

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

Report by Jabra Latham, 2006 Churchill Fellow

An investigation of classical saxophone teaching and performance.

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Signed *Jabra Latham*

Dated *August 21st, 2007*

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INTRODUCTION

The receipt of a Churchill Fellowship enabled me to travel to the United States, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and France to investigate classical saxophone teaching and performance. Meeting with several of the world’s leading classical saxophonists, I participated in conferences and masterclasses, spoke with students and professionals, performed and saw many excellent musicians play.

My sincere and hearty thanks go firstly to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust for both the provision of this opportunity and the institution of a program with such fine principles. Thanks particularly to Patricia Corby for excellent assistance with the preparation of my application, and to Dr Heather Monkhouse, Russell Gilmour and Paul Quinn for great references.

And to my family for all their support and enthusiasm, and for somewhere to land when I got home.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Project Description

The Fellowship was undertaken, with intervals, between the 27th of March and the 18th of June, 2007, covering a total of 6.5 weeks. The aim was to visit several of the world's leading classical saxophone performers, teachers and schools in order to investigate current trends, consider pedagogies and improve my own practice. I participated in conferences and master classes, consulted with performers and teachers, performed, met with colleagues and students, observed lessons, performances and rehearsals and sourced new repertoire, recordings and equipment.

Highlights

- Attending the North American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) Region VII conference in Greensboro, North Carolina, USA. Participants included Jean-Michel Goury and the New Century Saxophone Quartet.
- Attending the North American Saxophone Alliance Region III conference in Fargo, North Dakota, USA.
- Performing Australian works by Russell Gilmour at the NASA Regions III & VII conferences.
- Meeting with Professor Eugene Rousseau at the University of Minnesota, Minnesota, USA.
- Meeting with Professor Claude Delangle and attending rehearsals, lessons, exams and competitions at the Paris Conservatoire (Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris).
- Meeting with Christine Rall of the Rascher Saxophone Quartet in Friburg, Germany.
- Meeting with Wildy Zumwalt, University of Fredonia, USA, in Basel, Switzerland.
- Meeting with Marcus Weiss and attending rehearsals, classes and performances in Basel, Switzerland.
- Meeting with Simon Haram in London, England.
- Meeting with Kyle Horch of the Royal College of Music and observing lessons and rehearsals, London, England.
- Attending master classes with Johan Van Der Linden in Enschede, The Netherlands.

Summary of Lessons & Conclusions

- Gained valuable perspective on the nature of the classical saxophone career.
- Observed that classical saxophone teachers, generally, don't articulate a specific pedagogy informed by theory.
- Observed that standards of performance, according to level, are relatively consistent across the world.
- Became familiar with distinct schools of practice.

- Gathered a series of specific instrumental techniques and exercises that will assist with the development of students.
- Was exposed to a number of new works suitable for performance.

Dissemination & Implementation

The Australian community will be informed directly through my teaching practice as it applies to individual lessons, master classes, workshops and ensemble direction. These activities take place at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music, local secondary schools, such as The Friends School, and in private tuition. Students will benefit directly from my enhanced practice and broader knowledge of classical saxophone repertoire, techniques, performers and trends.

As an artist my learnings are best and most appropriately disseminated through my performance. The expanded knowledge of repertoire coupled with a clearer sense of direction will allow me create performance programs that are increasingly more satisfying for both the performer and audience, and engaged in increasingly more viable and effective projects.

Further, as has already begun, I will share my thoughts and findings with saxophonist colleagues as I relate to them in person and on the internet. In the coming months I hope to be able to present my experiences and learnings in the form of an article to the *Australian Clarinet & Saxophone Journal*. In September of 2007 I will present a recital that includes a number of new works gathered during my travels.

Finally, the clearer picture of what it is to be an Australian classical saxophonist that I formed lead to directly to me requesting a new work for alto saxophone and string orchestra from Don Kay. This Australian work, which I will promote amongst my new international colleagues, will be premiered with the Hobart Chamber Orchestra in 2009.

