

*Against the Dying of the Light* is above all things a tribute to the late Professor Sir Peter Platt. Prof Platt was a musicologist, composer, conductor and performer who had an enormous impact on the musical life of the University of Sydney, to say nothing of his national and international contributions. Both the form and content of this work reflect the tragic circumstances surrounding his death. The first movement is concerned with his own immense sense of frustration at leaving a life he felt was still wholly incomplete. The flute solo is often at loggerheads with the inevitable rigidity of the structure, a conflict which the orchestra emphatically and consistently addresses, much in the style of a Greek chorus. The second movement, an extended cadenza for the flute, is a transition from the deeply private, internal world of the opening to the more public, conventional expression of grief that is the third movement. Here, the style is at once removed- through its ritualistic temporality- and immediate- in its engaging, transparent rhetoric. This is in effect a memorial service for both Prof Platt and the department to which he devoted so much love and energy. The appropriation of 'Cortigiani, vil razza dannata' from Giuseppe Verdi's opera, *Rigoletto*, and its employment as the emotional vector of the movement embodies this duality. On one hand, as a token of Prof Platt's love and knowledge of Verdi, it provides a fitting tribute to his scholastic passion and dedication; on the other, it draws cathartic parallels between the loss of one kind of daughter and another.

Special thanks go to Megan Hobbs, whose quiet determination and musicality made this piece happen.