



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

review

THE CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN AUSTRALIAN MUSIC

ISSN 1443-9018

NUMBER 23, NOVEMBER 2008



Dancing at Ramingining, 1974. Photo courtesy of John Stubington

In this final issue of *Review*, Jill Stubington discusses the processes and aims behind her recent book *Singing the Land: The Power of Performance in Aboriginal Life*. She provides personal insight into the evolution of the book and presents a compelling case for all Australians to engage meaningfully with Indigenous culture. Stubington's article is followed by a review of *Singing the Land* by Elizabeth Mackinlay.

Learning to Listen

Listening to music is an activity that requires practice and concentration. It is the place where communication between the composer/performer and the individual members of an audience occurs, and even where audience and performers are caught up together in the moment of performance, it is at some level a singular activity. Each listener brings her or his own experience and skill to the process, and the meaning created there is different for each person.

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu's recent CD called *Gurrumul* (Skinny Fish SFGU080201) has been attracting very favourable reviews. Jaslyn Hall in *Limelight* (May 2008), for example, describes it as "soul searching" and notes "superb lyrics and a unique singing style". Bruce Elder in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (11 April 2008) is similarly enthusiastic. Indeed it is a beautiful recording, and consideration of it illustrates well the major point of my recent book *Singing the Land: The Power of Performance in Aboriginal Life* (Sydney: Currency House, 2007): the importance of listening and the personal and individual nature of that process.

My listening to Gurrumul's CD is coloured by the year I spent in the 1970s preparing the 115 notations of north-east Arnhem

Land didjeridu-accompanied clan songs, which accompany my Ph.D. thesis. Repeated listenings of songs for the purpose of notation are directed at particular aspects such as the words, the vocal melody, the stick patterns, the didjeridu patterns. This kind of listening requires a careful balancing act: all the listener's experience and understanding of all music, and all they have read, heard and understood about this music in particular, must be brought to bear without sullyng the openness which allows each recorded song to speak to the listener in its own terms. My understanding of the listening and notation processes deepened during my notating year and I realised that notations represent the way a single person heard and transcribed the recordings at one time. I became very well aware of the multitude of extraneous things ranging from the weather to the time of day, to mood, to what you had for breakfast, to the political environment, all of which can change the way a recording is heard. The main beneficiary of notations is the person who did the notating. The process of notating forces a very concentrated and pointed listening which has enormous benefits in training the hearing sensitivity of the notator. But they are also useful in other circumstances. None of those notations appear in *Singing the Land* because the families of the singers involved have not yet released the recordings.

Inside:

Book reviews by Elizabeth Mackinlay, Thérèse Radic, and Graeme Smith. Research report by Lorraine Granger-Brown.

review

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Some important and long overdue steps have been taken, but the reconciliation process still has a long way to go in this country. Its success depends to a large extent on the ability and willingness of all Australians to listen: to listen to what the Indigenous people have to say about themselves and their culture and how to live in this land. Listening is an active, time-consuming and energy-sapping process, but it becomes easier with practice and the time is well spent.

So, coming to Geoffrey Gurrumul's CD, I can see and agree with the observations made by the reviewers, but for me the outstanding characteristic of this recording is the way Gurrumul has woven musical characteristics of traditional Indigenous music into diatonic and entirely accessible Western song forms. I hear musical patterns conforming to the melodic patterns created by using separate pitch areas in, for example, the beginning of "Galiki", in the refrain of "Gurrumul History", and in the final item, "Wukun". Pitch area is a term I used to describe a common melodic pattern in north-east Arnhem Land clan songs of the 1970s. A pitch area consists of one or two notes used discretely in vocal phrases. Items may have any number of pitch areas between one and five, and they are used in descending order. "Wukun" demonstrates this clearly, the first phrase using one high note, the second, two lower notes, the third, lower notes again and so on. It is not a rigid pattern. Sometimes there is leakage between pitch areas but these are usually passing or decorative notes. Other echoes of traditional styles include Gurrumul's hummed introductions, particularly in "Wiyathul", and his very deliberate treatment of his ceremonial names in "Gurrumul History", which recalls the calling of important names at significant moments in north-east Arnhem Land ceremonies. The use of a second voice a third above the main singing voice is a very common device in Torres Strait and island dance styles.

These are some of the traditional Indigenous musical characteristics that I notice in Gurrumul's recording, but very few listeners would hear the same things that I hear there. Does that matter? Not in the least. Every listener must do their own listening, and every listening is as valid as any other. This is the message I hope to convey in *Singing the Land*. Above all, my purpose in the book is to encourage and facilitate listening to Indigenous music.

