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○ September | ○ 2005

THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN-NEW ZEALAND BRANCH  
OF IASPM



# IASPM-ANZ *Soundings*

**Welcome to the September 2005 edition of Soundings!**

*This issue presents a range of longer text articles and news from IASPM-ANZ members. Soundings is produced in conjunction with a fabulous new photos page on the IASPM-ANZ website. Many thanks go to the Website Officer, Eve Klein, for helping to set this up.*

*Have a look:*

[http://www.iaspm.org.au/Soundings\\_Images\\_Sept05.htm](http://www.iaspm.org.au/Soundings_Images_Sept05.htm)

*Happy reading & music-making!*

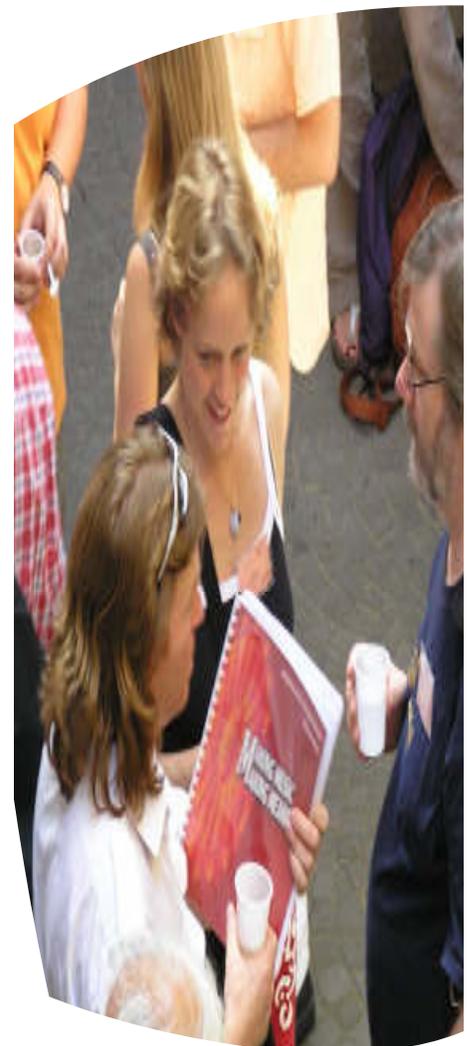
*— Shelley Brunt, Secretary & Soundings compiler*

## Notes from the Chair

Hi all,

I trust everyone is back on track after a busy mid-year round of conferences; Rome papers are due already so that's another one for the to-do list. Our Wellington conference is well-placed in many ways, with the hassle of teaching out of the way, and it will be a relief to get back to the small conference format following our two years as part of MegaConferences. I must admit though, last year's

*... continued overleaf*



conference has turned out well for us financially, with the organising committee returning remaining funds to us. Yes you read it here—'returning'. Many thanks to the organisers there, and Graham Smith, our rep on that committee. Amongst a list of things to edit for me lies the proceedings from SIMS, and it is very close to completion—weeks rather than months at least!

Perhaps we can discuss it as a group in more detail in December, but something that came up in Rome that relates to regional IASPM branches as well is the idea of becoming more active and vocal in public debates and the media when popular music is the subject. Although it is clearly difficult (and undesirable I think) to obtain consensus on everything that concerns our area of study, increasing our profile is worth considering as our numbers continue to grow. There are a number of groups that seem to be quoted with far less credibility than our own, if I may say so...

Anyway, I look forward to catching up with as many of you as possible in Wellington; may the writing/teaching/playing/listening forces be with you in the meantime.

Denis Crowdy  
Chair IASPM-ANZ

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## Conference News

The IASPM-ANZ annual conference will be taking place in Wellington, New Zealand from 3–6 December 2005. This year's conference has the theme 'Contemporary Popular Music Studies'. The conference timetable and details regarding registration will be announced shortly.

**\*\*Please Note!\*\*\***

Some postgrads will be eligible for a \$100 conference grant to assist with expenses. Please contact John Scannell (Treasurer) to discuss your eligibility or to ask for further information [iaspm@ihug.com.au](mailto:iaspm@ihug.com.au)

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The proceedings for the 2004 SIMS Conference are on the way! We will announce their availability in the coming weeks.

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The proceedings for the 13<sup>th</sup> international IASPM conference in Rome are also in the pipeline. Stay tuned for further information...

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# Conference Reviews

We are lucky to receive two reviews for the recent IASPM conference in Rome! Don't forget to see the Conference photos: [http://www.iaspm.org.au/Soundings\\_Images\\_Sept05.htm](http://www.iaspm.org.au/Soundings_Images_Sept05.htm)  
Read on...

