You were looking absolutely fantastic. I was looking pretty awful...



Eleanor, Jo and Mike dining on the Orient Express

Eleanor: ...I'm sure you weren't.

Joanna: We had these wonderful meals...

Eleanor: Yes, absolutely.

Joanna: We had these lovely meals and we had to dress

up, which was rather fun.

We went to Budapest...

Eleanor: We did, we did! And I was stunned by the Parliament buildings there. I had always thought the Houses of Parliament were pretty splendid, but they paled in front of that incredible building. Absolutely vaste...

Joanna: Do you remember there was that rather sinister man who was sort of following us round to make sure we weren't...



Eleanor: Yes, yes...

Joanna: Anyone would have thought that we were in a James Bond film.

Eleanor: (*laughing*) ...yes.

Joanna: We felt a bit naughty; we really wanted to do something to annoy them (*laughter*).

Eleanor: Then we went out to dinner one night; I remember so well because it was bucketing with rain – we wanted to go and hear a Hungarian band. We had dinner at this place...

Joanna: There was a very good cimbalom player there...

Eleanor: Fantastic!

Joanna: ...fantastic, and I thought, 'Wow!' I knew all about cimbaloms of course because of John [Leach]. The second night we went to a theatre where they were putting on some, so called, ethnic Hungarian dancing. It was all quite cleverly choreographed and very exciting with a gypsy band and a rather good cimbalom player. They did all these wonderful dances, which they all do, that were meant to be peasant dances but which have been slightly *upgraded*. But it was fun.

Eleanor: I wasn't then, and am still not at all up on the cimbalom, and you know so much about it. I have been to Budapest since and am absolutely stunned by the virtuosity of these people. But you really understand what it is all about.

Joanna: I know, [*that comes from*] living with John who of course played the cimbalom. At one time he was the only person this side of the Iron Curtain who could read music and play the cimbalom. There were a few people who had come from Hungary who played in cafes and restaurants. They improvised on Hungarian tunes, but did not know how to read music. So whenever it was *Hari Janos* or Stravinsky's *Renard,* or a cimbalom was needed in the orchestra, John was called in.

What I did discover, was very enlightening: I realised – and we did in our concerts bring out this aspect – how cimbalom music affected Liszt's piano writing, particularly the Hungarian piano music. When I hear people playing, who have never heard a cimbalom, they play in a completely different way from what I think Liszt really meant; because he wanted to imitate the cimbalom. He actually puts *'á la cimbalom'* sometimes on his Liszt Rhapsodies. And with things like the rapid tremolos, a cimbalom will always start off slower and then increase the pace. Some pianists just do a tremolo fast, right from the beginning - exactly the same, the whole way through. This isn't expressive, like its meant to be.

Things like the Romanian Dances too: because we had listened to a lot of Romanian folk music while out there. Later I remember going to Morley College in the master classes there, where people would sometimes play Bartok's Romanian Dances. People would do a big diminuendo and rallentando at the end of each fast piece; I was able to say - of course typical me, putting my hand up and chipping in, "*Look sorry this is not how its meant to be! In Romanian music they go belting up to the end absolutely fast, without any rallentando, then stop suddenly. That is the right way to do it".*

Eleanor: I think this is often the case in folk music with classically trained musicians and pianists; they dare not quite do that because they fear it is not quite pianistic and grammatical and all that stuff.

I remember having to adjudicate a competition in Malta and there was this girl and she played a Chopin polonaise;

she played it absolutely beautifully, but I had to say to her, "Look my dear this is a kind of processional dance". She played it like a nocturne with fantastic rubato, without the least comprehension. It was awful because her teacher was very upset by what I had said, but I mean...

Joanna: ...the teacher didn't really know...

Eleanor: ...obviously hadn't a clue

Joanna: ...didn't know what a polonaise was.

That is strange if its played slow, normally polonaises are played far too fast.

Eleanor: This girl wasn't capable of that.

Joanna: You and I went to a couple of dance classes run by people who were teaching piano teachers and musicians about Baroque and dancing minuets. We had to do it ourselves and we had to learn the sort of steps; it gave one a tremendous insight into the kind of tempi. And as for a polonaise, you certainly knew that they couldn't possibly have run about doing those steps; they were striding.

Eleanor: It was this thing of the one, two and a dip in the third beat, which people don't know about unless they have seen or done it.

Joanna: And therefore they don't play it like that. You have done lots of lovely talks and presentations: you did one here of various musical concepts. One of them was called *Chopin & The Dance.* Of course it isn't only Chopin and dance, but you pointed out that dance was so important in music right from the beginning...

Eleanor: ...yes, and Bach and everybody.

Joanna: *Chopin & The Dance* I remember went down very well and you played some examples to show what you meant in your talk. Of course a lot of people don't understand that – even if you're not actually going to dance the mazurka to a Chopin mazurka – you have got to know how a mazurka is danced to know what inspired him.

Eleanor: Very true! But those two courses we went to, were absolutely hilarious, we were all lumbering round the room trying to do minuets and gavottes and things - it must have been hilarious to watch.

Joanna: I loved it because I always loved dancing and it was a chance to actually dance a bit. No, I thought you and I did rather well. *(laughter)*

Eleanor: I dare say we did, but I mean...

Joanna: What amazed me was that there were lots of people who were quite well known musicians who were absolutely unable to move to the music at all!

Eleanor: Absolutely hopeless! Even though they were very competent musicians, they didn't really seem to see the physical connection.

Joanna: No. And of course their idea – some of the younger ones – of dancing, was this kind of bobbing up and down like a two year old does. It doesn't seem to me that its got any further than that. Whereas we were doing quadrilles, polonaises and we had to learn some of the simpler steps of a mazurka.

Eleanor: Yes, so true. But I think its a shame that the physical aspect of music is not emphasised more. This is one of the wonderful things you do when you're playing

Schubert dances, because you really make them dance-like; but most people don't, they make them far too refined.

Joanna: Well I know what its like to have to dance to Sylvester and his absolutely perfect rhythm; its so difficult to dance to. You need to have a certain type of rubato that helps you with your steps.

Eleanor: Yes.

Joanna: Andrew [Lancaster] told me that Artur Pizaro loved my Scarlatti and absolutely loved the disc, which gave me tremendous pleasure to hear. He said I had exactly the right Iberian feel and the dance feel. I felt very pleased about that because I love those pieces and I can't play them any other way; they just seem like that to me. I think it helps having been interested in dancing.

Eleanor: I'm sure it does.

Joanna: I was probably never very good at it, *but I knew what it felt like.*

Eleanor: And it is physical; it is the physical sense of the rhythm...

Joanna: ...*y*ou don't need to move around when you are playing the piano to express that, but you feel it inside you.

Eleanor: Absolutely.

Joanna: You understand that so well, but a lot of people don't.

Eleanor: No, no they don't.

Joanna: And I think that is probably one of the reasons why you are such a good teacher, because you introduce

this sort of element into your...

Eleanor: Well, I certainly did because I used to dance when I was giving lessons *(laughs)*

Joanna: I did too actually. I got up at Morley once and showed them how to do a polonaise and a mazurka.

Eleanor: Oh, well done you! They all sat there with their mouths open...

Joanna: I was thinking what a fool I was making of myself. *(laughter)* But I think it made quite an impression; Lizzy [Hunt] has never forgotten it any way.

Eleanor: But I do have to say – I want to say so much – I have always said that you are such a fantastic natural musician; that I have always felt, well... slightly in awe! No, I do, because you have this incredible instinct and natural rhythm and sense of rubato, texture, intense emotion – every single thing you have – and it seems so natural. And that is what is so marvellous.

***Joanna*:** Oh. thank you Eleanor... well, it means so much to me because I admire your sense of taste and your knowledge. A lot of people say, 'Oh isn't it lovely when you play,' or something; I'm very pleased if I please people, but they probably think that of lots of pianists, who I don't think actually play terribly well. And so one is always sort of wondering, whether one's one of those people or not.

Eleanor: And you encompass so many fields; I mean you play early music, you play Liszt and Chopin and you have a vast span.

Joanna: All I can say is that I am very glad if I have the

effect of giving anybody any pleasure at all with my playing, because I enjoy playing. It isn't a question of wanting to play *to* people; *I just enjoy playing the music.* If it does work out that people find there is more in it – something different, something a bit more special – then that is fantastic; that's really the whole *raison d'etre.*

***Eleanor*:** It is, this is the whole point: you give this impression that you are doing it because you love it. An awful lot of players don't. You know, you feel they are digging away at it, striving and everything, and you just feel as if you are right in it and you are actually enjoying what you are doing and I am sure this is what people pick up from your playing.

A conversation with Henrietta Thompson (*Joanna's niece*)



Daughters of the American Revolution

Henrietta: The American side of the family is interesting – there was a letter that I had for a while that was written by someone attesting to the fact that one of our ancestors had fought at the Battle of Beacon Hill and had been part of the Rebel forces in Boston during the *American War of Independence.* It struck me that if there were Bolines down in Virginia or further south; with Browns and Howes in Boston, that we must have had family fighting on opposite side during the *American Civil War.*

Jo: I think so. Aunt Belle put that information together because she wanted to be *'a Daughter of the American Revolution'*. I know in that book there are lots of little flags against all the names who actually fought in the *War of Independence.*

Henrietta: And they are in that book?

Joanna: They are in that book. So she was entitled to become *a Daughter of the American Revolution* and go around with a sash over her shoulder and lording it over all these people.

Henrietta: (*laughs*) For coffee mornings and fund raising.

Joanna: Both Annie [*our next-door neighbour, whose family went over in the 'Mayflower'*] and I could be 'Daughters of the American Revolution' – so could you if we so wished.

Henrietta: I'm not sure I would; it's only a social thing now isn't it?

Joanna: Frankly I can't bear the idea of being with a whole lot of snobby matrons...

Henrietta: (*laughing*) It's quite funny to think of it, because it is such a strong part of our family. Yet there are few of us that really know anything, or would be interested.

Joanna: I think Susan is.

Henrietta: Mum's interest came later, after I had been delving into it and talking about it.

Joanna: Yes she changed her mind.

Henrietta: Yet there is so much I don't know about them; or your father's family. There is so little I know; whereas I know so much about the other side, because Granny Rod always talked about her family and I picked up quite a lot from her. But it wasn't until I went to the States and went to the library in Boston and checked through some of the archives there, that I found more details about the family. The Howes are still very much in evidence in Boston. The

Parkman-Howes are direct descendants from the senior branch of the Howe family. He was at one point the President of the *First Bank of Boston* – quite important. The Howe family still have a website for descendants to contact.

Joanna: You know so much about the historical facts. I was so impressed when we all flew over with Andreas for his premier of his Schumann reconstruction at the Pierpoint Morgan Library – and you came over with us...

Henrietta: That was a wonderful trip.

Joanna: You took me on a walk to the Metropolitan Museum and showed me the Egyptian section – your special love – and were able to tell me so much about it. I was so impressed – well I knew you were very clever and intelligent. One of the reasons we have always got on so well together, is because we clicked and were interested in things like that. What was really lovely was that I was with someone who knew their way around and could lead us from one point of interest to another.

Henrietta: (*laughing*) ...we had to run back as we were running late. It was snowing and Andreas had to go for a practice. We listened to him playing this Schumann piece he had reconstructed...

Joanna: He had completed an unfinished work from fragments. The Pierpoint Morgan Library Museum had the original manuscript and they had lent him a copy to work from. It seemed appropriate to have the first World Premiér there.

Andreas and I were very privileged and were invited to go down to the air conditioned basement storage facility to see some of their collection of priceless original musical scores. Mike wasn't allowed down, because of the moisture control and only a maximum of two guests were allowed.

Henrietta: Yes, we had a lovely time; it was a wonderful trip.

A Christmas at Trewarne

Joanna: I remember you as a child, when you came to stay at Trewarne, you didn't like eggs (perhaps you had an intolerance inherited from my father). I remember you liking cottage pie and being absolutely fascinated by the Christmas tree – you were very small. We had this wonderful 15ft high tree in the dining room, covered in ornaments and real candles. You amused us so much because, in great wonderment, you pointed at the tree and said, "Oh look... bally", and then you said, "*two* ballies!" Julian and I were splitting our sides with laughter. My mother thought it was very funny too.

I saw you occasionally, but not often.

Henrietta: Yes, Dad got posted to Singapore.

Independence & Empathy

Joanna: We have always been very close. There have been times in your life when you needed a little bit of help or a shoulder to cry on.

Henrietta: Yes, I always felt you understood the fact that I was 'who I was' – independent. I was very lucky with both

my grandmothers in that respect; they both encouraged it. Of course it drove mum wild. I think she always wanted somebody she could dress up and was interested in girlie things. I wasn't; I was very contrary.