In Western society it is the written word which has authority, but for Aboriginal people, the words articulated in song

and speech are crucial. Song words carry heavy burdens of meaning, with layers of references stacking up in stripped-down texts. The response of Aboriginal people to the recent ceremony where the Prime Minister apologised to them illustrates the heavy weight that spoken words carry. Even the most cynical of Aboriginal observers, who noted at the time that the apology was just a beginning, accepted and embraced the Prime Minister's words.

Ideally, Australians should learn about Aboriginal life from Aboriginal people. There should be direct communication between Aboriginal people and a public prepared to put the effort into listening. Intermediaries like me are becoming more and more irrelevant as these more appropriate avenues open. But I am still carrying an earlier, 1974 obligation to Mungurrawuy and Burrumurra. Separately and quite independently these two senior Aboriginal men made it very clear to me that my being allowed to enter Aboriginal lands and record Aboriginal singing entailed an obligation to teach all Australians about Aboriginal music. To some extent, my teaching at the University of New South Wales was a response to that obligation, but clearly, Mungurrawuy and Burrumurra were not just talking about specialist students. They wanted the whole of Australia to know about their music. No book is going to reach the whole of Australia, but I felt that I should at least attempt to write something that was accessible to non-specialists.

The target audience for *Singing the Land* describes a continuum which runs between the general public, people who know a little about Aboriginal culture and wish to know more, music students beginning to learn about Aboriginal music, and experienced music researchers who have worked or intend to work on this music. The main audience, however, falls at the general public end of the continuum. It is the cohort of people described by David Horton, then director of publishing at Aboriginal Studies Press, as "educated laypeople".

The need to address this audience has been with me for a very long time, at least since classes in social anthropology at Monash University during 1969–1971. A series of courses focussed on Australian Aboriginal life and culture included one course run by Colin Tatz, which dealt very matter-of-factly with the situations in which contemporary Aboriginal people lived. The health and education statistics and their consequences were put very squarely to students. The comment that made such an impression on me was Tatz's observation that in countries

where a great deal was known about Indigenous people, their position in that society was better than in countries where not much was known about them. Of all the Indigenous people he had studied, the situation of the Australian Aboriginal people was the worst, and he linked this with the appalling ignorance of Australian society in general about Aboriginal people. I could see quite clearly the logic of his argument that ignorance about Aboriginal life allowed the general population of Australia to ignore the dreadful situations in which Aboriginal people lived.

In 1995 I discussed how to write a book for a non-specialist audience with David Horton and Stephen Wild at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Stephen Wild suggested I start with a general overview and then go on to more detailed chapters which could be fairly self-contained. David Horton's response was "Each chapter could be a mini version of the book, with a general overview and description of, say, the music of Arnhem Land, but with the technical descriptions of, say, the structure of *manikay*, or didjeridu playing, occurring in coloured boxes." (Letter, 30 October 1995).

David Horton gave me several other instructions about how to write for a non-academic audience. These were: Do not have an overt theoretical framework; do not go over the academic arguments of "he said this" and "she said that"; do not use obscure technical language; and do not have footnotes. In the end I did not follow these instructions to the letter, but they made me more conscious of the need to be careful about how I used strict ethnomusicological and academic conventions.

One of the most important things I tried to teach music students and the most difficult for them to grasp was the different reality of music in Aboriginal life. Its importance, its use in ceremony and its other functions are not difficult to grasp in theory. The difficulty is to understand the restrictions placed on music. Students would bring forward views that they regarded as absolutes, saying, for example, "music is for everyone" or "we share our music, so they should too". Besides tackling the "us/them" dichotomy, it was necessary to attempt to convince students that there could be other perfectly valid views of the nature of music. They needed to grasp that there could be a kind of music ownership which requires regulations about when music is performed and who may perform it; to cope with a copyright that bars the hearing of some music and places very severe limitations on performance; to deal with a situation in which the playing of a didjeridu might be regarded as disrespectful and offensive to some Aboriginal people.

The material in the listening boxes and the 24 notations in the third part of the book are intended primarily for students and researchers. For students, the music notations, edited into FINALE, demonstrate that this music is not just simple and repetitive chant, but is full of variety and subtle interest. Rough, hand-written notations give rise to an expectation that the music will be similarly rough. My experience with Aboriginal music indicates the contrary: that these song items were sculpted with infinite care and attention to musical detail. The edited notations sit on a page like other music that students have seen, and are obviously susceptible of analysis using familiar tools. For researchers, the notations by several experienced ethnomusicologists show different approaches that earlier researchers have taken to musical issues. In addition, the text throughout the book summarizes and brings together earlier conclusions which are now difficult to find. They are often

out of print or in obscure journals no longer readily available. The book draws attention to these now neglected writings and presents an intellectual and academic context for them.