## Making Music, Making Meaning: Review One

**13<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL IASPM CONFERENCE, ROME, 25-30<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

—LIZ GIUFFRE (Macquarie University)

Ah, Rome in the summertime. At what seemed like an average of 35C a day, there is certainly a reason Romans got running water and gelato organised early. This said, what a place for a conference! Held mostly at the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', the 13<sup>th</sup> International IASPM was a great experience, a chance to put faces to much read names and as always, explore popular music from a variety of angles.

While it is true to say that the Antipodean contingent did stick together somewhat, this connection was by no means exclusive. Fair to say that by the conference end not only were us Southern Hemisphere-ites responsible for organizing daily post-conference reflection (held, as was suggested on the first day, at 'the first place on the left that serves beer'), but it was great to realise the strength of our branch and its international reputation. As an international conference first-timer, this was both affirming and inspiring. Also good to realise that popular music academics the world over seem to enjoy a drink and a laugh. Funny that.

The conference itself was quite intimate, with the panels spread across the one floor of the university. Following the Opening by Franco Fabbri, the panels were ably kicked off by panels including Italian Voices (featuring our own Tony Mitchell), Music and Religion, TV Commercials and Song Contests (featuring Shelley Brunt). The last was a topic that received particular attention throughout the conference, with panels focused on Eurovision in particular both informative and insightful for those of us who generally only catch the highlights over a few vino on SBS. Also a highlight on the first day was a mid-morning session on Musical Labour and Property (which contained papers about US music industry an reception by Matt Stahl and Harris Berger), and after lunch Recording sessions (featuring Peter Doyle and Keir Keightley).

Day two saw a growth in momentum, evidenced by the temptation to 'session hop' between the multiple sessions and papers. Standouts of the day included Murray Forman's paper about Age Ideology in Popular Music; the mid-morning Eurovision panel (of which all papers were outstanding); emerging academic Ruth Dockway's paper on Rock Anthems (which featured some much need Sing-a-long opportunity), and Dave Hesondhalgh's exploration of Digitalisation and Power in the current music industry (a lovely 'don't believe the hype' moment concerning CDs, MP3 and all that

A Note from  
the Treasurer:

IASPM-ANZ  
Membership  
Fees

Hi Folks...A large number of members need to pay their fees.

I haven't chased anyone up, because for one thing that would be hypocritical (mine are due too!), but there is a reason behind this apparent benevolence. I feel the best thing to do is wait for the Wellington conference, so I can collect dues then in one go and save trips to bank and post office etc.

Now, those of you who will not be attending, and are perhaps wondering if you are in arrears, please write and ask.

OK, so if you are going to conference, I can do it all then but if not, then please pay in the usual method ASAP.

Cheers  
John Scannell,  
Treasurer.  
[iaspm@ihug.com.au](mailto:iaspm@ihug.com.au)

...continued overleaf

modern rubbish). The evening session on Fans and Stars was also stimulating, including honorary Aussie Kate Galloway's reading of record collecting and "High Fidelity", and Lisbeth Ihelmann's examination of Meaning and Music Fandom (a study based on intense but extremely detailed ethnographic research).

Mid-week on day three and more diversity and difficult choices of what to attend (and what to miss). Here non-hopping was rewarded however, with one of the strongest overall panels, Music Press, a highlight of the day as well as the conference. In particular, Paula Wolfe's exploration of Women in British Music Press was both provocative, informative, and importantly, critical of Alanis Morissette's decision to re-record 'Jagged Little Pill'. Unfortunately here I missed the panel on Music and Humour and Parody, which I also believe was as promising and it appeared in the programme. Also a standout on day three was the Everyday Life panel led by Anahid Kassabian, Lorenzo Facchinotti and Paola Prato, the last in particular providing an excellent paper on the mobile phone ring tones. Finally, new Aust IASPMer Catherine Strong presented in the evening shift on 'Grunge Remembered and Reconstructed'; Catherine was a great 'discovery' for both the Oz and international contingent. What an introduction.

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*Paula Wolfe's exploration of Women in British Music Press was both provocative, informative, and importantly, critical of Alanis Morissette's decision to re-record 'Jagged Little Pill'.*

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Over hump day and Thursday morning was kicked off by the incomparable Bruce Johnson and Martin Cloonan in a panel on Music and Violence. Although a work in progress, this panel showed particular promise not only in the given area, but also in encouraging further development of popular music studies as a whole; the idea that music should also be considered as a powerful force that can be harnessed for abuse as well as positive

use. Despite a communication and timetable mix up, the mid-morning Tribute Band session lead by Shane Homan and Guy Morrow was well executed and received, followed after lunch by a somewhat controversial cross-panel pollination as many of us struggled to choose between panels New Perspectives on Theory (featuring Keith Negus), and Star System. Again, although time and physical space restricted these somewhat during the day, luckily gaps were filled in over beers after the sessions.



