



Musicological
SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

**Western Australia Chapter
Conference 2020**

Programme Booklet



This conference is held at the University of Western Australia, which is situated on Noongar land. The MSA WA Chapter acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar people as the traditional owners and cultural custodians of their land, and that they continue to practice their values, languages, beliefs, and knowledge.

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Chapter Conference
November 21
University of Western Australia

The theme of the chapter conference is ‘Collaboration’, encompassing both historical and contemporary artistic collaborations, posthumous collaborations, or research collaborations and collaborative methodologies. In addition to formal papers, this conference includes a networking event for artistic researchers (both student and professional), a roundtable discussion on collaboration, and a keynote address from Dr. Nicholas Bannan.

MSAWA 2020 Committee Members

President – Sarah Collins

Vice President – Jonathon Paget

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Secretary – Elly Langford

Communications and Media Officer – Laura Biemmi

Artistic Research Representative: Emma Jayakumar

Undergraduate Representative: Victor Arul

Committee members – Cecilia Sun, Patricia Thorpe, Nicholas Bannan, Adam Pinto, Stuart James, Elena Wittkuhn

Become a Member of the MSA!

If you would like to become a member of the Musicological Society of Australia, visit the website (www.msa.org.au) to register. There are many benefits to becoming a member, including free copies of the journal *Musicology Australia* (published twice a year by Taylor & Francis), discounted rates to events and conferences, and opportunities to participate in the national musicological community.

Keynote Address
**Music's liberation from the educational ghetto: has it
happened?**
Dr. Nicholas Bannan

This presentation considers the historic role of Music within the tertiary sector, and the changing circumstances that define current trends. Music faces both external challenges - the undervaluing of its contribution to University culture, or its perceived function as mere specialist training - and internal ones related to its scope and global representation. The role of musicology in the education of the musician is placed in both a historical and epistemological perspective and considered as a platform for interdisciplinary collaboration. Case histories of composers and performers illustrate that excellence arises where Music integrates with other fields. To do so, it needs to remain an inseparable part of the academy. For musical culture to thrive within tertiary education, our subject needs to emerge from the ghetto.



Dr Nicholas Bannan is an accomplished international composer, conductor, music researcher and Associate Professor at the UWA Conservatorium of Music. His research focuses on the evolutionary origins of the human capacity for music; vocalisation in song and language; music in child development; and musical communication and pedagogy. His teaching specialises in vocal studies and composition.

Dr Bannan was a Canterbury Cathedral chorister and choral exhibitor at Clare College, Cambridge. He joined UWA from the University of Reading in 2006. He won several competitions as a composer, including the Fribourg Prize for Sacred Music in 1986, and has completed commissions for the Allegri and Grieg Quartets, the Guildhall String Ensemble, Cantemus Novum of Antwerp, and the Gentlemen of St Paul's Cathedral.

Awarded his doctorate in 2002 for a study of the evolutionary origins of the human singing voice, Dr Bannan's research has extended to work with Alzheimer's patients on the UK project Singing for the Brain, examining the potential of singing for retaining social communication between carers and people with dementia.

MSAWA Artistic Research Roundtable

Describing the Elephant: Creatives Roundtable

Chair: Dr. Emma Jayakumar

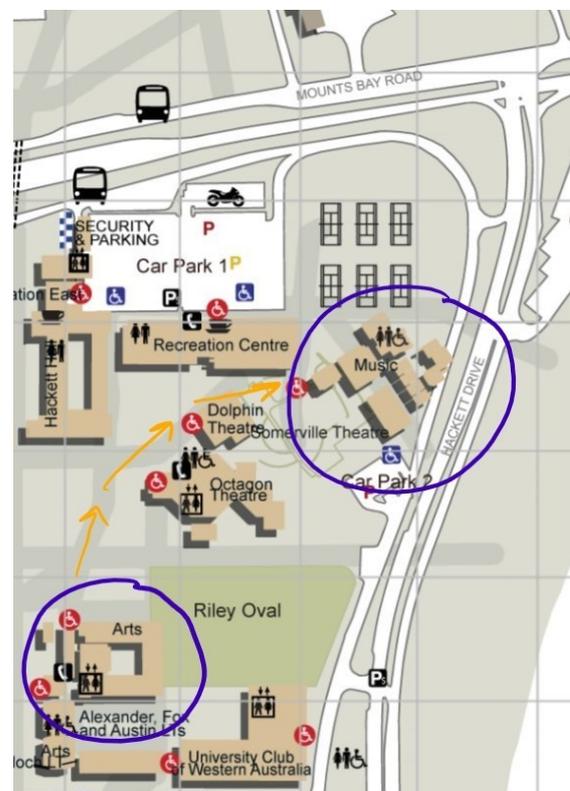
Artist and Practice-led research (PLR) pioneer, Carole Gray, once described PLR as several blind men trying to describe an elephant, a large, complex thing, with many different and intriguing parts, textures, structures, and movements;

