

THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF
AUSTRALIA

Report by Matthew Styles – 2003 Churchill Fellow

THE MRS. GERALD FRANK NEW CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP to study in the US, jazz and classical pedagogical methodology and examine ways in which the two styles of music could be combined in educational and performance based activities.

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Dated

Index

	Page
Acknowledgements	3
Executive Summary	4
Fellowship Programme	5
A Brief Introduction to the Saxophone	6
Personal Observations Concerning Saxophone Pedagogy	6
Potential Difficulties in Cross-Genre Music Education	7
 Observations and Findings 	
Paris: History and Innovations	8
New York: Jazz Performance, Education and History	8
Performances	9
International Association of Jazz Educators Conference	9
Conference Sessions	10
Cross-Genre Music in Practice (IAJE)	11
Conference In Sum	11
Indiana University, Bloomington	12
The University of Minnesota, Minneapolis	12
Summary of Learned Concepts, Observations and Discussions	13
 Contributions 	
Contribution to Australia	14
Recommendations, Personal Observations and Findings	15
Investment	15

Acknowledgements

The Fellowship

I must begin my report by once again thanking the remarkable generosity of the Churchill Trust for bestowing upon me the “Gerald Frank New Churchill Memorial Fellowship”. The opportunity to travel overseas on a funded course of research at a critical juncture in one’s career is a rare one indeed. The Fellowship has allowed me to get a ‘bird’s eye’ view of the area of saxophone pedagogy and performance. I hope these observations are of use to the wider arts community, other musicians and in particular, saxophonists, whose interests lie in the fusing of musical styles in performance and education.

Mrs. Gerald Frank New

To Mrs. New, I offer my heartfelt and sincerest thanks for enabling this fellowship, the fulfilment of a lifelong dream, to become a reality. I hope through my contribution to the field of music, that I am able to adequately honour the memory of Mr. Gerald Frank New.

Present & New Colleagues

The generosity of time and energy as shown by the Professor Otis Murphy, Dr. Eugene Rousseau and particularly Dr. Tom Walsh, who single-handedly handled all the VISA paperwork and university sponsorship details, helping to create a project where more was achieved than I thought was possible.

I would also like to thank UWA School of Music for their generous support in allowing me to pursue this fellowship and for providing me with the opportunities to explore cross-genre music.

Executive Summary

Name: Matthew Styles
Address: c/o School of Music, University of Western Australia
35 Stirling Highway, Nedlands, WA 6009
Occupation: Associate Lecturer in Music, Saxophone, Jazz & Classical
Pedagogy
Telephone: (w) 08 6488 7176 (m) 041 626 0012
Project: To explore jazz and classical music pedagogical methodology with
particular reference to the saxophone.

The Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Frank New Churchill Memorial Fellowship enabled me to travel to the US (New York, Indiana University and the University of Minnesota) for approximately 10 weeks to discuss and work with some of the world's leaders in classical and jazz pedagogy, with a particular interest in how these two can be brought together in a cross-genre methodology. In particular, the saxophone was the main focal point through which this information was captured, filtered and processed.

I met with Dr. Eugene Rousseau, Professor Otis Murphy and Dr. Tom Walsh who were all extremely helpful in guiding me through my journey.

In pre-tertiary institutions in WA, there has been an increasing demand for non-traditional musical studies. This points not only to the changing musical styles, tastes and consequential change in employment opportunities within the musical industry, but also to the potential attitude of the irrelevance of the more traditional educational methods and styles of teaching and learning.

Specifically, it has been my own experience in my role at the University of Western Australia (traditionally a supplier of classical music education), that students and teachers are demanding more 'cross-genre' music education which ultimately will enhance their teaching, performance, composition, employability and overall enjoyment in all their musical experiences. It will be mainly through this medium as well as through my work with Yamaha, that I will be able to pass on the information I have gathered within the discussions, lectures, seminars, papers, articles, workshops and through the courses I currently run.

As with any field of study, in order to maintain a high standard in all areas of education and its resultants, there needs to be an incorporation of the foundational building blocks throughout the learning process. The challenge I am faced with therefore, is how to make music education relevant, thorough, grounding and balanced. I have realised that although this is a large and long-term challenge, it is one that I can now see a growing need for its solution and one that is possible to start to solve.

