Prospect and retrospect: a composer analyses thirteen of his own compositions

John Wayne Dixon

University of Wollongong

Recommended Citation

Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong.
"PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT"

(A composer analyses thirteen of his own compositions).

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of:

MASTER OF ARTS (HONOURS)

from the

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by


School of Creative Arts, 1987
ABSTRACT:

The material I submit to the University of Wollongong in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Honours) is presented in several volumes. The first thirteen, larger volumes, spiral-bound and printed in A3 size, consist of copies of the manuscripts of thirteen original compositions, among which are two symphonies for large orchestra, a large-scale work for eight-part vocal ensemble with instrumental ensemble, two string quartets, a work for string orchestra and percussion, a short string trio, an overture for orchestra, a piece for organ, an inter-arts work, a set of three songs and two chamber pieces involving woodwind ensembles.

Finally, there is the A4 "thesis" which follows and which is entitled "Prospect and Retrospect", in which I comment upon aspects of both the structure and the spirit of the thirteen works. I bold-text the word "thesis" because the document is indeed not a thesis in the usual sense of hypothesis plus extensive analysis. Such an approach would have required that I devote the whole document to the discussion of any single one of the thirteen works, or else have thirteen separate theses! Rather, I comment (and thus the use of the title "Commentary" rather than the usual "Chapter" for each section of the main body of the document) in my own vernacular on my own musical creations, unapologetically eschewing detailed corporeal in favour of spiritual description where I, as the composer, have found this to be seemly.

In this thesis document musical examples are placed at the end of each commentary, and are numerated by opus number; thus the musical examples at the end of Commentary 1, for instance, begin
"Example 6a", "6" being the opus number of the first of the thirteen works. This format of placing musical examples at the end rather than within each commentary has been adopted in the interests of avoiding awkward spacing problems.
INDEX:

"Prospect and Retrospect"............................................................. Page 1
Commentary 1 "A Foursome of Twosomes".................................Page 8
Commentary 2 "Symphony No.1"..................................................Page 16
Commentary 3 "String Quartet No.1".........................................Page 38
Commentary 4 "Champagne Flutes".............................................Page 57
Commentary 5 "Overture For a Holiday"....................................Page 68
Commentary 6 "String Quartet No.2".........................................Page 81
Commentary 7 "Niblets"..............................................................Page 108
Commentary 8 "Escarpment Music".............................................Page 120
Commentary 9 "Outlaw!"..............................................................Page 137
Commentary 10 "Ocean Cave"....................................................Page 142
Commentary 11 "Three Songs to Words by

Emily Dickinson.................................................................Page 151
Commentary 12 "Symphony No.2".............................................Page 160
Commentary 13 "Tiled Evening"...............................................Page 182
Appendix A Summative List of Compositions.........................Page 192
Appendix B Summative Comments on Performances..............Page 194
Appendix C Bibliography..........................................................Page 197
Appendix D Letters to/from Penguin Books.........................Page 198
Other Inclusions: Copies of programmes and publicity

material, photo-print of Maureen
Cahill's sculpture piece 'Tiled
Evening', audio-cassette of
performances of various pieces
discussed in this thesis....see cover-pockets
PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT

This thesis discusses the thirteen works listed in chronological order in the index in as analytical a way as a composer might reasonably discuss his own 'children'. And 'children' the works are, in a sense: one creates them, not with the physiological assistance of another human being of unlike sex, but nevertheless they are conceived (perhaps, like human children, in a split second of time, in that moment of promise that is often, mistakenly I think, called 'inspiration'), gestated through an often maddeningly long (though sometimes excitingly short) stretch of time (and it is in this process of gestation that one does genuinely rely on one's reserves of concentration, one's physical and emotional balance, where one really does call upon 'inspiration') and then, as the final double barline is penned in, born. These births are not in themselves ends, but indeed beginnings, of nururings which may include revision (alas, not possible in human offspring!), certainly include checking for deformities, and taking, hopefully, the correct remedial actions. And then? Hopefully each work achieves performance, lest the composer be left with the stultifying sensation that his child is stillborn.

Some of the works discussed in this thesis have, at the time of writing each chapter, achieved either concert or workshop performances. Others have performances scheduled, others again still await, for reasons both practical or financial. I list the performance status of each work at the head of each commentary, referring only to the first performance where one took place. Some of the commentaries make reference to particularly pleasing
aspects, or on the other hand especially disappointing ones, of these performances.

As I have pored, in compiling this thesis, over the thirteen works covered, I have realised that there have been a variety of influences, not the least of which has been an awareness, in these years following my return from residency in the United Kingdom, and given the imminence of the 1988 Bicentennial, of my Australian-ness. This rediscovery of a receptiveness to Australian art, literature, music and, significantly, the landscape itself, more than a little surprised a previously convinced Anglophile, one who for many years following 1973 looked back with an indulgent nostalgia for cold, deciduous winters, sudden spring thaws, short and precious summers and long, peaceful, ever-redening autumns, and to the sense of belonging, the sense of being right there in the font of one's culture that residency in London perhaps inevitably brings to an Australian of British stock. And indeed, not just London but the many highways and by-ways of southern England, on whose North Downs' suburban London fringe I resided. The gentle, rolling hills, patchwork Kentish fields and chalky Atlantic-side cliffs of Blake's green and pleasant land still exert a strong pull, as does the tougher, swarthier monotony of Thomas Hardy's Dorset, further west, whence cometh my paternal forbears.

Race-memory cuts deep, and the music which still strikes the most responsive chord in my psyche is that of the composers who have been steeped in the landscape of England: Delius, Bridge, Bax, Moeran, Finzi. Perhaps I found, in my Australian rediscovery, a thrilling counter-balance in the vast, masculine, heated landscape of
Australia to the cooler, gentler visage of southern England. Perhaps, again, it is just a new set of nostalgias, those concerned with the location in which as circumstances would have it, I have settled and raised my family. Whatever, the southern, coastal, escarpment-backdropped landscape of New South Wales, in the area between Wollongong and Bermagui has exerted a pull as strong on my imaginative process as the country of my fathers: its beachside and estuarine scenery (manifested in the compositions "Champagne Flutes" and "Ocean Cave"), the escarpment, with its bird life, mists, and spectacular views, not to mention the wonderful Streeton-like light-plays on its slopes at the extremes of day (String Quartet No.2, "Niblets", "Escarpment Music"), and the easy-going exuberance of the coastal towns and resorts ("Overture For a Holiday").

Australia's wider, vaster, flatter, more elongated inland scenery also finds its way into my music, specifically after literary impulses have made impact: the terrors of pioneer bush-life (String Quartet No.2) and the scenes and characters associated with Ned Kelly and all the other colourful anti-heroes of our bush past ("Outlaw!" and, again, String Quartet No.2). The Jindyworobak school of poetry, short-lived though it was, brought forth many simply-expressed but highly evocative lines, some of which, by Roland Robinson, are appended to the manuscript of the String Quartet No.2 (see Commentary 6 below). While the Jindyworobaks were regarded with some suspicion in more influential literary circles, it seems to me that, from the vantage point of the late nineteen-eighties, they pointed to one of the obvious yellow brick roads that Australian creative artists need to follow to reach the
melting pot from which one day, hopefully, will be ladelled a distinctly and identifiably "Australian" style in the creative arts. I believe we are less likely to find the essence of that style by looking beyond our shores (to close Asian neighbours, for instance) than, within a broad eclecticism which will not deny the fact that, for most of us, the font of our culture is still Europe, to look within. The apparent conflict implicit here has probably already been shown not to be a problem. If we take Peter Sculthorpe's "Mangrove", for instance, to name a fairly recent and popular musical work, we find that the piece is none the less cohesive for being a description of a wholly Australian scene but using European musical instruments, European notation, European procedures. Ian Mudie, another Jindyworobak poet, exhorts:

"Give me a harsh land to wring music from....... 
........Give my words sun and rain, 
desert and heat and mist, 
spring flowers and dead grass, 
blue sea and dusty sky, 
song-birds and harsh cries, 
strength and austerity 
that this land has."

Certainly the Australian landscape, with and without catalysis from Australian literature, painting, folklore and history, is pervasive in several of the thirteen works I submit. Two of these works, the String Quartet No.2 and "Escarpment Music" I regard as probably my very best, most original creations.

What musical procedures have I discovered in retrospect in
these thirteen works? Certainly there is, I think, a distinctly Baroque idiosyncrasy in the use of ornaments in the melodic motives - not Baroque in the sense of ostentatiousness, but in the frequent occurrence of nervous, decorative, short notes which reach impatiently for longer, securer pitches. Fugato occurs several times, in both symphonies for instance, and the use of the passacaglia principle, too, is an idiosyncrasy I discuss in at least three chapters here-following. Generally the textures in my music are not contrapuntal, however, except in the completely freed-up procedures of "Ocean Cave", parts of the "Escarpmant Music" and, more arguably, in the two-part inventions of "A Foursome of Twosomes". Elsewhere, the music might fairly be described as melodic-homophonic, proceeding by developing-variation (pace Arnold Schoenberg). That is, the phrases, motives and other structural ingredients proceed without being presented in the same form, though ingredients are indeed recurrent.

Among the melodic fingerprints is the use of ostinati as harbingers of energy and forward movement. I exclude here the repetitions, often exact, in the wholly tonal, formula work "Overture For a Holiday". Are these ostinati, and the passacaglic procedures in several of the works ("Escarpmant Music", String Quartet No.2, "Tiled Evening") an acknowledgement of the vastness, the endless recurrent nature of the Australian scenery? I suspect so.

I favour the tritone, both melodically and harmonically. Why? Who knows? It comes out that way. I suspect that various acquaintances may construe in this use of tritones a holding back, a reticence which is a side of my nature I do, admittedly, frequently
allow others to see.

What about form? I have mentioned the developing variation, the constant manipulations of germinal structural ingredients. In my mind's ear the music grows without any consciousness of this-or-that form, and if, on analysis, certain pieces can be approximated to, say, sonata form (String Quartet No.2, first movement), then that is a retrospective discovery only. I value more the thread of constant manipulation, constant moving towards a hopefully inevitable cadence. To the charge that certain movements or pieces do on analysis show any influence of earlier forms or, for that matter, earlier procedures of whatever nature (and bearing in mind my acknowledged conscious use of the passacaglia principle), I must plead the influence of years and years of exposure to thousands of works by other composers. I do claim a vast knowledge of music's repertoire, and since I am an avid and anti-censorist listener to records, broadcasts, concerts, and remembering that I am also an orchestral conductor with a responsibility for compiling concert programmes, then surely, I say, some influences from earlier or existing compositional styles and procedures must 'rub off' into my own personal creative melting pot.

I have treated this thesis as an opportunity to write about my music in my vernacular, as the involved, paternal and maternal progenitor, rather than as the detached analyst. And I do so unapologetically. I suppose that most composers would expect that the bottom line of their intentions be ultimate personal expression. The quite unlike nature of many consecutive works in the output covered by this thesis - contrast, for instance, the carefree diatonic
tunefulness of the "Overture For a Holiday" with the eloquence and elaboration of the immediately following String Quartet No.2 - suggests a dichotomy, even a multiplicity of elements in my background and nature that may remain as a perceivable eclecticism, or, on the other hand, may eventually integrate into a personal quality or 'style' that not only will be easily identifiable but will not defy coherent definition.
COMMENTARY I  OPUS 6  "A FOURSOME OF TWOSOMES"

Autograph dated 11-11-'83.

SCORING: Flute and Piccolo, Oboe and Cor Anglais (Two Players)

PERFORMANCE STATUS: First performance 28th October 1985 at Gasteig Centre, MUNICH, by Antonia Huxtable, flute and piccolo, and Jasmine Huxtable, oboe and cor anglais.

This work, written to fulfil a request rather than a commission, was composed with a guarantee of at least one performance. Canadian sisters Antonia and Jasmine Huxtable, whose mother I met in Toronto whilst attending an orchestral conference in January 1982, are virtuoso performers on flute and oboe respectively. They subsequently hinted, through their mother, that I compose a short work for them to play, either at one of their annual duo-recitals at the Isle of Purbeck Festival (Dorset, U.K), or elsewhere. Antonia visited Australia in August 1984 to perform the Mozart G-major Flute Concerto under my direction.

In late 1983 I composed the piece and invented the title that would hopefully indicate the number of pieces - four -, the number of players required - two -, and perhaps obliquely hint at the total number of instruments required - again, four.

At about that time a performance of "A Foursome of Twosomes" was tentatively arranged for the northern summer of 1985, contingent upon Antonia and Jasmine, now living in Munich and London respectively, being able to arrange some rehearsals together.
Eventually a first performance took place at the newly-completed Gasteig Cultural Centre in Munich on 28 October 1985. The performance, in the Kleine Konzertsaal of the Gasteig, was attended by approximately fifty people and also included works by Beethoven, Casella and Copland. A copy of the programme for that event is appended to this document.

Brevity and conciseness become obvious characteristics in each of the four pieces; each occupies about ninety seconds. The work contrives to explore the two sides of each instrument's timbral character. One is tempted to apply Schumann's "Florestan and Eusebius" epithets, but that is to imply a literary impulse that is non-existent in "A Foursome of Twosomes". These characters, the imaginary personifications of Robert Schumann's schizophrenia - the one impulsive and passionate, the other gentle and reflective - might nevertheless describe the two possible moods of each of the four instruments. One thinks of some instruments being predominantly noisy or quiet. Take the trumpet, for instance: at first thought triumphant, brash, strident; and yet capable of the gentlest lullaby. Or the double string bass: capable only of underpinning an orchestral tutti or, in jazz, a toe-tapping pizzicato? Of course not, for it, too, can sing.

What, in this sense of timbral duality, were the challenges for me in writing for the four instruments in their various combinations in "A Foursome of Twosomes"? Certainly the plaintive, acciacaturas from the cor-anglais' lower register are what kicked me off in the direction of this work: see Example 6a.

Indeed, the plaintive, melancholy quality of sound colour possible from this instrument persists throughout the first twosome and the
lower half of the pitch range is used until quite late in the piece when, in response to the flute’s provocative descending scale passage, the cor anglais retorts, suddenly finding brighter humour, with two rising ones: see Example 6b.

The thematic material in these pieces is motivic and in the first twosome the conversation is built almost entirely upon the material introduced by the cor anglais in its unaccompanied first dozen bars. An exception is the scale passage referred to in the last quoted example, and this new point of discussion is first ventured from the flute, it will be seen, at bars 18-19, though at that point the cor anglais makes no response.

Certain basic motivic ideas - the acciaciaturas/appoggiaturas of the opening and the figures shown in Examples 6c and 6d are probably the most characteristic motives in terms of self-containedness. The pitches chosen in this and indeed in all four twosomes are instinctive rather than contrived. The improvisatory nature of much of the music reflects my own hours of keyboard doodlings, inventing two-part pieces and simply listening to the pitch combinations without analysing them.

An improvisatory character also pervades the second twosome, scored for piccolo and cor anglais, the latter now locked into the upper half of its register. Apart from the obvious contrast with the first twosome occasioned by this change of instrument and register, the music is now brisk, a frenetic quality being achieved by the use of interrupted metric structures (3/4 giving way to 3/8, then back again) and the frequent use of triplets, quintuplets and, just once (cor anglais in bar 12) a septuplet. The tempo of the music and the many small-value notes make this the most sheerly virtuosic of the four
pieces, both in aural effect and in technical demands on the players. Again the melodic/motivic material derives from the opening bars: see Example 6e.

Again, the players’ lines are independent despite this common material. The music presses onwards on its contrapuntal way, just once (unique in this work) synchronising momentarily into double octaves: see Example 6f.

The breathless flurry of the second twosome gives way to a third piece marked *Andante Commodo*, the duo now piccolo and oboe. In contrast to the motivic organisation of melodic material in the first and second twosomes, this piece gives way to a greater lyricism, found in the expansive oboe melody at the beginning. In its expansiveness this melody includes all semitones of the octave except C sharp: see Example 6g.

The 5/4 metre was chosen to avoid this lyricism being hampered by a regularity of rhythm. The obstinate, if very soft and tentative triplet interjections from the piccolo are the nearest we come to a rhythmic regularity in this piece. Given the ‘ppp’ marking, these interjections are a very considerable technical challenge to the piccolist, on whose instrument such dynamics present difficulty. Antonia Huxtable, in the Munich performance (a cassette copy of which accompanies this thesis), achieved quite a remarkable ‘pianississimo’ in this twosome: see Example 6h.

The final twosome is scored for flute and oboe. The oboe/cor anglais player has led the way in all three pieces hitherto — Florestan-like, perhaps, though in the first piece there was more of Eusebius in the cor anglais, more of Florestan in the flute — and in the last piece the oboe again sets off ahead of its cohort. The metre is
4/4 but the syncopated placing of the rising and falling thirds creates a tantalising aural sense of 6/8, piquantly underlined in the Munich performance by Jasmine Huxtable’s slightly accenting the later of each pair of notes. The metre indeed changes through 7/8 and 3/4, and the oboe’s opening ostinato is actually, rather than illusorily, syncopated at bar 8: see Example 6i.

This piece has more good humour than the others, largely achieved by these clucking ostinati over which the flute’s rather angular motive repeats itself several times, never quite the same, like a pup chasing its own tail (see Example 6i, above).

Further on (bars 10f), the flute joins in the ostinato argument, and despite intermittent interjections from both instruments - the oboe preferring a less angular series of statements than its partner - the ‘clucks’ have the last word: see Example 6j.

What have I, in retrospect, achieved in terms of the challenges in this work? Technically I have offered challenges to the players in areas of fingerwork, breathing, tonguing, dynamics and counting, but since the work was composed for professional players the rising-to-the-occasion in these respects may be taken for granted. To the listener, at least to the composer as he listens to the Munich tape, there seems to be a quite pleasing balance of the cantabile with the detached, the lyrical with the restive, the expansive with the compact, high spirits with pensiveness, cheekiness with sedateness.
COMMENTARY 2  OPUS 7  SYMPHONY NO.1
Autograph dated 17 - 2 - '84

SCORING: 3 flutes (3 d. piccolo), 2 oboes, cor anglais, clarinet in E-flat, 2 clarinets in B-flat, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon; 6 horns in F, 2 trumpets in D, 2 tenor trombones, bass trombone, euphonium, bass tuba; 2 snare drums, bass drum, tam-tam, triangle, cymbals (clash and suspended), tambourine, rattle, whip, glockenspiel, xylophone, tubular bells, tympani (2 players); harp, organ; strings.

PERFORMANCE STATUS: Not yet performed

The late Hugh Ottaway once wrote, for a record sleeve note, that "the man who writes more than one or two symphonies........is either the victim of a bad musical habit or the master of a very demanding musical process". Well, this is perhaps an extreme view, but certainly the symphonic aim - and here I mean 'Symphonic' with a capital 'S' as, probably, did Hugh Ottaway - presupposes a willingness to attempt to harness a wide range of musical resources, and a modicum of ability to hold them in just equilibrium. It is, to allude to Brahms' famous remark regarding the long gestation of his First Symphony, a "no joke" process, and for me, attempting a large-orchestra symphony some decade-and-a-half after the completion of the last of five juvenile symphonies, the process needed to be absolute.

