# Diversity in Australia's Music

# Diversity in Australia's Music:

## *Themes Past, Present, and for the Future*

Edited by

Dorottya Fabian and John Napier

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*To Roger Covell*

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ROGER COVELL
AM, FAHA, Emeritus Professor, musicologist, critic, composer, and conductor

Photo: courtesy of Music Performance Unit UNSW Sydney, photographer unknown.

Roger Covell (BA UQ 1950; PhD UNSW 1973) was born in Sydney (NSW, Australia), in February 1931 and educated in Brisbane, Queensland. During the early 1950s he moved to Britain where he worked as an actor with various theatre companies and also for the BBC and the Festival of Britain.

Upon his return to Australia, he re-joined the *Courier Mail* in 1955 and in 1960 he was made chief music critic of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, a post he held until 2001.

In 1966 he joined the staff of the University of New South Wales as founder of its music department. He became Associate Professor in 1973 and Professor in 1983. He remained Head of School until his retirement from teaching duties in 1996.

During his tenure at UNSW Sydney, he founded and was artistic director of a variety of ensembles and events, including UNSW Opera (1966-1997), and the Australia Ensemble (1980-2013). Through these he was responsible for commissioning and performing many contemporary Australian works, and for introducing Australian audiences to new or little-known compositions from overseas.

# SELECTED AWARDS, HONOURS AND PUBLICATIONS

## Awards

Member of the Order of Australia (AM) 1986
Geraldine Pascall Prize for Music Criticism 1993
Centenary Awards 2003
Long-term Contribution to the Advancement of Australian Music Award, Classical Music Awards 2006
Sir Bernard Heinze Memorial Award 2013

## Publications

### Monograph

*Australia's Music: Themes of a New Society* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1967; rev. ed. Melbourne: Lyrbird, 2016)

### Libretti

*Morning-song for the Christ Child*: for unaccompanied mixed chorus, with music by Peter Sculthorpe (Faber Music, c1966)
*Sea chant*: for unison voices and orchestra, with music by Peter Sculthorpe (Faber Music, c1968)
*Autumn Song*: for unaccompanied mixed chorus, with music by Peter Sculthorpe (Faber Music, c1972)

### Edited

*The Currency Lass, or, My Native Girl* (a musical play in two acts) by Edward Geoghegan (Sydney: Currency Press, 1976)
*Folk Songs of Australia and the Men and Women who Sang them* (vol. 2). With John Meredith, Hugh Anderson and Patricia Brown. Kensington: New South Wales University Press, 1987.

## Reports

*Music in Australia: needs and prospects: a report prepared on behalf of Unisearch Limited for the Australian Council for the Arts*. With Margaret J Sargent and Patricia Brown. Kensington, N.S.W.: Unisearch, 1970

*Music resources in Australian libraries: a report prepared for the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services*. With - Patricia Brown and Margaret J Sargent. Canberra: AACOBS, 1970

## Articles

European musical nationalism in a colonial context. *History of European Ideas* 16, no. 4-6 (1993): 691-95.

Claude Debussy: Rodrigue et Chimène: an opera in three acts. *Musicology Australia* 27, no. 1 (2004): 146-153

Patrick White's plays. *Quadrant* 8, no. 1 (January-February 1964): 7-12.

The next jump of the musical Avant-Garde. *Quadrant* 10, no. 2 (March-April 1966): 32-38

An end to modernity in music? *Quadrant* 21, no. 4 (April 1977): 22-25.

Patriotic songs: an Australian disease. *Quadrant* 21, no. 5 (May 1977), 16-20.

Recording's first 100 years: From Edison to Watergate. *Quadrant* 21, no. 6 (June 1977): 28-30.

Winding back along the track. *Quadrant* 21, no. 8 (August 1977); 27-32.

Fame and neglect: Percy Grainger and Havergal Brian. *Quadrant* 21, no. 10 (October 1977): 30-33.

Wagner in Australia. *Quadrant* 21, no. 11 (November 1977): 53-56.

Strauss and Zweig: collaboration in troubled times. *Quadrant* 22, no. 12 (December 1978): 55-58.

Contemporary music in Australia. *Quadrant* 23, no. 10 (October 1979): 38-41.

Music and the new technology. *Quadrant* 25, no. 8 (August 1981): 3-9.

