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VOICED IDENTITY: A STUDY OF CENTRAL CHARACTERS IN SEVEN OPERAS FROM AUSTRALIA 1988-1998

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Composers of Australian operas, in the decade from 1988 to 1998, have responded to social and political events through the medium of central characters. In each of the seven operas in the study, a character becomes the signifier of reflections on events and conditions that affect Australian society. The works selected are Andrew Schultz's *Black River*, Gillian Whitehead's *The Bride of Fortune*, Moya Henderson's *Lindy - The Trial Scene*, Richard Mills' *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, Alan John's *The Eighth Wonder*, Martin Wesley-Smith's *Quito* and Colin Bright's *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*. These operas are studied in three groups to investigate issues that concern voices of women in the contemporary operatic genre, issues of cultural identity and issues of political protest.

Grounding its readings of characters in the operas in theories of multiply constructed identity, the thesis contends that the central character in each opera represents a discourse, whether it be, for example, of alienation or justice. Primary sources for the seven operas include scores, librettos, recordings of performances and workshops, and interviews with the composers and librettists. Interviews, compositional notes and reports on performances are collected in the Appendices to the thesis. Comparative studies are made with operas in the repertoire in the exploration of dimensions in Australian opera in the 1990s. An argument that is consistently taken throughout the thesis is that the signs that musically manifest character aspects are semiotically decipherable. Using a range of methodological perspectives, the readings in the thesis demonstrate the power which accrues to authenticity of voice in contexts which are drawn from recent Australian experiences.
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and Madeleine Balzer RSM
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This thesis explores seven operas, written by Australian composers in the decade from 1988 to 1998, which all in some way critically appraise Australian society and uniquely respond to social, political and cultural events, in stories of Australian experience. The composers and librettists centralise a storytelling role on one character in each of the seven operas which invests that character with extraordinary power, and, to some extent, with mythic qualities. Such characters are interpreted in this study as signifiers of the composers' and librettists' reflections on Australian events and conditions in different ways from both the immediacy of news coverage and from other art forms. These reflections indicate reconfigured dimensions to opera in Australia in the late 1990s and it is the purpose of this thesis to discover and reveal those dimensions.

The seven operas, in order of their presentation in this thesis, are:

- **Black River** (completed and performed in 1989) composed by Andrew Schultz with libretto by Julianne Schultz;
- **The Bride of Fortune** (completed in 1988 and performed in 1991) composed by Gillian Whitehead with libretto by Anna Maria Dell'Oso;
- **Lindy** Scene 5, called the Trial Scene (completed in 1997 and Scene 5 workshopped in 1994) composed by Moya Henderson with libretto by Henderson and Judith Rodriguez;
- **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** (completed and performed in 1996) composed by Richard Mills with libretto by Peter Goldsworthy;
The Eighth Wonder (completed in 1994 and performed in 1995) composed by Alan John with concept and scenario by Dennis Watkins and libretto by Dennis Watkins and Alan John;
Quito (completed and performed in 1994; revised as documentary drama and broadcast in 1997) composed by Martin Wesley-Smith with libretto by Peter Wesley-Smith;
The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior (completed in 1994 and performed in 1997) composed by Colin Bright with libretto by Amanda Stewart.

In respect to these seven pieces, the composers and librettists hold different views about the process of the creation of an opera. The strongest challenge to the position of the centrality of the composer is represented by The Eighth Wonder which acknowledges composer and librettist on an equal basis. Andrew Schultz speaks of the process of creating an opera as being more collaborative than ever before (Schultz 1997: 12). However, this thesis takes as a premise that it is a composer's music which completes an audience's experience of operatic character and a creative response to social, political and cultural events outlined in a libretto. Consequently, it will be the practice in citing the operas of the study to refer to the composer's name alone.

The seven operas were chosen because they are about Australian experiences. This opens the possibility that they can resonate with Australian audiences in particular ways because such audiences may empathise with specific social and political contexts. Operas based on stories outside Australian contexts have been excluded (see Appendix 8 for chronological list).
Moreover, the operas in this study are grouped in particular ways. *Black River, The Bride of Fortune* and *Lindy* are linked together in order to examine voices of women in Australian opera in the 1990s. This thesis argues that these operas reveal the voices and construct the identities of women in new ways. The search to define cultural identity is reflected in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Eighth Wonder*. The first of these two operas explores a growing and changing Australian society during the 1950s, shown by the fading of the legendary status of the 'man on the land' with individuals as metaphors of the nation; and the second presents cultural changes during the years of the building of the Sydney Opera House from the 1950s to the 1970s. *Quito* and *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* focus on the political issues of the invasion of East Timor and the bombing of the Greenpeace vessel, Rainbow Warrior, during the period of French nuclear testing in the Pacific. These operas voice their protest through the fragmentation of character.

Such groupings could have been effected in different ways. It could have been possible, for instance, to have divided the operas into those which are based on factual events (*Lindy, Quito* and *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*), those on composites of fact and invented events (*Black River* and *The Eighth Wonder*) and those on fiction, albeit derived from factual events (*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Bride of Fortune*). Another purpose might have been served by linking operas according to the way the duration of the work affects considerations of scope and balance, for this would have seen *Black River* grouped with both *Quito* and *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*. The groupings chosen reflect the intent of the thesis to examine aspects of the central characters in order to discover reconfigured dimensions in Australian opera in the 1990s.
Since the beginnings of opera in the late sixteenth century, the fact that an opera takes the name of a character celebrates that character’s dominance. *Dafne* (1594) by Peri and Corsi, and Peri’s *Euridice* (1600) established this tradition and it continued with characters in operas such as Handel’s *Julius Caesar* (1724), Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* (1787) and Beethoven’s *Fidelio* (1805) (Grout in Sadie 1980: 13, 550-1). Wagner contributed legendary characters from operas such as *Tannhauser* (1845), *Lohengrin* (1850) and *Parsifal* (1882), while Verdi explored the psyche of characters in operas such as *Rigoletto* (1851), *Don Carlos* (1867), *Otello* (1887) and *Falstaff* (1893). The list is by no means exhaustive. The early part of this century added characters from operas such as Strauss’ *Salome* (1905) and Britten’s *Peter Grimes* (1945).

However, in the seven operas in this study, the central characters are not only dominant but their music makes the audience conscious that these characters have multiple identities. Recent research examines how members of minority groups attach a varying degree of importance to their multiple identities (Gingras 1998: 11). In the operas of the study, the central characters are drawn from aboriginal peoples, women, immigrants and members of political subcultures. The music explores the different facets revealed by each one as they respond to the events in which they participate. Through their multiply constructed identity, the central character in each opera represents a discourse arising from issues of women’s identity, cultural identity or political identity.

There are many social, cultural, historical and political influences to which these seven Australian operas respond. This is part of operatic tradition. The sensitivity of opera to the social and political environment has been reflected in the kinds of libretto topics prominent at particular periods (Grout in Sadie
1980: 547). For example, realism became the prevailing mode when the industrial age gained momentum. However, the seven operas in this study do not disguise their political and social issues with allegories or analogies but state them openly and passionately.²

A glance at twentieth century Australian opera shows little consistent use of Australian subjects. Operas by Australians whose composing lives were spent in other countries avoid the questions of Australian content and current issues. For example, Malcolm Williamson (b. 1931) left Australia for England when he was twenty-two and completed five operas within a period of three years from 1963 to 1966; a glance at their titles confirms their lack of connections with his origins: Our Man in Havana (1963), The English Eccentrics (1963-4), The Violins of St Jacques (1964-6), Julius Caesar Jones (1965) and The Happy Prince (1964-5). Peggy Glanville-Hicks' composing life was largely spent in America and her last operas, Nausicaa (1960) and Sapho (1963) portray women of ancient Greece.

Four Australian operas had major productions in the years following the establishing of the Australian Opera Company (1970) and the opening of the Sydney Opera House (1973). They are Larry Sitsky's Lenz (1970) and Felix Werder's The Affair (1969), performed as a double bill in 1974; Barry Conyngham's Fly (1984); and Richard Meale's Voss (1986). Lenz is based on a text by the German playwright, Buchner. By contrast, Fly and Voss are concerned with characters of Australian history, its inventors and explorers. Fly is concerned with the story of aviation pioneer Lawrence Hargrave, as is a later opera, Nigel Butterly's Lawrence Hargrave Flying Alone (1988). Voss brings the novel of Patrick White to the operatic stage, and is based on the story of the explorer Leichhardt. Of these major productions, only The Affair could be seen
to have some reference to the Australia of the 1970s, the period of its production, in that its libretto satirised politicians in general and, by inference only, the Whitlam government of the day.

Musicologist Elizabeth Wood has suggested that such operas as George Dreyfus' *Garni Sands* (1965, performed 1972) and Margaret Sutherland's *The Young Kabbarli* (1965) are "uneasy" because of the occasional non-alignment of their literary themes and musical symbolism (Wood 1979: 190). For example, *The Young Kabbarli* has been criticised for some oversimplified tumbling melodies sung in Pidgin English (C. Schultz in Breen 1989: 137). Some of the structural problems of *Garni Sands* can be directly attributed to dramatic inconsistencies in the text (Covell 1967: 267). Nevertheless, *Garni Sands*, with its convict hero, and *The Young Kabbarli*, with its story of Daisy Bates' work with Aborigines, indicate a trend away from larger-than-life characters and an engagement with Australia as a location for operatic story.

The seven operas of this study present critiques of contemporary Australian identity and of political and cultural issues. Indeed, at various times and places the arts have been able to do this. The year 1988 is chosen as the commencement of the period covered by this study because it was a seminal year for the arts in Australia and for social, cultural and political thought. Not only did the Bicentenary of white settlement in Australia prompt redefinition of Australian history, it also motivated re-appraisal of creative response in the arts, which finds expression in these operas. Recognition of that re-appraisal is to be found in statements by Paul Keating, Prime Minister from 1991, when he spoke about Australian identity being essentially connected to "the culture and identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians"; and he
acknowledged the enrichment that has flowed from "the meeting of imported and home-grown cultures" (Australian Government 1994: 6).

Contemporary operatic character frequently adopts the model of a possible person in a recognisable world. The complexity of a character is therefore based upon the complexity attributed to a person (Margolin 1990: 454). This has resonance with the theory of multiple identities. On the other hand, the question of character as signifier of the composers' and librettists' reflections, on current social and political issues, raises a second model where character is representative of a discourse.4

In each of the seven operas in this study, the composers and librettists make their response to Australian events and conditions through one character. It is not simply that several of the operas display the name or description of the central character in the title (The Bride of Fortune, Lindy and Quito); rather in each instance, one character powerfully owns or constructs the story. They represent a discourse, manifested strongly through the multiply constructed identity of the character. In the operatic genre, the effect of such a character is powerful because the accumulation of visual, linguistic and social detail in the stories is heightened by music. Significantly, it is through this aspect of character that the operas comment upon Australian society.

The character of the Narrator Fernando in The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior, while based upon a real person, exemplifies this model of character as discourse representative: he is an integral part of the discourse of betrayal, power, imperialism and ecological disaster which the opera explores. The audience is moved by the character to cognitively engage with a search for the
meaning of the events. Operatic character can only be fully understood through the music, but the context of social issues is of critical importance.

Readings of character in the subsequent chapters of this study are underpinned by the theory of multiple identities, and the thesis explores the connection that exists between revealing multiply constructed identity and representing a discourse. An explanation of the theory of multiple identities follows, with a rationale for methodologies which will be called upon in interpreting character.

1.1.1 Multiple Identities

Social theorist Madan Sarup sets out his account of multiple identities in the following way:

Identity, in my view, may perhaps be best seen as a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings blend and clash. These writings consist of many quotations from the innumerable centres of culture: parents, family, schools, the workplace, the media, the political parties, the state (25) ... The idea of belonging wherever you are, of being recognised by the people around you, implies the concept of multi-identities (142) ... There are many axes of identification: language, class, gender, sexuality, 'race', ethnicity, religion and nation (181).

Identity, then, is to some extent determined by who a person is with and where they are. Axes of identification form through interaction with people, in families and communities and through legal and social institutions. Principles, values and beliefs are absorbed or rejected in those different settings. While a person's multi-identities are not separate from each other, one of these axes of
identification may prompt a person to speak out in support or protest. For the operas in this study, this is the connection to the model of character as representing a discourse.

The concept of multiple identities is particularly relevant to the migrant experience. Salman Rushdie writes that migrants exemplify "new types of human beings... in whom strange fusions occur between what they are and where they find themselves" (Rushdie 1991: 124). Sarup's theory develops from his migrant experience, having left India as a youth and spending his working life in England. One of the aspects on which Sarup comments is that when a person identifies themself, they engage in narrative (Sarup 1996: 16). In the second half of the twentieth century waves of migration have taken place. The migration experience has focused attention upon recollection of the past as a selective set of memories. Some things are included and stressed, others are subordinated (Sarup 1996: 40). Telling the story has transformative power, which is related to the idea of human agency as freely willed action which creates change.

Migrant story is concerned with the gap between previous and present experience, and in the production of the story multiple specific identities have importance. Cultural anthropologists support this theory of multiple identities. For example, feminist writer and film-maker Trinh Minh-ha writes of

multiple presence... 'T' is not a unified subject, a fixed identity, or that solid mass covered with layers of superficialities one has gradually to peel off before one can see its true face. T is, itself, infinite layers ... all interchange, revolving in an endless process (94).
Stuart Hall theorises that, for every person, identity is not singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions (Hall 1996: 4). However, Francois Gingras takes as his general hypothesis that majority groups are less likely than minorities to attach importance to their multiple specific identities. Specifically, Gingras' theory explores whether minority groups will attach more importance than their dominant counterparts to their gender, language, ethnicity and place of birth. His findings in a pilot study confirmed that women tend to attach more importance to their gender identity than men do; and that language identity is of major importance to people when they are away from their country or province of origin. This thesis argues in support of Gingras' position by focusing on the musical construction of the central character in the seven operas in this study.

An operatic character who demonstrates multiply constructed identity resonates with theories which make sense of the real world. The construction of a character is necessarily dependent on cultural concepts that define the nature of self. Indeed, librettist Julianne Schultz observes that the depth and plausibility of a character is a factor in the appeal of operas which secure their place in the repertoire.

There has been much documentation of the significance of music in defining the identity of a society, beginning with the early research of such ethnomusicologists as Charles Seeger (1941), John Blacking (1957, 1959, 1976), and Alan Merriam (1964). On the other hand, the relationship of music and multiply constructed identity of operatic characters is almost untouched ground. Subsequent chapters, with their readings of characters in the
nominated operas, can test the proposition that such multiple identities are recognisable through music.

1.1.2 Interpreting Character

Intertextual studies take account of the text having the potential to lend a specific quality to music associated with a character. While de Lauretis was discussing cinematic character, her words are equally true of the musical representation of character in opera when she states that it "exceeds the moment of inscription to become a dynamic of feelings, affects, passions, ideas in the moment of reception" (de Lauretis 1984: 51). Readings of musical representation of character are influenced by, and are an influence on the text in a way which uniquely allows an audience to follow the emergence of multiple identities.

Musical hermeneutics is the process of explanation of musical texts, of interpreting social detail through music. It is one of the means by which "culture enters music, and music enters culture as discourse" (Kramer in Scher 1992: 140). The intention of hermeneutics is "to reveal the ways in which the social context bears upon, determines, influences, or otherwise informs the production, form, content and reception" of the music (White in Scher 1992: 290). Accordingly, readings of characters will combine methodologies of musical hermeneutics and semiotics with more traditional musicological analysis. Comparisons of each of the operas in this study with operas which are established in the repertoire will develop the thesis that there are new dimensions in the ways in which character is created by composers and librettists in Australian opera in the 1990s.
The hermeneutic process overlaps with ideas about the formation of metaphor and the concept of intertextuality, the relationship between texts and the allusion of one to the other. Kramer writes that "to form a metaphor is to open up the possibility of two-way transfers of meaning, as the discourses in which each term of the metaphor is inscribed become available to the other term". He finds that "a musical likeness is the equivalent of a metaphor with a substantial intertextual history" (Kramer in Scher 1992: 141, 161).

Metaphors depend on a perception of analogy and, as Graham Pont states, the relationships between texts may exist or be mere resemblances (Pont in Kassier 1991: 193). Ricoeur argues that metaphor functions as a particular case within hermeneutical method, in which "interrogation ... is carried towards ... the sort of world opened up by (a text)" (Ricoeur 1981: 93). Expressions that have been accepted as conventions for defining the contour and movement of musical lines are drawn originally from metaphor. The addition of a libretto introduces elements such as the inspiration of particular words, plot situation, message and extra-musical meaning.

Musical ways of defining identity vary in operas of this study; for example, some composers favour underlying harmonies and others, structural or timbral features. Musical motifs as metaphors of identity are used in all seven nominated operas; frequently, they function as part of the composer's thinking in the pre-composition stage and, as such retain importance for analysis. It should be noted that, while the use of motifs has a long history, the Wagnerian process frequently comes to mind when motifs are discussed. It is useful,
therefore, in this context to notice a feature of Wagner's approach which is different from ways in which motifs are used in the seven operas in this study.

A major reason for Wagner's use of motifs was to connect intangible concepts with specific objects. Wagner's musical motifs become motifs of reminiscence or leitmotifs when the music has become the symbol of something seen on the stage (Deathridge and Dahlhaus 1984: 146). In the operas in this study, motifs are used as the assertion of what Abbate calls "a voice with a characteristic way of speaking" (Abbate 1991: 48). They signify the composers' and librettists' reflections, open to semiotic interpretation.

Since the 1960s, there has been a growing literature on musical semiotics: this includes the ground-breaking work of musicologist Nattiez (1975, 1985); in the field of popular music, the work of Tagg (1979); and in the Western art music tradition, the work of Tarasti (1987, 1994) and Agawu (1991). In chronological order, those that have made semiotic studies of opera are: Noske (1977); Tarasti (1979); Charadeau (ed.) (1984); Sebeok (ed.) (1987); Clement (1988); Abbate (1991); and McClary (1991, 1992). There are also some critical studies of contemporary opera outside of Australia. These include: Jones (ed.) (1987); Driver and Christiansen (eds.) (1989); Norris (ed.) (1989); and Levin (ed.) (1994). However, with the exception of work by Halliwell (1994) and Kouvaras (1996), little study of contemporary Australian opera has been undertaken.

Ferdinand de Saussure's work in linguistics (1916) introduced the terms *signifier* and *signified* and for a time, linguistic models were applied to musical semiotics. While such models were later found to be misleading, it was through semiotics that musical scholarship came back to questions of
signification which, according to musicologist David Lidov, had been "repressed or neglected as a consequence, both of the development in the musical sciences and of the tendency of twentieth century aesthetics, to promote an abstract, non-referential interpretation of music" (Lidov 1986: 577). As semiotic study has developed, there has been a variety of semiotic musical research projects rather than one pervading musical semiotic approach.

Roland Barthes proposes that what a person grasps in the relationship of signifier and signified is the correlation which unites them (Barthes 1993: 113). However, the correlation that a person constructs when a person reads or hears a text may be different from the correlation intended by the author or composer. Poststructuralist theory sees the relation of signifier and signified as breaking apart and re-attaching in new combinations (Harvey 1990: 49). Moreover Umberto Eco proposes that, in any single art work, there are many messages on different levels, ambiguously organised. In Eco's terms, the 'decoding' of an aesthetic message is not final because each ambiguity compels one to reconsider the possibilities (Eco 1976: 274). As research in musical semiotics continues, the search for meaning in music has broadened to encompass cultural differences. Such approaches appeared in the late 1970s, with the work of musicologists such as Eero Tarasti (1979) and Vladimir Karbusicky (1987).

Semiotic approaches that have most relevance for this study of Australian opera place emphasis on the view that music communicates in society.10 Musical themes and motifs are read as having meaning as signs and, through the characters, the audience engages with the discourses of the opera. Readings of the characters in this study are mimetic, representing a type of 'reality'.
The question of opera's relevance at the end of the twentieth century has led to the idea of presenting contemporary situations and events, with recognisable characters, as a principle by which opera can reinvent itself (Kamuf in Levin 1994: 96). At the same time, there is evidence of an intention to incorporate a sense of myth and there are sound reasons for this. First, as Tarasti points out, "myths are associated with the sacred sphere of culture" (Tarasti 1979: 18). Second, as Theodor Adorno adds, "opera has been bound to myth since the experiments of the Florentines, even throughout the course of its ongoing secularisation" (Adorno in Levin 1994: 33). It follows that, while opera composers and librettists comment upon contemporary cultural situations, a mythic approach contributes to the renewal of an art form while maintaining links with opera's origins.

American composer John Adams has stated that the great modern political figures are the mythological characters of our time (Lieberson 1988: 35). In works such as *Nixon in China*, he has put his theory into practice. By contrast, Australian composers have added mythic dimensions to ordinary people in extraordinary situations, as for example, a woman accused of murdering her baby (*Lindy*) or a man killed in an attack on a Greenpeace vessel (*The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*). Some characters are familiar through the media, others are created from combinations of attributes gleaned from letters and legend.

To this point, the study of character in the seven nominated operas, has located responses to social, cultural and political influences as part of operatic tradition. An understanding of contemporary operatic characters has been grounded in
identity theories. The characters in the nominated operas demonstrate multi-
identities; and, through multiply constructed identity, the character represents
a discourse.

The study has established a rationale for using hermeneutic consideration of
social and cultural influences upon music with written text, sociological and
socio-political observation, intertextual approaches, semiotics (specifically
signification), and traditional musicological analysis. The framework for
investigating character as representative of a discourse is based upon the
concept of "histories of the present" from the work of Foucault.

The Foucault framework comes from two collections of essays and interviews:
*Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (1977) and *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*
(1988). These writings reveal Foucault's descriptions of historical investigations
as having a bearing upon intellectual work on the nature of the present. The
following pages expand on this concept of Foucault's and apply it to the
discovery of information about operatic character: namely, what issues these
characters raise; from what source, or line of descent, come changes in the
issues with which operatic characters engage; what external influences
contribute to the construction of a character's identity; and in what way the
reflective dimensions of character are addressed.

1.2 Framework for Investigating Character as Representative of Discourse

The concept, "history of the present", connects with the essays of Foucault in
which he consistently describes historical investigations as a tool for
intellectual work on the nature of the present.11 Foucault writes:
On the one hand, the time we live in is not the unique or fundamental or irruptive point in history where everything is completed and begun again... On the other hand, the time we live in is very interesting; it needs to be analysed and broken down, and we would do well to ask ourselves, "What is the nature of our present?"

The function of any diagnosis concerning the nature of the present ... does not consist in a simple characterisation of what we are but, instead - by following lines of fragility in the present - in managing to grasp why and how that-which-is might no longer be that-which-is. In this sense, any description must always be made in accordance with these kinds of virtual fracture which open up the space of freedom and of possible transformation.

Recourse to history is meaningful to the extent that history serves to show how that-which-is has not always been; that is, that the things which seem most evident to us are always formed in the confluence of encounters and chances, during the course of a precarious and fragile history... [T]he network of contingencies from which it emerges can be traced (Foucault 1988: 36-37).

In Foucault's approach, historical investigations raise questions about the present. They trace the line of descent, with its continuities and discontinuities, that shows problems being posed in certain ways, and focus upon the structures that give the present its shape, so that "the network of contingencies from which (the question) emerges can be traced" (Foucault 1988: 37). Such investigations, as Tyler and Johnson write, "locate the present as a strange rather than a familiar landscape", where something that has gone without saying becomes problematic (Tyler and Johnson 1991: 2). Through this process, familiar actions and practices become subjects of reflection.
Approaching the nature of the present in this way can be used as a model for reflection on changes within contemporary opera in Australia. The seven nominated operas present a variety of discourses, each one through a central character. Issues with which the characters engage first emerged in Australian drama and from there comes a line of descent. These operas expose the structures that historically shape the present such as government policies, the law and the media. In a way that few other art forms can effect, mythic elements transform the events of the stories of these operas into subjects of reflection. In the remaining pages of this chapter, these distinguishing marks of historical investigation will be applied to the nominated operas, in order to focus and comment upon dimensions that are reconfigured in Australian opera in the 1990s.

1. 2. 1 Social questions.

*Black River*, as read in this study, is about an Aboriginal woman, Miriam, telling the story of her family to the people with whom she shelters from a rising flood in the police cell. The story encompasses the deaths of her grandfather, her father and her son. *Black River* confronts its audience with Aboriginal issues, especially those of family separation (Sc. 4) and black deaths in custody (Sc. 8). The title carries a metaphor of the number of deaths of Aboriginal people in custody, seen as a river. The opera does not present answers but offers hope. Within the character of Miriam there is knowledge of the past and potential for growth and transformation.

As *Black River* is an opera by a non-Aboriginal composer about Aboriginal issues, it is necessary to look at questions of appropriation. These questions
include: Is there an assumption that Aboriginal women cannot 'speak' but can be 'spoken for'? Is Aboriginal identity defined in consultation with Aboriginal people?

Some of the answers to these questions lie in the writing of the libretto and some in the composing of the music. Prior to writing the libretto for Black River, Julianne Schultz had co-written a report for the Human Rights Commission's investigation into the Toomelah Race Riots. Her research for this report involved on-site interviews and was grounded in an awareness of the links between family separation and black deaths in custody. When Julianne Schultz came to write the libretto for Black River, its reflections on belonging and exclusion were informed by her research. Contrary to assuming that Aboriginal women could not speak for themselves, she consulted with Aboriginal people in the telling of their story, so that the perspective of Miriam's story in Black River is an Aboriginal one.

From the composer's perspective, Andrew Schultz made musical revisions based on the dramatic and vocal qualities of the Aboriginal singer who premiered the part of Miriam. He has commented on the importance of such revision "to suit the exigencies of vocal delivery, textual clarity and action on stage" (Schultz 1994: 54). On the basis that Julianne Schultz had consulted with Aboriginal people, Andrew Schultz put his energies into representing the story based on knowledge and empathy.

The Bride of Fortune raises issues arising from assisted immigration from southern Europe in the post-war period of the 1950s. As read in this study, they are issues of assimilation, prejudice, communication and empowerment. The
official Australian attitude was to welcome migrants on condition that they embraced the Australian way of life and did not import conflict into Australian communities (McKay 1993: 155-6). Such an attitude, reflecting government policy of the 1950s, intended that migrants should become invisible as quickly as possible.¹⁴ In part, this is the experience of the young Italian bride; but eventually she also gains support from her co-workers.

Lindy goes beyond recording the death of the baby, Azaria Chamberlain and the trial of her mother, Lindy. Lindy Chamberlain consistently maintained that her baby was taken by a dingo while the family were on holiday at Ayers Rock. The child's body was never found. Nevertheless, the reading in this study acknowledges the focus of the opera is survival: Lindy's survival of conviction and imprisonment. The Trial Scene is one of two in the public domain at the time of writing.

Summer of the Seventeenth Doll is based on the play by Ray Lawler (1955) and the reading of the character of Olive in this study investigates time and arrested emotional development. In the context of the 1990s, the opera is, on one level, a nostalgic return to a cultural identity of the 1950s. On another level, the contradictions of Olive's character disrupt easy identification.

Australian society is represented as collectively anticipating the completion of the Sydney Opera House in The Eighth Wonder. The reading in this study is of a young woman who achieves her ambition of becoming an opera singer. The opera addresses the questions of who is free in the creative process and what are the obstacles to be overcome. Above all, this is read as encompassing personal statements by composer and librettist about the arts in Australia: first,
in the building itself and then, by association, the diva and opera-within-the-
opera. Watkins, the librettist, has declared that "this opera is about a young 
country's cultural coming-of-age over the two decades it took to complete the 
building" (Watkins 1995: 34).

Quito presents a fragmented view of society. The issues it canvasses are the 
relationships between schizophrenia and invasion. The schizophrenia of the 
young Timorese man, Francisco Pires (Quito), is made a metaphor for the 
invasion of East Timor by Indonesian forces in 1975. The opera is read in this 
study as a strong political statement, challenging its audience to consider the 
apparently inconsistent response to human rights abuses by the Australian 

The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior investigates political readings of the 1985 
attack on the Greenpeace vessel in Auckland Harbour, New Zealand. The opera 
makes statements about French nuclear testing in the Pacific, and about the 
rights of indigenous peoples on islands such as Mururoa. Fragmentation is a 
metaphor for the opposing views of society. The discourse of betrayal and 
environmental issues is entwined with time, and by extension, time running 
out to effect a change in the responses of governments and peoples to nuclear 
testing and the rights of indigenous communities.

1. 2. 2 Line of descent.

