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From Researched to Centrestage: A Case Study

Od raziskovanega v središče scene: raziskava konkretnega primera

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IZVLEČEK

ABSTRACT

Aplikativno raziskovanje je ključna pot za znanstvenike v obravnavanju raziskovalnih nalog, ki se tičejo aboriginskih ljudstev ter Otočanov ožine Torres v Avstraliji. Rast Centra za aboriginske glasbene študije (CASM) kaže, da je aplikativno raziskovanje učinkovit odgovor na samoodločanje in samopredstavitev staroselskih ljudstev.

Applied research is a key way for music researchers to respond to the research agenda of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. Developments at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) point to applied research as an effective response to the call for self-determination and self-representation by Indigenous peoples in research.

The official establishment of the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) at the University of Adelaide in 1975, took place at a time in Australian history of profound and rapid change in the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia, a period which was witness to an increasingly vigorous struggle by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their supporters for greater recognition of the social, civil and political rights¹ of Australia's Indigenous population. Indigenous Australians are a minority group², representing the most socially and economically disadvantaged group in the Australian population across almost every indicator, including health, life expectancy, education, and employment. The legacy of colonisation³ permeates almost

¹ Including specific Indigenous legal rights such as native title and recognition of customary law.

² Less than 3% of the overall population (2001 census - <http://www.abs.gov.au>).

³ Commonly understood to have commenced with the arrival of the First Fleet at Botany Bay in 1788.

every aspect of contemporary Indigenous life, whilst a mainstream media delivers a confused and confusing public message of unrelenting dysfunction within Indigenous affairs contrasted with positive images of a strong and vibrant Indigenous community embodying a living culture worthy of national celebration. The dominant political dynamic is one of a never-ending blame game revolving around issues of access to power, allocation of resources, and assignation of responsibility and accountability. Some are claiming that today, in key areas of Indigenous affairs, Australia is going backwards, with a social justice agenda increasingly buried under the weight of economic rationalism, a return to assimilationist attitudes and policy-thinking, and the forces of globalisation. Professor Mick Dodson, leading Indigenous academic and human rights advocate has recently referred to 'some kind of culture war' in Australian public life (Dodson 2006: 4). Researcher and academic Karl Neuenfeldt has also referred to a form of 'new racism' in Australia, a racism in which the different 'races' are seen as being 'fundamentally incompatible', thereby justifying assimilationist policies, and the exclusion of '...whatever is deemed not to serve the interests of the dominant group(s) in Australian society', including 'the voices and themes of Indigenous peoples' (1998: 202).

The first part of this paper looks at some of the key ethical issues faced by music researchers in Australia in the light of these circumstances, and provides examples of recent responses to them by researchers, through new directions and developments in applied research. The second part provides a unique case study, outlining the context of recent innovations in research training and research work at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM) at the University of Adelaide, and describing some of the recent research activities and outcomes of the Centre.

A massive effort continues amongst Indigenous Australians today to improve conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities, an effort which aims to end discrimination and achieve self-determination and social justice across all areas of Indigenous life. The increasingly insistent and often desperate voice from Indigenous Australia on these issues can be heard across all arenas of community, political and public life, including in education and from within academia, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and groups are striving to provide leadership to a positive policy change agenda. In 2006, leading Indigenous academic Marcia Langton, in her role as Chair of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) to the Federal Government, positioned higher education as 'central to the aspirations of Indigenous people for a rightful place in Australian society', advising that 'Australian universities must play a leadership role in the nation's recognition of Indigenous people and culture' (Langton 2006: 3). The IHEAC 2006-2008 Strategic Plan identifies 'enhancement of Indigenous research and an increase in the number of Indigenous researchers as one of seven key priority areas necessary for improvement' (IHEAC 2006: 3).

Of special significance in music research has been the fascination by researchers, from within and outside academia, and from within Australia and from overseas, in the musics and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Over the more than two hundred years since colonisation, non-Indigenous researchers in fields such as anthropology, ethnography, linguistics, choreology, musicology, and ethnomusicology have been responsible for researching and disseminating vast amounts of interpretive

information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music cultures. Despite being the primary informants in this research, Indigenous musicians in Australia have, at least until recently, seldom had a direct voice in research, and have also commonly been excluded, through research processes, from the power and benefits that would naturally flow from their contribution of specialist knowledge to research. It has thus become incumbent upon researchers, and universities - historically the primary institutions associated with music research and research training - to recognise the discriminatory practices visited upon Indigenous musicians and knowledge holders through research, in the past and still today, and through this understanding to respond proactively by supporting research which prioritises the interests of Indigenous peoples and their communities. Lester-Irabinna Rigney, a leading South Australian Indigenous academic explains the core issues in this way:

Indigenous peoples and their cultures in Australia have been and continue to be a playground for many researchers. Indeed it is upon this foundation than many academic careers have been built. For example, in my own work I offer a critique of research epistemologies and ontologies and their implicit dispossession of Indigenous knowledges from the custodians. This is not to say that Indigenous peoples reject outright research and its various methodological practices. Indeed, some research has benefited the emancipation of Indigenous communities. However, we as Indigenous peoples now want research and its designs to contribute to self-determination and liberation struggles as defined by us and our communities. (Rigney 2000: 10)

Participation in tertiary level music and research education is an arena in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have historically encountered prohibitive access barriers, with curricula biased towards traditional Western music styles⁴ and epistemologies, a general lack of appreciation of and support for Indigenous music-making, and as described elsewhere⁵, the appointment of very few Indigenous musicians and educators to academic positions. This has seen the *virtual absence of a strong and sustained voice by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians and music researchers within academia in Australia and elsewhere*. For musicological research it has meant that the 'insider' voice has largely been missing from academic discourse about Indigenous Australian music cultures, resulting in an ongoing bias in Australian music research and representations of Indigenous music, and creating a most peculiar dynamic for contemporary researchers.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have often expressed a highly cynical and openly resistant stance towards the traditional Western research agenda. Professor Mick Dodson has strongly critiqued the position of traditional research, saying that, 'Since their first intrusive gaze, colonising cultures have had a preoccupation with observing, analysing, studying, classifying and labeling Aborigines and Aboriginality... without our own voices, Aboriginality will continue to be a creation for and about us.' Dodson claims self-representation and 'the freedom to live outside the cage created by other people's images and projections' as 'acts of freedom', describing 'the insistence

⁴ Such as classical and jazz.