Through the Gerald Frank New Churchill Memorial Fellowship, I have been able to find some insights as to possible solutions to this difficult, but very rewarding dilemma.

Programme

New York City, New York
15th – 25th of January

The purpose of being in New York was threefold:

1. To witness some of the world's finest live jazz performances,
2. To observe jazz making in its original forms such as gospel, blues and ragtime and,
3. To attend the Annual International Association of Jazz Educators conference

Indiana University Bloomington, Indiana
26th January – 26th of February

Indiana University's School of Music, Bloomington was chosen as a place of study for 5 weeks because of the presence of jazz and classical music programmes running in parallel with some crossing over of units and performances. It was also chosen because outside of Paris, it is host to one of the biggest and most vibrant saxophone studios in the world, a legacy of the brilliant leadership and teaching of Dr. Eugene Rousseau.

I was fortunate to observe and work with the following professors who very generously gave of their time and energy:

- Professor Otis Murphy: a leading classical saxophonist (world renowned performer, academic, teacher and clinician) who has worked and studied with such luminaries as Dr. Rousseau and Jean-Yves Forneau.
- Associate Professor Dr Thomas Walsh, a leading jazz saxophone performer and educator has the opportunity to contribute to the classical saxophone idiom through appearances with orchestras and the performance and recording of such commissioned pieces such as "*Sky Scraping – Serenade for Alto Saxophone and Piano*" (1997) by Don Freund.
- Dr. David Baker who is the Head of Jazz Studies and is an internationally renowned music educator and author and performing musician. Dr Baker is also a prolific composer and arranger who has recently transformed one of Paganini's caprices into a work that crosses the boundaries of classical and jazz music.

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Minnesota
February 26th to the 12th of March

I was very fortunate to have been accepted to work with Dr. Eugene Rousseau who is an internationally renowned saxophone performer, teacher (jazz and classical), author and consultant to major instrument makers worldwide. His teaching style and methods, along with his landmark recordings have seen major contributions to the world of saxophone pedagogy over the past 40 years. This contributions continue today with solo performances and workshops throughout the US, Europe and Japan.

An Brief Introduction to the Saxophone

Few people realise the classical origins of the saxophone. The instrument is mostly associated with jazz or through the reams of 'light classical' or 'light popular' music recordings by such artists as Kenny G and Kurt Steiger. While the saxophone is very adept and well suited to playing this sort of music, and indeed was partially responsible for some of the most important developments within the jazz idiom, this represents only a partial view of the saxophones capabilities.

It has been said that the saxophone was developed to fulfil a growing need for a mobile instrument whose tone colour would bridge a tonal gap in the military bands of Western Europe in the 1800's. It was a young and brilliant instrument maker and developer by the name of Adolphe Sax (1814 – 1894) who invented the saxophone. After a troubled beginning, the saxophone became increasingly accepted in France and later, the USA and Europe.

Since the mid 1850's, such classical composers as Bizet, Bozza, Rachmaninoff, Mussorgsky and Berlioz used the saxophone to great effect in a solo and ensemble capacity.

Since the turn of twentieth century, the instrument's popularity has grown dramatically as have the uses, the number and standard of compositions, as well as the technical possibilities. Today, although still largely seen as a jazz instrument, Australian tertiary institutions are successfully offering jazz and classical studies for saxophonists, which would only enhance the populace appeal of the instrument as a versatile one.

Personal Observations Concerning Current Saxophone Pedagogy

Saxophone pedagogy is a relatively young area of study with its origins spanning back only to the 1940's in the conservatoires of France. Since that time, such saxophone luminaries as Marcel Mule, Sigrid Rascher, Jean Londeix and Dr. Eugene Rousseau have significantly contributed to the relatively small body of knowledge attached to such a 'young' instrument throughout the world.

Dr. Rousseau in particular has been largely responsible for bringing credit to the subject of serious saxophone pedagogy in the US as well throughout Europe. Dr. Rousseau was also one of the performers and educators who were able to perform and encourage the composition and performance of new, purpose written music for the saxophone.