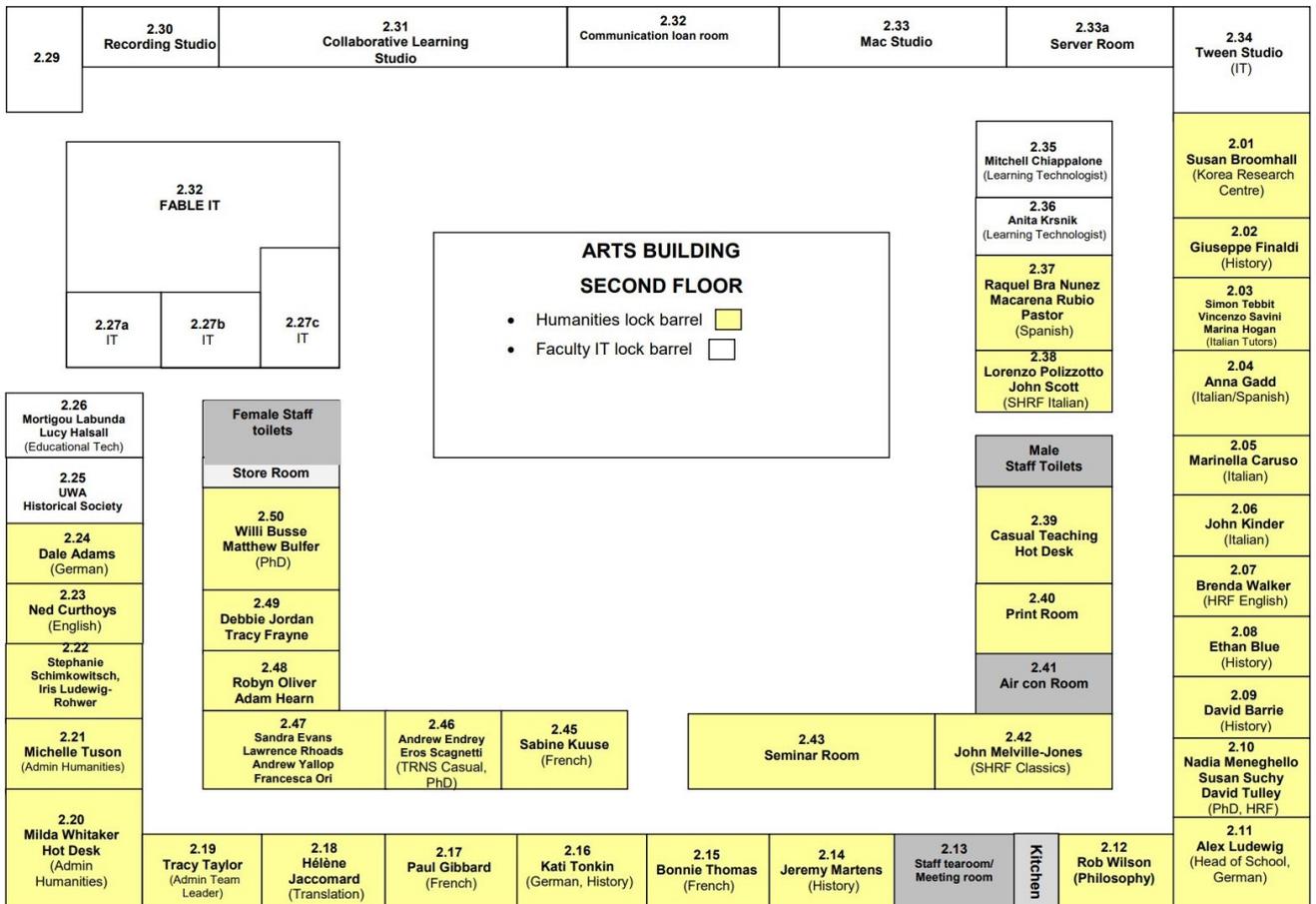
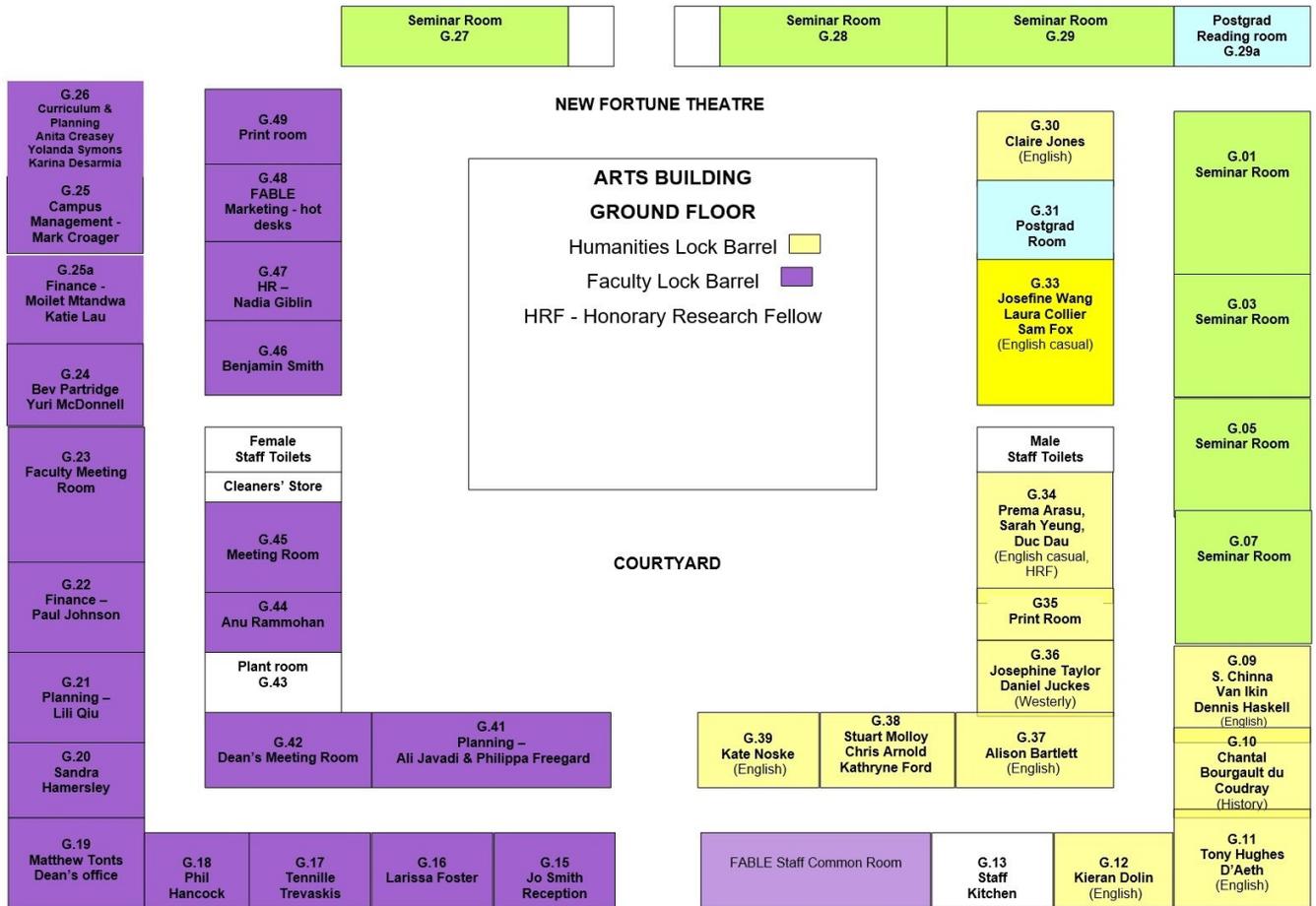
Only by making analogies and sharing each others' perceptions of the mysterious creature could the totality of the beast be appreciated. And so in the case of describing and developing practice-led research; the experiences of many researchers are required to define the parts in order to form the whole picture. Gray, C. (1996, p. 10). *Inquiry through practice: developing appropriate research strategies*

