

## *Mosaic*

By Anne Cawrse

*For Chamber Orchestra*

Zoom in with a musical microscope on Anne Cawrse's *Mosaic*, and you will see that the whole thing is constructed from a single musical interval. Imagine it visually like a bunch of small, plain squares, uniform in size and colour. But these pieces have been tessellated and superimposed in a myriad of different ways to create a musical mosaic- a *Mosaic* that sounds neither square nor plain, but undeniably beautiful.

What is this musical interval, the 'square tile', from which this music is made? Known by musicians as a 'perfect fifth', it is the simplest ratio that can exist between two pitches after the octave. Its sound is clear but bare- think the first two notes of *The Last Post*. Used as the basic material of *Mosaic*, it results in music that is wonderfully open and light.

This bright transparency is enhanced by the way Cawrse has orchestrated the music. It is scored for chamber orchestra; so instead of a matte wash of strings, there is the clarity that comes from having just one player per part. The ringing, tinkling sounds of piano, harp and metallic percussion instruments (glockenspiel, vibraphone, crotales) call to mind pure, running water, clear as glass.

*Mosaic* was first performed in Melbourne in 2007; this is its long-awaited homecoming. Anne Cawrse composed the work to a commission from the Cybec foundation for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Composer's Program. It is about 10 minutes long and consists of six 'dances' that flow on together without a break, each one using the perfect fifth 'tile' in a different way.

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