To reflect briefly on those five juvenile works, which must have been very immature, and all long since bonfired, all, with one exception, were consciously derivative:

No.1 in C (1958-9) - A thirteen-year-old's attempt to write Haydn's next symphony. Standard classical orchestra with all parts
written in concert pitch because I knew no better!

No.2 in C Minor (1962) - My attempt to write another Brahms No.1.

No.3 in D Minor (1962-3) - "Song of Australia"; an ambitious choral symphony with a movement for solo baritone, and with a pastiche-Bruckner first movement.

No.4 in C Minor (1963-4) - Another, shorter choral symphony based on a death poem of my own composition. This work attempted to invade the sound-world of Mahler's "Das Klagende Lied".

No.5 (1968) - For brass band, performed under my direction by the Royal Australian Engineers' Band during my national service. It worked in terms of effective brass writing, but, like the others, was conflagration-destined.

I do not regret the long hours I spent in my youth composing these works, even though none of the first four had a chance of performance. If nothing else, they taught me the importance of concentration and that, alas, my pen speed is less than commensurate with my brain speed, any composer's perennial problem, no doubt.

Why then, given the destiny of the juvenile works, did I turn again, in 1983, to writing a symphony? Was it because, having had a reasonably good orchestra at my disposal since 1976, I felt at least a half-conscious need to conduct them in a major work of my own? Was it because, after many years of composing hardly a note, I wished to return to the creative firmament with a grand gesture? Maybe there was simply a demon to be exorcised and certainly once I conceived the massive, gnarled opening of the symphony, I realised that the symphonic process for me was going to be 'absolute' in the
sense of 'unrestricted'. And soon thus, I had my first problem: I found that the sound world of my aural imagination demanded a huge orchestra, rather bigger than the Wollongong band and big enough to almost certainly preclude a performance from any of the A.B.C orchestras. However, once into the process of writing the work, I found that the scope could not be narrowed, and I forged ahead, feeling that if I attempted to 'reduce' the music it may as well go unwritten.

I still, of course, look forward to eventually preparing the work for performance by the City of Wollongong Symphony Orchestra. On paper the Symphony No.1 appears to be a large assortment of wild, passionate and often chaotic ideas, squeezed into about twenty-minutes' duration. Some of the episodes appear to lie formally ill-at-ease with others - the short and sparsely-scored central movement, for instance, may appear not to 'belong' in the work - but I was more concerned with potentialities in several basic ideas than with a dynamic approach to form in the Beethovenian or Brahmsian sense, and I have a degree of conviction that the progression of the long first movement sounds inevitable, that a symphonic unity is immanent. One of my hopes regarding an eventual performance of the work is that the whole work will reveal the same notwithstanding the obvious use of some of the symphony's opening material in the short epilogue that ends the work.

The opening Non allegro, pesante comes as a series of heavy, dissonant chords separated by growling, chromatic five-note turns, then falling, step-wise unisons move towards an expected D-minor that is never confirmed: see Example 7a. The process is then repeated with an upward striving, this and the following passage (at letter A) of heavy string unisons bringing the D-minor into momentary
confirmation before this is confounded by fanfare-like A-flats from shrieking horns and a loud, downward G-major rush from the harp.

A sudden subsidence of the apparently aggressive mood follows, and a lone cor anglais note is left suspended. This instrument’s doleful sound is used several times in the course of the symphony, notably later in the first movement in a solo of some length, and at the points of cadence in the central movement. The lone note is interrupted by sudden upward-rushing scales from unison trumpets, then the mood of urgency is re-established with furious scale-like passages from the strings and woodwinds, all another confounded attempt at reaching D-minor.

Relentless, treading notes from untuned percussion, gradually increasing in dynamic intensity, underpin a sustained trill from the strings and the spiky, nervous, opening minute-and-a-half of the symphony is abruptly rounded off with a thwacking, linear G-flat-augmented traced out by both tympanists: see Example 7b.

In the next section, beginning at letter B, the large brass section is used to bring a sense of uneasy calm. Creeping notes in the euphonium and tuba give a lugubrious effect and this provides a background for the cor anglais’ long, sinewy solo. Harp and organ provide isolated, abrupt interjections: see Example 7c.

The subdued mood continues, and the music subsides into a stillness, almost a dissolution in which very high and very low notes are sustained in pianissimo string notes on an uncertain chord of B-flat – B-natural – F – A. The missing ‘middle’ creates a sense of eerie emptiness. The only ‘movement’ is from the harp, which puts in some low, soft, intermittent interjections: see Example 7d.

The next section arrives abruptly and noisily, the sudden-ness with which this symphony’s quiet and noisy passages alternate being
an obvious fingerprint. At letter D the derivation from the work's opening gestures is clear, but the texture is now transparent and unisonal: see Example 7e.

Soon, however, the texture becomes polyphonic again, increasingly so after the strings' appassionato re-entry at letter E: see Example 7f.

The linear characteristic of this section gradually yields to a return to the vertical, unisonal style, with time punctuated every few bars by throbbing common chords from the horns in the rhythm etcetra. After another abrupt collapse of the music's apparent strength the cor anglais solo returns, modified, and beneath it the contrabasses offer some intermittent grumbles derived from the chromatic turns at the opening of the symphony: see Example 7g.

This wind-down brings, gradually, a stillness almost total as spread strings again, this time in many octaves and without the missing middle, are joined by the piccolo in very soft unison, tracing a long-noted ground which is repeated per retro e recto: see Example 7h.

Only intermittently do fragments of other instrumental colours interject, the harp and glockenspiel intruding almost jarringly into the restored stillness.

The distinguishing essence of a passacaglia (that is, the principle which makes it the strictest of ancient musical forms) is that the continually-reappearing ground bass should not change. Throughout the section of music from letter H to letter N in my Symphony No. 1 I make obeisance to that principle to begin with, but proceed gradually to violate its specific tenets, treating the passacaglia in general spirit, so that its function is to allow the movement to build towards its major and probably most inevitable
climax. The passacaglia principle is a fingerprint in my music, indeed, and I use it again in the String Quartet No.2 and the "Escarเปrm Music". In the Quartet the sense of growth and inevitability is denied, but in the Symphony No.1 and "Escarเปrm Music" my use of the passacaglia principle is in spirit closer to that of the big Baroque chaconnes.

As the symphony's passacaglia section proceeds material from earlier in the movement is brought into play, particularly obvious being the throbbing, obstinate percussion figures, the string unisons and the fanfare-like brass figures.

All the large compliment of instruments required in this symphony are work-horsed in the first movement, except the E-flat clarinet, whose shrill sounds are reserved characteristically for the dynamic climaxes. The tutti towards which the passacaglia has been striving is abruptly terminated at letter N, and a passage for percussion alone winds the momentum down again, the eventual tam-tam stroke remaining suspended morendo: see Example 7i.

The central Lento movement is short and formally approximating to 'modified strophic'. Timbrally the symphony now gains a lightness that is essentially absent from the first movement and the high, sotto voce, meandering melody in the first violins that begins in the fifth bar and which is the most obvious melodic element in each stroph, seems to take us across some high plateau after the exhausting ascent of the first movement: see Example 7j.

There are, nevertheless, emotional ambiguities in the movement: the chorale-like passages for oboes and clarinets in the first four bars, the oppressive, spread-out chord (low G - G - D - E-flat) that recurs in the trombones and tubas at each stroph's cadence, and the doleful short B - sustained D figure from the cor anglais, also heard
at the cadential points, all point to struggles still to come. Similarly
the pizzicati in the cellos and contrabasses (a modified version of
the violin melody) in the third stroph contribute to the earth-binding
aural/emotional effect of the movement.

Tonally the movement is ambiguous, consistently failing to
arrive in expected key centres of A-minor, E-flat-major, G-minor.
The only, brief tonal pivots are the momentary G-majors at each
stroph's end.

After the third stroph has run its course, an ascending
scale-like run from the bass clarinet, momentarily recalling the
rushing scales from the first movement, attempts to lift the piece
back to its high plateau, but a sustained low B-flat (contrabassoon)
and B-naturals (euphonium and tuba) drag the mood down again, and
the euphonium's and tuba's final, very soft fanfares clumsily attempt
to confirm G-major again; their attempts are confounded by the
harp's tritones on G-sharp and D-natural: see Example 7k.

A fifth stroph is begun as the first violins attempt to re-ascend
the plateau. However, this is cut short by another rising scale, this
time sounding in shrill fashion from the E-flat clarinet, and the
untuned percussion instruments suddenly enter violently. But their
tempest is quickly exhausted: see Example 7L.

The slow tempo is quickly re-established (letter Q). The
stratospheric violins now rise to some tremolandoing, high A-flats,
but lurking below, still, are the oppressive brass chords. A sudden,
shrieking crescendo from the horns signals the strident \textit{Più allegro}
which introduces the final movement, at last, after those false
rallyings of the slow movement's later pages: see Example 7m.

Rushing strings, supported by the trumpets and some of the
woodwinds, try to gain a foothold on D as a tonal base at the start of
the final Allegro non tanto but, as in the first movement, it is rather a conglomerate of several possible D-modes, certainly not a confirmed major or minor. Not until the con vigore at letter R does the brightness of D-major win out, and then only tenuously, in the midst of the on-rushing surge. The impetus is unflagging now, despite the multi-metric changes, with semiquaver movement in all instrumental departments creating a riptide of movement: see Example 7n.

Themes are very fragmentary and motivic in this long opening section. The angular first violin tune in the last example is the only theme of any length until the one used for fugal treatment later in the movement. The texture lightens at letter S, where the unisonal, rhythmic string writing recalls similar stretches in the first movement: see Example 7o.

Despite the music's falling to piano in the lightly-scored next section, the semiquaver movement is unflagging, and soon another cacophonous tutti is reached, the rushing scale-like figures of the movement's beginning now being extensively explored and manipulated in brass and strings. This occurs at letter T, and it would be difficult to reduce this section to a tidy, four-stave example.

At this point during the composition of the symphony I encountered the lines from T.S. Eliot's "Sweeney Erect" (whilst studying that poet's "Four Quartets" for a series of lectures) that I soon appended to the head of the score:

"And the trees about me,
Let them be dry and helpless, let the rocks
Groan with continual surges; and behind me
Make all a desolation.................
Paint me a cavernous waste shore
Cast in the unstilled Cyclades,
Paint me the bold anfractuous rocks
Faced by the snarled and yelping seas."

Given the current sound world in my mind, these lines seemed to
be an uncanny prosodic equivalent of the gnarled, granitic music of
the symphony. There are several places in the symphony where the
music is wild and convulsive, where it "snarls" and "yelps" like T.S.
Eliot's seas. In a later work, "Ocean Cave" (see Commentary 10) I find
a less wasted shore, friendlier rocks and a calm Pacific, the demon
of the Symphony No.1 by then exorcised.

In the quieter passage that starts at letter U, motivic fragments
from earlier in the work — the cor anglais tune of the first
movement, the rising, rushing scales and the throbbing drums — pass
by in brief review, and the music settles momentarily into a relaxed
B-flat-major, where a short theme for tubular bells cuts softly
through a haze of brass, strings and tambourine, the last-named
holding on to the music's semiquaver momentum; see Example 7p.

Again the quietness is shattered by thwacking tympani, but now
an impassioned, expressive passage for strings and horns attempts
to bring a new, nobler spirit to the music; alas, unsuccessfully, it
seems, as the woodwinds poke some fun: see Example 7q.

More rattling semiquavers and another subsidence follow, then
the cor anglais begins an eight-bar, animated subject, with
euphonium and tuba sounding ominously below like distant fog-horns:
see Example 7r.

Oboes, flutes, bassoons, then trumpets, clarinets, horns and
violins take up this subject in fugato treatment, with other
instruments entering gradually in hectic counterpoint. I would a-fuguing go here as a device for gathering the materials towards the final and most noisy climax, which, after the tonal freedom of this gathering-together passage, is reached with the sustained but abruptly terminated G-minor 7 chord, eight bars after letter BB. The strong sense of purposeful, forward movement is now suddenly called into question, with E-flat clarinet, horns, xylophone and piccolo frantically trying to re-establish the momentum, only to be abruptly undercut by a declamatory B-flat chord in bassoons and horns, now back at the tempo 1 of the first movement. As this chord fades, the drums strike up a crescending roll and the very opening of the symphony is restated, but the scoring is reduced to brass, harp, strings and some of the untuned percussion. This recapitulation is a mere wraith; descending thirds in the harp toll as the music recedes into pianissimo after only four bars. A low, very soft tremolando in the contrabasses is heard, with attendant apparitions from the snare drums, euphonium, tubas and tympani: see Example 7s.

A final stab of forte is reached for by cellos, contrabasses, horns and tympani, and in the final half-dozen bars the tenor trombones sound the music's fading life-beats as those surrounding instruments that have survived come at last to D-major. But even this finality is not to be: the harp sounds the low D – G-sharp tritone from the second movement (see Example 7k) in the penultimate bar, and after the final tam-tam stroke the contrabasses sound a pizzicato G-sharp – B-natural. The symphony's half-lit end leaves the tonality question ultimately unanswered: see Example 7t.

As I wrote early in this commentary, the Symphony No.1 is not yet performed. Will it, in actual performance, prove a mere succession of non-sequiturs, rebarbative unless seen purely in terms
of the Images in its Eliotian superscription? After the work's composition I searched my mind as to precisely what my conception of a 'symphony' is, or should be, and even whether a 'precise' conception is possible. I was still searching for an answer when I began work on the Symphony No.2 in January 1986.
Example Th:

Violins

violas

Chords

then 'per petto e recto'
My juvenilia included no string quartets, nor indeed any work for any of the other more popular chamber combinations; I can remember only an "Idyll" for clarinet, violin and piano and that, along with countless other works, was bonfired many years ago. Not until 1982, the year in which I returned to composition in a serious way, after a decade of writing no music at all, did I begin a work for music's most favoured chamber combination. Even then only the pregnant opening gesture - up to a bar before letter A - was forthcoming before I laid the sketch aside again, waiting for the right confluence of mood and circumstance before proceeding.

I have always found that the corpus of string quartets, from Haydn and Mozart via the Romantics (though I confess a boredom with the Mendelssohn, Schumann and, especially, the Brahms quartets) to the twentieth-century quartet giants Bartok, Berg, Shostakovich and Elliott Carter, provides enormous rewards, both sensuous and intellectual; and, overwhelmed as I have often been by such expressive and imaginative masterworks as the last two Mozart quartets, Bartok's Fifth, the Shostakovich Eighth and the Elliott Carter Second, I think it quite improbable that I could have completed a string quartet of my own without having lived with
those other sound worlds for many years.

When, spurred on by the announcement in early 1984 of the Petra Quartet's residency at Wollongong University for that year's July and August, I took up again the quartet begun in 1982, I found that the actual process of writing a whole twenty-minute quartet proved to be less arduous than I had feared. One of my fears was that I am not a proficient string player myself. My practical knowledge of these instruments is limited to that of the self-taught amateur who played cello in his high-school orchestra for a year and, years later, played the second-grade violin repertoire (all first-position stuff) whilst demonstrating his "practical knowledge" of one instrument from each orchestral family to a panel of examiners at the Royal Academy of Music, London, whilst attempting to gain the Academy's licentiate in orchestral conducting. Hardly the best augury for a composer now wishing to write the late twentieth-century's answer to the Rasumovskys!

However, years of absorbing the pieces I mention above, and, of course, many other quartets in the vast available repertoire of scores and recordings is, I suspect, evident in certain stylistic and procedural characteristics of my first string quartet: a Berg-like quasi-Romantic intensity in the slow sections, a Haydn-esque humour in the faster sections, a conscious quip from Shostakovich, a Carteresque concern for formal freedom. Several years as conductor of the Wollongong orchestra, rehearsing in the particular sound world of the semi-professional ensemble, also obviously contributed to my awareness of what string players can and cannot do. Working in the great amateur tradition of ensemble playing is for me very wonderful and moving, and it seems that the special teamwork required for successful ensemble playing is all the more crucial when the
ensemble is small. A string quartet to an orchestra exists in much the same ratio as, say, a Mozart symphony to one by Tchaikovsky: the greater the transparency, the more crucial the requirement for concentration and precision. I tried, given this realisation, to write, in the String Quartet No.1, music that is uncontrived and not self-consciously 'difficult' or showy, while at the same time avoiding too narrow a range of expressiveness or imagination.

When the Petra Quartet arrived and began rehearsing my newly-completed quartet for the scheduled workshop performance, their comments on the "highly idiomatic quartet writing" were, naturally, ones that I found especially encouraging, and certainly contributed to my starting a second quartet almost immediately (see my comments in the commentary, below, devoted to the String Quartet No.2). The workshop itself, with the piece having been prior-rehearsed, was successful in that the piece could be played more-or-less in full, with interruptions only to check a dynamic or phrase-marking here, a bowing or unclear note there. It is to my regret that the colleague who organised the workshop neglected to arrange for the session to be recorded.

A few adjustments were made to the score following the workshop, on advice from the Petra players, as follows:

In the first movement-

i) a removal of the *sul ponticello* in the violins at the 7/8 bar just before letter B. This passage sounded contrived as *sul ponticello*, but convincing in *modo ordinario*.

ii) the addition of the fermata over the double barline that separates the opening *Largo appassionato* from the following *Vivace non troppo*. This facilitates cueing in the start of the vivace.
iii) the altering of the crotchet =120 to crotchet = 104 for the Vivace non troppo to avoid a sense of rush in some bars. This apparently substantial change allowed more security in, particularly, the cello melody at letter E.

iv) a change in the viola part from pizzicato to arco in the fourth and fifth bars after letter H. The pizzicato is clumsy, indeed almost impossible, at this tempo.

In the second movement-
No changes, though since the movement is sempre pizzicato only a fairly sedate Presto assai is possible.

In the third movement-
No changes advised from the Petra players, but during the workshop I inserted the marking ‘meno lento e drammatico’ for the passage following letter O which recalls material from the first movement’s introduction. At the third movement’s basic slow tempo, these bars lack impact.

Whereas a fairly specific extra-musical scenario was one of the impulses for the String Quartet No.2, the String Quartet No.1 has no such extra-musical connotation, and I wish it to be heard as pure music. The four parts function in a tightly-knit way throughout the quartet: it is predominantly compacted music rather than expansive, relaxing into more lyrical vein only for the section in 5/4 at the end of the first movement and for some, though not all, of the final movement, and even here there are plentiful references to the impassioned opening of the work.

The appassionato indication to the opening Largo is a vital clue to the mood of the Quartet. Loud, dramatic gestures with two quick notes rising or falling a fourth onto a longer third note, become a ‘motto’ for the whole first movement (and recur again at the end of
the whole work: see Example 8a.

The chord with which the surrounding instruments support this opening second violin motif is spiritually related, indeed analyzably quite close, to the "heavily-burdened chord" which starts the 'Immovable Escarpment' movement in the String Quartet No.2, a point of obvious kinship between the two works: see Examples 8b and 8c.

The 'motto' is pervasive in the opening dozen bars or so, the quick notes sometimes rising, sometimes falling, onto the following long note. The harmonic procedures are chromatic and chords constantly shift, never settling onto an analyzable cadence, though some of the key/mode implications of the notes in the first full bar are explored only to be quitted almost immediately. So the music never relaxes onto C-major in bar 1, or E-flat-major in bar 3, or G-major in bar 4, and so on, despite the apparent "pulls" of tonality.