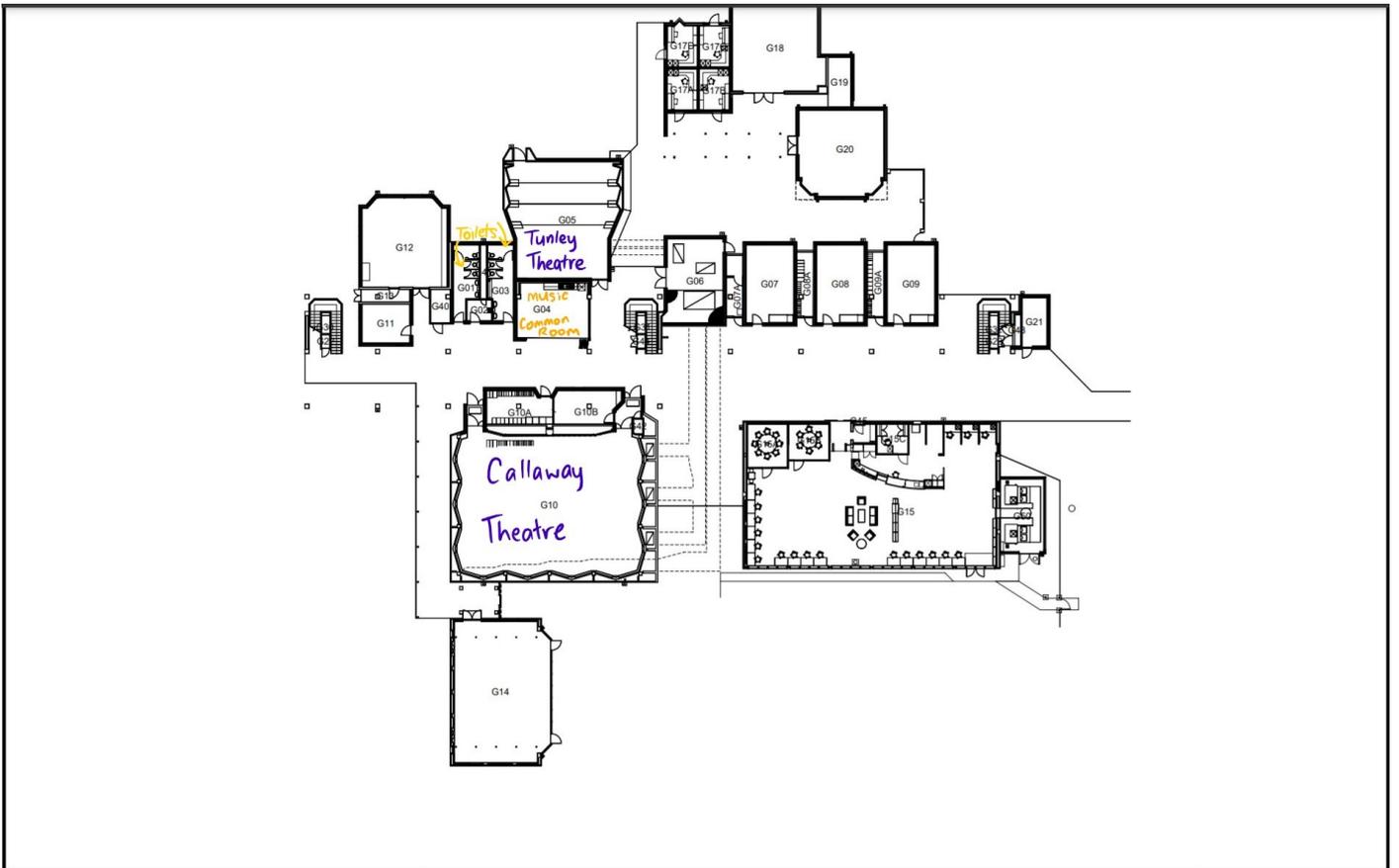
The 2020 WA MSA creatives roundtable will feature a collegial and informal discussion between six current West Australian composer/researcher/performers, with a focus on practice-led/artistic research methods developed or utilised in their compositional and/or performance practice. Chaired by WA MSA Artistic Research Representative Dr Emma Jayakumar, artists featured from across many musical genres include Dr Tracy Redhead, Dr Lindsay Vickery, Alice Humphries, Dr Stuart James, Dr Matt Styles and Kate Milligan.