The final two days of the conference saw a change in venue and format, as we moved across town and to plenary papers rather than multiple sessions. While there was something of a 'thinning of the herd' here as the pressures of impending work commitments at home meant some had to leave, those that stayed were not disappointed. Self-confessed 'wackademic' Phil Tagg provided not only the best of these panels, but one of the best papers I've ever seen, as his discussion of Musical Microcosms (aided by some fabulous visuals and sounds) demonstrated to all just how it should be done. Those that were there will never quite think of 'in-tel in-side' the same again.

Overall the conference was a great experience and success, and a pleasure to be a part of. Although plagued by a few technical and administrative glitches, these didn't overshadow the quality of work presented. Importantly too, new connections were made, drinks drunk and ideas discussed. Always the aim and well worth the heat! See you all in Mexico 2007.

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# Making Music, Making Meaning: Review Two

13<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL IASPM CONFERENCE, ROME, 25-30<sup>TH</sup> JULY

—KATE BARNEY (The University of Queensland) and SHELLEY BRUNT (The University of Adelaide)

From July 25–30, the University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’, Italy, hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> biennial conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music. The conference centred on the theme of ‘Making Music, Making Meaning’ and brought together over 300 scholars from a wide range of disciplines including cultural studies, musicology, ethnomusicology, music education, women’s studies, anthropology and popular music. As one of the conference organisers Geoff Stahl noted, it was “the biggest IASPM conference ever held” (RPM 2005, No. 35) and this was reflected in a diverse program that consisted of four days of formal papers and panels and concluded with two days of plenary sessions.

With five sessions running concurrently, each day of the conference provided a plethora of stimulating papers and panel discussions for delegates to attend. One panel, for example, examined issues surrounding female performance. Stephanie Jensen-Moulton (City University of New York) presented her paper “Anne B. Mainstream: Negotiating Female Rappers’ Identity on the Big Screen” which explored the use of music in the 2003 film *Anne B. Real* (dir. Lisa France). This film, set in the ghettos of New York, traced the journey of young Afro-Latina woman Cynthia and her attempts to break into the male-dominated world of hip hop MCing. In her well-prepared paper, Jensen-Moulton used feminist theory to determine how the film’s non-diegetic music—which included classical, jazz and R&B genres—serves to weaken Cynthia as a character and contributes to the ‘feminisation’ of the film which is already ‘safe’ and devoid of nudity or profanity. This argument was strengthened by Jensen-Moulton’s brief comparison of *Anne B. Real* with the gritty 2002 male-centric Eminem film *8 Mile* (dir. Curtis Hanson) and its protagonist Jimmy ‘B-Rabbit’ Smith’s struggles as a MC in Detroit.

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*... this has in turn resulted in an increasing number of female artists recording their music independently in order to control how they are represented.*

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Similarly, Paula Wolfe’s (SIB records) paper entitled “Sounds a Bit Like Dido: The British Music Press and The Female Singer Songwriter” examined the representation of the female performer in the British music press. Drawing on numerous media representations and interviews with British female performers, Wolfe convincingly argued that British media often focuses on stereotypical images of the ‘female singer songwriter’ and suggested that this has in turn resulted in an increasing number of female artists recording their music independently in order to control how they are represented. Still on the subject of the media and music, Silke Borgstedt (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) presented a compelling paper which looked at the ways a star’s image is crafted and displayed in various media presentations. Her paper, titled “Tracing the Meanings of a Star: Empirical Analyses at the Interface of Media Coverage and Fans’ Reception”, used British pop singer Robbie Williams and German folk soloist Stefanie Hertel as case studies and, most interestingly, shed light on the functions of star/fan interactions and how a fan’s perception of the star’s image is maintained.

Another particularly engaging paper was given by Helmi Jarvilouma (Academy of Finland) titled

*...continued overleaf*

"Soundscape and social memory". Drawing on her qualitative group interview research in European villages, Jarvilouma analysed the links between the memories of individuals/groups and history, culture and society. She also touched on the theoretical and methodological problems of studying the concept of memory and pointed to the differences between the concepts of social, collective and cultural memory. Jarvilouma argued that the concept of memory is useful for a researcher when studying social memory and raised thought provoking questions about musical soundscapes, memory and changes in cultures.

