Composed in Dublin and at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig, between March and July 2014, *Quadripartita* was commissioned by Malachy Robinson with funds from The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The gulf between the depths of the double-bass and the heights of the violin, and the dialectic between the individualisation of the 4 instruments and their aspiration to homogeneity provided the main challenges in writing for this combination. The work is partly based on a chorale that only reveals itself towards the end, and partly on a more melodic element that is unrelated to it. These materials engage in a play of attraction and repulsion that remains unresolved. *Quadripartita* is dedicated to Malachy Robinson and the Panoramic Quartet.

When I started work, I was reading the strange little book *Eternity Through the Stars* (1872), an “astronomical hypothesis” written by the socialist revolutionary Auguste Blanqui during his imprisonment in the Fort du Taureau, a castle on a rock in the bay of Morlaix, Brittany. It propounds an imagery of infinite repetitions in space and time far more hellish than Nietzsche's “eternal recurrence”. Freed 7 years later, old and ill, he immediately returned to the work of agitation in defiance of his own fatalistic vision.

The opening of the work, exploiting the gulf between the depths of the double-bass and the heights of the violin, evokes Blanqui imprisoned on his rock and contemplating the stars. Beyond this there is no explicit programme, although I feel that Blanqui's ghost somehow hovered over the piece.