While these operas address universal concerns, they also reflect on Australian 
social, cultural and political issues. In this respect, their antecedents come from 
Australian drama. During the 1960s and 1970s, while Australian operas on
Australian subjects, such as Dreyfus' *Garni Sands*, remained focused upon the colonial past with explorers and convicts, Australian drama had been moving, for some thirty years, towards shaping ideas of the kind of society Australia had been or was becoming. Even in the early 1980s, operatic characters were larger than life; heroic inventors and adventurers from a remote past are found in Butterley's *Lawrence Hargrave Flying Alone* (1988) and Meale's *Voss* (1986). While there were attempts to reflect their personal lives, in some expressive duet moments, these operas do not reflect timeless social issues or hold up to an audience the kinds of characters that they recognise in their own experience.

To follow Foucault's line of descent is to find that Australian drama has been addressing the social issues now being raised in contemporary Australian opera in the post-1988 decade. Old "Australianist" themes, of the superiority of the bushman and pioneer, were seen to be irrelevant as the ethnic makeup of the country was transformed, as a consequence of large-scale immigration and a new awareness of Aboriginal consciousness. Plays such as *Kullark* (1982), by the Aboriginal playwright Jack Davis, Stephen Sewell's *Dreams in an Empty City* (1986) and Alma de Groen's *The Rivers of China* (1987), display critical responses to social issues in Australian drama from the decade preceding that of the operatic focus. These plays draw attention to several issues: ways in which women characters are created; the presence of indigenous characters; cinematic progressions of scenes; and an approach which might be called that of the personal epic.

The panoramic span of events in Jack Davis' *Kullark*, encompassing the lives of a 1970s Aboriginal family, the Yorlahs and the resistance efforts of a Nyunga leader, Yagan, during the setting up of the Swan River settlement in Western
Australia, has epic dimensions in that it takes up Walt Whitman's construction of the epic in poetry as a "tallying" of the history of his people, in the sense of embodying and comprehending it.16

Fifteen scenes intercut the present, represented by the Yorlah family in their kitchen, and the past, beginning with European settlement at the Swan River in 1827. The Yorlah family come to terms with securing tenancy where they live, maintaining traditional life on occasions such as funerals, and dispelling potential conflict of their son's different way of life. The scenes in the present raise issues of Aboriginal alcoholism and abuse of social security, but place these issues in the context of the removal of children from their families, and consequent loss of identity. They allude to 1970s activism for land rights and convey the passion of a people to keep moving forward.

The scenes of the past place on record the massacres of Aboriginal people, the sending of the head of Yagan to England, the removal of children from their families and communities and the transfer of whole camps of people from their traditional locations to government settlements.17 They raise issues of arrests under the Aborigines Act and the farce that passed for the education of Aboriginal children. They also recall that the Aboriginal men who fought in World War II were accorded citizenship rights; one of the things the play does not record is that it took another twenty-two years for Aboriginal Australians to be counted in the national population census. Significantly, this "tallying" of the events by Davis has made subsequent developments possible: John Harding's *Up the Road* (1995), Ningali Lawford's *Ningali* (1997) and Deborah Mailman's *The Seven Stages of Grieving* (1997). Davis' personalising of the epic prepared the ground.18
Authors select those events that they feel are sufficient to provide the sense of continuum; they can isolate chosen incidents in detail or juxtapose them with a cumulative effect. In Sewell’s *Dreams in an Empty City*, for instance, simultaneously viewed actions are an essential part of the climax of the final scenes when the banking trusts collapse, ruining the lives of millions at the same time as the young man, Chris, is executed in a contract killing. Sewell’s play is a surreal nightmare, exposing the world of capitalist society and scrutinising the kinds of people it has created. In this world, rival magnates are involved in a battle of illegal tax-shelters, collapsing share prices, torture and murder. Dramatists like Sewell reflect an increased tendency to introspection in Australian society after 1975. Through the character of Chris, the discourse of the play focuses upon self-definition within Australian social and political systems.

In this epic play (with a musical score by Alan John, written nine years before his opera, *The Eighth Wonder*), the cinematic progression reaches an extreme form. *Dreams in an Empty City* has fifty-five scenes, intercutting frequently between different strands of the action to heighten suspense and symbolise the fragmentation and disintegration. A sense of dislocation and nightmare is created when the chronological sequence is radically subverted (Carroll 1994: 296). The sense of disorientation that this creates influences the structure of librettos for operas in this study.

One of the key themes in Alma De Groen’s *The Rivers of China* is the reconstruction of identity. This occupies the two narratives of the play, one of which is set in 1923 and the other in an alternative, present “reality”. In the alternative present, male-dominated society has been inverted, and it is in
poems by women that men express their "escape of the soul". Subsequently, a woman doctor recreates the spirit of the writer, Katherine Mansfield, in the mind of a male patient. The experiment takes its own directions when The Man not only succumbs to Katherine's disease but also acquires her great courage and creativity. In the 1923 narrative, the historically recognisable Katherine, suffering with tuberculosis, tries new treatment to find "the energy to continue her work". Her journey is paralleled by The Man's, another image of herself.

Early ventures in Australian opera explore a type of heroic Everyman. It is largely in the ten years from 1988 that opera has explored the issues with which Australian drama has engaged. Such a paradigm shift is theorised by Csikszentmihalyi in his concept of Flow. He contends that one generation rejects the ideas of the previous one because earlier challenges have become tame and routine (1988: 375). As a consequence of influences from the plays of the 1970s and 1980s, librettists and composers found new directions: among them, a variety of ways of creating a personal epic, in a journey of a central character, particularising a view of society.

1. 2. 3 Structures that Shape the Present

Government policy, the law and the media are some of the structures which respond to and affect social issues, give the present its shape and contribute to the construction of individual identity; accordingly, policies, laws and news reports relevant to the characters in the nominated operas are explored, at this point, to give a context for the reflections of composers and librettists.
The character of Miriam in *Black River* operates on several planes: she represents a personal experience of grief; but she is also a spokesperson for a discourse of Aboriginal values. In *Black River*, Miriam reflects that places like the police cell have "claimed the lives of my people" (Sc. 4); and she shows her distrust of Les, the policeman, when she talks about her son's death in custody: "You'd cut him down by the time pa arrived but his neck was bruised" (Sc. 8). Her view of white law needs to be seen in context: Aboriginal women, traditionally, have a status comparable with men (Payne 1991: 65). One of the most disempowering acts for these women was the "assimilation" policy which removed Aboriginal children from their mothers. The police role as agents of the old Aborigines Protection Boards, carrying out the assimilation policy, had a deep and souring effect on Aboriginal-police relations.

In 1987, the Federal Government announced a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The Commission's final report was released in 1991. However, prior to the final report, the Commission issued Reports of Inquiry into individual deaths. Significantly, these Reports of Inquiry included, among the causes of the deaths, the removal of Aboriginal children from their families, and consequent loss of identity.

The Report on the death of Malcolm Smith, released by Commissioner Wootten, is uncompromising in its condemnation of government policies to Aboriginal people, which caused family separation, and of the way in which those policies were kept out of historical study: "It is history that our historians are only now piecing together. Without a knowledge of it, we cannot hope to understand (present Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal) relations, for they are deeply moulded by that history" (Wootten 1989: 4).
Later, Wootten reflected on the work of the Commission and its findings (Wootten 1993: 265). In 1987, there had been an unusual number of deaths by hanging of Aboriginal people, in police custody. The Royal Commission exonerated police, both of deliberate killing and of brutality causing unintended death. However, it was noted that many of the deaths were due to the unsatisfactory care of prisoners and, as a result, the Commissioners made many recommendations for improved care.\textsuperscript{24}

In commenting on the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody, the Royal Commission found that discrimination and a greater rate of offending were merely symptoms; the overwhelming cause was the poor social and economic circumstances of Aboriginal people. The disadvantaged position of Aborigines in the community was traced primarily to dispossession and loss of identity through the effect of government policies towards Aborigines. In the opera, Miriam says that, when her grandfather left the police cell, "his spirit was broken, his body a wreck. The only way he knew to forget came in a bottle" (Sc. 8).

Grazia in \textit{The Bride of Fortune}, embodies a story of survival through personal tragedy; and she is representative of a discourse of migrant experience in Australian history. In \textit{The Bride of Fortune}, one of the ways that Grazia feels a loss of identity, when she arrives in Australia, is through language. Writing to her sister about her job in a factory, she frets: "I understand nothing, nothing, nothing" (Act 2 Sc. 5). She represents the migrants who came to Australia as a result of changes in government immigration policy in the 1950s. Assisted immigration, begun under the Chifley government and continued under the
Menzies government, responded to the need to industrialise Australia and achieve security and progress with a larger population. In this wave of assisted immigration, a large number of migrants were not British.

Assimilation was required of both migrants and Aboriginal people at this time; to counter any threat to the way Australians lived, outsiders needed to conform. Historian Richard White observes that the concept of an Australian way of life was used to discriminate against migrants in Australia (R. White 1981: 160). Without being clearly defined, it was often simply a way of expressing a prejudice against difference. It managed to deny two possibilities: that migrant culture might enrich Australia, and that more than one way of life existed among Australians. However, despite the value placed on social uniformity, the apparently helpless minorities from Southern Europe retained aspects of their otherness; and the character of Grazia represents such a meeting of cultural influences.

Justice and responsible media are concerns in Lindy, and the character of Lindy is a spokesperson for that discourse. In the opera, the predatory nature of the dingo and the press reporter merge on occasions. Commenting upon the actual Chamberlain Trial, anthropologist Julie Marcus writes that press reports interpreted the events so that "Azaria Chamberlain was seen to have lost her life because her family were camped at the centre of the Australian outback". The identity created for Lindy, as an irresponsible mother, according to Marcus, "led to Mrs Chamberlain being seen as guilty, regardless of who actually killed the baby" (Marcus 1989: 16). In Scene 5, the dingo press sing: "We got her! We had her from the start. We got her in the end!"
Barrister Jocelyn Scutt comments that, for some people, the actual behaviour of Mrs Chamberlain following the child's disappearance in 1980 indicated she was guilty (Scutt 1990: 412). Accordingly, her failure to confess was seen as wicked and people took exception to the fact that she was rarely observed in tears. Furthermore, both Chamberlains posed for photographs for the media and cooperated fully with the press. This was held against Mrs Chamberlain, and her behaviour was read as peculiar, even sinister. Above all, for some people, her consistently stoic expression seemed inhuman. In Scene 5 of the opera, Lindy sings: "Whether I laugh or cry, wrong. Whatever I wear, wrong. So I can't be worried what anyone thinks."

Olive in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and Alex in *The Eighth Wonder* are representatives of a discourse of national identity. This is presented through such means as local images, familiar stories and use of the vernacular. When Olive sings "Here's mud in your eye" and "Up there Cazaly; here's to us" (Act 1 Sc. 2) Australian ways of making a toast consciously draw attention to a wider use of colloquial expression. The use of a familiar story, from the Lawler play, underlines this discourse, too; and it is important to remember that it is Olive who constructs her affair with Roo as "five months of heaven" with an idealised Australian, who battles land and elements.

In a related way, when Alex fears that she will be "buried alive", by the limited opportunities of the 1950s, she presents a marker by which to gauge changed circumstances. The national identity here is a cultural identity; just as Alex declares that it's "a wonder; a wonder it (the Sydney Opera House) was ever built" (Sc. 14), so her personal epic is intertwined with the story of the building.
There are two discourses in *Quito*: one is about the invasion of a person through the affliction of schizophrenia; the other is about the invasion of a country. The character of Quito represents both discourses. The members of the ensemble recount stories of East Timorese men and women since the Indonesian invasion of 1975: stories of torture, rape and violent death. The ensemble also re-enacts the sufferings of a person with schizophrenia, in which processes in the brain are disturbed, distorting their sense of identity and ways of experiencing the world.

In the opera, one of the ensemble, as Quito, sings of his schizophrenic sufferings as "body, mind and soul invaded" (Sc. 12). While the opera draws attention to the need to review care for sufferers with schizophrenia, it is a scathing indictment of the Federal Government's lack of action in response to the violations of human rights in East Timor following the invasion in 1975 (most publicly in the Dili massacre on 12 November 1991) and to the implementation of the Timor Gap Zone of Co-operation Agreement in the same year.

What seemed to be the easiest policy in 1975 - leaving East Timor's fate to Indonesia - has continued to haunt subsequent Australian governments. In 1989, the signing of the Timor Gap Treaty involved the recognition of Indonesian control over East Timor. The treaty facilitates the exploitation of reportedly vast petroleum resources in the "gap" south of East Timor. One of the members of the ensemble in the opera, in the role of Evans, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, sings "Whenever I see injustice, I sit and make my stand...We've got the good oil on Timor - ain't that grand?" (Sc. 10).
Indeed, in an actual statement released with the treaty, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade stated its position, in international law, that "there is no binding legal obligation not to recognise the acquisition of territory acquired by force".30 Twenty two years after the invasion, the treaty remains the most crucial issue in Australia's attitude to Indonesia's occupation. In *Quito*, the ensemble sing:

Timor woman, your spirit bound in chains,
Timor woman, mute horror in your veins,
Your feeble honesty your strength,
Your voice an armament of war,
Your fragile chant the hymn of freedom (Sc. 8).

As has been mentioned, the character of Fernando, in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, is based upon a real person but is also representative of a discourse which encompasses betrayal and environmental issues. In *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, Fernando sings "Mururoa, Place of Great Secrets, face your victim the Present" (Sc. 1). Barely one month after the Greenpeace vessel had been sabotaged, the South Pacific Forum, meeting in the Cook Islands, approved the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (known as the Raratonga Treaty).

Ten years to the day after the first Rainbow Warrior was sunk by French agents, French commandos stormed its successor when it steamed into the exclusion zone around Mururoa Atoll.31 Through the presence of the Rainbow Warrior II, Greenpeace wanted to protest against the resumption of French Nuclear testing, and the total disregard for the impact that continuing testing might
have on the health of the Polynesian people and the ecology of the area. The cessation of France's testing, in late 1996, marked the end of all nuclear testing in a region which had been subjected to both atmospheric and underground testing for five decades. These events, since the sinking, are significant for the message of the opera and the identity of the central character, Fernando. He calls for the audience to have a response, to change as he sings: "In my death are the many deaths, disappearances, contaminations covered up, history revised" (Sc. 2).

1. 2. 4 Myths and Subjects of Reflection

The operas in this study explore mythic dimensions because the story-telling of the characters, the way in which they reveal their identities, happens in particular ways. Joseph Campbell writes that there are two orders of mythology, one being a metaphor of the spiritual potential of the human being and the other linking the person to a particular society (Campbell 1988: 22). In both systems, a myth arises from a collective belief and gives meaning to events and actions. Social anthropologist Mary Douglas writes that the meaning of a myth is partly the sense that the author intended it to convey, and the sense intended by each of its recounters, along with references to experience that listeners will find in it (Douglas in Leach 1988: 65). The content of myth is most frequently approached via anthropology and psychology; its expressive structure is more concerned with philosophy and the language of symbol (Tarasti 1977: 17).

It is largely in the second sense that this study will investigate mythic expression. As Roland Barthes states, myth gives something meaning and
form, "by the way myth utters the message" so that what is involved in myth is
a sign-system (Barthes 1993: 109, 114). In the context of the Foucauldian theory
of histories of the present, the connection with the language of symbol is the
path by which familiar subjects become subjects for reflection, by their mythic
expression, by their mythic status.

Myths are separated from the mundane sphere; their cultural function can be
to signify traditional knowledge and belief. Aboriginal culture prefers the term
"creation histories", to distinguish that, for them, these are not fictions.34 In the
sense of traditional knowledge, Miriam, in Black River, calls on the Rainbow
Serpent.35 Also the idea of home, as a place of belonging, emerges in Miriam's
first long solo, when she sings of the way that her home on the banks of the
river has been spoiled, "dammed and poisoned"; and she is angry that places
like police cells have become "home" for her people (Sc. 4). There are alternate
myths in Black River: that Aboriginal people are aggressive and that they
"live off the government and grog on" (Sc. 6). These populist myths are held
up to scrutiny, for the audience to read.

Horne writes that, when white Australians make myths about Australia
providing equal opportunities for all, they create certain ways of seeing
Australia in their imaginations. To suggest that a belief is a myth is to say that it
has a magic power to simplify (Horne 1989: 55-6). These are issues in
Whitehead's The Bride of Fortune. Vito's letter to Grazia elaborates upon
opportunities in the new country (Sc. 1). Grazia's promise, that she will "make
him a good wife; better than any fragile beauty" demonstrates that she sees
herself as his working equal (Sc. 6). At a deeper level, there are myths here
about relationships: about what men reveal of themselves to women, and what women reveal of themselves to men; about communication.

In a rather different but related sense of the word "myth", that of popularly held belief, the Trial Scene of Lindy raises issues of the myth of justice for all, and of myths created by the media and general public. Echoes of the suspicions of witchcraft emerge in asides from the Gallery in the Trial scene.\(^{36}\) At one time, the chorus sing: "Lindy'd need a rasp to sharpen her claws" (Sc. 5). In the proceedings, the matinee jacket is an important sign. Called into question as "a figment of her imagination", it finally establishes the truth of Lindy's account and it symbolises her maternal care for her baby.

Quito also contests the myth (popularly held belief) of justice and is concerned with myths about the "difference" of sufferers with mental dysfunction. On the other hand, Fernando in The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior is constructed as a mythic hero, representing collective memory; this notion is explored at length in Chapter Seven. Events in these stories become subjects for reflection by the way they carry part of the community's life.

Amadio writes of society's need for myth and, an important feature, its evolving nature. She finds that, as we reject the myths of the past, we desperately create new ones to fit our age. The use of myth is explored in more detail in Chapter Four. Suffice to say at this point, that myth brings wonder and a sense of awe to life (Amadio 1993: 64-66). In Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, Olive experiences that sense of awe; and she is a ready supporter of the white Australian myth of the struggle of the man with the land. The imagery she uses, for her description of Roo and Barney, comes from this myth: that
they are "like kings, like eagles coming south" (Sc. 1). In herself, however, Olive represents the antithesis of one whose life is concerned with self-discovery.

The ground from which a cultural community is invented includes a repository of myths, heroes, and events which are organised and made to assume a primordial quality (Smith 1990: 2). These sources are then used to give the past a sense of direction. This view is linked to what Anderson and others regard as a crucial factor in the construction of a community: the dissemination of images and memories (Anderson 1991: 6). Foreshadowed, here, is the view that *The Eighth Wonder* is a story that is entwined with myths, myths about images by which the Architect was inspired and myths about "a fair go" and "tall poppies". Even the Architect is constructed as a type of pioneer, a dreamer, a man of vision, battling against a blinkered bureaucracy (Fiske 1987: 156).

In the second chapter, the three operas discussed are: *Black River*, *The Bride of Fortune* and *Lindy* (Scene 5 called the Trial Scene). This chapter concentrates on the women who are the central characters in these operas and addresses questions of the voice, both literal and figurative, of women in the three operas. In the first two operas, the complete score is discussed with reference to the scenes where the central characters tell their story. Only one scene is discussed from *Lindy* as that scene has been workshopped by the commissioning company and is regarded as in the public domain at the time of writing. The third chapter discusses scenes from Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* where characters face challenges of communicating their story and identity. This chapter
introduces these scenes in order to establish new dimensions that the characters from *Black River*, *The Bride of Fortune* and *Lindy* bring to opera in Australia in the 1990s. The appendices accompanying this thesis contain excerpts which are analysed in the third, fifth and seventh chapters.

Social memory is the concern of the fourth chapter, with operas reflecting cultural attitudes of the recent past. The operas discussed are: *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Eighth Wonder*. The concept of cultural identity, as it appears in Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* and Verdi's *Don Carlos*, is explored in the fifth chapter in order to expose differences and similarities with the reconstruction of this notion in Australia in the 1990s.

Both of the final two operas make strong political statements and each, for a different reason, fragments the creation of the central character among the ensemble cast. The operas discussed in the sixth chapter are: *Quito* and *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*. The seventh chapter draws comparisons and similarities with dysfunctional characters and mythic characters in the operatic repertoire, referring to Donizetti's *Lucia*, Strauss' *Salome*, Wagner's *Tristan*, Verdi's *Otello*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Wagner's *Siegfried* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*.

By adopting the conceptual framework of a history of the present, this introduction places a focus upon the social questions addressed by the nominated operas and traces the appearance of such questions in a line of descent from Australian drama. Drama has not only influenced the kinds of issues being presented through the operatic medium, but also ways of creating
characters, of seeing narrative as personal epic, and of pacing narrative through a cinematic progression of scenes.

For this study of characters in the nominated operas, a context has been presented through social structures which shape the present. To this end, government policies, laws and media reports relevant to the nominated operas have been explored. As demonstrated, characters in these operas are not only based on real people but are also representative of a discourse. The mythic elements which are present in these operas transform familiar characters and stories into subjects of reflection. These two parts of the introduction form the basis for the readings of character which embody this thesis; the characters signify reflections on Australian events and conditions; and these reflections gradually reveal shifts in dimensions of Australian opera in the late 1990s.

1 Composer-musicologist, Istvan Anhalt refers to the genre of 'portrait opera' (Anhalt in Driver and Christiansen 1989: 127). Composer Elliott Gyger nominates the primary concern of such operas as "the exploration of various facets of a single central figure". He adds that this approach "allows the music and text great freedom to follow their own logic, exploring the realm of the poetic and transcendent, rather than be constrained by the demands of theatrical realism" (Gyger 1994: 194. 8).

2 While Purcell's Dido and Aeneas (1689) was based on Virgil's Aeneid, it contains an allegory which was current for the politics of the day. Verdi's Nabucco (1842) presents the story of the Israelites oppressed by a foreign power, analogous to the situation in Italy from 1815 to 1860.

3 In 1988, the first National Arts Week was launched. In 1989 the Australia Council advised the Federal Government on a new policy initiative entitled "Towards a Creative Australia" (Artforce 1988: 3; 1989: 5). In 1992, the Government appointed a panel to advise on the formulation of a Commonwealth Cultural Policy. As a result in 1994, the Federal Government released its policy, Creative Nation. Prime Minister Keating stated that this policy was not attempting "to impose a cultural landscape on Australia but to respond to one already in bloom" (Ryan ed. 1995: 72).

4 These models are two of several that are well accepted by other writers: Frow (1986), Mead (1990) and Phelan (1990) are representative.
5 Rushdie (1991: 10) and Ganguly (1992: 27) describe the experience of immigrant Indian peoples, one to Britain and one to the United States. In Australia, there have been successive waves of migration, the main ones being from Britain, from southern Europe and from Asia.

6 Gingras convened the Sessions on Multiple Identities at the 1998 Second International Conference of Cultural Studies in Tampere, Finland. His pilot study explored two main hypotheses: that multiple identities form a relatively stable hierarchy; and that members of a minority group attach importance to their generalised self less frequently than members of a dominant group. His findings in the pilot study were that language identity resulted in a difference of mean ratings of 2.11. In general, his observations are that the links between the socio-political factors (belonging to a minority) and psychological factors (attributing importance to the specific personality) largely explain the frequent misunderstanding that is characteristic of majority-minority relations (Gingras 1998: 11).

7 John Frow’s article, “Spectacle Binding”, calls for ways of understanding the relationship between literary theory and “cultural schemata” (Frow 1986: 227). With others (Sarup, Lacan, for example), I use the term "identity theories" and acknowledge these schemata as indicating those theories.

8 Julianne Schultz adds to this point by stating that, in her libretto writing, she set out to have the characters become increasingly complex (Schultz 1997: 11). In this way she has provided the frame for the music to reveal the multi-identities of each character.

9 This symbolic process derives from Schopenhauer’s writing where, for example, hunger is perceived as teeth, mouth and stomach; or, again, gravity is perceived as the falling of a rock (Schopenhauer 1966: I 108, 110). There is immediacy in this symbolism from intangible concept to object, representing this concept. It is acknowledged that much in Schopenhauer’s writing was subconsciously incorporated by Wagner into Der Ring des Nibelungen and the two men share this very particular way of treating symbols (Ewans 1982: 139).

10 For some Australian composers, there is a strong sense of defining Australian culture. In Sounds Australian 34, (1992), several of the 34 interviewed composers articulated their artistic beliefs: Don Kay writes of identifying with his “place of origin”; David Worrall writes of “understanding the sense that Aboriginals have of being of the land”; and Betty Beath writes of being “influenced by the landscape, the depth and breadth of horizons and the rhythm and tempo of language”. Raffaele Marcellino comments that writing music is both a political and a cultural act and that some of the principal reasons for a composer to create music are "to express an idea through sound and to have a point of view". Anne Boyd writes that composing attunes her "with others and with the world of which (she is) a part". Colin Bright writes that "art must be of its time to be socially relevant. The most obvious connection here is with music incorporating a text. The subject matter simply must be about NOW either topically or psychologically" (Sounds Australian 34 (1992): 10, 13, 15, 20, 30).

11 Historians Tyler and Johnson note, Foucault uses more than one term to describe his approach to the making of histories (Tyler and Johnson 1991: 1).

12 The report was called “Toomelah Report: Report on the Problems and Needs of Aborigines Living on the New South Wales/Queensland Border”. It was completed in June 1988 and the other writer was Kim Wilson.

13 These links were confirmed in 1997 by the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, Bringing Them Home. The Report states: “There is clearly a direct association between removal and the likelihood of
criminalisation. The compounding effects of separation and criminalisation were shown dramatically in the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody investigations. As stated in the National Report (1991: I, 5-6) forty-three of the ninety-nine indigenous people who died in custody had been removed from their families as children (National Inquiry 1997: 556).

14 In 1950, Liberal immigration minister, Harold Holt, stressed that "We can only achieve our goal through migration if our newcomers quickly become Australian in outlook and way of life" (The Good Neighbour, August 1950: 1).

15 Colonial themes are to be found in operas such as Conyngham’s Edward John Eyre, which premiered in 1970 and Dreyfus’ Garni Sands, which premiered in 1965. By contrast, Alan Seymour’s The One Day of the Year (1962), Dorothy Hewett’s This Old Man Comes Rolling Home (1967) and The Chapel Perilous (1971) introduce issues of generation gaps, working class struggles and the liberated woman.

16 Miller states that "tallying" was a favourite word of Whitman’s for describing the poetic function (Miller 1981: 43).

17 Many influences were probably at work in the Aborigines being written out of the historical record. For one thing, until the 1940s it was generally held that the Aboriginal people were dying out. For another, early twentieth century history was written to foster patriotism in the present and pride in the past. Racial violence and the prospect that the land was not "terra nullius" were deemed to be out of place in histories that celebrated steady material progress (Nile ed. 1994: 26). In his Boyer Lecture, Stanner denounced the suppression of reference to the existence of Aboriginal people which had established itself in the Australian culture. He described it as a "view from a window which has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape" (Stanner 1968: 24). The situation is showing signs of change. It was widely reported in September, 1997, that the head of Yagan was returned to the Aboriginal delegation who travelled to England to receive it for burial, with his body, in Western Australia.

18 Davis personalises the epic through a family rather than through one character, as is the case in the operas of this study.

19 This was the year in which an elected Australian government was dismissed by the Queen’s representative.

20 Cunningham finds that when an exploration of an everyman figure occurs, the genre itself operates in a nostalgic rather than a historic register. In contrast, when a work deals with actual events and historical figures, its representation is not so much nostalgic as it is critical and interventionary (Cunningham in Frow and Morris 1993: 120). His point is made about the contrast between period film and historical mini-series, but is relevant here.

21 ATSIC Law and Justice Assistant Manager, Sharon Payne, explains that the mother's line determines the tribal division (moiety) of the children. The women are custodians of family laws and secrets; they have their own ceremonies and sacred knowledge.

22 This is gradually being addressed but Payne declares: "The devastating effects of the institutionalisation and forced adoption of Aboriginal infants and children will continue to be a major factor in Aboriginal over-imprisonment for both sexes for a long time to come" (Payne 1991: 66).

24 Significantly, Wootten drew attention to the fact that suicide by hanging occurs among prisoners, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who have succumbed to despair but have no other means of taking their own lives.

25 Lindy Chamberlain's behaviour was also seen to be strange because the religious beliefs that she held, from the Seventh Day Adventist Church were unfamiliar to many people.

26 In writing of this illness, Anne Deveson found that schizophrenia accounts for three-quarters of all mental disorders (Deveson 1991: 32).

27 In many instances, the onset of schizophrenia is not fully apparent until adolescence when factors such as environmental stress, drug abuse or hormonal changes may act as triggers for deterioration.


29 Keith Suter, from the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at Sydney University, explains the issues. Initially, there was concern that communist governments might get a foothold in the region. Subsequently, there was the issue of oil and gas in the continental shelf region between Timor and Australia (Suter 1992: 10).