Joanna: My mother was very fond of you.

Henrietta: You were very accepting of the fact that I was independent and single minded.

***Joanna*:** as I was...

***Henrietta*:** ...because you were! Exactly! Also David got a lot of attention – which was fine, I don't have a problem with that; he was such a sweet child – I got more and more independent because of that. But I always knew that you accepted me for 'who I was'. OK, there were times when I was difficult and single minded, contrary or whatever. But granny and you and my other grandmother encouraged it; that I would be independent and able to take care of myself.

We all have times in our lives when we don't feel we are coping very well. I always felt I could be myself around you and my grandmothers. It took me a long time to come to terms with 'that's how I was'. I think it took Dad a long time to accept 'that was how I was'. I think he expected me to be a certain way, and I couldn't be like that. Now he understands that this is how I am. I'm rapidly moving towards grumpy old 'womandom'. Thats how I'm probably going to be: a rather grumpy, eccentric, single minded old bag! I don't care; I'd rather be that than someone who can't cope, having to have props all the time in their life.

Joanna: You have done extremely well. There are different ways of measuring success. There is the conventional route

of marriage and children where you have the support and protection of a partner, but are cocooned and not necessarily being tested in the real world. I personally think that is successful in its own way, but there are other ways of being successful: managing a difficult life, fighting for your own individual way of life; being interested in things that aren't just the 'run of the mill' interests – clothes and parties, the usual society stuff. I warm towards people who have a different attitude, who are searching and on – to me – a more interesting path; whether its to do with music, or art, or Egyptology, or whatever – it's stimulating.



Henrietta: It is, it is!

Joanna: What I have always found with you, is that you are never boring to be with; you are an intelligent person with interesting things to say. You're not sort of 'goody-goody' and are not nasty about people either.

Henrietta: [*laughing*] It depends who they are! No, but I think thats why I have always enjoyed your company. You're always interested in different things; in different experiences and different people. I think also that neither of us are interested in what we would think of as trivia. I find it very boring to go into an environment where people are likely to talk about trivia. People probably find you and me and probably Granny and dad, when he is in that kind of mood, quite intense people

to be around. I think the reason is that we have all been tested – I believe only strong people are tested; I don't believe weak people are tested because they would not be able to come through it. Strong people are tested so that their strength develops and stays with them.

Tough Women

Joanna: As I said to Jenny, with her problems with operations, if you are strong enough to come through it, it's like iron being hardened into steel; each time, it does make you stronger to be able to cope with other things.

Henriette: It does. It's tiring...

Joanna: It's not always what one wants to do. But I sometimes feel quite glad I have been through a lot of very difficult times, because it has made me appreciate the good times. Also you have the feeling that you understand more of what other people have to go through. How difficult it is to be jilted, widowed or ill.

Henrietta: A different kind of empathy isn't it.

Joanna: People who have never experienced that, find it very difficult to understand, because they haven't had the experience themselves – unless they are very imaginative and had a close relationship with someone who has.

Henrietta: I do remember when Patrick left, I told you before Dad. Mum knew because I had gone home for a few days. But you were the first person I saw when I came back. That was probably the first time that I had ever had my feet knocked completely out from under me. I had been

through other things, and dealt with them. I had lost my other grandmother, so it was quite a blow to have these two things happening at once. But your right it did make me a lot tougher. It was terrible and I wasn't very well; but now in some respects I feel I could almost deal with anything. One does not want to tempt fate...

Joanna: I felt glad that you could talk to me about it because you knew I had had Jerry deserting me and so on, and that I knew what it felt like,

Henrietta: At least I wasn't deserted with a child – I can't imagine what that must have been for you. But yes, you understood what it was like. He disappeared very quickly – we'd been married less than a year.

Joanna: I know...

Henrietta: It was all very odd.

Joanna: I understand how awful one can feel being treated like that. But in the end he was the weak one and you the strong one. It was awful with a child, but because I had Martin to look after...

Henrietta: ...you had to keep going.

Joanna: Looking back, I realise now that I was suffering from a really deep depression and just staring into space. It was only Martin, who was a very good child, that got me out of my dressing-gown and kept me going.Without him I would have sunk into an impossible state.

Henrietta: Abandoned. But I do feel very grateful for that actually. It has given me the tools to go on. I think that's the extraordinary thing about our family, that we have incredibly strong women.

Joanna: Mike was saying the other day that probably the women in my family – my mother, me and you were the ones who had this tough characteristic...

Henrietta: ...and Belle and Bessie and Betty... all of the women. Look at, Elizabeth Howe, she was the strong one. They picked on her because she had a very short sighted, partially blind husband. She was the one running the house; looking after the farm. She was the one doing everything.

Joanna: The one who was hanged as a witch at Salem? I didn't know that.

Henrietta: Yes.

Joanna: You see Julian, and my father have been strong in a completely different way; our strength is in managing the vicissitudes of life; whereas their strength was more on the physical endurance and determination of running a military campaign.

Henrietta: But a lot of it comes from being interested in things. I find our family history fascinating; I really do. I find any history fascinating.

Joanna: When you think of those women struggling to cope with those early days in America. It must have been so hard...

Henrietta: ...with nothing. They had to rely on the local native Americans for stuff, and fight them off at times.

Joanna: I think Betty thought that we had some native American blood in...

Henrietta: Yes, Dad said to me, that Betty had said there was something written that we had native American ancestry.

Joanna: Which might have been the case.

Henrietta: Well it's quite likely. If it was around that time, it would have been forest tribes, rather than prairie tribes. They would have been Huron or Mohican or something.



Bernard d'Ascoli & Joanna

discuss his Chopin CDs, interpretation and story-telling in music.

Bernard d'Ascoli - Chopin Noctures: "This ranks among the most remarkable Chopin Nocturne recordings - performances of a living breathing presence. A revelatory probing disc . . . Bernard d'Ascoli announces himself as a top-flight pianist." Bryce Morrison (*Gramophone*) .

GRAMOPHONE EDITOR'S CHOICE March 2006.

Bernard's Chopin CDs



Joanna: We did some wonderful Chopin discs; in fact the entire Nocturnes, the Schertzi and Impromptus. I hope we got the results that you wanted.

Bernard: I certainly got more than I expected. No, it was wonderful; it was always understood from within, because you just know the music more than anybody else - and Chopin in particular. It was something - we just didn't have to say - you understood what I preferred; why I preferred it and you understood why it was important to edit before the change of pedal or just after, and it was great.



Joanna: It was wonderful working with you Bernard.

Bernard: Well it was for me too. And yes, we managed three CDs altogether. But hearing your latest Chopin I understand why we got on so well with that particular repertoire. In fact you play a nocturne on your CD. . .

Joanna: The *D flat Nocturne.*

Bernard: . . . and I really found - what's wonderful is the way it flows so naturally. I had the real feeling that you were - this is something one says, but it was really true - as if you were improvising it; as if your were creating it in front of us.

Joanna: Oh Bernard, what a lovely thing to say.

Bernard: It's true; it's really what I felt. It didn't feel calculated; it was really spontaneous.

Joanna: The thing is that I found that I was getting back a bit more to the type of playing, perhaps more refined because I had been doing more technical work in between; getting back to how I actually felt the music on my own terms.

Bernard: Yes.

Joanna: Before perhaps being told this and that in master classes – and sometimes learning a lot from the master class – but *my* interpretation: I felt I was able to get back to my own feelings about it because I always say I don't *decide.* I do have to work jolly hard at my sort of vision of the piece.

Bernard: You must do because of the quality of the texture

Joanna: I do have to because I'm not... I'm very aware of the fact that I have to work jolly hard to get anywhere, but I do find that the music seems to come to me – and it may not be necessarily everybody's idea of it at all – but it comes to me and I can't do it any other way. I just interpret what seems to come to me. And so therefore, perhaps that's what makes it sound natural because I'm not actually *trying* to do it.

Bernard: Yes.

Joanna: I do feel very pleased indeed, that being at the moment rather vulnerable, being ill and perhaps not having much time left; it is the greatest comfort to me and encouragement to me to feel that someone with your fantastic critical ability and your own wonderful playing of Chopin actually likes my playing...

Bernard: I do.

Joanna: ...that is just a wonderful, wonderful thing.

Bernard: I do, I do; its not being polite or anything. It's absolutely true. I do because it feels exactly what you describe; that it couldn't be any other way. And it appears to us like that. I absolutely understand what you mean. I feel a bit the same about Chopin: I work hard at it, but I don't hesitate about which tempo to take; I take the tempo I feel it should be at. It's not the same for all composers. There are composers where I need to think hard and look three times: oh he put *andante*, he put *con moto*, so I should be careful. With Chopin, I hardly need to look at the tempo. When I check the tempo it's a confirmation of what I felt.

Joanna: Do you think that is because Chopin himself played in that way, very much on the spur of the moment perhaps...

Bernard: One hopes so but...

Joanna: ...when he was playing to his friends; I know he struggled to write it down, but his actual playing from what I gather from various writings, he had this natural touch, he had hands – you see you have tremendously wonderful hands – I'm lucky that I've got these hands that open up.

Bernard: Yes.

Joanna: And Chopin was described as having hands that looked small but opened up like as snake.

Bernard: Yesss.

Joanna: And I think that I'm lucky to have that ability to play some of these widely spaced things.

Bernard: Yeah, in a supple way. You're *A flat major Study* sounds wonderful; so effortless...

Joanna: Oh Bernard, thank you.

Bernard: ...and yet without holes in the texture; its pianistically achieved as well. I know you can benefit from editing and so on, we all do; but if you had edited it, every single note, it wouldn't sound that spontaneous!

Joanna: I did work jolly hard at it...

Bernard: You must have.

Joanna: ...there were many times when I swore and cursed because I had fallen down and made some awful mistake, but I love it. And you must hear the Debussy I have done,

which Mike loves. Its just three little pieces...

Bernard: *La Fille aux Cheveux de lin*

Joanna: Yes, and *Clair de lune* and the *First Arabesque*. They are all things that friends of mine - like my doctor - love. I didn't do it to impress people with my wonderful kind of *Fur d'Artifice*...

Bernard: Faurian Debussy...

Joanna: It's sort of...

Bernard: Gentle and subtle...

Joanna: …and I did play *Fur d'Artifice* at one point – not recently – I don't think I could do that now; I don't have the energy. But I loved making the disc; it was hard work and I was swearing like mad, wasn't I Mike? *(chuckles off)*.

Story-Telling in Music

Joanna: I just love the *F minor Ballade.* I know you play it very beautifully, because I heard the disc that you did a long time ago with somebody else. I just love that and I always feel its a ballade; it actually is a story, although one doesn't know what the story is...

Bernard: No, but there is a narration...

Joanna: Its got to sound as if you are actually telling this story and I do hear it often played without that kind of feeling; beautifully played, but it's music and not poetry.

Bernard: The sense of narration has been very often lost. I mean someone like Cortot had a wonderful way to tell the

story with the music. It is true that it's a quality that has got a little bit lost over the years. I think it is coming back and if you take some conductors like Harmoncourt for example, he brings back the story-telling with music. I have seen a rehearsal where he explains to the orchestra things that a school music master would explain, almost naive in a sense, which inspires the players and we have moved away from that purely academic intellectual cold fish approach. Its coming back and you can see in Harmoncourt how alive he makes his interpretations.

Joanna: There are so many people who can play practically everything; there are so many wonderful pianists who can rattle off the most difficult works. One listens sometimes and one thinks that its terribly, terribly clever and gawd how did he manage to play that so fast and listen to the clarity of their trills and everything, but it doesn't *say* anything to me.

Bernard: Yes.

Joanna: Of course I was brought up with old 78s of pupils of Liszt or people like Friedman - various big old pianists - so I suppose that I was very influenced - I don't want to play like them, in fact I haven't heard them for a long time.

Bernard: Yes, but you keep that in your subconscious.

Joanna: ...sort of that seemed to be Chopin and things to me. I wanted to play in a way that it meant to me as a child.

Bernard: The proximity with improvisation; after all most of his compositions were first of all improvised and then reconstituted. Georges Sand explains, doesn't she, that he

would improvise something wonderful, would try to write it; would tear his hair out and went mad for several days and finished writing more or less what he had done in the beginning.

Joanna: Sometimes it was a bit different in different editions and how he taught his pupils.

Bernard: Yes, it kept changing. Yes, because he was a perfectionist. Of course the improviser would not be a perfectionist; but he was a perfectionist as well and he wanted the music not to be distorted, but had originally been felt as a whole, as something organic. It's true that the best interpreters should try to find that natural flow and I honestly found this in your record.