At letter A the second violin throws out a hint, though in a timid, expressionless drone, of a key centre. The other instruments are in emphatic lack of consensus: see Example 8d.

This drone in the second violin is prophetic of the passage later in the movement (at the 'Tempo I, largo poco mosso') where the same instrument, again senza espressivo, drones a long, low A-flat while the other instruments are again in a state of some aggravation, though they eventually are more agreeable on the course the music should take (see page 9 of the full score). Ostinati of various colour are, I discover in retrospect, a fingerprint in my music. In this Quartet the drones are a conscious influence from Shostakovich, whose use of them in his own string quartets (and, indeed, in some of the symphonies) is hypnotically powerful. I acknowledge my debt to the great Russian in a good-humoured way in the Vivace non troppo section of my Quartet No.1's first movement (at letter G), where I
quote a snippet, appropriately transposed, from the third movement of the Shostakovich Eighth Quartet: see Example 8e.

Another drone soon steals in, low in the cello, and over this the other instruments enter at intervals of a semitone, the viola's *pizzicato* indicating the continuing pervasiveness of the 'motto': see Example 8f.

Soon the first violin re-establishes the C drone, though still there is no agreement on key-centre. Not until the gentle B-flat chords in three of the instruments in the fifth-last bar of this section is there any sense of stabilising key-centre. Even then the second violin, joined in the next bar by cello, throws in a confounding B-natural. A B-flat harmonic as a drone from the cello links the music's opening *Larghetto* with its *Vivace non troppo*: see Example 8g.

Just as it began the Quartet (and, indeed, it will be the last instrument lingering at the end of the finale), the second violin begins the *Vivace* section with a light, high, angular and somewhat fragmented theme which seems to look nervously for a place to go: see Example 8h.

The viola joins in in the third bar and the two protagonists soon lock into some obstinate semiquavers, around which the outer instruments, as though seeking to keep the proceedings in control, chime in with some sure-and-solid longer notes in contrary motion: see Example 8i.

The three elements in the last two quoted examples form between them the essence of the material in this *vivace* section, though the oscillating *ritmico* beginning in the fourth bar after letter C might be mistaken for a 'second subject' were it not for the first violin's obvious derivation from 'first subject' material in the
This Vivace non troppo section is again tonally highly chromatic and free, no sooner seeming to arrive at a key-centre (for example the A-major 'feel' in the last example quoted) than to almost immediately quit it again. Tonal 'light' is let in by the frequent scale-like unisons. A-major is briefly present again at letter D, where 'first-subject' material is heard in the violins over yet another ostinato, this time a light, detached one in viola and cello: see Example 8k.

The musical material is thrown around continuously, rather than their being a 'development' in the sense of a gathering towards a point of logical recapitulation. There is an essential nervousness in the uneven durational qualities of the music in this passage and when the only sustained crescendo of the movement does arrive the feeling is one of urgency rather than resolution: see Example 8l.

The good-humoured Shostakovich quip relieves the tension after the fermata at letter G (see Example 8e) and there follows what might be - very approximately - called a recapitulation, this time the first violin leading off: see Example 8m.

Most of the 'first' and 'second' subjects material is restated at predictably dislocated pitch, and the music winds down onto the A-flat, disembodied second-violin drone described on page 6, above, with the attendant dramatics.

The drama and urgency of the music now spent, the music finally settles onto an A-flat chord, then leaves a C-natural suspended in the first violin. In the 5/4 section that follows the music finds a calm that has eluded it hitherto. Rhythmically there is still considerable independence between the parts, tonally A-flat-major exerts a strong pull, though this is never confirmed. A high,
unsupported A-flat is followed by some bell-like descending harmonics in the violins and some low, murmuring thirds in the other two parts, leaving another note unsupported, this time G-natural: see Example 8n.

A brief flare-up of the impassioned opening occurs, but the music then quickly fades, the A-flat/G-natural conflict never resolved: see Example 8o.

Hitherto there has been some eleven minutes of music, more than half the Quartet's duration. The short middle movement should move at as headlong a tempo as the players can manage, ideally faster than I know is possible: my vision was one of pizzicato at breakneck speed. However, even at the sedater tempo demanded by the common sense of possibility, this music, with its accents displaced and their being, additionally, the obvious characteristic of multi-metre (6/8, 4/8, 9/8), has a rollicking quality which acts as a foil to the seriousness of the first movement: see Example 8p.

It will be seen that the very opening chord contains a happy G-major in the outer instruments which despite the concurrently placed C-major and A-flat-major chords in the inner instruments reinforces the hinted G mode of the very end of the first movement. Despite pizzicato wanderings into nether-reaches of tonality the music arrives in G-major at its first cadence, one bar before letter K. The form of this movement is the simplest ternary, A.A.A. After the first twenty-four bars have reached their G-major cadence the same music is bar-by-bar repeated, out from C-major but with some different tonal excursions than expected, and ending this time less certainly, with a cadence that attempts to pull back towards G-major: see Example 8q.

The third 'verse', now pianissimo and less accented, less jolly,
sets out unexpectedly from A-flat-major but returns to C-major, however much the odd A-flat lingers at the tentative final cadence: see Example 8r.

Whence cometh the G - C - A-flat-majors of this movement's sectional beginnings and endings? Let us look again at the very opening gestures of the Quartet: see Example 8s (and by 'gestures' I mean those isolatable, usually obvious releases of energy that have a declamatory function, or that provide passages of tension and intensity in any music's proceedings).

Well, this opening might answer the case for those keys, but what about the initial long D, at the top pitch of this example? It must be content, in this movement, with a fleeting moment of glory as a doubled penultimate note (see Example 8r).

The sighing cello theme at the start of the third and final movement is a near-chromatic sequence disguised by the rising and falling shape of the theme: see Example 8t.

The whole opening two-dozen bars, where the texture is thinned down to at most two lines of sound, maintains the yearning, sospiro, quality of the cello's solo. Only some spectres from the first movement intrude on the prevailing mood of rest: see Example 8u. Further spectres later, at the meno lento e drammatico: see Example 8v.

Calm is restored in time, and the sospiro continues, the music receding into peace when the violins intone some lofty harmonics over a diminuendoing E-flat in the cello: see Example 8w.

However, the 'motto' from the beginning of the Quartet is not yet spent, and it appears for a last, dying gasp, leaving the second violin alone and uncertain of which of the motto's pitches to quit on, ultimately choosing the one on which the whole work commenced,
almost in a "this is where I came in" sense: see Example 8x.

I believe that the String Quartet No.1 is a unified and balanced work, the early achievement of a workshop performance having afforded the opportunities to make meaningful emendations to the original score to assist this unity and balance. Tonal cohesion is present in the form of continual 'searching' around four pitch springboards. The tempo sequence of slow-fast-slow-fast-slow has a symmetry that is more-or-less confirmed by the duration in minutes of each section, approximately 4-4-2-2-2-6. Certainly the workshop performance by the Petra Quartet confirmed that, as a piece of chamber string writing, the piece worked, and, armed with this comforting knowledge, I proceeded to compose the String Quartet No.2. I hope that, too, will prove workable.
COMMENTARY 4  OPUS 9 "CHAMPAGNE FLUTES"

Autograph dated 8 - 6 - '84

SCORING: 4 Flutes (each doubling piccolo) and Percussion (1 player requiring xylophone, glockenspiel and vibraphone).

PERFORMANCE STATUS: First performed on 21 August 1987, by SCAW Ensemble.

"Champagne Flutes" and the "Overture For a Holiday" are the offspring of a seaside holiday at Mollymook, on the New South Wales south coast, in the autumn - or, should I say, Indian Summer, for the maytime weather is invariably idyllic in that locale - of 1984. While I am in no way a good traveller on the sea, usually getting green with seasickness even in the bath, I do, as the old promenaders' song goes, love to be beside the seaside, beside the seaside, beside the sea, and I anticipate each annual Mollymook holiday with relish. Invariably these holidays have been a time for relaxation and creativity, with the morning hours spent in my own company, walking at water's edge along the beach from north to south and back to the north again - about five kilometres altogether - and then sitting on the rocks at the northern extremity in the shade of the headland, being especially treasurable.

How solitary this must all sound, hardly suggesting the bringing forth of such impersonal, companionable, social works as "Overture For a Holiday" and "Champagne Flutes". But one is never really alone at the water's edge: myriads of aquatic life forms sharing the rock one sits upon, seaweed washing intermittently around one's ankles, and the sea itself reaching gregariously into whichever rocky, sandy nooks and crannies its gurgling momentum will take it before receding swiftly, only to tumble in again with the ensuing wave.
There seems always to be something friendly, smiling, even cheeky about the bubbling quality of the receding waves on the sand beneath, and I realised that an intended serious, sea-scape piece was bound to become, during that 1984 holiday season, a work of a light and happy nature.

Originally planning the seascape piece as a work for large wind band and percussion, the lighter conception seemed to demand a lesser number of winds. The onomatopoeic quality of the sea's "bubbling" around the rocks proved irresistible to my relaxed mind, and so the "bubbly" led fairly naturally to champagne, which in turn led to champagne flutes, and lo!...I had my scoring and my title! I chose four flutes and retained the percussion, with just one player required, playing three instruments - xylophone, glockenspiel and vibraphone. Each flute alternates between C-flute and piccolo.

This seven-minute "bubblithon" is frankly a fun work, but the music is of virtuoso difficulty for the flutes, and the opening "bubblianimato" tempo-marking of quaver=116 is probably slightly excessive, for there are numerous leaps in pitch, lots of rhythmic side-steps and some very precise phrasing and dynamics markings. The piece is cast in a ternary form. The central \textit{poco inebrio} finds our four flautic imbibers snoozing awhile under the influence, some appropriately dreamy sounds lullabying away from the vibraphone. In the final "bubblivivo" musical balance is achieved with a recapitulation of some of the virtuoso music.

At bar 1, the first imbiber expounds the following point of view. see Example 9a.
The two canons which follow both this and the first flute's second statement (bars 8f) suggest that our four imbibers hold similar viewpoints, yet each, it will be seen, has its own grey-shaded twist. At letter A our friends begin to wind down as follows to a series of low, fluttered Fs, if only for a short breath, or sip, perhaps: see Example 9b.

No tonal centre has been settled upon hitherto in the music. The opening pair of bars suggests a pull towards A-minor, but this is lost in the friendly hubbub. The rising brillante scales that end the first canon are indisputably C-major, and our drink waiter, the percussionist, finds these a worthy suggestion (bar 10). And then those low fluttered Fs: F major? "Maybe minor", suggests the first imbiber at letter B. "Let's try D-flat major" says the second a bar later. The third and fourth agree with the second, though the third prefers to take his D-flats as C-sharps: see Example 9c.

But by only the eighth bar of letter B, the same player loses his way with an obvious belch and finds himself, scalewise, suddenly in D-minor. No worry, everyone has the 'hics' by now except our fourth player, who is still trying to put in his punch-line. The others pay heed for a bar before giggling: see Example 9d.

Are they laughing with him or at him? He seems little perturbed as he suddenly wrenches free of F-minor for a brillante upward F-lydian scale.

The conversation becomes more of a melee now, but after another bar of laughter (seventh bar after letter C), the third flute propounds another thought for consideration by his fellows. "We agree", they say, "up to a point": see Example 9e.
That point, it would seem, is up until hiccups and laughter rudely interrupt: see Example 9f.

It seems as though, to quote one of our learned philosophers of old (no, not Malcolm Fraser), "life is too serious to be taken seriously"! Letter D brings some murmuring thirds from the third and fourth flutes, quite euphonious and pre-dilecting E-flat major after the minor-2nd dissonances of the last hiccups. Our waiter adds a glassy tinkle or two from the bar: see Example 9g.

Each player now forsakes the flute for the piccolo and some new fun is had with material from the very first canon - its opening chromatically-descending bars of flutter-tonguing and its final bar of ascending scales. But now our imbibers are becoming perhaps a little argumentative under the influence: at first they cannot agree on the direction of these scales. But in the end they go downwards. It is settled!: see Example 9h.

A few more hiccups, and then a slowing-down in the musical activity suggest that the imbibers could do with some fresh air. In the central *poco inebrio* that begins henceforth, the drinkwaiter, whose contribution hitherto has been to provide some suitable sounds of tinkling glass and sparkling champagne, plays a repetitive (and probably not very soothing!) lullaby, using soft sticks on the vibraphone, its resonators rotating at medium pace: see Example 9i.

After a few bars the imbibers, back on flutes, begin another canon, this time rejecting what the first player offers as a first bar. It is fine from the second bar onwards, they feel: see Example 9j.

The recitativi that follow fulfill whatever descriptive function in terms of the cocktail party scene that the listener, or indeed players, imagine. Musically they function as moments of lighter texture and as such are the only stretches of the music where each
flutist is heard solo for any significant length. The fourth flute's recitativo is an ostinato figure that brings a quickening of pace: see Example 9k.

But the tempo decelerates again and the central *poco inebric* ends quietly with a bare A–E fifth from the vibraphone.

Wakeful spirits are found again quite suddenly with the return of the quick three-in-a-bar, now crotchet rather than quaver pulse ( \( = \approx 116 \)) and marked *bubbli vivo* rather than *bubbianimo*. Perhaps I should have used the marking *bubbli-revivo* here! Whatever, the high-spirited chatter of the opening has returned. But the imbibers seem to find no common-interest talking point until the return of the 3/8 metre and the opening canon: see Example 9L.

It is all a false re-start, however. The first and second players take piccolos, the third and fourth remain on flutes, the percussionist has forsaken vibraphone for glockenspiel, and, after some wavering G-sharps and G-naturals and a flourish from the flutes, all imbibers bid a cheery farewell with another upward-rushing scale (C-sharp phrygian) and some final hiccups on the expected D-naturals: see Example 9m.
COMMENTARY 5 OPU 10 OVERTURE FOR A HOLIDAY
Autograph dated 17-7-'84

SCORING: Piccolo, 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes (1st doubling Cor Anglais), 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons; 4 Horns in F, 2 Trumpets in B-flat, 2 Tenor Trombones, Bass Trombone; Tympani (three drums, one player), 2 Percussionists (1st plays tambourine and triangle, 2nd plays snare drum and woodblocks); Strings.

PERFORMANCE STATUS: First performed by the City of Wollongong Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer in Wollongong Town Hall on 16th November 1985.

Though by mid-1984 I was into my ninth season as music director of the City of Wollongong Symphony Orchestra, I had not yet composed a piece specifically for it to play. By that time I felt that the orchestra had developed into a sufficiently excellent group, with a fairly static membership, to attempt something outside the staple eighteenth and nineteenth century repertoire with which it had been justifiably engaged. Since then, the orchestra has performed, to mention the major twentieth century pieces it has attempted, the Vaughan Williams Symphony No.5, the Peter Maxwell Davies soundtrack music to Ken Russell's "The Boyfriend", Britten's "Serenade" Op.31 and the Penderecki "Threnody For the Victims of Hiroshima".

Part of the problem of Wollongong's population, at least to the arts promoter, is its large working class and ethnic components: it simply lacks the vast middle, professional class that traditionally supports the so-called 'serious arts' arts, so selling twentieth-century music to local audiences is doubly difficult. For
this reason I decided that my first orchestral piece to be presented locally should be capable of being truthfully pre-publicised as “tuneful and straightforward”. The “Overture For a Holiday”, composed during and following a seaside holiday in May 1984, was first performed as the overture to the City of Wollongong’s final subscription concert of 1985.

A further performance, incorporating slight revisions, was scheduled for a 'Family Concert' in August 1986, but was dropped at the eleventh hour due to an overcrowded rehearsal schedule. It seemed to me at the time of the work’s composition that there is a shortage of effective ten-minute concert overtures, and that some of the best of these were the many from the pens of English composers during earlier years of this century, especially the between-the-wars years. Several of the best of them originated in the BBC’s Light Music programme. One thinks of Eric Coates’ “The Merrymakers”, Geoffrey Bush’s “Yorick”, John Ireland’s “A London Overture” and Francis Chagrin’s “Helter Skelter”, to name just a few of the most characterful works. Nowadays orchestral concerts rarely begin with an ‘overture’ as such, such a procedure seeming to have been unfortunately down-graded. A warming-up piece is still a good idea for an orchestra which is not composed a hundred percent of professional players, and in composing the “Overture For a Holiday” I wished to follow along the line of the works by other composers mentioned above. The piece needed not to be deeply-felt, serious or particularly original; rather, it needed to be the sort of warm-up toccata which enables players to demonstrate their confidence, to put the audience into a receptive frame of mind.

This “bucket and spade” overture, as the local media’s publicity for the first performance would have it, is scored for standard
symphony orchestra with the addition of piccolo and two percussionists. I attempted to keep the scoring clear-cut and light, and while some of the parts (notably the solos for first horn and clarinet and some of the violin writing) proved to be fairly demanding of the players’ virtuosity, it was, generally, within the capacity of the Wollongong orchestra of late 1985 to deliver a reasonably accurate, stylish performance of the piece. No doubt it would be child’s play to the best of our professional orchestras, yet at the same time, I hope, not uninteresting or unrewarding.

"Overture For a Holiday" is in B-flat major, with a central slow section in A-flat major, though I used accidentals rather than key-signatures in the score. In the outer *giocoso* sections, there is not so much cross-connections between contrasting themes (for this section is essentially monothematic) as between contrasting sections of the single theme, first heard on the solo clarinet at letter A, as it passes by several times in light-hearted review. Occasionally in this *giocoso* there is a touch of harmonic dislocation, here-and-there a rhythmic side-step, but these do not disturb the easy flow of the music. The central *non troppo largo* has an expansive *cantando* theme first heard in the first horn, perhaps the work’s most technically challenging line. This theme is worked up to a majestic though brief climax, quickly dying again before a sudden snare-drum roll clears the momentary clouds away and the ebullient *giocoso* returns.

The lively holiday mood is established at the very beginning of the overture with a series of B-flat chords, some of these having their Ds dislocated to E-flats, the latter then falling again to Ds. A fanfare-like motif of semiquavers occurs in the trumpets and strings at the third bar: see Example 10a. This is followed by a hint, in the
upper woodwinds, of the main tune yet to come: see Example 10b.

These converge to form a unison A, enticing a humorous dissonance from the trumpets, clarinets and tambourine, but an upward scale from the upper woodwinds, supported by semiquaver taps on the snare-drums, gets us back to B-flat, the major mode of which is re-confirmed with the strings' tremolando one bar before letter A. Over this soft tremolando, the first clarinet presents the main theme, indeed the only fully-blown theme of the giocoso section: see Example 10c. The last part of the theme has the cellos and contrabasses in cadence, pizzicato: see Example 10d.

The theme resumes in the sixth bar of A, still in the first clarinet. But other woodwinds are keen for a share of this thematic material, which now finds a new twist: see Example 10e.

The rapid, repeated muted semiquavers from the four horns in this section add a lively touch of timbral colour to the proceedings and soon oboes, then trumpets find these repeated semiquavers infectious and inevitably the whole orchestra soon joins in.