Singing the Land is not a Ph.D. thesis. I wrote one of those in the 1970s, and while it has a place in ongoing research into Aboriginal music, it is of interest only to a very small number of specialist readers. *Singing the Land* is directed much more widely and some of the more tedious conventions of academic writing have been abandoned. I have not tried to force the material into a single argument as would be necessary for a thesis. I could have done. I could have, for example, addressed the questions of whether Aboriginal music is the same throughout the continent, or not. In fact the structure of the book provides an answer to that question. Those things which can be said about all Aboriginal music are treated in the first part and those things which differ in different areas in the second and third parts. A thesis would have required this to have been spelt out in a much more obvious, and, for these purposes, unnecessary way.

Instead, I have tried to present the material gathered and the writing published in the early years, 1960 to 1980, in some context. I have tried to explain what the early researchers were doing and why and what they actually achieved and how. I have not gone systematically through all the early research and delivered judgements on it. Some pieces of the research I find more interesting and provocative than others, and these will be perfectly clear in my writing. To some extent I am still influenced by Alice Moyle's now very old-fashioned views that there is so much to be done in understanding Aboriginal music and so few people working in the field that all should be supported; that there are not enough of us to form factions and waste energy challenging each other; that if you find something in somebody else's work which you think inadequate or wrong, the correct response is to go and do better yourself.

Singing the Land is a very personal account. My view is that all writing is very personal, and always tells as much about the writer as it tells about the subject, but some is dressed up to sound more objective, more definitive, more authoritative. I have taken the opposite path. By making it very clear that these are the conclusions from my own experience, I hope readers will be able to give it its true value as nothing more than one person's experience of a very important, very profound musical culture.

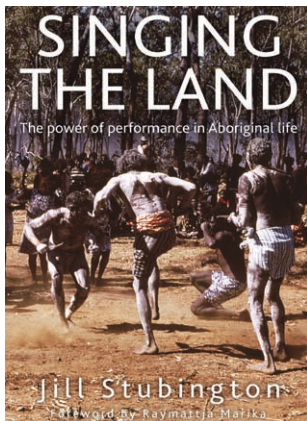
Meanwhile, Indigenous music continues to be composed and performed and follows its own very specific and often challenging trajectories. In February 2007 we were confronted by the death of a prominent didjeridu player, Alan Dargin. The *Sydney Morning Herald* of 27 February gives his age as 40. The death at age 49 of the friend who wrote the foreword for *Singing the Land* is a very personal and devastating loss for me. These are stark reminders of the curtailed life expectancies of Aboriginal people. But the music continues. The brilliant composer and didjeridu player, William Barton, and the talented Gurrumul Yunupingu define new ways to be musically expressive. Gurrumul's CD widens and strengthens the communication channels for Aboriginal people and increases the opportunities for better mutual understanding to develop. The most and the least we can do is listen to them.

DR JILL STUBINGTON

Singing the Land

Jill Stubington
ISBN 9780980280234

Publisher: Currency House Inc., 2007
RRP: AUD\$34.95 paperback edition (313pp)



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Jill Stubington began her musicology career as a research assistant to renowned Aboriginal music scholar, Alice M. Moyle. Working closely with Moyle, Stubington was provided with an opportunity to “audition” or transcribe field recordings of Aboriginal music from many regions of remote Australia, including those made by Richard Waterman and Trevor Jones. This intensive listening and analytical experience provided her with a valuable storehouse of musical knowledge about the structures, sounds and spoken words about musical performance by Aboriginal peoples. In the mid-1970s, Stubington travelled to north-east Arnhem Land to study and record non-secret Yolngu songs and thus added her own set of field experiences to her ever-growing awareness and insight into the nature of Aboriginal musical life. It is these combined analytical, experiential, and personal understandings which Stubington synthesises in *Singing the Land*. In writing this book, Stubington seeks to fulfil a number of aims. First and perhaps of most importance, Stubington carries through on her promise to two Yolngu men (now deceased) thirty years ago to teach *balanda* (non-Indigenous peoples) about Yolngu music. Second, she aims to provide an introduction to and account of the pioneering and large body of ethnomusicological research into Australian Aboriginal music, including her own, which took place between the years 1960 and 1980. *Singing the Land* is also intended as a textbook for students of music and social anthropology, and further as an opening for the public to better understand the sounds they hear when they listen to Australian Aboriginal music.