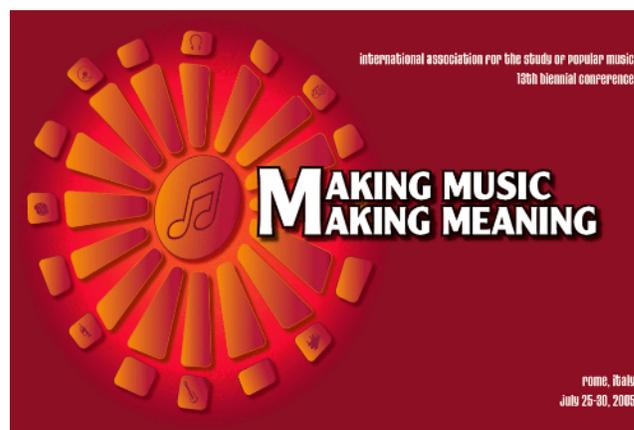
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*One of the most appealing parts of the conference was seeing/hearing scholars address the topic of the Eurovision Song Contest from differing perspectives.*

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Turing from soundscapes to cultural landscapes, Grenier (Université de Montréal) analysed the function and articulation of space and place in retail outlets such as record stores. Citing several scholars, she noted that consumers today have several avenues available in which to purchase musical products (such as buying CDs though Amazon.com) and yet 'real' stores are still popular because, among many reasons, they strategically and physically guide consumers and help them to 'keep up' with current trends in popular music. Although Grenier acknowledged that her findings were preliminary, this paper, titled "In and Out of Place: Retail Stores' Musical Mappings in Quebec", presented promising outcomes which gave insight into music consumption and the industry as a whole.

One of the most appealing parts of the conference was seeing/hearing scholars address the topic of the Eurovision Song Contest from differing perspectives. Mari Pajala (University of Turku), for example, presented "Finland, Zero Points: the Eurovision Song Contest and the



Melodrama of Nationality" which examined how the Finnish media has, over time, 'explained' the nation's long-running streak of failure in the contest. Alf Börnberg (Göteborg University), by contrast, looked at the contest as a whole and how musical/stylistic changes have emerged over time in his paper "Return to Ethnicity: the Cultural Significance of Musical Change in the Eurovision Song Contest". Others, such as Ivan Raykoff (New School University, New York) examined issues of politics, identity, nationality and use of language through his paper "Camping on the Borders of Europe: Ethnicity and National Identity in the Eurovision Song Contest". Overall, the numerous papers on Eurovision clearly identified the contest as a worthy but often neglected subject of research. When supplemented by quirky video footage and hilarious descriptions of song performances, as many of the presenters did, these papers were extremely enjoyable and were, not surprisingly, well attended.

It was also very pleasing to see a number of Australian and New Zealand IASPMites in attendance and presenting papers. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to catch up (so far from home!) and see established and emerging research coming from these countries. Topics included, for example, Papua New Guinea performance,

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Aboriginal rock, tribute bands, queer musicology, music and memory, Italian singer-songwriters, Japanese popular song contests, children's television, video ethnography, sound and power, Indonesia's MTV, Australian country music, movies and sound recording, and Australian techno sound systems.

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*By the final day after plenty of papers, sightseeing and gelati, we were all ready for a long and leisurely Italian lunch.*

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As with any conference, unforeseen glitches put an ever-so-slight dampener on the event. Some problems were technical and related to the incompatibility of media (NTSC vs. PAL) and region coding—clearly the responsibility of the presenter—but others were associated with the onsite equipment. Although the technical staff were extremely helpful, courteous and quick to respond, several papers suffered because of equipment failure. To make amends, some speakers such as Mami Sakai (Université de Paris) and others in the panel 'Hip Hop', re-presented their papers but sessions such as these were poorly attended perhaps because the new times for these sessions were not well advertised.

In addition, some panels such as 'Tribute Bands', were rescheduled or moved to different rooms without sufficient notice to attendees which proved frustrating for many. There was, to the credit of the conference organisers, a public noticeboard designed to highlight these kinds of changes: perhaps attendees needed to consult it more frequently and/or announcements needed to be posted in a timely manner. For the most part, however, problems such as these were uncommon and the timetabling was well organised and an excellent variety of topics were presented throughout the conference. Being the peak of summertime, the hot weather (although glorious) and the lack of air conditioners in all but a few

rooms meant that days were long. However, the food and coffee breaks in the pretty courtyard gave attendees an opportunity to take a break and revive. The catering was very good and a range of delicious Italian pizza, pasta salads, quiches, fruit salads and sweets were always on hand.