The dynamics and scoring subsequently lighten again, but only momentarily, with just a few bars' rest for the brass so that they may remove their mutes. The first tutti statement of the theme, now aperto in the violins and doubled by first flute, oboe and clarinet, occurs at letter B. Rapid semiquavers, both legato and staccato, give the music its jocose forward thrust, while syncopated crotchets and quavers in the three trombones, spiced here and there by tympanic punctuations, underpin the tonic-dominant-subdominant harmony: see Example 10f.

Predictably, the music comes to a B-flat major stop at the next cue letter, where, after another appearance (this time in all the strings) of the upward-rushing B-flat scale first heard in bars 5 and
6 of the overture the very opening chords are re-iterated then cut short, followed by a few soft semiquavers (the figure $7 \{\frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \}$ from strings and percussion.

A sudden pizzicato chord in which the triads of D and E-flat are present, and a modulatory semiquaver motif from the two bassoons, bring us unexpectedly to G major, confirmed in the brass chord in the last bar on page 8 in the full score: see Example 10g.

A new glance at the theme comes at letter D, the first oboe now relishing a few bars of solo status. Above the first sustained note, in the second bar, the two flutes carol in with a brief flourish of parallel thirds, characteristically in semiquavers: see Example 10h.

Strings support with some rhythmic pizzicati to underpin the G major. Later, when the two clarinets take yet another glance at the theme, the strings throw in a couple of bars of the re-iterated semiquavers: see Example 10i.

Dissonant horns in the bar before letter E disguise what should be a dominant chord preparatory to a re-confirmation of G major (letter E) but the second horn prefers a dissonant C-sharp to the expected C-natural: see Example 10j.

The letter D material returns briefly at E, differently scored now, then a crescendo passage, presaged by a figure in parallel thirds from the clarinets (in the rhythm $7 \{\frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \frac{7}{4} \}$ over bouncing re-iterated semiquavers in strings and tambourine, brings another tutti statement, similarly orchestrated to the one at letter B.

In these tuttis, and in similar ones later in the overture, some thickness of orchestration seemed to be apparent at rehearsals. The dynamics of the trombones, first marked mezzo forte and later poco forte, leggiero, were the devil's advocates. At the final rehearsal, on
the day of the performance, and in the acoustic conditions of the Wollongong Town Hall, the dynamic was further adjusted to *mezzo piano* and the thickness disappeared.

At the *l'istesso tempo* (on page 15 of the score) the cellos attempt to de-stabilize the B-flat major with their chromatic down-scale under the sustained B-flat in violas and fourth horn, and the music appears to settle for a moment on G-flat major in the fourth bar. But the B-flat is removed and the cellos wander up the G-flat scale, waiting expectantly on D-flat (bar 5). Trombones and tympani take this as a cue for B-flat minor, the cellos obligingly falling the minor third (bar 6). Perversely, it seems, the next, lifted D-flat is interpreted by the trombones as C-sharp, the third of A-major (bar 8). Again the cellos fall obligingly. Now it is their turn to name trumps and they fall another step in this chromatic game to A-flat. But the trombones call bluff and provide the D-flat chord that the cellos expected back at bar 5! (bar 11). The cellos retire and the resolving trombone chords, whose lengthening notes give the aural effect of a tempo wind-down, move from D-flat through C-sharp minor (by way of an enharmonic A-flat pedal in the bass instrument), A-flat major, A-flat eleventh (implied), then, with the pedal note falling chromatically to G-natural, to a preparatory E-flat seven. Soft bassoons and rolled tympani add a strong hint of tone colour to this *morendo*; see Example 10k.

Now, our ears surely expect the next chord after E-flat 7 to be A-flat? Well, certainly the 3/2 horn solo that begins the central *not troppo largo* section of the overture traces out a melody that includes all three notes of the A-flat triad, coming to rest on A-flat in the third bar. Our ear must do it all just for now, however. The first supporting chord is D-flat in bar 4, from second clarinet and
bassoons. When the plagal resolution comes in the following bar, the soloist soon adds a confounding sixth, F. Indeed it is the tenth bar before the instruments relish their A-flat major, by which time the soloist is repeating his melody with some variations: see Example 10L.

The horn solo finally rests from its long and admittedly difficult cantilena, the oboes, clarinets and bassoons finally relieving it at letter H with a chorale-like treatment of the horn melody, but this is interrupted in the seventh bar, where we expect an A-flat chord, with the indeterminate progression shown in Example 10m.

The piccolo and the violins seem to assume that the raising of E-flat to E-natural in this progression, and the falling E to D-sharp, as a cue toward A-major, and the piccolo tune (obviously a derivative of the horn one) at letter J is in this “lifted” key, confirmed in soft, tremolando violins. It is to my regret, indeed annoyance, that the piccolist at the first performance, a professional moonlighter, began this tune, without cue from the conductor, a bar early, obviously completely disrupting the harmonic sense of this section.

Through K the music gathers to majestic purpose, reaching a short-lived fortissimo then fading through repeated snippets of the main melody’s second bar.

A sudden roll from the snare drum signals the return of the giocoso section. No early confirmation of the original B-flat, though, for we have a ‘false’ recapitulation with the scalic flourishes of the piccolo and flutes, ostensibly in B-flat major, giving way in the third bar to a G7 chord in re-iterated semiquavers in the horns. The light arabesque above in the first violins gives melodic purpose to these re-iterated chords - a passage which required a lot of rehearsing to
get right in terms of lightness and accuracy.

Clarinet s in thirds then suggest G-minor, but the horns respond with C7 this time!

Since the return of the *giocoso*, then, we have the following harmonic progression: B-flat – G7 – G-minor – C7.

Might F-major be next in this string of great expectations? Certainly the tympanist has had enough of the nonsense and thwacks out two loud, hard Fs, but with an E-flat in between. At last, agree the woodwinds, it is time to get back to the home mode. A two-bar fanfare from all the brass fulfills a helpful *coup-de-grace*: see Example 10n.

The remainder of the "Overture For a Holiday" proceeds in predictable recapitulation and after an eventual series of fully-scored B-flat chords, the brass delight in recalling just the beginning of the big middle-section tune before the re-iterated semiquavers have the very last word: see Example 10o.

Certainly the "Overture For a Holiday" is not, to recall my previously-stated formula, deeply-felt (though the big tune of the middle section has obvious potential for being overplayed), serious (except in the obvious sense of the composer's attitudes and efforts during the work's gestation) nor particularly original. Indeed, music lovers who know their concert repertoire well may spot several influences; in fact, I would venture to suggest that those who are not reminded of any one of a dozen other orchestral works are not good listeners!
COMMENTARY 6  OPUS 11  "STRING QUARTET NO.2"

Autograph dated 28 - 11 - '84.

SCORING: 2 Violins, Viola, Cello.

PERFORMANCE STATUS: Not yet performed.

This is the first of a tercet of works involving string ensembles, written in succession in 1984 and '85. The bolt of promise that set me to writing these works came as a heavy, somewhat troubled chord with the notes A, C, E, F spread out on divided contrabasses, cellos and violins, starting forte and diminishing slowly to pianissimo, with violas attempting to rise out of this murk, from G# to A, B, D, with B and D then re-oscillating and settling onto a long and diminuendo C: see Example 11a.

I imagined this procedure being re-iterated several times, always heavily burdened but eventually lightening and with the higher pitches triumphing, as it were. As I penned this onto manuscript I seemed to be writing music which would equally suit solo or orchestral strings and, uncertain of how the work should go on, I laid it aside. Shortly thereafter, in July 1984, the Petra Quartet arrived in the School of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong for a two-month residency which included a workshop performance of my String Quartet No. 1. Encouraged by the performance and by the individual members of the Petra's expressions of appreciation of my "highly idiomatic" string quartet writing, I proceeded to lay out the music described above for solo strings, feeling that it would become the slow movement of a new second quartet. The oscillating B - D of the opening viola subject soon
formed, now transposed to A–C, the basis of a new fast movement, and seemed to be the way I should begin the work: see Example 11b.

1984, the year of this tercet of works' beginnings, was the year of Wollongong's 150th Anniversary celebrations. Importantly, that year seemed also to mark the beginning of the period of public awareness that Australia's bi-centenary year was a mere four years ahead, and I found myself wishing to celebrate this country's short period of Western history in my musical compositions.

So the new String Quartet No.2 became the first of an intended series of pieces to be sub-titled "Colonial Music Ⅰ,Ⅱ,Ⅲ..." and so on, hopefully culminating in the composition, for performance in 1988, of a work four-part choir and orchestra, a "Colonial Symphony", to be based on "Australian" folksongs. Some Australians find the word "colonial" offensive, and I am sticking to it not out of bloody-mindedness, but to pin-point the era of our Europeanized history which these works celebrate. (And, let's face it, that era lasted until what is in history terms very recently - the British Empire became the British Commonwealth only in 1961, after all!).

So the String Quartet No.2, eventually completed in late 1984 after being composed partly in Wollongong, partly in Sydney and partly in the Fijian Islands, has four sections, played without break, celebrating our landscape, our indigenous people, our flora and fauna and, in the final section, our most famous folk-hero. The sections are named as follows:

i) Seascapes, Aborigines, Cockatoos, 1788
ii) Immovable Escarpment
iii) Spectres, Snakes
iv) Mazurka
In the first movement forward propulsion and tension are achieved by the oscillating notes, a minor third apart, usually A and C later frequently the tritone F - B, see bars 24f, which form the basis of much of the viola part through the movement: see Example 11b.

Perhaps the work's opening oscillation represents the timelessness of this land, its endless, elongated scenery, the sense of uncertainty our first settlers felt as the Sirius and its attendant fleet made their way north along the New South Wales coast towards Botany Bay in those momentous days in January 1788. The violent sforzati in the cello and the double-stopped 'Bartok pizzicati' in the two violins (forming a much-spread-out D11) reinforce this sense of uncertainty, perhaps fear, at the same time functioning as punctuations in the musical sense (see Example 11b).

Now Carl Nielsen's Fifth Symphony begins with a similar oscillation from the violas, appearing, as it were, from outer space and making the listener suddenly aware of time as an absolute physical entity. Later, after the epic side-drum riddled struggle of this work, there is an obvious resolution onto a firm tonal centre that wins out over that tonality-defying first oscillation. My String Quartet No.2 is not concerned with resolution, merely celebration. Indeed, the tonality in this work is less defined, more negated at the end than the beginning.

The Quartet No.2's first movement is highly motivic. The rising-then-falling arpeggiated semiquavers, F-C-F1-C, crescending and landing on an accentuated quarter-note B (see Example 11b), appears many times during the movement, either in its initial function as a pre-flourish to the oscillations, or in counterpoint to them: see Example 11c.
It will be seen, too, that the same motivic flourish is used both arco, as in Example 11c, or pizzicato, as in bars 33f: see Example 11d; and unisonally, as by viola and cello at the very beginning (Example 11b), or in octaves, as by the violins as in Examples 11c and 11d. It is, further, used as itself an oscillation: see Example 11e.

Bar 53 brings the first notational problem. I wished the cello to provide a drone with the suggestion of didjeridu-like sounds. In the score I notate the pitch as low F, with “didjeridu-like pitch variations, bow changes ad-lib” and “dynamic rises and falls ad-lib”. My own inability as a string player disenabled me to mark the score more precisely, but I understand that a simulated didjeridu sound can be achieved by rapidly picking up then dropping the artificial harmonic for the written note (i.e. sounding two octaves higher). I am loth to attempt to change the instructions on the score at this stage, for the technique I have just described is extremely difficult; thus each cellist (and indeed later, at bars 116f, the inner fiddles - later again the viola and cello at bars 193f) will need to attempt his own didjeridu simulation, however it is done.

The whole of the movement from the beginning up to bar 88 is characterised by the oscillation and attendant flourishes. A “second subject” begins anacrusically at bar 89, though this is not to imply anything resembling sonata form. One will look in vain for a development or recapitulation, though the process of development in the whole opening section (bars 1-88) is one of continuous motivic manipulation.

This second subject would appear, in its initial unharmonised appearance in the second violin, to imply that the tonal uncertainty of the opening has found a resolution in E major, though there is no
confirmatory D-sharp; see Example 11f.

A sudden fragment of the oscillation in the viola at bars 94-95, now on B and D natural, would deny E major. Indeed at bar 99 the G sharp of the second violin is heard enharmonically as A flat with the entry of the first violin with the same subject at the distance of a diminished fourth above. However, the D flat which would now confirm A flat major appears only after four bars have passed, and then as a weak, brief passing note: see Example 11g.

The passage beginning with the entry of the viola and cello at bar 104 suggests an E major victory, but the first violin will not concede defeat, while later the viola’s A sharp re-establishes the tonality-denying tritone: see Example 11h.

In the next section the didjeridu simulations and soon the oscillations of the movement’s opening, with the attendant jabs of Bartok pizzicati, are re-worked but cut abruptly short for a wistful hint of the second subject in the viola, now marked ‘calmato’ and supported by sustained thirds, below, in the violins: see Example 11i.

Still later, over a sustained augmented octave in the cello and viola (beginning at the Poco Meng Allegro, bar 183), rapid motifs characterised by the rhythm \[ \begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c} 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 & 7 \\ \hline \end{array} \] and rising from G to C sharp, appear high in the violins. Here the augmented fourth has no such pedantic function as a denial of tonality. It is indeed the “Cockatoos” of the movement’s title: the rising, rhythmic call of the King Parrot which gregariously inhabits Illawarra gardens. This call occurs also in parts of the “Escarpment Music” Opus 13. Repeats of the bird calls are then supported by a full restatement of the second subject, with their non-E major-A flat major characteristics, but now in viola and cello: see Example 11j.

85
The movement ends with a hint of first subject material now in the violins, surrounded by widely-spaced notes, E flat and G sharp, in the viola and cello: see Example 11k.

There remains only an uncertain chord of harmonics to lead us, *attacca*, into the second movement, "Immovable Escarpment". The opening of this movement presents the original "heavy, somewhat troubled chord" of which I wrote at the beginning of this chapter. The viola melody rises out of this chord's sostenuto and this instrument, which carried the weight of the propulsive oscillations in the first movement, is melodically dominant for much of the second. The movement is a very slow *lento* and is partly used again, in scoring of full strings and percussion, as the second movement of "Escarpment Music". It is certainly the heart of that work and in its quartet guise it similarly attempts to convey the view towards the craggy, timeless mountain landscape that overlooks the Illawarra so stubbornly, proudly, paternally. Naturally in the later work I explore this landscape more extensively; in the Quartet No.2 its character is best summarised by the lines from a poem by Roland Robinson that I quote at the head of the movement:

"I lived where mountains moved and stood
round me; I saw their natures change,
deepen and fire from mood to mood,
and found the kingfisher-blue range,
and found, where huge, dark heliotrope
shadows pied a range's power,
mauve-purple at the foothill's slope"
The sustained, dying F major notes of the opening bars in the violins and cello are frankly an attempt to “paint” the stillness of the late afternoon escarpment top. The great Australian landscape painter, Tom Roberts, once described a painting as a “suspended moment of one mood or idea”, acknowledging the advantage of music and poetry in their having a time dimension.

In this music I have attempted to suggest Roberts’ “suspended moments”, in this case the moments of elation, wonderful, calm elation, that I experienced when taking in the view northwards along the escarpment late on a still, fine autumn afternoon during my six-year residency at Farmborough Heights on the escarpment’s foothills. Onto this calm, mauve-purple landscape intrudes the solo viola; a rapt onlooker, perhaps?: see Example 11L.

The opening procedures are repeated after a general pause, again after another, when the pitches stretch upwards and downwards to a B flat chord, our rapt onlooker’s spirits elevated: see Example 11m.

Sustained, calm sounds continue, the landscape "...firing from mood to mood", until the general pause at bar 280. Then the violins take up a dialogue, the first winding in sinewy counterpoint around the second’s new glance at the viola’s opening melody: see Example 11n.

The counterpoint continues with the re-entry of the two lower instruments and the movement gathers dynamic momentum towards its only fortissimo section, the tension easing again with a new, dying chord at bar 302, the first violin then undertaking further variation of the viola melody: see Example 11o.

The movement winds down again, eventually re-establishing the F major chord, now pianissimo in low second violin and cello sul tasto as the first violin and viola hint at a stuttering motive, falling in
The third movement of the Quartet is a fast one-in-a-bar bearing the sub-title “Spectres, Snakes”. All the instruments play ‘con sordino’ for most of the movement, until the general pause at bar 431, and several non-ordinario playing styles are called for – col legno and saltando bowing, and rapid, short rhythmic motifs played by the knuckles on the back of the instruments. There are also several abrupt changes from pizzicato to arco and back again, and quite sudden, often violent changes of dynamics. Ideally the piece, whose recurrent semi-quavers (sometimes in triplets) suggest a moto perpetuo, should be played as fast as possible. At the time of writing the Quartet is unperformed, and I have suggested dotted-crotchet = 60 on the score. This tempo, I hope, will allow the performers the security of playing the piece “as fast as they can” rather than “as fast as they can’t”!

Indeed, it would not be at all inappropriate if this third movement were found to be a ‘nightmare’ to play. This music was written concurrently with my rediscovery of those classic short stories from nineteenth century Australian literature, the “Bush Studies” by Barbara Baynton. Any Australian of my own generation can only imagine the harsh inhospitality of pioneer life in the outback: the tragedy, terror, back-breaking toil and a nightmare impression that the bush was an enemy, harbouring all manner of dangers - poisonous snakes, drought, fire, loneliness. Frequently these Baynton stories contain the image of the lonely bush hut besieged by a terrifying figure who is also a terrified figure. On reading these stories one certainly sympathises with Barbara Baynton’s desire to free her spirit from these nightmare obsessions: she was, after all, a survivor of the bush experience.

I wished the Quartet’s third movement to convey the world of
these "Bush Studies". The various knockings, scrapings, rattlings and short a-rhythmical thematic motifs which intrude upon the moto perpetuo of the cello part are all part of the afore-described nightmare world. Gustav Mahler might have marked each one of these sounds to be played 'wie ein Naturlaut' - in this case the sounds of a terrifying 'Natur'.

An examination of the first forty bars of this movement will reveal some unifying structural shadows as well. The rising-then-falling semiquaver motif of the very opening of the Quartet now forms the beginning of the moto perpetuo in the cello, while, at bar 343, the viola gives a new, rhythmically twisted, thrice-repeated figure containing the same notes. This particular 3-bar figure recurs frequently, each time with a new rhythmic twist, creating a sensation of being "rooted to the spot": see Example 11p.

And, further, the *pianississimo* semiquavers which pervade all four lines of scoring at bars 420f bring forth the first movement's obsessive oscillations once more: see Example 11q.

The tempo changes to *poco meno presto* at bar 436, and remains so until the close - or anti-close - of the movement. Here the sustained chords from the "Immovable Escarpment" are a cue for further musical spectres. Firstly, the first movement's Bartók pizzicati (bars 440-446) and subsequently the viola then first violin in turn allude to the melody first encountered in the viola part at the beginning of the second movement: see Example 11r.