Stubington has approached the writing of this book with fluidity and ease of access that suggests her familiarity with and her passion for the material she is discussing. Each of the thirteen chapters is carefully crafted to ensure that readers are provided with the necessary nuances of Aboriginal musics but not alienated because of their complexities. In this way, she serves her stated aim of sharing her extensive knowledge of Indigenous Australian musical life with the mainstream. The book is divided into three parts. Part One introduces the reader to the social and lived nature of music in Aboriginal life; Part Two discusses performance styles across Aboriginal Australia and includes a listening guide; and Part Three provides detailed musical notations for each musical example discussed.

Perhaps what is most striking and significant about *Singing the Land*, is the way that the book functions, perhaps unintentionally,

as an historical account of various researchers and the kinds of research work they were doing in relation to Aboriginal music during a specific period of colonial engagement. Indeed, the way that Stubington has written this book is at once a product of the time and something more. Several times throughout the text, Stubington reminds us of the partiality and subjectivity of any musical documentation and asserts that her understandings are nothing more and nothing less than her interpretation and hers alone. Where she feels it is appropriate and valuable, Stubington openly and honestly engages with the complexities of her subject position as “white female fieldworker”, the close relationship between colonial oppression and anthropological research, rights and responsibilities carried by white researchers undertaking research in Indigenous communities, as well as the fluidity of the research and the relationships we have with Aboriginal performers. Whether we like Stubington’s exploration of whiteness, race and music or not, she has attempted to lay bare her professional, political, and personal agenda as an Aboriginal music researcher and in this way, provides her own kind of response to the call from Indigenous academics and others to address white race power and privilege.

The issue of gender is not discussed. Even though she is a white woman and despite the fact that it is a Yolngu woman who introduces her text, most of the performers she speaks of are men. Why? A gendered critique and presentation would have been useful and insightful. Also, the way that such a gendered critique interacts with power and further again, music: these complexities would have been interesting to read about. There is some attempt to explain the male-centric view presented, but while this may hold for some instances of performance in north-east Arnhem Land, when Stubington similarly uses “he” to stand for both men and women across different Indigenous groups, the gendered analysis falls far short. It does not deal with the complexities, intricacies and fluidity which are performance in Aboriginal musical life—the performativity of performance is missing from this analysis.

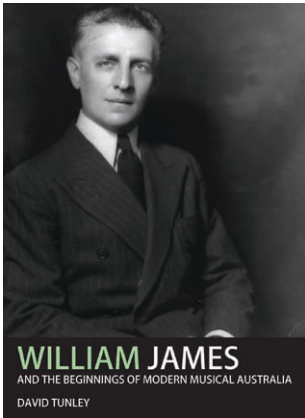
At the very beginning of the book, Stubington reminds us that “any view of Aboriginal music can only be a personal one” and it is from this perspective that I would like to conclude this review. I am not an Arnhem Land scholar and even though I am a tertiary-trained music lecturer, I do not consider myself a musicologist. However, like Stubington, I am a white woman who ventured into a remote area of Australia to work with, live beside and record the music of an Aboriginal community. *Singing the Land* represents Stubington’s life work, as well as the life works of others whom she knew well, most significantly, Alice Moyle.

DR ELIZABETH MACKINLAY

William James and the Beginnings of Modern Musical Australia

David Tunley
ISBN 9780909168629

Publisher: Australian Music Centre, Sydney, 2007
RRP: AUD\$20 paperback edition (134pp)



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musical life in this country for much of the 20th century. With the fading of the ABC's musical influence, James's name has all but disappeared.

In this little book (some 134 pages), David Tunley, now an Emeritus Professor of Music at the University of Western Australia, has provided scholars with a valuable life and career outline of an almost forgotten but important figure. In six chapters, it sketches James's student days, his all too brief time as a concert pianist in London, the crucial visit home which led to his giving up London for the ABC, and his years as a broadcaster, first as the ABC's Victorian State Director of Music and then as Federal Director. There are appendices that show the limits of James's creative work; a list of musical forces used by the Australian Broadcasting Company (which preceded the Commission) in its first year, 1929; a list of the concert artists brought to Australia for the ABC by James; and three of his own broadcast scripts, which give us an insight into what motivated his choice of music and performers. There are also restrained reference notes, a useful select bibliography and an adequate index based on names. James left us neither letters nor diaries. Only interviews and official documents remain, meagre pickings from which to flesh out this portrait of a shy and retiring musician. This may explain why Tunley has not attempted a full biography.