Conference Overview

- All morning sessions (including Registration and Welcome) will be held in the Arts Building, which is a short walk from the Music Buildings.
- Lunch will be provided in the FABLE Staff Common Room, and afternoon tea will be provided in the Music Common Room.
- There is a lift connecting the ground floor to the second floor in the Arts Building which can be located at the end of the building through the glass sliding door.
- The afternoon and evening sessions will take place at Music at either the Tunley Theatre or the Callaway Auditorium.
- There are a number of dining options close to UWA for dinner, including those at Broadway Shopping Centre, Matilda Bay Restaurant, Little Way, Steves Nedlands, and Jojo's Kitchen.







Conference Timetable

Sat. 21st Nov.		
8:30-9:00am	Registration and Welcome (Arts, rm 2.31):	
9:00-10:30am	Session 1A (Arts, rm 2.31) – Chair: Cecilia Sun	Session 1B (Arts, rm G.28) – Chair: Helen Rusak
	Paul Tunzi & Elly Langford, ‘Collaborating Through the Craft: An Analysis of the c.1770 Simpson Square Piano’s Restoration to a Playing State’	Brigitta Scarfe, ‘Decolonising Music Research: How is Genuine Collaboration Possible in Higher Degree Research (HDR)?’
	Gemma Turvey, ‘18 th -Century Solfeggi and Third Stream Ear Training: Creating a Foundation for Teaching Improvisation to Classical Music Students’	Ibolya Mikajlo, ‘Musical Diplomacy: Lyndall Hendrickson and the International Violin Performance and Teaching Exchange between the People’s Republic of China and Australia 1977-78’
	Adam Pinto, ‘Roger Smalley’s Final Concert Paraphrase?’	Daniel Scher, ‘Leonard Bernstein’s <i>Mass</i> (1971): A Jewish Commentary’
10:30-11:00am	<i>Morning Tea (in Arts Staff Common Room)</i>	
11:00am-12:30pm	Session 2A (Arts, rm 2.31) – Chair: Sarah Collins	Session 2B (Arts, rm G. 28) – Chair: Elly Langford
	Laura Biemmi, ‘The <i>Neue Hosenrolle</i> : Reconceptualising the Trouser Roles of Richard Strauss’	Samantha Marley, ‘#SorryNotSorry: Reimagining Katherine Howard as a #MeToo Feminist Icon in Six (2017)’
	Izaak Wesson, ‘Sounding Archaic Mystery and Devotion: the Countertenor in the Biblical works of John Adams and Peter Sellars’	Joan Pietersen, ‘Music Relationships, Human Development and Lifestyle: The Growth of a Person through Active Music Making in Community Music (CM) Contexts.’
	Emma Jayakumar and Andries Weidemann, ‘Choreography of collaboration: a New Children’s Ballet Emerges’	Jazmin Ealden, ‘Collaborating Beyond Borders: an Exploration into Virtual Chamber Music-Making’
12:30-1:30pm	<i>Lunch (in Arts Staff Common Room)</i>	
1:30-3:00pm		Roundtable Discussion on Artistic Research Methods (Music, Callaway Theatre): ‘Describing the Elephant: Creatives Roundtable’, convened by Emma Jayakumar and featuring Tracy Redhead, Lindsay Vickery, Alice Humphries, Stuart James, Matt Styles, and Kate Milligan
3:00-3:30pm	<i>Afternoon tea (in Music Common Room, outside of the Callaway Theatre)</i>	
3:30-5:00pm	Session 3A (Music, Tunley Theatre) – Chair: Gemma Turvey	Session 3B (Music, Callaway Theatre) – Chair: Laura Biemmi
	Jet Kye Chong, ‘Predicting Marimba Stickings Using Neural Networks’	Shaun Fraser, ‘Unveiling the Mystique: Defining the Role of the Conductor’
	Victor Arul, ‘Metalevel Notational Considerations in the late works of Morton Feldman’	Kate Milligan, ‘“Economics of Visibility”: The Gendered Body on the Orchestral Podium’
		Sarah Costello, ‘Intertextuality in HBO’s <i>Westworld</i> : Consciousness through the Lens of Pink Floyd’s “Brain Damage”’.
5:00-6:00pm	Annual General Meeting of the MSAWA (Tunley Theatre) All are warmly welcome to join in the discussion! Though only members can vote.	
6:00-7:00pm		Announcement of Student Prize Keynote Address (Callaway Theatre): Nicholas Bannan, ‘Music’s Liberation from the Educational Ghetto: Has it Happened?’ Chair: Cecilia Sun

Abstracts

Paul Tunzi and Elly Langford: ‘Collaborating Through the Craft: An Analysis of the c.1770 Simpson Square Piano’s Restoration to a Playing State’