There remains only a further, short-lived series of harmonically and rhythmically uncertain pizzicati and, after a bar's rest, two bars 'piu lento' with a thrice-played, tenuous chord of F major, with B natural added to create again the tritone of the work's very opening: see.
In the fourth and final movement I pay homage to our most famous folk hero, Ned Kelly. A.A Phillips once defined Romanticism as "the protest against the gap which yawns between the felt potentialities of the human spirit and the limitations of human circumstance" (A.A. Phillips: The Australian Tradition - Studies in a Colonial Culture, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1958). The rebellion of Ulysses against Telemachus - the spirit against circumstance - is a clear tradition of our national legend, says Phillips, and yet we have a strangely equivocal attitude to our "generous outlaws": Australians alone still see Ned Kelly, Ben Hall, Mad Dog Morgan as villains to shuffle as far out of sight as possible. Robin Hood, Rob Roy, Hary Janos, Billy the Kid and the rest are proudly accepted as national figures. As Phillips further points out, Kelly may not yet be far enough away in time, that the Kelly legend "lacks the mellowing patina of age". So Kelly is still something of an anti-hero.

This apparent cringing concerns me little in the Quartet No.2. The fourth movement is a passacaglia derived from the folksong "The Death of Ned Kelly", written in the nineteen-forties by John Manifold and published subsequently in the Penguin Book of Australian Songs, of which Manifold was editor. A letter to and reply from Penguin books regarding permission to quote Manifold's tune are appended to this thesis.

Marked 'non troppo lento' in my Quartet, the published edition referred to has the marking 'Mazurka' and I have simply lifted this marking for the title of the final movement.

A ground appears in short pizzicato cello notes at the outset: see Example 11t.
The viola then takes up the ground 'tremolando' with characteristic syncopations: see Example 11u.

The cello joins in the viola's repeat statement, apparently uncertain of its correct octave: see Example 11v.

The fourth appearance of the ground is in the second violin, again tremolando, and now underpinned by an E-pedal low in the cello: see Example 11w.

Then comes the first violin's ground, the viola now providing the E-pedal, *non-vibrato*, at an octave higher than the cello's now-gone pedal. Cello then first violin interject with the odd structural shadow, the cello's figure being rhythmically prophetic of the start of the "Death of Ned Kelly" tune.

The ensuing two statements of the ground are from second violin and viola, each supported by the other in turn, at a major third below. The ground is now in long, vibrant notes, the tremolando left behind. The cello and first violin pizzicati surrounding this pair of ground statements is the tune "The Death of Ned Kelly" a-rhythmically disguised (see bars 512f). Following this, the bar-and-a-third flurry of pizzicato in the cello, marked so as to be played as fast as possible, is, it will be seen, a highly compressed eighth appearance of the ground: see Example 11x.

This is in fact the ground's last appearance in any undisguised form, though it may be traced through the next six bars as the Ned Kelly tune attempts to gain ascendancy over its ground: see Example 11y.

The music dwells for several bars on the rising-fourth-then-repeated-notes of the tune's opening phrase, after which the second violin and cello attempt to re-establish the earlier tremolando version of the ground. But over this comes a sudden
restatement of the Quartet's very opening motive with its obsessive oscillating notes high in the first violin, and the viola, also in its upper range, establishes an obsessive interrupted quintuplet, the second violin now dropping out and the cello also establishing a low ostinato with a characteristic *glissando* separated by a pizzicato note: see Example 11z.

These three ostinati now established, the second violin intones the tune "The Death of Ned Kelly", very slightly rhythmically altered (vis-a-vis the published version) and instructed to play the tune simply and at a tempo slightly slower than that maintained by the ostinating instruments: see Example 11aa (Manifold's tune) and Example 11bb (my version of the tune, with its lamenting fall to end on the penultimate-but-one note, E, and lacking the final - optimistic? - lift to G-sharp).

Thus in the closing pages of the Quartet the passacaglia, normally one of music's most rigorous forms, has become an "anti-passacaglia", a procedure without its logical culmination: our anti-hero's death-tune finished, the second violin rejoins its fellows in 3/4 with some sustained F-sharps and G-sharps. The cellist loses its pizzicato and its glissando, the first violin and viola only maintain their ostinati until the abrupt and unresolved close of the work. The music takes its sudden leave on the nebulous pitch combinations of F - G♯ - C♯ - D.

Will the listener perceive our nation's "strangely equivocal attitude" to Ned Kelly in this equivocal leave-taking, or will the whole final movement serve simply as an extended lament? I look forward with great interest to the answer to this question.
Example IIk: (Bar 211)
Example 11p:  (Bar 231)

R.H. Knuckles on back of fiddle
Example II.9:

(con sord.)

col legno (con sord.)

(Con sord.)

(mp)
Example II w:  (Bar 495)

Example II x: leggiero  a tempo

Example II v:  poco f  p  
Example Iia:
(Tune as published)

Example Iib:
(My version)
play it simply:

Vh 2
COMMENTARY 7  OPUS 12 "NIBLETS"

Autograph dated December 1984

SCORING: 2 Violins, Cello.


This second of the three consecutive works for strings is scored for two violins and cello, not essentially because that combination, lacking a viola, was typical of the string trios playing around officers' messes in our colonial days (given this group of works' connections with those times, see Commentary 6, above), but rather the young players who requested this work played those particular instruments. Three fairly advanced high school music-elective students requested a short work from me in late 1984 to give them an opportunity to perform, as they put it, "something fairly contemporary but not too difficult for us".

The ensuing work consists of three compressed movements with a total duration of about seven minutes. I chose this format - several short movements rather than a single expanse - for no better reason than variety being, as one of our wise forefathers observed, the spice of life. Shortness tends, in my work, also to be equatable with lightness, and I usually compose a shortish work following the completion of a larger-scale one ("Champagne Flutes" and the "Overture For a Holiday" following the first String Quartet and, later, "Outlaw!" following the "Escarpment Music", for instance). The title needed
an element of humour, this giving me some bother at first.

"These little nibbles need a slightly frivolous title......"; when I thought out the problem in these precise words the rest followed quickly. I soon dropped the second 'b' from "Nibblets", punning on the size of pen-tip I used in writing the manuscript: my love of acronyms or other word puzzles is a terrible weakness!

In writing "Niblets" I kept to traditional barred notation, though admittedly the same players performed later in the "Escarment Music", with its boxed notation, without bother. In the first and second of the "Niblets" the regularity of the bars has several interruptions, in the first piece involving only a change of counts per bar, in the second changes of pulse as well - 2/4 alternating with 3/8. There is also a single bar of 7/16 (bar 35), but this gave the players no bother after the first couple of rehearsals.

Few special "effects" are required in this work. There are some instances of 'Bartók pizzicati', for all three players in the first and second pieces. At bars 19f in the first piece the second violin is required to play these as fast as possible, notated as in Example 12a.

The cellist has a glissando following its lone 'Bartók pizzicato' note at bar 39. A slide of only a minor third or so is possible in this instance, given the quickly-fading pizzicato sound. Cellist Trudi Zalewski made this bar sound convincing in the first performance, a copy of the programme of which is appended to this document. (The intended cellist, Fiona Henderson, was indisposed for this first performance).

Artificial harmonics are avoided except in the first violin part at bars 25 and 26 in the first piece, though there are some places in the muted third piece where some of the high notes would obviously be
picked up as harmonics (bars 12f). The cellist's final D-flats should be played as read.

"Niblets" presents, like the immediately-preceding String Quartet No.2, thematic material which is used again in the ensuing "Escarpmnt Music". My comments in the previous chapter regarding this last-named piece, and now my confessions regarding "Niblets", may suggest that the "Escarpmnt Music" is some sort of strange hybrid of its two predecessors. I hope I can show in the next chapter that this is not so! Certainly "Niblets" should be heard as a work of pure music, independently of its neighbours, despite the final "Canto"'s serving later as "Immutable".

In the first niblet, "Duets", the instruments play in pairs, as the title would obviously suggest. The first violin's rising-then-falling dactyls and the expansive notes on the same pitch that follow are the gist of the dialogue. The second violin opines that the dactyls should all fall at first, and with its entry at bar 6 the work's opening tritone is now contracted to a perfect 4th, the second's momentary B-flat creating a pitch tension with the first violin's sustained B-natural. The melodic F-B-natural tritone of bar 1 is now used vertically with the second violin's second note: see Example 12b.

The duet continues at bar 14 with the second violin apparently commencing the proceedings all over again, but thrusting the argument aside in favour of re-inforcing the melodic tritones, forte subito, after only one bar. Subsiding and resting its case again, the second violin falls tritone-wise from B-flat to a low sustained E, for which pitch, two octaves higher, the first violin now strives, after a written out ornament. In the ensuing four bars the first violin's apparent appassionato is contested by the second violin's intermittent 'Bartók
pizzicati' notes on, again, the F-B tritone of the opening. The pizzicati eventually become *in modo ordinario* as these players complete, apparently inconclusively, their dialogue: see Example 12c.

The first duet ends, after the pervasive tritones in the second violin are spent, with a suspended F-sharp high in the first violin. The cello's choosing of that pitch would seem to suggest a duet of that instrument with the first violin, but in fact the second violin is the first duet partner for the tenor instrument.

The cellist would seem to prefer the expansive *cantando* notes which formed, as it were, the second part of the work's opening "theme" (bars 4-7), but the second violin, cheekily entering at bar 29 at a pitch a major third below the cello, puts in a quiet case for the dactyls. The cello eventually pays only cursory acknowledgment to these before crescending suddenly for a long re-iteration of *detache* tritone (D-G sharp), over which the second must plead a now more impassioned case for the dactyls: see Example 12d.

The sudden tritonal pizzicati from all three instruments at bars 38-39 would suggest a grudging agreement, at last, if only a momentary one: see Example 12e.

But the cellist has a new case to plead: the dactyls are reversed to become trochees, though gentle, whimsical ones with characteristic \( \text{\textsuperscript{2}} \slash \text{\textsuperscript{3}} \) rhythm rather than the \( \text{\textsuperscript{3}} \slash \text{\textsuperscript{2}} \) which would precisely mirror the dactyls. This passage is in fact the final duet, the cellist now in dialogue with the first violin, who still prefers dactyl rhythms to trochaic ones, though now pleads the case for them gently and, as first propounded at the second violin's very first entry, they now fall in pitch: see Example 12f.

A grumble or two from the cellist over the first violin's
eventually-reached low, sustained B-naturals and D-naturals makes little impact and the "Duets" movement would seem to be dying away with a few wisps of the conversations that have been: a sustained harmonic, a couple of trochees, some pizzicati on the F-B tritone.

Indeed the tritones have the last word: those in the violins (D-A flat and F-B) are now heard as a diminished seventh chord "Bartok pizzicati", then, on the same notes, arco as the music diminuendos away. The cellist, however, insists on perfect fourths as though to brush aside all this radical tritone nonsense: see Example 12g.

"Commotion" is a presto movement, short and headlong, its vigour spent fairly quickly. Aspiring to the condition of the dance, it is too fickle in its metric course to achieve this aspiration.

Even some of the lively five- and seven-in-a-bar dances from the Eastern Mediterranean would scarcely fit this piece, though here lies one of the impulses for the piece: I had been attempting to remember some Greek dance steps, learned several years earlier, at about the time "Niblets" was being committed to manuscript. The note E is obsessive in the opening twenty bars or so, though it never arrives at the E-major chord it seems to strive for. Something almost analyzably E-minor is as near as it goes: see Example 12h.

Later, in the passage beginning at bar 26, the obstinate semiquavers centre around D, though once again this is not associated with a major or minor mode. Later, Ds are sustained in all three instruments in turn (bars 38f), the other instruments excitedly pressing on with boisterous semiquaver patterns against each D.

The pitch centre 'lifts' from D to E again in the final leggierc section (bars 51f) and, at last (bars 55-56) an apparent confirmation of mode, but E-mixolydian rather than major or minor. But the three
protagonists give the melting pot another quick mix as this short movement ends abruptly: see Example 12i.

The final "Canto", with its opening sustained notes separated by abrupt turns, has a melismatic quality which gives the movement its title.

The con sordino requirement in all three instruments, and the marking piano, dolce e serena, encourage a distant, carolling sound, and while no shepherds and shepherdesses tend sheep on the foothills of the Illawarra escarpment, it was this serene, viewed-from-afar quality which I felt was appropriate for the final section of the ensuing "Escarpen Music" for full strings, thus the piece recurs in the enlarged scoring of the slightly later work.

The first long and sustained notes in the opening "Duets" movement of "Niblets" were a series of high B-naturals. This same note pervades the opening of "Canto". Time within these Bs is marked by a series of rapid four-note turns, irregularly recurring: see Example 12j. Unity with "Duets" is further apparent, indeed, in these turns: twice in that movement, at bar 18 (first violin) and bar 32 (second violin), similar turns were used to give emphasis to higher notes that followed. In "Canto" the turns acquire a falling third, usually major, between the penultimate and ultimate notes, rather than the major seconds of the earlier movement: compare Examples 12k and 12L.

Further unity between the outer movements comes in the second violin's initial entry at bar 6 (see Example 12j), the B-flat apparently untroubled by its intrusion on the well-established B-naturals.

This piece is frankly evocative and as such I feel it works better in the "Escarpen Music". Restricted to a lighter mode of expression, it seems to miss something of the picturesqueness that the larger
scoring allows, and at the first performance of "Niblets" I felt that this movement worked less well than the previous two. However, I confess that my colleagues present on that occasion thought otherwise.

It is my intention to reserve further introspection on this movement until the next commentary.
COMMENTARY 8 OPUS 13 ESCARPMENT MUSIC

Autograph dated 22nd February 1985

SCORING: Violins (8 parts divisi), Violas (4 parts divisi), Cellos (4 parts divisi), Percussion (3 players, first requiring temple blocks, second requiring soprano glockenspiel, claves and high tam-tam, third requiring snare drum and suspended cymbal).

PERFORMANCE STATUS: First performance took place at Union Hall, University of Wollongong, on 7th December 1985, by the University of Wollongong Conservatorium String Orchestra, with percussionists Michael Dunn, Paul Dunn and Robert Laurie, conducted by the composer.

I have previously indicated, in my introductory paragraph to the chapter (above, Commentary 6) devoted to my String Quartet No.2, that the starting point for all these string ensemble works, Opp.11-13, was the "Immovable Escarpment" piece, conceived for full strings but then first written up as the slow movement of the Second Quartet, wherein it is given the latter title and inscribed with the lines from a poem by Roland Robinson, also quoted in the earlier commentary of this document. From the ascribed title followed the alliterative others which were given to the four sections of the larger-scale work: Impervious, Immovable, Immemorial, Immutable.

My experience of the Illawarra escarpment as viewed from my then residence on its foothills is the nub of this work. It is also a memorial to Bessie Foskett, a friend and tireless promoter of the cause of fine music in Wollongong for many years, whose death occurred during the very week the "Escarpment Music" was completed. Her home, like mine, afforded a view to the mountains,
and she spoke of them often and with great affection. Bessie was also a string player, so the dedication of the score to her memory seemed manifoldly appropriate.

In the short programme notes I prepared for the first performance of the "Escarpoint Music" I wrote of the opening section:

"Impervious - to man, sun, wind, rain and to its harboured avifauna." The title quality is represented by the slow, syncopated 3/4 ground bass played in unison by the three contrabasses: see Example 13a.

The eight-bar duration of this ground suggests at this point a passacaglia, the form I used in the finale of the String Quartet No.2 and indeed it is the same ground that is used, appropriately transposed, in both works. Such a form may not at first thought seem to belong in so frankly a 'landscape' work as the "Escarpoint Music", but elements of the form are nevertheless present, certainly in the additive, accumulative procedures of the orchestration over the three minutes or so of the ground's currency. On the ground's first repeat a lone suspended cymbal, rolling very softly, adds pregnancy to the atmosphere, then at figure 1 the four violas, each with its own "box" of musical material, twitter in with the first avifaunin stirrings of the piece.

In this movement (and, later, in part of the "Immemorial" movement), I wished to allow considerable freedom for each player from others in his sub-section, thus the Lutoslawski type of notation of boxed information, to be repeated as indicated by the ensuing wavy line until required to stop. Time is marked in approximate durations between major new events - i.e. entries of new instrumental sub-sections - with cue letters corresponding to
these. The conductor need indicate downbeats only at the cue letters, but in the first performance I found it necessary to occasionally re-inforce the contrabasses' three-in-a-bar so that they did not stray from their instruction, at figure 1, to "keep tempo strict, stay together".

The University of Wollongong Conservatorium String Orchestra is after all, a training orchestra, and the young players found my work strange and difficult. It is a matter of pride, I feel, that at the public performance the young players delivered an exceptionally competent and atmospheric account of a work which is essentially written for professional players.

The violas twitter obsessively at their first entry. Note the melodic similarity of the first viola's opening notes to that of the Second Quartet's very beginning (compare example 11b, above): see Example 13b.

All four violas twitter in rhythmic non-synchronisation around notes within the same octave. The cello notes at the ensuing figure 2 now fill the pitch 'gap' between the violas and the very low ground bass, still moving unperturbed far below in the contrabasses. The cellos have a tempo of approximately a hundred quarter-notes to the minute, quicker than the violas' sixty. Then the claves at a different tempo again. By the time violins 5-8 enter at figure 4, the accumulating layers of twittering sounds leave us in no doubt, especially given the subsequent long crescendo of the box-notated instruments, that we are no longer viewing the escarpment, but are indeed right there in its lively, bushy rainforests.

In my imagination I dared think of the random mixture of sounds of birds, insects, lizards and the like. This whole opening section of the music more than bemused the original audience: one
friend later swore he could have also heard a few rattling beer cans! I wondered for a moment whether this was defence mechanics or a genuine sympathy; certainly I would agree that parts of the amazing bushwalks along the Illawarra escarpment have been more than a little man-spoiled.

The crescended twitterings cut off abruptly at figure 7, leaving the outer pitches atmospherically suspended, re-inforcing the "Impervious" quality of the landscape. The top four violins hold an inverted G major7 chord, very softly and non-vibrato....(see Example 13c).......while, far below, the contrabasses complete their final playing of the ground.

The widely-differentiated sonorities continue, fading niente at figure 11, but resuming at figure 12 after a few distant bush noises from claves and snare drum. These and other rattlings continue until the end of the movement, interrupted only by the wistful, sighing violin solo at figure 15, a solitary bushwalker left on the benighted landscape, perhaps.

"Immovable" then follows attacca. The inverted F-major chord of the opening bars of this movement in its Second Quartet guise is coloured in the "Escarpment Music" by the addition of low Es in the cellos, so that the high Fs in the violins have a tonal function as minor sixths added to an A-minor chord.

The violas' tune strives to 'lift' out of this sombre, burdened minor, its upward movement anchoring on rinforzando middle Cs before it droops downwards again within the second of the widely-spaced A m6(m) chords: see Example 13d.

Given that this movement is the section that kicked me off in the direction of all three of these works, it may be said that the "Immovable " piece is the spiritual centre of the Quartet and the
"Escarption Music". I indicated in the Quartet commentary that this movement is my attempt to capture 'suspended moments' of the view to the hilltops in the late afternoon. Autumn afternoons afforded the most light-spectacular views, the setting sun being then in such a position as to throw onto the eastern slopes, a kind of 'European' light effect. I felt, when I experienced these afternoons, a certain twang of the same spent-summer (slightly sad but elatedly peaceful) atmosphere I remember from several consecutive European Septembers in the early nineteen-seventies.