William G. James was born at Ballarat in 1892, a contested dating, with 1895 given in every document preceding the *Australian Dictionary of Biography's* recent entry. His father was a compositor, possibly a printer. His mother was a piano teacher and a gifted pianist and gave her son his grounding in music to great effect. James was of Cornish descent. All four of his grandparents came from Cornwall to seek their fortunes on the goldfields. By the time James was born, Ballarat had outgrown its raw beginnings and metamorphosed into a prosperous country town. The James family had grown with it, the miners of the first generation educating their sons to enter the professions. William's father, however, had little business sense and made minimal headway with his printery. The family moved house often.

William received a string of awards at Ballarat's South Street competitions, ending in 1905 when the family moved to Melbourne, possibly to further the boy's musical education.

William Garnet James (1892–1977) was the Australian pianist-composer who became the Australian Broadcasting Commission's (ABC) first Federal Director of Music, a post he held from 1936 until his retirement in 1957. In the world of Australian radio broadcasting, as in Australian musical life, he was a power to reckon with. As the third in the triumvirate that included the redoubtable Charles Moses and Bernard Heinze, he was at the centre of the organisation that controlled

Harry Thomson, a staff teacher at the University of Melbourne Conservatorium, heard him at South Street and offered free tuition until the boy was ready to apply for a scholarship at the Conservatorium. Thomson's credentials came from three top echelon institutions: the Berlin Hochschule, the Raff Conservatorium in Frankfurt, and the Leschetitsky School in Vienna. He proved to be a fine teacher; James won the coveted scholarship and became a student at the University of Melbourne under Thomson in 1909.

At this point in James's story, Tunley refers to the turbulent foundation years of the institution in which the young man now found himself and states that the scandal and consequent refusal by the university to renew the tenure of the first Ormond Professor, G.W.L. Marshall-Hall, led him to create "another conservatorium—this in Albert Street—to where his devoted students and many members of staff followed". This I find a little confusing. The first building used briefly as the university's conservatorium was at the Queen's Coffee Palace in Carlton. The second was housed in the Victorian Artists' Society rooms in Albert St., East Melbourne, opposite St Patrick's Cathedral. In both cases the rent was paid by Marshall-Hall since the university refused to do so. In 1900, when Marshall-Hall found himself without his university position he simply remained where he was in Albert Street, surrounded by loyal staff and students. Since he was already the legal tenant, the university had no claim on the building. Marshall-Hall created his own conservatorium while the university had to begin again in temporary quarters until the present building was opened in 1910.

James's years at the university ended just prior to World War I. On the recommendation of the visiting pianist-composer, Teresa Carreno, he was accepted as a pupil by the Belgian pianist, Arthur De Greef, himself a former pupil of Liszt and of Saint-Saens. The outbreak of war left James stranded in London. But De Greef fled Belgium and also wound up in London. James was able to study with his chosen master in spite of the precariousness of both their positions. Throughout the war, James gave concerts and published a number of agreeable songs, gaining a reputation that was to grow to such an extent in peacetime that it seemed he was destined to have a role as a fashionable London pianist-composer indefinitely. He began to appear regularly at the Proms under Sir Henry Wood and toured during the 1920s in the international Celebrity Concerts series in the UK. In 1921 he married the Russian singer, Saffo Arnav, successfully putting an end to her career, though she appears to have enjoyed the experience, something I find hard to believe. In 1923, attended by his wife and child, James landed in Melbourne on vacation only to be swept up by soprano Stella Power to tour as one of her associate artists. During this time he encountered the most formidable man in Australian music, Bernard Heinze. As the newly-appointed Ormond Professor, Heinze was intent on taking control of orchestral music in Melbourne, where the Marshall-Hall Orchestra (incidentally a separate entity from his conservatorium orchestra and one which played independently and professionally in a public subscription series usually held at the Melbourne Town Hall) as well as its successor, the amateur

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, had faltered, the former due to union troubles, the latter from poor standards. At this stage, James had no intention of returning permanently to Australia, but he had barely taken up his London career again when he received an offer he found he could not refuse.

