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HISTORICAL *and* DIALECTICAL PERSPECTIVES *on the* TEACHING *of* ABORIGINAL *and* TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER MUSICS *in the* AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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■ Abstract

Indigenous studies (also referred to as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies) has a double identity in the Australian education system, consisting of the education of Indigenous students and education of all students about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. Through explanations of the history of the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics in Australian music education, this article critiques ways in which these musics have been positioned in relation to a number of agendas. These include definitions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics as types of Australian music, as ethnomusicological objects, as examples of postcolonial discourse, and as empowerment for Indigenous students. The site of discussion is the work of the Australian Society for Music Education, as representative of trends in Australian school-based music education, and the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music at the University of Adelaide, as an example of a tertiary music program for Indigenous students.

■ Introduction

Writing in the late 1990s about the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, Partington (1998, p. v) enunciates how the previous decades had witnessed change in the position of Indigenous Australians in the Australian polity:

Changes which have occurred in Australian society over the past twenty years mean that the world in which our teachers and student teachers were raised no longer exists. In particular, social changes in relation to the place in society of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians make necessary new values and relationships of equality and collaboration where previously domination and alienation existed.

He continues by noting that despite these changes, Indigenous students continue to experience difficulties in the education system, and indicates the importance of education for Indigenous students as a means of empowerment, for gaining potential to take control of their lives, and as a way to counter colonial paternalism.

Alongside the social changes Partington notes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, another change related to Indigenous cultures occurred in the Australian education system in the same decades: the introduction of Aboriginal (sometimes Indigenous) studies as a subject in schools. Here it is necessary to make a distinction between Aboriginal studies and Aboriginal education. McConaghy (2000, p. 3) writes that:

Indigenous education is a broad term that covers many sites of practice in the spheres of primary and secondary schooling, early childhood education, adult and tertiary education and training and professional development. However, most studies that deal with "Indigenous Education" take as their empirical site the site of schooling.

In contrast, Craven (1999, p. 15) provides this detailed explanation of Indigenous Australian studies, what is commonly referred to as “Aboriginal studies”:

Indigenous Australian Studies is the study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, societies and cultures, both as a subject in its own right and as content incorporated into all curriculum areas at all levels of education. Indigenous Australian Studies is not just an isolated social studies unit of work, as it also involves Indigenous perspectives across all curriculum areas. It is about teaching with Indigenous people in contrast to teaching about Indigenous people. It requires an ongoing social commitment to community consultation and involvement.

The difference between the two terms as described by McConaghy and Craven is that Indigenous education is concerned primarily with the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are educated, while Indigenous Australian studies is concerned primarily with the way that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are represented and taught. Indigenous education has been a major research concern for many years (e.g. Bridges, 1968; Christie, 1985, 1995; Crowley, 1993; Folds, 1987; Harris, 1980, 1990; Hughes & Andrews, 1988; Jordan, 1989; Keeffe, 1992; Lampert & Lilley, 1996; Loveday & Young, 1984; McConaghy, 2000), its major problems including the literal absence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the education system at all levels. Alongside this, the lack of any meaningful curriculum content to convey to non-Indigenous Australian students the reality of Indigenous lived experiences (Neuenfeldt, 1998, p. 7) has become a major concern with the delivery of Aboriginal studies. Hence the traditional colonial classroom is a site that privileges, as Giroux asserts:

heritage rather than liberating memory, literacy rather than literacies, censorship rather than artistic expression, moral regulation rather than self and social empowerment, and testing rather than learning, is mobilized by a vision of the arts, culture, and schooling that presupposes and legitimates particular forms of history, community, and authority (1992, p. 231).

Giroux further asserts that the pedagogical script of the traditional colonial classroom tracks discourses of Eurocentricism, racism, and patriarchy.

Writing some 15 years before, Mudrooroo’s comments resonate with Giroux’s. Mudrooroo (then Colin Johnson, 1987, p. 28) states that Indigenous knowledge, like many colonised voices, is the subordinate form of discourse. Indigenous knowledge must always be presented in the form of the dominant discourse by way of a process of translation or assimilation. Often these two discourses are

in conflict. Indigenous people often express concern that once their system of knowledge and transmission enters into the dominant discourse, this knowledge may not be honoured and that access to traditional ways of knowing may be abused in one or more ways. In this scenario, generally teachers tend to apply the rules from their own discipline and culture in terms of how they manage, learn and impart types of knowledge. Indigenous people are concerned that these non-Indigenous people in positions of authority become the so-called experts of this knowledge, because by them taking it and translating it into the dominant framework, this makes the knowledge valid. This process also legitimises the teachers as those with the authority to impart the knowledge.

It is in this developmental and contested site that we position the following historical analysis of the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics in sectors of the Australian education system. To explore these issues, we discuss the work of two institutions that have provided support for the study of Indigenous music since the 1960s. One of these, the Australian Society for Music Education (ASME), although its membership includes many tertiary education personnel, functions mainly as a professional association for school-based music education. Through analysis of ASME’s interactions with Indigenous musics as potential topics of classroom music teaching and learning, ways in which Australian students gain access to information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through the study of music can be assessed. The Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM), at the University of Adelaide, is the second institution we discuss. CASM provides opportunities for Indigenous students to study music at a tertiary education level. While ASME provides a lens for assessing the teaching of music as a form of Aboriginal studies, CASM exemplifies Indigenous education. That both function for the purposes of furthering the teaching and learning of music, and the centrality of music as a major artefact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, allows us to address not only the differences between Aboriginal studies and Indigenous education in the one subject domain, but also to investigate a range of issues that impinge on the changing constructions of Australian culture, the transformative nature of education as it responds to socially driven expectations, and the development of culturally responsive ways to teach music.