Originally my intention was to transcribe the whole of the Second Quartet's "Immovable Escarpment". Considerations of overall balance in the larger work, containing as it does a considerable amount of other slowish music, led me to a decision to use only the first sixty bars or so of the original setting (as far as bar 279 in the Quartet). Essentially, in the larger work, parts are allocated to the same instruments as in the Quartet, but there are inevitable re-spacings and doublings of parts to suit the larger ensemble.

Dynamics had to be adjusted during the rehearsals for this movement. The sustained chords (violins, cellos, contrabasses) had to be considerably marked down and the moving viola part up. I failed to consider, when I wrote in the original dynamics, that numerically the violins, cellos and contrabasses would outweigh the violas, with the latter's melodic line so disguised within the sustained chords. The orchestra had sixteen violins, so there were in practice two players per violin part rather than the one that I had envisaged. Six violas, two of them very weak, were available. Had there been eight, and of equal excellence, then the original dynamics may have been without need of adjustment. This will become clear only when a professional string orchestra, numerically balanced,
plays the piece.

After a barline fermata, a series of abrupt 'Bartók pizzicati', rising through all the strings from contrabasses to top violins (figure 26), and accompanied by some rattlings from the percussion, interrupt the peace of the second movement. I adjusted dynamics here too during the early rehearsals. All players have, now, at least a *forte*. The original crescendo through the instruments, low to high, simply did not work. The adjustments allowed this sudden interruption to have fresh, considerable timbral and gestural impact: see Example 13e. The pianissimo chord in the contrabasses left suspended after this last sudden interruption form the link to the next movement, “Immemorial”. In the first part of this movement freedom from the barline is restored and we have a return to the sound world of the bush. Punctuation in the music is achieved by recurrent, abrupt gestures from the cellos: see Example 13f.

Figures 30 and 31 need conducting, for the benefit of the violins, which must sound precise and together. Their melodic motive mimics the call of a bush bird, whose identity I have not established, but whose call I have often heard from the distant, bushy slopes: see Example 13g.

Other species begin their distant, ever-closening twitter at figure 33; at figure 34 a crimson rosella’s call is heard in the top-most violins, its third repeat joined at a lower octave in the violas. Note the variation in the calls here: these birds, frequent and gregarious backyard visitors, call the figure on D. Occasionally one would drop the third sound to C-sharp. I know not the ornithological reason for this; I know only the exhilaration of their call.
The 'jig' tempo marking presages the dance-like section to follow shortly, at figure 41. This is immediately heralded by an excited snare-drum passage in a single bar of 9/4.

The dance section, a considerably expanded version of the "Commotion" movement in "Niblets", might be said to be the single section of the work where the view is from the escarpment rather than to it or within it: we see the liveliness and bustle of the city and suburbs below.

At figure 46 a new dance, more specifically jig-like and rhythmically regular, begins. After a few bars of introductory flourishes an obstinate dance step begins in the cellos, lightly bowed over some treading, descending pizzicati in the contrabasses: see Example 13h.

Suddenly we look back in time from our mountain-top vantage point. The Irish twang of the underlying jig, and the snippet of the tune "Botany Bay" from the solo violin just before figure 48 put us into a fairly specific time-warp.

The music momentarily gathers in exuberance, the violins joining for a fragment or two of the "Botany Bay" tune, the violas offering a variation: see Example 13i.

Tonal interest is created throughout this section by the pull of various easily-analysable modes: F-mixolydian in the cellos' jig pattern, the contrabass tread containing a B-natural to destabilise the F-mode, G-lydian in the solo violin's "Botany Bay" and E-major for the violas at their entry after figure 48. The last falls cheekily to E-minor at their sautillé, but by then our brief glimpse of 1788 is vanishing as most of the instruments drop out, leaving once more the contrabasses with some brooding low notes: see Example 13j.
"Immutable" begins with another wistful violin solo, our solitary onlooker recalling for a moment a snippet or two of the sounds he has heard previously. Onto the solo violin's dying C-sharp intrudes the B-naturals of the second, third and fourth violins. This now is the music I first used in the final "Canto" of "Niblets", but infinitely more effective, I feel, in the larger orchestration, given this music's sonorousness and expansiveness of phrase. It was the sonority of this final section of the work that provoked the most positive comments from that first audience, who claimed to have found an uncanny psychic equivalent in this piece to the presence of the mountain landscape most of them have experienced so closely.

The long, sustained notes high in the violins are the essence of this movement, the chief means of my attempt to create a calm, timeless sonority. In the musical sense time is marked by the four-note turns which wind about the main notes, be they the original high B-naturals, the dissonant B-flats from the fifth and sixth violins, or the eventual Cs to which the music has descended by the point of entry of the lowest violins. A rattle or two - *col legno* - in the sixth and eighth violins - leads to a passage (figure 52) where all violins and the middle violas sustain a high, shimmering tremolando on a C-major triad, supported by a soft roll on suspended cymbal. The first viola, now our solitary onlooker, presents an expansive melody derived from the movement's opening: see Example 13k.

A sighing, chordal motive (moving from a D-flat augmented chord through A-flat 7 to a widely-spread G-flat major) from the violas and first and second cellos interrupts the rapt mood briefly, leaving just D and F suspended in the violas, falling then semitonally to C-sharp and E. The third cellist wistfully takes up
a fragment of melody on behalf of our solitary onlooker and a lone pianissimo stroke from the tam-tam augurs the onset of darkness.

But the violins, high in their range again, shimmer a little then gather strength, crescending to forte after a whooping glissando. They land on a D-flat, and punctuations continue quickly down through the instruments - E-flat, D-flat, C, low C, very low C - as the music, its energies spent, begins its long wind down into night. Tonally all draws inevitably towards C-major as, in this final section, the long notes and their attendant turns take their leave: see Example 131.

The eighteen-minute "Escarpment Music" is the largest of my works to achieve performance so far (notwithstanding the larger orchestration of the "Overture For a Holiday"). My "long wind down into night" description, above, of the work's closing pages should not mislead the listener into searching for a "morning, noon and night" significance in the work, into imposing a "Summer Day on the Mountain" or "Alpensinfonie" programme: rather it is an evocation, or at least an attempt at evoking a personal view - mine - of the escarpment, of the life forces and light forces within it and around it.

Before any further performances of the work take place, some editing of the score needs to be attended to. I have already mentioned the adjusted dynamics in the second movement. Similarly, some of the percussion dynamics are in need of further consideration. In this respect one of the problems in the first performance was in no way the fault of the players, but rather the restricted size of the stage in the Union Hall in the University of Wollongong. Even with front extensions the total available depth is only about five metres, pathetically inadequate for the forces
required: quite apart from the closely-cramped strings, the various percussion instruments and their executants were unable to be placed at a suitably recessed distance. Obviously some of the percussion sounds used in the "Escarpment Music" are required to suggest actual distance and the lack of convincing perspective in this regard was the single disappointment I experienced. At this moment, no ideal seating diagram is prefaced to the score. However, an "off-stage ad libitum" placing of the percussion would not (in any section of the score except the "Impervious" movement, where there is a snare-drum solo which needs to be forwardly placed), after some experimentation in rehearsal, be inappropriate.

A cut of three bars, those in 7/8 time immediately prior to figure 45, was made for the Union Hall performance, more or less at the eleventh hour, largely because the young players could not get them absolutely right. I have an equivocal attitude to these bars but do not intend excising them absolutely until I hear a professional string ensemble play the work. The second of the three bars, certainly, is weakly scored and probably needs deletion.
Example 13a: Calmo (J. c. 50)

Example 13b:

Example 13c: (J. c. 60)
COMMENTARY 9 OPUS 14 OUTLAW!

Autograph dated April '85

SCORING: No specific instruments or voices. Several pitched and non-pitched sound sources are required. Electronically produced sound effects may also be used.

PERFORMANCE STATUS: See body of commentary.

The score for "Outlaw!" is a single leaf displaying at its centre a Nolanesque profile of Ned Kelly, a pistol in his outstretched hand. In the background is the silhouette of a group of trees (this line-drawing also may be interpreted as one of the musical cues). Various cue numbers and musical symbols are super-imposed onto the Kelly figure, appearing as adornments to his pistol, sleeve, hand, coat and helmet. On the lower left appears the head of a bushranger, hanging in a noose. Framing the scene is a near-continuous stave, three sides of which contain the tune "The Bold Kelly Gang", written in G-major and without words. Sub-cue numbers at each phrase of this tune suggest its possible treatment as a round of up to five parts. The fourth side of the stave, along the lower edge of the score, is a series of musical symbols obviously indicating the use of pitchless instruments, high, medium and low.

Suitable for a class or group performance, where most of the participants need have only a basic knowledge of pitch and rhythm notation, the symbols can be performed in whatever cue order, combinations and with whatever sound sources are available. The more "precise" symbols, such as at cue 6, written in alto clef on Kelly's sleeve, may be played literally as shown, or alternately the clef may be treated as merely a graphic ornament and ignored, in which case the notes that follow may be read in whatever clef. All
cues may be read upside-down, if desired, except "The Bold Kelly Gang".

Obviously the written score should be treated as a catalyst to the performers' imagination, and I envisage that no two realisations of the work would be alike. I suggest in some short notes on the reverse of the score that in a "purely musical" realisation a time limit of ten minutes should apply, and indeed much shorter realisations may be effective.

Furthermore, the score may be taken as a catalyst to a more expansive, multi-dimensional treatment of the subject, and in this way the "Outlaw" concept may be extended not to mean specifically Ned Kelly, nor even any bushranger, highwayman or bank robber. I can envisage "The Bold Kelly Gang" part of the score being omitted altogether in such a case, and another identifying tune being substituted.

At the University of Wollongong during February and March of 1986 I directed a multi-dimensional realisation of "Outlaw!" with fifteen School of Creative Arts bachelor degree first year students working in their Inter-Arts Studies course component. The score triggered off much discussion among these students of the concept of "outlaw" in the historical and contemporary senses, and the particular outlaws eventually chosen by them for the realisation of my score were the Kelly gang, bikies, and, interestingly, computers. The musical symbols at cue numbers 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11 and 12 became pre-recorded percussion sounds from various sound sources including electronic bleeps for the computers in a short scene where the participating students simply crossed the stage as black-bedecked, de-humanised monitors. Cue 2 became the warning coo-ees and screeches of the Kelly gang's lookout scout; cue 6
triggered off the use (no pun intended here!) of a recording of Mozart's String Quartet in A, K.464 (part of the first movement, only) as accompaniment to a nineteenth-century picnic on the grass which the Kelly gang abruptly interrupt, later, after the Mozart has given way to cue 9, which was danced by the male picnickers as they became inebriated.

Cue 10, which without too much poring will reveal itself to the knowledgeable musician as a dance tune from Aaron Copland's "Billy the Kid", was used (actually a snippet from a recording of the Copland suite) as a dance by the police before their heated exchange of words with the Kelly gang as the latter confronted them suddenly. The actual words exchanged here were insults paraphrased from Ned Kelly's letters.

Cue 1 was taken as a landscape feature, and was the catalyst to the incorporation of the concept of perspective, particularly in relation to the illusions of close and far distance created by 'dead' ground. Though the ultimate twenty-minute conglomeration of scenes was presented to an indoor audience, with painted scenery, stage props, costume, theatrical lighting and hi-fi systems, much of the preparatory work was done outdoors, specifically in the hills around Jamberoo near Wollongong. The discoveries made about perspective were used to convey the gradual approach, with attendant effects of changing sound and size, of the bikie gang as it approached along the undulating road through the high hills. The "Bold Kelly Gang" tune was omitted altogether.

If the realisation was ultimately a collection of half-a-dozen undeveloped and barely connected sub-scenes, it was probably better, rather than poorer, for that. No highly sophisticated, theatrical work was intended and the fragmentary nature of the
realisation was quite in keeping with that of the written score itself. I look forward to "Outlaw!" finding its way into other arts-fusion and musical groups for further, different realisations.
One does not have to be a composer to feel the thrall of the sea and its shores. The glitter, motion and power of water have, however, repeatedly called forth musical associations from creative minds, the oceans having exerted a magical sway over Mendelssohn, Debussy, Rimsky-Korsakov, Vaughan Williams, Frank Bridge, just to cite the composers of the most renowned sea pieces. Debussy, in the shadow of whose "La Mer" lie most other sea pieces, almost became a sailor, and even if in the event he did not proceed to the naval career of his colleagues Rimsky-Korsakov and Roussel, his fascination with water obviously remained a sincere passion: one thinks not just of "La Mer" but of 'Sirenes' from the "Nocturnes", "Reflections dans d'Eau", "La Cathedrale Engloutie" and some extraordinary scenes in "Pelleas et Melisande".

Debussy's "La Mer" is a twenty-three minute evocation, a three-panelled fresco of extraordinary economy and beauty. Vaughan Williams' "A Sea Symphony", a sixty-five minute work composed at
about the same time, uses the additional forces of a large choir and wanders off into the philosophical musings of the Walt Whitman poetry used as text. Feeling in awe of these works, and sharing their creators’ fascination with the sea, my own sea-demon was partly exorcised in 1984 by my two lightish works, “Champagne Flutes” and “Overture For a Holiday”, but I emphasize partly exorcised. These pieces, after all, celebrate little more than the relaxed mood of a happy seaside vacation. It remained my intention, then, to write a larger work, not necessarily on the scale of the Debussy or Vaughan Williams, but which nevertheless would convey some of the atmosphere and intrinsic nature of the sea and seashore landscape, reflecting its innumerable rhythms and ineffable mysteries, its beauties, its grimaces, maybe even its terror and its rages. In the event, the sea in “Ocean Cave” does not terrorise or rage: one must look to the heavy stubbornness of the Symphony No.1’s first movement to find such currents.

“Ocean Cave” is my longest and probably most colourful work, also the most virtuosic, notwithstanding the considerable technical demands of the two string quartets and the second symphony. If my other two seaside-inspired works, “Champagne Flutes” and “Overture For a Holiday” have little to do with the sea itself, then certainly “Ocean Cave” is right there at the edge of the Pacific, often on slippery rocks at ebb-tide, often quite sub-aquatic, for, while Ron Pretty’s words are the result of a visit to an above-ground cave into which the sea washes at high tide, in my vision I went below the water as well, to the world of the diver, where all is visual, the sounds subdued gurgles and bubblings. I used a large group of colourful instruments to achieve the maximum onomatopaeic
timbral effects.

For some years I had wished to make musical settings of the poetry of my colleague Ron Pretty. Sympathetic material eluded me, however, until he one day placed before me a group of three poems under the collective title of "Ocean Cave". The title, naturally, and the extraordinary opening lines of the first poem struck an instant response and I knew I had my hoped-for material:

"The ocean cave
is the wind's reed
It sings its hymn
in the bass."

The subsequent images, in the first poem, of trilling swallows in flickering flight, sighing, billowing seaweed, water receding over tesselated rock floors and crowded cunjevoi all invited colourful musical sound equivalents, and the workings of my mind's ear soon dictated the scoring I needed. By the end of the day I received the poems the first four or five pages of pencil score were already completed.

My intention was to set just the first poem, but I completed the scoring of this rather quickly and hankered to go on. The second poem contains many similar images, being almost a second "version" of the first. Ron Pretty explained, in a discussion that took place well after I completed my settings of his work, that the second poem was a redraft of the first, and that later, after the Sydney Morning Herald had published the second poem, he re-assessed the first one and found it not wanting in the light of the second. So the two poems became a pair in which he was concerned primarily with strong
imagery, to which he subsequently added the third, more contemplative poem to make a mini-cycle of three. In my settings I use some of the same musical material in both poems, for example in the references to cunjevoi, which in the first poem are "...in crowded stalls, unmoved by the rhythm of the waves" and in the second "...squats and sticks, as near to pulsing life as stone can be...". The like and yet not alike nature of these two images uncannily conjured up for me the sea's strange monotony: a sameness that is never the same, a deceptive repetition of ebb and flow but where each surge is subtly different from the one before. I have attempted to convey this quality in the music and a comparison of, say, the percussion scoring of the first piece's opening few bars with the scoring for the same instruments at bar 11 will reveal the first instance of this quality of "sameness that is never the same": see Examples 15a and 15b.

Like Debussy's "La Mer", "Ocean Cave" has three movements, for I also set the third of Ron Pretty's poems, in which he views the scene from without, again with images of tesselated shelves of rock, cunjevoi and scuttling crabs, before entering the cave at ebb-tide to be over-awed by the "shadows [dancing] St.Elmo's Fire...reflections flicker[ing] like swallows". What extraordinarily beautiful imagery Ron uses here; I felt almost inadequate to set these lines. In the event, however, I deleted only one image in the whole set of three poems, that in the third which reads "...the blue bottles drifting with their sharp strings of pain". This passage alone induced no musical response, but I isolated and retained the words "drifting", "sharp", and "pain". This third poem is, despite its continuing strong imagery, primarily concerned with contemplation of caves in time and space,
and uses a more open texture and longer lines than the first and second poems. The images themselves, however, as can be gleaned from my enthusing in the previous paragraph, interested me more than philosophical musings concerning Plato's cave - that of the illusory world being more real than the real one - and more than any sexual overtones in verses three, four, and five:

"As the tide ebbs we enter the cave
along a dark and slippery ledge
shaking with the passionate sob and thunder
of the waves, sounding the mystery.

A moment of calm: the world outside
is all glitter and glare; here shadows
dance St.Elmo's Fire, or reflections flicker
like swallows in and out of the gloom.

In the depths of the ocean cave
entranced by Plato's parable
In the passionate play of illusion
we are almost trapped by the rising dark."

Generally, throughout the three pieces, which may be performed individually or as a cycle, the voices are used as instruments. That is, to evoke sheer sound, rather than a continuum of narrative, so vowels and consonants, words and phrases are overlaid, intertwined, extended, repeated, all in the cause of attempting to convey the mystery and brooding spirit of my seascape.

"Ocean Cave" has yet to be performed even in a workshop setting.
I hope that Ron Pretty finds, when a performance of the work eventually takes place, and indeed I hope too, that words and music are mutually enhancing, at least to the extent that this is possible given the divergent modes of expression and notwithstanding my generally catalytic treatment of the words. As I have indicated above, both voices and instruments are used onomatopoeically and for much of the score (the matter-of-fact opening of the third piece is an obvious exception: see Example 15c) the voices are required to keep their sound backward and *sotto voce*, with lips half-closed so that the words are never clear as such, rather are evocative sounds - of sirens, distant foghorns, the wind's reed, and many other sounds explicit or implicit in Ron Pretty's wonderful images.

"Ocean Cave" is difficult to analyse in the sense of structures and procedures, indeed in other than a phenomenological sense, for there are few structural or procedural anchors. Only recurring verbal images are matched by recurring use - always slightly altered in the way I mention in a previous paragraph - of stretches of similar musical material. None of the three pieces contains many gestural elements, at least not gestures in the sense of obvious jabs of sound-energy. Indeed, only rarely in any of the three pieces is there a dynamic marking above *mezzo piano*. Most of the energy is latent, present more in portent than actuality. I am reminded as I write this paragraph of that extraordinary opening of the Shostakovich Second Symphony: weird, sinuous, inosculate sounds which for several minutes never rise above *pianissimo*, but which are almost terrifying in their latent power, as indeed is the ocean. My compositional method in "Ocean Cave", then, was governed by impulse, even compulsion, as the words and the images carried me
along. The sections of similar music (such as in the previously-mentioned references to cunjevoi) were the result of a probably quite unworthy habit of wishing to be able to retrospectively seek and find at least a hint of formal unity, a hint of structural dynamism; rather, perhaps, such a fetish should have been over-ruled by the giving of even freer rein to impulse, notwithstanding that "sameness that is never the same" quality that fascinated me.