In August 1924 James was back in Melbourne as a piano teacher at the university's conservatorium. He gave out that this was a temporary arrangement and got on with a life of teaching, concertising (including accompanying a tour by Toti Dal Monti) and composing yet more songs. He also gave recitals and talks for early radio (3LO from 1926 to 1928), putting him in touch with the moves that were to create the ABC from this station. In 1929 James accepted the position of Director of Music for 3LO, by then part of the network of the Australian Broadcasting Company, with its headquarters in Sydney.

In 1932 the Federal Government's contract with the Company ran out and the next day the Australian Broadcasting Commission took control. Music occupied a major place in its plans. In 1938 James was promoted to Federal Director of Music and shifted to the Sydney office. There he presided until his retirement in 1957.

David Tunley devotes the remainder of the book to the way in which James used his position to promote Australian composers and performers and to programme works of importance in the

grand ABC scheme of bettering its listeners as part of an even grander scheme by government to shape, if not control, what was still seen as a young nation's future. It was, in effect, a highly patriarchal attempt to tell the rest of us what we should think and feel. And it worked. In the days when James was influencing the formation of the six state orchestras under ABC control it was the government that provided the careers of orchestral musicians outside the pit players and the dance bands of the commercial world. James sat unknown and barely visible at the centre of this web. That he was a major player in the shaping of Australia's high art musical life is undeniable.

What Tunley's book does is to whet the appetite for knowing more of how that web was made and used. More's the pity, then, that James was such a hidden man. I kept wanting to know more of what is plainly gone forever now: how did James come to make the decisions he did, against what odds, and why did he never get beyond the composition of pleasant songs? Was he thinking for himself or was he working to someone else's design? Today, the sense of the power of the ABC has gone, along with the public's awareness of James's songs—the bush songs and the carols in particular. David Tunley has done us a distinct service in returning William G. James to us in this way.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR THÉRÈSE RADIC

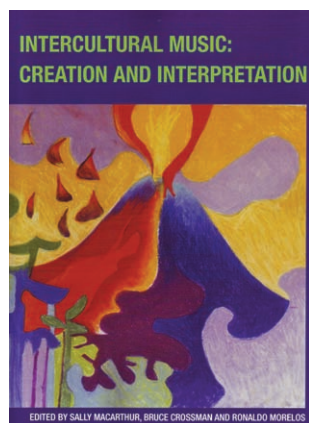
Intercultural Music: Creation and Interpretation

Edited by Sally Macarthur, Bruce Crossman and Ronaldo Morelos (eds)

Publisher: Australian Music Centre, Sydney, 2007

ISBN 9780909168605

RRP: \$29.95 paperback edition (134pp)



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This collection of papers presented at the 2006 Aurora New Music Festival includes commentaries by composers and other creative artists, as well as musicological analyses and reflection on the processes of cultural representation and identity formation and expression. The collection is bold in presenting a conception of music emanating from metaphysical, religious and spiritual discourses—the formalist *avant garde* has no place here; rather, music is

presented as a field where new rituals of engagement with identity can be created.

Sally Macarthur's essay "The Cultural Work of the Musical Work: *Light Sorrow* (1985), *Black Sun* (1989)" contrasts works by Anne Carr Boyd and by Georgian composer Giya Kancheli. Both works are anguished compositions reflecting on social outrages and tragedies, respectively the Tiananmen Square massacre, and World War II. Macarthur's analysis discusses the relationship of the sound elements of these works to the subjectivity of the listener; the subjectivity seen here not as ontologically prior, but as a project of experience, continually created in reflexive contemplation. Macarthur describes how the listening experience of music participates in this creation of self.

Anne Carr Boyd herself, in a short biographical essay, "Dreaming Voices: Australia and Japan", presents another aspect of the interaction of the composer's self and her music. She details how Japanese musical and dramatic forms have been aesthetic models for her, as she sought musical inspiration in *gagaku* (Japanese court music). At a more fundamental level she found links between the Buddhist spirituality of Japanese classical literature and her own explorations of time and goal orientation in her music. Composer Bruce Crossman, in his essay "Moving Between Things: Heaven and Hell, Visual and Sonic Gestures towards Transcendent Oneness", also proclaims the influence of East Asian philosophy and metaphysics on his music. As with Anne Carr Boyd, Asia provides images of oneness, of stasis rather than development, and of integrating music in a generalized expression of deepened consciousness.