Over the years, although it has the fortune of hindsight from the development of other wind instruments from which it could draw theories and methodology, it still remains a comparatively juvenescent field of study, even though it is specifically different from any other wind instrument.

The fact that the saxophone is extremely competent in its ability to effectively express both classical and jazz music has been well reflected through recordings and the rising standard and number of compositions. However, it could be said that it has only been in the last 40 years of saxophone study, that there has been an increasing number of saxophonists who have begun to see the combination and fusion of jazz and classical music as a professional and teaching possibility.

Such jazz saxophonists as Stan Getz, Tommy Smith, Phil Woods, Tom Walsh and the Australian saxophonist Dale Barlow, have performed and collaborated on works that have included their own jazz ideas within a classical music structure or idiom. As previously mentioned, Dr. Eugene Rousseau, along with Martin Robertson and John Harle, have lent their classical expertise to interpreting classical compositions that include jazz elements.

Potential Difficulties in Cross-Genre Music Education

Both the jazz and classical music genres have very definite and unique origins, language and, to an extent, ethos. In attempting to teach a combination or fusion of the two, I believe one must clearly understand each as a separate identity. Once this has been achieved, then attempts at cross-genre education could be more fruitful.

It could be said that although the two genres have very distinct differences (accepted traditions in interpretation and composition), but they also share a common goal in striving for new and insightful interpretations (based on accepted practices), in performance as well as being musical representations of a specific period of history (expressed through their own specific language or ‘jargon’), some of which overlaps in the 19th and 20th Century.

One of the problems arising when using the ‘jargon’ specific to each, is that of attempting to find a common language that expresses them both, but is universally understandable – similar to the ethos from which the language *Esperanto* was formed. Therefore, perhaps the solution lies within this same ethos: the development of a ‘hybrid’ language.

Further, when using relevant and accessible language, such as the suggested ‘hybrid’, the problem of maintaining the integrity of each distinct art form remains. In the past, it has been my attempt to teach classical music to jazz students using ‘jazz language’ and jazz to classical music students using ‘classical language’, whilst maintaining the true essence of each. In this way, I have tried to capture those elements peculiar to each genre.

It was and remains to be, one of my challenges to attempt to find insights as to a common language during the fellowship.

Observations and Findings

This chapter will be a combination of conversational observations and summarised points.

Paris: History and Innovations

My first 'unofficial stop' was in Paris, where I was able to fulfil a dream by residing at the "Gard de Republicanne" (one might say the place 'where it all started' for the saxophone) for four days. Visiting Paris was also useful as a benchmark and starting point for my studies, where arguably it was in Paris where many of the first pedagogical concepts were conceived.

Here I was able to meet one of the saxophonists in the military band who informed me of the current French attitude to the saxophone performance and education. In general, the attitude seems to be a concentration on the classical or jazz techniques leaving the individual player to diversify should they wish.

Whilst in Paris, I was also privy to the latest developments in saxophone accessory technology - in particular ligatures - through the products of Roger Petit and his company '*Ligaphone*'. The products are marketed as being mainly for use in classical performance. I found them to be useful for classical and jazz of performance allowing the player freedom to explore different tone colours and articulation.

New York: Jazz Performance, Education and History (Jan 15th –26th)

Aside from entering New York on the coldest day since 1893, I knew that because of the magnitude of the Annual International Association of Jazz Educators Conference, there would be many of the finest jazz performers and music educators prior to and at the conclusion of, the conference

By way of an introductory summary, one of the main characteristics present in those well established in the 'jazz scene' in the US and in particular those I saw in New York was a direct correlation between the performers and educators, ie., in many cases they are one and the same. They could be seen as specialists in most facets of their area.

In terms of the amount of published material available, there seems to be a prevailing mentality (whether for educational and/or fiscal reasons) of highlighting the importance of all sides of the commercial music when specialising in an area.

In comparison, it could be said that there is less correlation in Australia, when one looks at the recorded performances and teaching materials. While on face value, it could be seen as a negative aspect of our musical education, this could also be seen as a positive contributor in promoting cross-genre music education due to the many musical paths crossed, explored and partly journeyed.