An example of a c.1770 Simpson square piano, held in the Stewart Symonds Collection at Edith Cowan University (No. 114) has been the site of an undocumented craft intervention, intended to restore the instrument to a functional state. Physical interventions such as restoration or conservation have the potential to alter the instrument’s appearance, sound, touch, and material composition. This poses significant challenges to organological researchers attempting to uncover the original physical and sonic qualities of individual instruments. Consequently, “sympathetic” restorations such as that of the Simpson piano are particularly noteworthy in their attempts to preserve or replicate original aspects of an instrument’s design. The contemporary restoration of a historical keyboard to a functional state, whilst maintaining as much of its original aesthetic and technical biography as possible, represents a commitment to preserving the instrument maker’s design and intention for the instrument. In this paper, we examine the restoration of the Simpson piano as an act of collaboration carried out by the restorer in an attempt to reconcile the instrument with its original purpose and musical function. Analysing the methods and materials used by the restorer, and the pre-existing characteristics of the instrument, we investigate possible motives behind the restoration. We also address the theory that this piano was historically intended for a child or performer of small physical size, and discuss the implications that this may have for the evaluation of the restorative work and future uses of the instrument.

Brigitta Scarfe: ‘Decolonising Music Research: How is Genuine Collaboration Possible in Higher Degree Research (HDR)?’

For students conducting human research at a masters or doctoral level, the initial design phase of the research project generally occurs before the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the host university grants approval for the student to engage with potential participants and stakeholders. While there are clear and justified reasons for this aspect of the HREC process, especially for student research, it presents limitations for music HDR students trying to develop research that serves decolonial aims. Numerous anti-colonial scholars in Australia and beyond emphasise the need to engage with potential community stakeholders in a design capacity from the outset of a research project, especially those involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Co-designing the research project with community stakeholders ensures that it aligns with and serves community priorities. This kind of genuine collaboration is a key principle of decolonising research. Co-design also endows senses of community ownership of the project, which is essential for effective and impactful social research, but at odds with western institutional notions of intellectual property. By the same token, the HDR principle of solo authorship denies genuine self-representation of participants’ voices and stories in subsequent theses. With co-design and co-authorship off the table, music HDR students must either forfeit genuine collaboration or navigate the grey areas that lie between personal, decolonial and institutional ethical conduct. This paper portrays one doctoral student’s experience navigating these grey areas in the context of her prior and current research with Aboriginal musicians in the West Kimberley region.

Gemma Turvey: '18th-Century Solfeggi and Third Stream Ear Training: Creating a Foundation for Teaching Improvisation to Classical Music Students'

The art of improvisation requires the musician to draw on their knowledge-base of melody, harmony and other musical elements to create spontaneously. Improvisation is today commonly associated with jazz, however for centuries it was a dominant feature of different aspects of Western Art Music. In 17th- and 18th-century Italy, all students of music learnt how to improvise as part of learning theory and composition. Importantly, they also learnt to sing melodies known as solfeggi. Italian solfeggi from this period are melodic compositions for voice with bass accompaniment. They played an influential role in establishing the necessary melodic knowledge-base required for composition and improvisation exercises. A similar method, known as Third Stream ear training, is currently used by some jazz and contemporary music schools to support teaching improvisation. Like solfeggi, this method involves learning to sing melodies, but from a variety of contemporary music genres. Improvisation has been largely absent from classical music pedagogy for over a century. There is growing interest to reintroduce it using adapted 18th-century and jazz techniques, however there is little research on developing a suitable singing practice to support students. This study presents a comparative analysis of 18th-century solfeggi and Third Stream ear training repertoire and techniques, to identify how to develop a singing practice that can support classical music students approach improvisation tasks.

Ibolya Mikajlo: 'Musical Diplomacy: Lyndall Hendrickson and the International Violin Performance and Teaching Exchange between the People's Republic of China and Australia 1977-78'

Although Isaac Stern's high-profile visit to China in the late 1970s was lauded as ground-breaking, it was not the first made by a prominent Western musician or violin virtuoso. In 1977, a special delegation of twenty Australians organised by the Australia China Society participated in the inaugural Arts and Crafts Cultural Exchange Tour in the People's Republic of China. Renowned Australian violinist and pedagogue, Lyndall Hendrickson (1917-2017), was included in the Australian entourage and was invited to share her experience and expert knowledge with staff at the Central Conservatory of Music, Xinghai Conservatory of Music and Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Hendrickson was first Western violinist to give lectures in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou after the end of Cultural Revolution.¹ She discussed pedagogical ideas that had arisen from her extensive research in organisational psychology, educational psychology, mathematics, and bionics in music education. During the tour, Hendrickson met and developed friendships with prominent Chinese musicians who were keen to hear her philosophies of teaching. These positive exchanges led to a subsequent invitation from the Chinese Government for Hendrickson to make a return visit to the People's Republic of China in 1978 to present an extensive lecture tour focused on her methods of teaching.

Adam Pinto: ‘Roger Smalley’s Final Concert Paraphrase?’

Roger Smalley’s Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1984-85) was the first Australian work to receive the award of ‘recommended work’ at the UNESCO Rostrum of Composers, and takes a central place in Christopher Mark’s monograph on the Australian pianist-composer. However, less is known of Smalley’s second piano concerto, which was composed for John Chen, the winner of the 2004 Sydney International Piano Competition. As one of Smalley’s last major works, and still to be recorded, it deserves more attention. The work formed an unexpected part of my research into Smalley’s showpiece *Morceau de Concours* (2007) which, as the title suggests, was a competition piece commissioned for the 2008 Sydney International Piano Competition.