The new Bayreuth. *Quadrant* 28, no.1-2 (January-February 1984): 93-96.

The Aufführungpraxis of gesture. *Quadrant* 33, no. 12 (December 1989): 45-47.

Peter Sculthorpe: An introduction. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 3, (October 1968): 65-66.

Every teacher his own critic. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 3 (October 1968): 9-1.

Music in Australian Libraries. With Patricia Brown. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 10 (April 1972): 47-50.
Australian music education: A summary note. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 15 (July 1974): 79-82.
The cage unbarred. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 17 (October 1975): 3-7.
Percy Grainger – A personal view. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 18 (April 1976): 17-18.
What is the musical heritage of Australian students? *Australian Journal of Music Education* 21 (October 1977): 3-9, 11.
A statement from incoming president of ASME. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 22 (April 1978): 90.
Music and History. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 24 (April 1979): 27-35.
A statement of retiring national president of ASME. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 28 (April 1981): 93-94.
Stop the rot. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 2 (1984): 2-4.

## Selected Other Achievements

Member, Australia Council 1977-83
Elected Fellow, Australian Academy of Humanities 1983
Member of Council, Australian Academy of Humanities 1986-88
President of Australian Society of Music Education 1978-81; Musicological Society of Australia 1983-84
Board member, Heather Gell Dalcroze Foundation 1993-96
Presenter of Australian Academy of Humanities Annual lecture 1996; Stuart Challender Memorial Lecture 1994
Named Fellow Australian Society Music Education 2011

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# PREFACE

Roger Covell turned 85 in 2016. His former colleagues at the University of New South Wales organized a symposium to celebrate his academic life and contribution to music in Australia. Past students and research associates were invited to give papers on topics dear to Roger's interests, covering opera, vocal music, Australian composition and musical life, performance, music aesthetics, philosophy, and criticism. More than eighty people gathered in the Webster Building of UNSW Sydney comprising former undergraduate and graduate students, colleagues, professional associates, family and friends from Sydney, interstate and from abroad. Paper presentations were interspersed with musical performances by professionals from Roger's time as director of UNSW Opera and current and former students and staff brought to life Roger's own beautiful composition "Lullay: I saw a sweet and seemly sight," among others.

It was a memorable day and we include the full program in the Appendix of this volume for the record. But although many of the papers were interesting and inspiring, when we considered putting a *Festschrift* together for the occasion we decided to create something more unified. The fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Roger Covell's seminal book, *Australia's Music: Themes for a New Society* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1967) gave us the impetus to see where this "new society" and its music might be half a century later. Rather than inviting Roger's colleagues and associates, we put out an open call to the Musicological Society of Australia for contributions. The present volume is the result of our attempt to select the best proposals while covering as many aspects as possible of the rich tapestry of musicking, past and present, of this "Big Brown Land."[1] We are disappointed that we did not receive more proposals on the music of Indigenous Australians, on jazz, on contemporary composers or composed music, world music and the music of various ethnicities, and on popular music and musicians. But we noted with interest the bourgeoning work conducted on colonial and early federation times, especially opera. It might be indicative of the western-focussed roots of musicology that most

[1] *Big Brown Land* is the title of Alison Bauld's opera premiered in 1975 by Roger Covell and his company, UNSW Opera.

of the submissions received investigated aspects of white, European heritage and compositional style of the past. Although these would have expanded on the material Roger Covell's book covers, we trust that his open-minded world-view will delight in taking a volume in his hands that shows more broadly the expansive and eclectic nature of his homeland's welcoming of musical creativity in all its styles and form.

Given the diversity and self-contained nature of the chapters, we provide only a Names Index; the location of topics (subject entries) and discussion of institutions and many ensembles are likely to be self-evident from chapter titles. Similarly, the Bibliography contains only major scholarly works (books, book chapters, journal articles, conference papers and theses as well as creative works that are discussed at length) while references in each chapter provide further specific resources (such as websites, magazine and newspaper articles, encyclopedia entries and additional compositions).

Since this is a volume to celebrate one of the doyens of Australia's public intellectuals' achievements—music critic, composer, conductor, educator, musicologist and university administrator—we considered it appropriate to include a short professional biography of Roger Covell at the start of the book and to dedicate the whole volume to his life and achievements.

