

Program Note:

String Quartet No. 3 is a throughcomposed piece, consisting of five interwoven sections; it employs simple as well as complicated surface material in the guise of different musical styles. The underlying principle is that the material is brought to its fullest potential when it is contrasted, in either transition or juxtaposition, with a different musical character. The piece exploits the way in which this, combined with the limitations of *working memory*, can affect the musical experience.

The slow opening section of the quartet, with its vertical harmonic plane, readily paves the way for the horizontal counterpoint of the second. This material then gradually increases in complicatedness, culminating in the abrupt transition to the third. One might say that, upon recollection, the character of the complicated passage is exaggerated by the succeeding music. Similarly, it could be said that the sparseness of the central section is exaggerated by our recollection of the preceding music. Two final two sections act as a counterweight to the material preceding it, achieving an sense of *tectonic balance* within the piece as a whole.

My aim for the quartet was that the listener's capacity to process the 'gist' of the music would, at some point in each section, be subverted. This is again amplified by the lack of space, or silence, between each section. One might say that the intention is to manipulate *experiential time* and thus impair our faculty for musical expectation, in order to further emphasise the contrasts within the piece, and consequently the element of surprise.