

PETRA STRING QUARTET

PLAYS

CONYNGHAM

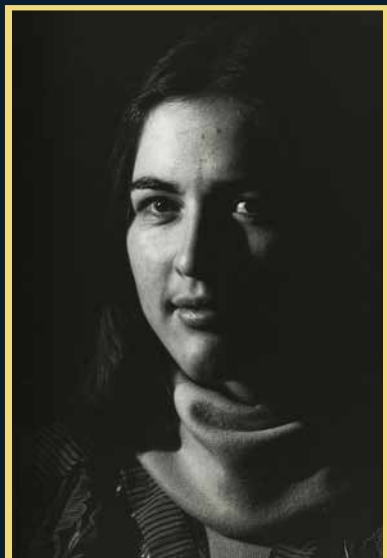
AND

TIBBITS



move

PETRA STRING QUARTET



Susan
Pickering
'cello



Sonia
Hyland
violin

Now acknowledged as being among the foremost exponents of contemporary Australian chamber music, the Petra String Quartet first began to attract attention some years ago because of its determined zeal to present our living repertoire to wider audiences.

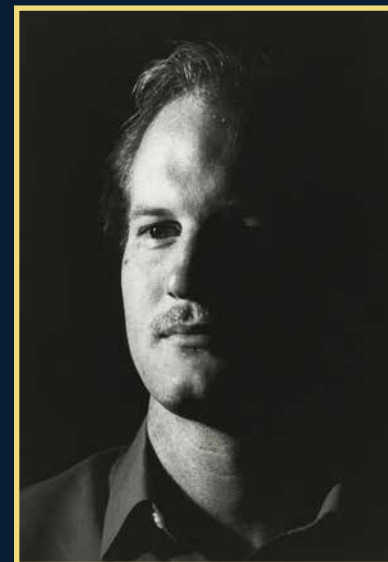
They have been associated with many of our leading creative musicians (Don Banks, Nigel Butterley, Ian Cugley, Richard Meale, Peter Sculthorpe, Larry Sitsky and others) in concerts, broadcasts and lecture demonstrations in many centres throughout Australia. They have given a number of first performances, including the premiere of Richard Meale's Second String Quartet at the Adelaide Festival 1980. Outside this country, they have given concerts in South East Asia, Great Britain and Europe, where — in Warsaw — they represented Australia at the XIVth Conference of the International Society for Music Education, July 1980, just prior to making the present recording.

The Petra had its origins in spontaneous music-making while the players were students in Jan Sedivka's String Department at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music in the early 1970s. They were later appointed to the staff as Artists-in-Residence. Apart from their quartet activities, the players have all achieved distinction in the field of recital work and concerto performances.

Robert
Macindoe
violin



Simon
Oswell
viola



Barry Conyngham

String Quartet

Barry Conyngham, born in Sydney in 1944, studied with Peter Sculthorpe and later through a Churchill Fellowship with Toru Takemitsu in Japan. In 1972 he received a Harkness Fellowship to live and work in the United States for two years.

He has worked in various institutions in the USA, France and Australia and in late 1975 was appointed to the University of Melbourne. His works have been successfully received in many parts of the world.

Ice Carving (1970), *Water . . . Footsteps . . . Time* (1971) and *Mirages* (1978), all for orchestral forces, the chamber operas *Edward John Eyre* (1969-72) and *Bony Anderson* (1979), and the computer generated piece *Through Clouds* (1973) show the wide range of instrumentation and materials used by Conyngham.