The final two days of the conference consisted of plenary sessions held in the new location of Caserma Sani. These sessions were respectively themed 'Mapping', 'Mediating', 'Reading Meaning', 'Visualising' and 'Voicing' and covered topics ranging from the Italian Sanremo song contest (Roberto Agostini; University of Pisa) to Rapanui music (Dan Bendrups; University of Otago). By the final day after plenty of papers, sightseeing and gelati, we were all ready for a long and leisurely Italian lunch. After the final session, conference attendees walked as a group to a nearby restaurant and indulged in several courses, wine and dessert and then said farewell until the next international IASPM conference in Mexico City. Overall, the Rome conference was a very successful and stimulating event, providing a forum to engage and explore music and its multiple meanings, meet with peers and enjoy La Dolce Vita!

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# Recordings

## **Seaman Dan CD**

Karl Neuenfeldt (Central Queensland University) is currently in the studio co-producing Seaman Dan's 4th CD, called 'Ailan Man'. Once again working at Nigel Pegrum's Pegasus Studios in Cairns, the CD will include musical contributions from Denis Crowdy (Macquarie) and a range of studio musicians and singers. The general theme of the CD is Seaman Dan reconnecting with the music of his ancestors from Polynesia, Melanesia and Jamaica. It also includes a track recorded on location in Fiji in 2004 at the University of the South Pacific. It is a traditional chant and was done with Churchward Chapel Choir from the island of Rotuma, from which many migrants came to Torres Strait in the late 1800s.

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# PhD Completions

*We are extremely happy to hear that three IASPM-ANZ members  
have recently completed their PhDs!*

*Keep reading overleaf to find out what they have been researching...*

- § Alison Huber was awarded her PhD by the University of Melbourne in May 2005, supervised by Dr. Chris Healy. She is currently teaching there in the cultural studies programme in the Department of English, but is still wondering what might happen next. She'd like to extend a big thanks to the members of IASPM-ANZ for their generous support and thoughtful conversation, which had quite a bit to do with her making it to the end of the project.
- § Phillip McIntyre graduated in April 2005 with a PhD from the Department of Media and Communication at Macquarie University, Sydney, under the supervision of Phil Hayward.
- § Helen O'Shea has recently completed her PhD at Victoria University in Melbourne and Trinity College, Dublin. The thesis was awarded the University Medal and will be published in Ireland next year. She thanks fellow IASPMites who welcomed her to the 'community of scholars'. This means you!

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# PhD Abstracts

Alison Huber

Learning to Love the Mainstream:  
Top 40 Culture in Melbourne

Abstract:

My thesis engages explicitly with the word, 'mainstream'. The concept, mainstream, generally alludes to the notion of cultural dominance and the word appears frequently in both popular and academic discourse. However, despite its ubiquity it has received little directed critical attention or definition in cultural studies, save for its role as an ill-defined, multi-purpose, and sometimes derogatory oppositional category for 'subculture' (towards which cultural studies has directed a large amount of attention). I argue that the concept, mainstream, might yet be useful as a critical category in a discipline that still finds itself struggling with the idea of 'the popular' despite its populist pretensions.

The thesis is written in two sections. In the first, I consider the fortunes of the concept, mainstream, in cultural studies. I suggest that it be recast as a virtual cultural space that is constituted by specific cultural practices. Cultural dominance, I suggest, is achieved through 'occupation' of this virtual space. In this section, I also locate the particular importance of mainstream in popular music culture and the study of popular music in the academy. I suggest that we are yet to find the most useful way of discussing the most popular forms of popular music because the language of subcultural studies—and terms like resistance, subversion, agency—continue to be relied upon in examinations of music that is not in any way 'subcultural'. The second section sets about deploying the theoretical conclusions of the first by focusing on a particular kind of culturally

dominant, mainstream music which has so far eluded extended academic consideration: the music of the Top 40 charts. In this section, from the vantage point of Melbourne, Australia, I map the virtual space of Top 40 culture, consider its intersection with some actual spaces of everyday life (specifically, chain record stores), and interrogate its temporality, which oscillates between nostalgia and contemporaneity. Through this reading of Top 40 culture, I suggest that thinking constitutively about cultural products, practices and the processes by which they become culturally dominant provides the key to 'learning to love the mainstream'.

Phillip McIntyre.

Creativity And Cultural Production: A Study Of  
Contemporary Western Popular Music  
Songwriting.

Abstract:

It was the contention of this thesis that it is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model (1988,1997) in particular, partially coupled with the similarly complex approach to cultural production presented by Pierre Bourdieu (1977,1984,1993), which provides the most useful working platform to investigate the idea of creativity.