PROGRAMME

March 29th – April 1st, Greensboro, NC, USA:

- North American Saxophone Alliance Region VII conference. Participants included Jean-Michel Goury , Steven Stusek, New Century Saxophone Quartet, Taimur Sullivan & Tom Lowry.

April 5th – 11th, Minneapolis, MN, USA:

- Meeting with Professor Eugene Rousseau at the University of Minnesota. Observation of lessons and rehearsals, and discussions with students;
- Stayed with Monte Mumford at Northwestern University, Minneapolis for discussions, rehearsal observation and networking.

April 13th – 15th, Fargo, ND, USA:

- North American Saxophone Alliance Region III conference. Participants included Eugene Rousseau, Matt Patnode, Russell Peterson and the Hard Bop Saxophone Quartet;

April 30th – May 4th, London, UK:

- Kyle Horch at the Royal College of Music, discussions and lesson and rehearsal observations;
- Freelance saxophonist Simon Haram, meeting and consultation, with particular emphasis on repertoire;
- Howgarths Music Store, instrument testing and repertoire sourcing;
- Contact with composer Graham Fitkin (London) and saxophonist Rob Buckland (Manchester).

May 7th – 12th, Enschede & Amsterdam, The Netherlands:

- Master classes at Artez Conservatorium, Enschede, with Johan Van Der Linden, Phillipe Geiss, and Guy Goethals;
- Aurelia Saxophone Quartet (Johan Van der Linden, Niels Bijl, Arno Bornkamp and Willem Van Merwijk) at the Concertgebouw.

May 22nd – 24th, 29th, 30th, Basel, Switzerland:

- Marcus Weiss meeting, lessons, rehearsals, observations and performances at the Hochschule and Musik Akademie;
- Marcus Weiss & Ensemble Recherche rehearsals and performance at Gard Du Nord;
- Meeting with Christine Rall of the Rascher Saxophone Quartet (Freiburg, Germany);
- Meeting with Wildy Zumwalt, visiting from the University of Freedonia, USA.

May 31st, Berlin, Germany:

- Meeting with Dan Freeman (Tasmanian ex-patriot working as a saxophonist in Berlin);

May 11th – 16th, Paris, France:

- Paris Conservatoire (Conservatoire National Superior et de Danse de Paris), a week of meetings, rehearsals, lesson, competition and examination observations with Professor Claude Delangle;
- Visited the Selmer Paris Saxophone factory and museum;
- Visited the Rue De Rome instrument and repertoire stores, repertoire sourcing.

Outside of my formal fellowship dates I was able to attend performances by Cecilia Bartoli & Orchestra La Scinta, Lorin Mazel & the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Hilary Hahn, Anne-Sophie Mutter & the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, The Netherlands Opera and Wynton Marsalis & The Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra.

Further to this I had planned to meet with composer Simon Barber and also attend a performance by Simon Haram and the English Chamber Orchestra. These activities didn't materialise.

MAIN BODY

Arriving in the Greensboro, North Carolina on the 28th of March, the first item on my itinerary was the North American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) Region VII conference. NASA offers ten regional conferences throughout the USA each every two years. On the alternate years a national conference is held. The conferences bring together teachers, students and professionals operating in the classical saxophone field. Participants perform, offer and attend master classes and workshops, and invest in some healthy networking.

The 2007 Region VII conference was presented by the University of North Carolina Greensboro School of Music and administered by Professors Steven Stusek, Susan Fancher and Chad Eby.

This was the first time I had attend a conference devoted specifically to classical saxophone. The experience was rewarding in a number of ways. Most significantly I was able to meet with many like-minded people and talk things saxophone. These colleagues who had worked through the same repertoire as myself, encountered the same difficulties in teaching, and met with similar career difficulties were many and present. The opportunity to hear a large number of live quality saxophone works as an audience member was a first for and provided new insight into how audiences must engage with what I do in Australia. The connection to this network and the sense of community I felt has been of instant and ongoing benefit and continues to develop.

