

PROGRAMME NOTES

Whilst this piece is above all an exploration and celebration of musical melodies and harmonies, some of the resonances, processes and timbres were inspired by my inner response to outer events – some of which are annotated in the score.

Beit Hanoun, 3rd November 2006

Following acts of violence at the end of 2006, Israeli tanks entered Gaza and trapped a large group of Palestinian fighters in a mosque in the centre of Beit Hanoun. The world watched and waited, expecting a massacre. But unexpectedly, women and children appeared from all directions, surrounding the mosque, and forming a crowd into which the menfolk could dissolve. The *impasse* was resolved – for now at least.

Petroglyph (I and II)

Ancient settlements in the mountains of Oman, only recently abandoned, still contain petroglyphs – primitive yet intricate representations of camels, date palms and so on, chiselled with a *pointillist* technique by Arab farmers into hard stone, to honour their dead.

Moonlight over the Tigris

At the very beginning of 2007, just a few days after the hanging of Saddam Hussein, I flew over Iraq one night with a full moon. The River Tigris reflected the moonlight like a beautiful silvery ribbon – curling across the black, convex surface of the earth.

Battle of D'bba, AD 633

During the Islamic conquest of Arabia, an entire army, trapped between the Indian Ocean and steep mountains, was slaughtered. The place is utterly peaceful now, with lapping waves and calls to prayer from the distant town. But 10,000 rough slabs erected in the sand after the battle still mark the burial places of the fallen - echoes in stone of the violence of the past.

Duration: approx. 17 minutes