The recycling of compositional resources was a recurring feature in Smalley’s works, and *Morceau de Concours* is yet another example, being a curiously unacknowledged transcription of material from his second piano concerto. This presentation will examine: the technical details of this transcription to clearly illustrate the material borrowed from the second piano concerto; details of the specific compositional processes used in the composition of the second piano concerto, including analysis of the material that Smalley borrowed to compose the original work, and; provide the context of *Morceau de Concours* amongst the other piano transcriptions and concert paraphrases of Roger Smalley, with some suggestions as to why Smalley never explicitly acknowledged the work as a concert paraphrase.

Daniel Scher: ‘Leonard Bernstein’s *Mass* (1971): A Jewish Commentary’

Leonard Bernstein wrote his controversial *Mass* in 1971 for the opening of the Kennedy Centre in Washington, D.C. *Mass* was written at a time when all the hope from the early Sixties for an end to injustice and inequality had faded. By 1968, influential leaders such as Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated and there was an increase in violent protests. *Mass* is no ordinary mass. It is a theatrical piece which combines many different musical styles including plainchant, twelve-tone, and rock and roll. It contains the traditional Latin text of the mass as well as new additional texts in English by Steven Schwartz which comment on the traditional mass. The theological nature of *Mass* has intrigued many scholars. W. Anthony Sheppard explored how *Mass* used the ritual model of the mass in order to reflect on the social developments of the 1960s. While *Mass* may not sound very Jewish, Jack Gottlieb argued that Bernstein imposed a distinctive Jewish world view onto the Catholic mass.

I argue that *Mass* acts as a Jewish-style commentary on various theological themes which are present in the traditional mass in order to reflect on the turbulence of the late Sixties. A close reading of the Credo and Agnus Dei shows how the music, text, and dramatic devices all form part of the Jewish-style commentary. In 2020, we are once again living through turbulent times and so therefore many of the ideas present in *Mass* are once again relevant to us.

Laura Biemmi: ‘Die neue Hosenrolle: Reconceptualising the Trouser Roles of Richard Strauss’

The operatic ‘trouser role’, where a female singer performs as a male character *en travesti*, is a complex and intriguing phenomenon in the theatrical arts. As an operatic device that declined in significance towards the end of the nineteenth century, the trouser role is often staged amongst conflicting signals of body, voice, and gender, and positioned within a complex dynamic of suspended disbelief and a distinct lack of verisimilitude. Despite the trouser role’s supposed decline, the trouser roles in the operas of Richard Strauss and librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal—*Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1916)—are central to the operatic worlds they inhabit.

This paper investigates the cultural function of the Straussian trouser roles as manifestations of twentieth century ideas of gender and body. In doing so, this thesis considers the gender politics of Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany, examining the Straussian trouser role (or the *neue Hosenrolle*) through the lens of gender mutability discourse prevalent at the time. Furthermore, this paper argues that the operatic voice is crucial to the cultural function of the Straussian trouser role, yet acknowledges that opera as an artform—often associated with ideas of artifice, excess, and grandeur—has the potential to gloss over the more disruptive elements of the trouser role. Ultimately, this thesis argues that the locus of the *neue Hosenrolle*’s subversion lies in its capacity to blur and distort fixed categories of gender, sexuality, body, and voice.

Samantha Marley: ‘#SorryNotSorry: Reimagining Katherine Howard as a #MeToo Feminist Icon in *Six* (2017)’

Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss’s musical *Six* (2017) provides a contemporary reimagining of the six wives of King Henry VIII (1491-1547) as pop divas in diamond-studded boots and sparkling eyeshadow. Fitting into what Elissa Harbert theorises as the “history musical” subgenre, this musical explores contemporary society through the historical narrative of these Tudor queens. *Six*’s use of a pop-concert setting transports these abused Tudor wives into the current feminist #MeToo era. Focusing on the construction of Katherine Howard, Henry’s fifth queen, this paper examines how *Six* has made the history of sixteenth-century English queens pertinent to the #MeToo generation.

Popular culture has constructed Howard predominantly as a “whore,” “sexual predator,” or “vulnerable and abused child.” *Six* notably goes against these representations by showing Howard as an empowered victim of sexual assault. Using an adaptation of Philip Auslander’s analytical model for pop music performance, I evaluate Howard’s historical self, alongside her reputation in other forms of popular culture, to provide a contextual understanding of her performance persona constructed in *Six*. In addition, I analyse her character as presented in her Britney Spears’s inspired pop solo, “All You Wanna Do.” Through this analysis, I show how the amalgamation of pop music and historical narrative in *Six* has encouraged a re-evaluation of not only the queen’s legacies, but also the treatment of women within the current #MeToo era.

Izaak Wesson: ‘Sounding Archaic Mystery and Devotion: the Countertenor in the Biblical works of John Adams and Peter Sellars’

In this paper I explore the role of the countertenor in what Peter Sellars has described as the “effeminate spirituality” of his and John Adams’s *El Niño* (2000) and *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* (2012). Presented as semi-staged oratorios, these reimaginings of the Nativity and Passion emphasise a carnal, mystical experience of divine love in their exploration of gendered experience in these Biblical narratives. These works are notable for their use of a trio of countertenors that act not only as Evangelistic narrators, but also as embodiments of divinity and gendered expression. My research examines how these countertenor voices, and their bodies, are deployed to achieve these representations as part of this “effeminate spirituality.”

My research engages with the cultural histories of carnal mysticism and the high male voice to illustrate the ways in which Adams and Sellars use these elements to construct their “effeminate spirituality.” I argue that Adams and Sellars utilise connotations of androgyny, eroticism and otherworldliness associated with the high male voice—employing the countertenor voice/body to construct a gendered spirituality that is grounded in bodily experience. In analysing the scoring and staging of key episodes, I will illuminate the vocabulary of sensuous musical and gestural signifiers assigned to the countertenors in their expressions of divinity and gendered experience. In doing so I reveal how the countertenors are integral to the construction of the carnal mysticism that underpins Adams and Sellars’s “effeminate spirituality,” and situate their use of the countertenor in relation to contemporary works that feature countertenor voices.