Following Greensboro my next appointment was with former-Tasmanian, colleague, friend, trombonist, teacher and conductor Monte Mumford. Mumford is currently in residence at Northwestern University, Minneapolis. I took this opportunity, provided by a personal stay in the home of Monte and his wife Kathy, to talk extensively about the nature of music teaching. Monte seems a rare quantity amongst instrumental music educators. He has a thorough working knowledge of educational theory, a wealth of experience, and is committed to the excellence of teaching skills as he is to the excellence of performance. The clear exception amongst the musicians I visited, Monte is able to articulate a well-informed theory-based model of teaching practice. I found this time challenging and inspiring.

On the 10th and 11th of April, whilst in Minneapolis, I also visited distinguished concert saxophonist and teacher Professor Eugene Rousseau at the University of Minnesota (UNM). It was an honour to meet Rousseau and witness the practice of such a thoroughly developed and experienced musician and pedagogue. During my two days at UNM I spoke with Rousseau, sourced some teaching resources, sat in on classes and rehearsals and talked with a number of students.

My next stop in the USA was the NASA Region III conference in Fargo North Dakota. This conference was presented by Professor Matt Patnode and the North Dakota State University School of Music. Similar to the North Carolina conference, here I was able to participate in master classes and performances. Despite this conference being noticeably smaller than Region VII the quality was high.

For me, the most significant moment during NASA Region III occurred during a performance by Russell Peterson. Prior to Peterson's performance I was feeling rather disenchanted with saxophone repertoire in general. Many new works had been performed at NASA Region III, yet I had not having been significantly excited or moved by anything. Much less had I found a piece that I felt I could, with any sense of commitment, perform in Australia. It was at that moment that I heard Peterson play his *Trio for Saxophone, Violin and Piano*. This piece is impressive both for its technical demands and its musical ideas. Peterson doesn't shy away from tunes and melodrama and I think this is gutsy, honourable and successful. Having considered the issue some more I'm impressed with Peterson. Living and working in a relatively isolated area he maintains an active presence in the saxophone world. His work may not be recorded with the biggest orchestral names, but he's using quality local resources to get things happening. This is a good model for Tasmanian musicians.

Also of note at the Region III conference was the masterclass offered by Professor Eugene Rousseau. I was particularly impressed by Rousseau's ability to make the hard comments sound positive. He spoke to each

participant/student with respect, care and in an uplifting way. The result was effectiveness, the performances changed and the students improved noticeably. Rousseau made a point of teaching the difference between what's new and what's hard. I was reminded that for all our instruction, there needs to be an outcome, a change, a tangible difference in the work of the student. Rousseau also reminded me of the respect that experience deserves, and the correctness of not speaking to students in a dominating or negative way.

My next appointments were in London between the 30th of April and the 5th of May. During this time I met with Kyle Horch at the Royal College of Music, and Simon Haram, freelance saxophonist and former teacher at the Guildhall School of Music. Meeting with Horch I sat in on lessons and rehearsals and spent time 'talking shop'. I took the opportunity to question Horch about classical saxophone career models in the UK and found his realistic approach refreshing and relevant. We spoke of the need for young saxophonist to be aware of the reality that the 'concert saxophonist' dream, although admirable, rarely translates into reality. Horch put me in touch with some excellent repertoire with which I was unfamiliar.

I was particularly keen to meet with Simon Haram, as I like his repertoire choices and style of playing. We spoke about colleagues who are engaged in similar musical pursuits, maintaining our standards and fitness as freelance musicians and teachers. Haram studied with John Harle and subsequently has first hand experience of Harle's school of playing. Being a commercially successful classical saxophonist, I had hoped to meet with Harle during this trip. Unfortunately we couldn't coordinate a meeting. Describing some of his time as a student of Harle, Haram provided me with insight into a school of playing I only knew through sound recordings.

