

**Peter Tahourdin : LOOK AT THE STARS**  
**For Flutes, Clarinet, Cello and Marimba**

**Programme Note**

**Look at the Stars** is in three interconnected sections - A<sup>1</sup>, B, A<sup>2</sup> - of which the middle section (B) is in triple, rather than duple, time and is more than twice the speed of the outer sections.

The title is taken from the first line of a poem, *The Starlight Night*, by Gerard Manley Hopkins - 'Look at the stars! Look, look, look up at the skies!' - which provided the text for **Raga Music 1**, a work for soprano and small ensemble that I composed in 1985 after a visit to India; it was the first of a series of chamber works based on the structural procedures of the Hindustani (north Indian) raga. The poem particularly appealed to me because of the manner in which it mixes the mystical and the mundane aspects of life. But thematic elements, too, of the music of **Raga Music 1** appear in **Look at the Stars**, particularly in the last section (A<sup>2</sup>).

Another source of inspiration was undoubtedly a trip to Greece in 1984, during which I visited the ruins of an ancient temple to the god Poseidon, perched on top of a steep cliff at Cape Sounion, the southernmost tip of Attica, overlooking the dark waters of the Aegean Sea. What a site on which to build a temple to the God of the Sea! A further image that has stayed in my mind as a result of that sojourn in Greece was of the sun setting over the Aegean, which I witnessed several times on the island of Ios - one of the Cyclades group - and of the clarity of the night sky after the sun had set.

While **Look at the Stars** is a purely musical (and non vocal) work, lasting a little over ten minutes, it does attempt to suggest something of the mysticism inherent in the world around us.

**Peter Tahourdin,**  
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