■ The Australian Society for Music Education

The national professional association for music education, The Australian Society for Music Education, was founded in 1967 as an outcome of a UNESCO seminar on school music held at Sydney University in 1965 (Nickson, 1997, p. 9). At a national level, ASME’s activities are focused in two areas: publication of a journal (*The Australian Journal of Music Education*) and the running of biennial conferences. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics have appeared sporadically

and in various ways in each of these areas of activity, reflecting ways in which these musics have been researched and how they have been positioned within Australian music education and Australian research agendas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics have appeared as the focus of ethnomusicological explanation, as one topic of multicultural music education, as contributors to Australian studies, as examples of postcolonial discourse, as sites of pedagogical debate, as an arena of political argument, and as an indication of government policies advocating education of Indigenous children alongside education of all children about Indigenous cultures and histories. Synoptically, the ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics appear in the publications and activities of ASME also reflect ways in which these musics have been defined and represented in the wider arena of Australian cultural history and cultural politics.

Publication of ASME's house journal, *The Australian Journal of Music Education (AJME)*, commenced in 1967. After 1982 there was a lapse in publication, a second series of the journal commencing in 1985 and continuing to the present. Support for Australian music in general was an implicit aspect of the first series of *AJME*, and a number of articles relating to Aboriginal music appeared at that time. It should be noted that Torres Strait Islander music is not mentioned in these early articles, its entry into this journal not occurring until 2002. The first issue of *AJME* included a discography of Aboriginal music – albeit a short addendum to a discography of music by Australian composers and listing only four recordings of what would now be classified as “traditional” music (Brumby, 1967). The following year Trevor Jones (1968), in a revised version of a 1962 article in *Hemisphere*, provided a summary of musical characteristics observed by ethnomusicologists in Aboriginal music – scale types, melodic and rhythmic practices, instruments, performance styles, roles of music. The editor of this issue of *AJME* noted in his editorial that: “the introduction to the nature of our indigenous Aboriginal music is an overdue enlightenment for many teachers” (Callaway, 1968, p. 3).

A number of aspects of *AJME*'s involvement with Aboriginal music can be presaged in these early materials. First, recognition that understanding of Aboriginal music was at a low level among Australian music educators. Second, that articles about Aboriginal music were by ethnomusicologists (such as Jones) working in the university sector, not by music educators in the school system or by university/teachers college lecturers involved with teacher training. Contributions by Indigenous writers were and remain absent. Jones' article was to be followed in the 1967-1982 series of *AJME* by ones from Catherine Ellis, Alice Moyle, and Stephen Wild. Some of these concentrate on the characteristics and uses of Aboriginal music, not on the educational issues surrounding it and attempts to introduce it into school-based music education. Despite the perspective from

which these authors write, when they address educational aspects of the topic, certain issues reappear across their work – notably the availability of resources and the problem of teacher training, issues which continue to surface in this area to the present.

While Jones' article presents purely musical information, in the following year Catherine Ellis (1969) introduces music educators to a range of issues surrounding Aboriginal music in educational settings, particularly the idea that by presenting Aboriginal music through the lens of the Western education system, Australian music educators might be contributing to Aboriginal “cultural destruction”. Her reasoning in this is based on the disjunctures between music's cultural identity in Aboriginal communities and the ways it is represented in music classrooms. She highlights the problematic nature of trying to teach Aboriginal music from a non-Aboriginal perspective, explaining ways in which Aboriginal music she has researched integrates into the lives of Aboriginal communities. She is also keen to address the teaching of music to Aboriginal children, suggesting the following ways of alleviating culturally inappropriate teaching: do not introduce European music to young Aboriginal children; allow a child to lead singing; do not accompany songs with instruments; seek advice from Aboriginal community members before teaching children; accept the topics of Aboriginal children's songs without prejudice; in teaching a non-Aboriginal song, work from an element common to Aboriginal music and to non-Aboriginal music. To Ellis, these suggestions will assist music educators to negotiate “the frightening responsibility for preservation or destruction of a great musical tradition” (Ellis, 1969, p. 24).

In a prophetic manner, Ellis' article prefigures ways that Aboriginal (and sometimes Torres Strait Islander) studies would subsequently be defined in Australian school curricula, as she addresses both the teaching of Aboriginal music to all students, and the teaching of music to Aboriginal children. Some decades later this “both-ways” definition of Aboriginal studies would receive official recognition in policy documentation. For example, in *National Principles and Guidelines for Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies K-12* this component of Australian education is defined as containing “two aspects of schooling ... [that] which relates to the education of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students ... [and] studies for all students about Aboriginal societies and Torres Strait Islander societies” (National Aboriginal Studies and Torres Strait Islander Studies Project, 1995, p. 1). Similarly, the New South Wales (NSW) Department of School Education sums up its policy on Aboriginal education with the slogan, “to promote the educational achievements of Aboriginal students – to educate all students about Aboriginal Australia” (NSW Department of School Education, 1995, p. 1), while the NSW Board of Studies defines Aboriginal studies as “for both Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students” noting that “Aboriginal students are provided

with an opportunity for cultural affirmation and positive educational experiences while non-Aboriginal students are able to 'learn together' with Aboriginal peoples and communities" (NSW Board of Studies, 1999, p. 6).