From London I moved onto Enschede in The Netherlands. Here I attended a three-day masterclass at the Artez Conservatorium with Johan Van Der Linden, Phillipe Geiss, and Guy Goethals. Van Der Linden, Geiss and Goethals run this masterclass a couple of times a year as a cooperative between the saxophone departments of three international universities. I enjoyed experiencing the contrast between three different teachers and their approaches, as well as how the students from three universities interacted. Johan Van Der Linden is an excellent model for the flexible teacher approach. A particularly perceptive individual he tailors his lessons towards the needs of each student in a suitably holistic way. Van Der Linden rarely labelled students' work with errors. Rather, for example, he chose to identify a 'squeak' as the beginnings of access to the high register, the only problem being that it was in a different context. At such a juncture Van Der Linden would digress and spend some time developing that squeak into something more. He created a very comfortable and focused learning environment.

During the Artez gathering I spent a large amount of informal time with the students and teachers involved and was able to build some good connections. It further enabled me to get a sense of what these saxophonists felt about their teachers, their music and their places in the classical saxophone world. As seems to happen on the other side of the world, I met a saxophonist who is conveniently nearby, in New Zealand.

From Enschede I travelled West to Amsterdam for a performance by the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet (ASQ). The ASQ comprises Johan Van der Linden, Niels Bijl, Arno Bornkamp and Willem Van Merwijk. This event was somewhat of a small gold mine. Rather than a standard presentation of repertoire for saxophone quartet, as I might have hoped for, I was occasioned with a children's concert. If the issue of what to play to audiences is a real one, then whether or not a saxophone quartet can win over a small concert hall full of children is something worth witnessing. Incorporating excerpts from across the saxophone quartet repertoire, including Bach, Francaix, Boulez and Cage, the ASQ, with the assistance of a seemingly talented clown (due to my complete lack of Dutch I can't actually comment at all on the quality of what he said), managed to engage, entertain, excite and keep under control 200 or so eight year olds.

The next stop was in Basel, Switzerland, where I met with Christine Rall of the Rascher Saxophone Quartet, Wildy Zumwalt from the University of Fredonia (USA) and Marcus Weiss, freelance musician and teacher at the Basel Hochschule and Musik Akademie.

My meetings with Rall and Zumwalt were purely dialogue. These were particularly advantageous as Rall and Zumwalt perform on vintage instruments, a practice I am currently pursuing. We spoke at length about repertoire, sound, artistic choices and working with students. The opportunity to rendezvous with Zumwalt was a fortunate coincidence, as he just happened to be in Basel. Rall, thankfully, put us in touch.

As well as observing classes in chamber music with Marcus Weiss I was fortunate to sit in on his rehearsals and performances with Ensemble Recherche. Marcus provided valuable career insight through his involvement in the German new music scene. Apparently Germany legislated some 40 years ago that radio stations must broadcast a percentage of new music every month. The result is that these stations are commissioning works and funding performers and composers. Subsequently the contemporary classical saxophonist is a financially viable phenomenon in Germany.

The final leg of my Fellowship trip was a visit to the Paris Conservatoire (Conservatoire National Superior et de Danse de Paris). During my week in Paris I spoke with the Professor of Saxophone, Claude Delangle, and

observed the rehearsals and preparations for the final exams and competitions of the third and fourth year students. Less interactive than other items on my itinerary this visit was an excellent opportunity to witness the ‘goings-on’ and simply be a ‘fly on the wall’ at arguably the leading classical saxophone school in the world. Most notable was the element of performance incorporated into the student presentations. Particularly in the competitions, the students made use of lighting and staging effects.