30 Admittedly, this Australian position came from a government that had not yet acknowledged, via the Mabo decision, that the notion of Terra Nullius was ended, regarding the settlement of Australia. Nevertheless, subsequent Australian government policy has not moved from this position regarding East Timor.

31 The Editorial Opinion in The Age newspaper, of 11 July 1995, reflected the depth of public outrage in Australia over these events, claiming that "the French Government must have a breathtaking disregard for public opinion" (The Age 11.7.95).

32 Speaking at the 7th Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference, in Suva in 1996, the President of Kiribati, Teburoro Tito, declared the end of testing and the realisation of the Nuclear Free Zone to be the most important achievements of the NFIP movement.

33 A myth is part of a community's formulating a sense of itself. Burridge discusses myths as reservoirs of articulate thought on the level of the collective (Burridge in Leach 1988: 92). It is this aspect of the collective which produces the related sense of the word "myth" as popularly held belief.

34 "Creation histories" is the preferred term in the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Thesaurus* (1977) compiled by Heather Moorcroft and Alana Galwood.

35 In traditional Aboriginal culture, the Rainbow Serpent is responsible for much of the creation of the earth and for creating wind and rain that are both nourishing and destructive forces (Marrugeku Company program notes).
Dianne Johnson's essay, "From Fairy to Witch: Imagery and Myth in the Azaria Case" articulates the spectre of Mrs Chamberlain as a witch, just beneath the discussion of the case (Johnson in Australian Journal of Cultural Studies 2: 2 1984: 90-107).
Chapter Two: Voices of Three Women

The three operas in this chapter present women as central characters who are active in their story. The voices of women which they present are from minority groups in society but they speak powerfully. The three operas are *Black River*, where the central character is Miriam, *The Bride of Fortune*, where the central character is Grazia and *Lindy*, with the central character of the same name. In addition to the issues which each opera addresses, all are concerned with the ways in which women tell their story.

1. Miriam in *Black River*

In *Black River*, completed in 1989, the composer and the librettist, Andrew and Julianne Schultz, focus attention on the number of deaths of Aboriginal people in custody, through the metaphor of a river. Rescue from the flood, while not presenting answers, symbolises hope. The libretto introduces five characters in its nine scenes; in order of appearance they are: Miriam (the Aboriginal woman), Les (the policeman), the Judge, Anna (the journalist), and Reg (the town drunk).

The opera is set in an Australian country town; the river is in flood and the scenes take place in the police cell, a temporary refuge but one which has been a place where suffering has occurred. There is also a sense in which a cell is a microcosm, in this case of the tensions in society. The Judge has been conducting an Inquiry into race relations in the town, and he and Anna are the only outsiders remaining as flood waters rise. Contact with the world by road and radio has been lost and the characters face the prospect of death.
The music composed by Andrew Schultz draws attention to the juxtaposition of events in time with an Aboriginal sense of place through a focus on either momentum or stasis. Both notions appear through responses of the characters to the flood which has necessitated sheltering in the police cell. Miriam, the Aboriginal woman, feels the evil of the place. The judge, the policeman, the criminal and the journalist, Anna, realise that if the rain does not stop in a short time they will perish in the flood.

Black River does not express the view that notions of place and time are mutually exclusive. The Aboriginal woman, Miriam, changes her focus so that it incorporates time, especially the passage of time marked by death. The others in the cell change their awareness of place, by beginning to acknowledge what has happened in that environment. As it is Miriam who has the story to tell, the first section of this chapter is concerned with her character. It considers her multiply constructed identity and her representation of a discourse of Aboriginal values.

Melodic shapes, arising from what Schultz calls "harmonic sources" in work-notes, establish the identity of each character (1988). For Miriam, there is a chord identified with time (Ex. 2. 1. 01). Its clusters of intervals of seconds dominate the opening of the Prelude and form the harmonic underpinning of Scene 8 when Miriam tells of the deaths of her father and her son.

Ex. 2. 1. 01: Chord associated with time.
The dissonance of this chord can be read as a reflection on the time it took Australian society to acknowledge the specific tragedy of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Another source, a group of chords, is associated with Black River in the same work notes. From the first of these chords (sounding at bar 22 in the Prelude) comes the motif through which Miriam’s character is significantly expressed (Ex. 2. 1. 02). The technique of using harmonic sources, or zones of harmony, is one way that Schultz approaches the concept of stasis in his music. In Black River however, much of the contrapuntal material deriving from harmonic sources unfolds in a directional way.

Ex. 2. 1. 02: Chord associated with Black River. and the source of the main motif for Miriam.

Identity not only defines what one is, but is always related to what one is not. A person defines themselves against the other. Miriam’s self, in relation to the otherness of the dominant culture, begins to emerge in the first scene. One of the ways that music contributes to audience recognition of her Aboriginality is that, within the mezzo-soprano range, the vocal writing gives the singer the opportunity to take some freedom with pitch, to be less confined to the interpretation of the "musical object". At first, the only response is the sound of rain.

The rhythmic patterns over the "time" chordal source, named "rain calls" by the composer in his compositional work-notes (1988), are interwoven in various rotations. They return later, in Scenes 5, 6 and 9, counterpointing the discourses of Reg’s racism, Les’ negligence and the Judge’s inquiry. In the first
scene, the "rain calls" give a context to Miriam's calling of the Rainbow Serpent, the life-force in Aboriginal cosmology. They precede, and then emerge in the gaps between, the first words that she utters. One of Schultz's major preoccupations in the music is with the way sounds die and what can emerge from them. In this scene, the rain calls emerge as Miriam's vocal sounds die. This places in the foreground the notion of sounds in time, and creates a subtext to the words of the libretto.

A sparse texture is created with fragments of rhythm which alternate between tom toms, harp, low strings and high winds. Emerging from this texture, Miriam's two vocal styles combine sustained notes, on her first words "rain, no, rainbow", and short vocal patterns characteristic of bird calls or didjeridu mouth sounds. Miriam's Aboriginal identity, at a traditional level, is established by these vocal patterns in this first scene (Ex. 2. 1. 03).

Ex. 2. 1. 03: Miriam's first words.

When Miriam is questioned by the Judge in Scene 3, she responds in polite monosyllables, a quite common Aboriginal mode of response to a non-
Aboriginal way of gathering information. As the rain continues (in the next scene), necessitating that all the other characters seek safety in the cell, Miriam shifts the margins in the process of defining identity. She defines herself against the otherness of the white majority by the stillness and certainty that she shows in contrast to the anxiety of the others.

A significant motif for Miriam is first heard in the Prelude. It outlines an ascending minor seventh, with the lower note being decorated by an oscillating major second (Ex. 2. 1. 04). The interval of the minor seventh can be associated with expressions of yearning, and in such usage, it traditionally resolves its tension by stepping downward. Here, the unresolved repetitions are a musical parallel of frustrated efforts to make a voice heard.

Ex. 2. 1. 04: Motivic gesture referring to Miriam.

The lyrics in Miriam's role, which Schultz sets with this motif, refer to her character. In Scene 4, when she asserts "I know how you live" (Ex. 2. 1. 05), the text conveys accusation. Miriam is outside the social reality in which the others live. Her story is one to which the other characters have not listened. Ironically, the "relentless rain" provides her with the opportunity to be heard. The motif is reflectively extended: "I grew up on the banks of this river" (Ex. 2. 1. 06). Then, accusation is reasserted: "The river that you dammed and
poisoned is my home" (Ex. 2.1.07) and a climax is reached at "I have seen your world" (Ex. 2.1.08).

**Ex. 2.1.05: Miriam's motif with text of accusation.**

![Musical notation](image)

**Ex. 2.1.06: Miriam's motif extended.**

![Musical notation](image)

**Ex. 2.1.07: Miriam's motif with text reasserting accusation.**

![Musical notation](image)

**Ex. 2.1.08: Miriam's motif at its climax.**

![Musical notation](image)

Consistently, this motif attaches to text which expresses unreconciled grief. Through this musical expression, Miriam reveals the part of herself to which she attaches the most importance, the strongest level of her identity. It is her sense of belonging, deeply connected to family. In Scene 8, Miriam becomes a vehicle for memory while she continues to assert her difference, expressed through the motif: "You may feel no shame", about what has taken place in the cell. The motif returns on the bass clarinet, preceding Miriam's recollection of her father: "My father tried to live your way".
In recalling her father's efforts, she exposes that part of her own identity, that has been shaped by white society. From Scene 3, with its nervous toccata-like pace, to Scene 8, the Judge and Anna continue to express fear of the flood; by contrast, Miriam's mode of expression changes from one-word responses to the Judge at the end of Scene 3, responses shaped by the manner of questioning in white society, to a deeper level in her disclosure to the others in Scene 8.

In Scene 8, her insight, "Every time it hurt him, ate him up inside", is not just about her father (Ex. 2. 1. 09). The unresolved tension in the musical shape becomes associated with an accumulation of tragedies. In it are Miriam's reactions to children taken to institutions and white homes, and young men taken into custody. All of the appearances of the motif point to a reading that it is a signifier of different ways of living that have not been reconciled.

Ex. 2. 1. 09: Miriam's motif associated with text of her father.

There are two important natural motifs that are developed. The first is the rain-response to Miriam. The rhythmic patterns do not follow one another in a continuous stream; instead, they circle around and double-back on each other. In this way, they present a way in which music approaches movement. Any spatial characteristic of movement has to be mapped, when it is preserved in music, into a non-spatial dimension. For example, changes in the size of a movement might be mapped in musical dynamics. In this instance, changes in direction are mapped in seven one-bar rhythmic patterns (Ex. 2. 1. 10).
Ex. 2.1.10: Rain call one-bar patterns.

These patterns are arranged in sequences, which change until they form the final cumulative pattern; the first sequence involves the following patterns:

$$1 - 2 - 1 - 3 - 2 - 5 - 6 - 1 - 6 - 2 - 3 - 6 - 1 - 6 - 2 - 1 - 7 - 1 - 7 - 7.$$  

The rhythmic patterns give the sensation of circling about each other; and the movement suggested by them contributes to defining Miriam's stillness.

The second natural motif is called the Earth Motto (Ex. 2.1.11) by Schultz in his compositional notes (1988). It occurs in Scene 8 when Miriam recalls her grandfather. There is also a motif, consisting of two alternating patterns on piccolo, glockenspiel and harp. The first pattern plays upon two notes of Miriam's motif; the second is from the "time" chord (Ex. 2.1.12). The motif's repetitions provide responses to Miriam's voice.

Ex. 2.1.11: Earth motto.
Black River provides several readings on interactions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Australia. The racism of Reg is overt. The position of the policeman, Les, is more complex: unconscious of the effect of his actions, he calls on Miriam's father to collect relatives from the cell. He does not register the injustice of detaining Aboriginal men in prison for being intoxicated. In the face of this, his statement that he liked Miriam's "boy" reveals the double standard which he has never questioned. Miriam reminds Les that "the last time you called him (her father) here was to identify my son" (Ex. 2. 1. 13).

Ex. 2. 1. 13: The last time you called him here. (Reduced score)
The Judge and Anna provide a type of sounding board. Being new to the town, while they collect information for the Inquiry, they are a means by which the audience fills in their own knowledge. Insights into Miriam are also disclosed through the Judge's response to the story of her experiences; the effect that she has, upon people who listen, is powerful. At the end of Scene 8 and in the first part of Scene 9, the Judge reacts in two ways that are different from any of his previous musical expression. One reaction is to Miriam: it is the biblical reference "And the sins of the fathers" (Ex. 2. 1. 14).

Ex. 2. 1. 14: Judge - And the sins of the fathers. (Reduced score)
The ground bass, on double bass (and harp, not shown) over which this cantor-like melody is placed, appeared earlier in the scene, when Miriam described her son's death (see Ex. 2.1.13). By means of its reappearance to underpin the melody of the Judge, the power of Miriam's story is musically connected to the Judge's response. The creation of this link in communication relies more upon the music than on the written text, as a type of musical narration. Miriam interconnects with the Judge in the telling of her story and she goes on to remind him that goodwill and understanding are not enough (Ex. 2.1.15).

Ex. 2.1.15: Miriam and the Judge in the final scene.
The Judge's other reaction to Miriam's story, to Reg: "What makes you like this? Is it fear that drives you?" is not only an emotive response (Ex. 2. 1. 16). This second reaction also has a structural significance: it serves to return the toccata-like fear momentum, from Scene 3, of the vocal parts. Scene 9 also re-focuses attention on the rain music; and it introduces the means of escape, with sound patterns associated with the arrival of the helicopter (Ex. 2. 1. 17).

Ex. 2. 1. 16: Judge to Reg in final scene.

Ex. 2. 1. 17: Sound patterns for the arrival of the helicopter in Scene 9.

Through the character of Miriam, issues addressed include the stolen generation and the incorporation of indigenous populations into the dominant culture of white Australia, crucial issues for the process of reconciliation. Outstretched hands to Miriam, in the final scene, and the sound
of the voices calling her, are a response to that process, presented as a moment of time, a revisiting of the concept of stasis (Ex. 2. 1. 18).

Ex. 2. 1. 18: The call to Miriam to "Come" in the final scene.
Miriam's role as a communicator grows out of that specific identity, connected to her sense of family. In the fourth scene, for example, Miriam shares her knowledge of two worlds, setting up a binary opposition, intending to disturb; her life is outside the social reality of the white Australians (Ex. 2.1.19).

This place is bad - but you cannot know how bad. I know it in my bones, in my soul. You visit and are appalled, shocked by what you see. You will forget but I must live it. I know how you live, I've been in your houses, and know your ways, but you cannot know me. Places like this have become my home, claimed the lives of my people, stripped our spirits. For centuries you and your kind have spat on us, killed us, treated us worse than your animals, taken our children and our land. And you wonder why we fear you.

Ex. 2.1.19: Miriam's reflection - Taken our children and our land (Reduced score).

While Miriam's vocal style at the end of this passage relies on recitative for clarity of text, instrumental colour, which occurs between the vocal phrases,
contributes to the tension: tom toms are scratched with fingernails; violas and double basses are played col legno, sul ponticello to sul tasto; and french horn, trumpet and trombone patterns are played "breath only". The aural effect suggests something like a husk or shell, from which the live matter has been cut away: all the sounds are dry and brittle.

In this passage which begins with extensive use of a motif associated with text of accusation (see Exs. 2. 1. 05-08) the revelation of Miriam's character deepens as she catalogues a series of injustices: physical mistreatment, appropriation of land, and the removal of children from their families and communities. The factual basis of Miriam's reflection includes such laws as the Act of 1915, in New South Wales, which gave the Aborigines' Protection Board the power to remove a child from his or her parents, on the basis of the Board's view of the child's welfare. Effects of such laws are still being felt in the loss of identity and culture, suffered by so many. Peter Read records that the 1921 Report of the Board planned "the continuation of this policy ... (which) must eventually solve the Aboriginal problem" (Read 1989: 3).

The links between the issues of the removal of Aboriginal children and Aboriginal deaths in custody were made obvious when Commissioner Wootten released the Report on the death of Malcolm Smith in 1989. Smith had been held at Long Bay Gaol and Wootten specifically rejected any finding of death by suicide. More significantly he attempted to answer the difficult question of why Smith died. According to Wootten, the answer was to be found sometime between 26 January 1788 when the First Fleet landed and 5 May 1965 when Smith was removed and isolated from his family at the age of 11 (Wootten 1989: 2).
For Miriam in *Black River*, it is not so much the questions of the Judge which prompt her to describe her childhood and the two worlds she now knows. Rather she reacts to the expressions of emotion. She says "This place is bad; you are right to fear it" (Sc. 4). When she relates the history of the cell and the tragedies which have been scattered through her life, she says "It is good that this place makes you uncomfortable" (Sc. 8).

Miriam has to speak about what she has seen and experienced. Her need to communicate makes her fearless in the face of the rising floodwaters. She confronts the others in the cell with her grief over the recent deaths of her father and her son. Interwoven with her great mourning for them is her sadness over what has happened to the traditional land of her people and the damage to their nurturing relation to country. Andrew Schultz's intention is that Miriam's stillness and certainty will detach her from the anxiety of the others. He states this in his compositional worknotes when he says "It is her stillness and certainty that the other characters find most threatening in her behaviour. Her failure to show fear adds to their terror" (1988). Her voice is present both in the motif which helps to establish aspects of her identity and in the evocative instrumental colours which reinforce the text.

The character of Miriam is compelling. In herself she dispels the notion of the invisibility of Aboriginal women in the law and she is a repository of the stories of her people. She is, therefore, a spokesperson for Aboriginal values, and representative of that discourse. Her multiply constructed identity is conveyed through vocal styles, and from motifs, emerging from harmonic sources, which are associated with text expressing grief and accusation. Driven by that specific identity, formed by her family consciousness, she responds to a
need to communicate. Her stillness and lack of anxiety are defined in contrasts to her circumstances and her companions: her stillness contrasts with the movement of the natural rhythm represented by the rain calls; her lack of anxiety contrasts with the fear of death that is felt by all the other characters.

2. Grazia in The Bride of Fortune

Whereas Schultz's Black River addresses a range of issues that affect the future reconciliation of indigenous and white Australians, Gillian Whitehead's opera, The Bride of Fortune, explores the continuing effect two cultures have had on one another. Completed in 1988 and premiered in 1991, it is the second collaboration of the composer with librettist, Anna Maria Dell'Oso. The story involves twelve characters in its three acts. Five of the characters are key participants in the events: Grazia, the young bride from Calabria; her brother, Ennio; her sister, Fiorina; Vito, the Sicilian husband; and Mario, from the same village as Grazia and friend of Vito. The events of the story are, almost exclusively, recollections of the bride, Grazia, who migrates from Italy to Australia in the 1950s to join a husband she has married by proxy.

All the scenes in the first act are flashbacks of Grazia's experiences. In the second and third acts, these recollections are interspersed with glimpses of concurrent happenings in the lives of those close to her, such as her husband, and her brother and sister back in Italy. However, it is clear that these happenings are, at the time, unknown to Grazia. Whitehead has described a notion of the main protagonist in a piece seeing part of the story without totally understanding it. It applies to this piece as much as to Marduk about which she made the comment. To a large extent, the events that are included
in the telling of the story, can be read as revealing the path of understanding on which Grazia travels. The memories that are selected construct her story in a particular way. Rushdie, writing of the memories of people who have migrated from one country to another, argues that the partial nature of these memories and their fragmentation make them evocative. "The shards of memory acquire greater status, greater resonance, because they are remains; fragmentation makes trivial things seem like symbols" (Rushdie 1991: 12).

In writing the libretto, it was Dell 'Oso's intention to "look for sub-text, for back-story, for the transformational arc and for change in character" (Dell 'Oso interview 1993). Grazia is a character whose multiply constructed identity can be musically explored. The Italian bride migrates to Melbourne in the 1950s; but as Dell 'Oso says, this is a story about Australian life: "migrants have a connection to the story of this country" (Dell 'Oso interview 1997).

The first scenes recall the letter of proposal, the village women helping Grazia to remake a dress for the wedding and the fantasies of the women about life in Australia. Scenes of the wedding and celebrations are followed by Grazia's shipboard farewell, where she declares her need to stay connected to her family through the "handful of earth" which she owns. The land is the symbol of the family bond that they cannot express. It is not love that she speaks of with Ennio, but it underlies his words, asking about her land, and her reply, acknowledging the land as her "heart". Her letter to Vito, on the other hand, articulates her need of love.

In the second act, Grazia arrives in Melbourne to join her husband, Vito. Instead of the life that she had been led to expect, she finds poverty and
emotional anguish, and her only confidant, through letters, is her sister. Her husband is incapacitated by a factory accident, so Grazia takes, and then loses, a job in a factory. They have little opportunity to establish a relationship of trust while they share accommodation with Mario, and Grazia does not know of the child, from a former marriage, that Vito is trying to bring to Australia. His frustrations, compounded by his gambling, are vented in violence. In the third act, she plans to leave him, having been sent money for her return passage by her sister. Before this can happen, Vito's mental state deteriorates completely when he receives news of his child's death. He holds Grazia in a siege, which ends in tragic circumstances when he is shot. In the final scene, Grazia decides to stay in Australia to bring up the child that she is expecting.

The opening orchestral phrase of the Prologue introduces Grazia (Ex. 2. 2. 01).

Ex. 2. 2. 01: The opening phrase of the Prologue
As it introduces Grazia making a decision in the letter she is writing, this motif (with its ascending intervals, in the violin 1, of tritone giving way to perfect fourth) juxtapose qualities of tension and security. When it returns during the sixth scene, this motif is associated with a letter which Grazia creates as a communication of the spirit with her unknown husband. The composer, therefore, links this motif with text in Scene 6 which reveals the inner self of Grazia, her desires and her decisions. Whitehead describes this process in the following way:

At first, the phrase is just the introduction to the piece. In the sixth scene, it returns; the sixth scene starts with that motif and all the chords that work through the aria in that scene are chords that have been heard before, sometimes at the same pitch, sometimes transposed or reworked. Everything, as the act came to a close, was derived from previous material. At that point and after that, I used that motif as material that specifically had to do with Grazia. It's structural and also referential. It refers to the character and is a way of unifying the music (Whitehead 11 July 1992).

Knowledge of Grazia builds gradually; for example, her letter in the prologue reveals two elements of her character. First, she is the agent for change in her life, but the decision has been difficult; the tension is parallelled in the harmonic choices. Tritones unsettle the chords which pull against a D-pedal; as is often Whitehead's approach in working with pedals, the other eleven pitches are cycled above it. The second element of Grazia's character is that she is nostalgic for her former life in Italy. The composer has identified the descending scales of string harmonics as an attempt to suggest something like a memory of church bells (Whitehead interview 1992) as Grazia writes her letter (Ex. 2. 2. 02). When these scales return, in Scene 6 for example, the text, with which they are associated, is about reminiscences of former times.
Ex. 2.2.02: Grazia’s letter in the first scene.

This is not an easy decision to make.

The transition from the Prologue is made by a melody which sets the word meaning “from far away”, “Lontano” (Ex. 2.2.03). This melody generates the music which opens Scene 1, reappears at the end of the immigrant chorus in Scene 5 and is the basis of part of Grazia’s letter to Vito in Scene 6.

Ex. 2.2.03: Lontano melody.

In the early scenes, Grazia is part of the general excitement over the letter Vito has written to her from Australia. She is not differentiated musically from her sister, Fiorina, even though Grazia is a Calabrian peasant woman in her mid-twenties. Both characters are given soprano range. This undifferentiated approach also establishes Grazia as part of the village women’s community. They support each other emotionally, work together, help each other out. Their bonding is musically established by their singing of a carol, harmonised in thirds to symbolise agreement, as is frequently found in folk traditions.9 (Ex. 2.2.04).
Ex. 2. 2. 04: The carol.

The first focus on Grazia as an individual is in the section where she is prevailed upon to read Vito's letter again, so that all can hear. This section, which Grazia leads, becomes a depiction of the Italian vision of life in Australia in the 1950s. Her excitement is shown at the prospect of the things she will have about her and the way she will live (Ex. 2. 2. 05)

Ex. 2. 2. 05: Grazia's vision of Australia.

At the same time, she describes what she knows of her husband-to-be: that he's honest, a widower of a good family and hard-working. She adds: "What more do you need to know?". While her description proves flawed, it does not alter the fact that Grazia is shown trying to make a decision based upon information that she has (Ex. 2. 2. 06). This decision-making aspect of Grazia is given
importance by the presentation of her statement as an accompanied recitative, a significant contrast with music for the letter which preceded it (Ex. 2. 2. 07). It is also different from the music for Ennio's reaction to the women's efforts to remake a dress for Grazia's wedding (Ex. 2. 2. 08). His embarrassment is a thinly-disguised frustration about his family's economic position. Significantly, the harmonies which occur at the moment of his embarrassment return whenever any character feels this emotion in the opera.

Ex. 2. 2. 06: Grazia's decision-making.

Ex 2. 2. 07: Grazia reads the letter - accompaniment.
The fifth scene of Act 1 shows Grazia attaching importance to her family and country as aspects of her identity. On board the ship, Grazia prepares to leave her old life behind. Sounds of farewell and blasts from the ship's horn are followed by a sentimental immigrant chorus, "Una bottiglio di vino", then sung as "A bottle of wine in the suitcase" (Ex. 2. 2. 09). Grazia's unaccompanied "Addio Italia" (Ex. 2. 2. 10) is more personal, and reveals the tension of parting by the tritones which occur as the word "Addio" ends.
Ennio's parting words are all to do with buying Grazia's land so that, with a more secure living, he can also get married. This conversation, which is really about the pain of parting, is expressed in terms which mask its meaning. Harmonies, derived from adjacent semitones, accompany text and action which convey that Grazia hears what her brother means to say. Her reply, rising sequentially over chords built on tritones, gives as full an expression of her feelings as she is able to make at this time: that the "handful of earth" signifies the sweat of generations, her ties to the past (Ex. 2. 2. 11).

Ex. 2. 2. 11: Grazia's reply -symbolism of her land.

Then a new vocal style for Grazia appears in this scene. Her reflection, "this handful of earth is my heart", is in a lyric vein, revealing deep attachment to family and country as aspects of her identity. It is also a climax of one set of memories, selected from her past and re-enacted through the scenes of the first act. Ennio's questions and the sentimental immigrant chorus float around, but do not impinge on this new awareness of herself (Ex. 2. 2. 12). At the end, the cello note, D, is only answered by the sound of the waves made by the bow of the ship. There is a sense of open-endedness which parallels the productive strength of purpose which Grazia has revealed in this scene.
Scene 6 recalls music from earlier scenes; the opening phrase of the opera (Ex. 2. 2. 01 which introduced Grazia) combines with harmonies from the wedding scene. Over these musical reminiscences, Grazia composes a letter to Vito. As the opening phrase sounds in the orchestral accompaniment, Grazia tries to imagine what kind of man she has married and, in doing so, reveals her hidden dreams (Ex. 2. 2. 13).

Grazia’s ecstatic projection of the future is a fantasy of love. Her phrase, "I fly to you" (Ex. 2. 2. 14a), is based on the "Lontano" melody (Ex. 2. 2. 14b); the eager mood of the text is musically extended by a rippling style of rising scales in flutes, oboes, violins and keyboards in the conclusion of the scene.
The chord that introduces Grazia's promise, "I will make you a good wife", is one heard earlier and carried forward into the fabric. In Act 1 Scene 2, Fiorina's advice, "Don't believe everything people tell you", is accompanied with it (Ex. 2. 2. 15a). This chord which supports a text advising a healthy scepticism, appears at significant moments. As Act 1 closes, Grazia's optimism is supported by this same chord, which can be read as an ironic comment by the composer (Ex. 2. 2. 15b).

Ex. 2. 2. 15a: Don't believe everything - chord.

Ex. 2. 2. 15b: I will make you a good wife - chord.
In this first act, there are different kinds of musical language, which contribute to the composer's musical style in the opera. In fact, variation of compositional technique is integral to the composer's style. There are sections which are dominated by lilting melody in regular metre, such as the sisters' duet in the scene of celebration, and there are atonal sections, such as the the wedding scene, in which the pitches are generated by the beginning of a magic square canon. There are quotations, such as the Italian carol and there are aleatoric elements, as in the pitch patterns which are played independently by the instruments at the end of Act 1. As musicologist, Roger Covell, noted in the context of another work, such eclecticism has been a feature of Whitehead's style since her earliest music-theatre pieces.

The early scenes of Act 2 contrast Grazia's dream and her lived experience. Scenes of meeting Vito and having photos taken, to send back to her family, are interspersed with scenes from Calabria about the child of Vito's first marriage. In the fifth scene, at the mid point of the opera, Grazia writes to Fiorina. She gives expression to being in a zone of alienation and pain, which Alarcon and others describe as "borderland" (Alarcon in Lavie and Swedenburg 1996: 44). It is a loss-of-illusion experience (Ex. 2. 2. 16).

Ex. 2. 2.16: Grazia's letter in the second act.
Descending scales from the Prologue return but there is an added flavour of saxophone blues inflections. While not involved in a dialogue, the saxophone interjects phrases which cut across her thoughts (Ex. 2. 2. 17).

Ex. 2. 2. 17: One of the saxophone interjections in the letter in the second act.

In her search for more writing paper, Grazia discovers a box of child's clothing. When Vito accuses her of "sniffing around", a violent argument ensues. This is a part of the scene where the composer responds with a series of fixed pitches conveying the sense that Vito is "locked in" his anger (Ex. 2. 2. 18). Whitehead has a different approach to moments of stasis from Schultz. Where his inclination is to privilege directional structures, Whitehead is content for sections over a pedal or passages with repeated pitches to have their place for a variety of reasons. She says that, "at one time, they might suggest the emptiness of a landscape, at another, they might convey rigidly unchanging emotions" (Whitehead interview 1997).