Joanna: Oh Bernard, I am so grateful to you because it means such a lot coming from someone like you. Andreas has also been very nice about my playing and he actually was listening to a tape we had made when Isobel Buchanan came and we did the *Frau Leiben und laben* and some Fauré and Duparc songs; I was accompanying her. Andreas, he was interested in Isobel because he had met her and everything; so we played it to him and he was so complimentary and I felt, God I had to struggle really to do those quite difficult accompaniments. Anyway he spoke to Stephan [Loges] who said he would love to come down and do some Schubert Lieder. So you see, it's given me this.... and to get it from somebody like Andreas as well... Well I feel life's been worthwhile if I die tomorrow! You know what I mean (*laughing*).

Bernard: You are the most in-demand accompanist.

Joanna: Well, I can't read music very quickly and I take a long time to learn it. I'm not as good as a lot of people like Eugene Asti and all these wonderful people who can play anything. Alexander Schmalcz who did the piano on our disc of Stephan singing Brahms and Schumann *Dichterleibe*; he is wonderful and can play suddenly in a different key – just like that. Maybe you can do that.

Bernard: Yes, but somebody like you – I understand that those qualities of spontaneity in the delivery are so important in an accompanist and singers are sensitive to that.

Joanna: It is important actually to make the piano part, which after all with somebody like Schumann, Schubert, or Brahms – they were pianists – they weren't just going to have an um-pa-pa accompaniment. Even the simplest accompaniment is so beautiful, I don’t mind studying it without the voice; I can hear the voice in my head.

Anyway when we have done it we will send you a copy and pop the Debussy on as well.

Joanna Leach



Snow fell on Jo's last Christmas 2010



PART SEVEN
The Final Reckoning

Goodbye to the Marsden & Kudos Trial

Mike: After a major operation to remove a diseased lymph node in March 2010, and a bone marrow biopsy in July, Jo was taken off the *Kudos Olaparib* trial as *Leukaemia* was now showing signs of developing.

At our last meeting in November, we had reversed clinics seeing Bronwen Shaw *(Hematology)* first. We learned that the situation had deteriorated somewhat with a rise in the size of white blood cells. It was suggested that we probably had a year of life expectancy. Going through what actions could be taken for some local palliative treatment, Bronwen told us that she would liaise with Exeter and Yvonne. The plan was for Jo to have a boosting blood transfusion in January combined with a mild form of chemo, in the hope of retarding the manufacture of white cells and to assist the platelets. Jo expressed her wish not to undergo treatments which would destroy the quality of life we might have left.

Prof. Kay made a point of seeing us personally and explained that the scan showed signs of the cancer returning - some small points appearing on the lungs and a couple of lymph nodes where the previous growth had been, around the liver. But this could wait and be treated later if necessary. The leukaemia was likely to take precedence anyway. He made some glowing remarks about Jo, touching her on the knee as he did so. She clearly is a special patient to him.

Coming away, we realised that we were now now dealing with an issue that, whilst being real, had been a somewhat blurred future event, a year or so away. Now in our minds it

was bearing down on us as an alarmingly and imminent reality.

The previous month we had seen her, Bronwen had mentioned having a year of life expectancy. Thinking about booking a last holiday, I asked her what she thought the situation for Jo might be in June next year. She looked thoughtful, no doubt weighing her words and the impact they might have: *"I am sorry to say that I don't think Jo will be with us in June."* The death hammer blow in Mahler's 6th Symphony comes to mind. Now, as I write, the memory brings tears. Jo is such a very special person. How will the world manage without her? Seemingly undaunted Jo said, *"Well I have had so much to be thankful for. 26 marvellous years that I would not have had but for that early chemo."*

The Last Recording

Despite her illness Jo continued to practise and play. Her last recording, on her *Steinway,* was videoed in March 2011 one week before her painful collapse, (five weeks before her death) showing her still at the height of her artistry.

Mike: On Friday, March 4th 2011 the piano was tuned, ready for the session of *Schubert Lieder* with Stephan Loges, who, with Natasha and their two young sons, were due to arrive that evening. They were staying across the courtyard at No.8 which, fortuitously, happened to be free that weekend.

That day was also significant, because Jo had decided ***not*** to take up the offer of a blood transfusion – the option of

one, a week earlier than planned to cover her for the session if needed. She had decided instead to leave the appointment standing for the following week. Following the previous transfusion, which was slightly mismatched, Jo had complained of a hip pain. Had Jo had the transfusion I believe it would have triggered the manifestation of the crippling terminal stage of the Leukaemia a week earlier and blighted hopes of recording.



On Saturday afternoon, Jo felt up to making a start on the eight songs. The session went well. Jo took a break about half-way through. All eight songs were completed to everyone's satisfaction in something under three hours. Jo is heard at the end of the session saying, *"I never thought I could feel as ill as this."* Jo was exhausted from her efforts, yet thrilled that it had worked out so well. It meant a great deal to her to make this recording with Stephan, whom she admired greatly. We all relaxed that Saturday evening and

for the rest of the weekend, enjoying the good company and shared meals.

During the following week, Jo and I started the audio editing and managed to complete three and a half songs to her satisfaction. We were using a new editing system (the old *SoundMaestro* having become unworkable after twenty years, due to incompatible formatting with the now much larger discs). It was more difficult since we were using a later system (not ideal), that only I knew how to operate; naturally a situation that Jo found frustrating!

The last four weeks

Mike: I can begin to look back on it all now: that last four weeks of Jo's life, with all the stress, pain and confusion which illness and death can evoke. When it came, it struck suddenly; its action, fierce and remorseless to the end. Yet how lucky we were to have made so many videos of Jo in conversation with a number of her closest friends and some of the family!

I feel sure that had Jo had that transfusion earlier, she might not have been in a fit state to do the recording with Stephan. It was after the transfusion the following Friday, that on Saturday, Jo found herself unable to get out of bed and walk without intense pain. I am convinced that transfusion finally triggered the *Acute Myelogenous Leukaemia* that was to kill her within four weeks.

After a difficult and painful two weeks in hospital, involving misdiagnosis – one of those notorious weekend admissions – when queried with, the i.c. on the Leukaemia ward (the ward was full and no consultant available) – he

denied her condition was connected with her disease and she was dealt with at A&E [possible trapped nerve] and sent back for pain control and physio treatment to our local cottage hospital.

Although not under Yvonne's direct care, it was she, who after a few days, twigged that the incomprehensible, excruciatingly painful hip, must be connected and she was transferred back to the Leukaemia ward in Exeter. Very much understaffed and under pressure, the care was less than optimum and when the chemo they were trying failed to work, to our great relief Jo was transferred to the Exeter *Hospiscare* facility.



Jo enjoying the Harris Hawk, *Hospiscare* (painting: *Jenny Leach*)

The treatment could not have been more different. Jo had a lovely sunny room overlooking a beautiful garden and most

important, rather than just being stuffed with morphine, she received the carefully balanced pain control that she desperately needed, mediated with a relaxant.

Throughout the fortnight there was a steady stream of friends and, for the most part, Jo seemed to delight in their conversation and presence. I seemed at times to be in the role of director of a theatre production; often on the phone choreographing visits and entries 'on stage'; giving everyone an opportunity to spend time with Jo.

I could feel Jo's frustration in the last few days at not being able to express herself. I thought how awful she would be feeling, even if not visibly in actual pain, as her body became more alien to her in its process of deterioration. She said on several occasions that she wanted to end it, once very forcibly to the doctor. Jo endured much to be there for her family and friends for as long as possible. She was courageous to the end. At around 6am: I, dosing in the chair, was suddenly aware that her breathing had stopped...

'Death bowed over her, enfolded her in its arms and carried her away' (*Nachtstücke* – Schubert).

My darling Jo, bringing to me what she called

'The Gift of Grief'



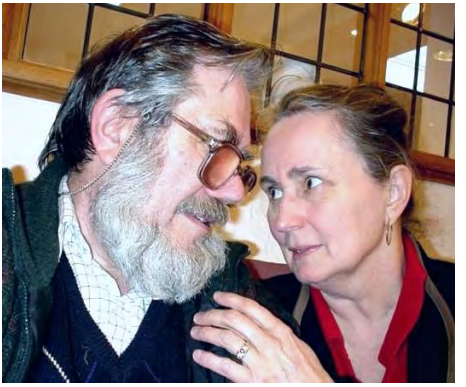
Oh, how appropriate is this Schubert song!

"Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan …"

from *Frauenliebe und Leben* - Schubert

'Now for the first time you have caused me grief.
You sleep the sleep of death,
O cruel merciless woman.'
The forsaken one, blindly stares ahead.
'I have loved and lived,
But now I live no more.
My world is empty.
Silently I withdraw into myself,
The veil falls,
There I embrace you and my lost happiness:
You, my world.'

Mike: "Looking back I recalled how, in 1995, when we had



sat discussing our newly discovered loving relationship and considering the likely impact on the lives of others and ourselves; Jo had warned, that, like the rose in the Franz Schubert song, *Heiden Rőslein,*

"If you pluck me, I will prick you with my thorns so that you will never forget me!"

I never will forget her, that is for sure. Jo will always be a loving part of the lives of her family and the many friends to whom she came to mean so much.

> To master a musical instrument requires a special dedication: Joanna had the dogged persistence to acquire and maintain technical ability; then to add that magic touch, that necessary flair of intuitive inspiration that breathes *life* into notes on a page. Joanna can speak so powerfully and directly to each one of us through her recordings.

Jo truly was

"A Most Remarkable Woman."

The Exeter Crematorium

Mike: I was deeply stressed in the run up to the funeral. I had decided to present Jo's playing interspersed with contributions from family and friends – including Jo in conversation with Bernard d'Ascoli. I was putting on a show and desperately wanted to 'do Jo proud'. I booked two cremation slots to give us enough time. I was very conscious of seeking to *get it all right,* ensuring that all the angles were covered to prevent it *going wrong*. At the last minute I decided to change one of the songs for *Nachtstuck* and to make *Un Sospiro – A Sigh* the closing item. That, I feel, was an inspiration from Jo, and such an appropriate choice.

Fortunately in my obsession for detail and certainty, I did not take the Funeral Director at his word when he told me that the sound system was *"very good"*. I decided to visit the venue the day before in order to check it out. I will forever be grateful that I was prompted to do so – perhaps

by Jo. It might *just* pass muster as a voice sound reinforcement system, but it was the most appalling reproduction of music that I have ever heard – all muffled, phasey and ghastly. They had 27-band equalisers in play, murderously configured – presumably out of desperation – trying to reduce feedback.

I cringe when I imagine how close we came to utter disaster. Having to subject friends and Jo's playing to such an awful sound system would have destroyed me. Jo would have haunted me for the rest of my life. I realised I would have to take in my own sound system, but it had to be very portable and easy to install; given the time constraints. Before leaving I found a convenient position not far from a mains socket but decided we would still need an extension cable.

To cut what was experienced as a very long story, short, I found my small Bose to be inadequate to the task and Annie my dear neighbour came to the rescue with one of the big Bose units – but I then discovered the next hurdle – it had to be electrically tested to meet regulations...

The Celebration of Jo's Life

Mike: The Chapel takes 120 people and I think we had about 80, many having travelled down from London.

Andreas's rendering of the opening to the second movement of Dvorak's piano concerto, was a particular favourite of Jo's and this was played as the coffin was shouldered up the aisle.

The programme ran through smoothly with the speakers taking their cues and going to the podium. The system reproduced well at realistic levels and the music was very enjoyable. Then, about 15 minutes before the end, I was suddenly aware of the Funeral Director at my side, thrusting a note into my hand reading 5 minutes left.

In my enthusiasm ‘to do Jo proud’, we had bought two slots. I was certain that we had time to complete the programme. Fortunately the programme was now on auto and I was able to go to the back of the Chapel and argue for more time. Clearly there had been a misunderstanding over the time actually allotted, or I had underestimated the length of the speakers' contributions. But I could not possibly stop the programme in the middle of *Un Sospiro*. I think they saw that there was no way we were going to budge until it had finished. So they relented and the next funeral was delayed. Well, they could hardly pull the plug on us and outrage eighty people.

Short of a Royal occasion, this was probably the longest funeral any of those attending have experienced. From all accounts everyone felt it was a great success and a novel way of presenting a funeral. Of the number attending, some 60 joined the family at the Buckerell Lodge Hotel for a tea and sandwich reception.