*Salut! Roger Covell, you are a national treasure!*

Dorottya Fabian and John Napier

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to our peer-reviewers who have provided invaluable comments, suggestions and academic insights and helped make each chapter to be better. In no particular order, Jill Stubington, Michael Hannan, Diana Covell, Andrew Alter, Samantha Owens, Jason Stoessel, Daniel Bangert, Sally Macarthur, Kathleen Nelson, Larry Sitsky, Paul Watt, Tony Lewis, Graeme Smith, Kim Cunio, Michael Halliwell, Anne-Marie Forbes and Robert Vince, thank you!

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We would also like to thank the authors for their contributions. They worked willingly to tight deadlines and accepted revision requests with professionalism and in good faith.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Publisher. Without Cambridge Scholars Publishing this volume could not exist. Thank you!

# Part I

## EMERGING COMMUNITIES

# CHAPTER ONE

# MUSICAL PRACTICES IN AUSTRALIA: REFLECTIONS ON THE PAST AND PRESENT

JOHN NAPIER AND DOROTTYA FABIAN

## Part I—Deceptive cadences, half closes, (ever) developing, athematic variations

In an intriguing paper entitled "The Invention of Australian Music," Graeme Skinner "offers a brief history of early colonial Australia in nine musical objects" each "identifiable in some way as Australian," each "illuminating ways in which Australian music continued to be 'invented' into the 1840s."[1] He suggests that this material "invites us…to reconsider whether national identification and ownership need necessarily be so superficial or problematically 'nationalistic' as they are often held to be."[2] And though he is true to his word, inviting us rather than demonstrating, he draws attention to Philip Bohlman's proposition of music being "mustered" in the creation of the nation. What is important is that Australian music, as Skinner points out in quoting Sculthorpe's characterisation, does not emerge "Minerva-like, fully grown." Accepting and moving on from Skinner's invitation, we read his description as reinforcing that "invention" may come not in an Archimedean moment, nor from either Edison's five per cent inspiration nor even that ninety-five per cent of hard work. It may come from the accretion of ninety-five small, frequently unrelated, intimate acts of musical construction.

A close focus on "smaller" but by no means insubstantial acts of musicking[3] that form part of the music of Australia's past and present, and

[1] Graeme Skinner, "The Invention of Australian Music," *Musicology Australia* 37, no. 2 (2015): 289.
[2] Ibid., 292.
[3] The term, which connotes the fullest range of musical activity, comes from the title of Christopher Small's influential book *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

which suggest potentials and challenges, characterises the way that this book has developed. Roger Covell's arguably declamatory title—*Australia's Music*—might at first act as an irresistible temptation to critique its implied comprehensiveness. Its subtitle, *Themes of a New Society* might prompt us to question the sweep of such themes. But to critique it on the grounds of its exclusion of any matters of academic interest fifty years past would be pointless; to critique it on its exclusion of matters of interest today unfair. The present volume in no way attempts anything like that. Instead, we aim to complement Covell's volume by focussed case studies and snapshots indicative of where and how things were or might be currently, both in terms of scholarship and practice. Most importantly, neither we as editors nor any of the individual authors lay claim to comprehensiveness. We assume that many of our readers are sufficiently experienced in writing surveys or devising curricula to know first hand the grail-like nature of unimpeachable comprehensiveness and to understand well the injunction of one of our supervisors: answer lacunae by filling them, rather than complaining about them. We hope, as we survey some of Covell's themes and present our very partial mosaic or patchwork of Australia's musicking—both in this opening chapter and throughout the book as a whole—readers will offer us that indulgence, and continue with the important work of filling in the gaps. Similarly we do not attempt to "update" the thematic discussions of Covell's book. That is done in part by Gordon Kerry's *New Classical Music: Composing Australia,* which revisits many of the themes its predecessor outlined.[4] The process of selecting chapters was not guided by an aspiration to comprehensiveness or a conscious effort to fill lacunae. The absurdity of the former is complemented by the inevitability of good scholarship taking care of the latter. We believe that the finest tribute we might pay to Covell's catholic interest and intellectual excellence was to simply select the proposals that we hoped would produce the finest work. It is both an acknowledgement of the diversity of musicking in Australia and a tribute to the consequent range of scholarship that at no point did we have to compare similar proposals and think of ranking them against each other, or of tossing a coin. The downside is that there are some areas of musicking that are unrepresented. But considering the crowded field of academic publishing, we trust that this lack of representation is a characteristic only