The planning of my Fellowship was driven by several major questions and concepts. These questions were:

- How do some of the more significant and generally accepted developments in educational theory, such as Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking, Gardiner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences and the use of cooperative learning strategies apply to one-on-one instrumental teaching? Implementation of these theories is all but standard practice for classroom teachers in many parts of the world, yet not so in music studios. I was aware that to adequately address this question would require a formal research process. However, the opportunity provided by a Churchill Fellowship allowed me to canvas the approaches of a number of teachers around the world;
- The teaching and learning of the saxophone brings with it certain idiosyncratic difficulties. The instrument is relatively large and heavy, the sound can be very harsh to the beginner, a large amount of air is required and the altissimo register can be very difficult to access etc. How do different teachers approach these issues in the beginner through to the advanced student?
- Repertoire. What are people playing? The classical saxophone repertoire seems to be in a constant state of flux. There is no Mozart Concerto. Our instrument is not wholly accepted as a classical instrument, as it wasn’t around when the standard orchestral formation crystallised. Realistically the standard repertoire is, at best, limited. Is there anything new and good out there that I would like to present to an audience? That I can recommend to my students? Why are people playing what they’re playing?
- What do the careers of saxophonist throughout the world look like? As a teacher how can I help to educate the budding concert saxophonist as to the realities of being a professional exponent of our instrument? As a freelance musician in an isolate part of the world, how can I best develop a functional career in my home environment?
- What are the standards of students, teachers and performers around the world? How does practice in Tasmania compare with these standards?

- What are the approaches of different established schools, teachers and performers? What are their philosophies? What specific techniques do they advocate? Where would/should I send advanced students who wish to study overseas?
- As a classical saxophonist, what appear to be the advantages and disadvantages of operating in Tasmania as opposed to a larger musical environment – London, Paris, Basel?

Overall, in terms of performance, the lessons I learnt deal primarily with standard and repertoire. The fellowship experience provided the rare opportunity to hear many live classical saxophone performances with all the flavours particular to certain schools of playing. As a Tasmanian who chooses to operate in his home State, I'm often reminded of a certain 'cultural cringe' that exists. This 'cringe' is the implicit, and occasionally explicit, idea that the talent and produce hailing from an area with Tasmania's degree of isolation are inferior. Never having bought in to this I was greatly encouraged to observe that a good player in Paris, generally, is no better than a good player from Hobart. Paris just has more of them.

The experience of sitting and listening to days of saxophone repertoire at conferences, and similar, easily became tedious. Even the most inspired of performances were at times wearing. With as much objectivity as I could muster in such a context I found myself becoming disillusioned with the music being served up. To my mind the goal of a live classical musical performance should be to entertain, excite or move an audience. In certain contexts music can also serve as an intellectual stimulus. The audience should never, ever, experience boredom. I witnessed a lot of saxophonists playing to saxophonists. This translated to music that is selected primarily because it is written for the instrument, no so much for it's intrinsic 'musical' qualities.

Pre-empting this somewhat, I chose to play several Australian works that I have found to be very successful with audiences, yet are not in any technical fashion able to be considered 'serious' saxophone music, nor have they yet become part of the standard repertoire. It seems ironic that in presenting this music I would cause some minor controversy. Possibly, in our passion for the instrument and learning, the saxophone community sometimes risks becoming so interested in music satisfying to technical cravings that we subvert out ultimate intentions and bore the audience.

I felt I was able to gain a perspective on the position of the classical saxophonist that I hadn't experienced before. The idea of the concert saxophonist regularly engaged by orchestras to perform Glasunov and Ibert

(the two pillars of our standard concerto repertoire) is a dream. A necessary dream, but a dream non-the-less. I know of no classical saxophonist that makes a living solely from performing as a saxophonist. All the careers I passed by are supplemented by teaching, sound engineering or something else. Rather than being a depressing revelation, this is a good thing. I'm excited by the prospect of considering and encouraging a career paradigm that doesn't view the lack of opportunities to be a 'famous soloist' as a sad reality, but rather embraces the degree of isolation, the benefits of smaller communities, the unexplored territory and unestablished traditions as an opportunity build relevant and successful models of music making for a young yet familiar instrument.