A Celebration in Music & Words
of the life of



photo: David Turner. 1980

Joanna Leach

(1st Oct 1937 - 8th April 2011)

Thursday, 21st April, 2011
St. Peter's Chapel, Exeter at 1.15pm

Order of Presentation

Dvorak: ***Piano Concerto in G*** - *Andreas Boyde*
the opening of the 2nd movement that Jo found so moving

Julian Thompson (Jo's brother) - The Family
Susan & Jenny - Jo's daughters

Janacek: ***'Good Night'*** from
'On an Overgrown Path'

Henrietta Thompson - readings for **Jenny**

Debussy: ***Clair de lune***

Eleanor Baillie

Schubert: ***Polonaise in B flat***
Duet by Joanna & Jenny Bach, 1989

Conversation with **Bernard D'Ascoli**

Chopin: ***Nocturne in D flat***

Stephen Sylvester - for **Andrew Lancaster**

John Field: ***Nocturne No.2 in C minor***
Stodart square piano, 1823

Dussek: ***Concertante No.1*** (1st movement - abridged)
Joanna - Stodart piano
Derek Bell (late of *The Chieftains*) - Erard harp

Scarlatti: ***Sonata No.2 in F minor***
Stodart square piano, 1823 – repeat omitted

Marianna - Jo's granddaughter (from Australia courtesy *Skype*)

Janacek: ***'In Tears'*** from *'On an Overgrown Path'*

Andreas Boyde

Faure: ***Clair de lune***

Joanna and **Isobel Buchanan -** Recital Oct 2004:
Your soul is a choice landscape, filled with elegant masked courtiers, playing on the lute and semi-mournful, dancing beneath their fantastical disguises. They all sing in the minor key, of supreme love and of a life most opportune. They don't seem to realise their good luck, and their song blends with the moonlight. O calm and lovely moonlight, sad and beautiful, that charms the trees, and floods the sobbing fountains. Great tall, slender jets of water flow through the gleaming marble!

Conversation with **Bernard D'Ascoli**

Schubert: ***Nachtstück***

from Jo's final recording session, 5th March 2011
Joanna and **Stephan Loges,** *baritone*
"Jo's opening - setting up the scene of the song - is unmatched." Andreas Boyde

Evening mists fall upon the hills and the old man takes his harp and sings to the sacred night. As he comes to the end of his life he is longing to fall asleep and be relieved of all his grief. His beautiful song is heard by nocturnal nature. The trees wish him a sweet slumber and the meadows promise sweet rest. The old man listens, the old man falls silent and death bows over him.

Liszt: ***Un Sospiro*** (1989)

Mike and Jo's family would like to thank those attending.
Refreshments will be available at the Buckerell Lodge Hotel, Topsham Road.
In view of the wonderful care Jo received, in her final days, we suggest that any donations are made on the internet to ***www.hospiscare.co.uk***, or sent to:
Hospiscare, Dryden Road, Exeter EX2 5JJ

The Eulogies

from Family and Friends

Julian Thompson

When we were visiting Jo in the hospice, she was listening to music and people started chatting; a long elegant finger came out and the dark eyes began to flash. I recognised the signs instantly. For the benefit of others, Susan said, “She doesn’t like being interrupted when she is listening to music.” So on that basis could you please turn off your mobile phones. Thank you.

Jo spent the first eight years of her life in India. She was born on the 1st October 1937 in Calcutta, where our father was an architect. We were fortunate to have loving parents. But we had to spend long periods away from them in the cool of the hills because of the suffocating heat of Calcutta; usually in the care of our English nanny.

Dajeeling then, was a wonderful place, not plagued by pollution as it is now. There were wonderful views of the mountains, including Kanchenjunga, the third largest mountain in the world. Jo would talk about this with me for the rest of her life. Bizarrely had it not been for the Second World War, we would have been sent back to England much earlier, as was the custom of the time. Luckily for us, because the war was on, our parents decided not to risk us on U-boat infested seas. So we were able to experience so many of the sights and sounds of India: like watching a tiger cross the road in the headlights of a car in Assam; like seeing elephants at night from a train in the moonlight.

One of my earliest memories of travelling with Jo (she must have been about three and I about six), was being invited to share the same bunk, head to toe. She pulled the

sheet up and I pulled the sheet up and she pulled the sheet up and I pulled the sheet up – and she won! All I got was a rocket from Nanny.

When Jo was about seven [1944], our parents took us trekking in Sikkim, which involved walking and riding on the mountain pass. She was totally fearless, riding a pony on those narrow paths, which I must say, I was not.

Another of my early memories of her dark brown eyes, almost black at times, flashing in defiance, when she thought she was being unfairly treated. At that stage of her life, she was always an ace at winning my parents round, a lesson that I took much longer to learn.

Eventually our parents settled in a beautiful Jacobean farmhouse in Cornwall and, as we were both at boarding school, we only met during the holidays. The weekly ‘exiat’ was not known in those days. We had a wonderful time, particularly in the summer, swimming and surfing in the north coast sea. After passing my driving test, we would sometimes sneak out of the house and go midnight swimming and I would "borrow" the car, roll it down the hill, hoping I had not been overheard by anybody. Then we would go down to the beach, taking a wind-up gramophone with us and dance and jive to classical jazz. I'm afraid my music was always 'a bit downmarket' compared with Jo's standard of music. Some of the people in this chapel today will remember those times.

It was this period in Jo’s life that our parents recognised the musical talent that she’d inherited from our Great

Grandmother, Bessie, who had studied music in Vienna, as a young woman. And one of my memories is of the sun shining through the big seventeenth century mullion windows at *Trewarne* and of Jo playing her Steinway. And of course music, as you all know, became her life-long passion.



From this time on I saw less and less of her, as my job took me away, often for years on end in various parts of the world, and she got on with her life. But whenever we met it was quite clear that the Jo I knew so well, hadn't changed. And it's an ill-wind that blows nobody good, because at the end of her life she was able to come up and stay with us in London, for her frequent visits to the Marsden. During that time we were able to re-cement the relationship that we had as children.

Jo was a lively courageous and fun child, and she retained those characteristics as a woman. It remained with her as the years advanced. She never shrank from standing up for what she thought was right, even though the consequences for her might be very tough. And goodness me, they sometimes were. The dark eyes were flashing away, almost to the end. She dealt with cancer with courage and grace; and she faced death in a way that I shall always remember. And I hope I do the same. I always was and always will remain, enormously proud of her.

Susan Parker ***(speaking with difficulty and deep emotion)***

Firstly thank you all for coming.

Jo was my mother; she was also my friend and confident; something I appreciate now, even more than before. Time is such a precious thing; we ought not to forget to cherish it. When it is gone, no matter how expected, it is still a surprise. I appreciate so much you all coming; so many friends. Thank you.

Henrietta Thompson

I'm so glad to have this opportunity, because Jo meant a great deal to me. As my aunt, she was always very supportive of me, throughout my life. I will miss her a great deal.

I am reading this on behalf of Jenny:

Jenny Leach - Henrietta, reading for Jenny

Jo once said to me, "If you can do life, you're a success; and if you do anything worth while on top of life, you're a major success!"

It is her life experience with all its complexity, that gives her playing such depth of feeling and makes it so personal and unique.

With all our similarities and differences; all our close times and arguments, I will greatly miss our contact but remember it with love and affection for the rest of my days.

Both these writings are for Jo, my mum.

THE SOUL *(Kahlil Gibran)*

And the God of Gods created the soul, fashioning it for beauty:

He gave unto it the gentleness of a breeze at dawn, the scent of flowers, the loveliness of moonlight.

He gave unto it also the cup of joy, and He said:

"You shall not drink of this cup save that you have forgotten the past and renounced the future."

He gave unto it also the cup of sorrow, saying:

"Drink that you may understand the meaning of joy."
Then God bestowed within the soul love that would depart with the first sigh of content,

And sweetness that would flee from the first word of arrogance.

He made a heavenly sign to guide it in the path of truth.

He placed in its depths an eye that would behold the unseen.

He created within it a fancy to flow like a river with phantoms and moving figures.

He clothed it in garments of longing woven by angels, from the rainbow.

Within it He placed also the darkness of bewilderment, which is the shadow of light.

And God took fire from the forge of anger,

Wind blowing from the desert of ignorance;

Sand He gathered from the seashore of self-fulness
And dust from beneath the feet of the ages;
Thus He fashioned man,

And unto man He gave blind strength that leaps into a flame in moments of mad passion, and lies down before desire.

God gave him life which is the shadow of death.
And the God of Gods smiled and wept, and He knew a love which hath no bound nor end;

Thus He united man and his soul.

SHE IS GONE *(David Harkins)*

You can shed tears that she is gone,
Or you can smile because she has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back;
Or you can open your eyes and see all that she has left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her;
Or you can be full of the love you shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday;
Or you could be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember only that she is gone;
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

You can cry, close your mind, be empty, turn your back;
Or you could do what she'd want:

Smile open your eyes, laugh and go on.

Andrew Lancaster (read by Stephen Silvester)

I first met Jo in the late 1980s when asked to quote on the restoration of an inherited Clementi piano. I told her that it was not going to be the piano it had been in its prime. However, Jo liked the result, but I knew it was never going to 'change her life'.

This was the beginning of one of the closest and most important friendships of my life; a friendship I am sure will never be equalled. I hadn't known Joanna very long, before I recognised what a truly remarkable and exceptional person she was. We had many interests in common: I was an avid reader and great Jane Austin fan; so was Jo. Cooking is a great interest of mine; also Jo's. In fact Jo's excellent cooking has given Dennis and I great pleasure over the years. Her steak and kidney pie is Dennis's absolute favourite.

Later that year, I invited Jo and Dave to an antiques fair in Guildford, where I was showing a particularly fine Regency Broadwood. Jo walked into the fair, followed by Dave, who was heavily weighted down with bags of music. Jo placed the music on the piano; sat herself on the stool and began to play. The effect was electrifying as the notes tripped from her fingers and the piano came to life. Visitors began to gather round forming a crowd in the isles and balcony above. She was playing the *Rondo alla Turca* from Mozart's Sonata K331. When Jo (unaware of the crowd) stopped playing, she was both startled and delighted with the sudden loud enthusiastic applause. Initially she was too embarrassed to carry on. Then when the crowd had

dispersed she began to play again. Another crowd began to form... The was to be the pattern followed at many subsequent antique fairs.

The effect of that *Broadwood* piano was profound. I think she felt instinctively that the square piano and her playing were a perfect match. Sadly the *Broadwood* was already sold, and I was charged with finding a piano as good for Joanna. Hearing her playing that piano also had a profound effect on me. It was a revelation to find how a square piano could sound when played by a pianist of Jo's calibre. From then on my yardstick for restorations became, "Would Joanna like playing on this piano?"

Jo and Dave looked very doubtful when I showed them the *Stodart* I had found for her, with its rusty strings all tangled inside. But it was the piano Jo came to prefer in her collection and on which she played and recorded the most. In fact, loved so much that her 'monika' on Skype was ***StodartJo.***

When she and Dave announced their intention of starting a record label, I was terribly enthusiastic and excited. I was very very keen that she should learn the Field Nocturnes. John Field would so often play them on square pianos. It was the first recording in a series of CDs that were received with great critical acclaim; a series of issues which I treasure.

After Dave's tragic death it was a joy to see the burgeoning relationship developing between Jo and Mike; to see Jo's renewed enthusiasm for life, as she involved herself once again in her many interests; before finally throwing herself

into the turmoil of selling the Fulham house and moving to the West Country. From my own purely selfish point of view, this was not the best option, as I was likely to see less of her. But for Jo and Mike the move was ideal and idyllic. The many friends they made together and steady stream of discs, is testament to that.

Shute rapidly became the favourite place to visit, with the unfailing warmth of Jo's and Mike's welcome, the music, the wide ranging conversations and occasionally, the steak and kidney pie.

Jo was a fascinating mercurial and highly talented person with such generosity of affection and love for her friends. She inspired love and friendship in so many people whose lives she touched and enriched. It has been a pleasure and a joy to have known her. And I feel privileged to be able to call her 'friend'.

Eleanor Bailie (Retallack)

Dear Jo! How can anyone talk about her and embrace her, as it were, in just a few minutes. For I think she was the fullest personality, with the most brimmingly full life, that I and perhaps many of us here, have ever met.

Over the last fortnight, I am sure we must have thought and reminisced within ourselves, about all that was so infinitely special about her.

In many ways bohemian in her life-style and her ideas, and passionate of course in the pursuit of her musical ideals; she was, on the other hand, mistress of all the house-wifely

arts. A superb cook, with everything so beautifully and loving arranged, and somehow with such a sense of nurturing.