Despite Ellis' forward thinking on this and her attempts to address the teaching of Aboriginal music, it was not until a decade later that another article specifically addressing the teaching of Aboriginal music appeared in *AJME* (Ellis, 1979). In her second article in *AJME*, Ellis again demonstrated her ability to foreshadow aspects of the teaching of Aboriginal cultures that would later become significant - in this case by discussing contemporary Aboriginal music as a "challenge" for the educator. Her analysis of the use of this music in educational settings problematises it from a number of perspectives - cultural, stylistic, historical, social - noting that its aural similarity to forms of non-Aboriginal popular music can lead to a tendency for music educators to overlook its social roles and distinctly Aboriginal musical characteristics. Always the pragmatist and basing her ideas on experiences with Aboriginal people in communities and at the recently established CASM at Adelaide University, she lists teaching methods to "bridge" the numerous divisions between Aboriginal students, Aboriginal music, non-Aboriginal students and teachers, and the expectations of music education. Among these she suggests the use of Aboriginal teaching methods, adaptations to the classroom of Aboriginal ideas of music as social activity, and the maintenance of links between students and the communities from which they come. Acceptance of Aboriginal "rock, jazz and country and western" (Ellis, 1979, p. 20) bands and their repertoires is an important aspect of her view of the teaching of Aboriginal music. Considering the positions of both Aboriginal music and popular music as topics of Australian music education in the 1970s, Ellis' suggestions at that time are ground breaking.

In the decade between Ellis' 1969 and 1979 articles, Aboriginal music is mentioned a number of times in a set of four articles under the heading "Ethnomusicology and Australian schools" by Frank Murphy (1976, 1977a, 1977b, 1978). In these articles, Murphy surveyed philosophical and pedagogical perspectives of the inclusion of non-Western music in Australian music education. Given the expansion of topics in Australian music syllabuses at that time and the influences of 1970s Australian multiculturalism in education, his work was a response to increased expectations that wide-ranging materials would be studied in music classrooms and a reflection of the changing directions of Australian education. Additionally, that the training of most music educators was undertaken in teachers' colleges or conservatoria and did not include study of much non-Western music was another impetus for these articles (F. Murphy, personal communication, July, 2003). Although not a primary focus of discussion, Aboriginal music is one of the musics to which Murphy refers in his discussion. For example, in the first of the articles, he

analyses syllabus expectations concerning "non-Western" music, noting that in Queensland, Aboriginal music is suggested as a topic of study.

In the second article, Murphy describes two experiments in the teaching of Aboriginal music to non-Aboriginal children in Sydney in 1965 and Santa Monica (California) in 1966. In the third article in this series, he makes a specific plea for the teaching of Aboriginal music:

Although it is less than two hundred years since Western man settled in Australia, the aborigines of this country already had a cultural tradition dating back thousands of years: education will have to play a decisive role if this tradition is not to be lost.

Murphy later added that music education can act as a means of fostering closer community ties, and that specifically in regard to Aborigines in Australian society: "it may help depressed sectors of our community, such as the Australian aborigines, to find a rewarding position in society" (Murphy, 1977b, p. 32). In his final article on this topic he outlines ways to address the problems he has identified in the teaching of music from non-European sources, and in common with other writers of the period who seem keen to group Aboriginal music with these other musics states that "more attention should be given to music that is available locally, for example, Australian aboriginal music or music of our immigrant population" (Murphy, 1978, p. 38).

The next article in *AJME* after Ellis (1979) to address a topic of Aboriginal music is Stephen Wild's (1981) description of the work of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (later the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies). Wild gives an historical overview of research into Aboriginal music, outlines the work of the Institute, and includes a listing of available recordings and films and a lengthy bibliography of material dating back to the work of Harold Davies in the 1920s. Wild's article in this 1981 issue of *AJME* is one of three covering aspects of music education outside the Eurocentric tradition that give this issue of the journal an indigenous focus. For example, Manins' (1981) article reinforces Indigenous readings of music and music education in his discussion of Maori music.

This focus on music from colonised locations reappears in the next issue of *AJME* in three articles. In an analysis of Australian composer, Percy Grainger, as an "international music pioneer", Teresa Balough (1981) discusses non-European musical influences on Grainger, particularly his interest in Maori music and Indonesian music. Lobban's (1981) discussion of music education in Papua New Guinea presents a number of problems currently hindering the delivery of music in primary schools, while Alice Moyle (1981) explains a project, "Classroom studies in Aboriginal music and dance, Australia 1940-1970", and the publication of teaching materials resulting from it. Explaining the impetus for this project, Moyle refers to sessions on Aboriginal music

at the ASME 1977 conference (see below) and the enquiries directed to her for educational materials resulting from those sessions. However, while indicating that the resources on Aboriginal music were continually increasing, she points out that “also growing, and possibly at a faster rate, is the need by classroom teachers for guidance in the use of these resources” (Moyle, 1981, p. 17). She is also keen to indicate that the work of researchers into Aboriginal music might not be “the kind of information which classroom teachers need” (Moyle, 1981, p. 17), raising the important issue of the difference between pure research and its development into teaching resources.