While Asia has provided the sources of inspiration and creativity for these and other composers, such translations between aesthetic practices are sometimes criticized as merely a contemporary version of the fascination with the exotic other, long present in Western music. For this reason, the essay by Cecilia Sun "Journey to the East: Asian Influences in the Performance History of Terry Riley's *In C*" is of particular interest. Riley's famous minimalist work is often seen as part of the minimalist's experimentation with non-western approaches to repetition, with different ways to structuring time and with attitudes to teleology. Sun documents how this work has been heard and performed in Asia, by ensembles as different as the Shanghai Film Orchestra and a Japanese psychedelic post-rock band. She also investigates how a number of western performers

have incorporated their own imagined “Asian musics” into performances of *In C*. Ultimately, whether these are “crude Orientalist fantasy” or the re-modelling of traditionalist western aesthetics within new high prestige cultural institutions in China, it is clear that the music has no simple relationship to “real Asian performance practices” (p54).

Three linked papers on the music of Ross Edwards are written from complementary perspectives of the composer, of the musicologist, and of the performer. These articles focus on Ross Edwards’s *Kumari* for solo piano, a work from his contemplative “sacred series” of around 1980. Edwards expresses his wish to get beyond both the sterility of Modernism and the self-consciousness of Minimalism, through turning towards an unmediated experience of sound. Paul Stanhope provides an analysis of *Kumari*, presenting the motives and musical cells with which Edwards invites the listener into a ritual-like “spiritual interiority”. Finally, pianist Diana Blom explains the processes through which she arrived at her interpretation of the work. *Kumari* employs rhythmic and dynamic notation, but no bar lines or implied pulse or climax. Starting with a consideration of the bodily involvement described as the “knowing in action” implicit in all musical performance, she also consulted with the composer, not so much to authorize her interpretations as to add another perspective. Stanhope’s analysis provided other views, as did a recording of another live performance.

Performance, rather than composition and derived interpretation, is a theme of several other papers. Ronaldo Morelos, in “Angels of Bali: The Sanghyang Dedari Trance Performance Tradition” describes one of the well known “trance dances” of Bali. The performance form is shown to be structured by well-established musical, verbal and kinetic texts, by Balinese concepts of self, by the exigencies of touristic staged performance, and by the psychological resources of hypnotic trance, which are used to manipulate consciousness in many societies. In another paper, Michael Atherton describes the collaborative process whereby he as “composer/improviser” and another “composer-performer” and “choreographer-dancer” generated the performance of their work *Jirayai*. The performance used a range of tuned and

untuned metallophones, including a Philippine Kulintang, various Afro-Cuban drums and a vibraphone played with a cello bow. The performance was generated by the collaborations combining the repertoire of playing movements of musicians, the gestures of the dancer, and a schematic score which indicated little more than possibilities. Michael Atherton describes it as a “collaborative research process, the outcomes of which were tested through dance . . . called *comprovisation*” (p 89).

In most of the articles assembled in this collection, music is read as transcendent, psychically integrative, full of immanent meaning and spiritual. It is “cultural” not in the sense of expressing a widely shared world view of a group, but as a resource through which an individual’s identity might be constructed. The “culture” of modernism in music, forensically uncovered in Georgina Born’s study of IRCAM¹ is not the sort of social formation which is referred to; rather, it is contemporary intellectuals’ fascination with defining themselves in relation to cultural difference and the possibility of a direct authenticity of being and consciousness. The idea of “culture” is increasingly problematised in the field of anthropology, but in popular discourses is “wild on the streets” and is now fundamental to “common sense” social understandings. Difference and its appreciation have replaced the universalism of enlightenment discourses of human nature. Yet the musics discussed here oscillate between two poles: on the one hand they are part of social structures which are valued in their specificity and social distance from western society; on the other they explore the possibilities of an unmediated experience of consciousness, more deeply and fundamentally grounded than any particular socially and historically situated way of life. Anthropologist Joel Kahn argues that current discourses of cultural difference are a constitutive structure of the modernity of intellectuals.² When this collection presents the ways in which these composers and commentators see music as “intercultural”, we see ways in which music is talking within another aspect of modernity.

DR GRAEME SMITH

Ern Malley, The Darkening Ecliptic: Song Settings by Australian Composers

The final publication by Centre for Studies in Australian Music will be a volume of song settings of the Ern Malley poems. The publication is due for release in December.

As reported in the previous issue of *Review*, the Centre for Studies in Australian Music is publishing a volume of song settings of Ern Malley’s *The Darkening Ecliptic*. The publication contains song settings by 24 Australian composers of the complete set of 16 poems and will be ready for distribution in December 2008. A selection of the songs was performed to acclaim at the Castlemaine State Festival on 7th April 2007 and again at the Melbourne Writer’s Festival on 2nd September 2007. This will be the final publication under the name of the Centre for Studies in Australian Music, due to the closure of the Centre in May this year.