⁵ See Newsome (1998, 2004), Newsome and Turner (2006).

on speaking back and retaining control' as highly political acts. (Dodson 1994: 3,10) Maori theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith also reinforces this perspective, speaking of a West that can 'desire, extract and claim ownership of our ways of knowing, our imagery, the things we create and produce, and then simultaneously reject the people who created and developed those ideas and seek to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations' (Smith 2005: 1). She exposes research as being one of the important ways in which:

...the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized... regulated through the formal rules of individual scholarly disciplines and scientific paradigms, and the institutions that support them....[and] realized in the myriad of representations and ideological constructions of the Other in scholarly and 'popular' works, and in the principles which help to select and recontextualise those constructions in such things as the media, official histories and school curricula. (ibid: 7-8)

Academic discourse in Australia about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics had its origins in racist constructions of Indigenous traditions, which were depicted as primitive and devoid of intellectual sophistication⁶. The special fascination with Indigenous Australian cultural traditions by non-Indigenous people began in the early years of colonisation, and by the end of the 19th century had assumed a 'rapidly developing sense of urgency, reinforced by the widely held belief that the Aboriginal people of Australia were a "dying race"', whose 'extinction would have dire consequences for the persistence of Aboriginal cultures' (Newsome and Turner 2006: 56-57). The first researcher to combine the recording, notation and analysis of 'traditional' Aboriginal music was Harold E. Davies (1867-1947) based at The University of Adelaide⁷. Davies has now come to be described as Australia's first ethnomusicologist⁸. By the middle of the 20th century the first specialist researchers to publish in the field of Indigenous Australian music had started to emerge, with important work by Richard Waterman, Alice Moyle, Trevor Jones and Catherine Ellis, and by the late 1960s teaching and research in ethnomusicology had begun at Monash University, and was also taken up by the Universities of Sydney, Adelaide, New England and Queensland. A new generation of researchers emerged including Stephen Wild, Jill Stubington, Linda Barwick, Allan Marett, Greg Anderson, Helen Payne, Guy Tunstill, Ray Keogh, Richard Moyle, Margaret Gummow, Margaret Kartomi, Robin Ryan, Antony McCardell, Luise Hercus and Grace Koch, Mary Louise Brunton, Udo Will, Peter Dunbar-Hall, and Peter Toner amongst others. Recent researchers to join the field include Aaron Corn, Elizabeth Mackinlay, Fiona Magowan, and Steven Knopoff. Today, musicological research in Australian Indigenous contexts has developed into a consolidated, although still underrepresented field within the academy.

David McAllester has described ethnomusicological and anthropological work as 'serious form[s] of trespass into the mind of the "other"', explaining that 'the more penetrating the research, the deeper the consequences both for the people visited and for

⁶ See Newsome and Turner (2006).

⁷ See Bridges (2006).

⁸ This term is not used generally in this paper because of its potential colonial connotations and narrowness of implied reference. The term 'music research/er' is used instead.

the field worker' (McAllester 1984: 288). Daniel Sheehy has also pointed to important ethical dimensions in music research, advocating for consciously proactive approaches to ethnomusicological endeavour, for 'strategy guided by a sense of social purpose', and for consideration of 'the larger importance and consequence of each and every ethnomusicological task, be it research, teaching, fieldwork, publishing, producing films, mounting festivals, or whatever' (Sheehy 1992: 335). Svanibor Pettan and Ursula Hemetek have also emphasized these points, advocating for real and practically based interventions by ethnomusicologists, and in particular by those working with disempowered and discriminated minority groups (Pettan 2006, Hemetek 2006: 54). Ashley Turner, through his work at CASM, has also proposed that 'if ethnomusicology is to serve Indigenous interests it will be activist, advocacy-based and oriented towards solving concrete problems' (Turner 1999: 145).

These perspectives are highly relevant in the Australian context where musicologists and other researchers find themselves confronted on a daily basis by the real life problems faced by Indigenous Australians. Ethical, moral and legal considerations point to the need for researchers to respond directly to the self-determination agenda and the call for responsible, responsive and reciprocal relationships between researcher and researched, and more specifically for proactive involvement by researchers in supporting practical solutions to real life problems and identified needs. Asymmetrical power differentials between the researcher and the researched in the Australian context call for a direct challenge to traditional research culture by researchers, and the promotion of the interests of Indigenous peoples in research incorporating Indigenous participation and leadership models. Key organisations such as *The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies* (AIATSIS)⁹ and the *Australia Council for the Arts*¹⁰ have developed comprehensive protocols and guidelines for the conduct of research, as well as for all activities involving the arts and cultural heritage of Indigenous Australian individuals and communities. The AIATSIS guidelines connect ethical research practices to basic human rights, emphasising the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to 'self-determination, and to control and maintain their culture and heritage' (AIATSIS 2000: 1). These guidelines identify eleven principles of ethical research, encompassed within three key domains: (1) *consultation, negotiation and mutual understanding* (2) *respect, recognition and involvement, and* (3) *benefits, outcomes and agreement*. Perhaps of special significance for applied music research are those that recognise the cultural and intellectual property rights of Indigenous peoples, including communal rights (contained in knowledges, ideas, cultural expressions, practices, resources, and cultural materials); the importance of incorporating Indigenous perspectives through involvement of Indigenous people and communities as collaborators in research; and the need for researchers to involve and negotiate with Indigenous peoples and communities (on an ongoing basis), in consenting to and in monitoring and controlling the research process. Perhaps of greatest relevance is the recommendation that Indigenous peoples and their communities should acquire tangible benefits as a result of the research, at the local level as well as more generally, including the right not be

⁹ See: <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au>

¹⁰ See Janke (2006).

disadvantaged through the research. The essence of this principle is that researchers should *give back to the researched community*, returning benefits in acts of reciprocity, and in ways that are specific to the identified and negotiated needs of individuals and communities (ibid: 2-4).

