

Winter Night at Liffey

*a collection of solo piano pieces by Steve Crump
inspired by the poetry of Bob Brown*



Foreword by the composer:

These piano pieces offer musical sketches inspired by four poems written by Dr Bob Brown, as published in “In Balfour Street” (NewPrint, 2010). Bob’s poems are vivid, rugged, gentle, funny, brave accounts of various events in his life in the 1970s. The four musical sketches were improvised by conjuring up what the poems meant to me, focusing on key events in each: the peacefulness of the snow at the end of a night time storm at Liffey under the Western Tiers in Tasmania; the surprise wave of happiness during a dark and dim descent down an escalator at Sydney’s Wynyard railway station; the mysterious and wonder-filled life of Katie Kingston, an outsider in country NSW; and, a Gerard Manley Hopkins type of inscape where three old semi-detached houses on Balfour Street in Launceston on a wet cold night trigger contemplation about existence. Bob updated the text in some of the poems to fit my playing in what was a joyous two hours together at R2R Studio in the hills south of Hobart. Thanks, Bob.

Stephen Crump

Hobart - July 2018

www.stevecrumpmusic.com

Cover photo by Paul Thomas

Wynyard Station escalator and sculpture, and mountain-top snow: Kitty te Riele

“In Balfour Street” sketch: Bob Brown

Katie Kingston artwork: Mic Rees

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Winter Night at Liffey

Bob Brown

Steve Crump

♩=78

mp

Gm C F/C

Ped.

5

Dm Gm Bb F

9

mf

Bb Am Gm F

13

Bb F/A Gm rit. //

17

A tempo

p

Dm Am Gm F C Dm

Ped.

22 Am C F Am Bb

mf

26 F Am/C rit. Dm C Slightly slower Dm

f *mp*

rit. *Slightly slower*

30 Am accel. A tempo

mp

accel. *A tempo*

33 Gm C rit.

mp

rit.

red.

Winter Night at Liffey

*When sleep shuts off
the winter gale
with its freezing rain
and hail that clatters
on the iron
then silence wakes me
to a still
a softest quiet.
I smile to myself
knowing through the night
it's snowing.*

*In the softest quiet
it's snowing.*

It's snowing.

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Katie Kingston

Bob Brown

Steve Crump

♩. = 70

Em

pp

mf

simile

Red.

6 Am Dm

mp

11 G Em Am

16 Dm C

2 7

21 Em F

mp

Red.

24 Am

mf

Red.

27 G Em

mf *mp*

Ped. Ped.

32 Am Dm F

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

37 G Em F

mf

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

42 G C F

f

Ped.

47 G C F

Ped. Ped. Ped.

51 G F G C

f

Ped. Ped. Ped.

Katie Kingston

*Katie Kingston wheels her barrow
through other people's nights
among the moonshot shadows
where she needs no Earthly rights
muttering at the dogs
and thieving things
to lose in her mystery.*

*But where is Katie
when no one else is thinking
about her?*

*Where is she
when no one else
is thinking about her?*

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In Balfour Street

Bob Brown

Steve Crump

$\text{♩} = 90$ $E\flat/B\flat$ $B\flat$ Cm $A\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat/B\flat$

7 $B\flat$ $A\flat/E\flat$ $B\flat/D$ $E\flat/B\flat$ Gm

12 Cm $A\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat/B\flat$ Gm Fm *rit.*

17 $A\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat/B\flat$ $B\flat$ Cm $A\flat$ $B\flat$ *A tempo*

22 $E\flat/B\flat$ Gm $A\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat$ Gm *rit.* *A tempo*

28 *rit.* Fm $B\flat$ $E\flat$ $A\flat$ $B\flat$ $E\flat$



Oh! carry myself for them.

In Balfour Street

*In Balfour Street
three houses sit and stare at tar
vainly seeking blueprints
in their shadow.*

*Sometimes a sunlit fog
brings hints of new dimensions
to their stoned imaginations
often times a passing rain
leaves pools which flash for them
with brief exquisite insights.*

But in truth the three know nothing.

*Locked beneath the realms
of life and knowledge
they cannot even wonder
at the omniscient ones
who built them
who live within them
and who will destroy them.*

*Perhaps such mute insensibility
is their luck
though I would wish them anguish
and free them from it
if I could.*

I envy myself for them.

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Wynyard Girl

Bob Brown

Steve Crump

♩=80

E A(add9)/E E B

mp

5 E A(add9)/E E B A

mp

9 E ♩=116 *Animato* A(add9)/E E B

mp

13 E A(add9)/E E B

mp

17 E A E B

mf

21 E A E B

25 E A E B

f joyfully

29 E A E B

E A E B

33 E A E B E

E A E B E

38 A E B E A

rit. - - - - - Tempo primo

mp legato

rit. - - - - - Tempo primo

Red.

43 E B E A(add9)/E

morendo

Red.

47 E B B/D# E(sus4) E

mf f

Wynyard Girl

*The escalator took my foot
from the cold of Autumn Sunday
and led to an indeterminable disappearance
in the railway gloom -
which exploded
as her foot was taken up
and Spring
came dancing to me
in flashes
of red and green and smile
sunning the world
and turning my head
until the receding daylight
claimed her as its own.*

*Came dancing to me
in flashes of red and green
and smiles,
sunning the world.*

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Winter Night at Liffey

The poems that inspired this music are from “In Balfour Street”, a collection of poetry I wrote between 1970 and 1976, published by NewPrint Press, 2010. It was the height of the Cold War and I was in my Twenties. “Winter Night..” is at Liffey, under the Great Western Tiers in Northern Tasmania.

The original shingles of my 1904 farmhouse had been replaced with corrugated iron. It was unusual for snow to settle long at the house but, often, I'd awake in the morning to find the mountain behind ladden with white. In Launceston's hilly Balfour Street there's a huddle of conjoint single story houses built in the 1800s. I was a young doctor in the 1970s and walking past the houses one wet night set me ruminating on the frustrating concept of a super-being. “Katie Kingston” is a story my mother told me about from when she was a girl at the family farm on the Great Dividing Range north of Sydney, New South Wales. Katie had a humpy on the Glenn Innes common and she was a lot talked about - seen as very strange in those days. But, one night, my mother (just a few years old) heard Katie passing with all the farm dogs barking. Many years later, my mother told me about that night. At Wynyard Station, in Sydney not Tasmania, there's an underground railway station with long wooden escalators at the York Street entrance going down to where the trains come and go. It was Sunday morning - I was going down as she was coming up.

Bob Brown, July 2018

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