Ex. 2. 2. 18: Fixed pitches - signal the crossing of the arcs of alienation.
Such sections provide productive tensions with the libretto, which continues to have its own momentum, with its cinematic progression of scenes. The moment of stasis musically indicates the positions of the two characters on separate arcs of alienation. Grazia begins her efforts to involve herself in the new community in the next scene. Vito's arc curves downward from Act 2 scene 5, as he distances himself from Grazia. It is not until the third act that he tries to communicate his troubles to her.

Act 3 scene 3 begins with Grazia held in a siege, at knifepoint, by Vito. Noises from outside include police sirens and voices through megaphones. Inside, Vito at last opens up to Grazia about the death of the daughter of his first marriage. The musical language is gentle as he remembers the long period of waiting for Grazia to arrive: "For months I carried your picture in my wallet." Up to this point in the opera, the selective set of memories are Grazia's. Now, she reaches out, in sympathy for the child of his first marriage. There is a return of the rippling style of accompaniment from her aria at the end of Act 1; this creates a musical link between Grazia's expressions of love: what she wanted to find in Vito and what she could have given the child (Ex. 2. 2. 19).

Ex. 2. 2. 19: Grazia reaches out to Vito.
The final scene of Act 3 completes the letter begun in the Prologue and affirms the bond between the sisters. Grazia’s plea in Act 3, “If you come, I can bear it” (Ex. 2. 2. 20a), comes from the sisters’ duet in Act 1 (Ex. 2. 2. 20b). In the presence of another migrant family, Grazia’s decision, to make a new life for the child she is expecting, gives expression to the way in which two cultures meet.

**Ex. 2. 2. 20a: Grazia’s plea in Act 3.**

**Ex. 2. 2. 20b: The sisters’ duet in Act 1.**
In constructing the libretto, Dell 'Oso uses letter writing to reveal the multiply constructed identity of Grazia at key moments in the story. The most powerful letter is the one which opens and closes the opera, the letter in which Grazia decides to stay in Australia. Other correspondence includes the proposal from Vito and the letter she writes to him on board ship and then throws into the waves. Vito receives a letter, which he does not discuss with Grazia, telling him of the serious illness of the child of his first marriage; and a letter is involved in Grazia's dismissal from the factory. There is also the letter which Grazia writes to her sister, expressing the true state of things with her husband and their life; and there is her sister's reply sending money for Grazia's passage home.

It is worth noting that the intimacy of letters is frequently associated with women in operas. This reflects the tradition which is established in research as the work of kinship and the maintenance of family ties in the letter writing of women. So there is tradition here. There is also the element of physical distance being bridged and a sense in which a letter can be seen as a site where women may feel they can be open in their expression. Dell 'Oso reaches into what Teresa de Lauretis describes as "the immense reservoir of women's folklore, the letters in which women have spent their imagination and creativity writing to those they loved" (de Lauretis 1987: 90). In Technologies of Gender, Teresa de Lauretis describes a play, "Despite Gramsci", that was edited from letters by Adele Cambria, and remarks on the twofold process in the text: the release of affective energies contained in the personal writings; and the release of another emotional response in the commentary on the letters. There is also a twofold process in The Bride of Fortune but the commentary is manifest in the music.
The three acts of the opera retell Grazia's story in flashback. The first focus on Grazia as an individual is in the second scene of Act 1 where she reads sections of Vito's letter to her sister and friends; but this scene is also based on the typical Italian vision of life in Australia in the 1950s. The final scenes of Act 1 show Grazia more clearly emerging as an individual. On board the ship, she prepares to leave her old life behind, a step which she likens to "an unopened letter of destiny".

As Act 1 closes, Grazia composes a letter to Vito and then throws it into the sea. There is ambiguity in this action: it could be read as a poetic gesture, keeping communication on the level of the spirit; and it could also be read as an incomplete development of the ability to communicate a deep level of self to another person. In either case, the inner thoughts of the young woman soar upwards (Ex. 2. 2. 21).

*Ex. 2. 2. 21: Grazia's thoughts in the letter to Vito.*

![Musical notation](image)

Grazia's direct communication with Vito does not achieve the intimacy that is revealed here until the third act, in the siege scene. The poetic imagery of the words is emphasised by the musical intensity, expressed through the high tessitura and the rising contour of the phrases. However, it is a letter to an imagined rather than a real person. Grazia's letter to her sister, Fiorina, in the fifth scene of Act 2, is more honest correspondence. She describes the reality of meeting her husband and the difficulties of her life.
In the final letter, Grazia communicates with ease and reaffirms the closeness of the bond between the sisters. Her decision to stay in Australia, to bring up the child she is expecting, signifies hope in the continuity of the story. The letters chart Grazia's maturing "voice", confidently articulating to another the wants that she has, the decisions that she has made.

Whitehead's achievement is the gradual revelation, through motifs and harmonies, of Grazia's multiply constructed identity. It is in the music that we see the stages of migration, the loss of family, land and language. The first scenes in Act 1 present a character who identifies strongly with her family and village. The Italian language and folk vocal tradition are symbolised in the singing of a carol. In these scenes, Grazia is undifferentiated from other women. By the fifth scene of Act 1, when she leaves her family and country, these aspects of her identity become nostalgic, engendering a new vocal style.

The second act shows the trials of migration. Grazia is defined by others (when she is told in Scene 1 that where she will live is better than what she had in Calabria); and she becomes invisible (when her letter to Fiorina is taken from her in Scene 6, in the workplace, as if she had no rights). Eventually she becomes a target for abuse and violence (when Vito calls her "disgraziata" and strikes her in Scene 9). The musical approach to character follows the hybrid experience and slowly shapes the changes, that integrate her into her new life, independently of the pace of events.

In the same way as *Black River* reflects on a story which is the experience of many Aboriginal women, *The Bride of Fortune* records a story with elements that are familiar to many women from southern Europe who came to
Australia in the 1950s. While each story of those southern European women is unique, there are common features: the marriage ceremony with an unknown bridegroom, who had written from Australia sending for a wife; the arrival; and the struggle with communication. It is out of Grazia's hybrid experience that new life emerges in Act 3. Surrounded by people and a way of living very different from her previous experience, she ultimately constructs a new identity and a new family grouping. In her final letter to her sister, she writes:

Fiorina, if you come, I can bear it.
For I have decided to stay in this country.
I want more for my daughter
Than the life we have had...
It's a hard life on this strange soil
But we can live.

Whitehead's music enables an audience to internalise, through the character, the triple dislocation of the migrant: the loss of roots, the loss of language and the loss of familiar patterns of social behaviour; and also to experience the new formation of Grazia's identity. She expresses her need to put down roots in the same way, but not in the same place, as generations of her family before her. Grazia represents a discourse of migrant experience through the way in which she surmounts difficulties of communication.

3. Lindy in Lindy - The Trial Scene

While the structure of the libretto of Lindy, as that of The Bride of Fortune, allows the story to be told in flashback, the music, as demonstrated in the Trial Scene, is designed to maintain a separateness for the central character. The opera is composed by Moya Henderson on a libretto by Henderson and Judith
Rodriguez. Completed in 1997, it awaits performance. The Trial Scene, workshoped by the Australian Opera and then publicly performed in the National Festival of Australian Theatre in October 1994, presents the trial of Lindy Chamberlain, for the murder of her baby, Azaria. Librettist, Rodriguez, states that:

"Everywhere in this story, there was belief: Mrs Chamberlain's supposedly outlandish religious faith which sustained her, Aboriginal knowledge of the land, as well as volatile public opinion... This forebade us to concentrate on mere personal heartbreak (Rodriguez 1997: 16)."

As only the Trial Scene of *Lindy* will be discussed, a synopsis of the opera is included to contextualise that scene. The Prologue establishes that, within an appearance of naturalism, characters will freely step out of and back into the time frame of the scene.

The opening prison-cell scene, in which the central character is dreaming, takes place in 1986, over five years after the disappearance of the baby, Azaria, while the family were holidaying at Ayers Rock (Uluru). It is the night before her mother, Lindy, must identify the recently discovered matinee jacket, worn by the baby when she disappeared. Lindy's dream is richly populated. There is the spirit of Azaria, the Prosecution Council, and Ding, Dong and Belle who are sometimes understood as being from the "dingo press" and sometimes as being ordinary dingoes. The next scenes take place in 1980, with the Chamberlain family as tourists at Uluru.

Lindy takes Azaria to Maternity Cave, in the second scene, to absorb the centuries-old atmosphere, created by the memories of Aboriginal mothers. In the third scene, at an evening barbecue, the Chamberlains meet the Lowe
family and, after the meal, Lindy carries Azaria to the tent and settles her to sleep. When Lindy has returned to her husband and sons, the sound of a cry makes her run to check Azaria; she sees the tent marauded and screams the alarm that her baby has been taken by a dingo. The police are sent for and a search is made; but, to no avail. Suddenly the scene returns to the prison, on the same night as at the opening of the act, and Lindy is alone.

The press recall details of the forensic evidence at the opening of the second act and their personal comments about Lindy are a reminder that journalistic innuendo played a significant part in the case. In the fifth scene, called the Trial Scene, several witnesses appear, from among the campers for the Defence and from experts on textiles and blood samples for the Prosecution. When the decision is reached, the chorus express satisfaction with the guilty verdict.

At the end of the sixth scene, when the matinee jacket is identified, Lindy’s solo is a song of survival. In the seventh scene, at the Royal Commission, the Defence experts decimate the previously accepted Crown testimony. After the evidence of Aboriginal trackers is admitted, the judge finds that a conviction cannot be supported. Catharsis comes from Lindy’s belief that the land has become a paradise, that Azaria and the land have become one.

Focus on the Trial Scene in this chapter is framed by two kinds of theory which have an impact upon an accused person’s identity. One theory concerns the effects of assigning guilt. Criminology theorist Jay Lemke maintains that an accused person is rendered powerless as much by the way society constructs its image of them, as by their custodial detention. This social construction of an accused person paves the way "to its total subordination to institutional
interests" (Lemke 1987: 114). This contrasts with the way in which social theorists such as Sarup, Hall and Trinh have written about identity forming through interaction with people in a variety of settings. De Lauretis theorises that identity is produced "by personal engagement in the practices, discourses and institutions that lend significance and affect to the events of the world" (de Lauretis, 1984: 159). Personal engagement in the formation of identity empowers people and it is that power which is removed when a person is accused, preceding the determination of their innocence or guilt.

Legal theorists argue that the framework of the law is based on the notion of separation from others (West 1988: 2). Labelling a person as deviant effects that separation. Once labelled as deviant, the accused person will be treated differently by society in general and ousted by the majority. Teya Dusseldorp and Suzanne Hatty deplore the belief that women who are convicted, or even accused, of violent crime are held to have transgressed some kind of biological norm as nurturer, and are seen as non-women (Dusseldorp 1993: 201; Hatty 1993: 23). In such a naive belief, the roles women may take as nurturer and carer signify femininity and criminality is seen as an antithesis to womanhood.

Media coverage also contributes to a social construction of the identity of an accused person, as is shown to happen in the opera's Trial Scene. In contemporary court cases, images of a trial are not only photographed with captions but also televised with commentaries. It is some years since Christian Metz described the act of watching images on the screen as giving the film spectator a type of emotional power, a transcendental power of pure sight that can go anywhere in space and time and can observe other people's troubles in security (Metz 1982: 108). Metz's *The Imaginary Signifier* remains a key work.
for the evolution of semiotically-inspired film theory, showing film is concerned with things that are like other things but all its icons are projected images of absent ‘realities’. He writes:

[W]hat unfolds on the screen may be more or less fictive: the actors, the ‘decor’, the words one hears are all absent, everything is recorded (as a memory trace which is immediately so, without having been something else before) ... [I]t is the signifier itself that is recorded, that is absence (Metz 1982:129).

As social scientist David Harris points out, it becomes not only hard to trace the meaning of signifiers to an original signified but problematic whether there is gain in so doing. He questions the specialness of the moment of origin and argues for attention to shift to the interesting meanings contained in the signification processes after that original moment (Harris 1996: 136). For example, semiotically-inspired film theory has transferences to televised images. When actual events are televised, powerful images can be received in a familiar environment. Michael Novak points out that, for the millions who see televised news, the story is the ‘reality’; for those who lived through the event, it may prove a surprise to see what the television screen made ‘real’ (Novak in Gumpert and Cathcart 1986: 591). The question becomes: whose ‘reality’ is it? Who is reading and for what purpose?

From many readings of actual events in the Lindy saga, three will be canvassed. First, barrister Jocelyn Scutt records that the Crown’s reading of Lindy was of a scheming woman (Scutt 1990: 413). The Crown alleged that she was responsible for making jagged cuts in the baby’s jumpsuit look like the
work of dingo's teeth. This reading, for the purpose of contributing to the case against Lindy Chamberlain, challenged the credibility of the accused by associating her with a category of women schemers. In other words, it was not seen to be necessary to prove the allegation of scheming; the expert witnesses were called to 'verify' how cuts on the jumpsuit 'must' have been made.

Anthropologist Dianne Johnson focuses on a second reading, of Lindy Chamberlain as witch (Johnson 1984: 90). This evolved from the talk of the death of Azaria being a religious sacrifice. Such unfounded speculation was fuelled by ignorance of the Seventh-day Adventist religion to which the Chamberlain family belonged and in which Michael Chamberlain was a minister. It was also seen to be 'incriminating' that Lindy sometimes dressed Azaria in black clothing. The speculation behind this talk pointed to the 'unnaturalness' which was attributed to Lindy Chamberlain as a mother.

Photographer Catherine Rogers denounces the evidence from the trial as unverifiable, citing the destruction of slides made by forensic expert Joy Kuhl, and she finds that guilt was established by the community's reading of a less than convincing performance of maternal grief (Rogers 1986: 2). In a legal commentary, Frances Heidensohn writes that women who fail to conform to expectations of appropriate female behaviour may be treated very much more severely by the courts, because of their failure to weep or show maternal love (Heidensohn 1986: 295). The readings to which Scutt, Johnson and Rogers draw attention expose the fragility of the process of reading images. They also underline differences which may be read by those who are distanced by location and time.
Belief and verification are issues in *Lindy*, but, in a commentary on the actual trial, barrister Scutt has problematised such belief by stating that "to be a woman, whether as victim or accused, is to be incredible in the context of law" (Scutt 1993: 9). Concerned by these issues of belief and verification, medical writer Ruth Allen proposed to move away from juries as the exclusive tribunal of fact in trial matters dealing with medical and scientific evidence (Allen 1994: 72). In arguing for this, she cited the Chamberlain case, where wrongful conviction was the result of confusion with two submissions of forensic evidence for the same substance. The prosecution suggested a substance found in the Chamberlain's car was blood. The defence evidence, that the substance was a commercial sound deadener, was largely ignored.

The two inquests into the death of Azaria relied on statements from eye witnesses. In the trial, however, reliance shifted to forensic science.16 By shifting ground in this way, criminal lawyer Trevor Nyman states, the prosecution was able to create the impression that forensic scientists reconstructing an event were more reliable than eye-witnesses who were at the event when it took place (Nyman 1986: 71).

The Royal Commission, set up to inquire into the Chamberlain conviction, focused attention in its 1987 report on the deficiencies of the expert evidence: from inappropriate methodologies and inadequate quality assurance systems to unacceptable practices adopted by forensic scientists. The English Law Reform Commission has recommended that a Court Appointed Expert determine the validity of medical and scientific evidence in all appropriate cases.
The first section of the Trial Scene of the opera gives no opportunity for Lindy to speak publicly; and her 'voice' is submerged by others in the court. Nevertheless, aspects of Lindy's identity are uncovered by the evidence of a camper from the Uluru site. Questioned by the Defence Counsel, Mrs Lowe gives evidence that relates to Lindy as a new mother. The music is moving in its simplicity (Ex. 2. 3. 01). The dingo press comment that her evidence is "out of the way early" while the music suggests the frenzied atmosphere (Ex. 2. 3. 02).

Ex. 2. 3. 01: Mrs Lowe's evidence.

Ex. 2. 3. 02: The frenzied atmosphere.
The second section is concerned with expert witness. The music for the expert in textiles (Ex. 2. 3. 03), presents a parody style which attends others as well. It is a moment where non-verbal communication is used to clarify perspective, where the composer's voice is evident. The music of the accompaniment includes a brief reference to the score of the cartoon film, "Bambi" (Ex. 2. 3. 04); its appearance in the Trial Scene comments upon the suspicion which was so prevalent at the time: that no animal killed the baby and that the only explanation was that the Chamberlains did. Lindy responds: "Was there ever any evidence that didn't seem contrived?" (Ex. 2. 3. 05). This phrase develops significantly when Lindy describes what Azaria was wearing (Ex. 2. 3. 06).

Ex. 2. 3. 03: The first expert, in textiles, with the Bambi reference at bar 235.

Ex. 2. 3. 04: Music from the film, Bambi.

Ex. 2. 3. 05: Was there ever any evidence.
As the scene continues, the development of this melodic expression begins to separate the musical language of Lindy from her accuser. The questions of the Prosecution, in the third section, generally are set syllabically. Lindy's replies are melismatic. Despite unorthodox rhythmic shapes produced by the 5/16 meter, the long phrasing suggests calm. Its tensions are a product of the contour and high tessitura for the soprano. However, it has a floating quality. Lindy "sees" the image, the baby wearing the jacket, in her memory; expressive
dynamics, which decrescendo from \( mf \) to \( p \) and then crescendo again to \( mf \), are a musical parallel of a moment in which Lindy goes back in time and then returns to the proceedings in the present.

This melodic expression underpins the section of the scene when Lindy is speaking publicly, giving evidence about going into the tent. All through the scene, the accompaniment hurries along in agitated semiquavers. The melody, however, moves calmly; and this mirrors readings of the saga which state that Lindy's composure provoked antipathy among the public. The pace of the interchange between the Prosecution and Lindy is so constant for the period of this evidence that any tempo changes become significant. For instance, a change of meter and tempo occurs at the words: "A split second later, I realised that she'd cried and been disturbed". It emphasises her reaction to reliving events. Then the music changes as Lindy recalls the eerie moment of seeing "that the tent was empty". There is a sense of slow-motion recall (Ex. 2.3.07).

Ex. 2.3.07: I could see that the tent was empty.
In the midst of the unsettling pace of Prosecution questions about the
movements of the dingo, a variant of the melody is stated. When the
Prosecution asks whether there is any doubt about evidence that Lindy has
given, concerning the dingo leaving the tent, Lindy states: "Not in my mind"
(Ex. 2. 3. 08). This phrase is also connected with text which painfully relives the
past.

Ex. 2. 3. 08: Not in my mind.

A little later, Lindy wearily declares: "This has been going on for two years". The
effort of giving evidence is musically shown by the fragmentation of the
melody (Ex. 2. 3. 09). To questions about blood-stained clothing, she replies:
"We are talking about my baby" (Ex. 2. 3. 10). The music suggests a lullaby,
rejecting the momentum of the Prosecution's musical language. Again, this
represents a brief withdrawal by Lindy into memories of the child.
The structure of the Trial Scene is very much determined by the transcripts of actual events. In the first section of the scene, with its courtroom ceremony, there is no opportunity for Lindy to make a public statement. The second and
third sections reveal her characteristic musical language, through which the composer conveys the separateness of Lindy in this scene. Henderson has long held the view that: "In theatre, you've got to reach out to an audience through ... the ideas that you want to represent (Henderson 1989: 20).

The identity of Lindy is revealed in several ways in this scene. One of these is evidence representative of campers who met her at Uluru; another way is her voiced inner thoughts. For example, Lindy asks: "How much more can I stand of this?" (Ex. 2. 3. 11). A third way is her replies to questions, using the 5/16 meter. The musical language that Henderson creates for Lindy giving her evidence has specific features: 5/16 meter, long phrases and active semiquaver accompaniment (see Exs 2. 3. 05-06, 2. 3. 08-09). It occurs when she recalls events of the past, but it does not preclude the kind of exasperation, which can surface (see Ex. 2. 3. 10) through regular rhythm and accented articulation.

Ex. 2. 3. 11: Lindy - How much more can I stand of this?

The Trial Scene demonstrates ways in which Lindy was constructed as guilty and pathologically different from 'normal' women. Her final statement in this scene, after the jury delivers its verdict, denies the evil of which she has been accused (Ex. 2. 3. 12).
Ex. 2. 3. 12: Lindy's final statement in the Trial Scene.

Lindy never have done the evil you accuse me of.

Mad.

more slowly here

I'd already had two boys.

I loved my daughter, A - zarla.
The first part of this music (Ex. 2. 3. 12) has a semiquaver pulse which maintains the frenzied momentum of the scene. The second part (from bar 1295), with Lindy's reference to her other children, contrasts with that frenzy in its abrupt change of meter and tempo. This is a peak moment in the scene and representative of the statement that the opera makes about justice for an accused woman, and by implication, about an equitable justice system. The opera goes beyond Lindy's trial and places its focus on life-changing moments: the identification of the matinee jacket Azaria had worn when she was removed from the tent at Uluru; and the admission of evidence from the Aboriginal trackers by the Royal Commission.

Above all, the opera is about the survival of an ordinary woman, charged with an extraordinary crime; and the melodic motif, which has been previously found to create her separate identity in the courtroom, contributes significantly to the way in which the "voice" of the character is revealed. The notion of separateness for an accused person is an essential ingredient of her musical expression; however, unlike the legal theories addressed in this chapter, it is also a separateness which Lindy transforms into a source of her strength. When she revisits the past in her mind, she renews her memories. This aspect of her identity is directly related to her representation of issues of justice.

Focus in these three operas is on the ways of expression with which women engage to find the power to tell their stories. They are characters who might have been represented as socially marginalised; instead, they are powerful representatives of the discourses of the operas. As the women resist and transform conventions of character, the music conveys their voice in various ways: the strength of the motif which helps to reveal Miriam's character and
the contrast of her stillness with natural rhythms and the responses of the other characters to the dangerous situation; the letter sequence which reveals Grazia's decision-making and the way she is transformed by her experiences; and the separate musical language of Lindy's evidence in the Trial Scene.

The next chapter will compare the voices of women in these three operas with voices from operatic scenes in the established repertoire where characters face challenges and obstacles in the communication of their identity. These comparisons are drawn in order to test the proposition that it is the perspective of the characters of the three women, in the operas which have occupied this chapter, and not the issues with which they engage which reconfigures operatic dimensions in Australia in the 1990s.

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2 Commenting in an article called "The Gap", where he discusses questions of authenticity in performance, Schultz writes that "the created score is arguably only one representation of a world of musical ideas that are held subconsciously or semiconsciously in a sort of artistic limbo." His comments are relevant to the performance of this character's music (*Sounds Australian*. 35, 22-23. Spring 1992).

3 In the program notes on the music, Schultz writes that this notion is at odds with the dramatic realities of confinement and hostility (Program to 1989 performance season).

4 Alice Moyle uses the term "mouth sounds" to describe the syllables used to articulate the complex patterns in didjeridu playing; some examples she gives are *krr-krr-krra, dip-drrla* and *krra-krra-dup* (Moyle 1974: 9).
This usage is typical of romantic idioms and of post-romantic ballad style; musical examples from Chopin to Bernstein abound.

Two ideas that Schultz has identified as emerging in his music are irreconcilable synchronicities and water. Although this is an idea that Schultz articulated in 1995, the two ideas inform *Black River*, in the collision of cultures and the sense of threat embodied by water (*Sounds Australian*. 46, 24-25. Winter 1995).

Child welfare, like all aspects of Aboriginal affairs, was profoundly affected by the decision of white Australians that there would be no recognition of Aboriginal laws or title to land, and no compensation for its loss. In the 1990s, as founding co-ordinator of Link-Up, Coral Edwards states, there are many Aboriginal people who were taken as children from their families and communities (Edwards and Read 1989: xxiii). Link-Up is an organisation which works to re-unite members of Aboriginal families who were separated by government policy.

In interview with Noel Sanders, Whitehead referred to this theme from the theatre piece *Marduk* and also confirmed that it worked through a lot of (her) pieces (Whitehead Interview 1985: 11).

The use of thirds, symbolising agreement in harmonising communal songs has a long tradition. Harman and Mellers state that the use of twin song (cantus gemellus) as a modified form of conductus dates back to the early Renaissance. It is found as early as the thirteenth century in Britain and the name is used from the fifteenth century. Its two parts move together, mostly in thirds or sixths (Harman and Mellers 1962: 101). Percy Dearmer notes that carols of various national origins were preserved as folk song and he comments that the carol represents the ordinary people's musical contribution, in the sense of all involved (Oxford Carols 1964: ix-x).

Whitehead describes the magic square, in the work of mathematician, John Mitchell, as having the numbers 1 to 36 arranged, so you have six numbers horizontally and six vertically. She used it to generate bar lengths, pitches and chord structure.

Covell's comments were made following the 1987 National Opera Workshop (*Sydney Morning Herald*. 11 Oct. 1987).

Women's letter writing is called the "work of kinship" by Micaela di Leonardo in "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families and the Work of Kinship" in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 1987 vol 12 no 3.

In "Despite Gramsci", the letters to Antonio Gramsci, from his wife and his wife's sisters, were incorporated. It was first performed in 1975 (de Lauretis 1987: 84).

Appendix Three includes reports from the National Festival of Australian Theatre in October 1994.

This term, used in the stage directions of the libretto, was not coined by Rodriguez, but she is unable to source it. It has a similar meaning to gutter press, defined as "marked by sensationalism" (*New Shorter Oxford* 1993: 1165); and it also carries associations of the slang usage of the word "dingo", as "behaving contemptibly" (*New Shorter Oxford* 1993: 675).

Carolene Gwynn attributes Labelling Theory to Howard Becker, a criminologist writing in the 1980s. She does not cite this in specific writings of his but Labelling Theory is cited in N.

17 Both inquests were held in Alice Springs. The first commenced on December 15, 1980 and the second on December 14, 1981. The trial was held in Darwin, commencing September 13, 1982.
Chapter Three: First Reflection

This chapter tests the proposition that, while communication and social alienation are issues in operas before *Lindy*, *Black River* and *The Bride of Fortune*, these operas approach such issues from another perspective as a consequence of the prominence given to the voices of women from minority groups in society. Henderson and Rodriguez re-create an ordinary mother and shed light on Australian attitudes about women and about justice (Henderson 1992: 54). Andrew and Julianne Schultz, through the character of Miriam, question who is confined, who is safe, who belongs and who is excluded from society (Schultz 1997: 12). Whitehead and Dell 'Oso regard their opera with its migrant characters as a story of Australian life. In other words, the composers and librettists do not present these women as 'different'.

Before *Lindy*, there are a range of operatic scenes where a woman is accused. Frequently in nineteenth century opera, the accusation is from a husband, alleging infidelity. In Verdi operas such as *Un Ballo in Maschera* (1859), *Don Carlos* (1867) and *Otello* (1897), Amelia, Elisabetta and Desdemona are typical recipients of such accusations. Violent crimes, too, provide the basis for accusation of a woman in opera. However, it can be problematic who the victim of the violence is. In Bizet's *Carmen* (1875), Carmen is accused of slashing another girl in a knife fight. However, Peter Robinson's study of the story on which the libretto of *Carmen* is based establishes that she later saves Don Jose's life, does not abandon anyone in need and is not herself violent.

In Janacek's *Jenufa* (1904), the Kostelnicka is accused of murdering Jenufa's 'illegitimate' baby; but the Kostelnicka is herself a victim of the expectations of
the society in which she lives and for which she is supposed to represent the highest integrity as the church sacristan. In Ward's *The Crucible* (1962), Elizabeth Proctor comes before Judge Danforth, accused of harming Abigail through witchcraft by sticking pins in a poppet. The charge is falsely laid but eventually leads to the death of Elizabeth's husband. In these scenes, the accuser is temporarily dominant. The scene which repays comparison with the Trial Scene of *Lindy* is that from Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* (1853) because it is a scene where the protagonists vie for equality and it provides a study of the way another composer creates a separateness of musical language for the accused.

1. *Maria Stuarda* and *Lindy*

Turning to *Maria Stuarda*, the separateness for the character of Maria is created in the great scene of confrontation, the *Dialogo delle due Regine*, from the second scene of Act 1 of Donizetti's opera. A meeting between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart historically did not occur, even though Mary was held for a long period under house arrest because she was perceived to be a threat to Elizabeth's throne. Librettist Giuseppe Bardari, following Andrea Maffei's translation of Schiller's play, constructs a situation in which Maria tries to avoid the meeting, but is persuaded to try to gain her freedom by seeking a pardon from Elisabetta.