It has been argued that for songwriters in the contemporary western popular music tradition, their ability to make choices, and therefore be creative, is both circumscribed and facilitated by their knowledge of the domain of contemporary western popular music and their access to and knowledge of the field that holds this knowledge. The domain, which is accessed by a variety of procedures including combinations of formal and informal educational procedures that become 'second nature' or intuitive, is operative in creativity through the activity or agency of the individual's variation and transmission of this knowledge. It is the field, the members of the

...continued overleaf

social organisation who are familiar with the knowledge system and act as cultural intermediaries, that selects and filters the variations for re-inclusion in the domain. The interdependence of the domain, field and person involved in the cultural production of contemporary western popular music, as seen by the exposure and elucidation of the creative systems model in this research, allows the conclusion, at the more philosophical level, that these ideas can also be presented as an account of the interdependence of agency and structure.

The Aristotelean based definition of creativity was more fully supported by the evidence presented in this study. This definition of creativity can be outlined as one whereby products, processes and ideas are generated by the agency of someone, whose knowledge to do so comes from somewhere and the resultant novel variation is seen as a valued addition to the store of human knowledge. Since it was observed that creativity could not be explained solely by singular characteristics, as there are too many variables involved i.e. the store of knowledge, the social organisation involved and the variable characteristics of individuals and all the permutations thereof, the study concluded that creativity could be re-conceptualised as a property of complex systems rather than of singular individuals.

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The interview subjects included songwriters who had been working at the international level of the contemporary western popular music industry for some time

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#### Methodology:

In terms of data collection the ethnographic study was predominantly carried out in the field and included participant observation, a number of in-depth interviews coupled with a series of shorter interviews, access to secondary interview material, a limited survey and the examination of a variety of other artifacts, documents and procedures. The interview subjects included songwriters who had been working at the international level of the contemporary western popular music industry for some time, such as Andrew Farriss (INXS), through to those who had had varying international experience such as Peter Black (The Hard Ons) Rob Hirst (Midnight Oil), Paul Kelly and Dave Faulkner (Hoodoo Gurus), Tim Rogers (You Am I), Marc Hunter (Dragon), Deniz Tek (Radio Birdman), Don Walker (Cold Chisel), Lindy Morrison (Go Between) and Stephen Cummings (The Sports). Many were lesser-known writers such as Tyrone Penshorn (Little Hornet) and Mark Tinson (Heroes) whose names were identifiable to a smaller cohort of admirers. There were also writers such as Marion Abbott whose work remained at the local level.

Regarding the participant observation the researcher has been, and continues to be, a self-published songwriter, instrumentalist and musical director for various groups. His latest recorded release was in 1997 for his current band Texas Radio and the Big Beat. He not only wrote the majority of songs on this album but also arranged, produced and engineered it. He had previously worked in music retail where he not only sold and repaired various instruments but also was instrumental in purchasing stock and organising promotional events. During the period of this research he also produced and presented a local music radio program on community station 2NUR-FM. He was a teacher of songwriting in the Basic Music Industry Skills course at the Hunter Institute in Newcastle and in this capacity he was fortunate to have the members of the band silverchair in his classes, along with a large number of students who were also playing in the Newcastle area. His ongoing work as a music journalist was particularly crucial as it has afforded him access to writers from beyond the local area with this contact occurring over an extended time-frame from 1994 to 2003 (cont)

During the period of the research the researcher also managed a young band from Newcastle NSW. His position as manager allowed him access to levels of the industry not normally afforded others. The researcher's privileged access to meeting material and his dealings with record companies were particularly useful. Also attending writing and recording sessions, organising and participating in video shoots, dealing with radio and television, flying interstate for promotional ventures, dealing with agents and promoters and acting as tour manager for this group while they've been on the road has given this researcher an insider's viewpoint that would be difficult for another to obtain. For example, his time at a world class studio in Sydney in 2002 where the band were being produced by an award-winning producer was a good opportunity to observe and discuss this activity and its effects on the songs being recorded from an insider's perspective.

At the beginning of the research period which started in 1994 the researcher was also operating an audio production company where he hired his PA systems to various acts across most genres ranging from metal, to country to hip-hop and worked as Front- of- House (FOH) operator and stage manager for local and national touring rock and pop acts. A limited number of music videos were made by the researcher during this period which have been aired on ABC TV. At the latter end of the research period he moved this activity towards studio work, producing and engineering demos and commercial releases for a number of local writers which he continues to do. In this way the ethnographic field work afforded the research, as Keith Punch recommends, an 'understanding a way of life from the point of view of its participants' (Punch, 1998:157).

Helen O'Shea.

Foreign Bodies in The River Of Sound: Seeking Identity and Irish Traditional Music'

Abstract:

This thesis investigates how musicians who play Irish traditional music, but do not identify themselves as Irish, understand their relationship to Irishness. The research was designed to interrogate frameworks for theorizing the articulation of music, identity and nation, emphasizing the need to understand both music and identity as socially constituted imaginative processes. Writing from the viewpoint that knowledge is embedded in discourse, it argues that certain repertoires and styles have been regarded as symbolically representing and expressing essentially Irish characteristics mythologized within colonial discourse and inverted within nationalist discourse. These understandings have been extended into the present and reinforced through the commodification of Irish culture.