Only a couple of months ago when I was staying with Jo and Mike, we had, on the face of it, what was a simple roast chicken lunch, but of course the chicken was deliciously flavoured and succulent, with perfectly cooked veges, tastefully placed on each plate, with a few sprigs of asparagus on top. Somehow that was so typical, with everything so lovingly done. Although at that time the effort of working at her beloved Aga was becoming increasingly taxing.

And she was such a home-maker, wasn't she? Witness the unique and warmly personable and welcome setting that she and Mike created at Shute, even down to the carefully chosen bathroom fittings and fetching bedlinen.

What a lust for life she had: how she relished the latest bawdy joke or tale and revelled, to put it delicately, in the pleasure of the senses of life. Yet again, on the other hand, she had such perfect manners, a kind of natural graciousness and consideration towards us all; particularly to those older than herself. And how this lust for life remained through the recurring bouts of her cruel illness. An undimmed courage; that joyful determination to savour every moment, to surround herself with family and friends to the very end. And wasn't it wonderful, the way she would fire up (Julian has already mentioned 'flashing eyes'). Those great eyes opened wide and flashed, with either enthusiasm or righteous indignation: indignation

about some injustice suffered by her family or friends, to whom she was so fiercely loyal. Or about some political or musical sore point; pressed in blatantly partisan manner.

There is a great story told by Lizzy Hunt, of a time at those classes at Morely College, which Jo attended for so many years. When they were studying the Chopin Mazurkas, and the eminent tutor was busy teaching one of the students, Jo jumped to her feet and shouted. *"No, no, Martino, that's not the way it's done at all!"* And then proceeded to dance around with appropriate leaps and stampings of her feet, to show this was a *dance*, not just a matter of 'good playing', which was one of her pet abominations. Can't you just imagine it. And what a force she was in those classes, Lizzy says; always ready to challenge all comers, including the tutor, poor thing! Lively and encouraging everyone to engage in fierce debate.

And what an incomparable gift of friendship: On a personal note, I feel so grateful to her, because when I was going through a very difficult time, some few years back, she was one of the few people to accept what had happened without question; to support, sympathise and understand, with no question of moralising, preaching and apportioning blame, or finding facile solutions. A friend indeed! And how inestimably we shall miss her.

I must just say it is so wonderful the way Mike has arranged all this and I feel she will be simply, simply loving it.

Andreas Boyde

"Music begins where words end." These words were written by Johann Wolfgang Von Geothe. I think Jo would like these words. She would have liked these words as a musician, as much as she felt connected to the German-Austrian cultural heritage. But now I can feel the limitations of that speech. I wish I would find the words to describe what Jo meant to me.



She was a unique character, a wonderful friend, and an extraordinary musician. I think of Jo as the most loyal friend I have ever had. She was there for me, particularly when I faced problems in life. And I believe that everyone who was close to Jo would have shared this experience. In fact Jo and Mike were like parents to me. Jo's temperament was irresistible, and we all know that she was quite a character. She had a boundless energy that gave her the courage to fight her illness. I am convinced that it was not medication, but her determination, that gave her so many more fulfilling years.

When I met her in 1993 it struck me immediately that Jo was not only a highly educated woman; she followed her intuition, which made her truly an exceptional person and musician. I learnt from her to listen to the inner voice, which actually plays an important part in music as well. Music was her passion and music brought us together.

A few days ago in the Hospice we listened to some of her

latest recordings, and all of a sudden she became very alert, looked at me and expressed her concerns about a missing note. This demonstrates her dedication and humble approach. Actually Jo's modesty was something I found quite startling; because she had a special gift. Most of us musicians struggle to find a unique voice; with Jo it came naturally.

In the last few months when I visited Shute House, I remember particularly having a bath in the morning and listening to Jo's practice. The music was always superb; only interrupted by her getting angry at some passage. Jo would shout swear-words, that I do not repeat. I do not dare repeat!

Music from her fingers turned into stories. This is how she touched and how she delighted audiences.

She was one of the closest friends I have ever had. She was always there for me. And I hope she will be there for me in the future. I hope she will be there for all of us. This is what she promised when we said goodbye.

Roland & Pat Whiteside



Jo we can picture you now in your most comfortable chair quietly and almost meditatively creating one of your petit point pictures, sitting by a cosy fire burning in the grate.

Jo, what a lovely and delightful friend together with your husband Mike whom we were fortunate to know when we lived as neighbours at Shute in the glorious countryside of East Devon.

Jo loved to have people around her – enjoying their company and entertaining them to dinner, spoiling them with a variety of delicacies that she prepared with love and fastidious care reflecting her high standards.

And so it was with Jo that we had many conversations on a wide range of interests when her natural colourful character was allowed full rein with obvious emotion and sensibility, occasionally spiced with her impish sense of humour and coupled with a giggle!

We were fortunate to see Jo playing the piano – it was so special and what we heard exquisitely subtle and astonishingly thrilling, so that for me I felt possessed by the spirit of the moment which seems to endure in one's body memory. The many times that we enjoyed with Jo and Mike that rise from memory of their own volition and which will sustain us through time.
with love

Patricia & Roland

Annie Huffman's Memorial Garden



Mike: It was a touching moment when our dear friend and neighbour, Annie (Farrelly-Smith) announced that she was going to create a garden in memory of Jo. We placed some of Jo's ashes in the garden and Annie had a iron plaque cast to be an enduring memorial.



Annie's Memorial Garden for Jo

PART EIGHT

The Joanna Leach Foundation
The First Memorial Concerts

The 2011-2012 Memorial Concerts

Mike: I had already had a meeting with Andreas in London with the idea of having a Memorial concert for Jo in one of the major London venues. It would involve Andreas, Stephan & Alex and Jenny and Emmanuel Bach. As an aspiration to reach Jo's London friends it was commendable, but when we got all the details through, the costs were so high that it did not seem viable as a fund raising project for Hospiscare or for the Marsden.

I had set up an account for *The Joanna Leach Memorial Fund* with Kevin at HSBC in Honiton and had deposited £2,000 to get things started.

My new friend Liz Tirard (a Honiton Town Councillor) with her local knowledge of people and venues made an invaluable contribution. Andreas came down and we visited St. Paul's in Honiton. Liz was already organising organ and other musical recitals there. We decided we would book St. Paul's and hire a particular *Steinway 'B'*, with which Andreas was familiar from Steinways. Liz's connections with the Honiton Tourist Information Centre and the generous terms arranged made them the obvious choice as a Box Office. By this time having failed to proceed with the London concert, our choice of charity for the year naturally fell on *Hospiscare* where Jo had received such quality treatment during her last two weeks of life.

The Honiton area has a group of very active *Hospicare* supporters and raises a lot of money for them through a whole range of events including suppers.



Andreas Boyde Recital, 3rd November 2011:

Andreas played his first recital in Honiton to stupendous acclaim:-

Brahms: *Scherzo, Op. 4 Intermezzo, Op. 117 No. 1*

Haydn: *Sonata in C major Hob. XVI:50*

Liszt: *Nuages gris – Unstern! – La lugubre gondola (I) – Orage Les Jeux d'Eau à la Villa d'Este*

Schumann: *Schubert Variations* (reconstructed from the manuscripts by Andreas Boyde)

Schumann*: Carnaval, Op. 9*



Andreas, St. Pauls Church, Honiton

Review Excerpt:

"It soon became evident that "Andreas possesses a phenomenal technique as each item in his programme required a high level of virtuosity. The music, however, never came secondary to his technique. From the formal concentration of the classical Haydn to the dark and towering romanticism of Liszt, all were played with a clear understanding of what the composer was saying in his music...

"The audience's appreciation of the evening was shown by a spontaneous standing ovation. The pianist's love for Joanna Leach was clearly shown in his interpretation of the

music in this memorial recital and possibly most in his encore, a simple but very moving arrangement of Brahms' Cradle Song." *Trevor Bolshaw.*

Stephan Loges & Alex Schmalcz Recital,

3rd March, 2012 in Honiton with a **Lieder recital:**



Lieder – Stephan Loges & Alexander Schmalcz in St.Pauls, Honiton

Review: "It has been said that the finest musical instrument is the human voice. Stephan went a long way towards proving this in a recital of lieder by Brahms and Schumann. However good the singer, he is reliant upon a sympathetic piano accompaniment. This was ably provided by Alexander Schmalcz. I dislike the term 'accompanied by' as it implies a subsidiary role for the pianist whereas what we heard here was a partnership of musicians of equal ability who together brought out the deep emotion in these songs.

"Once again another evening of first rate music in this series of concerts and we look forward eagerly to the next one on September 29th when the brilliant pianist Andreas Boyde returns with a programme of Ravel and Mussorgsky." *Trevor Bolshaw*

Mike: I had another 'bright idea'. Whilst reluctant to totally commit a significant portion of my funds irrevocably to a charitable venture, the idea that a large interest free loan could be invested to be the main source of funds (provided we could get tax-free status), suddenly came to me. I felt that I could afford to forego this sum for a while at least and perhaps leave a similar amount in my Will that would at a minimum provide some form of annual scholarship.

I began to think in somewhat grander terms and thought we should set up a proper *not-for-profit* company and apply for charitable status, through which to run things. For simplicity I wanted to register it as the name we had already adopted, but found that the use of the word '*Fund*' was not allowed; so thinking on my feet on the phone to the formation agents, I said what first popped into my head...

The Joanna Leach Foundation

On reflection perhaps it sounds rather grand, but was surprisingly more acceptable to the powers that be.

After getting to know Jo through her music and the video chats with friends, **Liz Tirard** was very supportive and enthusiastic about the project and was very much involved as a co-founder. She became Company Secretary, whilst I,



Liz Tirard

Andrew Lancaster and **Henrietta Lilley** (Jo's niece), were the first trustees followed by **Annie Farrelly Smith** and **Samantha Knights, QC** our neighbours.

We later invited Jo's illustrious composer friend, **George Fenton** and her eminent brother, **General Julian Thompson,** CB, OBE to be our Patrons. **Andreas Boyde** was not included as a trustee, since we wanted to use his exceptional talents and (although initially freely given), ultimately we wanted to be able to pay him professional fees without any conflict of interest arising.

Because of the level of funds involved, Liz was responsible, over several months, for negotiating our required registration as a full-blown charity with the *Charities Commission.*

We applied to the Inland Revenue for charitable status and this was eventually granted, enabling us to have not only a tax-free status but also be eligible for Gift-Aid tax refunds on donations.

Andreas Boyde Recital, 29th Sept, 2012, Honiton

Mussorgsky:
Pictures at an Exhibition

Ravel: **Miroirs**

Schubert:
Wanderer Fantasie



Andreas signing CDs in Honiton

Audience Comments:-

"Amazing musicianship, superb technique and every note profoundly felt".

"Absolutely breathtaking, a superlative player and such a nice person"

"Completely transported.... the Mussorgski hit me between the eyes"

"Every note lived, moved and breathed"

"Wonderful, and delightful programme notes"

"I was captivated, taken to another dimension"

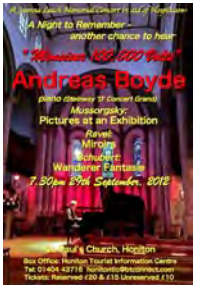
"Oblivious to his surroundings, every note, every rest, inflection and nuance had significance and meaning."

"A breathtaking piano too, I had forgotten just how much difference a superb instrument makes!"

Joanna Leach

“What a privilege to hear such a fantastic musician in our town"

"I am so glad I went. People who didn't, you missed an amazing display of energy and virtuosity. Next time, all of you need to clear your diaries and be there!



Review Excerpt:-

“The programme was made up of three of the most difficult pieces in the Piano Repertoire. This was no obstacle, however, as this was arguably the best recital Andreas has presented so far. The immensely energetic playing which the Programme required was tempered with a sensitivity of style which turned what could have been simply a demonstration of virtuosic technique into a musical performance of eloquence...

Yet again another splendid evening of piano playing by a virtuoso pianist of the first order...” *Trevor Bolshaw.*



Bernard d'Ascoli, Axminster Recital 3rd November 2012,

Audience comments:

"A superb evening, the quality of his playing was quite lovely."

"Exquisite, such sensitivity and so expressive!"

"A wonderful player. His technique and musicality serves the music; putting the composer first, it is Debussy played by Bernard d'Ascoli, not d'Ascoli plays Debussy!"

"A quite extraordinary, very moving evening and very very special."

"I found myself needing to close my eyes to listen with no distractions, sharing his world of darkness. Because of his lack of vision, sound and touch are his world."