[4] Gordon Kerry, *New Classical Music: Composing Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009).

of the planning, or non-planning of this book, rather than of the dissemination of research on Australia's music.[5]

## Traditions as Themes

Defining genres of music is not necessarily more complex now than fifty years ago, but reconsideration is inevitable, particularly when such definitions might apply to chapters in this volume. Covell describes the definition of certain songs, generally likely to be called folksongs, as an "appallingly difficult problem."[6] Though the association of "folk" and rural is generally now downplayed if not altogether rejected, as Cohen writes

> a definition that satisfies all users and applies to all cultures and eras, is, to say the least, challenging, mainly because most users have in mind particular characteristics as defining 'folk music,' and few such characteristics are invariant with time and locale.[7]

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[5] It is a matter of great disappointment to us that we did not receive any chapter proposals that discussed jazz or popular music in Australia. We hope readers will understand that this does not stem from any intentional exclusivity on our part, but may reflect unintended exclusivity in the academic networks in which we operate. It is also for this reason that we feel it necessary to restrict this introduction by not discussing these genres. In the absence of scholarly contribution from these fields, we feel it might be presumptuous to make our own statements about them here. For discussions of jazz in Australia, see for example John Clare, *Bodgie Dada: Australian Jazz Since 1945* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 1995); John Whiteoak, *Playing ad Lib* (Sydney: Currency, 1998); Bruce Johnson and Simon Frith, *The Inaudible Music: Jazz, Gender and Australian Modernity* (Sydney: Currency, 2000); John Shand, *Jazz: The Australian Accent* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009). For popular music, see for example Philip Hayward, *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992); Tony Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop and Rap in Europe and Oceania* (New York: Leicester University Press, 1996); Shane Homan and Tony Mitchell, eds. *Sounds of Then, Sounds of Now: Popular Music in Australia* (Hobart: ACYS, 2008).

[6] Roger Covell, *Australia's Music: Themes of a New Society.* 2nd edition. (Melbourne: Lyrebird, 2016), 37.

[7] Norm Cohen, "Folk Music," *Grove Dictionary of American Music.* Oxford Music Online. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.
See Graeme Smith, *Singing Australian: A History of Folk and Country Music* (North Melbourne: Pluto, 2005); and Seth Jordan, ed. *World Music: Global Sounds in Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2010). See also Aline Scott-Maxwell and John Whiteoak, *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia* (Sydney: Currency House, 2003).

Patterns of migration have effectively meant that any definition of "folk" in Australia that draws on origin or ethnicity is unsustainable. Furthermore, if investigated in terms of a single ethnicity, any music would require the same unpicking of generalisation that Cohen urges. Pegg notes a continuum that now incorporates World music and Roots music.[8] We suggest that this continuum embraces not only some popular music, but even to the occasional distress of their practitioners, forms that in their country of origin are considered "high art" or "classical."[9] This complex continuum is perhaps manifested today at some of Australia's larger folk festivals, in an inclusivity that is sometimes pragmatic, sometimes begrudging.[10]

This very public inclusivity extends to Indigenous Australian music,[11] though inevitably not to ongoing traditional ceremonial music, of which documentation continues.[12] As Covell writes, "our passion for collecting

[8] Carole Pegg, "Folk Music," *Grove Music Online.* Oxford Music Online. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.

[9] John Napier's Indian music teachers have expressed aversion to the "folk festival" as an appropriate context for their music.

[10] Inclusivity is seen particularly at the Woodford Folk Festival, but also the declaredly catholic WOMADelaide and the now-defunct Bellingen Global Carnival. In what might be thought of as a partial instance of gentrification, since 2010 Bellingen has hosted a "Fine Music Festival" that focuses on classical music, but also features jazz, world, and "choral music." http://www.bellingenmusicfestival.com.au/. The chapters offered in this volume do not address the use of "folk" as a source for other music created in Australia: Vincent Plush's *Australian Folksongs* (1978) uses a small, conventional folksong repertoire in music-theatrical parentheses. In his 2009 book, Kerry dissects the use of English folk-song in the music of Andrew Ford, a composer, broadcaster, writer, teacher, and thinker of such force that the slightly epic adjective "indefatigable" ought to be used.