Already, I noticed the integrity of the separate genes of music being maintained through the separation and specialisation of music education and performance. The question still remained as to how can (or 'if'), classical and jazz be brought together to encourage the next generation of 'cross-genre-demanding' students to continue and further their studies in music.

Performances

One of the most noteworthy performances I attended featured 3 of the world's most influential jazz tenor saxophonists - Michael Brecker, Joe Lovano and Dave Liebman. They each exhibited a sense of the jazz of yesterday, today and tomorrow in their interpretations. Lovano seems to draw from some of the wonderful traditions set by many a saxophonist since the 1940's, Brecker was an expert exponent of the more modal and hard-bop traditions, while Liebman portrayed a sense of unpredictability, incredible depth of knowledge, experience and excitement. Each of these performers, especially Liebman, has produced articles, arrangements and/or educational materials along with their recordings and live performances.

I also had the privilege of attending a service at the *Abyssinian Gospel Church* where almost one hundred years of Negro musical tradition was an integral part of their Sunday services. This was an experience where I witnessed some of the authorial elements that have made up jazz, ie., call and response, the talking (swinging), and the vocal responses and 'calling out', being portrayed in a modern setting. In understanding cross-genre music, I feel it important to be able to go to the roots of the music to understand its elements and hence its potential influence on other musical styles.

International Association of Jazz Educators Conference

I attended the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) Annual Conference in New York City featuring some of the best in jazz education and jazz performances I have ever witnessed.

The Association was original set up in the late 1960's in the US and it was only in the 1980's through the work of Associate Professor Pat Crichton (Edith Cowan University, WA), that Australia became a part of this association, and thus opening channels of information exchange and flow between the US and the Australia jazz and popular music communities.

Since then, our association has grown and cemented, giving Australia an international forum through which to showcase the fine music education being taught in this country.

Through the IAJE, I am able to tap into one of the world's most comprehensive sources of music education and music educators.

It is an association without an agenda, except to help teachers, performers and all those associated in the creation and promotion of jazz and jazz education achieve the highest results whilst having access to the world's best in their respective fields.

For those 'in the know', some of the main protagonists in this association include Michael Brecker, Dave Liebman, Ron Carter, Wynton and Branford Marsalis, David Baker, Bob Mintzer and Dick Dunscomb (lecturer and author for Warner Brothers)

Conference Sessions

One of the sessions was a discussion on the state of tertiary jazz education. Some of the conclusions are listed below:

- Predominantly classical music university departments are increasingly including jazz electives within their programme.
- Jazz is increasingly becoming well received and increasing in importance as part of music education curriculum
- More jazz educators should be encouraged to participate in cross-genre music programs
- There are a growing number of universities who are ensuring that music education is a well-rounded experience that includes jazz and classical. A saxophone lecturer (Dan Goble, Western Connecticut State University) spoke of his jazz students having a 70:30 ratio (jazz to classical training) in education and performance and vice versa for the classical students, ensuring that their graduates are versed in 'music' and not just their specialist area. He also cited North Texas University, which included the mandatory study of the western classical musical elements of history, harmony, literature and instrumental performance techniques in their jazz program.

Other seminars and meetings included:

- Jazz in Primary schools - ways in which jazz education can be used in a primary school setting to encourage creativity, openness to all music as well as encouraging initiative and healthy group dynamics.
- The trend of fusing musical styles, where ethnic music (in this case, Indian) is brought into a largely western arts culture, ie., jazz.
- The increasing standard of performances by school aged students – highlighting the result of good music education opportunities at the younger ages.
- The importance of meeting and staying in touch with many of the world's renowned experts in jazz education, composition and performance (some of whom pledged their allegiance to 'my cause' and offered ongoing help).
- The importance of increased accessibility to the latest developments in music performance, pedagogy, composition, techniques and music education literature.

Cross-Genre Music in Practice (IAJE)

One of the most interesting performances of the IAJE conference was that of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* arranged for jazz quintet by New York based musician, Charles Pillow. This was a good example where jazz utilizes the template of well-known classical music piece in a jazz suite. From the classical tradition, the arrangement drew on the melodies, form and compositional techniques of melodic development. From the jazz idiom, one could hear the inclusion of jazz rhythms (swing and rock), chromatically altered chord progressions and the use of improvisation based on melodies as well as on the prevailing chord progression.