I may have been tempted out of this state, and the country, at a number of junctures during my studies and career to date, the opportunity to perform saxophone repertoire to 150 people in London being apparently better than the same number in Hobart. But what exists here is a smaller community with the same talent. There are less people doing what classical musicians do, but they're just as good. Here, I can easily get projects off the ground, the logistics are more workable, things are cheaper, people know who you are, there is less competition, the media are interested, collaborations with composers, orchestras and other performers are doable and access to funding is ready.

In a phrase, what I came back with was *don't be a saxophonist, be a musician*. What is that? Well it asks the question *what's your music?* Not *what instrument do you play?* Our music is so interwoven with our instrument that we at times switch off our musical discernment and just play the repertoire. Should we so readily accept the element of predestination that comes with this? No. Of course there is a subtle balance to be achieved here, and we should take heed of the many discerning performers who have come before and canonised this musical literature, but we must teach our students and encourage our colleagues to consider context, audience, culture and how best to use the saxophone to entertain, excite and move.

The classical violinist has before them a number of clear and established paths if they so choose, be those paths hotly contested. Saxophonists seem to experience a dissonance that results from the meeting of the global classical saxophone world, its repertoire, dos and don'ts, aims and activities with the reality of the local world the individual lives in. To clarify, a typical conservatorium student may dream of the concert platform and engage with the appropriate repertoire. As they do this, being not yet at that place in the world where they can realise their ambition, they attempt to graft this concept of the classical saxophone onto their local music scene. That is, despite the fact that possibly no one in their audience base has any pre-existing desire to hear a classical saxophone work, they choose to offer it. This it not necessarily erroneous, but the

saxophonist is essentially trying to fill a hole that isn't there. At least, from my small amount of observations, this is often the case in Australia and the USA.

Of note in the US system was the PHD preferred status for saxophone teaching positions at universities. To secure this kind of work saxophonists are expected to have completed an undergraduate degree, masters and doctorate. I consider this useful in that it provides a clearly defined path for those seeking a career in the area, and not so useful in that the saxophonist can easily become sealed up in 'the bubble' of classical saxophone tertiary education.

Visiting Germany and Switzerland I was made aware of the existence of a governmental mandate that compels radio stations to broadcast a certain quota of new works per month. This encourages a continuous activity of commissioning, composing and performing that provides regular high profile paid work for many contemporary classical musicians. This is good, and it works. But it does not exist in Australia or the USA and we should not pretend that it does.

In a nutshell, classical saxophonists should see themselves as musicians, not saxophonists. I think this kind of liberation from the 'standard repertoire' stream is essential for a healthy and vibrant saxophone world.

As I formulated my initial application for a Churchill Fellowship I was perhaps most strongly driven by the question of how our current understanding of pedagogy, resulting from thorough research and testing, is implemented in instrumental teaching. Particularly as it pertains to one-on-one instrumental teaching.

The issue of concern was not so much that there was a discernable lack of success in instrumental teaching and much less general malpractice, but rather that, in my experience, when instrumental teachers are asked to describe and justify their pedagogy explicitly, the responses are unclear and subjective. I expect this is largely the result of a lack of a particular kind of training. Classroom teachers seek to be classroom teachers and therefore undergo the appropriate training. Musicians are trained as musicians and rarely set out to teach one-on-one. It's something that just happens, to earn money. For the record, however, whatever is happening in the music-teaching world, it's very often very successful!

CONCLUSIONS

In considering the earlier stated questions that drove me, the major lessons I learnt during my Churchill Fellowship experience are as follows.

How do some of the more significant and generally accepted developments in educational theory, such as Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking, Gardiner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and the use of cooperative learning strategies apply to one-on-one instrumental teaching?