For much of the dialogue, both women share musical motifs and accompaniment patterns. Then leading to "Qualle insulto" (What an insult) a three-note accompaniment motif from the opening of the duet is inverted, which can be read as a symbol for the overturning of Maria's composure (Exs. 3. 1. 01a and b). The unconventionally placed recitative which follows provides Maria with expression separate from preceding musical language (Ex. 3. 1. 02).
Ex. 3. 1. 01 a: Maria Stuarda - Opening of Duet

Ex. 3. 1. 01 b: Qualle insulto.

Ex. 3. 1. 02: Unconventionally placed recitative in the Dialogo delle due Regine.
Usually, a recitative is placed before an aria and prepares for it. This recitative passage contains Maria's denunciation of Elisabetta as a "vil bastarda" and brings the duet to its conclusion. One of the unwritten laws of Italian censorship was that crowned heads must always be spoken of with respect (Commons 1992: 32). For Donizetti to structure the vocal duet, so that it ends with Maria's recitative, overturned convention. By changing the musical convention, Donizetti establishes Maria as a character who steps outside the social norm of her place within society. Musicologists Philip Gossett and William Ashbrook confirm that Donizetti departed at times from the structures of inherited tradition when stimulated by the character he was bringing to life.4 Maria Stuarda's musical language approximates the immediacy of spoken word and reflects the break with the conventions of expected behaviour.

This scene in *Maria Stuarda* is the catalyst which leads Elisabetta to condemn Maria to death. The whole of the second act is concerned with the reactions of Elisabetta and Maria to that decision. By contrast, the Trial Scene in *Lindy* precedes the final scenes. The dramatic peak at the announcement of the guilty verdict is resolved in later scenes which validate Lindy's evidence against the finding of a conviction.

Maria Stuarda and Lindy are both accused women and, by definition, stand separated from society. In order to present the element of separation musically, the composer must first decide in what way the character's separation can be conveyed. For Donizetti, the choice was that Maria would break with convention. The choice of musical language grew from this decision. The recitative style, in itself, is not extraordinary; its position in the structure of the duet, at its climactic end, is.
1.1 Analysis: Lindy's Giving Evidence

The character Lindy is from a minority in society, of women who have been accused of violent crime. Lindy's giving of evidence begins to unfold over a series of chords that are paired: minor chords of A and E, a change from F minor to F-sharp major, and then major chords of F and G. The simplicity of the harmony lets the ear focus on Henderson's approach to time with the rhythmic tension between the accompaniment patterns and the vocal line. The accompaniment in 5/16, with its repetitious patterns provides a subtext of restless activity for the legato vocal line. Initially the vocal range is limited (remaining within a sixth as Lindy recalls "She wore over the jumpsuit a pure white knitted jacket") and moves by step or small leap. At the words "It was called at the time a matinee jacket", the range opens out, the octave leap is emphasised by the increase (to f) in dynamic level and higher tessitura emphasises the strain of going back in time, remembering the child. Thereafter, 5/16 meter indicates the moments when Lindy moves outside of the time of the courtroom to the time of being at Uluru with her baby Azaria.

During Lindy's evidence, there are a series of texture and meter breaks. A texture break is produced by the chorus' reaction to the beginning of Lindy's evidence but the majority of breaks come by way of meter and are the result of the Prosecutor's questions. Lindy's reply, about calling out that the dingo had taken the baby before she went into the tent, re-establishes the 5/16 meter with similar harmonic movement and rhythmic restlessness in the accompaniment beneath the vocal legato. The next three breaks are shorter, and while they can possibly be read as intentionally unsettling the rhythm of the defendant Lindy, the effect is created that the main narrative is carried in the 5/16 meter. After
Lindy remembers "running flat out" to the tent, there is a short passage in which she asserts that she did chase the dingo which changes into 4/4. However, it seems to be the memory of her own momentum which returns Lindy's expression to the 5/16 meter.

Despite the interjections Lindy's expression remains the same until the Prosecutor asks when she decided that the dingo must have the baby. For the first time in her evidence, Lindy's expression becomes staccato and the tempo slows as she replies "A split second later, I realised that she'd cried and been disturbed". Once more the vivid memory of her running to the tent brings the return of the 5/16 meter. Scalic patterns which follow upon Lindy's reaching the empty tent can be read as a musical metaphor of waves of fear and nausea which Lindy tries to resist. Following this passage, the evidence that Lindy gives is in the meter of 4/4 as Lindy tries to reply factually about the railing obscuring her vision of the dingo. However she returns to the 5/16 meter when she is questioned about whether she has any doubt about the opinion that she has offered.

The next meter break happens when the Prosecutor asks Lindy to verify that the summary he has given of her evidence is correct. Overwrought she calls out "Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!", each C4 exclamation accompanied by a one-bar 5/16 pattern as an expression of Lindy's raw pain at this point. This jagged expression continues when she explains that "This has been going on for over two years" and the meter only changes when she asserts "I'd like to get it over and done with, Your Honour". In this last section of Lindy's evidence, there is rapid movement backwards and forwards in meter change, where regular meter accompanies text which expresses Lindy's trying
to endure the trauma of the court ("We are talking about my baby daughter not some object") and where irregular meter accompanies text which returns to memories of her child.

Throughout this section of Lindy's evidence, her language encompasses a heightened awareness as she describes "climbing the railing", "diving into the tent" and "running flat out". The word accentuation is effected by melisma. For example, in Lindy's first statement about the "pure white knitted jacket", it is the word "jacket" which is accentuated by the elongated rhythm of the melisma. This elongated rhythm is also used on the word "tent" when Lindy recalls that she called out about the dingo taking her baby before she went into the tent. These words tend to fall at the ends of phrases, often preceding meter breaks.

Without diminishing the meaning, the elongated words produce a focus on the sonic aspects of the text. Each elongated word creates emphasis (for example, when Lindy acknowledges what has been said is "correct") without requiring the dynamic level to increase in order to make its impact. The questioning in the courtroom provides for a different fall of emphasis. In general, the questions are set syllabically. When Lindy is first questioned, each downbeat is accented. At other times, the Prosecutor brings different emphasis by increasing the tempo, or changing the articulation or dynamics.

The crucial difference between the woman's voice in *Lindy* from that in *Maria Stuarda* is shown by the cumulative way in which Henderson uses the tension between voice and accompaniment in the 5/16 meter in this scene. Musically the reflection on the child Azaria is shown by the floating vocal line in 5/16
meter that presents an outward calm. The restless energy of the accompaniment can be read as the mother’s distress which is hidden from public gaze. Donizetti’s decision is for one dramatic moment but Henderson’s music for Lindy’s voice is material which enters the fabric of the opera in many contexts while retaining its recognisable features. It contributes to structure without being a fixed structural component like a recitative in relation to an aria.

2. Peter Grimes and Black River

There are classic operatic scenes before Black River where a character outside of the dominant society tells their story, such as the Flying Dutchman’s admission to Senta that he is cursed in the second act of Wagner’s Der Fliegende Holländer (1843) or Aida’s revelation in the first act that she is torn between her love for Radames and her duty to her father and people in Verdi’s Aida (1871). In Meale’s Voss (1986), one of the strongest images is of the explorer as outsider in society and the scenes of Voss reaching out to Laura are attempts to ‘cross the space’ and commune with the spirit of another human being. However, the scene in Britten’s Peter Grimes (1945) where Peter tells his story to Captain Balstrode, provides a strong contrast with Miriam’s communication of her story in Black River because it is not part of an expression of love.

As with all scenes of disclosure, the scenes from Peter Grimes and Black River are critical to the development of relationships in the opera, but in both these operas the relationships tend to be between an individual and society. Peter is isolated but is part of the society in which he is perceived to be breaking its norms; Miriam is isolated as representative of Aboriginal peoples outside of the dominant society in Australia.
In *Peter Grimes*, Peter's 'difference' lies in his behaviour. The people of the English village in which he lives suspect Peter, a fisherman, of causing the death of a boy apprentice. An inquest is enacted in the Prologue, and Peter's reflections on his future to Captain Balstrode occur at the end of Scene 1. This reflection sheds new light on Peter's character. He has faced hostility in the courtroom and resentment at his plans to secure a new apprentice, and his only offer of friendship is from the schoolmistress Ellen Orford. He is "too self-willed to come to terms with society" (White 1983: 54). Nevertheless, Peter embodies the isolation and vulnerability of the village. While the theme of the outsider is strong in Britten's operas, Peter, like Miriam in *Black River*, has a strong sense of place: "I am native, rooted here" (Ex. 3. 2. 01).

Ex. 3. 2. 01: *Peter Grimes* - *I am native, rooted here.*
Unlike Miriam in *Black River*, Peter does not feel compelled to tell his story. It is only when Balstrode suggests that perhaps Peter was not to blame for the death of the apprentice that Peter is moved to tell about the day when the boy died. While the community are preoccupied with an approaching storm, Peter opens up to another person (Ex. 3.2.02).

**Ex. 3.2.02: Peter Grimes - We strayed into the wind.**

For this moment, Britten creates a sense of stillness with static harmonies which run counter to orchestral scalic activity. At the end of this scene Peter is alone, reflecting on his life. The motif, which appears in this scene, is later frequently attached to a text expressing longing for peace (Ex. 3.2.03). This same motif, with its minor ninth poignantly sounding as Peter expresses his isolation, takes instrumental shape in the second interlude of the opera, which is a musical parallel of the turmoil at sea and that in Peter himself.
In the intense expression of this monologue lies the composer's preference for word rhythm which conveys emotional content (Britten program note 1945). It also represents a 'frozen' moment before the full release of the storm which had been threatening through the conversation of Balstrode and Peter. Britten constructs the instrumental interlude that follows so that it completes the brevity of Peter's soliloquy revealing his tormented spirit, longing for peace. This passage provides the basis from which an audience come to understand the character of Peter Grimes and his reluctance to disclose information about himself.

Like Peter, Miriam in *Black River* is outside society as represented by the other people in the cell. In contrast to Peter, Miriam's disclosure in Scene 8 of the realities of Aboriginal life is not prompted by feelings of trust but by a
combination of grief and the necessity to tell her story. Miriam's grief is a personal expression that uses the power of storytelling to maintain the connection of her identity to the lives of her grandfather, her father and her son.

In Schultz's opera, an indigenous woman relives the action and relates the story. The roles of the other characters divide into two groups. In one group, the Judge and Anna are active listeners to stories such as Miriam's as they inquire into race relations. In the other group, the policeman and the town drunk are pieces of a story which encompasses generations. In two lengthy solos, the composer and librettist recreate Miriam's family history as a channel of shared Aboriginal experience. It should be noted that in mounting the performance, the production team set out to find a female Aboriginal singer in a search that was as concerned with specific vocal quality as with perceptions of appropriating story.

2.1 Analysis: Miriam's Disclosure - Sc. 8, Black River

The music of Scene 8 opens with the chord associated with time (see Ex. 2.1.01) with its clusters of seconds widely spread over piccolo, oboe, piano, synthesiser, viola and double bass. The scene then unfolds as a series of events. At first, Miriam's statements ("It is good that this place makes you uncomfortable. It is a rotten place. No, I'll never get used to it.") make limited changes to the pitch with which each statement commences. Separate instrumental colours - single sounds from tam-tam, harp, bass clarinet, french horn and low strings provide a thinly exposed texture.
The return of Miriam's motif (see Exs. 2.1.05-08) is a second event (bar 10). One of the reasons for its appearance here is structural in that it carries reminders of its associations in previous scenes. It also prepares for the third event, which is the narration of Miriam's story of her grandfather who was chained in the cell (bar 21). The sound of the tuned gongs, playing the Earth Motto has a "hollowness" that is appropriate for Miriam's memories of her grandfather, imprisoned for five years for allegedly poisoning some sheep (see Ex. 2.1.11). Notes from the 'time' chord also sound below these memories of Miriam, in a subtle motivic development. This merges into the fourth event which alters the vocal colour to breathy and tearful, as Miriam describes her grandfather's broken spirit and descent into alcoholism. Her motif sounds in the cor anglais while the pitch of Miriam's vocal line becomes of secondary importance to its emotional expression.

The fifth event is signalled by a meter change to 7/8 and a slightly faster tempo change (bar 44). The piano, bass clarinet and viola begin to toll one note in quaver subdivisions and this evolves into Miriam's motif. Below this, the double bass and harp commence a ground bass which descends in tones from A-flat till it reaches F-flat and then rises outlining a tritone. It provides a new depth of tension. Miriam grieves for her father whose heart gave out after bringing the dead body of Miriam's son from the cell. Her grief at burying two men on one day is therefore accompanied by all the motifs associated with her character, powerfully accumulated.

The sixth event, where Miriam questions Les the policeman directly, continues these motifs. During this the vocal expressions become shorter, punctuated by orchestral clusters and snare drum rim shots. The effect is explosive. Miriam
influences the decision-making of the Judge in Scene 8 when she unites the history of her grandfather's generation to the tragic death of her son and questions the role of the police. It galvanises the Judge. Musically, this is shown in the final event of the scene, in the use of the ground bass to create the link between the telling of Miriam's story and its transformation of the receptive listener. However, there is an unresolved element in the music as it segues into Scene 9.

There are crucial differences between Peter's disclosure in Peter Grimes and Miriam's in Black River which can be seen from the musical expression which results from them. It is self-evident that the stories are different. Peter's story, based on an eighteenth century text, expresses a search for a harbour that "shelters peace". It is not difficult to see the significance of that in a 1945 English context. However, with Peter, this phrase becomes increasingly associated with death; in his disclosure to Balstrode, it is linked with the death of the boy apprentice but at the end of the opera it immediately precedes his own. Miriam's story, grounded in documents from Royal Commissions into Black Deaths in Custody, expresses a search for justice and for white society to "know" and acknowledge Aboriginal ways. The open ending resounds with the voice of the indigenous woman in her final expression "maybe".

3. Eugene Onegin and The Bride of Fortune

Letters are a common device by which characters are revealed and plot is developed in opera. There are letters of invitation to a meeting which is actually an entrapment, as in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro (1786) where the Countess and Susanna set out to teach the Count a lesson, or Strauss' Der
Rosenkavalier (1911) where Sophie and Octavian deceive Baron Ochs. There are letters whose content is false such as that from Violetta in Verdi's La Traviata (1853) when Violetta tries to convince Alfred that she wants to return to her former life; or the forged letter from Edgardo in Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor (1835) which brings Lucia to agree to sign a wedding contract with Arturo, a man she does not love. There are letters whose content is not delivered such as the letter in Puccini's Madama Butterfly (1904) from Pinkerton to Sharpless so that he will tell Butterfly that Pinkerton has married a new wife.

In contrast to these, the letter scene in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin (1879) provides a particularly apt comparison for Grazia's letter scene in The Bride of Fortune because both are romantic situations for a woman, writing to the love which she does not yet know. These letter scenes of Grazia and Tatyana provide insights into the ways in which two composers, with a similar context, construct the communication of the character.

In Eugene Onegin, the scene which Tchaikovsky completed first was Tatyana's letter monologue, the second scene of Act 1 (Schmidgall 1977: 233). Sections of the scene follow a key-scheme which explores semitonal shifts. The excited preamble, in the key of D-flat, has Tatyana trying to find a way to begin telling Onegin of her love. Thereafter, Tchaikovsky divides the letter scene into three sections. In the first section in D minor, Tatyana acknowledges Onegin's power over her emotions (Ex. 3. 4. 01); then, in C major, she writes that she knew him from her dreams, and could not give her heart to anyone else (Ex. 3. 4. 02). The third section returns to the D-flat tonality. A strong structural approach is
evident, and the semitonal shifts of the tonal design convey a flavour of similar tonal shifts in Russian folksong (Abraham 1968: 146).

Ex. 3. 4. 01: Tatyana’s letter - I now know that you have the power.

Ex. 3. 4. 02: Tatyana’s letter - I could not give my heart to anyone else.

In the third bar of the final D-flat section, the horn plays a motif overlapping with Tatyana’s question, "Who are you?"; after its appearance here, this horn motif dominates much of the early part of the opera (Ex. 3. 4. 03). For example, it is found in the arioso of Lensky, suitor to Olga (Tatyana’s sister); and it is in the
introduction to the duel scene and Lensky's aria. It is associated with longing, which is the common experience of these three characters.

Ex. 3. 4. 03: Tatyana's letter - Who are you; recurring horn motif.

3. 1 Analysis: Grazia' Letter Scene in Act 1 Sc. 6 See Appendix Two (B)

Grazia's letter breaks into three distinct sections, with the preamble being the re-statement of the opera's opening phrase (see Ex. 2. 2. 01). However, Grazia knows exactly what she wants to say. The first part of the letter acknowledges Vito, her unknown husband, as her "destiny" and this first melody also returns in the second act, as the background to the gambling scene (Ex. 3. 5. 01).

Ex. 3. 5. 01: The background to the gambling scene in Act 2.

Grazia describes herself as "willingly...marked (by him)" and as "the bird who can never look homeward". The accompanying harmonies are from the wedding scene, providing internal structural links rather than aural cues for
audience memory (Whitehead interview 1992). The purpose displayed by Grazia in this section gives it a different quality from the opening section of Tatyana’s letter.

The second part of Grazia’s letter is romantically speculative and fanciful as in the phrase: “I have felt your breath on the air” (Ex. 3. 5. 04). The accompanying chords derive from the scene with the village women, when Vito’s letter was read. It links her imagined new life with Vito to the past. Again the vocal line rises to a climax, separated from the next section by a falling violin phrase.

The third section imagines the presence of Vito and musically expresses Grazia’s sense of urgency to reach him through the aleatoric style of accompaniment. Trills lead to rising scales, quickly repeated but at random. In the context of another opera, Yarmilah Alfonzetti describes this effect as a “band of sound” (Alfonzetti 1994: 40). In The Bride of Fortune, there is a sense of activity to which this band of sound musically contributes, as an underlying metaphor.

The crucial difference between Grazia’s letter scene and Tatyana’s is that Grazia is already involved in action that will lead her to her unknown love. Musically, there are no hesitations and Grazia does not wait for a reply to her communication. Her voice expresses her momentum, her purpose. She already reaches out for her “destiny”. In this scene, the rippling shapes are associated with the waves that carry her forward (Ex. 3. 5. 05).

The three Australian works, in this chapter, demonstrate what opera director Kasper Holten calls “the continuing coherence of the operatic genre” (Holten
Seminar 1997). They are linked, in ways of conveying character operatically, to operas which have established places in the repertoire. They resonate with musical solutions that other generations of composers have had to find for conveying the "separateness" of a character, the marginalising and isolation of a character, the moment at which the character is able to tell their story, the ways in which to structure a scene so that it articulates with musical material that has gone before and that is to follow. However, while communication of stories about marginalisation and difference can be found in operas before these three, it has not often been the case that female characters involve the listener in the story from within their perspective. Miriam, Grazia and Lindy do that and one of the changes in these operas comes from the revelation of the woman's voice.

Other changed dimensions in contemporary opera, revealed by the central characters of these three operas, are concerned with issues of indigenous voice, specifically, and issues of authenticity, generally. It is ground-breaking to have an indigenous woman be the conduit for the story and message of an opera, to have a character represent an Aboriginal discourse and for that character to be a woman. Significantly, the character is not created by Aboriginal melodic contours or imitation of indigenous instrumental colours. Indeed, Schultz has written that he felt drawn to Aboriginal music "without wanting to literally imitate its surface features" (Schultz 1991:12). Rather, Miriam's character lies in her musical stillness. The rhythms are important because they offset this quality of stillness. So, too, are the harmonic sources that give rise to the motifs.
Furthermore, it is one thing for composer and librettist to acknowledge their intention to explore a pressing issue in contemporary Australia, but it is another for an Aboriginal spokesperson to endorse the authenticity of the image of Aboriginality presented in *Black River*. At the 1993 Launch of the film of *Black River*, Sol Bellear, who was then Deputy Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, stated:

I hope that *Black River* can stir the conscience of people so that they face up to the injustices that indigenous people still suffer ... It tackles some difficult issues. It provides us with an insight into our very recent history, a history that is often ignored and shamefully covered up. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody comprehensively documented the brutal history and mistreatment of our indigenous people. It examined the reasons why so many of our people were being held in custody, raising major concerns about our criminal justice system. ... *Black River* brings home very forcefully these concerns in a new and dramatic way ... The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission believes ... that *Black River* will make an important contribution to increasing public awareness of crucial issues in the area of race relations (Bellear Film Launch 1993).

All three operas are concerned with issues of authenticity. Discussing *Black River*, Schultz emphasised the primary importance of conveying who the character is and how they speak or sing (Schultz 1997: 12). These questions sit within the parameters of being true to the facts submitted about Aboriginal deaths in custody to the Royal Commission, some of which inform the libretto. *The Bride of Fortune* is not based upon the story of any one individual woman, but its detail is sensitively conveyed by a New Zealand-born composer and a librettist from an Italian migrant background. Both know the particular difficulties that women may experience in relocating in a new country and their intention to accurately show some of these difficulties grounds the work
in recent history. Even more is authenticity the issue with *Lindy* where the challenge for music and libretto was to truly reflect and transform the volume of published material, including court transcripts.

Adorno writes of opera in the 1970s losing what he calls "cultural topicality" (Adorno in Levin 1993: 111). This is a position at odds with that adopted in this study. These operas demonstrate that cultural topicality is one of the ways by which opera effects its reinvention. In fact, the return of cultural topicality raises the question of the neutrality of composer and librettist in the discourse that is presented. In these three operas, it must be stated that none adopt a neutral position and that all three partnerships of composers and librettists create their pieces in such a way that the central character presents a discourse which, in turn, reveals the point of view of the creators of the opera.

Whitehead and Dell 'Oso do not take a neutral position in *The Bride of Fortune*. Their commitment, through the character of Grazia, is to present a discourse of migrant identity in Australian history (Dell 'Oso Interview 1997). There is similarly no neutrality in the Schultzs' dramatising the issue of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Both composer and librettist present the character of Miriam with the opportunity to debate whether the two worlds she knows can be reconciled (Program note 1988). Henderson and Rodriguez pursue the justice issues inherent in *Lindy* (Rodriguez 1997: 15). Henderson, in particular, confirms her commitment when she says:

I think that unless you actually feel something when you're writing the piece, then there's no way that the audience is going to feel something. It has to be transferred through feeling and passion in the music itself, that's the transmitter ... For me the most poignant moment is when they finally
bring that little matinee jacket back, by which time she has already served three years ... Dramatically it is the heart of the story (Henderson in Ford 1993: 106).

These questions of authenticity and neutrality will be revisited with operas in later chapters, exploring potential tensions with their expressions of cultural identity and political comment.

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1 Carol Robertson writes of the movement from margins to centres in “The Ethnomusicologist as Midwife” (in Solie 1993: 121). However, Trinh problematises this notion of centres and cores when she states that “the point is not to carve one’s space in identity theories that ignore women ... but patiently to dismantle the very notion of core” (Trinh 1989: 96).

2 The story by Merrimee includes the detail that Carmen had been called a whore by another girl in the factory and was defending her honour (Robinson in McClary 1992: 9).

3 Robinson argues that, in Merrimee's story, Carmen is the de facto leader of the gypsy band, devising its strategies. However, it is not so much on account of this leadership but of her sexuality and her use of language that she poses a threat to the men in the story (Robinson in McClary 1992: 10, 13).

4 Ashbrook's authoritative Donizetti and His Operas (1982) and Gossett's Anna Bolena and the Artistic Maturity of Gaetano Donizetti (1985) provide fulsome evidence that directness of utterance and dramatic characterisation outweigh formal considerations so that he presses against the boundaries of the tradition in which he is working.

5 The major part of the Trial Scene is taken up with the giving of evidence by the character Lindy. It spans some 662 bars (bar 440 to bar 1102) in the scene.

6 This jacket was not found until five and a half years after Azaria's disappearance. In the Trial Scene it is accorded the emotional significance which it acquired by virtue of the actual events.

7 Brian Elias states that there is no point in setting words simply to convey their meaning alone. The sonic aspects need to have the strongest consideration (Elias in Driver and Christiansen 1989: 227).

8 This theme is also present for the inventor in Butterley's Lawrence Hargrave Flying Alone (1988).
Chapter Four: Voices, Memories and Cultural Identity

Characters from two operas are explored in this chapter because they interconnect with memories which are part of Australian society's cultural identity. *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* by Richard Mills and *The Eighth Wonder* by Alan John evoke social memories. Sociologist Mike Featherstone states that a nation provides a sense of belonging when the landscape and people hold collective memories with the emotional power to generate a sense of community (Featherstone 1995: 108). This is a somewhat limited view, in that it does not take account of how migrants achieve that 'sense of belonging'. Migration patterns around the world have meant that the notion that ties a culture to a fixed terrain has become increasingly problematic. It is a way of thinking that has only seemed natural and permanent.

However, Featherstone has captured part of the picture. It is when people share individual memories that they enter the realm of social or collective memory (Darian-Smith and Hamilton 1994: 1). As people share memories that they perceive to be relevant to their own identity, they can incorporate a memory of events outside of their lived experiences. In this way, since the early years of the twentieth century, people in Australian cities have experienced what Ann McGrath calls the mythologising function of the outback, which became a pivotal cultural symbol of Australia.1

Culture has different meanings which often slip into each other and it is important to clarify the sense in which it is used in this study. Education theorist Mary Kalantzis outlines the history of the development of the word 'culture' in the English language:
The first uses of the word relate to cultivation and humans using nature for their own ends... The second meaning, from the eighteenth century, involves the metaphorical extension of the word to people, so that to be cultured in this sense was to support 'high culture'... A third meaning appeared during the Industrial Revolution intended to broaden the context so that culture meant popular or folk culture; but it was interpreted as the things that people do as a release from work... The fourth meaning enters with the rise of cultural anthropology in the late nineteenth century... Cultural anthropologists came to define culture as a whole way of life. This holistic conception of culture encompasses all three of the modern meanings: human interaction with nature, the culture of elites, the culture and symbols of folk life; and culture as the holistic relationships of worklife, politics, economics and social structure (Cope and Kalantzis 1997: 5-6).

This study uses the holistic conception of the word, because that enables the symbols of narrower meanings of culture to be re-examined in the broader concept. For example, the operas in this chapter explore communication by "codes". These codes, such as vernacular language and familiar story, define the experience of being on the inside and incorporate recognisable Australian images and idioms, which signify the Australian-ness that both creative teams espouse.

This study does not take an essential view of Australian cultural identity but relates changes in view to particular time frames. Historian Livio Dobrez states that "Australianness is very much a question of who is looking for definitions, and of when they are asking, and why... Being Australian is shot through with historicity" (Dobrez 1994: 26). In a similar manner, historian Richard White argues that Australia is a series of historical inventions. For example, colonial identity connects with a discourse of Appropriation of land that was inhabited by Aboriginal people.
On the other hand, Nationalism arises with the sense of 'settling' the land and building a community which generates identity.

In the nineteenth century, from about the 1870s, a new 'type' of Australian whose life was outdoors, was said to have emerged with the following characteristics: independence, manliness, a fondness for sport, egalitarianism, a dislike of mental effort, self-confidence and a certain disrespect for authority (Rothwell [1880] in White 1981: 77). This problematic set of characteristics emphasises masculinity, locates the qualities in the bushman and excludes women from the Australian 'type'. Nevertheless, this set of characteristics is largely unchallenged in commentaries on the 1914-18 Australian soldiers (diggers), until World War II helped to discredit the idea of a national 'type' (White 1981: 132, 157).

As many historians argue, the most important element in the redefinition of Australian cultural identity was the historical event of postwar immigration. Dobrez calls this redefinition a discourse of Consciousness in which New Australia alters Australia itself (Dobrez 1994: 38, 40). Composer Mills is on record as describing the music of The Doll as "a manifestation of ... the kind of culture of the fifties" (Mills 1997: 19). In fact, what The Doll comments upon is the end of one interpretation of Australian cultural identity, through the character of Olive.

1. Olive in Summer of the Seventeenth Doll

In October 1996, Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, was given its premiere season by the Victorian State Opera, at the Melbourne International Festival. This opera is about memories, in particular the shattered memories of one character, Olive. The opera transforms a classic Australian
play, written by Ray Lawler in 1955. Peter Goldsworthy, the opera's librettist, re-constitutes Lawler's end-of-scene tableaus as opportunities for ensembles to reveal the thoughts of the characters. These ensembles at first enable the characters to anticipate experiences. Later ensembles are vehicles for expressions of regret that remembered times cannot be relived.

The story is set in the 1950s, in the suburban Melbourne home of Olive and her mother, Emma. Two cane-cutters, Roo and Barney, come south each year from their work in Queensland to spend the lay-off season there. Olive and Roo have been lovers for sixteen summers. As Barney's former girl, Nancy, has married, Olive invites Pearl to meet Barney and relates the story of the lay-offs, constructed as a season of fun from her selective memories.