This difficulty in resourcing the teaching of Aboriginal music is compounded by the fact that teachers’ “college training is in education and teaching methods. In only a few cases would their training have included subjects such as the social and ceremonial organization of different Aboriginal groups, regional variations in mythical beliefs, the relationships of singers to the songs they sing and the relationships of songs to Aboriginal land” (Moyle, 1981, p. 18). This problem of the different styles and uses of research materials and teaching resources resurfaces later in the survey work of Peter Dunbar-Hall (Dunbar-Hall, 1997, 2002; Dunbar-Hall & Beston, 2003) into the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics, as while music educators in Dunbar-Hall’s surveys indicate that they include these musics in their teaching, they also indicate that despite their knowledge of research-based materials (such as those by Moyle) they see the teaching of them as lacking in what they consider suitable resources.

After ceasing publication in 1982, *The Australian Journal of Music Education* recommenced in a new format in 1985. By that time Australian music education was in many ways different from that represented in the earlier series of the journal. Increases in postgraduate research in music education, changes to teacher training, curriculum developments in schools, and changing expectations placed on music educators that had been accruing since the 1970s are reflected in the style and content of the second series of *AJME*. The imminent bicentenary of White settlement in Australia, that was causing a strong Australian ethos to filter into Australian education, became a factor shaping the ways in which music was positioned in schools. This can be seen in Jacinth Oliver’s (1987) article, “An Australian studies perspective in music education”, in which the teaching of Australian music across its range of styles becomes a site for investigating Australian cultural identity: “the purpose of Australian studies in music education is to promote musical creation, communication and appreciation processes so that each young person will have the opportunity to reflect upon the cultural context of Australia through the content presented” (Oliver, 1987, p. 40). Among the types of Australian music Oliver discusses is Aboriginal music, defining it as one of the “styles and genres which have become part of the

cultural experience of the country” (Oliver, 1987, p. 42). To demonstrate how Aboriginal music can be defined and explained, she provides a short summary of its musical characteristics and cultural contexts. Later, and reflecting the trend noted for authors such as Murphy (above), she groups Aboriginal music with “other multicultural influences” (Oliver, 1987, p. 46) as a topic of classroom music. She also discusses Aboriginal music as representative of music in specific times and places stating, “music in traditional Aboriginal culture and urban Aboriginal culture are diverse styles which exist side-by-side as representations of Australian Aboriginal experience” (Oliver, 1987, p. 47).

The Australian ethos of Oliver’s article is furthered in a special edition of *AJME* to coincide with the 1988 bicentenary and an International Society for Music Education (ISME) conference in Canberra. In this issue of *AJME*, Margaret Kartomi (1988) describes the state of study of Aboriginal music in Australia, finding it lacking in range and depth and notes, “(in 1988) we are only in the early consciousness-raising stage” (Kartomi, 1988, p. 15). She provides a survey of research into and the teaching of Aboriginal music at universities, identifying those researchers who up to that time had contributed to it (Margaret Clunies-Ross, Catherine Ellis, Trevor Jones, Margaret Kartomi, Ray Keogh, Alan Marett, Anthony McCardell, Alice Moyle, Richard Moyle, Helen Payne, Jill Stubington, Stephen Wild) and lists resources in the form of publications and recordings. Similar to earlier writers such as Ellis and Alice Moyle, she identifies teacher training as an area requiring attention, especially in light of calls by the Australian government of the day for increased Australian content in educational curricula. She also positions the teaching of Aboriginal music as a means for “coming to grips with problems caused by our neglect of Kooris and their cultural expressions over the past two centuries” (Kartomi, 1988, p. 22).

A gap of 14 years separates Kartomi’s article from the next one to focus on Indigenous music in Australian music education. This article (Dunbar-Hall, 2002) reports the attitudes of music educators to the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics in their teaching. It is the companion to a conference paper presented at the 2003 Darwin ASME conference (Dunbar-Hall & Beston, 2003) that reports the statistical situation on whether music educators surveyed nationally teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics. By asking teachers to respond to a number of political statements about the teaching of Indigenous topics, it adopts an explicitly political approach, finding, however, that the majority of music educators who returned the survey taught Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics primarily for musical reasons (e.g., to exemplify musical concepts, or to provide a wide range of types of music for study) rather than for avowedly political purposes (e.g., to further processes of reconciliation).

While articles about Aboriginal music and its educational profile appear in *AJME* from its

commencement, the first appearance of these topics at an ASME conference was in 1977 when three panel sessions on aspects of Aboriginal music and the teaching of it were held (Moyle, 1977). As can be observed in other publications of the time that group Aboriginal music with Asian music as an area of music education debate, the planning of this conference lists "Asian and Aboriginal music" as a conference theme. At this conference, presentations by ethnomusicologists Alice Moyle, Richard Moyle and Douglas Myers were made alongside papers that investigated Aboriginal music as a classroom topic. Only one paper, by Hilton Deakin, was published in the summary of the conference (Deakin, 1977). In this paper, Deakin outlines some basics of Aboriginal music, lists problems facing music educators at that time (engendering interest in Aboriginal music, provision of resources, use of materials in teaching) and provides a justification for the inclusion of Aboriginal music in music education. He writes:

The importance in exposing people, especially those still studying, to the phenomenon of Aboriginal music, rests on the claim that the more aware people become of the rich cultural diversity in our country, the deeper becomes the experience of the human spirit. To experience, even a little, the music of the original Australian people is a step in that direction (Deakin, 1977, p. 61).