Joan Pietersen: ‘Music Relationships, Human Development and Lifestyle: The Growth of a Person through Active Music Making in the Community Music (CM) Contexts’

Music relationships, human development and lifestyle: The growth of a person through active music making in Community Music (CM) contexts. Music relationships, human development and lifestyle are linked to adult learning and together form necessary elements in framing active music making and wellbeing as music education in community life. When adults engage in music making, their participation is a reflection of: their musical experience; the impact of the teaching and learning of music educators and community musicians; and the culture of the music making groups they join. By drawing on aspects of Knowles’ andragogy and Habermas’ domains of learning, the activity of adult music ensembles is elevated to a contextual framework of adult learning from within the Community Music (CM) perspective. Adult music ensembles operate as CM groups in a wide variety of styles and genres. This paper pursues the nature of adult music ensembles: by highlighting the aspects and principles of CM; in relation to adult learning; as music education in community life; and argue for the continuation of active music making. The scope of CM facilitated using an ethnographic analysis as I opted to consider the musical experiences of participants as the central feature of CM, to investigate the musical engagement of members in adult music ensemble groups.

This paper concludes that adult music ensemble groups enable music education to continue into music making after schooling; that community musicians and music educators inspire participants to develop and share their musical experience through active music making and in so doing contribute to the quality of life of older adults in the achievements of adult music ensemble groups in the community.

Emma Jayakumar and Andries Weidemann: ‘Choreography of Collaboration: A New Children’s Ballet Emerges’

Historically speaking, specially devised works for child and family audiences in the so-called high art genres of chamber music, opera and ballet have been scarce in the Australian cultural landscape. With modern-day arts organisations competing for an ever-dwindling funding pool, many have relied on adaptations or abridged versions of existing adult works to fulfil their young audience obligations, with mixed results. However, in the past five years some major Australian high arts organisations have begun to invest in emotionally engaging and child-centric in-house experiences for child and family audiences, away from school incursion models. These works include many literary or folklore adaptations such as Victorian Opera’s *The Magic Pudding*, ACO’s *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* and Australian Ballet’s *Wilaygu Ngayinybula*. Beginning in 2019 with a new ballet adaptation of Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*, the West Australian Ballet also announced a yearly children’s ballet commission in commitment to an oft-neglected audience base. In 2020, this commission was to be an adaptation of the beloved Australian children’s stories *The Adventures of Snugglepoot and Cuddlepie*, by May Gibbs. This paper explores the collaborative process between choreographer and composer from the ballet’s inception to its premiere at the 2020 Awesome Festival for Bright Young Things. From the initial storyboarding and planning process, utilising many innovative practice-led research methods, through to the creative development period in studio with dancers, both composer and choreographer will discuss their separate perspectives and the overall successes and challenges of their collaboration.

Jazmin Ealden: ‘Collaborating Beyond Borders: an Exploration into Virtual Chamber Music-Making’

The emergence and rapid development of CoVid-19 at the beginning of 2020 stopped the global population in its tracks. Venues were closed, performances were cancelled, and artists around the world had their creative projects postponed indefinitely. One particular post-graduate research project was the recording of three new pieces for saxophone and mixed chamber ensemble. Originally, the research was to culminate in a live recording; however, due to the fragile and unpredictable situation surrounding the developing pandemic, social distancing regulations prohibited the gathering of people to rehearse and perform. This paper presents an exploration into the revised creative process of these musical works, and details how new creative pathways and technology-based alternatives were utilised to see the project through to completion.

The research process involved nearly twenty musicians spanning three continents who recorded parts individually for each work. The recordings were then combined using digital audio editing software, in addition to creating a virtual performance video alongside each track. Results demonstrated clear obstacles throughout the process of virtual music-making, including challenges with intonation, tempo, and phrasing. Conversely, the project revealed a number of opportunities not commonly available in traditional ensemble environments, including the development of international professional networks, flexibility in the performance process, and self-directed versatility in recording practices. Adapting the project because of unpredictable circumstances also revealed the wide array of employable skills, such as versatility, communication and improvisation, that were utilised and refined throughout the creative process.

The interruptions to this research project caused by CoVid-19 have inadvertently enabled the exploration of new and innovative collaborative practice, highlighting the need for further research into how musicians can better utilise online platforms to collaborate.

Jet Kye Chong: ‘Predicting Marimba Stickings Using Neural Networks’

Instrumental music education involves communicating a complex blend of theoretical and physical knowledge. In marimba music, this is evident in ‘stickings’---the choice of mallet used to strike each note, which influence the musician's physical facility and expressive quality. Choosing ‘good’ stickings and evaluating one’s stickings can be slow and difficult tasks, often relying on trial-and-error vaguely guided by past experience. This ‘sticking problem’ can impede technical and musical development, and hinder the learning of music. In this study, a machine learning approach is employed to address the sticking problem by predicting and annotating stickings in 4-mallet marimba music as suggestions for marimbists.

A 32,000-sample dataset is constructed from exercises in Leigh Howard Stevens’ *Method of Movement for Marimba* by digitally transcribing the exercises and sticking annotations. Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) neural networks with a range of hyperparameters are constructed and fit to this dataset. K-Fold cross validation and qualitative testing are conducted on the models, yielding a maximum quantitative accuracy 64.58% from a softmax-activation bidirectional LSTM model, and consistent qualitative scores across models. The discrepancies between quantitative and qualitative metrics suggest a need for expanded datasets, but promising results invite further development and study in this field.