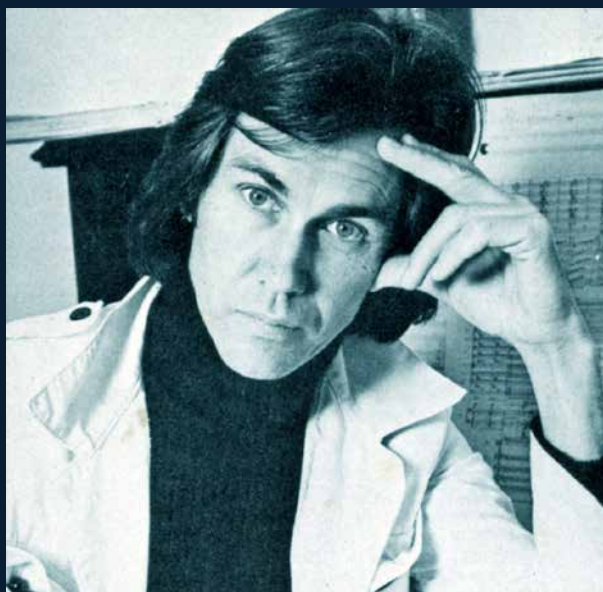
He has worked closely with performers such as the Percussions de Strasbourg (Six [1971]), Roger Woodward (Snowflake [1972]), Bertram Turetzky (Playback [1973]), the Australian Chamber Orchestra (Sky [1976]), as well as the Victorian Time Machine (Mirror Images [1974]).

Conyngham's *String Quartet* (1979) is closely related to the imagery of the large orchestral work *Mirages* (1978) and involves two interlocking sets of variations converging into a single idea. They concern themselves more with texture, space and gesture than traditional techniques.

The first set of variations use the quartet as an ensemble; vertical becoming horizontal; harmonic becoming polyphonic.

The second set use the quartet in different combinations; separation becoming unity; speech becoming song.

The notation of this work covers a wide range of methods from traditional to aleatoric; each used to achieve the texture, time feeling and emotion desired.



Structurally and conceptually this may be Conyngham's most ambitious work to date.

VARIATION A

VARIATION B

1. Ensemble —
"Shadows and line"
2. Solo 'Cello — Trio
"statement and calm"
3. Ensemble —
"convergence and line"
4. Solo Viola — Trio
"statement and comment"
5. Ensemble —
"haze and line"
6. Duet — Duet
"statement and argument"
7. Ensemble —
"blur and line"
8. Quartet — Quartet
"resolution and line"
"statement and isolation"
9. Ensemble —
"statement and shadows"

George Tibbits

Second String Quartet

George Tibbits is one of Australia's most distinctive composers. His immaculately scored works are admired for their formal organization, colour, and beauty of sound. His music is both serious and witty and expresses its unsentimental contrasts and contradictions with great vibrancy and rhythmic vitality.

The *Second String Quartet*, written in 1975, is a rich and homogeneous work of great power and concentration.

It has four linked sections each of which is separated by a brief silence. The last section turns back towards the first, with allusions to the earlier movements, so that the work ends with its beginning.

The first movement opens with a sequence of contrasting subjects which are repeated, extended and varied over the whole course of the movement. Eventually one of the opening subjects is so extended as to become a musical glove of flailing chords. The movement ends with the music dissolving into open fifths.

The second section is a delicate and evocative slow

movement of soft syncopations spread among the four instruments.

The third movement requires the strings to be struck with the wood of the bow and has a light-heartedly manic character. At one point the music almost fades back into the slow movement after which the *col legno* section is repeated. It is a feature of this quartet that parts of each movement suggest segments of the movements which are to come or have already been played.

The last movement opens in an earnest and confused way and gradually becomes more obsessive and difficult as earlier movements are suggested. When at last the

quartet's opening 'cello chords are recalled, a tonal joke intrudes which prepares the ground for a terminal stroke — a D major cadence.



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NEW AUDIENCE presents two
Albert H. Maggs Award
Commissions

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Barry Conyngham

1 STRING QUARTET No. 1 19'40"

George Tibbits

SECOND STRING QUARTET

2 First movement 9'47"

3 Second movement 6'11"

4 Third movement 2'16"

5 Fourth movement 6'03"



Original LP cover

Albert H. Maggs

The Albert H. Maggs Award in musical composition is one of the longest standing and most prestigious awards given to Australian composers.

Both works on this recording were written for the award. They were premiered together in 1979 at a New Audience concert at the Faculty of Music, University of Melbourne. The concert celebrated World Music Day, and formed part of the International Music Congress held that year in Melbourne Australia.

The production of this record has been assisted by the Faculty of Music of the University of Melbourne.

Produced by: Barry Conyngham and Martin Wright

Sound engineering: Les Craythorn
Recorded in Melba Hall, University of Melbourne

Photography: Sandy Abbott