

# The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

Report by Cyrus Meurant – 2006 Churchill Fellow

To undertake advanced studies in musical composition at the Royal Academy of Music and to research contemporary music, its composition and performance by leading ensembles and institutions

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Cyrus Meurant

June 2007

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## **Introduction**

The Churchill Fellowship enabled me to travel to Berlin, Vienna, Linz, Paris, London, Manchester, Amsterdam, The Hague, New York and Boston.

I attended classes, lectures, seminars, concerts and festivals at the Royal Academy of Music, London, the Paris Conservatoire and The Royal Conservatoire of The Hague. As well as meeting leading composers and becoming acquainted with leading exponents of contemporary music, I attended numerous performances throughout Europe and the United States. This ranged from contemporary chamber, symphonic, operatic and theatrical works.

I would like to thank the Churchill Trust for granting me this tremendous opportunity. Many thanks to the composition professors and teachers I have become acquainted with in the recent past months and also to the many musicians I have met in my travels around the world.

## Executive Summary

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Project: To undertake advanced studies in musical composition at the Royal Academy of Music and to research contemporary music, its composition and performance by leading ensembles and institutions.

## Fellowship Highlights

- Meeting and exchanges with Professor Simon Bainbridge at the Royal Academy of Music, London.
- Meeting and lessons with Professor Frédéric Durieux at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris.
- Attending performances of Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Intercontemporain, London Sinfonietta, Berlin Staatskapelle, Absolute Ensemble and Deutsche Symphony.
- Attending the annual composition festival at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague and meeting composers Louis Andriessen and Martijn Padding.
- Meeting conductor Dennis Russell Davies in Linz, Austria.
- Attending performance of Philip Glass's opera *Satyagraha* at English National Opera, London and meeting Director Phelim McDermott.
- Attending Bang on a Can 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Steve Reich Tribute in New York City. Visiting composers and Bang on a Can founders Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe in Manhattan.
- Meeting with Australian Composer Elliot Geyger, assistant professor of composition at Harvard University.

## Recommendations

- Encourage the integration of new compositions in multimedia performance
- Promote collaborative roles for new music and encourage the dissemination of new music to a general public and wide audience.
- To collaborate across stylistic boundaries and perceived cultural barriers

## Implementation and Dissemination

- My findings will directly influence my future compositional ventures including potential new works commissioned in Australia and my most recent composition for the Australian Ballet.
- I also have plans to more directly assume control of the performance of my music through collaborative projects and my own organised performances.

# Fellowship Program

## Berlin

- Concert of the Staatskapelle Berlin –

**Aribert Reimann** *Finite Infinity* (1994/5)  
**Bruckner** *Symphony No. 5*

Michael Gielen Conductor  
Christine Schäfer Soprano

- Attended B♭ Jazz Club
- Concert of the Deutsche Symphony Berlin –

**Faure** *Requiem* (1887/88/1894/1900)  
**Debussy** *Trois Nocturnes* (1892-1899)  
**Ravel** *Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2* (1909-12/1913)

Georges Prêtre Conductor  
Olesya Golovneva Soprano  
Klems Sander Baritone  
Rundfunkchor Berlin  
Micheal Gläser Choreinstudierung

- Performance of Neuköllner Oper

**Rachmanioff** *Aleko. Eine Zigeunerhochzeit*

- Meeting with composer Tim Florence
- Visit to the Universität der Künste

## Vienna and Linz:

- Performance by Klangforum Wien –

**Aureliano Cattaneo** *La philosophie dans le Labyrinthe*

- Met Marsimiliano Donninelli (Italian Composer)
- Performance by Concentus Musicus Wien and Arnold Schoenberg Chor

**Mozart** *Vesperae de Dominica, KV 321* and *Davidde penitente, KV 469*

Nikolaus Harnoncourt Conductor

- Visit to the Arnold Schönberg Centre
  - Exhibition on *Mozart and Schönberg Wiener Klassik und Wiener Schule*
- Visit to the Sigmund Freud Museum
- Performance by the Bruckner Orchester Linz

**Charles Wuorinen** *The Magic Art*  
**Philip Glass** *Symphony No. 8*

Dennis Russell Davies Conductor

- Performance by the Landestheater Linz

**Philip Glass** *Orphée*

Dennis Russell Davies Conductor

- Performance by Beni Schmid Jazz Violin — Porgy and Bess Bar
- Visit to the Museum of Modern Art at Museumsquartier – Yves Klein Exhibition
- Meeting with Daniel Salecich