In a change from previous summers, Roo is without his seasonal pay to spend. He left his cane-cutting job when he was defeated in a fight over leadership by a younger man, Johnny Dowd. Just enough money remained to buy Olive the seventeenth doll, the annual symbol of their years of happiness. The first act ends with an optimistic ensemble. At the outset, Bubba, the young girl next door, feels romance coming; Pearl hopes that Barney will be the right man for her; Barney expects Roo's forgiveness for staying on to work with Dowd, instead of going with him; Roo wants to believe everything can be fine, but Emma knows that change is overtaking them as they grow older. Olive sees nothing except that the waiting for her man is done and summer can begin.

The second act opens with Emma's soliloquy, affectionately recalling the first of the seventeen summers. Then, in the second scene, the focus is on present events, with Roo looking for work to tide him over, and Pearl and Barney discussing how they might take one step at a time towards forming
their relationship. Roo's decision to work is at odds with Olive's construction of the story of the lay-offs and is a signal for tension to come.

As the third act opens, it is New Year's Eve. The tensions of the changed situation are obvious in Pearl's laughter at Olive's description of the men as "eagles". When the men are alone, Barney asks Roo to leave with him for the fruit picking season, but Roo refuses, seeing that as letting Olive down. Even Emma's playing for a sing-along around the piano does not bring the familiar enjoyment. As the scene closes, a poignant ensemble provides the opportunity for reflection. Olive wishes for the return of the summers that she has had; Pearl senses that Barney is not the love that she was looking for; Roo sees the borders of his life shrinking; and Barney sees that everything has changed, vanishing "like music into air". Only Emma realises that they cannot accept the changes that have come.

When Barney brings Dowd to the house to make peace with Roo, tensions are at breaking-point. While the end comes for Barney's tenuous match with Pearl, Dowd and Bubba's meeting indicates the beginning of a new relationship. After Dowd is gone, Barney and Roo fight, shattering the seventeenth doll, and the ensemble gives expression to the relationships which have broken. Emma sees the fight as the inevitable end; Roo cannot understand how it has happened; Olive laments her broken dreams, Barney the break with a mate in Roo, and Pearl the loss of the love she hoped for in Barney.

In the third scene, Olive has taken down the dolls and bird-of-paradise ornaments which Roo had given her over the years. Her memories have crumbled into dust. As Pearl leaves, she tells Olive that nothing was as she had been led to expect. With Roo trying to understand why everything has
gone sour, Emma declares that they have been confusing "seasons" with permanent relationships. However, when Roo proposes to Olive, he is refused because she is afraid their love will die in a conventional setting and she begs Roo to give her back what she had before. He is defeated by her image of him and, as the opera ends, Barney leads Roo away.

Central to the narrative is Olive, who does not see that her story of the lay-off has separated from 'reality', that keeping things the same as they have always been is impossible. The shattering of her memories is inevitable. While her identifying traits are transferred from Lawler's play, the music for her character emphasises her enthusiasm which, on the one hand, sustains her passion for Roo and on the other, feeds upon the support of the group.

The words of the motif at Olive's entrance, "There's fire in the air", suggest connotations of summer heat and passion (Ex. 4. 1. 01). This motif appears at significant times, such as when Roo presents the seventeenth doll (Ex. 4. 1. 02). Bubba also sings this motif when she sees the doll (Ex. 4. 1. 03), so that these text associations establish it as encoding a memory for the characters.

Ex. 4. 1. 01: Motif 1 - Olive's first entrance.

Ex. 4. 1. 02: Motif 1 - Roo presents the Doll.
Ex. 4.1.03: Motif 1 - Bubba sees the Doll.

This motif of Olive's is associated with text that identifies the woman she is with memories of her youth sixteen years ago. Appearances of the motif, in music both for Olive and for other characters, tend to reinforce that aspect. Emma's version of the motif, in her nocturne, remembers Olive after her first meeting with Roo, and her face flushed with fire, unconcerned to hide the sexual attraction that she felt (Ex. 4.1.04). Rejecting Emma's warnings of change on the way, Olive claims that the "sun's in full flight" (Ex. 4.1.05). Bubba consciously imitates Olive when she visits on New Year's Eve (Ex. 4.1.06). Olive sings of the bird-of-paradise ornaments that Roo gave her (Ex. 4.1.07). In the final scene, Roo sings that there is still a little "fire in the air" at the end of summer (Ex. 4.1.08); and Olive alters this motif when she sings about wanting the return of "summers past" (Ex. 4.1.09). In these ways the motif can carry associations and memories of youth, love, passion and the symbols of those emotions in the dolls and birds of paradise, and the summer itself.

Ex. 4.1.04: Motif 1 - Emma describes Olive's face.

Ex. 4.1.05: Motif 1 - Olive rejects Emma's warnings.
"Fire" is also associated with destruction. Mills has confirmed that he associated a hexachord, reworked in different scenes, with "fire harmonies" (Mills interview 1997). In Olive's entrance in Scene 1, the notes of the chord are: F-sharp, A-flat, A, B-flat, B and D. With a syncopated ostinato using D, A and E, this forms the harmonic basis for the phrase, "fire in the air" (Ex. 4. 1. 10). Later, the chord harmonically underpins two other scenes. In Scene 2, Barney's account of Roo's fight with Dowd as "fire fighting fire" uses the hexachord reworked: C-sharp, E-flat, F-sharp, A-flat, A and B-flat (Ex. 4. 1. 11). At the end of Act 3, Mills uses this reworked hexachord to accompany Olive's ultimatum to Roo, to "go back" (Ex. 4. 1. 12). In this way, the composer establishes an harmonic link between the previous "fires" and the collapse of the relationship as the opera ends. In such moments, music itself has a narrative function, with harmonies linking the scenes which eventually bring about the destruction of memories.
Olive first calls the men "eagles" (Ex. 4.1.13) when describing them coming south with the sun; and she places herself in the picture, as their arrival is the end of her waiting (Ex. 4.1.14). When she describes the waiting, the motif takes on a swooping contour, descending and curling back up (Ex. 4.1.15). In her duet with Roo, Olive sings of the heat glowing inside his body and his hands (Ex. 4.1.16); with him, she finds "wings to fly, to soar" (Ex. 4.1.17). The motif also occurs when she regrets the "sunlit dreams, too beautiful to watch, too delicate to touch" (Ex. 4.1.18). It is associated with the idea of waiting; frequently, the motif appears as a melisma, extending the word, waiting for its completion. It signifies that aspect of her identity which enshrines an Australian view, prevalent in the first half of the
century, of the superiority of the man from the bush. Olive's vision of Roo is of someone far above "soft city blokes" (Sc. 1).

Ex. 4. 1. 13: Eagle motif - Olive's description of the men.

Ex. 4. 1. 14: Eagle motif - Olive's waiting ends.

Ex. 4. 1. 15: Eagle motif extended.

Ex. 4. 1. 16: Eagle motif - duet with Roo.

Ex. 4. 1. 17: Eagle motif - Olive's wings.

Ex. 4. 1. 18: Eagle motif - Sunlit dreams.

Another motif from the first scene is associated with being "tied down". When Pearl questions whether the "eagles" are as wonderful as they are described, Olive tells her "no one is tying you down; no one is making you stay" (Ex. 4. 1. 19). In Olive's mind, her life is free of conventions. The smallness of the pattern of falling semitone and minor third can be read as a metaphor of mediocrity. In the quintet at the end of the second scene of Act 3, the motif is developed and extended, with shifting chromaticism through
chains of sequences, until Olive declares: "The seventeenth summer, and it's come to this" (Ex. 4.1.20). It also emerges in the final scene, when Olive exclaims: "You think I'd let it end in marriage, everyday a paint factory" (Ex. 4.1.21). This aspect of identity is concerned with Olive's fear of conventional relationships and her particular expression of freedom.

Ex. 4.1.19: Tied down motif - Olive to Pearl.

Ex. 4.1.20: Tied down motif - Act 3 quintet.

Ex. 4.1.21: Tied down motif - final scene.

In broader structural terms, Mills' music emphasises Olive's determination to keep everything as she remembers it. For example, Olive's two arias, in Act 1 (Ex. 4.1.22) and in Act 3 (Ex. 4.1.23), are mirror images of each other. Not only is the "eagle" motif present in both, but they share the same pitches in the opening phrases; and the opening harmonic structure of the later aria is simply a variation of the earlier one. In Act 3, music underlines that events have not made a difference to the way Olive expresses her identity because the motifs and the harmonies are unchanged.

Ex. 4.1.22: Opening of Olive's aria in Act 1.
Ex. 4. 1.23: Opening of Olive’ aria in Act 3.

Ex. 4. 1.24: Emma’s question in her aria of Act 2.

Emma’s two arias, while connected by some phrase patterns, are different in both mood and function. Her first aria in Act 2 is a benediction. By contrast, the second, at the close of the New Year’s Eve scene in Act 3, is a wake which mourns the disintegrating relationship of Olive and Roo. While both arias define Emma’s character, they also comment on Olive and the others. Her solitary reflections are a strong foil for Olive’s need for company. Moreover, Emma’s indication, that Olive was never sure how long the summer lay-offs might continue, spells out Olive’s uncertainty with the lay-off’s durability in a way that is different from Lawler’s play (Ex. 4. 1. 24).

1. 1 The Ensembles Revealing Olive’s Identity

One of the many interesting things about Olive’s character is that she needs to have the "crowd" around her, that she needs to have Emma and Bubba, and Barney and his partner (whether Nancy or Pearl) to be there with her, seeing and admiring her relationship with Roo, and contributing to "the
fun". For this reason, the ensembles are not simply the musical equivalents of the tableaus in Lawler's play. The ensembles early in the opera musically parallel this important need in Olive. Later ensembles, constructed as a series of individual reflections, reveal aspects of identity for all of the characters and thoughts they are unable to communicate to each other.

The trio for the women, early in Act 1, reveals the young woman inside Olive, through the reactions of Bubba. The structure of the first half of the trio is such that Olive and Bubba are frequently linked and Pearl's part counterpoints them both. It is Bubba who sings "You'll have such fun", but it is evident that she uses that phrase because it is a description that Olive has always used. In a strange way, we see and hear the Olive of seventeen summers ago, and the Olive of the present with the newcomer, Pearl, as a contrast to their excited expectations (Ex. 4.1.25). As the women sing about "summer beginning", it is evident that Pearl has been caught up in their excitement; this is, in fact, the only ensemble in which the characters listen to each other. As Olive and Bubba vocalise together playfully, Pearl wonders what others will say when they find out (Ex. 4.1.26).

Ex. 4.1.25: Trio in Act 1 - Olive and Bubba together, Pearl separate.
Early in Act 1, while waiting for Roo, Olive declares, with unconscious irony, that "the seconds won't pass". In fact, it is the lay-off season, as constructed by Olive, that is not permitted to change. The ensemble, which ends the act, begins with layers of verses; and these solos are separated, as all raise glasses, saluting each other with "cheers" and vernacular expressions such as "up there Cazaly", celebrating the boys' arrival. The consonant harmony is a musical parallel of Olive's illusion that "things will be the same": there is nothing new here (Ex. 4. 1. 27).

However, there is a passage of excess, which comes at the end of the sextet, marked by metre and tempo changes from 3/2 to 2/2 con moto. It functions
as a cabaletta, but it does not signal action or decision; consequently, it takes the mood from one of optimism to one of pretence (Ex. 4. 1. 28).

Ex. 4. 1. 28: End of ensemble of Act 1.

The New Year's Eve ensemble, in the first scene of Act 3, sees a challenge to Olive's view of the lay-off from Pearl's mockery. Olive does not acknowledge that Roo and Barney also do not see this lay-off as she does. In order to convey this, the composer has used the structure of a passacaglia, with its melodies over a ground of eleven bars, using the chord progression:

\[
\begin{align*}
D & \quad Bm & \quad D/F-sharp & \quad Bm & \quad G & \quad D \\
D/F-sharp & \quad G & \quad D/F-sharp & \quad Em7 & \quad G & \quad A
\end{align*}
\]

In choosing the conventions of this structure, the composer creates expectations that the harmony will move to a full or half close, and then the cycle will recommence. Having set that expectation, Mills subverts it, using a key scheme designed to create instability and to convey more than the words alone. The opening few bars of music for each character in the quartet show this key scheme, explained below, as a way that music provides meaning independently of the text (Ex. 4. 1. 29 a-d).
Olive commences the ensemble in the key of D; from the first sung notes of the opera, the composer has frequently chosen this key for Olive, when she is retelling her story. Pearl's regret, for the love and fire that did not eventuate, appears in A-flat minor, very distant from Olive's opening key, creating tensions that persist throughout the ensemble. She also abandons the chord progression. When Roo sings, the value he places on loyalty underlies the return to Olive's key, while acknowledging that he sees the
borders of his life shrinking. Barney's confusion is wonderfully conveyed in the tonal shifts. He begins in the same key as Olive and Roo, hovers into A-flat minor when his attention turns briefly to Pearl, and continues to fluctuate between the two. Through the key scheme, the composer makes his comment about fractured memories and the passing of time.

In the final section of this ensemble, a chromatically descending pattern occurs on the words: "(the old year vanishes) like music into air". It leads to a cadence which slides towards its place of rest, seeming to catch the total amazement of the characters in the situation with which they are confronted (Ex. 4. 1. 30).

Ex. 4. 1. 30: Like music into air - final section of New Year's Eve ensemble.

The "broken dreams" are exposed in the ensemble in the second scene of Act 3. The fight and the shattering of the doll force Olive to see the differences between Roo and Barney. She has always described them both as eagles. The "fire" motif, which was the encoding for the doll as well, is "broken" in that it is inverted and its intervals are altered; but it is still rhythmically recognisable (Ex. 4. 1. 31). The chromatic descent (see Ex. 4. 1. 30) returns on "smashed in pieces", another instance of destruction (Ex. 4. 1. 32). The phrase, "A broken doll and broken dreams all smashed in pieces", 


returns three times; each time takes the pitch higher, the first time by a tone and then by another semitone.

Ex. 4. 1. 31: Broken Doll - Motif 1 "broken".

Ex. 4. 1. 32: Smashed (in pieces) - chromatic descent.

1. 2 The Duets for Roo and Olive

The duets for Roo and Olive occur in the first and last acts. The first duet has interludes for Barney and Pearl. After Roo presents the seventeenth doll, they continue their duet, reflecting on the distance that is between them for seven months of the year, feeling that the other is with them as a refuge. The melodies of Roo and Olive entwine around each other, in a
musical parallel of the physicality of their love that is, however, supportive and curiously at odds with the expressions of "fun" and the need for admiring onlookers (Ex. 4.1.33).

Ex. 4.1.33: Olive and Roo Duet - Act 1.

The duet in the third act completes the picture of Olive's identity: she is shown as being unable to tell herself a different story than the one she has lived in memory for sixteen years. She would rather destroy the relationship with Roo than her dream of what "real love" is. Barney has gone, to the strains of the "tied down" motif; but it is Pearl's judgment of her and of her description of the lay-off that upsets her (Ex. 4.1.34).

Ex. 4.1.34: Olive in duet in Act 3.

Roo begins the duet with a melody which has echoes of the tenderness of Olive's arias; but, significantly, he now realises, and states, that what they will be doing is "pretending" and that it will now be "just the two". Olive, on the other hand, talks of the symbols, the birds of paradise, which she can repair so that some things will be the same (Ex. 4.1.35). The tenderness of the moment only seems to promise new directions for their relationship. When Roo reveals that he is not going back, Olive retreats in fear of the destruction of her image of love (Ex. 4.1.36).
Ex. 4. 1. 35: Olive and Roo duet in Act 3.

Ex. 4. 1. 36: Olive's ultimatum - Act 3.

Through the contradictions in Olive's character, tensions arise that burst forth in the music. Olive's offered base for the lay-off season is meant to be a place to "have fun" and enjoy "the season for living" (Sc. 1). In reality, it is where Barney is rejected, where Roo faces his loss of physical superiority and where Olive's memories and dreams are shattered (Ex. 4. 1. 37).

Ex. 4. 1. 37: Summer of the Seventeenth Doll - I want my summers back.
In music for and about Olive, an audience can read the paradoxical aspects of Olive's identity. Musical motifs associated with text provide metaphors of Olive's desire for youth and her girlish reactions (see Ex. 4. 1. 01), her fear of conventions and her view of freedom (see Ex. 4. 1. 12 and 4. 1. 21), her sense of living an alternative life-style (see Ex. 4. 1. 22); and above all there is a musical likeness of her longing for the past. This takes two forms, one of which is in the use of the eagle motif with its association of old "Australianist" themes of the bushman (see chapter 1). The other is in Olive's rejection of change, which in her perception would threaten her relationship with Roo (see Exs. 4. 1. 09 and 4. 1. 29a).

The opera is also about the durability of love. Olive has valued the intensity of an experience contained in a five-month time-frame, rather than one which is a daily routine; but she has expected that nothing would change as the years moved on. However, when Roo tries to move outside of the framework of the lay-off in which they have lived, he finds that Olive is unable to relate to anything else. The discourse that Olive represents is the struggle to identify valued attributes that is part of defining cultural identity. On one hand, she puts youth and freedom into the picture. On the other, she embodies a reluctance to end a way of thinking, about Roo and Barney's superiority, that no longer agrees with the facts and she is fixated on her memories of the past rather than looking to the future.
2. Alexandra in The Eighth Wonder

In The Eighth Wonder, completed in 1994 and premiered by the Australian Opera in Sydney in 1995, composer Alan John and librettist Dennis Watkins intertwined stories of the building of the Sydney Opera House and a young singer's path to success. John and Watkins describe the opera as about 'Australia's cultural coming-of-age' in the 1970s (Watkins 1996: 34). 1973 saw the completion of the Sydney Opera House after a period of construction which spanned almost twenty years. The Opera House design competition was held in 1957, in a period of post-war enthusiasm, and won by the Danish architect, Joern Utzon. The mood of the 1960s and 1970s was politically more pragmatic. When Utzon left the project in 1966, the exterior of the building was complete. Compromises to interior plans were effected because of budgetary considerations but, as James Waites writes, the controversy over the circumstances of the completion suggests that Australians "were aware that something crucial in terms of identity was at stake in the building of the Opera House" (Waites 1995: 43). The opera celebrates creativity and, in David Marr's words, "what is possible to achieve in this country" (Marr interview 1995). While it reconstructs memories of building the Opera House, it links them to an artistic present through the story of the young singer.

With the character called the Architect, John's sole concern is with conveying his sense of vision. By contrast, a "whole" characterisation is found in the young singer, Alexandra called Alex. Indeed, her wholeness completes the fragment, which is the Architect. John has confirmed that it was his intention for music associated with Alex's vocal art to evolve from music about the shape of the building (John interview 1997). It is through this connection that she becomes an embodiment of memories about the
period of construction. Her story explains the building. She exemplifies its purpose.

The opera is designed in two acts which subdivide into fifteen scenes. The Prologue is concerned with a vision, in which Earth and Sky personified. They proclaim that the spirit of man is torn between them, searching for a space to inhabit. Earth and Sky return as commentators on the action in subsequent scenes.

The first scene, set in 1955, shows the Premier of the day instigating the design competition for the Opera House. This scene also establishes that many participants in the story will be known by archetypal names. While the majority of scenes follow chronologically, contained in an urban naturalism, the second scene breaks that convention. An Aztec ceremony, happening 500 years earlier in Mexico, opens the scene, with a sacrificial victim giving his strength to the gods. The continuation of the ceremony merges with the year 1956 and introduces the Architect. As he studies Aztec structures, he is powerfully affected by the image of the Aztec people ascending to the clouds, journeying to their gods on the stepped sides of the temple. When the Aztec victim is sacrificed, there is also a symbolic release for the Architect. He envisions a stage rising out of the sea and surmounted by sails, a wonder of the modern world.

In the third scene, a young soprano, Alex, is working with her teacher, Magda. While Alex hopes to study in Europe, she is also in love with Stephen; his dream is of an orchestral career and Alex staying in Australia with him. At the unveiling of the winning design, Alex interprets the sketch as a dream come true and she foresees her song, floating as an offering to the Sky.
Gradually, the two stories begin to connect. In Denmark, the Architect learns that he has won the competition. At a Sydney beach Alex defers her plans to study away from Australia and Stephen. As work progresses on the Opera House, the Premier dies and the Engineer is left to try to foresee coming problems. Some six years later, Alex and Stephen are married and expecting a child. At a family backyard party, Alex's father reflects on the hopes they had held for her career; and Alex, too, is uncertain about the future, symbolised by the incomplete Opera House. On the site, the Architect tries to solve the problem of the roof construction, amid dissenting voices; the Engineer raises concerns over costs, and there are committee meetings about whether concert music or opera will be housed in the main hall. Left alone, the Architect finds the solution for the sails of the roof in the curves of a sphere. Act 1 concludes with a splendid vision of the exterior of the building.

Act 2 opens in 1963 on the Royal Yacht in Sydney Harbour. It is a Reception and Alex sings for the Queen and her guests. The Architect's description of his design for the interior of the building rekindles her ambitions for an operatic career. The next scenes reveal pressures, domestically for Alex, and politically for the Architect. When they meet again, each is making an important decision. For the Architect, trying to realise his designs for the interiors, the decision is to re-present his case to the Politician. For Alex, it is to study in Europe to further her career. The final confrontation with the Politician results in the Architect leaving the project. His legacy is the final scene: the opening of the Opera House is celebrated by a performance, with Alex in the leading role of an opera about a ritual, which both echoes and completes the Aztec inspiration of the vision in Act 1.
2. 1 The Story of the Opera House

In the opening of the opera, the immediate focus is on conflict in the human spirit, between realisation of the creative vision and destruction of it in compromises and deferred plans. The Prologue presents the theme of Earth and Sky, which returns at significant moments in the opera. The opening two major chords (D and E) and the melodic line are ostensibly unrelated. The composer acknowledges that his approach to pivoting between chords sometimes produces slightly odd harmonic spelling (John interview 1998). Nevertheless, there is also an idea of sounds moving in and out of resolution, which can be read as a conflict between creativity and pragmatism. This conflict is continued in the chorus of Cabinet Ministers, "Why opera?", in Scene 1. The Premier’s response, with his vision of a "great public building on the best site in the world", is an answer to the Prologue theme (Ex. 4. 2. 01).

Ex. 4. 2. 01: The Prologue - Earth and Sky.

The Aztec scene is a pivotal one in the opera, providing the framework for the Architects’s design and for Alex’s vocal expression. John describes it as the richest source of musical themes for the whole work (John interview 1995). The staggered entries and curving phrases musically parallel certain architectural features (Ex. 4. 2. 02). In particular, the rising motif: B C D E-flat,
parallels the visual image of steps (Ex. 4. 2. 03). This first motif, with its inherent tensions, appears frequently in the opera at critical moments. A second motif becomes associated with destruction (Ex. 4. 2. 04); it recurs in important scenes for the Architect and for Alex.

Ex. 4. 2. 02: Staggered entries; curving phrases in Aztec Chorus.

Ex. 4. 2. 03: The rising step motif.

Ex. 4. 2. 04: Motif associated with destruction.

The Architect's solo, "In Elsinor", provides musical metaphors of creative stages: preliminary imaginings and later realising a specific inspiration. In the solo, these stages are related to different locations, to Denmark and the Aztec "ancient avenue" in Mexico (Ex. 4. 2. 05). Melodic lines and accompaniment styles are different. For the preliminary stage, the melodic range is contained and a sense of incompleteness is conveyed by unresolved harmonies and an oboe obbligato in repetitive semitone patterns (Ex. 4. 2. 06). For inspiration, the melodic range is expansive and "freedom from the
"commonplace" is accompanied by rhapsodic arpeggiated figures which have a more complete realisation in music for Alex later in the opera.

Ex. 4. 2. 05: Architect's solo - This ancient avenue.

Ex. 4. 2. 06: Architect's solo - Unresolved harmonic direction in accompaniment.

The idea of "ascending to the clouds" takes musical shape in rising dotted triadic figures (Ex. 4. 2. 07). The ascent becomes a metaphor of the Architect's future, as the High Priest proclaims the Aztec belief that the spirit flies out towards the sky as an offering to the visitor god, Quetzlcoatl (Ex. 4. 2. 08). Conscious attention to the act of singing prepares for the introduction of Alex's character, as the chorus state the purpose of the sacrifice is so that "dreamers on earth can sing one more song" (Ex. 4. 2. 09).

Ex. 4. 2. 07: Ascending to the clouds.
Ex. 4.2.08: Theme of Aztec belief - In earth your feet are bedded, but your spirit.

Ex. 4.2.09: Dreamers on earth can sing one more song.

When the Architect reveals his vision of a stage rising out of the sea, the static harmonies in the triplet patterns of the accompaniment and the high, glittering tones are a musical parallel of dazzling light (Ex. 4.2.10). The melodic shapes in the vocal line define the shape of the sails; and in turn, they provide the changed direction in the curves of Alex's vocal line in later scenes. The ecstatic outburst culminates in a description of the Opera House as a "wonder of the world" (Ex. 4.2.11).

Ex. 4.2.10: Accompaniment to the Architect's vision.
Ex. 4.2.11: A wonder of the world.

Alex's story is framed by this idea of the relationship between creativity and sacrifice, for the end of the opera returns to this Aztec scene as the opera-within-an-opera. The Architect's vision blurs into the scenes which follow it, as musical memories of it continually reappear. The ceremony of Scene 2 also establishes the idea of ritual re-enactment. At the end of the scene, Earth and Sky recall the theme of the Prologue while, in the orchestra, rhapsodic accompaniment figures continue; a new textural complexity is reached when the Aztec chorus is added, providing a platform for the Architect's excitement at the inspiration of these images (Ex. 4.2.12).

Ex. 4.2.12: Dreams and action - Earth and Sky, Architect and Aztec chorus.
2. 2 Alex's Story

The most evocative writing in this opera is for the character of Alex; she represents performing energy and through her character, memories of the period of construction of the Opera House are coloured with positive qualities of enthusiasm, humour, and pride, mixed with some regret. Historian, Paul Connerton writes that, in a person's experience of the present, there is a two-way distortion effect at work, such that present factors influence recollections of the past, and past factors influence experience of the present (Connerton 1989: 2). This is true of Alex whose story parallels the development of the building and whose memories of events are selective. Moreover, her music generates motifs which emerge in the music of other characters. This is not mere coloratura decoration; the music of Alex is expressive of curves and soaring shapes, the musical equivalents of the design image.

This use of natural shapes, of arcs and curves, defines the design approach of the building: functional strength and power transformed in the beauty of the shelled roof. Feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray, writes that "everything should be rethought in terms of volute, helix, spiral, curl, turn, revolution" and that the properties of such shapes disconcert attempts to view them as static (Irigaray 1991: 64). The character of Alex, without written text and from the music alone, can be read as having properties of these shapes mapped on to her identity. These properties include a resistance to being seen as "static" and a capacity for transformative power and strength. It is also noteworthy that motifs which are introduced by other characters, and which are shaped in curves, are often developed in Alex's music. From her first appearance in Scene 3, many of the musical motifs that are developed in her part take to completion motifs established in the Aztec Scene.
The first scenes of Alex musically establish aspects of her identity: her determination, her fear of being submerged, her awareness of her special gift, her dream of success and her confidence released by the design image.

The first impression of Alex, is of a young singer on a journey of discovery. Light tone colours of vibraphone and violin, before she begins singing, surround her with sound that has a quality of enchantment. Her teacher, Magda, comments in rhythmic counterpoint, as a continuation of the musical expression. Alex's determination to "be the best" is shown in rehearsal of the vocalises (Ex. 4. 2. 13). She is aware of the quality of her voice, and her fear is of being "buried alive" (Ex. 4. 2. 14) before she can "climb the steps" and set her will free.

Ex. 4. 2. 13: Alex's vocalises.

Ex. 4. 2. 14: Buried alive motif.

This "buried alive" motif (Ex. 4. 2. 14) recurs at significant moments, such as when Alex chooses marriage and family over her career plans and when the Premier fears that his project will be ambushed if it is delayed; and it is a frequently used accompaniment figure, giving the composer an opportunity to comment on the action. While Magda is a strong influence, she cannot remove Alex's fear; the dominating musical shapes are inverted curves in the phrase "there's something special in me" (Ex. 4. 2. 15). However, the tonality of the music links her with the Architect in the Aztec scene. The key of G is used for the realisation that her time is coming, as it was used in Scene 2, when the Architect realised that his time had come (Ex. 4. 2. 16).
Ex. 4.2.15: There's something special in me.

Ex. 4.2.16: Your time has come.