According to Alice Moyle's summary of sessions about Aboriginal music at the 1977 conference, teacher training, communication between researchers, Aboriginal people and music educators, and discussion of methods suitable for teaching Aboriginal music emerged as the issues "which could be regarded as calls for action" (Moyle, 1977, p. 64).

Despite Moyle's comments, a period of 13 years separates the sessions of the 1977 conference from the next appearance of Aboriginal music at an ASME conference. In 1990 the location of the biennial ASME conference in Alice Springs facilitated a performance by Aboriginal rock group, Areyonga Desert Tigers, and daily teaching sessions of central Australian ceremonial songs ("Wichetty Grub Ceremony") by members of the Mimili community. The 1990 conference also included two presentations on Aboriginal music, one by Margaret Kartomi (1990) and the other by cultural historian, Therese Radic, "Whitening the songlines", later published by ASME as the society's first monograph (Radic, 1991).

Kartomi's paper begins by discussing characteristics of songs by children, later moving to description of Aboriginal children's songs from the community at Yalata (South Australia) to illustrate children's musical attitudes and preferences, and how their songs exist as an identifiable musical type worthy of serious study. Radic's address is a call for serious research into Australian cultural history, a field she defines as in its infancy. To

illustrate problems with research into non-Aboriginal Australian musical cultures, she sets up a dichotomy between ways in which Aboriginal music functions as part of a social system, and non-Aboriginal ways of utilising and conceptualising music. To illustrate aspects of Aboriginal music, she draws on English novelist Bruce Chatwin's well-known 1988 novel, *The Songlines*, and publications on Aboriginal music by Catherine Ellis and Chester Schultz. While her primary intention seems to be to expose a lack of cultural critique in Australia, she manages to include criticism of the handling of Aboriginal music in general up to that time, noting, for example, "the difference between White educational attitudes that saw music usage as a way to bolster a sense of unity among the British diaspora and the ignored black attitude towards the purpose, growth and mode of passing a valued heritage to a new generation" (Radic, 1991, p. 15). As Ellis (1979) had done just over a decade earlier, she also reinforces the need to consider contemporary forms of Aboriginal music as valid research and teaching topics:

Black music has found a hearing through the adoption and adaptation of those more recent forms, though it sometimes reveals an ancestry that includes not only white missionary music and country and western (Dougie Young's songs for example), but supposedly related black musics from elsewhere, ranging from reggae to mambo (Radic, 1991, p. 17).

Recalling the performance of Areyonga Desert Tigers at the 1990 Alice Springs ASME conference, performance by Aboriginal rock groups was a feature of two other ASME conferences. The Burrara group, Bulpha, from Maningrida (Northern Territory), performed at the 1999 conference in Sydney, while the Darwin 2003 ASME conference included performances by two Aboriginal groups, Young Guns, from Bagot Aboriginal community, and Yirrkala CEC (Community Education Centre) Big Band. The Young Guns demonstrated aspects of the work of George Rrurrumbu, former lead singer of Warumpi Band, who had presented a plenary address at the Darwin conference and was involved in music teaching programs in Aboriginal communities through the work of the Northern Territory Open Learning Centre (Darwin). Rrurrumbu's appearance is a rarity in ASME activity at a national level.

The first research paper from an ASME conference to treat aspects of Aboriginal music since Kartomi's 1990 paper on children's songs from Yalata is that by Bob Smith (1995). In this paper, Smith engages with an issue that under the growing influence of postcolonialism would become a trope of late twentieth century music education, the concept that West-centric educational methods are inappropriate when used to teach music from non-Western settings, in this case, that from Aboriginal cultures. This issue, the topic of Ellis' 1969

article in *AJME*, also forms the focus of two ASME conference papers by Kathryn Wemyss (1999, 2003), specifically in reference to music teaching and learning in Torres Strait Islander schools and the need to develop culturally responsive modes of teaching. Torres Strait Islander music, relatively rarely discussed in either *AJME* or at ASME conferences appeared in an ASME setting first in Dunbar-Hall's paper at the 1997 ASME conference (Dunbar-Hall, 1997), an analysis of the findings of a NSW secondary school music education survey into the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics. The survey reported in this paper was a response to the 1994 introduction of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics as topics in NSW music syllabuses, and an attempt to assess the effects of this and the problems teachers identified with it. As writers such as Ellis and Moyle had indicated in early issues of *AJME*, the problematic nature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics as topics of Australian music education focused on the availability of teaching resources and the lack of comprehensive training about these musics - both problems identified in Dunbar-Hall's 1997 survey and conference paper.

A second survey on this issue, this time conducted on a national level by the same researcher and reported in *AJME* and at the 2003 ASME conference, indicated that the problems identified by NSW teachers in the 1997 survey were reflected nationally (Dunbar-Hall, 2002; Dunbar-Hall and Beston, 2003). The 2003 conference also included a paper by Elizabeth Mackinlay (2003) on her work in facilitating teaching at the University of Queensland by groups of Yanyuwa women from the remote community of Borroloola in the southwest Gulf region of the Northern Territory. In this paper, Mackinlay explores the tensions between gendered aspects of an Aboriginal culture and the experience of them by non-Indigenous students, explaining the negotiations necessary to allow "Yanyuwa performers and performance knowledge [to] make the journey into the mainstream" (Mackinlay, 2003, p. 2).