Analyses of participant/observation data in Melbourne, Australia, indicate that young Australian musicians understand Irishness as a citational ethnicity, depoliticized and commodified, while older Australians value more highly the embodied musical performance of musicians from Ireland. Australian musicians who had made 'pilgrimages' to Ireland were relatively confined within a world of summer schools and pub sessions linked to the tourism industry's mythologizing of an 'Ireland of the Welcomes'. Extended fieldwork among Australians and other foreign musicians who had re-located to Ireland found current theorizations of musical community inadequate to account for difference and disharmony in group performances. Foreign musicians' failure to assimilate musically and socially was attributed to their status as strangers, their tactics and their perception by Irish musicians.

While there is no material barrier to foreigners playing Irish traditional music, an exploration of the relationship between music and place in the construction of Irish traditional music concluded that, even where musicians attempt to draw outsiders into this bounded area of Irish culture, the authenticating discourses that define it as essentially Irish impede their success. --- • ---

# Publications

**Matthew Bannister**, a Masters supervisor at Wintec (Waikato Institute of Technology), has completed the book *White Boys, White Noise: Masculinities and Indie Guitar Rock*. It examines constructions of masculinities in 1980s indie music scenes in New Zealand the UK and the US and will be published by Ashgate (UK) in 2006.

**Denis Crowdy's** new book *Guitar Style, Open Tunings, and Stringband Music in Papua New Guinea* has just been published by the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. It will be launched soon but those eager to get their hands on a copy can contact the publishers directly:

Publications  
IPNGS  
PO Box 1432, Boroko 111  
PNG

ph +675 325 4644, fax 325 0531, email ipngs@global.net.pg

**John Whiteoak** has been working on a new book, titled *The Latin Tinge Down Under: 'Latin' and 'Continental' Influence on Music and Dance Before Australian Multiculturalism*, for several years now and hopes to be finished in September next year. This study takes a very unusual perspective on 'Latin' influence, so unusual that he has taken the unconventional step of posting a ten page illustrated description of the book on his website as way of explaining the project and attracting feed-back.

If anyone has a moment to look over the explanation and offer some constructive criticism or some possibly relevant information, this would be very much appreciated. He does not describe the work as a contribution to postcolonial studies, but some aspects of it might seem relevant to it, or dismissive of it, depending on how it is read.

**Over the next few pages, we present a description of John Whiteoak's book which, to quote John, "partly describes the content but not the concept, since it defies brief explanation".**

**To read the book concept in entirety, go to his website home page [www.ausmdr.com](http://www.ausmdr.com) and click on 'The Latin Tinge' page.**

**John welcomes constructive criticism or relevant information pertaining to this book. Please contact him at [whiteoak@hotkey.net.au](mailto:whiteoak@hotkey.net.au)**

**Enjoy!**

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IASPM-ANZ

# Book Description

**John Whiteoak**

*The Latin Tinge Down Under:  
'Latin' and 'Continental' Influence on  
Music and Dance Before Australian  
Multiculturalism*

## What The Book Is About

The Latin Tinge Down Under is, above all other things, an history of what I define as 'Latin' 'Continental' and 'Mediterranean' influences upon music and dance in Australia before 'multiculturalism' became official government policy, before substantial Latin-American migration to Australia and before the nebulous concept, 'world music' became a cultural platform and successful marketing label for the products of multicultural fusion and to a much lesser extent the music and dance of Australia's ethnic minority communities. Yet, the book also has important resonances for present-day Australia in which 'Latin' music and dance and even a 21st century equivalent of 1930s 'Gypsy-tango' music are only partially or (in the case of the latter) not at all associated with participants hailing from the specific nations and peoples that are, albeit often vaguely, perceived to have originated these forms.

As a work of historical musicology and dance research, it is informed by extensive primary source research and personal gathering of rare documentation such as printed ephemera, published and unpublished scores and sound recordings—a similar depth and breadth of foundation research as was applied to *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836-1970* (Whiteoak 1999). It is further informed by a musical background that commenced with playing 'Latin' and other so-called 'Continental' repertoire in 1960s Melbourne night spots catering largely for European diners and dancers. The combining of music and dance research for the one study comes

out of the illuminating experience of editing, researching and writing for the *Currency Companion to Music and Dance in Australia* (Whiteoak & Scott-Maxwell 2003). This provided a greatly enhanced appreciation of the interdependence of dance (especially social dance) and musical (especially popular music) development.