## Paris:

- Performance by Ensemble Intercontemporain

**Arnulf Herrmann** *Anklang .1/2*  
**Marc-André Dalbavie** *La Marche Des Transitoires*  
**Magnus Lindberg** *Jubilees*  
**Ivan Fedele** *Ali Di Cantor*

- Performance by Ensemble Intercontemporain

**Jérôme Combier** *Noir gris, pour trio à corde et un lecteur* **Samuel Beckett** *Text Improptu d'Ohio*  
**Pascal Dusapin** *Quad, pour violon et ensemble*  
**Morton Feldman** *Samuel Beckett, Words and Music*

- Attending composition class at the Paris Conservatoire
- Meeting with Professor Frédéric Durieux at the Paris Conservatoire

## London and Manchester:

- Meetings with Professor Simon Bainbridge at The Royal Academy of Music
- Contact with Musicologist Keith Potter, Goldsmiths College

- Performance by BBC Symphony

**Mahler** *Symphony No. 3*

- Performance by English National Opera

**Philip Glass** *Satyagraha*

- Meeting with Director Phelim McDermott
- Visit to Finchcocks Music Museum in Kent
- Meeting with composer Ian Venables
- Performance by BBC Symphony

**Berlioz** *Overture: Les franc-juges*

**Sibelius** *Luonnotar*

**Charles Ives** *Orchestral Set No. 2*

**Stravinsky** *Symphony of Psalms*

**Thomas Adès** *America: A Prophecy*

Thomas Adès Conductor

- Performance by London Sinfonietta at the Imperial War Museum North

**Simon Bainbridge** *Music Space Reflection* (World Premiere)

Diego Mason Conductor

## Amsterdam and The Hague:

- Performance by the Nederlands Philharmonisch Orkest

**Brahms** *Symphony No. 3*

**Richard Strauss** *Don Quixote*

- Attendance to The Royal Conservatoire of The Hague Spring Festival and Concerts
- Meeting with Martijn Padding at the Royal Conservatoire of The Hague
- Concert of composer Alvin Curran
- Meeting with composer Louis Andriessen
- Performance by the Schönberg Quartet

**Louis Andriessen**

*Quartet in two movements* (1957)

*Facing Death* (1990)

*Tuin van Eros* (2002)

*...Miserere...* (2006-7)

- Performance of Absolute Ensemble with Goran Bregović's Wedding and Funeral Band

- Performance of the Echer Trio

**Hummel** *Piano Trio*

**Schönberg** *Verlärte Nacht*

**Schubert** *Piano Trio in Es D929*

## New York

- Bang on a Can 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert

**Steve Reich** *Electric Counterpoint*

**Steve Reich** *Video Phase*

**Michael Gordon** *Light is Calling*

- Meeting with composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe
- Meetings with young musicians William Lane (Viola) and Olivia De Prato (Violin)
- New York University – Graduate musical theatre writing program

## Boston

- Visit to Harvard Music School
- Meeting with Assistant Professor Elliot Geyger at Harvard University

## Main Body

### Observations during the Fellowship

#### Berlin

My Fellowship began in Berlin where I was fortunate to experience a generous cross section of the city's musical life; ranging from the concert hall, to opera, to jazz club. I was also able to meet with Berlin based Australian composer Tim Florence and talk to young Australian pianist and repetiteur Rebecca Hicks.

Berlin, being one of the great bastions of classical orchestral playing, features a myriad of concerts everyday, and I was able to immediately hear contemporary orchestral music by Aribert Reimann in his *Finite Infinity* performed by the Staatskapelle, and performances of classic works by the Deutsche Symphony Berlin in Debussy's *Nocturnes* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe Suite No. 2*.

My discussions with Tim Florence were revealing as I was able to learn of his recent collaborative and theatre works, and his own take on the new music scene in Berlin - particularly in regards to arts funding and viable ways of maintaining creative outlets. Based in Berlin for some 15 years, Florence combines elements of world music and visual art in his work, and also regularly teaches at colleges.

Whilst in Berlin I also attended a performance of the Neuköllner Oper production of Rachmanioff's *Aleko. Eine Zigeunerhochzeit* which was a brilliant fusion of eastern European folk and musical theatre. I paid a brief visit also to the Universität der Künste and was able to build an impression of this significant artistic institution and its student life. Finally, I attended an impromptu performance at the B♭ jazz club to witness Berlin's Jazz scene.