At the ASME conference immediately prior to this, in 2001 in Adelaide, the work of CASM at the University of Adelaide formed the focus of papers and workshops by Jennifer Newsome (2001) and Anthony Pak Poy (2001), both CASM staff members. Pak Poy's paper discussed the benefits of a holistic approach to music learning that draws on the contexts of lived experience, identity, personal relationships and community interaction. Newsome's session explained ways of teaching traditional cultures at CASM, and concluded with a workshop presentation in which Pitjantjatjara teachers from the CASM program demonstrated these to conference delegates. We now turn our gaze from the teaching of Aboriginal music to the way that music has been taught to Indigenous students through an examination of the legacy and role of CASM.

The Role of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) in Teaching Music to Indigenous Students

While the contribution of ASME to the teaching and learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics is primarily as a music application of Aboriginal studies, the work of CASM is a form of Indigenous education. Even though the research presented through ASME questions the position of Indigenous musics in Australian music education, attempts to further their inclusion, and advocates the adoption of culturally responsive pedagogy, contributions by Indigenous musicians and/or researchers in this forum have been minimal. This reflects a general pattern in Australian education. It also reflects statistical information from the late 1990s on interactions between Indigenous students and the education system, in which, for example, only 15% of Indigenous children above the age of 16 were attending school, and only 2.5% of Indigenous Australians had tertiary education qualifications, with the result that "these unequal educational outcomes lead to reduced employment opportunities in the labour market in particular, and help explain the general socio-economic disadvantage" of Indigenous people (Reid & Holland, 1996, p. 112). Alongside this situation, pedagogies and systemic characteristics of Australian education have marginalised Indigenous students in many ways. In music education, this has occurred notably through the use of Western pedagogic frameworks for (re)presenting Indigenous musics. If Indigenous Australian peoples and cultures are for the most part silenced by and excluded from education systems in Australia, what then of Indigenous Australian performance traditions? CASM has provided a model for Aboriginal music education - both in terms of educating non-Indigenous people about Indigenous musics, and educating Indigenous people about music. The historical and contemporary CASM context highlights the complexities of bringing Indigenous Australian music into the academy, the participation of Indigenous students in music education, and the ambiguity of ethnomusicology as both colonial collaborator and Indigenous advocate.

With the aid of the Aboriginal Arts Board, Catherine Ellis and Max Ellis founded the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music in 1975 as a unit of the Department of Music at the University of Adelaide (Ellis, 1978, p. 8). The setting up of CASM formalised the work undertaken originally in a program known as the "Program of Training in Music for South Australian Aboriginal People" (Ellis, 1974). By the late 1980s, CASM was not only a music school but also a research centre for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people based on Aboriginal music and Aboriginal-style music teaching (Tunstall, 1989).

From its beginning, CASM offered three different courses, all of which were open to Aboriginal people and one offered to non-Aboriginal students. The first course was "for Aboriginal people who would like to gain an interesting education experience without worrying

about exams and qualifications" (Ellis, 1978, p. 9), the second provided the opportunity for Aboriginal people to become "qualified in music so they can enter music as a full-time profession" (Ellis, 1978, p. 9), and the third comprised subjects for university students studying for degrees in music or arts (Ellis, 1978, p. 9).

Concepts of equality and the universality of music underpinned the philosophy of CASM (Rankine, 1979). Ellis, noted above as an advocate for the inclusion of Aboriginal music in Australian education and the study of Aboriginal music by Aboriginal students, believed that CASM provided an opportunity through music to bridge differences and allow "free movement from one culture to another; to understand the music of other groups; and to appreciate and re-evaluate the music of one's own culture in the light of direct musical experience in another person's culture" (Ellis, 1979, p. 19). Aboriginal students could shift from silence to voice by becoming musically literate. Non-Aboriginal students could re-evaluate their perceptions of Aboriginal people by listening and experiencing that Aboriginal voice and thereby gain an appreciation of the complexities of Aboriginal performance traditions.

The establishment of CASM also saw official recognition of tribal education through the appointment of tribal teachers as Visiting Lecturers; urban Aboriginal people were also recognised for the traditional knowledge they held and were given appropriate teaching status (Ellis, 1978, p. 8). Ellis (1979) felt that the granting of this status to tribal performers was essential for two reasons. First, it meant that Aboriginal performance traditions and performers were being acknowledged at the highest level of Western education, the "world of the white men" which in turn gave them "faith in the value of their own traditions in a changing world" (Ellis, 1979, p. 20). Second, cultural interaction and exchange was now possible between the elite thinkers in both cultures. The emphasis placed by Ellis on tribal music and culture reflected her fear that "the quiet voices of tradition will be drowned in the torrent of sound emanating from the mass-media-culture" (1979, p. 20).

Leila Rankine, then a student at CASM, describes in depth the traditional Aboriginal singing classes taught at CASM by the tribal elders from Indulkana (South Australia) Aboriginal reserve:

This gives urban Aboriginal people and western students the opportunity to study traditional Aboriginal children's songs as students of the tribal elders, and helps in breaking down the barriers between urban and tribal people. It is a very intense class where students need to watch the teacher very closely to understand what is being taught. Self-discipline, patience, tolerance and respect are lessons which can be learnt by participating in Aboriginal singing classes (Rankine, 1979, p. 19).