[11] "Aboriginal music" is used to describe music made or owned by Aboriginal people. "Indigenous Australians" is used to describe Aboriginal people, people from the Torres Strait, and Pacific Island peoples now living in Australia.

[12] See for example Richard Moyle, *Songs of the Pintupi: Musical Life in a Central Australian Society* (Canberra: AIAS, 1979), Catherine Ellis, *Aboriginal Music, Education for Living: Cross-Cultural Experiences from South Australia* (Brisbane: Queensland University Press, 1985); Richard Moyle, *Alyawarra Music: Songs and Society in a Central Australian Community* (Canberra: AIAS, 1986); Fiona Magowan and Karl Neuenfeldt, *Landscapes of Indigenous Performance: Music, Song, and Dance of the Torres Strait and Arnhem Land* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005); Allan Marett, *Songs, Dreamings, and Ghosts: The Wangga of North Australia* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2005); Jill Stubington, *Singing the Land: The Power of Performance in Aboriginal Life* (Sydney:

whatever is tribally unadulterated should not obscure the realization that this transitional material is interesting in its own right and may be much more important in its bearing on the future."[13] Any theme of Indigenous Australian music today would concentrate at least, if not more, on the importance of Indigenous adaptations of European musics from the earliest "buried country" through to the Yunupiŋu family,[14] and urban Indigenous music such as rapper Briggs and hip hop artist Dobby (Rhyan Clapham). It would show the establishment of Indigenous music and dance institutions such as the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, Desert Pea Media, the Yothu Yindi Foundation, Descendance (formerly Ngaru Dance Company), the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts and Black Drum Productions (Brisbane) and the Kawanji Aboriginal Dance Group (Cairns); along with festivals such as the Alice Desert Festival and Arnhem Land's Garma Festival.

A related problem manifests from the opposite direction as well. Covell writes that "there are no obvious reasons why Australian musicians of exclusively European training and background should attempt to synthesise Aboriginal musical idioms and their own in a new way,"[15] and the question of the use of Indigenous material in the compositions of non-Indigenous Australians must now be considered a vexed one.[16] The featuring of didjeridu player William Barton in the premiere of Sculthorpe's *Requiem* (2004), the use of an Indigenous rock band in

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Currency House, 2007); Allan Marett, Linda Barwick, and Lysbeth Ford, *For the Sake of a Song: Wangga Songmen and their Repertories* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2013). The establishment of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies should also be noted.

[13] Covell, *Australia's Music,* 91.

[14] See for example Marcus Breen and Chester Schultz, *Our Place, Our Music: Aboriginal music—Australian Popular Music in Perspective* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1989); Karl Neuenfeldt, ed. *The Didjeridu: from Arnhem Land to Internet* (Sydney: John Libbey/Perfect Beat, 1997); Clinton Walker and Paul Kelly, *Buried Country: The Story of Aboriginal Country Music* (Sydney: Pluto, 2000); Peter Dunbar-Hall and Chris Gibson, *Deadly Sounds, Deadly Places: Contemporary Aboriginal Music in Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2005); Aaron Corn (with contributions by Marcia Langton, Allan Marett, Melinda Sawers, and Galarrwuy Yunupiŋu), *Reflections & Voices: Exploring the Music of Yothu Yindi with Mandawuy Yunupiŋu* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2009); Ciara Minestrelli, *Australian Indigenous Hip Hop: The Politics of Culture, Identity, and Spirituality* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2017). See also Julie Rickwood's chapter (Chapter 6) in this volume.

[15] Covell, *Australia's Music,* 91.

[16] See Jonathan Paget, "Has Sculthorpe Misappropriated Indigenous Melodies?" *Musicology Australia* 35, no.1, (2013): 86-111.

Gordon Kerry's opera, *Ingkata* (2008),[17] and the use of Indigenous choir and dancers by Paul Stanhope in *Jandamarra: Sing for the Country* (2014) are among the responses, partial or otherwise, to current challenges to cultural appropriation. Solutions are perhaps easier to find in performance-based interactions, such as that between jazz players of the Australian Art Orchestra and the Young Wagilak Group from Arnhem Land.

