

LAMENT 1988

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The Lament of the title refers to two anniversaries which took place in 1988. Firstly, July 18th was the seventieth birthday of Nelson Mandela, at that date still in prison. Secondly, 1988 was the year in which Australia celebrated its bicentennial. The arrival of the English in January 1788 was the beginning of the end for the Aborigines.

My quartet has a quality of lament running right through it, from the outcry at the opening, through the central cor anglais solo to the concluding viola solo. The scoring was chosen for its dark colour: oboe doubling cor anglais, clarinet doubling bass clarinet, viola and 'cello. The melodic lines and harmony are often inflected with quarter-tones. Lament 1988 was written for Capricorn, who commissioned it with funds provided by GLA. It lasts a little under a quarter of an hour.

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