#### Vienna and Linz

Moving on to Austria, I was impressed with the strikingly modernist performances of Klangforum Wien in Aureliano Cattaneo's *La philosophie dans le Labyrinthe* at the Museumsquartier. An opera which combined brave lead performances with video art and immense instrumental virtuosity. Klangforum attracts a diverse following with an impressive emphasis on a vibrant clique of energetic performers who function democratically in the artistic decision making of the ensemble (formed in 1985 by Beat Furrer). At this performance I also met the Italian Composer Marsimiliano Donninelli who had been teaching in Vienna.

I took in performances of a more traditionally Viennese slant in the Concentus Musicus Wien and Arnold Schoenberg Chor under Nikolaus Harnoncourt and also paid visits to the Arnold Schönberg Centre (with exhibition on Mozart and Schönberg) as well as the Sigmund Freud Museum.

In Linz I was able to take notice of how a smaller regional approach to new music making can produce stunning results. Since being appointed conductor of the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, Dennis Russell Davies has been able to exert his interest in contemporary music in much the same way he had done previously at the Vienna Radio Symphony. I was fortunate to see

performances of Charles Wuorinen's *The Magic Art* and Philip Glass's *Symphony No. 8* - a recent commission specifically written for Davies and the orchestra. Davies being an internationally leading conductor of Glass's operas, I was fortunate also to see the Landestheatre Linz production of *Orphée* based on the Jean Cocteau film. I was able to briefly chat with Dennis Russell Davies at the theatre and explain my traveling fellowship.

Upon my return to Vienna, I attended a performance by the jazz violinist Beni Schmid at the Porgy and Bess Jazz Club Bar as well as making a visit to the Museum of Modern Art at the Museumsquartier. Of particular note, there was an exhibition dedicated to Yves Klein. Finally, I met up with young Australian composer, Daniel Salecich who has been based in Vienna for around 3 years. We exchanged music and ideas and discussed his recent compositions and projects including his time spent in Graz and at the Darmstadt new music summer school.

## Paris

In France, where classical music is heavily subsidised by the Ministry of Culture, the resulting art music is heavily embedded in the nation's artistic culture, respected, revered and nurtured. It is also closely allied to the educational institutions. My time in Paris was very rewarding, and I was very pleased to visit the Paris Conservatoire.

I sat in on the small class of Professeur Frédéric Durieux, head of composition studies. We listened to his new *String Quartet* (including live electronics), a work by Luigi Nono's, and another by Brice Pauset, *Les voix Humain*, a chamber work, with some effective use of silence, extreme dynamics and numerous extended techniques. Within the class there is a clear and overt dynamic of mutual respect with very little correspondence entered into regarding compositional decision making – most specifically in regards to the ways in which *le professeur* undertakes his compositional processes. There was often a simple “no” or “yes”, and we moved on. In reference to a seemingly aleatoric device in the professors *String Quartet*, I enquired as to if the players are free to make ad libitum some creative decisions, to which was soon established “NON! they are not free”.

I enjoyed the focus of the sessions and the rigour of it all. Later, I would have a private meeting with Durieux where I played and discussed several of my compositions including recent works for the Melbourne Symphony and the Australian Ballet. We discussed numerous aspects of composition, ranging from the purely technical: orchestration, rhythmic and harmonic structure to the politics of aesthetics and the role of bureaucracy and structure of arts organisations and the educational situation in Europe.

It was extremely interesting for me and a valuable experience to be talking about contemporary composition with a leading figure in the French modernist tradition. Though I think he was more intrigued by how an Australian with a French name and ancestry could be in Australia and write music of the type I was writing.

Whilst in Paris, I also attended two concerts of the Ensemble Intercontemporain at the Pompidou centre. Concurrently running with a special exhibition on the works of Samuel Beckett, Ensemble Intercontemporain crafted a program with specific correlation to Beckett and unsurprisingly embraced the music of Morton Feldman. The Intercontemporain series highlighted the strength of cross media collaboration and was a wonderful, if not stark, assembly of dedicated actors and musicians.

Previously, in a more purely instrumentally driven evening, the music of the Italian composer Ivan Fedele stood out in his powerful work *Ali Di Cantor*. Fedele embraced a gamut of aural sensibilities ranging from the earthly and primordial to the most brilliant and multifarious of virtuosities. The Ensemble Intercontemporain certainly sets a high benchmark in the dissemination of uncompromising modernist music and it should stand as a great source of inspiration to emerging French musicians. As a spectator, it made me fully appreciate the concept of subsidised cultural investment and the many years of professional training and dedication required to ever make such an ensemble a functional reality.