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As with *Playing Ad Lib*, *The Latin Tinge Down Under*, frames a history based on foundation research within a cultural and social perspective or approach conceived specifically for its 'music and dance in Australia' topic. For *Playing Ad Lib*, I sought a inclusive framework concept (defined therein as 'improvisatory music') that allowed discussion of improvising in music across the totality of Australian music activity from early colonial times, across the high-brow/lowbrow music divide but necessarily excluding the traditional musics of minority community cultures present in Australia over this period. For *The Latin Tinge Down Under*, I sought a similarly inclusive framework concept to embrace discussion of a cluster of related cultural influences upon Australian popular entertainment that I define as 'Latin' influences ('Spanish-Gypsy', 'Afro-Cuban', 'Mexican' and others) but also to embrace discussion of the complex relationship of these influences to 'Continental' influences on Australian popular entertainment, including the once popular 'Gypsy tango' orchestras.

Despite the convolutions and complexities of the extended way in which 'Latin' and its relationship to 'Continental' are defined for *The Latin Tinge Down Under*, a central function of the book is to trace and describe the influence of mediated

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Spanish and Latin-American music and dance (mediated Latino) influences as such on Australian popular entertainment and related culture from the earliest known examples to the 1970s. Seminal events and influences from the 1970s to the present day are surveyed and compared as an Afterword.

The colonial era component of the study follows threads of Spanish, Spanish and other 'Gypsy', (and early Mexican) influences in opera, ballet, variety, circus, Wild West shows and other popular stage genres, and also in social dance music and broader forms of popular and art music, including Colonial era presence of the Spanish guitar. Beginning just prior to WW1, it also traces the introduction of the tango (and maxixe) as a stage and social dance craze closely related to the then current ragtime dancing and music craze. Social contexts for tango dancing, such as the Tango Tea are examined and also how tango dancing was approached, taught and perceived from a social and moral perspective in Australia. Imported and locally composed tango music are compared and special contingencies associated with early Australian ensemble performance of tango music are discussed. Spanish, Mexican and other early Latin-American influences (e.g.. tango song) on 1920s stage, silent cinema, and social dance music and dancing are described and situated within the rapidly shifting cultural and social processes of Jazz Age modernity Down Under.

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Throughout the remainder of the study, considerable musicological and dance research attention is paid to the adoption, synthesis and learning of successive styles of Latin-American music and dance by professional dance, theatre and radio studio musicians, stage dancers and choreographers, and dancing academies. These changes and developments comprise the backdrop to the emergence of a vogue for Continental and (later) for 'Latin' venues and music. Both vogues provided a window of professional opportunity for talented non-Anglo Australians, European refugees and post-War European migrants whose perceived 'foreignness' and affinity with Latin, Gypsy and other Continental fare offered an advantage in this specialised entertainment field, but not always beyond it.

The study is, however, equally concerned with the work of professional musicians and dancers from the cultural mainstream who, for whatever personal and professional reasons, engaged with these challengingly

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unfamiliar forms to become recognised as practitioners and, in some cases, creators of repute. A few examples are the 1930s ABC dance orchestra leader Jim Davidson and the 1940s Latin orchestra leader 'Ernesto Ritz' (Ernest Ritte) in Afro-Cuban rhythm; guitarist George Golla and reeds player Don Burrows in Bossa Nova; Jo Muhrer, multi-lingual vocalist with the 1960s Italian-Latin Mokambo Orchestra or, in dance, the sensuous and fiery 'Spanish' dancer 'Lola Montez' of 1850s goldrush era entertainment and the influential Latin-American cabaret dancer and choreographer Jeanne 'Montez' of post-War Australian entertainment. The former was Irish and the latter Irish-Australian.

Finally, the title *The Latin Tinge Down Under* was, as some will guess, inspired by John Storm Roberts' *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States*. This relatively early work (1979, 1999) comes out of a scholarly ethos that is especially appropriate to the historical study of popular performance culture in pre-multicultural Australia. Roberts writes that: 'In reality, the issue of "authenticity" is largely irrelevant in popular music and that Critics have tended to treat "commercial" popular music as a nefarious influence on supposedly pure forms. ...[Musical forms have] always borrowed from and lent to other forms; the pejorative and, in the context, essentially meaningless concept of corruption betrays a basic misapprehension of musical evolution.' The same can also be said for dance.

Yet 'authenticity' and 'borrowing' remain sensitive issues for those who feel they have been borrowed from and had their borrowings misused. Therefore, an extensive introduction, that also sweepingly surveys exoticism in Australia from the colonial era, places *The Latin Tinge Down Under* in relation to various debates, theories and perspectives associated with postcolonialism and those who dare to critique it.

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*That's it for another edition of Soundings!*

*Any feedback about this issue is welcomed;  
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