"Ocean Cave" will be a costly work to produce, a difficult one to rehearse, with each of the twenty-seven vocal and instrumental parts requiring considerable virtuosity in both reading and playing. It is also a work with considerable visual potential, and as such the thought of an eventual performance is all the more tantalising.
Example 15c.

Poco Lento (L=60)

Four miles down from the high way to the tesselated shelf of rock....
COMMENTARY 11  OPUS 16  THREE SONGS TO WORDS BY EMILY DICKINSON

Autograph dated 9 - 7 - '85

SCORING: Medium or high voice and piano

PERFORMANCE STATUS: First performed by Angela Patton, accompanied by Garry Quinn, at SCAW Concert, in Music Auditorium of School of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, on 21st August 1987

Prior to 1984 I knew of Emily Dickinson's poetry only by disrepute, as an old-fashioned lady poet, writer of quatrains of a dated, pretty quality, whose subjects were wind, sunset, birds, butterflies, flowers and the like—

"Summer for thee grant I may be
When summer days are flown
Thy music still when whippoorwill
And oriole are done."

Nevertheless, coming across a beautifully bound volume entitled "Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson" in a book sale sometime during 1984, I purchased it, attracted as much by the handsome, genuine leather binding and gold-leaf spine as by the prospect of the volume's contents. But the contents were in the event a revelation. Not only did I discover verses in great abundance, but that the poetry is frequently strong, tenacious, even fastidious, many of the verses exhibiting the sort of beautiful understatement that informs Japanese haiku—

"The pedigree of honey
Does not concern the bee;
A clover, any time, to him
Is aristocracy."
Some of the poetry of Emily Dickinson has, too, a quality suggestive of that of William Blake. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, editor of the first, posthumous Dickinson collection, speaks of "flashes of wholly original and profound insight into nature and life; words and phrases exhibiting an extraordinary vividness of descriptive and imaginative power, yet often set in a seemingly whimsical or even rugged frame" (Higginson, T.W. and Todd, M.L.: Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson, Chatham River Press, New York, 1983, in preface, page xxi).

Apart from the general sense of revelation I felt at the discovery of this poetry, I also glimpsed a lyric strain in much of the verse which begged consideration for musical setting. Not previously having set any poetry for solo voice and piano, I chose just three poems for Opus 16, but suspect that I may return to Emily Dickinson as a song source again in the future.

The first of my settings is printed under the title "The Mystery of Pain", though Emily Dickinson did not, I understand, generally put titles to her verse. When she did so, it was at the bottom of the poem, or in an accompanying letter to a friend. So the titles here and in the third song, "Evening", may be editorial; the Chatham River volume is not clear in these details -

"Pain has an element of blank;
It cannot recollect
When it began, or if there were
A day when it was not.

It has no future but itself,
Its infinite realms contain
Its past, enlightened to perceive
New periods of pain."
We know not if this poem is related to a crisis of physical struggle on the part of the poet; little is known about this recluse woman at all. I was attracted only by the vivid delineation of the images.

The first and second poems are numbers XV and LVII of the "Life" poems, an editorial grouping in the first published volume of Emily Dickinson's works. The second is untitled and contains in its four short lines an image full of wonderful sound and light. Surely, says Higginson, this daringly-constructed gem contains a "thought-rhyme", appealing immediately to a more elusive sense than just hearing -

"How still the bells in steeple stand,
Till, swollen with the sky,
They leap upon their silver feet
In frantic melody!"

Possibly out of deference to my long-held mis-impression of Dickinson, I have set one of the 'prettier' poems, "Evening", to complete the group. I almost used the word 'cloying' just now, rather than 'pretty', but no, the sweetness in this poem is not wearying. Rather, I find again a calmness, a beautiful understatement -

"The cricket sang,
And set the sun,
And workmen finished, one by one,
Their seam the day upon.

The low grass loaded with the dew,
The twighlight stood as strangers do
With hat in hand, polite and new,
To stay as if, or go.

A vastness, as a neighbour, came -
A wisdom without face or name,
A peace, as hemispheres at home -
And so the night became."

Formally, I retain the strophic layout of "The Mystery of Pain",
but in the vocal line only, and then with some variation between the
two stanzas. I have through-composed "Evening". The second song has
only a single stanza.

In "The Mystery of Pain" there is, as well as a vivid suggestion
of physical discomfort without beginning and end, a suggestion of
prostration and inertia, of a slow, nagging throb. The opening, bare
piano chords in super-imposed fifths attempt to suggest this "slow
throb": see Example 16a.

The opening chords, plus the internal one first encountered in
bar 6 are analyzably B9 with B-minor added to create the dissonance
of minor-second harmony. B9 is heard alone at bar 10, but the voice's
first notes reinforce the dissonance: see Example 16b.

The jarring continues until the first stanza's cadence
(F-sharp-minor 7th at bars 24 and 25 with B-flat added in the voice).

The pain becomes more violent with the meno piano, poco
agitato of the piano part at bar 26, and again it is an ostinato,
endless and nagging: see Example 16c.
The voice super-imposes as a strophic second stanza: see Example 16d. Then the agitation subsides again, and the slower throb of the opening bars returns briefly at the end: see Example 16e.

Slow, clangorous chords, again in super-imposed fifths but now always perfect and bell-like, form the opening of the second song. The piano accompaniment in this song may be rather obvious, but not out of place, I feel: how else could I support the wonderful image of bells than by attempting to match Emily Dickinson's extraordinary simplicity? Several harmonic series are suggested in the eventual piling-up of fifths on G, E-flat, D, B, B-flat, A, so the cumulative aural effect is potentially as exciting as the image in the words. The pianist must obviously contrive the most sonorous effect of which his instrument is capable.

The vocal line in this song also has an effect of accumulation, from its F monotone through high D to F-sharp, then "leaping upon" B-flat-major before lifting again to a Westminster-like D-major in the bells' final "frantic melody": see Example 16f.

The buoyant mood of the end of the 'Bells' song yields to a sun-goeth-down calm in the third and final song, "Evening". Sustained, spread chords in the piano are common to all three songs, it will be seen. In "Evening" they come at bar 17 to suggest heavying dew and darkening twilight: see Example 16g.

They come again later, at bar 28, with a hint of churchbells at evening: see Example 16h.

The much-repeated two-bar ostinato of the piano part's beginning is similarly descriptive: the cricket's song of the opening words, perhaps, or just the day shuddering quietly to a close: see Example 16i.
These chords are, allowing for the right hand's opening B-Flat to be the colour note in the ornament, simply C-sharp-minor, alternating by outward expansion with an inverted F-major, the final chord of the pattern belonging analyzably to an earthy G-flat-pentatonic. The flurry of this ornamented ostinato gives way in the second stanza to a barer, gentler pattern: see Example 16j.

This re-appears towards the end (bars 39f) where "a peace, as hemispheres at home" gives way to night and darkness: see Example 16k.

The final, soft vocal phrase, apparently tracing the E-major triad, is supported by a soft F7 in the piano. Harmonically incompatible, but by now the dew is heavy indeed as night enfolds us.

I marked no dynamics in the vocal line of the outer songs, and only a couple of obvious ones in the second song. The singer should set the dynamics from the piano part and, more importantly, from Emily Dickinson's telling words.
Example 16a:

Example 16b:

Pain has an element of blank.
Example 16a:

loaded with the dew

Example 16b:

the twilight stood as strangers do with

Example 16c:

Example 16d:

Example 16e:

Example 16f:

Example 16g:

Example 16h:

Example 16i:

Example 16j:

Example 16k:

as hemispheres at

Example 16l:

 Example 16m:

home and so the night he came
COMMENTARY 12  OPUS 17  SYMPHONY NO.2

Autograph dated 11-7-'86

SCORING: Piccolo, 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, Cor Anglais, 2 Clarinets, Bass Clarinet, 2 Bassoons; 4 Horns, 2 Trumpets, 3 Trombones, Tuba; Untuned Percussion (2 players, requiring Snare drum, Bass drum, Tambourine, Tam-tam, Triangle, Woodblocks); Xylophone, Tympani (1 player, 4 drums); Harp; Strings.

PERFORMANCE STATUS: Not yet performed.

The Second Symphony needed, I felt at the time I was planning its composition, to be a less sprawling, more tightly controlled work than the First. I have used the adjective 'sprawling': it is that, in its jagged and often clumsy rough-hewnness. It is not sprawling in the sense that a symphony by Mahler or Rachmaninoff can be, where the listener is aware of considerable span in terms of duration. Indeed, twenty minutes is a fairly compressed playing time even in a Mozart symphony, so there is, I hope, a fairly controlled expansiveness to be found in the Symphony No.1, rather than a 'sprawl' in the literal sense. The Symphony No.2 needed to be more concerned with a concept of form closer to that of successful symphony composers in the European tradition; not necessarily the Austro-Germanic tradition with the inevitable considerations of subject groups, exposition, development and reprise, but at least something closer to the French one, having what Nadia Boulanger called "la grand ligne", that thread of inevitability that takes the music ever and easily onward from event to event. There did not need to be any master-themes (though in the event there is; certainly the expansive subject heard at the very opening of the symphony is pervasive for the first few pages and traceable in some subsequent passages) or
clear-cut harmonic symmetries, but I searched for a consistent tone of voice, or at least compatible contrasts, and an overall balance in terms of duration of each movement. This latter quality is missing, probably, from the Symphony No.1, where the first movement out-durates the other two combined and therefore somewhat lopsides the work.

So I planned a four-section work, but to be played without breaks between the sections, and overall following a slow-fast-fast-slow pattern. Each section is about five minutes long, so that the total duration of the Symphony No.2 is similar to that of No.1.

The Symphony No.2 begins serenely, quite unlike the heavy, aggressive opening of its predecessor. The lower strings begin with a long, cantabile theme which, since it is presented with largely unisonal texture, is free, at least at the beginning, of the tonal conflicts inherent in the equivalent pages of the Symphony No.1: see Example 17a.

This opening presages an important characteristic of the symphony: the generally sparing use of the instruments. Tuttis are used infrequently in the fast, vigorous sections. I require, nevertheless, a large orchestra, but with several of the Symphony No.1's extravagant extras dispensed with. There are, for instance, no requirements for E-flat clarinet, contrabassoon, euphonium, organ. Horns are reduced from six to four, and the percussion section is also trimmed. Only one tympanist is required, for instance, and the use of percussion is generally discreet, an exception being in the long build-up to the climax of the scherzo-like third section of the work.
The opening theme is worked out extensively, often in single-bar sub-divisions, and tonally there is 'pull' towards A-minor. However, there are also many opposing pulls against this A-minor: D-flat-major (clarinets at bar 13), C-flat-major (trombones and tuba two bars later), D-major(7) at bar 18 and so on. But the music persistently relaxes into unisonal texture as these and subsequent tonal apparitions are apparently ignored. Certainly unable to be ignored, however, is a persistent rhythmic figure, first heard in the clarinets and bassoons at bar 15, which not only jars against the expansive cantabile of the first theme but achieves considerable prominence in the work and becomes, gradually, something of an obvious rhythmic motto, with its characteristic sextuplet: see Example 17b.

The opening theme and its attendant rhythmic figure (see Example 17b) rally to more assertive purpose from bar 32, subside again and give way to a new, more active theme in the first bassoon, which has potential for both humour and plaintiveness: see Example 17c.

A touch of fugato follows as the other woodwinds enter, with the lower winds eventually favouring a spread-out C-major chord which, with a hint of habanera rhythm, becomes one of two ostinati. The other is the figure in parallel thirds from unison muted horns and clarinets: see Example 17d. Over these ostinati the fugato treatment of the bassoon theme (see Example 17c) continues and another timbrally climactic point is reached as all the winds and brass, underpinned by a persistent rhythmic figure on the snare drum, reach a loud and raucous trill (bar 60) which is abruptly cut off, leaving a high D suspended very softly in the violins.
The elements in the music thus far possess a latent capacity for mordancy and this is further apparent in the portentous, if very subdued, chordal passage now heard in trumpets and trombones under the suspended high D. A snareless side drum puts in an eerie rattle or two, and the deep harp notes underline the sudden mood of uncertainty: see Example 17e.

A series of sudden, violent, low E-flats breaks through the subdued brass chordal passages. These E-flats, underpinned by shuddering drums, are abruptly attacked but their energies are quickly spent and after the second of them the snare drum crescendos again in a gesture of fanfare for the first oboe, who, the tempo now doubled to Allegro ed Energico, plays a nervous motif derived from the bassoon theme (see Example 17c): see Example 17f.

Attempting to describe in coherent terms a work which is free from any programmatic or literary associations is, for me as I write this chapter, rather like walking a tightrope. Given the essentially vernacular, personal style I have chosen to use in writing this thesis, I do not wish to lose either myself or any potential readers in over-detailed technical explanations or risk making unfair claims upon those readers' emotional responses by dwelling upon possible extra-musical messages. Certainly I have not prefaced this score with any superscription other than the dedication to my friends Carl and Roslyn Jackson. Even the Symphony No.1 had its T.S.Eliot quotation assigned to the title page after most of the work had taken shape in my imagination, so in that work, like the present one, I also was attempting first and foremost to express a purely musical content clearly, and with as much expressive and dramatic power as possible. So the literary attachment to the Symphony No.1 should be seen only as a catalyst to comprehension of the music's
To describe the Allegro ed Energico section of the Symphony No.2 as 'mordant', then, is to imply that it seems, in retrospect as I examine it closely, to have a nervous, convoluted, even angry twist in its treatment of the opening Largamente's once broad, singing theme. This twists and turns rather aggressively in the early part of the Allegro ed Energico, with strings predominant; fragments of the bassoon theme appear fitfully in the other instruments. I strove in this section to maintain la grand ligne in the manipulation of what had obviously become 'master themes'. Orchestrationally, individual sections of the orchestra predominate in turn, so the themes appear to be fragmented among the instruments into motivic units, kept together by the on-going thrust of the music. A new, rhythmically squarer treatment of the opening theme appears suddenly in the bassoons at bar 117, the soft tread of the drums bringing a temporary march-like character to the music, relieving its excitability: see Example 17g.

This is short-lived; an up-rushing chromatic scale from the clarinets and bass clarinet is heard, and the heavy E-flats, this time tonally coloured by the additional notes F, G-flat, B-flat, B-natural and D, return with their characteristic decrescendos and attendant rolls from percussion. The tympani retain an element of the march with thwacking, cork-malleted fanfares: see Example 17h. The first oboe attempts to re-establish the motif with which it ushered in the Allegro ed Energico, but a new mood suddenly comes over the music. Forward movement is retained with the light saltando sextuplets of the violins and violas, now rocking back and forth between A- and B-majors and bringing thus a new tonal questioning to the work. These sextuplets accompany a doleful cor anglais solo, which is
easily analyzable as the symphony's opening theme in rhythmic augmentation; the rhythmic twist at the sixth and seventh bars is derived from the opening theme's accompanying rhythmic motif (see Example 17b): see Example 17i.

The subdued dynamics remain for some time, but the music's forward movement is maintained, chiefly through persistent shakes in the lower-pitched instruments. Prominent in this subdued section are the tuba solo at bar 158, which attempts to lift the music into sunlight, but alas falls back into the shadows quickly: see Example 17j......and the eerie parallel thirds in the flutes at bar 167, over a haze of E-flat minor in the harp, low brass and contrabasses: see Example 17k.

An E-flat tonal centre (E-flat was the very first note in the symphony) is reached for now, and the sudden horn-calls at bar 183 (starting each phrase on A, the symphony's second note) are the most obvious motif in this reaching. However, even here there is a concurrent attempt by divided cellos and contrabasses to establish C-major, even this having a side-step to and from B-major, which wins out at bar 189, albeit as E-major/minor's dominant: see Example 17L.

The opening theme of the symphony dominates the last two-dozen bars of the Allegro ed Energico , replete with the continuing percussion fanfares, and the section ends abruptly when trumpets and trombones attempt to maintain the shrieking horn motifs shown in the last example. The penultimate bar's melodic Fs - E-flats from piccolo, brass and violins, achieve no finality for the still-striving E-flat-major pull, for in the last two bars the de-stabilising A-naturals are forcefully present: see Example 17m.
If the symphony's opening *Largamente*, could summarily be described as broad, singing, expansive, and its subsequent *Allegro calmo* and *Energico* as mordant, fitful, even rhapsodic, then one certainly would have to describe the *Risvegliato* third section of the symphony in terms of its ostinati and obsessive repetitions. Approximating to the scherzo of a four-movement nineteenth-century symphony, this movement's metre is a one-in-a-bar 3/8 and the phrases are often constructed in three-bar units, reinforcing the triple-time feel of the music. These latter moments of formal 'security' occur usually at the eruptive, brash tutti sections characterised timbrally by noisy brass and a solistic use of the xylophone. In contrast, the opening part of the movement's forceful string chords, abrupt and jab-like, are spaced with a jolting unevenness.

These string jabs, combinations of two pitches usually a fourth apart - perfect fourths now, rather than the tritones of the first section's opening theme - bring an earthly thudding to the high, other-worldly aural effect of the ostinati, which consist of a sustained A - C-sharp - A1 from pianissimo piccolo and flutes, and a swirling pattern of a-rhythmic semiquavers in the harp, which also provides bell-like F anchors, so that harmonically a whole-tone F-mode is present: see Example 17n.

The ostinati and the string jabs are interrupted eventually by a sudden crescendo in the harp pattern, a noisy appearance of the xylophone (A-major against the harp's continuing F-whole-tone) and abruptly articulated figures from trombones, tuba, vigorously taken up by the tympani, with punctuations from the other percussion instruments: see Example 17o.
The A - C-sharp ostinato, the flutes now joined by violins, is just as abruptly restored, the harp one too, after a few isolated grumbles from the percussion and brass. With the obstinate pianissimo re-established (clarinets supplant the flutes and violins at bar 67) the string jabs return, now less intermittent and creating a tritonal ostinato of their own: see Example 17p.

The motivic elements heard thus far in the movement undergo quiet development, with the characteristic rhythm interrupting fortissimo in the tympani. Clumsy brass and woodwinds suddenly return (bar 122) however, and a new expansion of the whole-tone harp ostinato figure into a ten-bar trumpet tune, underlined by a suitably dancing rhythm, brings a brief tutti: see Example 17q.

Near-silence is soon restored again with characteristic abruptness, and a new, sinewy bassoon subject grows out of familiar material: see Example 17r.

The fugato treatment of this subject through bassoons, clarinets and cor anglais culminates in another fortissimo outburst and then a further restoration of the harp ostinato, suddenly pianissimo once more, and the sustained A - C-sharp is now in cello harmonics, sul tasto (bar 177).

The attendant string jabs are now confined to violins, their C-sharps clashing dissonantly with C-naturals, sforzato, in the flutes and piccolo (bar 184).