## Structures: The Middle Ground

Covell gives an entire chapter (Chapter 6) to two organisations that have shaped the broadest contours of musical life in Australia: the Australian Broadcasting Commission (now Corporation, which at the time of the book's initial publication was responsible for the running of the now independent orchestras of the state capitals), and Musica Viva. Large organizations are also represented in his chapter on opera (Chapter 8). But in the fifty years since Covell's book, it is the middle-sized organisations or smaller ensembles that have fused the roles of advocacy, entrepreneurship, performance, composition, commission, and teaching. A cross section includes A-Z Music, Aphids, the Australia Ensemble, the Australian Contemporary Music Ensemble, austraLYSIS, the Clifton Hill Community Music Centre, ELISION (which has commissioned over 200 new works),[18] Ensemble Offspring, Flederman, the Libra Ensemble, the Machine for Making Sense, the Nova Ensemble, Perihelion, the Plexus Collective, the Seymour Group, the Song Company, the Soundstream Collective, Speak Percussion, Sydney Alpha Ensemble, Synergy Percussion, the Syzygy Ensemble, Tilde, Tura New Music (discussed by Hope and Trainer in Chapter 14 of this volume), WATT.[19] Many of these were short-lived, others, particularly those such as the Australia Ensemble that are supported by larger institutions, have histories of over thirty years. For many composers and performers, do-it-yourself has come to be a central ethos, one that pervades both ensembles and festivals.[20] Ensembles

[17] Timothy McKenry, "From Overt to Covert: The Changing role of Cultural Commentary in Australian Operatic Repertoire (1990–2009)," *Journal of Music Research Online* 4 (2012): 12.

[18] ELISION, "Biography" http://www.elision.org.au/bio.html.

[19] See Warren Burt, "Some Musical and Sociological Aspects of Australian Experimental Music," (The Australian Music Centre, 2007). http://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/article/some-musical-and-sociological-aspects-of-australian-experimental-music.

[20] The chapters in this volume by Campbell (Chapter 2), Roennfeldt (Chapter 3), and English (Chapter 4) demonstrate that this is not new.

that are particularly experimental in approach are likely to be composer/creator driven, such as in the founding of the Clifton Hill Community Music Centre by Ron Nagorcka, Warren Burt and others, Martin Wesley-Smith and Ian Fredericks with WATT,[21] Roger Dean with austraLYSIS, Damien Ricketson and Matthew Shlomovitz with Ensemble Offspring. In addition, many of these ensembles feature work that collaborates across porous boundaries of genre.

Creative cross-media projects have formed a vital part of the output of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, under the directorship of Richard Tognetti. Smaller orchestras fulfil needs that may stem from particular approaches to performance, such as the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and the Australian Romantic and Classical Orchestra,[22] or the Arcko Symphonic Ensemble, created to offer repeat performances of modern works.[23] Others cater to the needs of non-professional music making. Also characteristic are orchestras and large ensembles that are avowedly occasional in their nature. The most obvious of these, the rather celebratory Australian World Orchestra, assembles top-level Australian orchestral musicians from around the world and from Australia almost annually. A more forward looking parallel is the Musician Project, in which aspiring orchestral musicians play alongside professional mentors.[24]

In 1967, Covell wrote that, "Choral singing on a large scale has been in decline in many countries as a social force."[25] But choral organisations now demonstrate similar ranges of size, durability, and approach to the largely instrumentally-based ensembles listed above. Their role in education cannot be over-praised, especially the work of the Australian Voices, the Australian Children's Choir, the Sydney Children's Choir, and its smaller Gondwana choirs and the Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir, and regional rural and remote service work such as that of the

[21] Burt, "Australian Experimental Music."
[22] The interest in historically informed performance, or "early music" has led to the formation of smaller ensembles dedicated to these practices, such as Salut! Baroque, Ironwood, or The Australian Haydn Ensemble.
[23] http://www.arckosymphonicensemble.org.au/.
[24] The Musician Project http://musicianproject.net.au/.
[25] Covell, *Australia's Music,* 129.

