

The University of Adelaide

Elder Conservatorium of Music

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Portfolio of Original Compositions

**submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Abstract

The rationale for this portfolio of original compositions was to investigate particular ideas in relation to the use of dissonance, and in particular harmony, to represent the concept of darkness in an emotional and visual sense. The notion that harmony and dissonance can evoke emotions was developed through research into literature of music and the mind. Theories of harmonic dissonance, acoustic, physiological and psychological were studied including those of Helmholtz, Greenwood, Plomp and Levelt, Stumpf and Cooke. The compositions are divided into two parts, two orchestral works that are an evocation of underground locations, and the second part which is devoted to three small chamber works that investigate the darker emotions of child psychology, looking at phobias, dreams and psychological perceptions:

1. *Mary King's Close* - flute, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, piano, 2 percussion, 2 violins, viola, cello, double bass.
2. *Limbus Infantium* - flute, soprano voice, piano, harp.
3. *Nocturne* - 2 trumpets, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, 2 percussion, recorded text.
4. *Symphony 2 'The Caves'* - symphony orchestra
5. *Voices* - 2 violins, viola, cello

The portfolio of compositions begins with the use of dyadic harmonic intervals derived from modal themes, and the subsequent compositions expand and develop these ideas culminating in a complex use of small harmonic cells which relate to subtle light illuminations in the underground caves, and the psychological depth of perception of children in the final works.

Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where reference has been made in the text.

I give my consent to this copy of my portfolio, when deposited in the University library, being made available in all forms of media, now or hereafter known.

Date

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