

“Take Me to Spain”

Australian Imaginings of Spain through Music and Dance
By John Whiteoak

AUSTRALASIAN MUSIC RESEARCH 18

Australians have been transported to an imaginary Spain from at least the 1830s, when *cachuchas* were first danced on the Sydney stage. In *Take Me to Spain* John Whiteoak explores the rich tapestry of Australians’ fascination with all things Spanish, from the voluptuous sensuality of Lola Montez to operas featuring señoritas, toreadors and Gypsies, and from evocative silent and later Spain-themed Hollywood movies to the dazzlingly creative artistry of the flamenco dancers and guitarists who toured Australia in the 1960s and ’70s. Examining the diverse ways that Spanish music and dance have been mediated or hybridised to cater for Australian popular taste, this landmark study of cross-fertilisation and ethnic fusion reveals how Hispanic traditions have become integral to the cultural history of the nation.

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Argentina (The Spanish Dancer), c. 1929 by Australian artist Dorrit Black. Held by the National Gallery of Victoria and reproduced by kind permission of the artist’s great-niece, Ghillian Sullivan.



For further information please contact Lyrebird Press coordinator Jen Hill: hillj@unimelb.edu.au
Lyrebird Press ♦ Melbourne Conservatorium of Music ♦ The University of Melbourne ♦ VIC 3010