Although there was a predominance of one style over another in this performance (jazz over classical), there was evidence of two languages compromising, producing a different 'dialect'. It was of interest to me that this performance was a part of this conference, as it pointed to an even wider demand for cross-genre music.

The Conference In Sum

In discussion with many of the jazz musicians, the following elements were common to almost all:

- They cite a significant part of their musical success being a result of classical technique they studied.
- They admire and refer to many classical musicians in matters of tone, technique and general musical principles
- Many of them found their beginnings through the use of various 'classical wind band methods'.

Indiana University, Bloomington (Jan 26th – Feb 26th)

The School of Music at the Indiana University, Bloomington is held in great esteem as one of the premiere music schools in the US. It has a student population of 39000 of which about 1,500 students study classical, jazz, music theatre, opera and music education. As a result of its reputation, the expected standards are high as is the resultant research.

The classical saxophone department has earned its reputation as one of the best in the world largely as a result of the work of Dr Rousseau and now Professor Otis Murphy. The jazz department, led by renowned educator, author and performer, Dr. David Baker, is also one of the most sought after institutions for students and professors. Dr. Tom Walsh, current Chair of the Woodwind department and Head of Jazz Saxophone is regarded as one of the most thorough, inventive and inspirational jazz educators in his field.

It was here, with these professors, that I continued my exploration.

Addressing classical and jazz pedagogy only, there are 2 separate programs highly specialised in their approaches area. In sum, the university seems to create an atmosphere that:

- encourages learning in a safe, encouraging environment,
- is highly competitive and;
- encourages cross-genre awareness.

This cross-genre awareness takes place through the student attendance of specialised classes not specific to their area of specialised study.

However, apart from within the context of individual instrumental tuition, cross-genre tuition did seem a current priority.

The University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (Feb 26th – March 12th)

In contrast, the University of Minnesota's music student population is about 600 students where the approach to music is very inclusive and very encouraging, where the emphasis is on accessible learning with less focus on competitiveness.

Dr. Eugene Rousseau holds the Chair of Saxophone position at the UMN and being someone with a vast experience in every possible field of saxophone pedagogy and performance, teaches and performs with that same ideal of inclusivity where each student is approached "where they are at".

My time with Dr. Rousseau was channelled through specific repertoire study as well as observations of his own teaching style and approach.

Here, the music program is largely one with a classical focus where jazz is encouraged through optional electives and volunteer jazz ensembles. As a result, the level of student participation in jazz is high as is the motivation for wider learning.

Summary of Learned Concepts, Observations and Discussions

Saxophone specific ideas and discussions from Dr. Eugene Rousseau, Professor Otis Murphy and myself:

- One should allow and encourage more flexibility in tone
- Warm-ups are essential for every student to enable effective playing
- One should encourage flexibility in approaches to fingering, especially quite mid-register notes and 'palm-key' notes.
- When addressing the tongue position, the tongue should remain in the position where it makes the tone is best, then the tongue should hit the reed from this position.
- Understanding the links between the shape of the mouth, position of the tongue and the strength of the embouchere.
- Physical position of the entire body is vital to ensure the best quality of tone and to avoid unnecessary injuries
- Whilst saxophone and clarinet technique can be seen as similar, there are some stark contrasts and differences in embouchere technique especially, that need to be addressed
- One should always to continue to encourage versatility in ability
- While specialisation is necessary, versatility should be encouraged for employability and for the expansion of music that crosses musical and social boundaries
- There is more emphasis on 'guide teaching' and the encouragement of conceptualising, rather than merely passing on of information. This encourages students to take more initiative, whereby the tertiary teacher is as much a guide as a teacher. Where this is sometimes kept for those in post-graduate research, it was collective opinion that this should be integrated into the undergraduate level.

My Contribution to Australia

The Mrs. Gerald Frank New Churchill Fellowship allowed me the unique experience of being able to meet with leading music educators and performers and discuss some of the wider issues involved in jazz and classical music education, with specific reference to the saxophone. It was an incredible journey where I was privy to some of the finest teaching, performing and pedagogical ideas available today. As a result, I have returned with a wealth of new information, as well as a confirmation of the validity of many of my own ideas gathered from Australian sources.

