

Missing Pieces

In memory of my father

(i)

They could be described
as musical pieces, those
things that you crafted
across the years:

the rose garden that
waltzed your weekends,
captivating the neighbours
and colouring the streetscape

the music room that sang
out in disparate voices
from Folk, Pop, Rock and
Jazz to Classical tunes

and your piano
that once rolled from
the cheek of Fats Waller
to the roar of Beethoven

from Debussy's melodies
to Cat Steven's acoustic dance
now lie silent, in anticipation
just waiting on your cue.

(ii)

Digging, you were always digging
and pushing wheelbarrows
of fresh earth towards
another destination

not far, maybe from back
to front yard, but
taking with you
a history of becoming

which re-invented itself
with every shovelful,
mixing soil with sacks
of mystery ingredients

like a magician, transplanting
your love of roses into
every-one's vision - up the road,
they all knew you'd been digging.

(iii)

And after dinner the ivory keys
lay patiently waiting for your
choice of favourite melodies - mainly
classical and old movie love themes

but I can't forget our 'duos' on
Cat Stevens and other pop/rock
songs – your playing capturing the
essence with me strumming guitar.

It's over a year since you played
your last Debussy tune and your
final death certificate arrived
as a LP record just today:

'Death by living a long life'
it seemed to say - at 92, more than
50 as the community and family
Doctor, playing other sides of you.