

*Djilile*, consort music of five parts (1995)

As a schoolboy, I was so excited when I first heard the "Lament" from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, that I wrote several works inspired by it. I planned to base the present piece, for the Purcell Tercentenary, upon one of these works. Later, however, I decided that the occasion demanded the best possible music that I could write, rather than a return to my early essays as a composer.

*Djilile*, then, is based upon an adaptation of an Aboriginal chant from northern Australia. The title translates as "whistling-duck on a billabong". The work is a straightforward one, with four statements of the chant separated by brief interludes, and followed by a coda. While it contains elements of the *chaconne*, or *chacony*, there is no conscious influence of Purcell upon the music. I do, however, share with Purcell much joy in the sound of a consort of viols.

In writing the work, I decided to use scordatura in the bass viol, and to exploit the higher pitches of one of the treble viols. I also decided to bring the work to its conclusion with six-part chords in most of the parts.

*Djilile* is dedicated to *Fretwork*.