

BINYANG

for clarinet and percussion
duration c. 7 minutes

1: Binyang

2: Interior

I was captivated by a persistent and strikingly melodic birdcall and derived from it the scale underlying Binyang, the first of these two short pieces (each of which may be played separately). Binyang means "bird" in the now defunct Sydney Aboriginal language. The identity of the bird remains a mystery, my whistling it over the phone to ornithologists having left them stumped.

The second piece, Interior, remote and mysterious, is an oblique comment on Binyang, starkly in contrast with its joyful melodic outpouring.

Both pieces were commissioned, with assistance from the Australia Council, by the Sydney clarinettist Peter Jenkin, to whom they are dedicated. Peter had requested a solo work, but as I began to compose, a rhythmic accompaniment for Aboriginal clapping sticks asserted itself and quickly became inseparable from the clarinet line.

The percussionist plays:

Australian Aboriginal Clapping Sticks,
or, if these are not available, claves;

and one pair of crotales tuned to:



Ross Edwards