## London and Manchester

Moving on to London I visited Professor Simon Bainbridge at the Royal Academy of Music. Firstly, I attended his seminar on his new commission from the London Sinfonietta - to be later performed at the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester. The work, *Music Space Reflection* is best described as an amplified installation-like work for 4 groups of instruments and live electronics. A piece written in the spirit of collaboration as a reaction to the architecture of Daniel Libeskind - initial concept designer of the new World Trade Centre in New York.

I was subsequently able to travel to Manchester, to the Imperial War Museum North, and attend the world premiere of Bainbridge's new work. I feel fortunate to have been present, and to be able to hear the work twice, whilst being able to move around the space of the museum and experience the work in its intended acoustic space. The work has subsequently been critically acclaimed and it was a fantastic opportunity to appreciate the piece, after a seemingly abstract seminar at the Royal Academy to its premiere.

Whilst in London, I also saw the BBC Symphony twice, first playing Mahler Symphony No. 3 and the second time conducted by the young composer/conductor Thomas Adès in a rather impressive program of modern classics in Berlioz, Sibelius, Ives, Stravinsky and Adès himself.

I also saw Philip Glass's opera *Satyagraha* at English National Opera. On the night I attended, there was a post performance question and answer session with director Phelim McDermott. I was able to talk with him briefly after this discussion and this was of specific curiosity to me - given my interest in Glass's opera's - particularly *Akhmaten*. McDermott's production company *Improbable* provided a virtuosic staging of *Satyagraha* which elevated the opera to an ostensibly transcendental level - which was provocative - though undeniably poignant and uplifting when considered in union with Gandhi's movement of passive resistance during his years in South Africa.

Whilst in London I also spent some valuable time in the TATE modern gallery where a retrospective of Gilbert and George was a powerful reminder of the way art can directly engage with a wider public. An afternoon at The National Gallery and Portrait Gallery was also a stimulating diversion away from my musical activities.

## Amsterdam and The Hague

In Amsterdam I attended a variety of concerts at the Concertgebouw including the Nederlands Philharmonisch Orkest, the Echer Trio and an exciting performance of New York's Absolute Ensemble in collaboration with Goran Bregović's Wedding and Funeral Band. Absolute Ensemble have embraced a broad spectrum of new music making, under their conductor Kristjan Järvi, and I am interested in the ensemble's championing of the music of Erkki-Sven Tüür. With Bregović's band however, there featured an eclectic mix of traditional eastern european dance music and folk singing coupled with a contemporary (and heavily amplified) art music sensibility. The concertgebouw hall became estatic and the performance was greeted with enthusiastic cheers and numerous standing ovations.

In The Hague I spent all the time attending the spring festival at the Royal Conservatoire - a full week of intensive new music with concerts and seminars. It's a very open school, renowned for its association with composer Louis Andriessen. The composition department is now heading in some new directions under Martijn Padding, though still the schools developed character is retained. The conservatoire encourages composers to immerse themselves in the performance of

their works and provides a vibrant creative atmosphere for a student body which comprises a very international makeup. I was able to meet and talk with many of the talented students and it was a valuable insight.

At the spring festival the featured composer was the American, now based in Rome, Alvin Curran, a self labeled poly-stylist – not far removed from Frederic Rzewski and John Zorn, though following his own trajectory. There was a strong work for electric guitar ensemble *Strum City*, which reminded me somewhat of Howard Shore's score for David Cronenberg's film *Crash*.

A 30 minute percussion quartet *Theme Park* and another 30 minute trio *Schtyx* with dramatic staging elements for violin, piano and percussion were compelling and challenging in their consistent emphasis on stylistic pluralism. However, Curran's most compelling music lay in his solo piano works, which ranged from austere minimalism to a more improvisatory character.

I met Louis Andriessen briefly after one of the concerts at the festival and would later attend his evening of string quartet music by the Schönberg quartet in Amsterdam at the Muziekgebouw aan'tij. My schedule being as it was, I had to move on from the Netherlands a little sooner than I perhaps wished, though I was fortunate to be present at a flourishing time of new music and to meet leading figures and some exceptionally talented musicians.