In Scene 4, Alex internalises the visionary quality in the winning design. It is the catalyst for her, and her spontaneous response, "There's a change in the air", signals the release of her will, and the beginning of her future. As a soliloquy, she sings "The dream awakens", which develops in rhapsodic lines. It explores rising curves which derive from the style of melodies in Scene 2 at the Architect's moment of inspiration; but Alex's aria also extends them vivaciously, for example at the melisma on "glory" (Ex. 4.2.17). Over the top of the "buried alive" motif (see Ex. 4.2.14), she claims the road as "mine to follow". Dotted rhythms retranslate the Architect's idea of Aztec people, "ascending to the clouds" (see Ex. 4.2.07), into the energy of bringing "alive the dream within me" (Ex. 4.2.18); soaring lines of the final bars project the image of the voice reaching to the stars.

Ex. 4.2.17: Alex's aria in Act 1 - The dream awakens.
Specific patterns in this music relate Alex's dream to the design of the building. They provide musical memories by which she is connected to the creation of the building. The phrase Alex sings, "my future", and the phrase sung by the Architect in Scene 2, "a wonder of the world" (see Ex. 4. 2. 07) both use the descending tetrachord, placed in a high tessitura. Alex's use of the pattern extends it (Ex. 4. 2. 19). This motif consolidates its significance in this aria, as the same pattern returns in "what's possible with dreaming" (Ex. 4. 2. 20), and again in "floating free" (Ex. 4. 2. 21). It also recurs later in the opera, in the duet in Act 2 Scene 12 at "the angels will see to that" (Ex. 4. 2. 22). In its descending contour and its text associations, it expresses calm certainty. It also resonates with Irigaray's idea of arcs and curves having properties of transformative power and strength.
Ex. 4.2.21: Floating free.

Ex. 4.2.22: The angels will make sure of that.

The next scenes in which Alex appears present events and people intersecting with different aspects of her identity. On the one hand, there are stages in completion of the Opera House. On the other, there is Stephen whose career plans conflict with Alex’s; "Here in the sunlight", is his love song to Alex at the beach. As Alex promises to stay in Australia and marry Stephen, the "buried alive" motif emerges in orchestral accompaniment figures (see Ex. 4.2.14). For Alex, the beach becomes a metaphor for resisting change; and the opening "here in the sunlight" phrase recurs as an accompanying motif to scenes of tension between her and Stephen later in the opera (Ex. 4.2.23).

Ex. 4.2.23: Here in the sunlight.

With her father, Alex reveals something of that aspect of her identity, whose realisation has been delayed by marriage and family. When her
father sings "you could 'a been a star", his music echoes the motif of the rising steps (see Ex. 4. 2. 03) and in the orchestral accompaniment, the motif of the awakening dream is heard (see Ex. 4. 2. 17). He expresses regrets that Alex has not put into words. As they duet, Alex sings of her "other child", her voice (Ex. 4. 2. 24). Her despairing cry, "I'll never have a chance like that", is a variant of the destruction motif (see Ex. 4. 2. 04) and it brings a return of melodic shapes with inverted curves.

Ex. 4. 2. 24: Why must it wait; I'll never have a chance.

Alternating with these personal pressures, the scenes at the construction site present a different range of conflicts: of political expediency and engineering logic. In a variant of Alex's "buried alive" motif from Scene 3, the Premier sings: "out here (being the best) will even count against you" (Ex. 4. 2. 25). Music at this point blends the notions of submerging talent and cutting down tall poppies.

Ex. 4. 2. 25: Alex's buried alive motif appears in the Premier's music.
The focus of the final scene of Act 1 is the construction problem of the roof. It involves the Architect's rejection of the Engineer's solution of compromise (Ex. 4.2.26). Left alone, the Architect finds the solution with "another logic" (Ex. 4.2.27). The Act ends with the voices of Earth and Sky joining the Architect in a celebration of the creative spirit.

Ex. 4. 2. 26: It's a compromise.

Ex. 4. 2. 27: Hang my building from another logic.

While the end of Act 1 celebrates a stage in the completion of the artistic vision in the external realisation of the building, the second act strengthens the case for the character of Alex to represent a discourse of cultural identity. The second act also follows the successful arc of her artistic ambitions and the decline of those of the Architect.

Alex's aria, in the opening of Act 2, describes Sydney Cove as a "port of dreams". While it draws attention to her as a singer, it allows the composer
to focus upon the act of singing, through phrasing, exploration of register and opportunities for expressive contrasts. It also musically establishes that her identity as an opera singer is dormant. The text has the harbour "watch[ing] a city grow and tread[ing] time" (Ex. 4. 2. 28), and the oboe obbligato recalls the accompaniment to the Architect's solo, "In Elsinor" (see Ex. 4. 2. 06). Marking time was also a focus of that solo. Alex's aria closes, celebrating the harbour's waking. Appropriately, a second catalyst for Alex comes through the Architect's encouragement.10 His question "Why are you still hiding here?" (Ex. 4. 2. 29) is musically related to her motif, "my future" (see Ex. 4. 2. 19).

Ex. 4. 2. 28: It watched a city grow and treaded time.

Ex. 4. 2. 29: Why are you still hiding here?

Before the resolution of the final scene, there are a series of arguments and crises. In the argument between Alex and Stephen, Alex's vocal music dominates with its purposeful shapes while Stephen's line maintains
repetitive patterns. Musical memories arise in the orchestral accompaniment. Stephen's motif "here in the sunlight" (see Ex. 4. 2. 23) is distorted by chromatic alteration. His taunt, that she is a true prima donna, only strengthens her determination to claim that status, signified by the motif of the vocalise in the accompaniment (see Ex. 4. 2. 13).

While Alex tries to decide on her future direction, orchestral commentary is made through the return of motifs of the awakening dream (see Ex. 4. 2. 17), "buried alive" (see Ex. 4. 2. 14) and "another logic" (see Ex. 4. 2. 27); the last motif, associated with the design of the building, leads to the final meeting of the Architect and Alex. Both stand on the platform - metaphorically close to the gods - and Alex acknowledges that the vision of the building has possessed her and promised fulfilment and purpose. Similarities in their dilemmas are shared; and their duet celebrates the achievement and potential of the artist in the phrase, "we're halfway there" (Ex. 4. 2. 30).

Ex. 4. 2. 30: So many steps but we're halfway there,

The discourse that Alex represents links her performing art with the shape created by the Architect for the performing site. As with Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, there is an attempt in The Eighth Wonder to identify valued attributes in defining an Australian cultural identity. Many metaphors of transformative energy and determination are overlaid in the work, countering the expression of fear of being submerged. For example, the Politician's advice to the Architect, to confine himself "to the realm of
the possible" is an elaborate variant of Alex's "buried alive" motif (see Ex. 4. 2. 14).

The final verdict on the building, given by Alex in the penultimate scene, expresses the opinion of an intended audience. She sees it as "a wonder it was ever finished, a wonder (they) couldn't see what it would have been if (they'd) trusted the Architect". However, the Architect's ambition to create a space in which the people of the country could express their artistic soul, is realised in the final scene. This scene is a revelation of the identity of Alex as acclaimed singer; it is also an intensification of the Aztec scene, as an opera-within-an-opera, for the opening of the Sydney Opera House, celebrating an inspiration becoming reality. In this way, too, it is concerned with definitions of Australian culture.

Metaphors of power are prominent in the opera. These include people who wield power, such as the Aztec High Priest, the Premier, the Maestro and the Politician, and structures, such as steps rising to a platform. There is also the dimension of sacrifice that is first indicated in the Aztec ritual and then borne out in the loss of the Architect's completed vision for the sake of the Minister's economic rationalism, and the temporary denial of the young woman's ambition for the demands of family and her husband's career.

Alex's role in the projection of reconstructed memories begins at the design competition, when the experience of her reaction to the winning design is shared with the audience in her aria. It is given importance by being directly expressed to the audience, as a soliloquy. She, rather than the chorus of socialites, is the representative of the positive response expressed on behalf of the intended audience (Ex. 4. 2. 31). The narrative of her life is part of an interconnecting set of narratives; it is embedded in the story of those groups
(family, teacher, inspirational concept), from which her character derives its identity.

Ex. 4. 2. 31: The Eighth Wonder - I've seen what's possible with dreaming.

Social memory, Connerton suggests, may find expression in commemorative ceremonies (Connerton 1989: 54). In The Eighth Wonder, the community is reminded of its identity, as told in a very specific narrative and the response to the memory is reconstructed by the character of Alex. Twenty-two years after the opening night of the Opera House and almost thirty after the Architect left the project, this opera appropriates the stature of commemorative ceremony. There is a significant distinction between ritual and myth which is pertinent here: there is a static element encoded into the structure of ritual that is not present in myth. For the duration of the performance, the composer and librettist have created an opportunity for the audience to remember in the same way.

This is engendered by the sense of re-enacting a narrative of events, even the re-enactment of an Aztec ritual, with the purpose of establishing a spiritual vision. Behind the personification of Earth and Sky, there are memories of ancient beliefs in goddesses. This is an opera which lays claim to commemorate continuity with the past. The music, which consciously evokes styles from an older generation of Australian composers appropriate to the period of construction, confirms this and places it as part of a tradition. The concern with continuity is reflected in the selection, revision and invention of memories.

Alex's presence in the final scene projects the positive realisation of the dream; she also signifies a continuum with the energy to be "freed from the
commonplace" that was the catalyst for the Architect's design in which she performs. The story of the young singer, by its success, is a foil to the story of the Architect and her music is the completion of the motives and phrase shapes that begin in the scene of his inspiration. In its emphasis on the positive story, the opera reconstructs the social memory of the period in which the Sydney Opera House was built.

1 Ann McGrath writes that "imaginative uses of the outback have served an important role in an evolving white Australian mythology" (McGrath 1991: 113).

2 Edward Said says of Palestinian culture: "the experience of being inside is presented as a series of codes which, though incomprehensible to outsiders, are instantly communicated by Palestinians when they meet one another" (Said in Rushdie 1991: 169).

3 Richard White's *Inventing Australia* (1981) follows the different historical discourses of identity in Australia and the politics of the process.

4 For more complete discussion of these issues than is possible here, see Wendy Lowenstein and Morag Loh *The Immigrants* (1991), John Thornhill *Making Australia* (1992) and Livio Dobrez (Ed.) *Identifying Australia in Postmodern Times* (1994).

5 The librettist Goldsworthy's scene-setting for Emma's Act 2 aria describes her reflections as "a nocturne of the changes she senses ahead, a monologue becoming more a lullaby, a concluding benediction for the couples, Bubba and the house" (Act 2 Sc. 1).

6 Trinh writes that "each story is at once a fragment and a whole" and that "you may also be me while remaining what you are and what I am not" (Trinh 1989: 123, 90). This is an expression of Trinh's understanding of the theory of multiple identities. She explores the premise that personal identity involves both the 'other' and the 'person'; or, to put it another way, that a person's story is theirs, but not theirs alone.

7 Connerton calls movement that has "direction upwards, against gravity" one of our culturally specific postural performances. Through the essentially embodied nature of our social existence, the oppositional terms (high and low, superior and inferior) provide us with metaphors by which we think and live (Connerton 1989: 74).

8 Architect, Philip Nobis, describes the Opera House as a continuation of nature (Nobis in Waldren 1994: 30). Utzon himself says that the buildings that inspire him lie in place as "part of nature's splendour" (Utzon Film: 1994).


10 The conversation between the Architect and Alex recalls Utzon's plans for the interior, skilfully shown in an Exhibition, mounted in October 1994, which included video simulation
of the interiors (Philip Nobis, architect, and John Murphy, senior manuscript librarian at the Mitchell Library, 1994: Exhibition 'The Unseen Utzon').

11 The Triple Muse at Helicon, or White Goddess, encompassed three characters: the Goddess of the Sky, Earth and Underworld. As Goddess of the Earth, she ruled the seasons, trees and plants and all living creatures. As Goddess of the Sky, the Moon, she directed the passions and creative energies. As Goddess of the Underworld and Harvest Maiden, Persephone, she represented death and rebirth. The sowing of the seed was expressed as her descent into the Underworld, and her reappearance in spring signified the sprouting of the young crop (Graves 1948: 386).
Chapter Five: Second Reflection

This chapter investigates two propositions. First, it argues that cultural symbols and events are used in Mills' *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* to provide a stylised setting in the way they do in Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*. In Strauss' opera, eighteenth century modes of behaviour and rituals are present but do not determine the decisions of the three main characters. Mills' characters, too, inhabit a nostalgically recreated past. The setting and cultural symbols were not stylised when Lawler's play was written in 1955 but they have become so in being revisited in the 1990s. Second, this chapter explores the way different composers present the character of a female singer in opera, through a comparison of the 'set piece' for the character Alex in John's *The Eighth Wonder* and the Chanson du Voile (Veil Song) of Eboli in the second act of Verdi's *Don Carlos*.

1. *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*

*Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) does not reflect on society, either as a commentary on eighteenth century customs or as an allegory on early twentieth century ones. As musicologist Paul Robinson writes: "The aristocratic world of Maria Theresa's Vienna functions strictly as the opera's 'setting'... the prevailing spirit is nostalgia for the way things look" (Robinson 1986: 239-240). The externals of life - dress, elaborate decor, social position, wealth - are foils to the human emotions which the opera studies.

The pre-eminent cultural symbol in the opera is connected with an expression of love. The presentation of a rose is a ceremonial requirement of the courtship
of the young Sophie by Baron Ochs. Octavian, who has been the Marschallin's young lover, is pressed into service in Act 2 as the Knight of the Rose, to make the offering on behalf of the Baron. Made of silver, the rose becomes instead a symbol of the young love of Octavian and Sophie. It is invested with qualities of the eternal and the precious.

In the Terzetto of Act 3, the Marschallin Marie Therese says farewell to Octavian. In effect, she does so, acquiescing in his new love for Sophie. The Marschallin is a woman who understands the passing of time; her understanding is her gift to Octavian, setting him free to declare his love to Sophie. The first words in the Terzetto are hers:

I wanted to love him in the right way, and even love his love for another. I never thought I would have to endure it so soon.

The terzetto's structure is dominated by two statements of a broad sweeping melody; in the first of these, the Marschallin's melody stands alone for twelve bars until melodies of Sophie and Octavian begin to counterpoint with and develop its shapes and rhythms (Ex 5. 1. 01). The second shorter statement involves all three voices immediately and rises to a peak of intensity with both sopranos reaching B♭ in successive bars (Ex. 5. 1. 02).

Ex. 5. 1. 01: Der Rosenkavalier - opening of the Terzetto.
The texture of the terzetto is, therefore, the result of complex interweaving of the two soprano and mezzo-soprano lines. From the time when all three voices are singing, the uppermost notes of the melodies pass from one voice to the other in a seamless overlapping of sounds. While the vocal texture is devised so that each voice emerges from the interweaving sound, the close of the Terzetto also gives the Marschallin prominence.

Ex. 5. 02: Der Rosenkavalier - close of the Terzetto.

This Terzetto celebrates the love of Octavian and Sophie. It also functions, in the narrative, as a confirmation of the Marschallin's resolve in Act 1. In her monologue there, she reflects on aging and being forced to observe herself doing so. She has decided it is time to end the relationship with Octavian, but she refuses to succumb to self-pity or despair. The Terzetto is positioned at the end of the opera to signal the end of one relationship and the beginning of another. Nevertheless, for all three characters, it is an expression of looking back in wonderment. It is a denouement which has been gracefully prepared.

1. 1 Analysis: Trio Summer of the Seventeenth Doll  See Appendix Four (B)

The Trio for the women in Act 1 of Summer of the Seventeenth Doll is an expression of looking forward, of anticipation of summer beginning when the men arrive. Cane-cutters like Roo and Barney would probably not recognise
themselves in the characters of Mills' opera. In fact, the opera does not hinge upon that; instead it uses cultural symbols as a setting in which to develop its own focus on seasonal relationships. The men working in the country in the north move south to the city, the holiday atmosphere and the women. *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* is also concerned with the effects of time on relationships. Unlike the Marschallin with Octavian, Olive is a character who wants her relationship (with Roo) to remain the same. The structure of the Trio falls into two sections. The first opens with Olive's "fire in the air" motif and quickly establishes close harmony with Bubba, in contrast to Pearl's separate responses. It is only Olive and Bubba's enthusiasm for the "fun" that begins to sway Pearl's indecision (at figure [L]). When the symbol of the relationship between Olive and Roo, the doll presented annually, is introduced later in the act, it is presented using the "fire in the air" motif. Unlike a silver rose, it is as impermanent as the seasonal "fun".

The texture of the Trio allows more space to the paired voices of Olive and Bubba and to individual voices in the first section. In the second section (at figure [I]), the vocal lines overlap at shorter rhythmic intervals and there are moments when the three voices sing the same text, united. For example, at the beginning and end of the second section, the three voices move together rhythmically. There are differences for Pearl's vocal line and text maintained, but the momentum of the Trio is carried more by combined singing in this section.

It is quite typical for ensembles to consolidate the responses of characters to previous actions. In fact, the Terzetto from *Der Rosenkavalier* does this. However, the Trio in *The Doll* develops into an interchange of ideas between
the women and serves to highlight the loss of communication in later ensembles. Moreover, in Der Rosenkavalier, the Terzetto is the culmination of a series of events, and the Marschallin's recognition and acceptance of the passing of time. In Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, the Trio is the commencement of events, and Olive's attempt to deny the effects of time.

The Trio serves an important narrative function. From this point onwards, the idea of the lay-off deteriorates. The final scene of Act 3 is a natural outcome of Olive's love for the rugged bushman-image rather than with the man Roo is. If the relationship was not permitted to change and grow, it had to end in destruction. In Lawler's play, there was comment on changes to the social fabric of Australia in the 1950s. With Mills' revisiting of the story in the opera, the comment on Australian society, like the cultural symbols has become stylised.

2. Don Carlos and The Eighth Wonder

There are several examples of a "set piece" in opera drawing attention to the conscious act of singing; one of these is the Chanson du Voile from the second act of Don Carlos. Verdi's last opera for the Paris Opera tells of the thwarted engagement of Carlos, Infante of Spain to Elisabeth of France; a political treaty changes these plans so that Elisabeth becomes the wife of Philip, the King. The Veil Song is sung by the Princess Eboli, jealous of the new Queen over Carlos and suspicious of Elisabeth's fidelity to Philip. In the royal gardens, Eboli is asked to sing by the ladies of the court. Her song, about marital infidelity, evokes Spanish culture with its reference to the gardens of a Moorish palace and has musical influences from the seguidilla with its exotic harmony and choice of orchestral colour (Ex. 5. 2. 01).
In an opera, when a character is asked to sing, the effect can generate new attention on that character as well as the moment to which the song contributes. The aria is elaborate with cadenzas which follow the verses and its text reveals Eboli as a danger to the Queen. The Veil Song is both an entertainment and a preview of Eboli's later involvement in royal intrigues.

2.2 Analysis: Alex's aria in *The Eighth Wonder*  See Appendix Five (B)

When Alex sings, for the Queen, in the second act of *The Eighth Wonder*, there is, similarly, a double function served. It functions as the entertainment on the royal yacht; and it reveals the development of the singer, the journey that has been travelled since the singing lesson in Act 1. The aria also represents the composer's acknowledgement of other musical styles (John interview 1997). Its opening bars are a conscious imitation of, and tribute to, the style of Malcolm Williamson.

With continuing relevance to Australian music of the 1960s, the second part of Alex's aria then evokes Peter Sculthorpe's engagement with Indonesian gamelan music by using a Balinese scale (John interview 1997). This creates a moment of stasis, while the text reflects on the timelessness of the harbour (bar
The social frenzy of the opening of the second act prepares for this moment in the aria; and, as a whole, the aria signals Alex's return to striving for her career. It looks back to previous moments in the opera where the act of singing is represented or evoked: to the singing lesson in Act 1, and to the announcement of the design competition winner, when Alex envisages her singing career. It also looks forward to the opera-within-an-opera in the final scene.

*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Eighth Wonder* commemorate the past in their musical structures. Both Mills and John have constructed their operas in ways that continue the traditions of the genre. Their use of ensembles at the "curtain", in the manner of grand opera, and of using duets, to move the action forward, are testament to that. These composers are disseminating images and memories, through the characters, in a particular way. While they expand the range of new operatic works, they consciously maintain traditions in their musical creation of characters.

These operas do not engage a contemporary interpretation of cultural identity, with its diversity. Their vernacular and icons contextualise their stories - the 1950s in one case, a twenty-year time span from the 1950s in the other. Musicologist-composer Istvan Anhalt suggests that to envisage a context "may only mean that someone has chosen a vantage point from which to view a part of the world" (Anhalt in Driver and Christiansen 1989: 107). He goes on to discuss the many ways in which a text reflects a context and he groups these around two opposing poles. On one hand, the text may confirm and be "widely accepted by society, yet very personal in expression", and on the other, it may be "critical, disparaging or even condemning" (Anhalt 1989: 107). While the
operas in Chapter Two can be seen in the second group, Mills' and John's operas belong in the first.

The detail, which helps to define a context, is in the text, in its words and images. In *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, colloquial expressions which often omit syllables or words are frequently set as recitative, with a consistent rhythmic use of triplets (see Exs. 4.1.21 and 4.1.34). More than this, however, is the physical presence of summer in the work. It relates to the legend of the superiority of the sun-browned man of the land, a legend to which Olive clings. Musically, it takes expression in the "fire" motif (see Exs. 4.1.01-09) with its associations of passion and in the "fire harmonies" (see Exs. 4.1.10-12) which link different images of destruction.

In a related way, *The Eighth Wonder* presents a range of Australian images. Alex delays the momentum of her career at the beach and discusses the chances of restarting it with her father in the family backyard. More than the other characters, the speech patterns of Alex's father represent the type of Australian syntax, described above, such as is found in his comment to Alex that "you could 'a been a star". Over these symbols of image and word is the physical presence of the Opera House rising beside the harbour. A sign that Australian artistic monuments could stand alongside the Pyramids or the Parthenon, the Sydney Opera House is a modern icon of Australian identity (Fiske, Hodge and Turner 1987: 159). Musically, it is expressed through the character who fulfils its purpose and through the melodic contours which outline architectural features of the building.
Chapter Six: Voices of Protest

This chapter explores Quito by Martin Wesley-Smith and The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior by Colin Bright and argues that these operas cross a border to a concept of a character's portrayal by more than one person. In each of these operas, the central character is fragmented among several performers. There is a violence in this fragmentation which resonates with the ideas of 'borderlands'. This thesis has related the discourse which a character represents in contemporary opera to theories of multiple identities. Bright and Wesley-Smith both use the notion that aspects of identity can be musically expressed through the fragmentation of one character's identity among several performers. The central characters in the stories, Quito and Fernando, are representatives of discourses of protest and they address the relationship of identity to agency, creating change, through the portrayal of an individual character by an ensemble of performers.

In Quito, this is overt; different members of the ensemble take on the character of Quito, so that different musical registers help to convey his schizophrenia. In The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior, Fernando summons the participants in his story. While one character, the Activist, continues his political ideals in the present, Fernando's identity can only be defined in shadow, against all the other protagonists from the past.

1. Quito in Quito

Quito, by Martin Wesley-Smith, with a libretto by his brother Peter, was premiered in November 1994 by the Sydney Metropolitan Opera and the Song Company. Wesley-Smith subtitled his work as an audio-visual music theatre about schizophrenia and East Timor. Its first performance venue
was Rozelle Hospital in Sydney, once the location for treatment of psychotic patients. The dual narrative entwines stories of the sufferings of the young Francisco Pires, called Quito, and the tragedy of the East Timorese people caused by the Indonesian invasion in 1975. The music drama also exists in another form. In May 1997, *Quito* was reconstructed for radio, in which form it won the Paul Lowin Award for song cycle. As this reconstruction represents another consideration of the music by the composer, the later version can be viewed as a confirmation of the core musical expression of the theatre piece.

The thirteen scenes of the music drama introduce the character of Quito, played at different times by each member of the six-part vocal ensemble and symbolised by a child-sized puppet. The libretto operates on two planes. One is the story of Quito, who was born in East Timor and escaped to Darwin, with members of his family, at the time of the Indonesian invasion in 1975 when he was about twelve. As a young man, he began to suffer the symptoms of schizophrenia. Peter Wesley-Smith writes that the illness may have been intensified by the knowledge of the sufferings and deaths of family and friends in East Timor, traumas "suffered albeit second-hand" (Program note 1994). The common symptoms of schizophrenia, such as voices in the head, delusions, shattered logic, suspicion of the effects of the anti-psychotic drugs (as forces alien to the body) are a metaphor of the condition of East Timor.

Quito's story is juxtaposed with the story of the invasion and occupation of East Timor by Indonesian forces, the second narrative of the libretto. Members of Quito's family who stayed in East Timor experienced unspeakable horrors. For Wesley-Smith's music drama, these are the factual basis of the sections called "Fatima's Story" and the Aunt Alexandrina
sequence. While Quito’s sister, Fatima, and her husband were on the run from the Indonesians, their baby son died. Fatima lost two other children from disease and malnutrition. Aunt Alexandrina, her husband and their five children were all shot.

In this music-theatre piece, the tragedy of East Timor is made visible as an externalisation of Quito’s interior turmoil. The music mirrors the states of mind of the central character; the libretto invites the audience to make the connection between a suffering mind and a suffering country. There is disorder in Quito and disorder in his homeland. The imbalance in Quito mirrors the disruption of life in East Timor as a result of Indonesian invasion. Quito’s imbalance led to prescriptions of anti-psychotic drugs, pioneered in the 1950s. These drugs do not cure the illness but they reduce some psychotic symptoms for many schizophrenics. Every individual reacts differently to the drugs, however, and Quito’s letters show that he felt that the drugs gave him breasts, that they invaded his manhood.

The voices (auditory hallucinations) heard by some sufferers of schizophrenia, may tell them how to behave or feel. They may be friendly or they may tell the person to kill themselves. The hearing of such voices is externalised in this theatre piece by members of the vocal ensemble. Visual hallucinations also haunt schizophrenics in the psychotic phase. The face of a friend may suddenly distort horribly, terrifying the schizophrenic. In order to show this distortion, Quito integrates the use of morphing slides which change images from one shape to another.

During the song "My Night is Falling" in Scene 4, for example, the stage directions state that "a slide of a young Timorese man's face appears and starts to melt". The face is that of a young man who was participating in a
demonstration for peace and justice at Santa Cruz Cemetery, Dili in 1991. Minutes after the photo was taken, he was shot by Indonesian troops (Wesley-Smith interview 1997). Later in the performance, after the song "I Am the Cock that Killed the King" (otherwise known as "Quito's Voice"), the stage directions state that the melted image of the same young man's face returns. In the 1994 production, it melted into different colours and shapes, such as an egg and the symbol for an approaching cyclone on a meteorological display screen; these images accompanied the return of the song "My Night is Falling" and a spoken text, the content of which is exemplified in these words:

I melt ... pieces of me ... my skin: keeping the pieces together ... but everything flies away ...() blots on the landscape ... that was me ... I am torn ... apart ... my heart ... worn ... forlorn ... I am the egg man ... fried ... scrambled ... () Fear ... and trembling ... everything dies ... it's all black ... underneath ...

The real Quito was an accomplished singer, guitarist and songwriter and the music drama includes tapes of his band. There are also speeches of public figures, videoed news reports of his being wounded by police gunfire during an incident in Darwin in 1987, and slides include demonstrations in East Timor. This use of technological resources extends operatic usage of stage machinery; in Quito, screen images and taped sound occur simultaneously with staged action, so that the moment can be more densely packed. Wesley-Smith's first major venture into audio-visual presentations was Kdadalak (For the Children of Timor) in 1978, based on the Indonesian invasion of East Timor. He continued the theme in the 1984 piece Venceremos (Victory). Both Martin and Peter Wesley-Smith have maintained a consistent and long-standing commentary on this political issue.
In researching her book about her son's illness, Anne Deveson found that schizophrenia accounts for three-quarters of all mental disorders (Deveson 1991: 32). The cause of the dysfunction is not yet discovered but it seems likely that a vulnerability may be built into the system by infection or shortage of oxygen at birth. While schizophrenia may suddenly appear in adulthood, more commonly it is a gradual onset. It may not become fully apparent until adolescence when factors such as hormonal changes, environmental stress, or drug abuse may act as triggers for malfunctioning and deterioration. For the real Quito, environmental stress was created by the sufferings and deaths of family members and friends still in East Timor after the 1975 Indonesian invasion. The Wesley-Smith brothers believe that Quito's schizophrenia was "one of the indirect casualties of an invasion that caused the death of a third of East Timor's pre-1975 population (Wesley-Smith Interview 1997).