However, she also describes a disjuncture between her musical and cultural experience as an urban Aboriginal person and that of her tribal Pitjantjatjara teachers:

Because we urban Aboriginals have grown up with little or no knowledge of tribal music; it is difficult for us to fully understand the complexities and structures of tribal music and song texts. When tribal elders teach at the centre the women show the girls how to sit and beat and the tribal elders show the men how to sit and clap (Rankine, 1979, p. 19).

Rankine points to the identity crisis that many urban Aboriginal people confront when placed within the traditional/authentic versus urban/inauthentic binary. She highlights the disconnection that she feels as an urban woman from the songs of her remote community teachers. She is not from their country even though they may refer to each other as countrymen. She cannot understand the language, and the words are awkward on her tongue. The melody and rhythm of the songs are unfamiliar to her.

Ellis' motivation for the inclusion of a traditional musical component in the CASM curriculum centred around the Freirean ideal of making literacy a "process by which the 'culture of silence' can find an instrument to voice its growing self awareness" (1985, pp. 150-151) and further that this voice must have legitimacy and authenticity if it is to overcome the "inevitable repression which ... follows the emergence of a people working to break their submissive silence" (1985, p. 151). For Ellis, the authenticity Freire refers to is found in the tribal and ritual songs of Aboriginal people in remote communities, and relearning and reconnecting to this authentic music-culture would ultimately empower and emancipate an educated, strengthened and revitalised Aboriginal people.

Ellis (1991) strongly supported performance-oriented ethnomusicology in an academic setting and believed that engagement with traditional performers improved students' performance skills and understanding. She was also aware of the debates around this issue and was at times herself uncertain of the positive and negative aspects of this cross-cultural process. Ellis (1991, p. 13) first and foremost believed that:

It is important that the subject is taught by the indigenous performer, who thereby gains great stature from teaching his or her birthright to people outside the tradition and stature in that outside educational system. The original tradition is then still maintained under the control of the rightful teachers and leaders, and songs are not bought and sold as commodities.

She acknowledges the process of Indigenous empowerment that takes place when Indigenous Australian voices speak from the margins into the centre.

She further reveals a strongly emancipatory and anti-racist pedagogical platform aimed at cultivating respect and reconciliation between White and Black Australia which provided the motivation behind CASM and indeed formed a major impetus for her own research into Central Australian performance practice:

We exist alongside a tradition of great antiquity, which has been moulded through thousands of years into an expression of Australian-ness and of the spiritual essence of the black people of this country. We can express feelings for Australia and Australian-ness in our music without depleting Aboriginal traditions. We do not need to rip it off (as modern city Aboriginal people we do); rather we can draw from its depths to enable us to have a deeper knowledge of our own feelings for the land which we too inhabit, and the Dreamings within which we live (Ellis, 1991, p. 14).

Traditional performers began to take part in the CASM classroom because of Ellis' long research relationship with them, because she was able to be there with them in the field, because she was the Director of CASM – roles she assumed because of her powerful position *vis-à-vis* Aboriginal people as a White person. Drawing from his experience as an educator at CASM and himself a student of Ellis', Tunstill (1995) questions the impact of her work and laments:

The general public can be excused for not being well versed in the *results* of academic studies of an analytic nature, but sadly there is little understanding of the *processes* that Central Australian music represents – processes that were adopted by CASM from the outset and that have been available, virtually weekly, through teaching sessions in a public setting for the last twenty years (Tunstill, 1995, pp. 59-60).

While obviously frustrated by the lack of interaction between the academy and the general public, Tunstill seeks to understand the pedagogical aims and achievements behind the involvement of Pitjantjatjara people in the music teaching sessions and performances of Pitjantjatjara musical traditions at CASM. He describes the conflicts and compromises made by these performers in bringing their musical traditions into the academy, which centre on the primacy of song text in teaching and learning Pitjantjatjara song. Later, however, Tunstill (1995, p. 67) speaks positively of the benefits of this cross-cultural teaching and learning process:

As a result of Ellis's [sic] original insight and determination to see Central Australian song and poetry realised in an open educational forum under the control of the song owners, its magnificent products can be proclaimed in a process open to

other Australians. And with disarming directness and simplicity, all that the Pitjantjatjara ask of us as people (not birds) is to get off our chairs (trees) and focus our ears and minds on the truth contained within, a guiding philosophy that is not the recondite preserve of specialists, but is within reach of virtually every adult member of society.

Like Tunstill, Newsome also speaks from her experiences as Director of CASM. However, her analytical and political stance is markedly different and follows more directly Neuenfeldt's discussion of Aboriginal didgeridists' involvement in the Australian educational system. Newsome's (1999) work on Indigenous Australian music represented by the enrolment of Indigenous Australian students in the music program at CASM is the most recent to address the question of the engagement of the academy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musical traditions. She contends that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music has appeared in the academy primarily through research within the established disciplinary paradigms of musicology, ethnomusicology and anthropology. Newsome is critical of the focus placed on the authenticity and cultural importance of "traditional" music in this research and also the lack of Indigenous Australian involvement as researchers in this process.

