

GRAHAM NEWCATER

(Biography)

Graham Newcater was born in Johannesburg on the 3rd September, 1941 but had most of his education in Durban where the family moved to in 1948. There he ended his schooling by studying mechanical engineering at the Natal Technical College during which time he studied music privately, having clarinet lessons and postal lessons in composition with Arnold van Wyk who was at that time lecturer at the University of Cape Town. Returning to Johannesburg in 1958 Newcater worked in the motor industry and continued his music studies, this time having composition lessons with Gideon Fagan. In 1962 he won a scholarship issued by the South African Music Rights Organisation which took him to London for two years study at the Royal College of Music, studying composition under Peter Racine Fricker and conducting in his second year under Sir Adrian Boult. In 1965 Newcater was back in Johannesburg where he worked for a short time at the SABC but in 1966 returned to London where he won the Ralph Vaughan Williams grant for that year on the recommendation of Howard Ferguson, Robert Simpson and Humphrey Searle with whom he studied privately ~~with~~ for six months on the strength of this grant. At the end of 1966 Newcater returned for the final time to Johannesburg where he again worked for a brief time at the SABC. On the strength of the success in Johannesburg and elsewhere of his First Symphony (begun in London in 1964 and completed on his return) he was commissioned by the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal to compose the score for the ballet Raka based on the poem by N.P. van Wyk Louw. This ballet proved such a success that it was soon made into a film which was distributed worldwide by 20th-Century Fox. Apart from Raka, he has had other successful overseas performances, notably his First Symphony in Paris and Brussels and his Philharmonic Overture in Asunción and Montevideo. Newcater is a 12-tone composer and his most important works are:

First Symphony
Raka (ballet)
Variations de Timbres (for orchestra)
Third Symphony
String Quartet
Songs of the Inner Worlds (for soprano and orchestra)
Cape Chronicles (for orchestra)
African Idylls (for string quartet)

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