Australian music researchers working in the Indigenous context have made extensive use of established methods of conserving and disseminating research, through archiving, publishing, and teaching, and also through other forms of representation including conference presentations, performance and recording. Historically though, much of this activity has taken place at a substantial distance, both spatially and temporally, from Indigenous informants and their communities, and research results have on the whole been largely inaccessible to Indigenous participants because of language and mode of transmission barriers, as well as a general lack of ready access to the material results. Additionally, published research has tended to direct benefits more to non-Indigenous participants, with original informants often gaining in only intangible and indirect ways, if at all. Researchers in Australia are increasingly acknowledging the multi-faceted and multi-layered ethical considerations integral to their work, and ethnomusicologists have often led the way in Australian musicology in moving away from strictly traditional Western empirical approaches to music research and analysis, 'rejecting the apparent reliance...on the ethics of objectivity... in favour of a more critically humanist approach to the study of music in culture' (Kartomi 1997: 415).

Collaborative and interdisciplinary studies have been a feature of research by non-Indigenous researchers in Australia, and have included the work of linguists, choreologists, musicologists, anthropologists, photographers, sound recordists and film makers. In recent years there has been a notable and increasing blurring of roles and fields of study in Indigenous music research, with a new group of researchers from a range of disciplines expanding the field, revitalising and adding new perspectives and ways of working with Indigenous peoples, through fields such as education and industry training, media and technology, cultural studies, identity studies, heritage studies, Indigenous studies, museum studies, cultural politics, popular music studies, and music composition, performance and recording.

This has seen the emergence of important and interesting work, work which is often collaborative and within applied fields of study, encompassing areas such as music and dance performance and production; composition and song writing; education and community development; health and well being; cultural retrieval, restoration, maintenance and promotion; recording and broadcasting; rights protection and land claims; documentation and archiving; and joint publication.

Recent published examples include the work of Philip Hayward, media and music studies scholar and founder of *Perfect Beat-The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*. Hayward edited *From Pop to Punk to Post-modernism* in 1992, and in 1998, *Sound Alliances*, which brings together material from *Perfect Beat* by a diverse group of researchers and addresses the relationship between Indigenous peoples and popular music in the Australia-Western/Central Pacific region (Hayward 1998: 4-6). The book *Deadly Sounds Deadly Places*, co-written by educator

Peter Dunbar-Hall and cultural geographer Chris Gibson, traces the development of Aboriginal contemporary music in Australia¹¹.

Applied music research in the Australian Indigenous context is a rapidly expanding and growing field. The four basic qualities of strategy in applied research as articulated by Daniel Sheehy are relevant to most activity currently being undertaken in applied Indigenous music research in Australia: (1) *developing new “frames” for musical performance* (2) *“feeding back” musical models to the communities that created them* (3) *providing community members access to strategic models and conservation techniques* (4) *developing broad, structural solutions to broad problems* (Sheehy 1992: 330-331). Of course in real life contexts these qualities may and often do overlap, as the benefits of one strategy lend themselves or lead to others. A ‘new frame’ in Indigenous performance, as exemplified for example in the spectacular 2001 *Yeperenye Federation Festival*, may incorporate a ‘conservation technique’ in the form of a sound recording or film (in this case, the Australian Film Commission documentary *Coming Together As One*), which then proves useful for ‘feeding back’ to participants and their communities. Such recordings may be used for purposes such as education, archiving, and public dissemination, as well as providing ideas for future events and activities, thereby contributing to ‘broad solutions’ in the longer term. Another highly relevant area in applied research lies in the increasing opportunities provided by the rapidly globalising and mass-mediated market economy. With support, Indigenous Australian musicians are well positioned to capitalize on this potential and to thus extend their social, cultural and political agendas to the world stage.

The publication in 1989 of *Our place, our music*, edited by Marcus Breen, represented an important cross-road in Australian Indigenous music research. Essentially a dialogic encounter between staff, students and graduates from CASM, it opened up a public space for Indigenous musicians to speak directly about their music, as well as helping to break down conceptual boundaries between ‘traditional’ and contemporary genres in Australian Indigenous music. An important feature of more recent work has been this opening up of a shared space, an important ‘strategic model’ within published research, providing an important avenue for Indigenous musicians and commentators to speak directly about their music in their own voices, as contributors and collaborators. *The Didjeridu: From Arnhem Land to Internet* edited by Karl Neuenfeldt¹² (2000) includes contributions by Indigenous writers Mandawuy Yunupingu¹³, Kev Carmody¹⁴, Mick Davison¹⁵, and David Hudson¹⁶ along side those of non-Indigenous writers, including researchers Linda Barwick and Steven Knopoff. The 2005 publication *Landscapes of Indigenous Performance* edited by Fiona Magowan and Karl Neuenfeldt, includes a collaborative chapter by Neuenfeldt and Indigenous academic Martin Nakata, as well

¹¹ Indigenous music research in Australia has historically been somewhat polarised into two main fields of study, ‘traditional’ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics, and new and emerging Indigenous traditions, sometimes loosely categorized within ‘popular’ genres such as country, rock, reggae, funk, rap etc.

