

### Three Japanese Miniatures for Solo Piano

Essentially bravura character pieces for piano, Three Japanese Miniatures are fragments and paraphrases on material from a work for chamber orchestra. This piece, 'Detail from the Record', is itself a distillation of musical episodes taken from a larger work in progress, 'The Record of Ancient Matters' (Ko - Ji - Ki), a puppet ballet based on Japanese folk tales. Each miniature is titled as followed:

#### i) Temple Music

An elaboration of transformation music which heralds a wanderer's finding of a ruined temple at night. Miraculously the temple regains its splendour and is found to be populated by various deities as well as many wondrous things.

#### ii) The Cradle rocks...

An episode from the tale 'The Cold Lady'; a winter sprite wishes to revenge a broken promise by taking the lives of a man and his children. However, she decides to choose her own demise rather than take innocent life.

#### iii) Little Bumbuku

A humorous extract from a tale about an earth daemon who takes the form of a badger and lives in a tea-kettle! He puts on a grand public show to earn money for his kindly but poor master. After a period of great companionship Bumbuku's time in his present form must end and gradually the once animate tea-kettle falls still.

Three Japanese Miniatures is dedicated with affection to Oliver Knussen on his 50th birthday.