There now comes the privilege of being able to pass on my experiences to the wider community. It is through my role as a Churchill Fellow, teacher, performer and ultimately a 'commission-ee' and perhaps even as an author, that I can affect change and encourage growth in an area where more than simply music is brought together. With this privilege comes the challenge of trying to form a coherent pedagogy to enable a joining of musical ideas and methodologies. The Fellowship has enabled me to 'step back' and view this area from a unique vantage point.

UWA

At the University of Western Australia's School of Music, I have begun the process of writing and re-writing the courses I teach in light of the new and validated information that has been passed on to me. I currently teach classical musicians (performance, composition and education majors) how to read, understand, interpret and teach music from the jazz idiom whilst encouraging them to combine their knowledge of jazz with the skills and knowledge they already possess in their classical music studies. The result is something of a 'jazzical' nature.

Compositions

Such local, yet nationally and internationally recognised composers as Lindsay Vickery, Cathy Travers, Jim Ledger and Iain Grandage have already been successful in bringing elements of both genres together in works involving saxophones. I would welcome the opportunity to further work with these and other composers, resulting in commissions to enlarge the body of works currently available for the saxophone.

Research

My Master's degree (due to be finished this year) focuses on the very question of classification and the validity of music that spans across classical and jazz music genres. On completion of this, I will be looking to further research projects, grants and collaborations with any interested Australian tertiary institutions to continue to devise methodology to meet the changing needs of the musical arts community in this area.

Performances and Masterclasses

I will also be aiming to increase the number of performances and recordings in and around Australia highlighting the cross-genre versatility of the saxophone and further, hope to be increasing the number of masterclasses and workshops I give regarding this topic.

Recommendations

In this ultimate section, I will briefly mention some of these validated ideas, along with some suggestions as to possible direction for the future.

1. The saxophone is a unique instrument in its ability to cross-over musical styles, speak the language of most styles and adapt to changing styles. Thus there exists a unique opportunity for this instrument to realise this ideal through teaching, performance and composition
2. I encourage composers to continue to write challenging and relevant works for the saxophone to build up an international standard body of works.
3. I encourage the continual increase of teachers and performers who can teach and understand both jazz and classical styles. It's all music!
4. In a tertiary setting, as is the case at the University of Western Australia's School of Music, an integrated approach to music would be beneficial not only to the immediate body of music students, but also to the professional music community and ultimately to the wider arts community.
5. I encourage Australian students, teachers and saxophone performers to consider contributing to the pool of methodological and research resources, whilst challenging existing techniques.
6. There is a significant need for instrument companies and music companies to unite efforts in significantly reducing the cost of ready-made literature, sheet music, scores and saxophone books to make music education more accessible, whilst offering affordable publishing alternatives to locally produced literature.
7. I encourage a wider recognition of the validity of present Australian methods and approaches.
8. On a wider scope, I encourage the awareness of the unique position Australians currently holds and a pride in being able to significantly affect change in all areas of the arts.

Investment

In light of my observations and discussions in the US over a period of some 10 weeks, I found that although many of those within the North American arts community were complaining about the reduction in funding and opportunities, in relative comparison to Australia there are far more sources of funding (private and Government: *National Endowment for the Arts*) and a markedly higher number of opportunities and room for funded initiatives. As a result, The US has a growing musical and cultural identity and sense of belonging within their artistic and wider community

Having said this, however, Australia has been able to gather some of the best ideas from leaders in respective artistic fields, whilst having the advantage of remoteness and space to be able to interpret and utilise this information in a very unique way. As with any ideas and thoughts, however, the realisation of same and the encouragement of the continuation of this exploration of identity, can only continue through the direct increase in the investment to this area.

In this way, it is believed that the musical identity of Australia is still being developed, but is at the same time, being heard world-wide. For example, the winner of the 2003 Montreaux World Jazz Saxophone Competition was Jamie Oehlers from Perth, Western Australia.

I urge the Australian funding bodies to follow the incredible example of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and to dramatically increase investment in what would be the formation and growth of our artistic, and ultimately our national identity.