## **USA – New York and Boston**

Flying across the Atlantic to New York was next on the agenda. As fate would have it upon my arrival I was struck down with illness which marred my activities for a week. After fending off the wretched virus, I established contact with the Bang on a Can founder Julia Wolfe. I was able to subsequently attend the Bang on a Can 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration concert which also functioned as a tribute to influential composer Steve Reich who was present. The event was a wonderful cross section of young aspiring composers and performers and I was able to meet several young musicians including Australian violist William Lane and Austrian violinist Olivia De Prato. I would also later speak to composer Michael Gordon in between the performances by the Bang on a Can All-Stars of the music of Reich and Gordon himself.

Following this initial meeting I was able to meet Julia Wolfe and Michael Gordon at their Manhattan loft and it was a great opportunity to discuss contemporary music and the possible trajectories in the development of a career in composition. Bang on a Can stands as a great inspiration to many young musicians in the USA and internationally. Their determination to compose and perform music, on their own terms, and to develop a viable art music for a new audience has achieved a status unusual for any classical or art music group. I found talking with Julia very interesting and particularly heartening when she encouraged me to perform in my own music – and I was able to leave some of my recordings with her.

Whilst in New York, I also established contact with young Australian composer Anna Jacobs currently studying at New York University's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program - a unique school with an interesting mix of aspiring composers and librettists.

Moving on to Boston I arranged a meeting with Elliot Geyger, the Assistant Professor of Music at Harvard University Music School. Harvard (along with Yale) has continued to develop some ties with Australia in recent years with post graduate studies and appointments. Elliot Geyger has since been appointed Professor of Composition at Melbourne University and was a mine of information in regards to contemporary composition in the USA, and offered particularly valuable insights into the importance of patronage in the United States and the operation of the music school at Harvard. I spent some time in the music school library perusing through the vast

catalogue of scores and viewed a music seminar. The bustling atmosphere of the picturesque campus in Cambridge and of Boston Common was also a pleasant way to round off the formalities of my Churchill Fellowship before embarking on my voyage home via a stop over in Los Angeles.

## Conclusions

My study purposes on the Churchill Fellowship were essentially two-fold. Firstly, to undertake studies of composition – directly relating to my own work as a composer and secondly to research contemporary music, its performance and composition within a societal context. During such an intensive period of travel, with at times demanding immersion in music (as well as simultaneously completing a new work for the Australian Ballet), my most valuable lessons have been the further appreciation of performance and composition of new music as being directly in relationship to the societal context within which artists find themselves. I can now begin to quantify the extent to which the relationship of embedded cultural values – those of education and a wider social concern, directly impact on the methods by which an artist can disseminate their work.

Standing in stark polemical opposition are the continental European countries and the United States, where the funding of the arts, in each case, corresponds directly to the political and social systems the countries find themselves in today. Whilst flourishing musical atmosphere are prevalent throughout Europe and North America, these differences are not skin deep. The aesthetic of composers, the attitude of performers and the function of their artworks is completely and irreconcilably impacted by these realities of funding, audience, education and wider social history.

As an emerging composer in Australia, during a period in which artistic funding from government sources increasingly resembles the American model, we can take heart at the success and prior example of the New York composers and their ability to 'market' their art with little to no advocacy in the European sense. However, one must realise that many of these American artists carve out a following in Europe and have, quite often, had formative experiences there. It is also Europe, where many American composer are granted the most significant reception of their major works.

Having seen first hand the success and flourishing of the arts in Germany, Austria, France, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom, I can not help but feel that such strength of functional artistic culture is fundamentally born out of a determined investment in artistic and philosophical education. The problem we face in Australia is that we do not have a rich history of patronage as the United States does, so we also lack the established networks to replace or continue the maintenance of artistic organisations. More to the point, accommodating a loss of funds, as remnants of the European models are withdrawn, is not a realistic option. The damage to culture is not easily replaced once support is taken away. Within such an atmosphere of conservative economics, it is then even more difficult for companies or composers to take risks for fear of rebuke or loss of income. Within such a climate, the role and function of art is stifled.

In regards to my own composition, I was challenged to consider the reconciliation between an art of personal expression and one of viability. Being creative is constantly a compromise; however in both Europe and the United States, the emphasis on the artist to express work on his or her own terms is a virtue which is still ostensibly intact.

## Recommendations

Since completing my Masters degree in composition at the Conservatorium of Music University of Sydney in 2006, I have been somewhat disconcerted by the contemporary art music scene in Australia. An artistic community which, whilst active – even thriving in terms of proportionate numbers of creators and spectators – is severely undervalued and insufficiently promoted. The wider arts community is failing to target a general public and more importantly, a new generation of people.