At no point during my journey was I aware of any explicit reference to these theories or directly connected models of practice. However, I did witness forms of cooperative learning, and teachers with an intuition or understanding of multiple intelligences. On this particular issue, the conclusion I reached was as expected – that to some degree teachers of the classical saxophone reflect principles in question but without a deliberate conscious awareness of neither the theory nor the entire practice. As such, I believe there is significant work to be done in this area, with the potential to explore new models of one-on-one wind instrument practice. Still, I have a great respect for the intuitive teacher, for the one who knows their students and knows the questions to ask.

The instrumental teacher is in an interesting position. The context of one-on-one teaching presents both the need and the opportunity for the teacher to be much more flexible than the typical classroom environment would allow. During my travels I noticed that instrumental teachers seem to take this on instinctively, many of them adjusting their approach, language, priorities for each student that walks through the door.

How do different teachers approach idiosyncratic difficulties in the beginner through to the advanced student?

There are a number of such difficulties and I was encouraged to find many teachers facing the same issues. As well as collecting several technical exercises pertaining to particular issues, I benefited from simply seeing others address these and knowing that they do. My practice is now altered in that I have some more techniques up my belt, I can explain to students that there are many others in many countries that experiences the same problems, and I can reference my own response to these problems against those of my saxophone teaching colleagues.

Repertoire. What are people playing Is there anything new and good out there that I would like to present to an audience? That I can recommend to my students? Why are people playing what they're playing?

I heard a healthy mix between standard repertoire and new works. It was good to see that there are many saxophonists fostering relationships with living composers and presenting their music. I was disheartened by

the lack of variety, by the sheer volume of ‘contemporary classical’ or ‘avant garde’ music that I heard. Although I heard some truly excellent performances, I recorded only two works that I would perform without hesitation to audiences in Australia. These works were *Trio for Saxophone, Violin and Piano* by Russell Peterson, and *Tuning In* by Jonathon Dove.

I must emphasise that much of my choice to question playing many of the other works I heard is driven simply by my own taste. Further, my personal taste does and did during my trip extend beyond the Peterson and Dove works. I heard more music that I enjoyed and would enjoyed to play, but I strike it from my list because I cant’ reconcile it with what my experience of Australian audiences is, and with what I believe the outcomes of the classical music performance should be – entertainment (that does not requite intellectual engagement), emotional movement and excitement.

What do the careers of saxophonist throughout the world look like? As a teacher how can I help to educate the budding concert saxophonist as to the realities of being a professional exponent of our instrument? As a freelance musician in an isolate part of the world, how can I best develop a functional career in my home environment?

Having canvassed a large chunk of the classical saxophone world I’m now satisfied with degree of familiarity I have with what’s going on. This improves my practice as a teacher by allowing my to be simply more well informed about the whos whats and wheres of saxophone. Essentially the careers are the same. That is, there are saxophonists of varying levels who are pursuing opportunities to both perform standard repertoire and create new work. These saxophonists, to varying degrees, supplement their performance activities with more consistently financially viable ventures such as teaching.

In relation to my own career as a freelance classical saxophonist living in Tasmania I have returned from my Fellowship trip with a firm sense of affirmation and direction.

What are the standards of students, teachers and performers around the world? How does practice in Tasmania compare with these standards?

I saw no evidence that supports any relationship between location/population and standard. It is not news that talent is talent regardless of where it comes from, but it’s reassuring and useful to know that good Australian saxophonists (at whatever level) are on par with the rest of the world. The only difference is that there are less of us here, which it kind of a good thing because we have more opportunities!

What are the approaches of different established schools, teachers and performers? What are their philosophies? What specific techniques do they advocate? Where would/should I send advanced students who wish to study overseas?

An important factor in my initial application for a Churchill Fellowship was that my plan would allow me to become familiar with the practices of different schools of playing and teaching. My hope was to benefit from any differences and similarities I could observe and build enhance my practice by talking the best from each school.

There is much talk in the saxophone community about different ways of playing. This talk can focus on anything from what mouthpieces and instruments to use, to the best use of vibrato and opinions on repertoire. Ultimately, it's about voice and context, and most seem to appreciate this.