Review excerpt:-

> "The Evening was marked by sensitive playing with a wonderful balance between left and right hands which brought out the inner voices of the music with great subtlety. His playing displayed wonderful tonal refinement with judicious use of rubato. The first half of the Programme, with the Debussy and Ravel, brought out a luminous tone quality in the playing...
>
> "The sizeable audience volubly expressed their enjoyment and appreciation at the end of a wonderful evening." *Trevor Bolshaw.*

The Artistes' Generosity

All these initial recitals were given with the generous support of the artistes who played without fee to honour their friend Jo.

Having got the Foundation on a financial footing it was deemed essential to pay an appropriate fee for future engagements.

Later in that month a properly financed stupendous professional orchestral concert was played in London specifically for the benefit of Jo's London friends:



The Tiffin Memorial Concert, Kingston-on-Thames 24th/25th November, 2012

The Tiffin Oratorio Choir, The Thames Youth Choir & Brandenburg Sinfonia, conductor **Simon Toyne.**

Andreas Boyde, piano; **Ilona Domnich,** sorprano; **Gareth John,** baritone

Mike: The *Tiffin School* concerts were very special for me, because I had promised Jo's many London based friends that we would have a London Concert in her memory. Although the initial explorative efforts for a concert in London had come to nothing, it was Liz who had the idea of contacting an old acquaintance whom she had not spoken to for years.

Liz's contacts seem endless! It seemed to me that she knew just about everyone! I began to see just how socially retiring Jo and I had been by comparison.

Liz: Who would have thought, thirty years ago, that two small boys singing as Choristers in *Exeter Cathedral Choir* could lead to something as awe-inspiring as the concerts we enjoyed at *Tiffin School?* (My eldest son, Peter, was a contemporary of Simon Toyne, Tiffin's Music Director and Assistant Head. This contact from thirty years ago formed

the initial basis for the *Foundation's* link with Tiffin.)

> ***The Tiffin Boys Oratorio Choir*** ranges from 8 9 up to 18 years of age, plus old boys. It is greatly respected and a great deal of focus is put on music through all ages. They have an annual concert and employ a professional orchestra to do major choral works. Amazingly, they have a guaranteed audience of 500.

Mike: Jo loved the Beethoven *Choral Fantasy* and we had heard Andreas playing it with the *Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra* over a decade ago. The choral part is about three minutes long, so it is never performed unless with another big choral work. Suddenly our London concert fell into place. Simon was keen to have our support in funding Andreas as the *Artiste in Residence* for a year and he was willing to make their annual concert a Memorial Concert for Jo. Not just one performance but two – on the Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Liz: The concerts were sponsored by the *Foundation* and we hired in a Steinway 'D' for the occasion. Andreas was in fantastic form as the soloist in Weber's *Konzertst Stūck* and Beethoven's *Choral Fantasie*, with the massed ranks of Tiffin's Oratorio Choir and members of the Brandenburg Sinfonia. The culmination of these two concerts was Brahms' *German Requiem*, a massive work performed superbly by 250 singers and the Sinfonia.

Mike and I were privileged to sit in for some of the pre-concert rehearsals on both days and were thrilled to observe the rapport between conductor, orchestra, soloist and the choir, in both rehearsal and performances. In fact, we came

away with the distinct impression that Andreas, the School's *Artiste in Residence* for this academic year, is much more than that.

Whenever he appeared at the piano, during rehearsals, a deafening cheer and loud applause came from the ranks of the singers, who have clearly adopted him as an integral part of the school's music making !

There were too many intensely emotional and uplifting moments during the concerts for me to single any one out. I wasn't familiar with the Weber, *Konzertst Stück* but after two rehearsals and two concerts, I am getting to know and love it. It was an excellent vehicle for Andreas to demonstrate his total focus, musicianship and wonderful technique which is breathtaking.

Much of the *Choral Fantasie* is familiar as the themes reappear in the 9th Symphony, but the interaction between all the musicians was wonderful to behold, and I am sure that even the youngest members of the choir, who will only have been part of it since September, will have life enhancing and lifetime memories to cherish.

Having come from a choral background, I was thrilled by the Requiem, a huge work to sing. *The Oratorio Choir* was absolutely in touch for the whole performance, very demanding in terms of vocal requirements and concentration. They had obviously been well-trained in 'keeping the eye on the conductor' and one was left appreciating a really professional performance, almost forgetting that the venue was the School Sports' Hall and that this was a school concert.

In fact, this was so for the whole weekend. What a privilege to have been present and to have had a small but practical involvement in the proceedings. And even more important, how wonderful to have been able to bring a knowledge and an awareness of Jo, all she stood for and



achieved, to around 900 concert goers and another 300 performers, and also how the Foundation seeks to commemorate her life. Certainly one of our main objectives has been fulfilled, that of enabling professional and amateur musicians to work together to the highest standards, and in so doing, to experience a life enhancing and collaborative fulfilment and satisfaction gained through music.

Mike: A particularly poignant moment for me came just after we had joined the rehearsal, towards the climax of the *Choral Fantasie*, when the whole choir rose as one and

sang en masse with the piano and orchestra – seemingly at *fffff* ... culminating in the words:–

> *Accept then, you beautiful souls,*
> *Joyously the gift of high art.*
> *When love and strength are united,*
> *God's grace is bestowed upon Man.*

The impact of this massive 'wall of sound' was incredible to experience. Andreas played from his heart for his dear friend, and the music carried us beyond this world toward heavenly realms of consciousness, where Jo's presence and inspiration will forever be found.



Andreas with Simon Toyne conducting - rehearsal

Simon Toyne wrote:-

> "...I'm so glad that you could be there and witness quite what an impact Andreas's playing has had upon so many people. That experience is one that will live in the memory of all who were present – and it's very rare to say that about an occasion which affects singers, orchestral musicians and audience alike!

It seems to me that this is exactly the kind of cause that the Foundation was set up to promote, whereby a leading professional can work with students and amateurs and can create a more superior and more meaningful artistic creation than if it were (merely) on a professional concert platform.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with Andreas over the next two terms – I've a feeling this might become more permanent."

The Joanna Leach Hall (Auditorium) at The Beehive, Honiton

Mike: Chatting about fund-raising for the Beehive, Liz and I came up with the idea that the Beehive could name rooms according to sponsors' wishes and we would like the main hall named after Joanna. Liz put the idea to the Beehive fund raisers. We offered to raise £10,000 in return for the main hall becoming *The Joanna Leach Hall.* It was agreed and we set about raising the money. Many of Jo's friends made generous contributions.



John Burgess, Cllr. Peter Halse, Mike Beville, Michael Teare, Cllr. David Foster (Mayor), Andreas Boyde, Liz Tirard
St. Pauls Memorial Recital 28 Sept 2012

Sidmouth Herald **(2 Oct 2012):** The auditorium of the proposed Beehive Community Centre is to be named the Joanna Leach Hall – after a foundation set up in memory of the late musician agreed to donate £10,000 to the Honiton

Town Council project.

News of the donation was announced at the latest Jo Leach Memorial Concert, staged in the parish church at the weekend.

At the same time, it was revealed work on the community centre will start in the new year.

Pianist Joanna Leach lived in Shute prior to her death, but Honiton has been the focus of events staged in her memory.

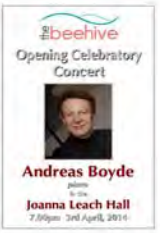
Accepting the donation offer, Councillor David Foster, the Mayor of Honiton, said: "The town council is delighted that the *Joanna Leach Foundation* has recognised the significance and importance of having modern, purpose-built facilities for the community of Honiton and has shown its commitment by the very generous donation of £10,000 which will be used towards the completion of the Beehive. We are all looking forward to seeing the building start in the new year and be ready for use towards the end of the year."

"The naming of the main hall as the *Joanna Leach Hall* is the start of our new phase of planning the soul of the complex, having spent so much time concentrating on the building development and we would like to encourage other organisations to contact us if they would also like to discuss sponsorship opportunities."

In a statement, the Friends of the Beehive said: "We are very pleased to announce that the *Joanna Leach Foundation* has agreed to make a £10,000 donation to the Beehive. In recognition of this donation, the main hall in the community complex will be named the *Joanna Leach*

Hall. We are very grateful to the trustees of the Jo Leach Foundation, not only for this very generous donation but also for what we are sure will be the start of a very close relationship."

Andreas Boyde
The Beehive Opening Celebration Recital



Programme

The Joanna Leach Hall

Dedication by ***Andreas Boyde***

Recital

Ludwig van Beethoven

Moonlight Sonata

Sonata quasi una Fantasia in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 2

1. Adagio sostenuto 2. Allegretto
3. Presto agitato

Johannes Brahms

Intermezzo

Op. 117 No. 1

Modest Mussorgski

Pictures at an Exhibition

1. Promenades 2. The Gnome 3. Promenade
4. The Old Castle 5. Promenade 6. Tuileries 7. Bydlo
8. Promenade 9. Ballet of Unhatched Chicks,
10. Samuel Goldenburg and Schmÿle 11. Promenade,
12. Limoges 13. Catacombs,
14. With the Dead in a Dead Language,
15. The Hut on Hen's Legs 16. The Bogatyr Gate

Following the recital there will be an opportunity to donate to the Beehive Fund and tour the Beehive facilities.

Refreshments

This was a free concert jointly supported by the *Friends of the Beehive,* providing refreshments and the *Joanna Leach Foundation* funding the Steinway hire and a fee for Andreas.

Since the opening of the Beehive the *Foundation* has sponsored three major orchestral concerts: two with Roger Hendy's *ISCA Ensemble* and Emmanuel Bach playing *Brahms Violin Concerto* and one concert with professional players of the *Brandenberg Sinfonia* when Andreas played *two* Beethoven piano concertos – *The Emperor* and repeating the *Choral Fantasie* with Judy Martin's *Axminster Chamber Choir* and professional soloists.



When Liz tragically died in January 2014 from a very virulent form of cancer, the family put together a donation for the Beehive. In such a fitting memorial to Liz – whose skills as Chair of Planning were renowned and saved Councillors from many a long tedious meeting – the Town Council Meeting Room in the Beehive is now called...

The Liz Tirard Function Room

Mike: I was again devastated to lose Liz, who had become my 3rd wife; someone who was herself, a truly remarkable woman. I wrote:

A Brief Encounter

Our meeting has been brief, yet our love feels timeless; grown out of previous deep and enduring relationships. It was always truly unconditional. Liz and I have only known each other for thirty months, yet remarkably it feels to have been a huge part of a life-time. We met after each had lost a wonderful partner and we had already learnt valuable lessons: we made no demands, nor had great expectations; only the desire to support each other in the moment and to lovingly contribute such talents as we could to the relationship.



The ISCA Ensemble playing in the Joanna Leach Auditorium with Emmanuel Bach, soloist and Roger Hendy, conducting.

Mike: Although deeply pained by the loss of another partner, I have no regrets that 'we seized the day', came alive once more, lived a full life and did so much together. Later this year (2014) we will be remembering Liz in two major orchestral concerts that she worked to set up for the Joanna Leach Foundation.

Michael Knights, FCA kindly volunteered to take over the role of Company Secretary.

Since Liz's death the *Foundation* needed a promotional personality with good connections. We were delighted to meet up with **Roger Hendy** who runs the ***ISCA Ensemble.*** Roger became *Music Advisor* to the *Foundation*. 'Ensemble' sounds like a small group of musicians but is actually a full-blown orchestra of 65 retired professional players and enthusiastic amateurs.

Roger started his first orchestra 50 years ago when at Exeter University and has been intimately connected to music making in the area ever since.

A key purpose of the *Foundation* is to encourage professionals to work with amateurs, as expressed so well in the two Tiffin concert performances. It seemed ideal for us to finance a professional soloist to play with the orchestra each year. In 2017, Andreas has given the *Joanna Leach Memorial Concert,* playing the Beethoven Piano Concerto, No.4 in a superb performance with the ISCA orchestra at their usual venue in Sidmouth Parish Church and also gave a masterclass for four young pianists from the area.

In 2018 we sponsored a big choral concert in Exeter Cathedral featuring Brahms *Requiem* and the young violinist Emmanuel Bach in a Mozart concerto. In 2019 we put on Haydn's *Creation*.

Although the Foundation ceased to be as a corporate entity in 2020, its spirit lives on and there will continue to be an

annual memorial concert given by the ***ISCA Ensemble*** in Joanna's memory and the new revised and extended website will be maintained, where visitors can hear Jo playing ‘the Squares’ and her unreleased Steinway recordings, with access to videos and conversations with her friends.



Over its eight year life the Foundation raised £72,000 that went into funding musical events, soloists, workshops and helping the launch of the Beehive.