Whilst a problem, perhaps beyond the scope of an emerging artist to tackle or even to be concerned with, it is striking to myself that the current ‘problem’ stems from a wider lack of intellectual discrimination and political independence in the attitudes developing in musical education.

Specifically, I believe there is insufficient value placed on the creative and challenging roles which musical artists should be fulfilling. I also feel there is a failure by many creative artists to directly engage with the general public. This is, however, a complex situation, with artists struggling to find a voice of critical or investigative properties in an increasingly globalised society and ever increasing ephemeral mode of existence.

I believe we have emerged from the 1990s into a political climate which has steadily underfunded the university sector to the point of desecration. This is a situation, I feel, tantamount to cultural vandalism. I look no further than the gradual decline of campus culture across many universities where clubs, societies and other student groups are now obliged to pay fees to use buildings for musical concerts or performances. A culture of unabashed fiscal dominance, which discourages creative outlets of expression, has pervaded universities causing them to descend into havens of corporate sponsorship, streamlined undergraduate courses and reduced faculty sizes. This is most noticeable in the arts.

Concurrent with these challenges to student exploration and a liberal learning environment is a degradation of traditional and formal musical education. I recount just recently the shock of conductor Lawrence Foster in an interview on ABC Classic FM after he realised that not one member of the string section of the Australian Youth Orchestra had rehearsed or played any of the quartets of Bela Bartok. A composer who alongside Dmitri Shostakovich was one of the seminal contributors to the medium in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Maestro Foster surmised that it was a severe shortcoming by the tertiary music institutions in Australia, and that the AYO alone could not be expected to take up the slack. Whilst the difficulty of the music is in part a reason for this shortcoming, it is indicative of a much wider incidence of students not being actively encouraged to participate in the cultural dissemination of new music – both Australian and international.

Perhaps as a composer, I have what some people would feel to be a prejudice or preconceived notion of the kind of artistic expression artists should be creating – and they are in part correct – namely that of the contemporary and socially pressing; however, I do not hear the critical charge of being dismissive of historical practice being levelled at the Australian film industry, the fashion industry, or the Australian cricket academy. As composer Philip Glass has surmised – to expect people to listen to centuries old music is as reasonable as expecting them to dress in period costume. That said, there is and should be a strong sense of tradition in the performing arts. I merely propose that in Australia there needs to be a much greater sense of constant renewal and just generally more activity in the sector overall. There needs to be a new dynamic of relevance and urgency to the performing arts and a condition of this is that new works are constantly programmed with pre-existing master works and modern classics.

Internationally, classical music, has (perhaps from the later 1980s) become wary of descending into a parody of wig wearing misfits, and has embraced, in many ways, the marketing aspects of more popular culture. Though it can be scarcely denied that outside of the university and institutionalised music making – whether it be jazz, rock, classical or punk – the experience of music to a general public, particularly in the English speaking world, is directionally proportionate to its success as a commodity.

Secondary to this, particularly in popular youth culture, is the coupling of music to some overtly ephemeral external identity – quite often within the context of a collective. These overt intentions vary from the non-descript to the opportune, right through to saving the entire planet (as recently seen with Live Aid, with origins in the 1980s). Frequently, media hype is lavished, to promote commercially driven infotainment, so reducing the fourth estate to pawns in the propagation of some sort of pastiche, considered suitable for mass consumption by advertisers.

Perhaps 'legitimate', classical music can claim to be a bastion of integrity with its historical pedigree. On the other hand, the world of classical orchestral music and performing arts in Australia could be accused of maintaining nothing more than a museum culture, replete with cultural and class boundaries firmly intact.

I personally wonder how Mozart or Beethoven would feel today at the current proportion of new to pre-existing music on concert programs. We too easily forget they were active advocates of their music in their own times, constantly writing and often challenging the precepts of what music could aspire to be and indeed what it could represent.

Unfortunately for some, traditional classical music has become the milieu of rarified tastes, synonymous with elitism and social luxury. For others it is a commercially tangible item with little immediate relevance other than providing accompaniment to a wedding, a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party or BBC period drama. This really should not be the case, and I believe that in Australia we have a fertile opportunity to disseminate a truly socially relevant and internationally distinctive voice in the progress of new art music.

My fellowship enabled me to witness first hand developing compositional strategies throughout Europe and the USA. The fellowship offered me a tremendous opportunity to witness how composers and performers, of new music, practice their craft within their societal structures and can viably operate at the highest level.

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