¹² Non-Indigenous academic, musician, performer and producer.

¹³ 1993 Australian of the Year, educator, political activist and musician of Yothu Yindi fame.

¹⁴ National award winning musician, well-known performer, singer songwriter and social activist.

¹⁵ Cultural awareness educator and musician.

¹⁶ Musician, dancer, artist, and actor.

as a reprint of a chapter by Eddie Koiki Mabo¹⁷ on music of the Torres Strait. The work of academic Karl Neuenfeldt also extends to collaborative performing and recording work with Indigenous musicians, including with award winning Torres Strait Islander musician Seaman Dan.

In recent years music researchers working through professional associations such as the *Musicological Society of Australia* (MSA) and the Australian branch of the *International Association for the Study of Popular Music* (IASPM)¹⁸ have also sought to open up more space for Indigenous participation. In 1998, the *6th National Australian/New Zealand IASPM and Inaugural Arnhem Land Performance Conference* attracted a wide national and international audience. Participants included Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and scholars, educators, musicians, media and music industry representatives, and cultural critics. Aiming to enable a 'coming together of Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices and perspectives' (Bloustien 1999: preface), the conference included performances and presentations spanning a wide range of Indigenous music and dance genres. The subsequent publication of the selected conference proceedings¹⁹ included contributions from prominent Indigenous participants Nancia Guivarra²⁰, Jardine Kiwat²¹, and David Page²². The jointly held *23rd National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia and 17th Annual Conference of the New Zealand Musicological Society*, convened by researcher and academic Allan Marett in 2000, included a two day symposium *Research in Indigenous Performance: Current Issues*. This conference included substantial involvement by Australian Indigenous presenters, including Marcia Langton, Djon Mundine, Lapulung Dhamarrandji, Maroochy Barambah, and Jardine Kiwat. Within the conference *Mungamunga* singers and dancers from Tennant Creek performed traditional songs and dances for the launch of the *Yawulyu Mungamunga* CD, a collaborative community based project involving *Warumungu* women song-owners, singers and dancers, working with non-Indigenous researchers Linda Barwick and linguist Jane Simpson. The central involvement of the local community in this project and the direct benefits flowing to the community, illustrate ways in which music researchers can work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to provide tangible, mutually negotiated benefits. In 2003 Linda Barwick and Jane Simpson also assisted in the successful repatriation and return to *Warumungu* and *Warlpiri* women and men, of significant historical recordings, and copies of associated photographs and field notes, made by anthropologist Professor Elkin during his research in the Tennant Creek area in 1953 (Cheadle 2003: 24-25). An interesting South Australian example of useful collaborative work is the *Kaurna Paltinna* song book and cassette, produced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous songwriters, musicians, students, teachers, with linguist Rob Amery. This work draws on reclaimed *Kaurna*

¹⁷ 1992 Australian of the Year, Indigenous leader and human rights advocate, and successful plaintiff in the landmark Mabo decision of the High Court of Australia which recognised traditional land rights for Australian Indigenous people.

¹⁸ See Hayward (2000) for an informative overview of the relationship between popular music and ethno-/musicological research publishing in Australia.

¹⁹ See Bloustien (1999).

²⁰ Leading arts and culture journalist.

²¹ Leading musician, composer and educator, and CASM Coordinator (Policy and External Relations).

²² Award winning composer and actor.

language²³ to reintroduce *Kaurna* language in a readily accessible form, whilst also disseminating important historical and ethnographic research information to a broader audience, including to the direct descendants of original informants (Schultz, Varcoe, Amery 1999: 4-7).

Recently Allan Marett has lamented the serious underrepresentation of 'Indigenous music research' in the academy today, pointing to the degree to which music training institutions are essentially failing in their responsibilities 'in a key area of what should be a national concern', and calling for change which can only occur 'if tertiary institutions are prepared to re-evaluate their priorities' (Marett 2004: 23). He notes the very low numbers of researchers currently working in the field, particularly in research relating to 'traditional' Indigenous music. In making these comments he has pointed to the fact that 'Indigenous communities are now at the point of actively seeking assistance in the documentation and preservation of their endangered musical traditions' (ibid). There is substantial merit in this position, in that suitably trained and experienced researchers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can work alongside Indigenous peoples and their communities, for example, with song owners and media organisations, in applying and teaching research methods useful in meeting identified needs and priorities relevant to Indigenous peoples and their communities²⁴. Recent outcomes of the *Garma Festival*²⁵ held annually in Gulkula in North-East Arnhem Land are of considerable interest in this respect. In 2002 the inaugural *Garma Symposium on Indigenous Music and Dance* released the *Garma Statement on Indigenous Music and Performance*²⁶ calling for the formulation of the *National Recording Project for Indigenous Music*²⁷. This ambitious and important collaborative project, involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, aims to 'systematically record and document the unique and endangered performance traditions of Indigenous Australia' and through this to 'assist in the development of local knowledge archives as primary repositories for locally recorded and documented materials, and a secure national repository...'²⁸. Representing a break with conventional academic agendas the project aims to ensure that community elders are empowered to lead the recording, documentation and archiving process. Flow-on benefits include relevant materials being made available to the communities for 'integration to community health, education, governance and business initiatives'²⁹. This project is demonstrative of the proactive ways in which teams of researchers can work together with Indigenous communities in applying all four qualities of applied strategy (as per Sheehy), developing initiatives of multiple ongoing benefit for individuals and their communities³⁰.

²³ The 'traditional' Aboriginal language of the Adelaide plains area.

