

Articulation

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Musicological Society of Australia

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CONVENOR'S REPORT

Anne Power

It seems that while we plan to look forward, we're always looking back. The initial focus of this report was to anticipate the Graduate Music Symposium in September and to provide an overview of the recent 23rd National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia and 17th Annual Conference of the New Zealand Musicological Society. Both plans take second place to the sad passing of Professor Peter Platt.

In a strange way, these things all come together. One of the highlights for many at the National Conference was the great pleasure of seeing Prof. Platt once again in full flight in a paper which he entitled 'Only Connect'. He took his text from E. M. Forster's *Howard's End*:

Only connect! ... Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation which is life to either, will die (1910 [1969]: 174).

Platt expanded on the notion, suggesting that in musicology we need the lot, including the beast and the monk. Inimitably, he foreshadowed the flavour of the panel discussion later in the conference on seeing beyond disciplinary boundaries. His discussion with his listeners, for this is what his paper really was, ranged over reminiscences drawn from the history of the Music Department of Sydney University. He shared his insights, his humour and his 'carry-outs' with a packed room and he worked the room with a sense of the theatrical. It was a wonderful memory to take away and to look back upon now. Vale Prof.

There is much to recall with relish from the Conference. Susan McClary's keynote address investigated the musical organisation of time during the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries, exploring the idea of time which pushes forward and time which takes pleasure in the present as culturally shaped and amplifying her presentation of these contrasts with engaging musical examples. McClary also gave the inaugural Alfred Hook Lecture during the Conference, discussing competing modes of subjectivity in the madrigals of Cipriano de Rore.

Robert Walser and William Dart delivered keynote addresses on the contribution of musicology to the study of Popular Music. Walser's paper exploring ten significant points about musicology touched on the split between musicology and

Convenor's
report

Australian
Viola da
Gamba Society
formed

Graduate Music
Symposium
2000

Part of the trauma of modernity is exactly this mind-shaking suspicion that the world is not enlistable on humanity's side - that human values must resign themselves to being grounded in nothing more solid than themselves, and perhaps suffer a panic-stricken internal collapse on account of this unnerving insight.

Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*

Inside



ethnomusicology in other parts of the world, and argued that there can't be autonomous pieces of music because there aren't any autonomous people, using examples from the stylistic differences in trumpet playing between Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis that were brought about by amplification. (In this, his paper has kinship with an excellent chapter in Bruce Johnson's *The Inaudible Music* which looks at the impact of the microphone on jazz singers.) William Dart's paper explored an emerging Kiwi vernacular in popular music, drawing examples from the album *Sings Harry*.

There was wide-ranging choice in papers on the first two days and a feast of Indonesian music in concert. There was Roland Bannister's ethnographic research, 'Music in the Immigrant Experience of the Italo-Australians of Griffith, NSW', in which Bannister reported that while his project is context-sensitive ethnomusicology, it has much in common with oral history. There were three fine papers in Feminist theory: from Sally Macarthur's research on Alma Mahler-Werfel's songs, through Maree Macmillan's comprehensive sweep of Lulu and Lola figures from Berg to Tykwer's 1999 film *Rum Lola Rum*, to Helen Rusak's exploration of Elena Kats-Chernin's opera *Iphis*. There was an illuminating panel discussion which included Stanley Sadie's discussion of his editorial role in the new *New Grove*, and John Whiteoak and Aline Scott-Maxwell's foreshadowing of the completion of their mapping of music and dance in Australia. John Phillips added his fascinating research on Bruckner's Ninth Symphony to this panel. There were papers by Carolyn Brennan and David Salisbury addressing Kelantan music from the north east of Malaya and Talempong music from the Minangkabau cultural tradition of Payakumbuh, West Sumatra. There was Gary Tamlyn's very neat clarification of Rock'n'Roll's stylistic origins and Adrian Renzo's paper on the construction of 'queer' identity enacted at the level of the music itself.

The Symposium on Research in Indigenous Music opened the final two days. Marcia Langton and Djon Mundine raised important ethical issues which are still to be addressed. Langton pointed out that University Ethics Committees have not yet incorporated IATSIIS guidelines and protocols. Mundine cautioned that intercultural events are fraught with dangers of misinterpretation. Their generous commitment to the best research outcomes was evident in their interactive participation in sessions and Langton's introduction of the CD launch by the Mungamunga Singers and Dancers of Tennant Creek, a result of the research of Linda Barwick.

Articulation, the newsletter of the Sydney Chapter of the Musicological Society of Australia, is published three times a year, in March, July and November.

This issue was prepared by David Cashman, Terry Clinton, Adrian Renzo and Caitlin Rowley. Design and layout are by Caitlin Rowley.

Contributions from all sources are welcome, from short articles to information on upcoming events that may be of interest to MSA members.

For ease of handling, the best way to submit material is via email to either Terry Clinton or Caitlin Rowley. Telephone enquiries may be made to Terry Clinton or Adrian Renzo.

Terry Clinton: Email: tcClinton@mail.usyd.edu.au or terry.clinton@uts.edu.au
Ph: (02) 9519 1091 or (02) 9514 1623

Adrian Renzo: Ph: (02) 9310 2436

Caitlin Rowley: Email: carowley@comcen.com.au

Postal address: MSA Sydney Chapter
c/o PO Box 11
Holme Building
The University of Sydney NSW 2006

There were some exciting papers in this symposium. Peter Toner's work-in-progress on different ways of singing the same song subject was a splendid introduction to the complexity of the researcher's task in Yolngu music. Aaron Corn's paper examined encroaching global marketing of the didjeridu and considered Yolgnu responses, endeavouring to retain the sacred value of the yirdaki. Liz Reed's paper on the Alice Springs-based rap group NoKtUrNL posited that the band's lyrics and performances provide a map of issues: place, race, identity and history. Maroochy Barambah discussed and demonstrated contemporary contexts of traditional song. Jenny Newsome and Jardine Kiwat outlined the creative teaching methodologies at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music.