PART NINE

Joanna's Life-Line

Oncology Treatment Time-Line

Discography

The Steinway Collection

Index of Square Piano Recordings

Joanna's Memorial Website

www.joannaleach.org.uk

The Life-Line of a Remarkable Woman:

1937: Joanna Mary Atherden Thompson was born in Calcutta, on the 1st October 1937, just prior to WW2. She remained in India throughout the war save for a short return as a baby with the family.

Her father was a WW1 Army Major, twice Mentioned in Dispatches. He was a significant architect supporting the WW2 effort in India.

Prior to the 1914 18 War, part of the American Brown side of Jo's family were living in Berlin and through her pianist grandmother, Bessie Krause and her twin sister, Belle G. Brown, had connections to some illustrious musical figures such as Theodor Leschetizky, Edvard Grieg, Benno Moiseiwitsch and Mme. Désirée Artôt de Padilla. Of course, protocol of the time would not have allowed Bessie to perform in public.

1945: Joanna comes 'home' to England aged 8, with her parents and brother Julian, on Christmas Eve.

1947: The Thompson family eventually settled in Cornwall and bought Trewarne Manor, its central stairway tower dating back to Norman times.

1947 1950: Educated at The Hall School 10 13;

1950 1953: Sydenham House School 14 16

Jo's flair for the piano was encouraged by her mother, Mary, who recognised her own mother's playing in Jo and was keen that she should eventually study in Vienna as her grandmother Bessie had done.

Studied piano with Henry Wynn Wernick. [Wernick had studied in Leipzig with Robert Teichmüller (1863 1939) before the 1914 18 War. Teichmüller was said to have been a student of Liszt.]

1955 1956: studied in Vienna with Josef Dichler.

1956: Life complicated by an early pregnancy with Martin. Social pressures push Joanna into marrying the feckless American student artist, 'Jerry' P. He abandons her with the baby, returning to the USA and commits bigamy.

1957 1963: studied in London with Peter Katin [1] who offers Joanna a year's free lessons.

Ad hoc lessons with Franz Osborne [2] and Maria Donska [3]

1961: Finally Divorced from Jerry.

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1 Letters: Alasdair Graham - 6 Aug 1957; Jo - 3 Feb 1960; 21 July 1961; Peter Katin - 20 Sep 1960, 30th Oct 1962.
2 Letter: Jo - 8 Oct 1954
3 Letter: 21 Jul 1961

1963: Second marriage to John Leach, cimbalom player and composer. She adopts Joanna Leach as her professional name.

1965: Death of baby James.

1966: Daughter Jenny born.

During her marriage to John Leach, Joanna gave recitals at the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, St. John's Smith Square and also at the Franz Liszt Academy Budapest both as soloist and chamber musician. These recitals were well received by critics: *"Her performance of the big A minor Rhapsody No.13 was absolutely magnificent and a high-light of the evening."*.[4]

John Leach and Robert Huffler (his Austrian friend) with a folk musician group, put on an annual series of concerts for the UK Hungarian Institute in which Jo always played a key role; playing Liszt to show how the folk music of the area and the cimbalom was a significant influence on his compositions.

Although Peter Katin had a high regard for her talent her prospects as a concert pianist were hampered by child rearing and tied to a worsening problematic domestic situation that severely undermined her confidence and limited her career opportunities.

---

4 Keith Fagin, discographer of the Liszt Society.

1972: Jo meets David Turner when giving a recital rejects his advances.

1973 4: Affair with Herbert Pürchenfellner.

1975: Starts relationship with David Turner and becomes great friends with Bob Speer.

1978: Inheriting money from her mother allows Joanna to finally separate from John Leach and obtain a divorce.

1983: Dave finally separates and comes to live with Joanna.

1985: Joanna diagnosed with with breast cancer. David is privately warned to expect the worst against all the odds, she survives.

1987: D&J Recording Ltd set up as recording facility for artistes, with Jo as producer and editor; with her partner, recording engineer David Turner.

Start of Debussy CD project for Martino Tirimo.

1988: Meets period piano restorer, Andrew Lancaster and partner, artist Dennis Roxby Bott. And is encouraged to play various square pianos at Antiques Fairs.

1989 Joanna and David meet Mike Beville, Company Director of *Audio & Design Recording*, at the APRS Exhibition and purchase *SoundMaestro,* the first digital hard disc audio editor with wave form display.

Joanna inherited a broken Clementi piano and has it restored out of curiosity.

1989 1990: Joanna becomes fascinated with period pianos as her instrument of expression. David encourages Joanna by recording her on different pianos. Andrew finds and restores the Stodart, that becomes her favourite piano.

They complete the *Complete Piano Works of Debussy* with Martin Tirimo

1991: Joanna marries David Turner. Athene Records is formed as a specialist label to record English square pianos of the period 1785 1835.

1991 1992: Joanna releases three square piano CDs to critical acclaim.

Peter Katin is enthused by Joanna's square piano recordings.

1992: Andrew Lancaster finds a better Clementi piano and restores it for Peter's recordings.

Peter Katin records *Clementi on Clementi*.

1993: *Clementi on Clementi* released

David Turner, after struggling with the final stages of heart disease during the recording, dies shortly after hearing the released CD.

The *Clementi on Clementi* CD is heralded as a great success *BBC Music* 'Record of the

Month' and a track is selected by the BPI and put on a UK music promotional CD for the 1995 MIDEM exhibition.

In the Autumn, Jo meets pianist Andreas Boyde.

Mike Beville takes over technical aspects as recording engineer for Athene Records.

1994: Mike records his first commercial CD Peter Katin *Schubert Impromptus*.

1995 D&J Recording Ltd closed. Mike Beville becomes Joanna's lover and business partner in Athene Records (as a trading partnership).

Athene Minerva formed for modern instruments and a WDR live Schumann recital broadcast by Andreas Boyde is the first release followed by recordings by Raymond Clarke, Derek Bell, and more by Andreas Boyde and Peter Katin under the *Outstanding Concert Performance Series*.

1997: Mike comes to live with Joanna.

1998: Start house hunting outside London.

1999: Joanna commissions John Pickard to write a piano concerto for Andreas Boyde.

2000: Joanna, Mike and Athene Records move to Shute House. The Pickard Concerto performed to great acclaim at the Kulturpalast, Dresden as part of

the Millennium celebrations.

2002: Joanna diagnosed with late Stage 3 ovarian cancer. Marries Mike Beville, who becomes her fourth husband.

2003: Athene Records business transferred to Stephen Sutton's Divine Art company.

2003 2010: Joanna continues to record square piano CDs including her *Scarlatti CD* and for Minerva, label with Bernard d'Ascoli three Chopin discs and a Lieder CD by Stephan Loges and Alexander Schmaltcz.

2011: Five weeks before her death, Joanna records 8 Schubert Lieder with Stephan Loges.

April 13th 2011 Joanna dies in Hospiscare, Exeter not of Ovarian cancer, but of *Acute Myelogenous Leukaemia*; probably brought on by all the chemo treatment she had had in her life.

Joanna's Oncology Treatment Time-line

Oncology History:

1985: Right Breast Cancer treated with radical mastectomy and likely CMFx4; adjuvant radiotherapy; adjuvant Tamoxifen for five years.

[Severe side-effects from chemo and radiotherapy. David was told to expect the worst but not to tell Joanna. Her life was saved and that cancer permanently defeated.]

2002 Diagnosis:

St**age 3c ovarian carcinoma, currently in remission**
BRCA2 mutation. Previous breast cancer in 1985.

Feb 2002: O**varian carcinoma:** surgery hysterectomy and omentectomy. Treated with TAH BSO (6 cycles Carboplatin & Taxols) with **16 months remission.**

[The whole cycle of treatment lasted almost 4 months (provided no delaying complications) with six infusions at 3-weekly intervals: 1st week feeling good with highs on Steroids; 2nd week, exhaustion and down; 3rd week white cells recovering ready for next infusion.]

Oct 2003: First relapse.
Oct 2003-May 2004: Six cycles of single agent (18 weeks). Carboplatin completed with **14 months remission.**

From June 2004: ***situation complicated by gall bladder problems until removal was possible in July 2007***

July 2005: Second relapse
July- Oct 2005: Six cycles of single agent Carboplatin completed with **12 months remission.**

Sept 2006: Third relapse
Oct-Dec 2006: Three cycles of Carboplatin with anaphylactic shock allergic reaction with **9 months remission.**

Transfer to Marsden

Sept 2007: Fourth relapse
Oct 2007-July 2010: **Olaparib/AZD2281** Phase I clinical trial with full remission. **3 years remission.**

March 2010: Major abdominal surgery to remove a diseased lymph node from liver.

July 2010: Bone Marrow Biopsy reveals trilineage myelodysplasia. 6% blasts consistent with a diagnosis of ***myelodysplasia***. **Trial treatment discontinued.**

Nov 2010: Currently free of ovarian cancer.
Attending Prof. Kaye's Gynaecology Clinic.

Transferred to Dr. Bronwen Shaw's Haematology clinic for monitoring the progress of the *Leukaemia*.

March 12th 2011 Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital with intense pain in hip. Mild chemo treatment for the ***Acute Myelogenous Leukaemia*** that was to kill her.

March 24th transferred to **Hospiscare**

Died 8th April 2011.

DISCOGRAPHY

To master a musical instrument requires a special dedication: Joanna had the dogged persistence to acquire and maintain technical ability; then to add that magic touch, that necessary flair of intuitive inspiration that breathes *life* into notes on a page. Joanna can speak so powerfully and directly to each one of us through her recordings.

Listen to her Steinway recordings on the Memorial website.

Joannaleach.org.uk

Joanna Leach
Square Piano Discography



John Field: Nocturnes 1-16

*"*I would urge readers to listen to Joanna Leach's... John Field Nocturnes, it might change their lives!"

Classical Music on the Web



Haydn: Three Sonatas & Variations in F minor

"Finely judged ... lovingly played ... simply magical"

Hi-Fi World



A Recital on Four Square pianos: *J. S. Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schubert & Soler*

"There is no more convincing fortepiano recital than this."

Penguin Guide



Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin

Richard Edgar Wilson, *tenor*

"The accompaniment is excellent, shaping and imitating the words of the singer."

Early Music Review

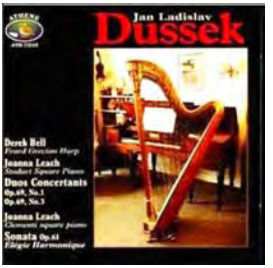
Dussek: **Duo Consertants**

with **Derek Bell**, *Erard Harp*
Joanna plays on the *Stodart 1823* and the *Clementi 1832* for

Sontata, Op. 61

"Meisterlicke"

Harpa-Piano Magazine



Scarlatti: **16 Sonatas**

" .,,opening up a new vision of the compositions. The only regrettable thing is that Joanna Leach has not recorded the other 539 sonatas."

Alexander Rapp



Haydn: **Capriccio & Five Sonatas**

"One cannot but enjoy this disc, for its multitude of colours and emotions, for the true joy that Joanna Leach brings to this great music."