²⁴ Note the importance of archive collections, such as in those held by AIATSIS, in providing material of significance to communities including in relation to Native Title Claims: see <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au>

²⁵ <http://www.garma.telstra.com>

²⁶ Retrieved on 18 June, 2007 from <http://www.garma.telstra.com/2002/statement-music02.htm>

²⁷ Retrieved on 18 June, 2007 from http://www.garma.telstra.com/nat_rec_proj.htm

²⁸ See above.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ Of interest, see also the PARADISEC digital recording and archiving project directed by Linda Barwick (<http://www.paradisec.org.au>).

The Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music (CASM)

Catherine J. Ellis (1935-1996) is widely recognised as the most prolific and influential of the early non-Indigenous researchers to study Aboriginal music (Barwick and Maret 1995: 1). Her pioneering research encompassed not only 'traditional' Aboriginal musics³¹ but also made an important contribution to an appreciation of the significance of 'mixed traditions', and emerging and new Indigenous Australian musics. Ellis's extensive research efforts over some 40 years to understand Aboriginal music *from the perspective of the performer*, made a major contribution both to an understanding of Aboriginal music traditions by non-Indigenous people and to ethnomusicological theory. As the instigator and co-founder of CASM, along with members of the Adelaide and Indulkana Aboriginal communities, her work in the area of 'cross-cultural' music education may be regarded as perhaps her greatest legacy (Newsome and Turner 2006 (b): 77-81). In a visionary leap of faith, Ellis had affectively applied Sheehy's fourth strategy (which he saw as transcending and including all the others)³², utilizing the knowledge and status she had gained through her research to create an institution that was to prove of far reaching benefit for Indigenous people.

CASM had its foundations in *The Program of Training in Music for South Australian Aboriginal People*, initiated in 1971, and essentially a pioneering exercise in applied ethnomusicology in the Australian Indigenous context³³. Cath Ellis along with her husband Max, developed a three strand program, working firstly with the all-Aboriginal *Council for Aboriginal Women in South Australia*, and then with members of the *Port Adelaide Central Methodist Mission Aboriginal Project* to provide instrumental music tuition for Aboriginal children in the Port Adelaide area. This part of the program later became known as the *Adelaide Aboriginal Orchestra*³⁴. The other strands of the program were the *Institute of Narrative and Music of Aborigines (INMA)*³⁵, described by Ellis as 'an experiment in applied ethnomusicology designed for urban adults...intended to encourage an interest in tribal music'³⁶ (Ellis 1985:168); and the *Indulkana Inma Centre*³⁷ which involved members of the Indulkana Aboriginal community in various music projects including the performance and teaching of 'traditional' song and dance. Ellis, in her role as lecturer in ethnomusicology at the University of Adelaide, persuaded the University of the significance of the work being undertaken in the program, and in 1975 the *Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music* was officially established within the University within the then Faculty of Music. This step represented an unprecedented innovation in Australian music education, in recognising the important role universities could play in working with members of Indigenous communities to create new approaches to cultural maintenance and knowledge building, and in ascribing to Indigenous knowledge holders

³¹ In particular that of South Australia.

³² Explained as 'devising broad structural means to work towards desired ends' (1992: 334).

³³ For a full account of the foundational philosophy and early history of CASM see Ellis (1985).

³⁴ Students learned to play instruments such as the clarinet, flute, trumpet and trombone.

³⁵ *Inma* is also the Pitjantjatjara language word for song or ceremony.

³⁶ The term 'tribal music' is no longer in common use, with the term 'traditional music' or local language words such as *inma* preferred. 'Traditional' Aboriginal song and dance had largely been lost in the Adelaide metropolitan area by this time as a consequence of the colonising process.

³⁷ Indulkana, known also as Iwantja, is in the remote north-west region of South Australia, in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands.

the academic status equivalent to that of non-Indigenous academics in the university. The subsequent appointment of senior Pitjantjatjara songman Minyungu Baker to the position of Senior Lecturer at the University at that time, was really quite remarkable in not only being the first formal appointment of a traditional songman within Australian music education, but also the first full-time permanent academic appointment of an Aboriginal person within the Australian tertiary sector as a whole.

Through the evolution of a unique intercultural educational philosophy and the development of specialised tertiary level education programs for Indigenous musicians, and in successfully establishing an effective enclave for Indigenous musicians within a major mainstream tertiary education institution, CASM has responded to, as well as directly contributed to the changing status of Indigenous Australians over the last thirty years or so. CASM has been described as being ‘the first important catalyst in Aboriginal music’s renaissance’ (Castles 1992: 28), and is recognised today as making a special and important ongoing contribution to Australian music and music education. From its origins as a local community based initiative, CASM has today become a nationally recognised leader in education and a successful support agency for Australian Indigenous music and music-making. Special features of the CASM teaching program are the focus on meeting the identified learning needs and aspirations of Indigenous musicians, epistemological breadth with the inclusion of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous music and knowledges side by side within the curriculum³⁸, an emphasis on Indigenous perspectives, and intensive individualised support for creative and practical outcomes.

From its inception, participation and leadership by Indigenous people were central to the success of the CASM program. This set the stage for embracing Indigenous values and perspectives throughout the organisation - in decision making, educational innovation, and in choices of styles and genres of music making. It would also, however, lead later on to some pivotal points of conflict, in which an underlying self-determining imperative would come into direct conflict with institutional and academic conventions, including those directly associated with research. Smith has noted the many examples in which ‘indigenous and ethnic studies programmes have struggled to survive in rather hostile environments’, explaining how ‘In most institutions support for indigenous issues is not overt and the ability of academic colleagues to assess on an informed basis what might count as appropriate and worthwhile in the indigenous arena is questionable’ (Smith 2005: 129, 131).