Moorambilla Voices.[26] The late 1980s saw the rise of an enduring "movement" in the creation of *a cappella* ensembles that had a basis in either locality or support of particular social or political agendas, such as the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Choir. These and smaller vocal ensembles often demonstrate the porosity of the boundaries between traditions of popular music, jazz, classical, and world music.[27]

Despite their perennial financial precariousness, smaller operatic companies such as Melbourne's Chamber Made Opera (which presents a far broader range of theatrically driven performance), Sydney's Pinchgut Opera, (which presents opera that is older and less frequently played than much of that produced by larger companies), Sydney Chamber Opera, Hobart's Ihos, founded by the now expatriate composer Constantine Koukias, and Green Room Music, founded by Andrée Greenwell as a platform for the creation and production of innovative performance and screen works, have done more than meet a need for smaller works within both a conventional and a contemporary cross-genre repertoire, by providing vehicles for exciting revivals of the old and the introduction of the new.[28] These companies, as well as major ones, have been vivified by offerings of social and political topicality—Andrew Schultz's *Black River* (1989), Gordon Kerry's *Midnight Son* (2012), Andrée Greenwell's *Sweet Death* (1991), Alan John's *The Eighth Wonder* (1995), Moya Henderson's *Lindy* (2002), Colin Bright's *Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* (1994)—or contemporary readings of Australian history, as in Richard Mills' *Batavia*

[26] If the growing optimism of much of Covell's book feels borne out, so sadly too must his pessimism about the state of primary school music education. When he writes that "the vital prerequisite . . . is that primary school instruction should be in the hands not of the nearest more-or-less willing teacher but of specialists in musical education with awareness of the latest developments in contemporary practice" (p. 279), we might be reading the words of Richard Gill fifty years later: "There are hundreds of state schools where there are no music teachers whatsoever, and the kids are lucky enough to listen to a CD." Anon, "Music program targets primary school teachers," *Australia Major Performing Arts Group* webpage 20 October, 2014, http://www.ampag.com.au/article/music-program-targets-primary-school-teachers.

[27] See the articles in Anni Heino ed. "Something to Sing About: The Good Health of Australian Choral Music," *resonate*, December 18, 2009. See also Rickwood's chapter in this volume.

[28] See also Fabian's chapter on the University of New South Wales Opera in this volume. See Napier's chapter for a discussion of South Asian dancers: their productions, in their theatricality, narrative, and use of song parallel opera.

(2001).[29] Brett Dean, in recreating Peter Carey's novel *Bliss,* emphasises that is a "powerfully dark and satirical tale."[30] McKenry suggests that in other works, cultural "engagement" is "active, but veiled."[31] Nevertheless, opera remains the most daunting of forms for the consideration of new work: according to Brian Howard, "my advice for the 2014-16 composition stock exchange...opera: sell."[32]

Several chapters in this volume discuss festivals, either directly or in passing. These chapters draw some attention to the role that festivals play in the promulgation of both old and new music, and in giving broader attention to genres that might otherwise be marginal. Apart from major and broad based festivals in capital cities, and capital city fringe festivals, these include regional jazz festivals in towns such as Wangaratta, Merimbula, Thredbo, Byron Bay, and Kiama, (which supplement city-based ones, as well as ones focussed on women or youth), the Four Winds Festival in Bermagui, the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville, the Sydney Sacred Music Festival, the What is Music festival, the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Bangalow Music Festival, Totally Huge New Music Festival in Perth,[33] Sydney Spring, the Bendigo International Festival of Exploratory Music, the NOWnow, the Tilde New Music Festival and OzAsia in Adelaide. The number of festivals featuring general or stylistically specific commercial popular musics is predictably large.

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[29] Vocal works of political topicality are also discussed in Linda Kouvaras's chapter in this volume.

[30] Brett Dean, "Moments of Bliss" (program note)
http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2013/01/10/3666975.htm.

[31] Timothy McKenry, "From overt to covert," 7. This source also gives a list of performances of new Australian operas from 1990-2012. *Black River* interrogates relationships between Aboriginal and white Australians; *Midnight Son* and *Lindy* deal with notorious legal cases, the former a love triangle gone badly wrong, the latter the miscarriage of justice around Lindy Chamberlain, accused, imprisoned, but finally exonerated of the murder of her child. The Eighth Wonder is the Sydney Opera House: the opera explores its creation. The Rainbow Warrior was a Greenpeace vessel, sunk in Auckland by French agents; the sinking of the Dutch vessel Batavia was followed by an orgy of sociopathic violence among the survivors. *Sweet Death's* central character effectively eats until she dies.

[32] James Nightingale "A brief interview with Brian Howard," *resonate* April 22, 2014.
www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/article/a-brief-interview-with-brian-howard.

[33] See Chapter 14 by Hope and Trainer in this volume.