Thrice, then, in this section, the basic materials of this section of the symphony have been presented and subjected to various manipulations. At bar 198 the music acquires a new breadth in the toneful string melody, this marking the beginning of the most sustained and accumulative of the work's crescendos. The broad
melody is eventually thrust aside by the arrival of familiar motifs: the tympani thwacks, the clumsy brass figures, and the trumpet tune (see Example 17q), with woodwinds gleefully joining in; the violins vigorously pitting against all the other motifs.

The excitement continues, the whole orchestra now involved in one of the symphony's few tuttis. At the climax of all this, B-major (note the tritonal relationship to the F-mode of earlier in the movement) pulls against C-major. Neither is confirmed. The strings are left suddenly alone at bar 285 with some suddenly anguished questionings, thrice asked and eventually answered by fading clarinets and bassoons, then a nervous grumble from the bass clarinet leaves only soft, sustained G-naturals and A-flats sustained low in the third and fourth horns, trumpets and trombones. A muffled chime from the tam-tam and a six-note rattle from the woodblocks follow, and the music which only thirty-seconds or so previously was at the height of dynamic and timbral excitement has disintegrated to nothing - only a tam-tam rim stroke is left to follow the woodblocks.

Now in 9/8 and a tempo, however, the violins and violas attempt to revive their jabs, but these are now tritonal and in a disembodied pizzicato. A doleful monotone from a rattling xylophone, followed by close chords in divided cellos, laments the music's collapsed vitality: see Example 17s.

The tempo subsides in a molto rallentando, settling into the initial Poco lento of the symphony’s fourth and final section. Over a soft, toneless C in the contrabasses the harp commences a C-lydian scale, moving softly upwards in even quavers to the instrument’s upper register. En route, soft brass chords, trombones and tuba then

Then, after a soft snare-drum roll, and over a single cello's toneless low A, the flutes begin a tranquil duet, reflecting on a familiar rhythmic figure from early in the symphony (see Example 17b). As they plateau out, bass clarinet and bassoon bring in some sustained and harmonically incompatible chords which hang weirdly in the air: see Example 17u..............then vanish, leaving just the bass clarinet to its own musings on the flutes' departed duet. Soft horns and contrabasses add chordal stabs, but do not persist with these and the bass clarinet settles onto a thrice-repeated low E-flat, the music seeking once more a confirmation for its very opening note: see Example 17v.

The tempo pulls back further to Molto lento as the bass clarinet's E-flat falls finally to D. Now D and F-sharp are combined in flageolet harmonics on two violas and two cellos, recalling the sustained major thirds of the symphony's third section. There is no harp ostinato, no string jabs now, however. Rather there are layerings of sustained brass chords that start on, but always then quit, E-flat-major (bars 350).

Then there is an abrupt return to light after all these shadowy reviews, and full strings intone a striving theme that is spiritually related to a motif in the first section of the symphony (see Example 17e): see Example 17w. The violins, supported by piccolo and flutes, reach impassioned heights, and the sudden fortissimo tuttis at bar 370 suggest a degree of anguish and urgency. This amplitudinal rallying is short-lived, however, and as the violin theme bows out a tam-tam stroke is heard, and the tympani, over a low C in the harp and to the dogged accompaniment of snareless side drum and bass
drum, begins a treading, much-repeated motif which metamorphises the bassoon tune heard right back at bar 110 in the first section: see Example 17x. Over this monotonous tread, a cor anglais solo muses further on the figure last heard as the tranquil flute duet. Fragments of the symphony's various motifs now flit by fitfully as the music seems to have once more become dis-embodied. Soft descending arpeggios from the harp bring a return of the tympani tread. This tread-motif is analyzably in C-minor, but the trombones and tuba, contrabasses and harp intone a C-major chord: tonally at odds, but prophetic of the symphony's final bars. As the tympani figure dies again, a clarinet solo, at once tranquil yet angular in melodic shape, takes its leave with a final review of the sextuplet figure that has been so prevalent in much of the symphony: see Example 17y.

The fourth section of the symphony is, then, essentially a series of reviews of material of the earlier sections, at times wistful, at times impassioned. And what about the resolution of the A - E-flat tonal pull implicit from the very opening two notes of the work? The clarinet's final G provides the beginning of the answer, for it turns out to be a preparatory dominant of C, the halfway note along that tritonal distance from A to E-flat. C is heard in tranquil major mode, with sustained wind and brass chords and gently-throbbing harp and strings, in the final, soft bars of the symphony.
Example Pu (continued):

Example Pu:

Bass Cl.

(p) poco cresc.

Horns can sound.

Ob.
Example 17a:
Clarinetto solo

\( p \) dolce

\( \text{... Tutti보다, piccino} \)
Some years ago a friend, knowing that I was a keen record collector and that among the discs on my shelves were several by the great organists of the past half-century (Marie-Claire Alain, Herbert Sumson, Fernando Germani), gave me a birthday gift, a recital entitled "Great Organ Works, Volume 1", by one Gunther Brausinger. All the old chestnuts of the wedding and funeral repertoire were there: Widor's Toccata, Handel's "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba", "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring", Jeremiah Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary" and so on. Beautifully played, they were, and sonically quite stunning, but I remember that my finer sensibilities were offended when, upon consulting the recording data on the sleeve, I read that the pieces had been recorded in a Hamburg dance hall. Sacrilege! Surely, I thought, these pieces should be played only on a church organ!

Of course, it takes only a little standing back and taking stock to remember that most of these pieces were for other instruments than the organ in their original scorings, and that they seem to belong in church only because they have been popularly banished there. The one genuine organ work on the record, the Widor, is, like several of the arranged pieces, of non-liturgical significance, and despite its creator's long installation at St.Sulpice, it may well have benifitted from a breath of the less consecrated atmosphere of the Hamburg dance hall. It remains that all organ works seem to belong
in church because that is where most organs are. Viva Gunther Brausinger!

If a note of petulance or churlishness is detectable in this last exclamation, then I would diffuse it immediately by recording my awe at the great organ works of J.S. Bach - the Preludes and Fugues, the Chorale Preludes, and, especially, the wonderful Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor, whose ground appears in non-passacaglia context in my "Tiled Evening" and of Olivier Messiaen. It seems to me that in these composers, almost alone among the myriads that have written for organ, the creative force is spiritual as well as technical. For most others among those myriads, alas, the reverse is the case, and although for personal-reminiscence reasons his "Toccata" will always remain a favourite, I include here Charles-Marie Widor, whose dozen or more "Symphonies" for organ do, I feel, well earn Paul Henry Lang's description as "contrapuntally belaboured products of a flat and scant musical imagination, the bastard nature of which is evident in the title alone" (Lang, P.L: Music in Western Civilisation, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1942, Chapter 20, page 995).

It was with some surprise, then, (given that any new solo work for pipe organ will, on the basis of any reasonable law of chance, find its place among the vast dross than beside Bach or Messiaen) that I found myself suddenly needing to write an organ work in June of 1986. As usual, there was an external trigger, which in this case dictated the organ as the only acceptable instrument, and the work was composed at lightning speed.

That trigger was a piece of glass sculpture displayed as part of a travelling exhibition at the Wollongong City Gallery during June 1986, Maureen Cahill's "Tiled Evening". This art object, though essentially one-dimensional and less than a square metre in area,
instantly riveted my attention, jumping out at me with a magnetic impact scarcely less overwhelming than that I felt when, rounding a stairwell corner in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, my eyes fell for the first time upon Rembrandt's "Nightwatch", or when, upon my glimpsing the gold mask of Tutankhamen some years ago at the British Museum, those timeless, arrogant eyes pierced me with their centuries-old power. "Tiled Evening" had a disturbing, if exhilarating impact, and as I gazed at it (or it at me?) for several minutes, then returned again and again before leaving the gallery on that June afternoon, the soundscapes of a work for pipe organ took hold in my mind's ear: there were anarchic, orgiastic waves of high-amplitude, low-frequency noises from pedals, huge, dissonant clusters both high and low in the manuals, stabbing scale-like passages thrusting upwards like the green strips in the sculpture piece, reaching heavenwards, beyond the limits of the sculpture's own borders. There were long diminuendos as though these sounds were gradually reverberating into silence in the cathedral-like structure below the tiles. And I also heard the ground of the Bach Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor sounding from within the cathedral; and rapid, high, 'shimmering' ostinati as the gentle, iridescent rainbows of colour that overlay the white, sky-like sections of the north and west sections of the sculpture momentarily captured my vision.

At home, at work in my study, with the stave paper before me, these many and apparently disparate elements had to be worked into a piece of musical structure as convincing as the glass one. The opening two pages of the eight-page piece are concerned with the lively, gestural thrusting nature of the sculpture as I perceived it. Rapid glissandi on pedals and manuals (marked 'ad lib' in the score - Glenda Snyder used forearms on both manuals to gain the most
spectacular fortissimo in her Wollongong Town Hall performance) open the work, each time arriving on sustained low pitches, the bass—most of which fall semitonally, E then E-flat, and after two rapid, specific-pitch flourishes, to D then C-sharp: see Example 18a.

This opening is highly ostentatious, highly Baroque in its use of rapid ornamentation, and the same sound-world inhabits the next section, beginning at letter A with the first of the rising, thrusting scale passages that I refer to above. The *veloce* motif at letter B and the bass notes of the passage through to the beginning of letter C suggest an A-minor tonal pull, though the *fortissimo* clusters continually confound this with their full-strength anarchy: see Example 18b.

The last of these clusters, over the sustained G-natural and A-natural in the pedals, is marked to soften gradually, over ten seconds, after nine seconds at full volume (time is marked in seconds rather than barlines and metre-signature in the opening three pages of this work and again, briefly, later). Consultation with the first performer, during her rehearsals for the work, made it clear that for this *diminuendo* to be properly possible (that is, without having to gradually knock out stops), a large, French-style electro-pneumatic action organ, with efficient swell pedal, would be needed. Indeed, the variations in colour and texture throughout the work call for an instrument with a greater range of 'orchestration' than that possessed by the Sharp organ in Wollongong Town Hall, exciting and atmospheric an instrument though that can be in suitable repertoire.

A massive dissonance piles up after the general pause that follows this decrescendo, this dissonance being a spread-out A-diminished in the lower registers with a B-F tritone in the higher.
Another general pause and the lower notes are heard again, the right hand running away with a much-repeated, rapid five-note ostinato which, with the sustained lower notes, is subject to another protracted diminuendo. This high ostinato is my representation of the shimmering, rainbow-like colours which are discernible on the Cahill sculpture, representing, as the artist claimed when I eventually met her (after the composition and first performance of the work), the iridescent, muted effects of a sky during the early evening, between sunset and darkness.

It is appropriate at this point to describe the artist's thoughts on the sculpture piece. As I point out above, I composed the work quickly, without consulting the artist, but naturally I was eager to eventually meet her, and when that happened the conversation revealed that my interpretation of the meaning of her glass piece was fairly close to her own intention. It will be seen from a glance at the colour print of Ms Cahill's "Tiled Evening" (included in the appendices to this document) that the piece is essentially flat, disguising, as she put it, her usual flamboyant, colourful personality. The essentially subtle colours (pale greens, whites) are linked to the reflective side of her personality, perhaps in the mood of the quieter moments of sunset and later, thus the "Evening" of the title. In my organ piece, the quiet appearances (from within the cathedral, as I envisaged it, or perhaps from within one's own quiet musings) of the ground from Bach's Passacaglia at letter D and following, and again for awhile at letter G before the music gathers towards its final accumulation, provide a reflective contrast to the more gestural, flamboyant beginning and end of the piece: see Example 18c.

Ms Cahill agreed with my suggestion that the green tile-like strips on the central part of the sculpture piece, which were my
first point of visual focus, are quite literally tiles, but which are more than just structural: they appear to have enormous, upward-thrusting energy, dynamic, limitless, perhaps shattering at a point beyond the limits of the sculpture piece itself, thereby both defining and defying the fragility of glass, it seems. After the reflective middle section of my "Tiled Evening" the music gradually regathers its energies and its dynamic forward movement, culminating at letter H in some massive E-flats, under which two heavy voices of the Bach ground are heard in counterpoint: see Example 18d.

This E-flat orientation is shattered with the sudden dissonance in the ninth and tenth bars of H, and then the dissonant notes themselves are released to leave a final statement of Bach's ground in energetic, detached pedal notes: see Example 18e.

The final page-and-a-half of my "Tiled Evening" concerns itself with more of the gestural, energetic music of the work's beginning, and, finally, over a sustained A-natural in the pedals, a series of up-rushing blocks, tutti and slightly a-rhythmic, ends the piece abruptly, vanishing from our hearing as suddenly as do Maureen Cahill's upward-thrusting tiles from our sight.

Naturally, despite the artist's and the composer's imposing similar interpretations on certain elements of the sculpture piece, I could not have hoped, given that I composed the piece before I spoke to the artist, to have achieved an 'exact match' in this regard. My organ work probably reflects more of the energy and dynamism of the sculpture than its quieter, reflective elements. Ms Cahill's own interpretation finds more in the subdued, gentler elements, in the intention of revealing (the opening page corner suggestion just to the top-right of the green tiles is a hint in this regard, but my music
ignores this) a side of her personality which she allows "out" only occasionally.

Glenda Snyder made the piece 'work' at her examination performance despite the limitations of the mechanical-actioned Wollongong Town Hall organ. Her advice on registrations, most of which are now marked in the original manuscript, and the remainder of which she assured me would be chosen as a matter of course by any competent organist, is much appreciated. I quote, exactly, some of her notes on the piece, relating to both notation and performance:

"Page 1 line 1 -
Add forearms for bigger sound.
I changed the separate notes to glissandi for speed
and to avoid treading on toes - a real problem when
covering so much pedal in such a short time."

"Page 3 bottom line -
Plain flutes were too dull. I used 8' flute, sesquialtra
(for colour) and tremolo - this made it a special moment."

"Page 5, system 1 -
From 'Vivo' swapped manuals for easier registration. Then
it is similar to previous page."

"Letter G -
Many organs do not have these notes. It really needs to be
written down an octave and using a 4' registration."

"Page 7 -
Swell: I played an octave higher for more brilliance."
"Page 8 -

Final bars - these and the blocks at the 'vivo' on page 5
are rapid and therefore difficult on mechanical action."

Encouragingly, Glenda Snyder and her teacher Robert Ampt have
each expressed an intention to play the work on some of the large
electro-pneumatic organs in Sydney.
APPENDIX A......

SUMMATIVE LIST OF COMPOSITIONS.

Opus 6: A Foursome of Twosomes
Flute (doubling Piccolo), Oboe (doubling Cor Anglais).
Duration: 6-7 minutes. Dedicated to its first performers, Antonia and Jasmine Huxtable. Composed 1983.

Opus 7: Symphony No.1

Opus 8: String Quartet No.1

Opus 9: Champagne Flutes
4 Flutes (each doubling Piccolo), Keyboard Percussion.

Opus 10: Overture For a Holiday
Standard full orchestra. Duration: 8 minutes. Dedicated to "my friends in the City of Wollongong Symphony Orchestra". Composed 1984.

Opus 11: String Quartet No.2 (Colonial Music 1)
2 Violins, Viola, Cello. Duration: 19 minutes.
Dedicated to Andrew and Nicola. Composed 1984-'85.
Opus 12: Niblets

Opus 13: Escarpment Music (Colonial Music 11)

Opus 14: Outlaw!

Opus 15: Ocean Cave

Opus 16: Three Songs to words by Emily Dickinson

Opus 17: Symphony No.2

Opus 18: Tiled Evening
APPENDIX B......

SUMMATIVE COMMENTS ON PERFORMANCES GIVEN OF THE WORKS DISCUSSED IN THIS THESIS.

Opus 6: A Foursome of Twosomes

The performance by Antonia and Jasmine Huxtable at the Gasteig Centre, Munich, on 28th October 1985, is an excellent and idiomatic realisation of the work. Unfortunately the cassette that was sent to me is un-Dolbied, and thus has a good deal of tape hiss. The first half-bar is missing in the recording.

Opus 8: String Quartet No.1

No recording was made of the Petra Quartet’s workshop performance of August 1984. To my memory the performance was generally excellent.

Opus 9: Champagne Flutes

The first performance on 21st August, 1987 was recorded, but the players were dissatisfied with the result and agreed to re-record the work the following day under studio conditions. The re-make is a very good realisation of the piece, despite the substitution of synthesized percussion in the absence of the percussionist through illness.
Opus 10: Overture For a Holiday

The City of Wollongong gave a committed and reasonably accurate performance at the 16th November, 1985 premiere, though a somewhat clumsy one in terms of style. The piccolo solo is, very uncomfortably, a bar early throughout in the middle section of the work. The recorded sound on the accompanying cassette is rather 'tubby'.

Opus 12: Niblets

The three young ladies who performed the work at the SCAW Ensemble concert on 12th September 1986 gave a committed, stylish performance which unfortunately was not recorded.

Opus 13: Escarpment Music

The University of Wollongong Conservatorium String Orchestra's performance on 7th December 1985 was excellent, and came very close to my intentions despite acoustical problems in the Union Hall. The cassette recording reveals these poor acoustics.

Opus 14: Outlaw!

Comments on the March 1986 realisation are contained in the appropriate commentary; it is not appropriate to comment further here.
Opus 16: Three Songs to words by Emily Dickinson

Angela Patton's performance of the songs at the SCAW concert of 21st August, 1987, is included on the accompanying cassette. Ms Patton is an advanced student in vocal studies but, having been set too slow a tempo at the outset of each song by accompanist Gary Quinn, found the phrasing of the songs difficult to sustain. This is particularly obvious in the second song, less so in the other two. Generally she found the true 'spirit' of each of the songs.

Opus 18: Tiled Evening

Glenda Snyder's performance on the Wollongong Town Hall organ on 11th December 1986 was excellent given the mechanical action of the instrument, and that the work really needs an organ of electro-pneumatic action. Ms Snyder's performance was not recorded.
Appendix C

Bibliography

Publications referred to in the course of this thesis:

Baynton, B: Bush Studies, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1965.


APPENDIX D

Copies of letter to and reply from Penguin Books Australia, Ltd, regarding permission to quote a folksong in the commentary relating to the String Quartet No.2. (following......)
Dear Sir,

I seek your permission to quote the melody (only) of the folksong "The Death of Ned Kelly" (by J.S. Manifold) printed on page 172 of your Penguin Australian Songbook, 1971 edition. The melody will be used in a Master of Arts thesis I am currently writing and will not be printed commercially in any way.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WAYNE DIXON
LECTURER IN MUSIC.
John Wayne Dixon
Lecturer in Music
University of Wollongong
P O Box 1144
Wollongong
NSW 2500

Dear John Wayne Dixon

Thank you for your letter of 12 January 1987 requesting permission to use the melody only of "The Death of Ned Kelly" as printed in The Penguin Australian Songbook edited by J S Manifold.

Penguin Books Australia do not control the copyright for this melody. We feel that as you wish to use it purely for private research and study, it could be considered as fair usage for which no fee is payable.

However, as stated, the permission is not ours to give and we assume it is within the public domain.

Yours faithfully

Peg McColl
Permissions Controller
CONTENTS:
1 COMPACT DISC
6 SCORES