Indigenous developments within an institution such as a university can mediate and structure new relations between institution and community, between indigenous people and non-indigenous people, between communities of the ‘researched’ and communities of ‘researchers’. At the same time indigenous centres which exist inside institutions...continue to struggle for legitimacy. (ibid: 134)

For many years CASM struggled on the fringes of the university, striving to assert the rights of Indigenous musicians to an equitable space within academia. Throughout this

³⁸ Taught by Indigenous and non-Indigenous specialists in their respective fields, with Indigenous musics and knowledges taught by Indigenous lecturers.

time, a fundamental conflict of values played out, with persistent funding uncertainties, resourcing inadequacies, and a pervasive sense of marginalisation in both the physical and philosophical senses. One obvious area of dissonance related to preferred styles and genres in Indigenous Australian music-making³⁹, with some external ambivalence about the value and validity of Indigenous music 'influenced by' Western idioms, conflicting with an internal view which saw all Indigenous music as being of inherent value.

With the formal accreditation of unique specialised courses in 1989 and the granting of departmental status to CASM within the newly created Faculty of Performing Arts in 1991, CASM became more integrated into the academic and administrative frameworks and functions of the University. Although this brought with it a degree of financial stability for the first time, it also placed increasing pressures on CASM to conform to established institutional and academic conventions, and threw into stark relief some of the ways in which CASM was substantially and necessarily different from other departments in the University in terms of philosophy, aims, priorities, curriculum, and outcomes. These differences revolved around core CASM aims, related to meeting the learning needs and expectations of Indigenous music students, supporting Indigenous music and music-making as diverse traditions, and maintaining both a responsive relationship and a proactive role within the broader Indigenous community. The broader self-determination and self-representation agenda emerging in Indigenous education and research throughout the 1980s reinforced a growing determination within CASM to respond proactively to the need to further develop Indigenous research within CASM. This was to prove increasingly important in (re)asserting and (re)defining an Indigenous identity for CASM within the University.

From Researched to Researcher

By the mid 1990s, Indigenous research issues had become an increasing concern for CASM students and staff. It was ironic that the discipline of ethnomusicology, the impetus for the founding of CASM, had now become the focus of an increasingly heated debate, with both students and staff expressing reservations about the direction of research and research training at CASM. Some of the concerns expressed by Indigenous students were that the study of the 'intimate details of Australian Indigenous music cultures was unacceptable when the lecturer was non-Indigenous', and that 'representations of Indigenous cultures and identities were of little real worth when non-Indigenous people made the representations' (Turner 1999: 144). These and other 'potent critiques of [traditional] ethnomusicology' (ibid) mirrored increasingly loud challenges to conventional institutional and intellectual traditions from the broader Indigenous scholarly community. CASM had, by this time become a 'site of resistance' within the university, a front line in the call for self-determination and self-representation, and for what was to become essentially a 'decolonisation' of the relationship between Indigenous education at CASM and the university, at the institutional level.

³⁹ A conservative view regarded 'traditional' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island music as more 'authentic' and therefore a more valuable form of Indigenous musical expression.

Internally for CASM, one of the key issues was the perceived colonial agency of ethnomusicology as a discipline. In a sense CASM could be seen as having represented 'a site for numerous ethnomusicological interventions' since its inception, in which 'actions by outsiders... included attempts to educate, study and shape individuals on the "inside"' (ibid: 142-3). Although Indigenous students at CASM had been studying ethnomusicology since the early 1990s⁴⁰, it was apparent that the various approaches to this were not leading to the kinds of liberating and empowering outcomes that had initially been hoped for. For CASM students, musicological discourse at CASM had come to be seen as at least partially informed by 'institutional and personal memories of ethnomusicology as sources of power and authority emanating from outside CASM' (ibid: 142).

In 1996, a radically different approach to the teaching of ethnomusicology at CASM was commenced, through the development of a new and specialised program of research studies⁴¹ focused solely on addressing *Indigenous student learning needs, interests and priorities*. This new program targeted students at the sub-degree entry level, in an unusual move in Australian tertiary education where original research does not usually commence until the post-graduate level. It was hoped that these new directions would inspire and empower students, open up new paradigms and knowledges in music research, support Indigenous musicological discourse, and perhaps even in time lead to the development of an Indigenous Australian musicology. The program would be fully integrated with other areas of the CASM curriculum, beginning with foundational research skills (library studies, use of information technology, communication skills etc.) and then continuing with systematic study over two years within the Associate Diploma program. Ashley Turner, an ethnomusicologist by training⁴² and a practicing musician, was subsequently appointed to join the CASM team, assisting in the development of a unique program of tertiary level research studies specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music students, and through this it was hoped, the development of Indigenous musicological discourse at CASM. An important and symbolic first step was renaming, calling the new subject simply 'Research Studies'.

The research studies program has proven to be very successful, becoming a core part of the CASM curriculum, and embraced by students as not only relevant and important to their studies but also to their personal lives. The learning outcomes of the program are: (1) *Well developed ability and confidence to participate confidently in scholarly discourse about music, society and research, especially in relation to Indigenous contexts* (2) *Well developed ability and confidence to conduct a simple research project by designing and following a research plan* (3) *Confident ability to keep a research journal as an integral part of the research effort* (4) *Sound knowledge and confident ability to select and use, appropriate research methods for data collection and analysis* (5) *Well developed ability and confidence to prepare and present verbal and written reports, formal and informal, on research in progress and research findings*. These outcomes are supported through the development of relevant generic skills such as identification and articulation of research problems; critical analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of

⁴⁰ The study of the music of other cultures had had a special place in the CASM educational philosophy since the beginning.

⁴¹ Cath Ellis, though already gravely ill by this time, provided some most valuable insights and advice in this process.

⁴² Specializing in Indonesian and Malay music.

information; effective management of information and data; application of basic research methods; communication skills and the use of academic conventions.

