

CORAL FANTASY

For piano trio

PROGRAMME NOTES

Coral Fantasy was created at a time when I was playing the piano for a children's ballet company in London in the early 1990s; I even got as far as attending a ballet class on one occasion. So my mind was full of costume and set designs and I spent hours watching brilliant Soviet productions on video of ballets such as *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, *Romeo and Juliet* with the phenomenal Ulanova as Juliet, and *The Stone Flower* with a dancer friend.

It was this friend who planted a seed of inspiration by suggesting I write a ballet set in a coral reef; recent trips to Hawaii and Australia further fed my imagination about all the exotic possibilities you could explore in tropical waters.

This is why performers will encounter stage instructions, as in any opera or ballet, in the score of *Coral Fantasy*. Although there are some very serious minded musicians who object to this, there are others whose creativity is stimulated by a sense of theatre though the score is still able to stand on its own merit as pure music.

Despite a strong ballet influence, *Coral Fantasy* was never intended to be physically danced on stage as the music at eight minutes is too compressed in duration. It is more likely, now that the composer has entered into a period of experimentation with audio/visual work, to find representation in a magical blend of live dancers and video to capture such subjects as underwater currents, jellyfish and clown fish, a tropical sunset and the sunlight reflecting off the surface of the water. This is a future project ripe for exploration with the internet increasingly becoming a major platform for creative artists.