► p. 4

AUSTRALIAN VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY

A new national viola da gamba society, to support the work of performers, teachers, researchers, composers and instrument makers, recently was launched in Sydney.

The formation of the Australian Viola da Gamba Society (AVdGS) follows discussions held at this year's Easter Viol School in Melbourne. The society now has been incorporated, and an interim committee is guiding the fledgling organisation in advance of the election of office bearers (for which nominations closed on 11 August).

Interim President Patrice Connelly said it had become clear that Australian viol players needed to organise their own society, in the light of the difficulty early music societies were having in continuing support for the Easter Viol School. The most important event on the Australian viol calendar, the school could not be held in 1999 and there were fears it 'faced the possibility of expiring at some point'.

'In starting the AVdGS we join about nine other gamba societies around the world in serving our gamba players,' Ms Connelly told members in the Society's first newsletter, issued last month.

The AVdGS had 35 members as of 10 August and Ms Connelly said there were expectations of many more from among the more than 100 players of the viola da gamba in Australia.

'We wish to actively assist anyone engaged in viol research and for them to contact us if they are not already members,' she said. 'We propose to get a scholarly journal going next year.'

- The society lists as its objectives:
- To be a national society supporting all aspects of the viola da gamba in Australia
- To increase the popularity and knowledge of the viol in Australia
- To disseminate information about the viol via a website, newsletters and a journal
- To run an annual national workshop
- To mentor aspiring professional performers and researchers
- To support research into the viol and closely related topics
- To help the development of the viol community in states where this is currently in its infancy, by assisting with funding for visiting teachers
- To affiliate with other gamba and relevant early music societies around the world
- To set up a tax-deductibility fund in support of the society's activities
- To encourage the world's top performers on the viol to visit and teach in Australia
- To encourage composers to enlarge the repertoire by means of commissions (via grants), invitations to workshops and by assisting composers to familiarise themselves with the viol and its possibilities

Ms Connelly said that thus far the Society's structure is solely national, but in time State chapters funded from the national body will be set up. For further information contact Patrice Connelly, ph: (02) 9419 7473, email: patrice@saraband.com.au

GRADUATE MUSIC SYMPOSIUM

University of Technology, Sydney

8 September

see page 4 for full report

2000

◀ p. 2: Convenor's report

There were also non-indigenous themes pursued on these final two days. Jennifer Royle gave a paper on Australian commemorative music from the three International Exhibitions held in Sydney and Melbourne between 1879 and 1888. Joel Crotty presented an interpretation of music as time capsule through a comparison of Antill's *Symphony on a City* (1959) and John Peterson's *Port Kembla* (1998). Anne Power explored fragmentation of identity in two recent music theatre pieces: Colin Bright's *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* and Martin Wesley-Smith's *Quito*. Felicity Andreasen reported on her research into the integration of home culture and school culture, with reference to Pacific Islander students. She argued that the teaching challenge is to reach the place where different does not mean 'less than' and where different curricula enlarge the scope of the structures of Anglo-Australian institutions and identity.

The success of the Conference was a tribute to convenor Allan Marrett, deputy convenor Nicholas Routley, chair of the programme committee Sally Macarthur, with Adrian Renzo, Natalie Shea, Kathy Marsh, Kirsty Beilharz, Franca Tamisari, Ian Maxwell, Terry Clinton and Sally Treloyn.

The forthcoming Graduate Music Symposium in September has attracted abstracts from postgraduate students at the University of Sydney, the Conservatorium of Music and Macquarie University. The topics are varied but the call for papers encouraged themes related to interdisciplinary approaches to research, picking up on the flavour of the National Conference. And the day looks set to be stimulating. Hope to see you there.

Best wishes, Anne Power

2000 GRADUATE MUSIC SYMPOSIUM

Adrian Renzo

The Graduate Music Symposium, to be held on the 2nd of September at the University of Technology, is convened by the Sydney chapter of the MSA (with support from IASPM). The convening committee of the GMS consists of Anne Power, Terry Clinton, and Adrian Renzo. As Secretary of the MSA's Sydney chapter, I would like to thank both my co-convenors for their efforts in staging this exciting event.

At this year's MSA National Conference, a forum on Australian Music Studies underlined the notion that the various organisations devoted to music research (such as the MSA and IASPM) would benefit from increased dialogue with each other. It is only fitting, then, that the program for this year's GMS features papers covering a diverse range of topics, from eighteenth century Italian vocal music to contemporary indigenous and popular musics, with session titles such as 'Quartets, Clusters and Complexities' and 'Media and Recorded Popular Music'. The conference will be opened by keynote speaker Peter McCallum. As always, both formal papers and works-in-progress are welcome at the GMS, giving research students the opportunity to present and discuss still-developing aspects of their research in a collegial atmosphere. The symposium is being staged for a minimal entrance fee of \$8, a small price to pay for such generous opportunities for socialising and inter-faculty comparisons.

For further information, please contact Anne Power at am.power@uws.edu.au or your local music department. I look forward to seeing you at the symposium.