
Editorial

Welcome to Issue 42 of *Context*. Our last two numbers concentrated on Australian music; while this issue does not share such an explicit dedication, it retains an engagement with antipodean musical history and composition that is characteristic of the journal.

This sense of continuity is emphasised in our opening article. Johanna Selleck examines the work of women composers in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Melbourne, work that struggles to escape the limitations of role and genre imposed by society at the time. Selleck makes a case for paying greater attention to these composers, not simply as remarkable figures in an era disinclined to assign value to their work, nor as archetypes of the 'New Woman,' but as the forerunners of noted female composers from the mid-to-late twentieth century.

Kerry Murphy then provides a complex insight into music in late nineteenth-century New Zealand, seen through the eyes of visiting virtuosi. We are given an unusual view of musical life of the time: not simply lists of performers and pieces but the viewpoint of the sophisticated francophone musicians leading the tours, full of musical, societal and cultural observations. Part of the fascination lies in the ability to contrast what one of the virtuosi, Ovide Musin, wrote for his hometown newspaper in Liège with his later, more politic, recollections in English.

Maria Grenfell and Shan Deng lead us to a different sort of cultural connection, a practice-led examination of their experience as composer and performer preparing *Five Songs from the East* using material from unpublished Chinese folk-song. The task creates an important point of negotiation: how can Western compositional style incorporate Chinese folk melody in a

way that respects the identity and importance of each element? Grenfell and Deng illustrate one way of resolving such problems, leading to the completion of this new composition for the equally cross-cultural combination of piano and *pipa*.

Contemporary composition is also discussed in the next article. Andrew Callaghan examines the way composer Howard Shore adds to the realism of the 2015 film *Spotlight* through the unobtrusiveness of his score. This unobtrusiveness is artfully contrived; Callaghan examines the way in which scoring, sound editing and composition are engaged to create an effect of 'inaudibility', producing a score that reinforces the 'based on actual events' elements of the narrative while also apparently hiding itself from critical attention.

Our last article returns to Australian music with Jessica Crowe's case study of Matthew Hindson's *Nintendo Music* and its relationship with game console sound design. Matters as diverse as 1980s sound chip limitations, the idea of playfulness, musical representations of gameplay events and post- and altmodernism contribute to *Context's* first venture into the growing field of Ludomusicology. In a world where computer games now attract greater revenue than films, it is unlikely to be the last!

Our series of interviews with prominent Australian composers continues with Madeline Roycroft's conversation with Liza Lim, recently returned to Australia to take up a position at the Sydney Conservatorium. This position and the opportunities that it provides to develop and promote the work of female composers is discussed at the conclusion the interview, but we are introduced first to Lim's award-winning 2016 composition *How Forests Think*. This discussion makes a fascinating comparison with Grenfell and Deng's earlier article, since *How Forests Think* also integrates a traditional Chinese instrument, in this case the *sheng*, into Western compositional discourse.

Issue 42 concludes with a diverse array of book reviews, covering Carl Vine's music, Ernest Newman's biography, performing pitch and historical improvisation, all preceded by Frederic Kiernan's research report on emotions and the reception of Zelenka's music.

As ever, *Context* remains indebted to the anonymous readers who generously provided their time and expertise, and to Melbourne Conservatorium of Music for support for its publication and advice on its operations.

The release of Issue 42 is tinged with melancholy. After a number of years service on the Editorial Committee, the last several as Coordinator, *Context* bids farewell to Rachel Orzech. Rachel's rigour and determination has been the driving force behind the journal's success in recent years. The Committee wishes her well in her future endeavours, and feels certain she will bring those same qualities to all her enterprises.