
Editorial

In May 2018, the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music hosted a conference dedicated to postgraduate music research. Over two days, presentations were given by students from across Australia, with scholars visiting from almost every state, as well as two engaging keynotes by recent graduates Dr Rachel Orzech and Dr Sophie Boyd-Hurrell. Overall, this conference gave a wonderful sense of the diversity and vitality of music research currently being undertaken by early career researchers in Australia.

After the conference, presenters were invited to submit article-length versions of their papers to be considered for this special issue of *Context*. Following the journal's standard practice, these submissions were peer-reviewed, and the six articles presented here are the result of this process.

The first two articles provide analytical explorations of twentieth-century music. We open with Ian Parsons's psychoanalytic reading of Karlheinz Stockhausen's seven-part opera cycle LICHT. Parsons—who recently completed his doctorate at Monash University—examines this massive, twenty-nine hour work as a study of human nature, making use of Lacan's three registers of the human psyche: the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real. Next, Gergana Yildiz, currently completing a PhD at the University of Tasmania, analyses the use of the aksak rhythm in the work of the Turkish composers Ahmed Adnan Saygun and Ilhan Baran. Yildiz explores how aksak, a type of irregular metre distinct to Turkish and Balkan folk traditions, is used in an abstract way by these composers in a manner influenced by the abstract visual art movement.

The next two articles take a distinctly practice-led approach, beginning with Sage J. Harlow's discussion of her improvised vocal practice, which is informed by and integrated with ritual possession. She uses 'extra-normal' vocal techniques, combined with a variety of meditation practices as a means to explore different aspects of what she terms the 'extra-normal self'. Through this, Harlow—a recent WAAPA doctoral graduate—interrogates multiple ways of experiencing or existing in the world. This is followed by Austin Oting Har's exegesis on his opera *The Ghost: Electroacoustic Tragic Opera*. Har is a DMA candidate at Sydney Conservatorium of Music and Sydney University, and his article—examining his interdisciplinary research project in Greek tragedy and spectral music—considers Gérard Grisey's definition of spectralism as an attitude as a compositional framework.

The final two articles of this volume are works of historical musicology. My own article considers the transmission of music via telephone at the Edinburgh International Exhibition of 1890. I argue that this presentation of music was uniquely democratising, and representative of many of the values important to contemporary Scottish cultural identity. Finally, Madeline Roycroft—a doctoral candidate at the Melbourne Conservatorium—interrogates the 1989 'Year of Shostakovich' festival in France. After giving an overview of the possible motivations for celebrating Soviet music in France at this time, Roycroft explores the French reception of several large-scale works, arguing that 1989 helped to shape Shostakovich's present-day reputation in France.

Thanks to all the anonymous readers who generously offered their time and expertise, to all the conference presenters who made their way to Melbourne to share their research, the authors who submitted articles to this volume, and the staff at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music for their ongoing support. I'd particularly like to thank Tim Daly and the *Context* Editorial Committee for allowing me to commandeer their time and resources to create this additional volume. I know it has been a great deal of extra work on top of producing their regular annual issue. I'd also like to thank Professor Gary McPherson for his support, and for providing funding for both the conference and this issue, as well as Professor Kerry Murphy and Associate Professor Linda Kouvaras, whose support and expertise really helped get this whole thing off the ground.

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