Newsome cites the colonial baggage carried by Aboriginalist researchers in the history of music research in Australia as contributing to this research bias. However, she is not willing to allow researchers today to continue this legacy of misrepresentation within academic discourse. She calls for "new types of research and new approaches to research training" to allow Indigenous Australian musicians to "contribute as equal 'voices' to academic discourse about Indigenous musical traditions" (Newsome, 1999, p. 97) and believes that in creating a "coalition of Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds", CASM has found an effective means for "negotiating the complex territory between cultures to create a curriculum which embraces not only 'western' and 'traditional' Indigenous epistemologies but also the learning world between these systems" (Newsome, 1999, pp. 101-102). Similarly, Turner (1999) turns the gaze around to discuss how Indigenous Australian students at CASM experience and view ethnomusicological representations of Indigenous Australian music. The historical Aboriginalist legacy of ethnomusicology at CASM is at odds with the "principle of self-determination and the stated objective ... to affirm Indigenous music making *in all its diversity*" (Turner, 1999, p. 142) and today CASM operates on an ethnomusicological platform that is activist and advocacy-based to better serve Indigenous interests (Turner, 1999, p. 145).

Today, CASM has a national and international profile as a tertiary educational site which directly addresses the "identified learning needs and aspirations of

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander music students" through culturally relevant and innovative approaches to pedagogy, and in "supporting Indigenous cultural maintenance and production through music and dance" (CASM, 2003). Historically and educationally CASM can be viewed as "the first important catalyst in Aboriginal music's renaissance" (CASM, 2003) and this legacy continues in the work of music educators and ethnomusicologists in other educational sites around Australia. For example, like Wemyss' conference papers discussed above (1999, 2003), York (1995) speaks to the process of negotiating, incorporating and supporting "traditional" musics and performers in the pedagogical process. He describes the way that informal cultural studies programs operate in Torres Strait Island schools as an effective means for passing on important traditional knowledge which includes knowledge of song and dance traditions. Typically, cultural studies programs involve community elders in teaching local music and stories and are seen as a means by which Torres Strait Islander children can become engaged with their traditional languages and performance traditions. While keen to highlight the benefits of this program, York is also aware of the problems and concerns associated with bringing traditional knowledge into the largely Western structured classrooms which include: the heavy reliance on community members as volunteers or Community Development Employment Program (CDEP, an Indigenous work for the dole scheme) workers, the ad hoc nature of community involvement from school-to-school, the politics associated with deciding what to teach and who should teach it, as well as the perceived need for a balanced approach through inclusion of Western music education in the curriculum. As York sees it, "the challenge is to strengthen teachers' existing skills and abilities, and broaden music curriculum without interfering with important embedded customary practices and procedures" (York, 1995, p. 23). He also envisages a curriculum developed under the advice of Islander teachers and elders that is mindful of Indigenous Australian approaches to education, knowledge, learning and teaching practices. Ultimately, York is concerned that a culturally appropriate curriculum assists in the maintenance of Torres Strait Islander performance traditions and expresses this hope:

After learning this part of their heritage, and combining it with other representative songs and dance, today's young Islanders will have a broader picture of the foundations and elements of their identity. Coupled with other accumulated musical skills and knowledge acquired through the curriculum, they will leave school with a concept of the universality of musical experience, and the part their own musical culture plays within that universal framework (York, 1995, p. 37).

Taking a more directly theoretical approach, Neuenfeldt (1998) situates his work within the framework of critical pedagogy to examine the perspective of Aboriginal didjeridu performers who cross over into mainstream education. Based on ethnographic work with three didjeridu players, Neuenfeldt positions Kerry McKenzie, Mark King and Sandy Dann as "cultural workers and border crossers who use music and musicianship to literally and figuratively sound silences" in educational contexts which have systematically worked to exclude, separate and obstruct Aboriginal people (Neuenfeldt, 1998, p. 6). Describing the social and political paradox inherent within identification of the didjeridu as the "primary aural and visual musical icon of Australian indigeneity", Neuenfeldt (1998, p. 7) discusses the way the didjeridu is used in a type of border pedagogy by these performers as a tool for education, empowerment and entertainment. He emphasises the movement of McKenzie, King and Dann and other Indigenous performers like them as "front-line representatives of a marginalised group, interacting critically, albeit contingently, with mainstream mind-sets, institutions, and educators at the borders between cultures" (Neuenfeldt, 1998, p. 15). In these ways these musicians open up an alternative site for forms of music education, one centred on and utilising Indigenous performers as educators.

■ Conclusion

The teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics in sectors of Australian music education is not the simple task of inclusion that government directives, syllabus expectations and ideological agendas can imply. As articles in *AJME* and ASME conference presentations demonstrate, inclusion is not the problem - researchers and music educators regularly acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics are an accepted component of Australian music education. How and why they are (re)presented, however, remain opaque, raising a raft of ethical and ideological issues. These issues are well demonstrated and intensified in the work of CASM, on the one hand a support agency for Indigenous musicians, on the other theorisable as a quasi-colonialist appropriator of Indigenous cultures and the right to analyse and teach them. Performances of music by Indigenous performers and performances about Indigenous music by educators and ethnomusicologists within the context of ASME and located at CASM mark an important moment in Aboriginal music and musicians making the journey from the margins to the mainstream "literally and figuratively to sound silences" (Neuenfeldt, 1998, p. 6). As locations for the possibility of change and transformation, both ASME and CASM are examples of "how music can transcend musicality and enter the realm of the extra-musical as the nexus of performance, politics and pedagogy" (Neuenfeldt, 1998, p. 17). What emerges from this overview of the work of the Australian

Society for Music Education and the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music is that like education, music education is not neutral. To teach Indigenous musics is also to teach the historical, social and political contexts in which they exist, to raise debates over the efficacy of the pedagogic act, and to uncover the dialectic and musical tensions that surround it.

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