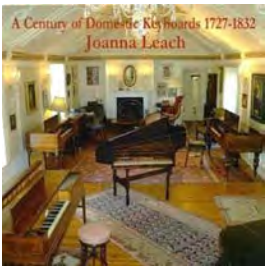
Classical Music on the Web



A Century of Domestic Keyboards

"Leach's performances are first-rate, stylish and alert, with impeccably pointed ornaments... "

International Record Review



The Athene Records Catalogue:

https://divineartrecords.com/label/athene/

Joanna Leach

Thomas Barton Spinet, 1727

a recording made for a music-lover who purchased the spinet

1. Daquin: ***Le Coucou***
2. Couperin: ***Les Baricades Myésterieuse***
   Couperin: ***Les Folies Française, ou les Dominos***
3. La Virginity – Transparent Domino
4. La Perdeur – Rose-coloured Domino
5. L'Ardeur – Flesh-coloured Domino
6. L'Espérance – Green Domino
7. La Fidélitié – Blue Domino
8. La Persevérance – Flax-coloured Domino
9. La Langeur – Violet Domino
10. La Coquetterie – Multi-coloured Domino
11. Les vieux Galants et les Trésorierés suranées – Purple-coloured Domino
12. La Coucous bénévoles – Yellow Domino
13. La Jalousie taciturne – Moorish-Grey Domino
14. La Frénésie ou le Désespour – Black Domino
15. Byrd: ***The Earle of Salisbury His Pavane***
16. Zipoli: ***Étude***
17. Handel: ***Fantasie in C***
18. C.E.P.Bach: ***Solfeggetto***

The Steinway Collection
recordings by Joanna Leach on her Steinway

DEBUSSY & CHOPIN recorded for Friends (Annie & Yvonne) 19 October 2010 at Shute

Debussy:

1. Arabesque No.1
2. Clair de lune
3. La Fille aux Cheveux de lin

Chopin:

4. Study in A flat, op.25, No.1
5. Study in F minor, op.25, No.2
6. Nocturne in D flat, op.27, No.2
7. Fantasy Impromptu, op.66
8. Prelude in C major, op.28, No.1
9. Prelude in G major, op.28, No.3
10. Prelude in F# minor, op.28, No.8 11. Prelude in C# minor, op.45
12. Balade in F minor, op.52

Joanna Leach, *piano*

Recordings from 1973-1989 Volume One

1-2 Bach: Prelude & Fugue, No.2 Book One in C minor (1989)
3-4 Bach: Prelude & Fugue, No.3 Book One in C# major
Bach: Partita No.1 in B ♭ (1989)
5. Praeludium
6. Allemande
7. Corrente
8. Sarabande
9. Menuets 1 and 2

10. Gigue
11. Liszt: “Un Sospiro”, Concert Study (1989)
12. Liszt: Consolation in D ♭ (1989)
13. Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody, No.11 (1973)
14. Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody, No.13 (1979)
15. Liszt: Dante Sonata (1989)

Joanna Leach, Piano Recital

Recorded at Rosslyn Hill Chapel

1. Field: Nocturne No.10 in E minor
2. Field: Nocturne No.12 in G minor
3. Chopin: Berceuse, op.57
4. Chopin: Nocturne in C# minor
5. Liszt: Consolation in D ♭
6. Clara Wieck: Notturno (from op.6)
7. Liszt: Un Sospiro
8. Dante Sonata

Piano Recital by Joanna Leach

Recorded at Rosslyn Hill Chapel

1. Liszt: Dante Sonata
2. Liszt: Un Sospiro
3. Field: Nocturne No.10 in E minor
4. Field: Nocturne No.12 in G minor
5. Chopin: Berceuse
6. Chopin: Nocturne
7. Liszt: Consolation
8. Weick: Notturno
9. Bach: Prelude from Partita No.1
10. Schubert: Polonais, op.75/2 (duet Jennifer Stern)

Janacek Piano Recital

Recorded at Rosslyn Hill Chapel (1989) 1-10.

On an Overgrown Path – Book 1

1. "Naše večery" ("Our Evenings")
2. "Lístek odvanutý" ("A Blown-Away Leaf")
3. "Pojďte s námi!" ("Come With Us!")
4. "Frýdecká panna Maria" ("The Madonna of Frydek")
5. "Štěbetaly jak laštovičky" ("They Chattered Like Swallows")
6. "Nelze domluvit!" ("Words Fail!")
7. "Dobrou noc!" ("Good Night!")
8. "Tak neskonale úzko" ("Unutterable Anguish")
9. "V pláči" ("In Tears")
10. "Sýček neodletěl!" ("The Barn Owl Has Not Flown Away!")

Piano Sonata (1.X. 1905)

11. Foreboding (*Předtucha*) – Con moto
12. Death (*Smrt*) – Adagio

Ludwig van Beethoven

Sonata in D minor, op.32/1 *"Tempest"* (1979)
recorded at Rosslyn Hill Chapel

1. Largo Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Allegretto

Other / duplicate Recordings

"Volume One" from 1973-1989

***recorded in Rosslyn Hill Chapel,**
other tracks recorded at 7 Felden Street.

1.* Liszt: Concert Study "Un Sospiro" (1989)
2.* Chopin: Berceuse op.57 (1989)

3.*	Chopin: Nocturne in C# min, op.post	(1989)
11.	Chopin: Fantasie Impromptu, op.66	(1976)
12.	Chopin: Nocturne B ♭ min, op.9	(1973)
13.	Chopin: Waltz in C# min, op.66	(1976)
14.	Chopin: Waltz in F min, op.70	,,
8-13.	Chopin: Preludes from op.28 [Nos.1,3,8,10,11 and 21]	(1977)
14.*	Clara Wieck: Notturno from op.6	,,
15.*	Liszt: Consolation in D ♭	(1989)
16.	Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No.11	(1973)
17.	Schumann: Romanze in F# major	,,
18.	Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No,13	(1979)

CDR1 from Betamax digital recording

Recorded at Rosslyn Hill Chapel in 1988

1. Chopin: Fantasie Impromptu, op.66
2-7. Bach: Partita No.1 in B ♭ Prelude, Allemande, Courant, Saraband, Minuets I and II, Gigue.

Recorded at 7 Felden Street in 1973

8. Chopin: Nocturne in C#
9. Schubert: Impromptu in B ♭
10. Liszt: Consolation
11. Liszt: Rhapsody, No.10

Recorded at 7 Felden Street in 1976

12. Bach: Prelude & Fugue in C# minor (1st note missing)
13. Bach Prelude & Fugue in C minor
14. Bach: Gigue from Partita B ♭ .
15. Schubert: Impromptu in A ♭
16. Schumann: Romanz

CDR2

Recorded at 7 Felden Street in 1976

1. Chopin: Nocturne No.1 B ♭ minor, op.1
2. Chopin: Fantasie Impromptu, op.66
3. Chopin: Berceuse, op.57
4. Chopin: Waltz in C# minor, op.64, No.2
5. Chopin: Waltz in F minor, op.70, No.2

Recorded at 7 Felden Street in 1977, 4th October.

6-11. Chopin: Preludes
[trk.6] **1**, [7] **3**, [8] **8**, [9] **11**,[10] **10**, [11] **24**.

12-17 Chopin: Preludes again recorded 5th October

Recorded at 7 Felden Street in 1977, February.
Beethoven Sonata, **op.31**, No.2

18. 1st movement: *Moderato cantabile multo expressivo*
19. 2nd Movement: *Allegro molto*
20, 3rd Movement: *Adagio ma non troppo-Allegro ma non troppo*
21. **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No.13**

SQUARE PIANO RECORDING INDEX
By Piano / Composer

Astor, c.1800

HAYDN: Sonata in E flat, Hob.XVI:49
ATHCD2 / 23002

Barton, Spinet, 1727

BYRD: Pavan - The Earle of Salisbury
23026

COUPERIN: *Les Barricades Misterieuses*
23026

COUPERIN: *Les Folies Françaises*
23026

HANDEL: Fantasia in C major, G.60
23026

Broadwood, 1789

FIELD: Nocturne No.3 in A flat
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.8 in A major
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.9 in E flat
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.16 in F major
ATHCD1

HAYDN: Sonata in C major, Hob.XVI:35
ATHCD2 / ATHCD3

Clementi, c.1832

CLEMENTI: Sonata in F sharp minor, Op.25 No.5
ATHCD4 / 24113 (Peter Katin)

CLEMENTI: Sonata in B flat Major, Op.24 No.2
ATHCD4 / 24113 (Peter Katin)

CLEMENTI: Sonata in G minor, Op.7 No.3
ATHCD4 / 24113 (Peter Katin)

CLEMENTI: Sonata in D major, Op.25 No.6
ATHCD4 / 24113 (Peter Katin)

CLEMENTI: Sonata in F minor, Op.13, No.6
ATHCD4 / 24113 (Peter Katin)

DUSSEK: Sonata in F sharp minor, Op.61
ATH CD10 / 23010

MENDELSSOHN: Venetian Gondola Song in A minor
23026

MENDELSSOHN: Venetian Gondola Song in F# minor
23026

MENDELSSOHN: Wie die Zeit lauft – Time Flies
23026

MENDELSSOHN: Duetto, op. 38 No.6
23026

MENDELSSOHN: Albumblatt in E minor. op.117
23026

SCHUBERT: Die schone Müllerin
ATHCD6 / 23006

SCHUBERT: Four Impromptus, D.899
ATHCD5 / 23005 (Peter Katin)

SCHUBERT: Four Impromptus, D.935
ATHCD5 / 23005 (Peter Katin)

SCHUBERT: Drie Klavierstücke, D.946
ATHCD7 / 23007 (Peter Katin)

SCHUBERT: Valse Nobles, D.969
ATHCD7 / 23007 (Peter Katin)

SCHUBERT: Moments Musiceaux, D.780
ATHCD7 / 23007 (Peter Katin)

Collard & Collard (Peter Katin's own instrument)

CHOPIN: Berceuse, op.57;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Mazurka in A flat major, op.24 No.3
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Mazurka in B flat minor, op.24 No.4
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Mazurka in C major, op.24 No.2
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Mazurka in F minor, op.68 No.4
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Mazurka in G minor, op.24 No.1
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Nocturne in C sharp minor;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Polonaise in A flat major, KK Iva, No.2;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Polonaise in B flat major, KK IVa, No.1;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Polonaise in G minor, KK IIa, No.1;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Rondo in C minor, op.1;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Sonata in C minor, op.4 (3rd mvmt);
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Variations Brilliantes, op.12;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Waltz in A flat major, op.64 No.3.
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Waltz in C sharp minor, op.64 No.2
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

CHOPIN: Waltz in D flat major, op.64 No.1;
ATHCD11 / 23011 (Peter Katin)

D'Almaine, c.1835

FIELD: Nocturne No.10 in E minor
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.11 in E flat
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.12 in G major
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.13 in D minor
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.14 in C major
ATHCD1

MENDELSSOHN: Lied ohne Worte, Op.19 No.1
ATHCD3 / 23003

SCHUBERT: Impromptu in A flat, D899 No.4
ATHCD3 / 23003

Longman & Broderip,1786

J.S.BACH: Partita No.1 in B flat
ATHCD3 / 23003

J.S.BACH: Prelude in E major, BWV933 No. 5
23026

J.S.BACH: Prelude in E minor, BWV933 No. 6
23026

HAYDN: Sonata in C minor, Hob.XVI:20
ATHCD2 / 23002

HANDEL: Sonata in G minor, G273
23026

HANDEL: Toccata in G minor, G 276
23026

HANDEL: Air and Variations, G56
23026

Stodart, c.1823

DUSSEK: Duo Concertant, Op.69 No.1
ATHCD10 (Derek Bell, *Erard harp*)

DUSSEK: Duo Concertant, Op.69 No.3
ATHCD10 (Derek Bell, *Erard harp*)

FIELD: Nocturne No.1 in E flat
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.2 in C minor
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.4 in A major
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.5 in B flat
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.6 in F major
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.7 in C major
ATHCD1

FIELD: Nocturne No.15 in C major
ATHCD1

HAYDN: Variations in F minor, Hob.XVII:6
ATHCD2 / 23002

HAYDN: Sonata in D major Hob.XVI-37
ATHCD22 / 23022

HAYDN: Sonata in C sharp minor, Hob.XVI-36
ATHCD22 / 23022

HAYDN: Sonata in F minor, Hob.XVI-23
ATHCD22 / 23022

HAYDN: Sonata in E minor, Hob.XVI-23
ATHCD22 / 23022

HAYDN: Sonata in D minor, Hob.XVI-51
ATHCD22 / 23022

HAYDN: Capricio in G major, Hob.XVII-1
ATHCD22 / 23022

MOZART: Adagio in B minor, K540
23026

MOZART: Fantasie in D minor, K.397
ATHCD3 / 23003

MOZART: Sonata in A, K.331 (Rondo alla Turka)
ATHCD3 / 23003

SCARLATTI: A minor, KK 54
23025

SCARLATTI: A major, KK 113
23025

SCARLATTI: A major, KK 208
23025

SCARLATTI: A major, KK 209
23025

SCARLATTI: B minor, KK 27
23025

SCARLATTI: C major, KK461
23025

SCARLATTI: D minor, KK 1
23025

SCARLATTI: D minor, KK 9
23025

SCARLATTI: D minor, KK 64
23025

SCARLATTI: D major, KK 491
23025

SCARLATTI: D major, KK 492
23025

SCARLATTI: E minor, KK 198
23025

SCARLATTI: E major, KK 380
23025

SCARLATTI: F sharp minor, KK 25
23025
SCARLATTI: F minor, KK 466
23025
SCARLATTI: F minor, KK 481
23025

SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Deutscher Tanz in G
23026
SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Ecossaise No.1
23026

SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Ländler, D.790 No.4
23026

SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Valse Sentimentale
23026

SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Wlazer, in B minor
23026

SCHUBERT: 6 dances – Wlazer, in B major
23026

SCHUBERT: Ungarische Melodie, D817
ATHCD22 / 23022

SOLER: Sonata No. 84 in D major
23026

SOLER: Sonata No.90 in F sharp major
ATHCD3 / 23003

SOLER: Sonata No.90 in F sharp major
ATHCD3 / 23003