

PROGRAMME NOTES for Margaret Brandman's

Binna burra Dreaming

For 'Cello and Piano

Binna Burra - Australian aboriginal place name, meaning 'Where the Beech tree grows'.

The town of *Binna Burra* is located south of the city of Brisbane in Queensland.

The introductory section of the work begins with a rhythmic 'cello figure reminiscent of the earthy sound of the native aboriginal instrument, the didgeridoo, representing the roots of the beech tree. The shape of the answering lyrical phrase in the higher register suggests the outline of the leafy parts of the tree. The accompanying piano phrases in bars 3, 6, and 10 capture the sound of the wind rustling through the leaves.

The opening G minor modal tonality, conveys the pleasantly cool and shady effect you would feel when relaxing under the tree. The piece develops organically from the opening section, introducing the '*where the beech tree grows*' motif played by the piano in bars 32-33, exploring various time signatures and moving to other tonal centres. At letter B the tonality moves to C modal minor. At this point, you will hear the 'cello melody beginning with the short version of this motif (*beech tree grows*) from where it develops into a more rhapsodic line. Shortly after letter C, the excitement increases with a syncopated rhythmic figure doubled by the piano and 'cello, with the *beech tree* motif appearing in the piano treble part in bars 54-55.

At letter E, there is a slower, more chromatic passage which provides a transition to a contrasting section at Letter F. Here new material is introduced. Quartal harmony is a feature of the piano part followed by an ascending melody line in the 'cello part. At letter H the piece moves briefly into 5/4 time with the wide piano voicing combined with intervals of a 10th in the 'cello part played pizzicato, producing some unusual textures.

The work concludes with a return to the melodic and rhythmic material from the earlier C section (*beech tree motif*) and a short coda, capped off with a piano flourish and 'cello glissando.

Another version of this piece (Binna Burra) has been composed for Solo Bass and Piano.

Solo Bass is tuned a fourth higher than the Double Bass.

Outline of Tonal levels

Section	Bars	Tonality	modulation
Introductory section	1-20	G modal minor	
A	21-36	G modal minor	to Cmin
B –C	37-67	C modal minor	
D	68-80	C modal min	Development section
E	81-82	Chromatic transition	
F	83-94	E modal minors	
G-H-I	95-110	A modal minors	Mod to C min
J - K	111-124	C modal minor	