Consistent with the CASM philosophy of proactively supporting individual interests and learning needs, students have undertaken research on a wide variety of topics of their own choice. Students may choose any topic, which need not necessarily be related to Indigenous issues or cultures. Much class discussion revolves around ‘encountering, unpacking and exploring implicit assumptions underpinning the research questions, strategies and outcomes controlled by others’ (Turner 2007). For students ‘the shift in power from feeling and seeing oneself to be amongst the ‘researched’ to being the ‘researcher’, presents students with many challenges, including negotiating the personal, social, ethical and epistemological complexities of insider research’ (ibid).

Recent research studies projects have encompassed a wide range of topics, reflecting the varied interests and concerns of students, and have included: *Backward Masking in Heavy Metal Music and its Effects*; *Thanakwithi/Yupangathi Culture*; *Composers, Choreographers and Performers of Murray Island*; *Australian Aboriginal Women in Country Music*; *A study of youth empowerment through the performing arts: Strategies for Success*; *Bamboo Drums*; *Songwriters and Songwriting at CASM*; *Culture Loss and Recovery Among the Djabugay People of North Queensland*; *The Development of Aboriginal Recording Studios in Alice Springs, 1984-1997*; *Aboriginal Musical Life in Bourke, NSW*; *Aboriginal Country Music: A Story of Musical Migrations*; *The Bondi Cigars: the evolution of an Australian blues band*; and *Irish Music in South Australia*.

Together with the development of the new research studies program was the formulation of an overarching and proactive research policy that aimed to directly support Indigenous musicological discourse at CASM. In response to the ongoing concerns about the construction of CASM as a ‘site of surveillance’ and a ‘field of action’ for ethnomusicology (Turner 1999: 142), a research policy and a set of research guidelines were developed that went a step further than those of AIATSIS, in not only asserting the importance of Indigenous participation in Indigenous research, and in outlining the ways in which and under what conditions research should be conducted, but in also *placing Indigenous research and research priorities firmly at the centre of the research agenda*⁴³. The policy aimed to proactively create space and time for the development of an Indigenous research culture within CASM, and in doing so *for the definition and consolidation of Indigenous research priorities and methods* by Indigenous researchers. In order to achieve this, restrictions were placed on unsolicited research at CASM by external researchers⁴⁴, and guidelines were introduced to ensure that research conducted at CASM was approved and supervised by CASM. Strict protocols were also put in place to protect the intellectual and moral property rights and interests of students and staff, including in relation to the composition, performance and recording of music and dance.

Current CASM research priorities are: (1) *Research by Indigenous researchers* (2) *Research which responds to the identified priorities of Indigenous musicians and/or their communities* (3) *Research where the primary benefits flow to Indigenous musicians*

⁴³ In this context ‘Indigenous research’ refers to research directed and controlled by Indigenous people.

⁴⁴ Except where negotiated collaboration towards identified Indigenous goals was inherent and agreed.

and/or their communities (4) Research which directly benefits Indigenous musicians and/or their communities (5) Negotiated collaborative research in support of identified Indigenous priorities and needs (6) Research by CASM students and staff (7) Research which assists CASM to support Indigenous musicians and Indigenous music-making⁴⁵ (8) Research which supports the educational objectives of CASM.

Over time, sustained effort has seen the development of a positive Indigenous research culture within CASM and the consolidation of a clear set of preferred Indigenous research outcomes and methods. These include the important project work conducted by students as previously discussed, and also perhaps of greatest significance, the consolidation of *applied research, where the primary benefits flow directly to Indigenous musicians and/or their communities*, as the most important Indigenous research priority. The key outcomes of this research fall into the following categories: (1) *Curriculum development and teaching (through ongoing action research) (2) Creative work (original composition and song writing) (3) Public performances and workshops (music and dance, cultural performances) (4) Community development activities (especially those targeting Indigenous community needs) (5) Collaborative projects (including with other researchers and organisations) (6) Documentation and archiving (CD and audio/visual recording) (7) Dissemination (conferences, collaborative presentations and performances; and publication, written and audio/visual⁴⁶.*

The CASM Anangu exchange program⁴⁷ exemplifies the direction of research at CASM over the past decade or so. Conducted on a collaborative team basis by CASM staff (and students), and CASM Anangu Visiting Lecturers (and their communities), this work encompasses the development of innovative curriculum and teaching, public performances of music and dance, presentations at conferences and other artistic and cultural events, remote area school workshops, and CD and audio/visual recording and archiving projects.

The annual Anangu Field Studies Trip undertaken by CASM students and staff to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands (AP Lands) includes a unique collaboratively framed community based teaching program, incorporating amongst other activities, several nights of *inma* organised and presented by the CASM Anangu Lecturers in conjunction with members of communities from across the AP Lands. In these *inma* 'classes', CASM students and staff participate, sometimes alongside Anangu children from the communities, in learning, in a community context alongside 'traditional' custodians, some of the most important 'traditional' songs and dances of the central desert region⁴⁸, bringing the community and the university together in a uniquely constructive and mutually beneficial way. CASM staff and students also incorporate within these *inma* presentations, performances of Torres Strait Island songs and dances and CASM choir songs, by now

⁴⁵ As 'diverse and living traditions', consistent with broader CASM aims.

⁴⁶ The CASM in-house journal *Tjunguringanyi* ('joining together'), to be reissued from 2007, provides a valuable forum for dissemination of CASM research outcomes and activities.

⁴⁷ Developed from the early relationships initiated by Cath Ellis between CASM and Anangu (people) from the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal communities in the remote north-west region of South Australia, involving an ongoing and unique visiting lecturing program in which key song and knowledge holders from the area teach as an integral part of the CASM program.

⁴⁸ These are also taught to students by the Anangu lecturers using unique collaboratively designed teaching materials on campus in Adelaide.

well known to members of these communities, in a spirit of reciprocal cultural exchange consistent with the important Anangu principle of 'ngapartji-ngapartji'⁴⁹.