Shaun Fraser: ‘Unveiling the Mystique: Defining the Role of the Conductor’

A conductor standing upon the podium in front of an orchestra is one of the most identifiable images in classical music—but what precisely is it that they are doing? Ask any professional conductor what their essential role and responsibilities are to a performance and it will result in a myriad conflicting response. Similarly, while the instructional texts and tertiary training available to aspiring conductors explore rudimentary skills and techniques in conducting, the focus and instruction vary considerably. This lack of clarity regarding the role is further amplified when viewed through the lens of the playing ensemble, as a well-trained conductor may find themselves completely disregarded by the musicians if their method of direction does not meet their expectations. The pathway to the podium is often viewed to be more a matter of birth right as opposed to demanding work. The practical skills passed on to student conductors by pedagogues do not offer a defined pathway, nor do they guarantee that the acquired knowledge has any practical application in the professional field. All three principal stakeholders (pedagogues, conductors and musicians) have their own understanding in defining the role of a conductor, and yet the differing opinions only add to the mystique of the role itself. This lack of an agreed understanding relating to the functions of a conductor has resulted in little empirical investigation having been undertaken. This research will set out to demystify the role of the conductor. In doing so, will aim to offer clarity as to what the role entails and submit a baseline understanding that can be utilised as a model for further empirical research.

Victor Arul: ‘Metalevel Notational Considerations in the late works of Morton Feldman’

Following his period of utilising ‘grid’ notation, Morton Feldman returned to a seemingly conventional fashion of staff notation in his late period of composition (c.1980s). Despite this, Feldman’s later pieces present many issues for performance interpretation, such as the lack of notational clarity found in his scores. My argument is that Feldman’s deviation from a traditionally desirable standard of engraving practice in this period belongs to an experimental trend and philosophy of the late avant-garde; a trend involving a technique which I have termed as ‘metalevel notational consideration’. Through analysis of select compositions by Morton Feldman from the 1980s, and establishment of a framework of commonality in aesthetic pursuits of notation of select works from the late 20th century avant-garde, I have identified the reasonings and effects of Feldman’s notational oddities in his later compositional period. By establishing what is meant by the term ‘metalevel notational consideration’, illustrating the use of metalevel notational considerations in Feldman’s *Bass Clarinet and Percussion*, and rationalising the effects of Feldman’s notation on a technical and aesthetic basis, I have illustrated a line of relations and justification from Feldman’s New York School ideals to his notational practices. My research illustrates that Feldman employs his notational oddities to extend his aesthetic tenets of looseness and non-linearity. The significance of this research is that it establishes how notation might participate as not only a means of conveying musical information, but also as an aesthetic entity within a musical piece’s structural goals.

Kate Milligan: “Economics of Visibility”: The Gendered Body on the Orchestral Podium’

Orchestral conducting has historically been—and remains—an overwhelmingly male-dominated profession. However, in recent years the industry has welcomed a new wave of young, elite woman conductors, celebrated as empowered feminist icons and seen as heralding the end of gender discrimination on the podium. The public sees their womanhood as a symbol of triumph, despite the conductors’ best efforts to dissociate gender from their professional activity. This new era has been ushered in by the significant transformation of feminist rhetoric around the world; the empowered woman is now seen as popular, desirable, and—crucially—as a marketable icon. Women enjoy a new visibility in the public sphere, where previously there has been a struggle for representation. Scholars in the field of media theory have critiqued this phenomenon, noting that whilst visibility is important it should not be seen as an endpoint in and of itself lest it inhibits deeper structural and institutional changes for gender equality.

This paper will discuss the degree to which the new diversity rhetoric shrouding the practice of orchestral conductors furthers or complicates the progression of gender equality in this profession. Specifically, this paper will examine how the feminine body—as the site for both musical performance and gender expression—is represented in public discourse. The research will consist of a critical analysis of discourse in the media, as well as a series of semi-structured interviews with practicing conductors. Banet-Weiser’s ‘Economics of Visibility’—which posits the visible feminine body as product with market value—provides a crucial framework for assessing gender in the current moment.

Sarah Costello: ‘Intertextuality in HBO’s *Westworld*: Consciousness through the Lens of Pink Floyd’s “Brain Damage”

HBO’s television series *Westworld* (2016-) is a Science Fiction Drama series which begins in a futuristic amusement park populated by androids known as “hosts”, who are almost indistinguishable from humans. Wealthy guests pay to visit the park, interacting with the hosts who run on scripted action and dialogue loops. The creators of the park change the host’s code causing them to eventually attain a form of artificial consciousness and they attempt to wrest control of the park and pursue freedom. The series meditates on the nature of consciousness through an exploration of the relationship between host and human. The soundtrack of the series plays an important role in conveying narrative information to its audience, specifically questioning the nature of consciousness and what it means to be human. *Westworld*’s original music is composed by Ramin Djawadi, while other music is featured as pre-existing soundtrack or musical covers which are re-arranged by Djawadi.

This paper will examine the use of the song “Brain Damage” by Pink Floyd within season three episode eight of *Westworld*. The work appears as an orchestral cover arranged by Djawadi as well as the original recording appearing in the end credit sequence. I examine the two versions of the work and how they operate within the series as an example of intertextual reference generating narrative information for the attentive viewer. “Brain Damage” and its lyrical discussion of sanity relates closely to the theme of consciousness within the series, expressing a questioning of the nature of the conscious mind.