The composers involved in the project are: Katy Abbott, Lorenzo Alvaro, Andrew Batterham, Brenton Broadstock, Barry Conyngham, Mark Elliott, Stuart Greenbaum, Elliott Gyger, David Howell, Raelene Howell, Annie Hsieh, William Hughes, Stephen Ingham, Linda Kouvaras, Christine McCombe, Sonoko

Nishio, Andrián Pertout, Kevin Purcell, Johanna Selleck, Timothy Shawcross, Peter Tahourdin, Antonio Tenace, Adrian Vincent, and Julian Yu.

A wide range of styles and voices are catered for in this volume of songs. The settings are for soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, countertenor, tenor, baritone, and bass. Elliott Gyger’s setting of *Petit Testament* is a duet for soprano and mezzo-soprano with piano accompaniment. Four of the songs are for solo voice, and the remainder are accompanied by piano. The Preface provides an overview of the Ern Malley story and the hoax that was perpetrated upon the editor of the *Angry Penguins* magazine, Max Harris, in 1943, by poets James McAuley and Harold Stewart. The publication is testimony to the continuing inspiration that composers and other artists continue to draw from the Ern Malley poems.

1 Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

2 Joel Kahn, *Multiculture, Postculture* (London: Sage, 1995).

Student Research: Update

Lorraine Granger-Brown is currently completing her M.Mus. at the Faculty of Music. In the following abstract she outlines her research into the J. C. Williamson and George Musgrove theatre enterprises, focussing on the year 1893.



J.C. Williamson, Arthur Garner, and George Musgrove. Used with permission of the National Library of Australia. nla.pic-vn3600929.

J. C. Williamson and George Musgrove's Company, 1893

James Cassius Williamson (1845–1913) is a name synonymous with Australian Theatre. From 1880 until 1910, Williamson, with a variety of partnership arrangements, was wholly involved in the management of his theatre businesses. The success of his business entities and the longevity of the J.C. Williamson name go some way towards demonstrating his outstanding business acumen and entrepreneurial approach to theatre management, but they by no means deliver a complete picture of what it was to run a successful theatre company and what the day-to-day picture looked like.

Although Williamson's activities are reasonably well documented, the level of detail in existing studies is perhaps not as comprehensive as it could be, given the wealth of archival material that exists in several important collections. The most comprehensive collection is housed in the Melbourne Arts Centre's Performing Arts Collection.³ Within this collection are sets of balance sheets relating to the Williamson companies for a range of years. These balance sheets are much like the financial reports prepared by the large corporations of today and provide a detailed financial picture of the overall business, together with financial information relating to individual productions and also to the personnel involved with those productions. Unlike today, with the restrictions and controls in place to protect privacy, full details of personnel are provided in the Williamson balance sheets, allowing certain observations to be made. This information, coupled with reviews from the press and existing secondary source materials, will facilitate a more in-depth appreciation of the "inner workings" of the Williamson business enterprises.

This thesis takes a synchronic view of Williamson's business activities for the year 1893, by examining the balance sheets for Williamson and Musgrove for the entire year. This technique of taking a slice of time as a means by which to examine the detail of day-to-day life was used in the writing of the twelve volume series: *Australians: A Historical Library*.⁴ The in-depth reconstruction of one entire year will allow the full extent and range of Williamson's achievements to be reconsidered.

The year 1893 was selected because it provided the earliest set of financial records available. It is also an extremely important year in which to examine the success or otherwise of an Australian business operating in both Melbourne and Sydney, as it was one of the worst economic years in Australia's history with catastrophic results for many businesses, entrepreneurs, and everyday families. The analysis of any business during such economic uncertainty would be of interest, but a business that is predominantly in existence for the purposes of entertainment is even more intriguing. 1893 was also the year when Australian opera audiences were re-invigorated by the introduction of the *verismo* operas and the premiere of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* on 9th September at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne.⁵ During this time, Williamson and Musgrove were operating out of the Princess theatre, Melbourne, and the Lyceum Theatre, Sydney.

LORRAINE GRANGER-BROWN
(M.Mus. student)

³ J.C. Williamson Collection, Performing Arts Collection, the Arts Centre, Melbourne.

⁴ Alan D. Gilbert and K. S. Inglis, "Preface to *Australians 1838*". *Australians: A Historical Library*, eds. Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling, vol. 2 (NSW: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1987).

⁵ Alison Gyger, *Opera for the Antipodes: Opera in Australia 1881–1939* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1990) 83.

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