The many video recordings of CASM Anangu *inma* recorded by CASM for over a decade form a unique educational and cultural record. These are currently the subject of a major collaborative documentation and archiving project involving transfer of video to digital format and the creation of accompanying documentation for use in teaching at CASM and as an archival record for the CASM and Anangu communities. Together, CASM and members of the Anangu communities have also participated in numerous public events over the years, including: collaborative presentations of 'traditional' Indigenous music and dance for the *Luiteria Nel Mezzogiorno* Exhibition in Ortona, Italy in 1999⁵⁰; a joint presentation for the 2001 National Conference of the *Australian Society for Music Education (ASME)*; a performance by *Keriba Wakai-Keriba Sagul* (Our Song-Our Dance) for the 2003 *WOMADelaide* world music festival; and recording and release in 2005 of the 30 year celebration *Keriba Wakai-Keriba Sagul-CASM Choir Live* CD⁵¹.

The performance and recording of original music across a wide range of new and emerging Indigenous styles represents perhaps the most prolific and important areas of the CASM research effort. In support of its aims the CASM curriculum is underpinned by an emphasis on creative work. This has over the years resulted in the extensive production of individual and collaboratively composed, arranged and performed compositions and songs⁵², which have been systematically recorded⁵³ and documented. Most of these recordings are of original compositions performed by the composers, and some also include performances of 'traditional' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander songs and dances. Over the past decade CASM has compiled a large archival record of these student and staff performances, which will be useful for the musicians and their communities for generations to come.

The acclaimed composition *Music is Our Culture*, co-written by CASM staff members Jardine Kiwat, Grayson Rotumah, Kerry McKenzie, and Jensen Warusam⁵⁴, provides an example of the originality of work produced at CASM. This composition, performed and premiered by the Indigenous composers with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra at the 1999 Adelaide Festival of Arts, represents a notable achievement in Australian music, being the first composition for symphony orchestra conceived of and written by Indigenous composers. Students are also often involved in innovative project work. In 2004 CASM student Micah Wenitong led a collaborative music team⁵⁵ through Indigenous health organisation *Nunkuwarrin Yunti*, creating a unique health promotion project designed to increase awareness of Hepatitis C amongst Indigenous youth through the production of a nationally distributed CD *Tune Into Your Health, It's In Your Blood*.

49 Meaning 'reciprocally, cooperatively'.

50 In collaboration with Indigenous organisations Kaltjiti Arts and Crafts, Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Media Association, National Aboriginal Cultural Institute-Tandanya; and the South Australian Museum.

51 The CASM *Keriba Wakai-Keriba Sagul* choir and dance groups have evolved a unique cultural repertoire of Indigenous songs and dances, much in demand for public performance at a wide variety of cultural and community events.

52 Often involving students and staff working and performing together.

53 CASM has an 'in house' state of the art recording studio dedicated to Indigenous recording, also used to teach students recording techniques and sound engineering.

54 Together with facilitating non-Indigenous composer Chester Shultz.

55 See <http://www.nunku.org.au>

This project involved workshoping and recording nine original songs created by over ninety young Indigenous people from nine regional communities in South Australia. It provides an excellent example of the special ways in which collaborative applied work by Indigenous musicians can produce multiple benefits for Indigenous people and their communities, and of the ways in which universities can proactively support such initiatives.

Today both the University and the Australian University Quality Agency are supportive of the kinds of applied work pursued by CASM, recognising that in working within and together with the Indigenous community, CASM is providing a key equity service for the University and the community as a whole. It will be interesting to see whether the new national Research Quality Framework can also embrace this way of working, where collaborative effort towards social justice outcomes is given the highest priority.

The ongoing work of CASM in supporting Indigenous musicians and in working with and within the community⁵⁶ produces long term benefits and outcomes that often go far beyond the initial conception of an individual project. This is where applied work has its greatest value. The outcomes of research development at CASM over the past decade have been substantial and diverse. In opening up a space for Indigenous research training and in taking a proactive approach to supporting Indigenous priorities in music research, the hope is that practical investment in and consolidation of Indigenous research at CASM will prove to be not only of value for individuals, but also productive and of lasting benefit for the broader Indigenous community.

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⁵⁶ In areas such as education, health, and community and cultural development.

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POVZETEK

Raziskovalci-nedomačini so bili doslej odgovorni za raziskovanje in zbiranje obsežnih interpretativnih podatkov o glasbi aboriginov in otočanov ožine Torres. Toda: čeprav so bili domači glasbeniki prvenstveni informanti, so doslej le redko imeli neposredno besedo pri raziskovanju, tako da po navadi niso bili deležni vpliva in koristi, ki so po naravi stvari izhajale iz raziskovalno usposobljenega znanja. Raziskovalci glasbe se dandanes vse bolj zavedajo etničnih, moralnih in pravnih premislekov, ki zadevajo delo z staroselskimi ljudstvi, in zato iščejo pota, kako bi učinkovito odgovorili na klic le-teh po raziskavah, ki bi temeljile na sa-

moodločanju in samopredstavitvi. V Avstraliji je bilo aplikativno raziskovanje spoznano za ključno raziskovalno pot k praktičnim rešitvam pri obravnavi resničnih življenjskih problemov in potreb Aboriginov, Otočanov ožine Torres in njihovih skupnosti. Center za aboriginske glasbene študije (CASM) Univerze v Adelaidi prezentira raziskavo izbranega primera, ki razkriva zadnje novosti v raziskovalnem izobraževanju glasbenikov-domačinov in ki osvetljuje razvoj raziskovanja, s katerim se domačinska raziskovalna prizadevanja postavljajo v središče raziskovalnih nalog in se jim tako priznava ključni pomen aplikativnega raziskovanja pri uresničitvi raziskovalnih prioritet, ki jih opravljajo glasbeniki-domačini.