Having the opportunity to consider the contrasts of so many different players I was able to spend much time thinking about what it was I liked about the playing of different musicians. It is a difficult thing to know what to do when one's ear is presented with two beautiful and yet mutually exclusive sounds. As a player, I've always been drawn, for the most part, to what is often referred to as the Rascher style of playing. Championed by Sigurd Rascher and the various members of the Rascher Saxophone Quartet, this approach utilises vintage instruments. Similarly I've been drawn to the clarity of the French sound. Suffice to say, I've come to a point where I understand what I value in the performance of music and feel comfortable to choose a voice that best suits me.

My new-found familiarity with these distinct schools of practice and a number of their advocates means I can make more appropriate recommendation to students as to future paths of study.

As a classical saxophonist, what appear to be the advantages and disadvantages of operating in Tasmania as opposed to a larger musical environment – London, Paris, Basel?

By way of example, upon return I was able to invite eminent Australian composer Don Kay to write a work for saxophone and string orchestra. With Kay's agreement, I approached the Hobart Chamber Orchestra and Jean-Louis Forestier as the collaborating ensemble and conductor. The project is going ahead. In Tasmania, a relatively small and geographically isolated community, the separation between the geographical and various layers of the artistic communities is not so huge. Here artists, individual and banded, can reach out and

collaborate. I don't believe that, in Sydney for example, a collaboration between a freelance unsigned soloist, an eminent composer, the capital amateur chamber orchestra and an a regular professional conductor could so easily and effectively be achieved.

Having arrived home and had time to reflect on what I've experienced and learned, I'm encouraged by the potential in Australia. The Australian community will be informed directly through my teaching practice as it applies to individual lessons, master classes, workshops and ensemble direction. These activities take place at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music, local secondary schools, such as The Friends School, and in private tuition. Students will benefit directly from my enhanced practice and broader knowledge of classical saxophone repertoire, techniques, performers and trends.

As an artist my learnings are best and most appropriately disseminated through my performance. The expanded knowledge of repertoire coupled with a clearer sense of direction will allow me create performance programs that are increasingly more satisfying for both the performer and audience, and engaged in increasingly more viable and effective projects.

Further, as has already begun, I will share my thoughts and findings with saxophonist colleagues as I relate to them in person and on the internet. In the coming months I hope to be able to present my experiences and learnings in the form of an article to the *Australian Clarinet & Saxophone Journal*. In September of 2007 I will present a recital that includes a number of new works gathered during my travels.

Finally, the clearer picture of what it is to be an Australian classical saxophonist that I formed lead to directly to me requesting a new work for alto saxophone and string orchestra from Don Kay. This Australian work, which I will promote amongst my new international colleagues, will be premiered with the Hobart Chamber Orchestra in 2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To bring about improvements in classical saxophone teaching and performance in Australia I intend to:

- Practise, model and teach effective teaching and learning;
- Source and promote relevant instrumental instruction literature;
- Source and promote relevant and excellent classical saxophone music for performance;

- Provide a realistic and relevant career model that is satisfying to the performer and the audience;
- Perform and promote the quality saxophone repertoire that I encountered during my Fellowship;
- Foster the international connections I have made with teachers, students and performers and encourage visits to Australia;
- Promote Australian compositions, teaching resources and performers to the international network I have connected with;
- Engage in formal research projects relating to teaching and learning in the one-on-one instrumental environment;

Of the improvements that could be made in the Australian classical saxophone world of teaching and performing I consider the following the most significant:

- Saxophone players should consider their positions not as ‘saxophonists’ but as musicians;
- There should be greater and more effective networking between Australian saxophonists. The internet serves to make this very easy;
- Explicit teaching of best practice in instrumental teaching is not as common as it could be. As a community of teachers we should clarify what constitutes best practice and, engage in discussions, and celebrate those who excel;
- We must teach young musicians to consider their contexts and audiences and to learn how to navigate the repertoire effectively.