*quito* not only extends conventions, with technology, but breaks with them in its concept of character. One of the ways that a schizophrenic sense is conveyed is through the device of the central character being played by each member of the ensemble at different times. In addition, the vulnerability of the schizophrenic sufferer is emphasised by the use of the child-sized puppet. Other figures, such as doctors, family, schoolfriends, tormenting voices, briefly enter and exit from the story. *quito* shows traces of a style of theatre, created by Peter Brook, called Theatre of Cruelty. One of the aims of this theatrical style was to try to correspond to the broken and fragmentary way in which people may experience contemporary reality. In *quito*, this experience of fragmentation is intensified by the mental dysfunction of the central character, by the mockery and abuse shown from the characters representing medical and political authorities and by the pace and short-scene construction of the music drama.
In the staged performance, the first scene includes television news reports of Quito's death, followed by screen images of the face of a young man, morphing out of shape. Accompanying these images is a collage of the sounds of wind, sea, cocks crowing and the voice of Quito with his band. Behind a huge representation of a bishop, the ensemble sing the lament by Orlando di Lasso, "Timor et Tremor". This motet, composed in 1566, sets the text "Fear and trembling have come upon me"; Martin Wesley-Smith incorporates it as an expression of the fear of the Timorese people and as a lament which focuses upon the name of the country, Timor.

In Scene 2, the puppet is released from a body bag by the doctors, as a symbol of birth. A candle is lit and placed in the water pot which represents his entity. The trio, "Be silent", is a call to nature to be silent so that Quito can speak. In Scene 4, the puppet Quito learns to walk, and is hugged and supported by his mother. Then, in a reversal, the cast dismember the puppet, leaving the mother-figure to pick up the body parts and cradle them. A doctor's report begins to interweave with her lament, "I'm so filled with fear" (Ex. 6. 1. 01). The end of the mother's song, "I am losing you" (Ex. 6. 1. 02), is a recurring theme in the theatre piece.

Ex. 6. 1. 01: I'm so filled with fear.

Ex. 6. 1. 02: I am losing you.
Normal life is shown in scenes where the young Quito plays soccer and goes to the beach. Through showing the scenic attractions of Timor in tourism promotions of the early 1970s, attention is drawn to Australian familiarity with Timor through travel. Nevertheless, the Indonesian invasion in 1975 brings no response from Western observers. The earlier refrain of "Be Silent" returns in a new political context.

Tragic stories are interspersed with a refrain from Quito's band, "It's Just Another Sad Story". Fatima, Quito's sister, tells of the death of her baby while she was hiding from the Indonesians and the story of Maria Gorete is one of torture, rape and murder. "Fatima's Story" and "Maria Gorete's Story" climax in the heroic anthem, "Timor Woman", with words written by the Resistance leader, Xanana Gusmão. There is also the recollection of the murder of an entire family in the "Aunt Alexandrina" sequence. The lament, "I'm so filled with fear, I am losing you" returns, sung by the baritone. In Scene 9, the condition of Quito is clinically discussed while the puppet figure is restrained in a chair. The puppet is manipulated so that it appears to struggle. The stage directions of the libretto state that Quito is forcibly restrained despite his protests. In the 1994 performance, the medical staff bound the puppet in clingwrap and deposited him in a hospital waste bag, a metaphor of the "wraps" of ignorance under which discussion of schizophrenia stayed for so long.

The game show in Scene 10 satirises the efforts of politicians, such as Foreign Affairs Minister of the time, Gareth Evans, to effect a resolution in East Timor. The song, "Thank Evans", satirises Hollywood-style western songs with its vamp style of accompaniment, its images of roaming the world six-gun in hand delivered by a singer in a stetson. During the scene, the Quito puppet is forced to look upon symbolic representations of the
shooting and knifing of relatives. Later, Quito tries to establish whether what he remembers is real or hallucinatory. From this point the musical solos and ensembles focus on Quito's multiply constructed identity.

Creating the radio version led composer, Wesley-Smith, to reposition some of the early music and to omit the game show. The monologues that accompanied the morphing images were unsustainable, but the news clips were retained. The piece removed the sense of representing the psychotic phases of the sufferer, but gained greatly in intensity of focus on the relationships of the two narratives.

The narrative of the East Timorese people is explored in the "Timor Woman" and "Aunt Alexandrina" sections. In the "Timor Woman" ensemble, the sounds of scat have rarely sounded so menacing (Ex. 6. 1. 03).

Ex. 6.1.03: Timor woman.
The syllables "jing jang" (not shown) suggest guitar distortion and unsettled nerves. The bass line, "ba doom", and the hissing of the "tsh" syllable have double meanings as well. They suggest not only the sounds of the drum kit, but also collaborators' whispers and fatal ends. One of the sopranos leads the ensemble, which celebrates the courage of the women, their identity intact while they suffer and die.

The monotone, with which the alto begins the "Aunt Alexandrina" sequence, belies the horror in the account of the murder. There is a moving effect created in the repetition of her name (Ex. 6. 1. 04). The music makes the point that she is not to be forgotten. When all have been killed, the names fall to the ground like the water pots of their entities (Ex. 6. 1. 05).

Ex. 6. 1. 04: Alexandrina.

Ex. 6. 1. 05: The names fall.
Quito's narrative is explored in the final sequence of the staged production: "Only Those", "Sorrowing Heart" and "Quito, Blown by the Wind". This sequence continues to explore the shift between voices. The identity of Quito is at one time in a soprano, then in the ensemble and finally in the tenor voice; there is also the bass song, "I Am the Cock that Killed the King", which is discussed in Chapter 7. "Only Those" begins with a Timorese saying, and that re-emphasises the language and cultural aspect of Quito's identity. It raises issues of truth, of lifting defiant fists, of standing against torture and dying with dignity and courage. The music begins with a soprano solo in ballad style (Ex. 6. 1. 06); the subsequent verses re-introduce the ensemble, enlarging the protest (Ex. 6. 1. 07).

Ex. 6. 1. 06: Only those - soprano.
Ex. 6. 1. 07: Only Those - Ensemble.

Even tho-se with bro-ken ha-nds can raise de-fi-ant fi-sts
E-ven tho-se with graves al-re-a-dy du-g can
die with dig-ni-ty—and cou-ra-ge
The ensemble, "Sorrowing Heart", incorporates the melody of the Orlando di Lasso lament, re-establishing Quito's spiritual identity. This is poignantly ended when his entity, represented by the water pot, is shattered on the ground (Ex. 6. 1. 08). The final music, "Quito, Blown by the Wind", recalls Quito's identity as a musician. Schizophrenic movement between voices comes to rest in this tenor solo, whose vocal line is built upon the rising octave, associated with each call on the name of Quito (Ex. 6. 1. 09).

Ex. 6. 1. 08: Sorrowing heart - the end.

Ex. 6. 1. 09: Quito blown by the wind.
Both narratives come to focus on the death of Quito, so that his cultural identity is powerfully connected to ideas of resistance to oppression, as the focus of the discourse. In the character of Quito, the normal presence of multiple identities is distorted, resulting in a different way of conceptualising the character of Quito. In *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, the fragmentation of the presentation of the central character, between the members of the ensemble, has another rationale.

The characters which Bright and Wesley-Smith create are unlike characters in operas written over ten years ago. Operas of Sitsky and Meale, for example, from the 1970s and early 1980s do not fragment the presentation of character in any way. What Bright and Wesley-Smith have created has been influenced by the ensemble skills of the company for which both have written, the Song Company. However, both composers have also taken the relationship of the characters and the audience into different spaces.

2. Fernando in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*

*The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, by composer, Colin Bright, with a libretto by performance artist and poet, Amanda Stewart, was completed in 1994 and premiered in the 1997 Festival of Sydney. The statements this opera makes about betrayal are very strong. Six singers and two dancer-swimmers convey the story of the 1985 attack on the Greenpeace vessel in Auckland Harbour, the subsequent interrogations of the French agents who were caught and the sentences which were compromised by New Zealand trade concerns. Presentation of the central character is fragmented among the members of the ensemble as Bright and Stewart have constructed a character whose identity can only be revealed by the other protagonists in the historical event.
The following brief synopsis of the six scenes provides a context for exploring this different approach to defining the central character. During the Prelude, the two dancer-swimmers re-enact the setting of the explosives. In the first scene, the spirit of the Portuguese-born Fernando Pereira emerges from the darkness, summoning the other characters to appear. They do so in two groups, one of which is the French Official who applauds the "sacrifice" of the two DGSE agents, and the other is the Activist with another Greenpeace worker. The appearance of these two sets of characters overlaps, taking place in different locations within the performing space. While all the scenes happen after the sabotage, they are not in the sequence of a linear narrative. The second scene takes place very soon after the bombing. As evidence mounts against the two French agents who were apprehended, the Official reluctantly agrees to announce an enquiry and eventually he is forced to admit French involvement. However, he effectively barters for a reduced sentence by using trade agreements and the sentence given is two years, to be served on a French island in the Pacific.

The location of the third scene shifts to Hao Atoll, where the agents, Prieur and Mafart, serve out their sentence. In their ironic love duet with its hip-swaying dance rhythms, they present a view of the Pacific through European eyes. When the mood changes in the final section, the pair also reflect on the time they are serving as a consequence of being caught. At the end of their duet, they pick up pairs of goggles; it is left to the audience to decide whether they are preparing to swim or to observe a nuclear test. The fourth scene shows the Activist recounting the testimony of a Tahitian woman whose husband worked on Mururoa Atoll for the French government. The Official arrives at Mururoa in the fifth scene, asserting that the tests are completely safe.
In the final scene, the characters in the interconnecting fragments of the event are seen to be caught within a vortex, whose spinning motion is conveyed by the instrumental accompaniment. The Official, who has lived down the scandals and redefined his approach: "We are green! We want things clean!" His rap-style speeches appropriate the latest Green language for political expediency. While the infiltrating agent, having transmitted final intelligence to the French Secret Service, makes her escape, the confrontation of the Activist and the Official remains unresolved; and the scene ends with the words of the spirit of Fernando:

At the centre there is no sound
No sight, no reason (Sc. 6).

The interweaving of different times and places is initiated by the literary style of Stewart's libretto and completed by the music which defines each one. Bright ensures that, through the different readings, the audience approach the event from many angles. Each separate discourse, of law court transcripts, political rhetoric and personal testimony, adds variety; but it is the juxtaposition in the musical design which creates fresh understanding.

The central character is Fernando, who drowned when the flagship of the Greenpeace movement was sabotaged. He was the only fatality from the bomb blast and it is believed that he was trying to retrieve equipment and film from his cabin on the Rainbow Warrior. While the opera presents the story from a variety of perspectives, Fernando is the only one of the six characters who makes no reading of the event. Instead, the audience see all other characters when they are evoked by the returned spirit of Fernando. Their actions are presented like film clips, a neat device, since Pereira's profession was photography. In fact, the audience is always aware that Fernando appears as a mythic figure and that they only see these events
because they have been recalled by him; and, conversely, the only way the identity of Fernando is defined is by the other participants in the event. This is the key difference in approach to defining the character of Fernando.

The other characters are emblematic of political positions regarding the environment. The French political reading is caught in the moment when the Official triumphantly announces the end of 'L'affaire Greenpeace', as he sets off for the Pacific to watch a test. In this way, the Official reads the event as a failed environmental protest. The reading offered by the Activist recalls the planning of the flotilla, which the Rainbow Warrior was to lead. It was to be the figurehead of a campaign to protest the contamination of the Tahitian people from the French testing programme. In this way, the Activist presents a reading of the bombing of the vessel as the destruction of an icon or symbol of the Greenpeace movement. These readings, which happen in different time frames, resist articulation with each other. They are like perspectives of a piece of sculpture, frozen in time before being juxtaposed or superimposed.

From time to time, the composer intentionally comments on readings presented by the characters through the use of musical style that is significantly different from its context, such as in the Official's "backdown" announcement in Scene 2 (Ex. 6. 2. 01). It both changes the vocal mode and shows the composer's very Australian enjoyment of the discomfort of an embarrassed politician (Bright Interview 1994).

Ex. 6. 2. 01: The Official's "backdown" announcement.
This type of commentary is identified as a narrating voice by Abbate and defined "not by what it narrates but by its audible flight from the continuum that embeds it" (Abbate 1991: 29). In discussing another moment of such commentary, the scene of the Tahitian woman's testimony, Bright states that the intention behind the change in the final section from song to the use of speech is "to be matter-of-fact, as part of its Australian character" (Bright Interview 1994). At such moments, change in the music is effected for reasons other than mere variety. However, it is not always the case that it is openly acknowledged by composer or librettist.

While not interpreting events himself, Fernando is a focus of attention as a consequence of the mythic quality of his return from the underworld. Like the mythic heroes described by historian Lance Strate, Fernando blends "elements of the real world and the supernatural" (Strate 1991: 104). The opening sounds of the Prelude, fog horns and conch shells, immediately associate the music with the sea and they are followed by a series of insistent rhythmic motifs on log drums and congas. The opening motif, a rising minor second from D to E-flat, takes on great significance. The music of the conversation of the French agents is created with this interval basis and these pitches; so too is the angry exchange, following the revelation of the espionage of an agent who had posed as a Greenpeace member. The motif, therefore, comes to signify subterfuge and betrayal in the opera (Ex. 6. 2. 02).

Ex. 6. 2. 02: Prelude - motif on fog horns and conch shells.

The most extended melodic idea is that of the bass clarinet (Ex. 6. 2. 03). As the opera proceeds, the association of the clarinet and Fernando becomes
stronger. The first scene is dominated by the figure and bass voice of Fernando who presents the fracturing of existence, when "the fabric of now" is torn and "the real splits!" (Ex. 6. 2. 04).

Ex. 6. 2. 03: Bass clarinet melody, Prelude.

Ex. 6. 2. 04: The underside meets the surface; the real splits.

The composer uses pitch, tessitura and timbral quality to create layers of meaning that are independent of the written text. Just as in mythic stories, primeval elements are often associated with low, fundamental tones, so the bass voice of Fernando, and the low tessitura of the vocal line convey the mood of primitive suspension of belief, by virtue of the sound quality which has mythic association.11 While the vibrations of low tones alone will not generate mythical meaning, timbral quality can reinforce the effect. This layer of meaning is additional to the words of the text. In a similar way, the staggered entries of the ensemble of voices singing the word, "Mururoa" can create an effect of sound waves, and this layer of meaning is separate from that which attaches to Mururoa as the name of the French nuclear testing site in the South Pacific (Ex. 6. 2. 05).
Philosopher Martin Heidegger identifies the conflict of truth and untruth as a rift (Riss) which carries opponents into the source of their unity by virtue of their common ground (Heidegger 1971: 63). This happens in the confrontations between the Activist and the Official, although it must be added that Bright has confirmed such similarities with Heidegger’s ideas are coincidental rather than intended. Within simultaneous scenes of the past and present, the audience begin to encounter the fractured readings of the event. In the final debate, in Scene 6, the Activist’s strongest emotional response is when she is opposed to the Official, but sharing a duet. The two opponents have been carried to their common ground and the music reflects this as a positive gain (Ex. 6. 2. 06).

Ex. 6. 2. 06: The other is none other than yourself.
The paradox of Fernando's position is that he is not part of present time (Ex. 6. 2. 07). Heidegger uses the term "ekstasis of time" in the sense of "standing outside" time, a notion that is important to Fernando as he also "stands outside", in shadow and can only be revealed by the positions of the other characters in the events. Heidegger's theory of temporality, with its threefold simultaneity of past, present and future, subverts the idea of linear time; and in Bright's music the idea of a linear narrative is subverted while alternate ideas of time accommodate Fernando's role of initiating the re-enactment of events (Heidegger 1962: 377).

Ex. 6. 2. 07: I a spectre, a statistic, a figment across time.

Another important aspect of Fernando is that he is not able to participate in reconstructing his identity. Any qualities of character can only be inferred by statements that other characters make about themselves. The DGSE agents respond to "the ocean, the sun on it" (Ex. 6. 2. 08); by implication, this is true of him as crew aboard the Rainbow Warrior and like them, he is "the past of (our) future" (Ex. 6. 2. 09). Such inferences only serve to underline the missing details which would normally accumulate for a central character.

Ex. 6. 2. 08: The ocean; the sun on it.
Ex. 6. 2. 09: We are the past of your future.

Like the Activist, Fernando was moved to protest against the contamination of the Tahitian people. In Scene 4, the Activist relays an horrific account of a woman's attempts to have a family, and the subsequent illness and death of child after child. The destruction of the Rainbow Warrior and Fernando's death are the filter through which the testimony makes its impact, leading to the woman's accusation that the deaths of her children are a result of her husband being contaminated while working at Mururoa. In this testimony, the inclusion of other voices, in an overlapping style, is a way of containing the scene while providing all the detail of the text (Ex. 6. 2. 10a and 10b).

Ex. 6. 2. 10a: Doctors would not tell.

Ex. 6. 2. 10b: Overlapping voices - Without a death certificate.
The structure of Bright's opera focuses on Fernando who reaches across time, and on time itself, unfolding in a non-linear sequence of events. Bright provides musical material for each event so that recurring motifs and timbres create a series of "echoes" for the audience. One example is in the second scene, where the three interrogations of the agents occurs. A rapid keyboard figure (notes of an A minor triad with added B-flat, C-sharp and D-sharp that resonate like a cluster) connects the interrogations and conveys both the relentlessness of the questions, and an aural world of instability. At the same time its distinctive sound acts as a base for the speech-like exchanges (Ex. 6. 2. 11).

Ex. 6. 2. 11: Rapid figure resonating like a cluster.

Simultaneous presentation of events that occurred at different times is the core of the structure; and it is in that synergy that new meanings arise. For example, when the French pair converse, trying to keep up their resolve, the interval of a minor second, falling from E to D-sharp, is repeated persistently. This interval has already come to be associated in the opera with subterfuge and betrayal. The scene immediately merges into a conversation in which the Activist reflects that the interrogations are starting to have effect (Ex. 6. 2. 12).

Ex. 6. 2. 12: They're being forced into the open.
As in Wesley-Smith's music drama *Quito*, reference is not to one event so much as to a whole web of events seen concurrently. While the events are re-enacted, Fernando's protest against nuclear testing in the Pacific remains "across time", defined by time. It is by virtue of this aspect of his identity that Fernando represents the discourse of betrayal of peoples and of the environment. The focus on time frames means that time is always a major element of the political discourse and the rights of indigenous people.

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1 A borderland, as described by Anzualda is "an undetermined place created by the emotional residue of a boundary" (Anzualda 1987: 37). Traditionally, one character was presented by one performer; or an early period of the character's life was presented by one performer and a later period by another performer, such as happens in Ross Edwards' *Christina's World*. If operas have crossed a border because one character may be portrayed by many people, then the "undetermined place" is the character's identity.

2 The term, "psychotic" refers to delusions, any prominent hallucinations, disorganised speech, or disorganised or catatonic behaviour (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Ed. Robert L. Spitzer. 1994: 273).

3 In the 1960s, Peter Brook directed a season for the Royal Shakespeare Company under this name. He describes this as "trying to find a twentieth-century language that can expand the single moment" (Brook interview in *Plays and Players* February 1964).

4 Morphing is a process which can be achieved by applying computer technology to camera images. The gradual transformation from one shape to another takes its name from the process of metamorphosis.

5 The notes to the CD of *Quito* explain that, in Mambai cosmology, all objects have mouths, but only humans normally speak. If humans stop speaking, however, then mountains, valleys and springs will speak again. The Mambai include the members of the Pires family.
6 Xanana Gusmão is leader of the National Council of Maubere Resistance, currently serving a twenty year prison term in Cipinang Prison, Jakarta, for subversion. His translated poem was versified by Peter Wesley Smith.

7 Anne Deveson writes that "in 1988, a study undertaken by Hinckley's American Mental Health Fund found that sixty per cent of Americans still thought that people with mental illness were malingerers. In Britain in 1991, nearly seventy per cent thought that schizophrenia was a split personality. And in Australia, in 1991, while just about fifty per cent knew that schizophrenia was a mental illness, twenty per cent still thought it was caused by parental treatment" (Deveson 1991: 219).

8 During the staged production, Quito's death by hanging was re-enacted, using the puppet.

9 A dancer-double has a similarly important contribution to make to the Aria of the Falling Body: Gymnopedie, in John Adams' opera, *The Death of Klinghoffer*. Klinghoffer's death is enacted symbolically. While the performer singing the role reflects, in the aria, about people whose response to threats is to go away and not take action, Klinghoffer's dancer-double drags him slowly away in a great white sheet like a shroud; it is a dance between Klinghoffer and his body.

10 The DGSE is the French Secret Service.

11 According to Gilbert Rouget, the fundamental tone is given in creation myths of the Oceanic peoples by the Triton conch-shell trumpet which thus also refers to the sea or to water in General (Rouget 1973 cited in Tarasti 1978: 78).
Chapter Seven: At The Border

In their concept of character, the operas of Bright and Wesley-Smith are as different from works before them as subcultures are to a dominant culture. Subcultures, such as the various migrant cultures in Australia, change the perceptions of the dominant culture, even about such key features as its icons and its humour. A subculture feeds the dominant culture but while it retains recognisable hallmarks of that culture, it inflects and inverts them, creating something which constitutes a different subversive entity (Hall and Jefferson 1976). This is true of the way in which the exploration of multiply constructed identity in both Quito and The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior changes the concept of operatic character.

This chapter argues that signs of character are inflected and inverted in the operas of Wesley-Smith and of Bright. The first part of the chapter will revisit the character of Quito through comparisons from the operatic repertoire with other characters who are dysfunctional, defined as "having an abnormality or impairment of function" (New Shorter Oxford 1993). These include Lucia from Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor; Salome from Strauss' Salome; Tristan from Wagner's Tristan und Isolde; and Otello from Verdi's Otello.

The second part of the chapter will re-examine Fernando from The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior through comparisons with characters who have been presented in mythical ways: Tamino in Mozart's The Magic Flute; Siegfried in Wagner's Siegfried; and the minstrel, Sadko, in Rimsky-Korsakov's Sadko.
1. A Sign of Dysfunctional Character

This first section will test the proposition that one of the signs of dysfunctional character in opera is tessitura. It is problematic to make broad generalisations about tessitura operating with consistent meaning as a sign of character. However, existing conventions are associated both with voice types and with tessitura of voices. It is possible, then, to observe interpretations of disturbed emotion portrayed through the combined effects of tessitura with other compositional devices such as rhythm and pitch patterns, harmony and dynamic levels.

For the first type of dysfunction, Donizetti, in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, uses change in tessitura, combined with unexpected harmonic shifts, to create a single metaphor of Lucia's loss of reason. After Lucia has stabbed and killed Arturo, her manner, to use Walter Scott's words, has "a flighty levity" (Scott in Schmidgall 1977: 144). "Flighty", moreover, aptly describes the way in which the tessitura of her aria in Act 2 Scene 2 moves higher, with the melody sometimes soaring to C5 and the phrases hovering at the upper limits of the soprano voice.

Certainly, the lyrics about the grave in this aria of Lucia's, "Spargi d'amaro pianto", have no logical connection with the exuberant dance-like melody (Ex. 7. 1. 01). The text translates as "Shed a sorrowful tear over my untimely grave and, above in heaven, I wil pray for you. Even heaven will bring me no joy if you are not there. Ah no!". Musicologist, McClary, describes the sudden flat-six modulation, from B flat major to G flat major, as a move into "an alien region" which, in this context, can be read as a realm of unreason (McClary 1991: 93). Unexpected harmonic shifting parallels the loss of the solid ground of reason and understanding.
Indeed, such harmonic shifting was a convention of the time. According to Jonas Barish, unforeseen changes of key and mode was one of the ways in which composers of the nineteenth century tried to simulate the effects of
distraction. Other signs included emphasising recitative, utilising sudden changes of tempo, alternating vocal lines of agitation and calm, and providing opportunities for fioritura, especially scales running upward (Barish in Rosen and Porter 1984: 151). It is the last sign which is particularly significant as it is responsible for lifting the tessitura.

Obsessive desire, a second type of dysfunction, is explored in Strauss' Salome. Once again, high tessitura is an essential sign of psychological malady. It is combined with a use of specific pitches on key words of the text to convey Salome's fixation. When she sings of the "kiss" she demands of Jochanaan (John the Baptist) and of his "mouth", the pitch of A₄-flat (G₄-sharp enharmonically) is associated with these words (Ex. 7. 2. 01). This example also shows large leaps in Salome's vocal line. Typically, these leap from or to one of the specific pitches, as here from A₄-flat in the first notes of the example. The translated text is "Ah! you would not let me kiss your lips Jochanaan. Well, now I will do it!". Strauss connects the high tessitura with key words of the text, which can be read as associated, not only with the object of Salome's obsession, but with the obsession itself.

Ex. 7. 2. 01: Salome - Ah! Du wolltest, Salome's final monologue

Extending this association, Salome converses with the severed head of Jochanaan, commanding 'him' to open his eyes and see her. Here, the
enharmonic equivalent of A4 flat is sounded and the act of seeing substitutes for the intimacy of the kiss. Salome's final expression of her fixation, rising to A4 sharp, brings yet another increase in intensity to this monologue as the opera draws to its close. Consistent pitch material, together with the high tessitura, contributes to the portrayal of her deteriorating psyche.

Amnesia, a third type of dysfunction, is presented in Tristan und Isolde, and again an upward rise in vocal tessitura is a metaphor for an abnormal mental state. In the first two acts of Wagner's opera, Tristan is perilously close to insanity. According to Kerman, the wound from which he suffers in Act 3 can be seen as the outward sign of a complete nervous breakdown, brought about by the collapse of his system of values (Kerman 1956: 199). The long scene of Tristan's delirium in Act 3 is in two sections, the first of which is a musical representation of amnesia (Ex. 7. 3. 01).

Ex. 7. 3. 01: Tristan und Isolde - Weh, nun wachst, Act 3

The translation of the example reads: "Alas, day's savage distress now waxes pallid and fearful for me; dazzling and deluding, its bright light wakes my brain to fraud and hallucination!". The rhythms of the music amplify the character's incoherent flow of expression. Tristan is being torn in two
directions; part of him longs for the oblivion from which he is waking, and part of him fights against his memory loss.

In the early part of the scene, his condition is revealed by various musical means: slow rhythmic motion; low dynamic levels; and short, fragmented vocal phrases where the tessitura is around the middle of the tenor's range. However, as Tristan struggles to regain his memories, the musical setting intensifies: vocal phrases lengthen and rhythmic activity becomes frenetic; the dynamic level reaches *fortissimo* with strong orchestral support. When the vocal tessitura moves to the top of the tenor's range, the tone is able to penetrate the orchestral tutti. At the same time, the combination of tessitura with other compositional elements, helps to portray Tristan's over-wrought state.

The fourth type of dysfunction is taken from Verdi's *Otello*, where loss of rational control is shown by unconnected ravings and a rise in the tessitura of the tenor voice. Clement describes Otello as "like a crazy compass", simultaneously wanting and rejecting his wife (Clement 1989: 124). When he curses Desdemona in the finale of the third act, the intensity of the pitch (A3 sharp) helps to convey the final interior breakdown, externalised in a fit which renders him unconscious. Leading up to this moment, we see the breakdown of Otello's position of respect in the community. His aria, "Ma, o pianto, o duol" encapsulates the process of disintegration.

Each of the three sections of the aria is musically unsettled in some way. The opening section of "Ma, o pianto, o duol!" moves in broken, irregular phrases (figure P). The next section of the aria is built on a whole tone scale, harmonised by a series of secondary dominant chords which are not resolved in traditional fashion (6 bars before Q). In these two sections,
Otello's unstable state of mind is revealed in dissonances, irregular phraseology and tonal ambiguity. In the final section, tessitura is the additional destabilising element (Ex. 7. 4. 01). The text here reads: "Ah damnation! Let her first confess, then die. Proof? Heaven! Joy!". The tessitura of the whole aria is rather high but, significantly, there is a development of intensity in the aria through the element of tessitura. The aria moves from the opening phrases in which the high tones are occasional towards the final section which includes prolonged high-note singing.

Ex. 7. 4. 01: Otello - Ah! Dannazione!

 Indeed, in all the arias which musically convey instability of mind, a change to prolonged high note-note singing is a feature, as it contributes to the intensity of the emotions expressed. The characters in the four operas discussed suffer from a variety of abnormal mental states which include loss of reason, obsessive desire and amnesia. In an aria whose tessitura is medium high, such as Otello's "Ma, o pianto, o duol", high notes have a
more thrilling quality and dramatic sound. High notes that plunge to low
tones also contribute to the meaning of texts where the mood swings wildly,
from extremes of triumph to despair. This is true of Salome's monologue
"Ah! Du wolltest" where descending leaps such as those from A₄ to G₃ (one
bar before 318) and from G₄-flat to E₃-flat (327) typify the tension of the vocal
line.

In terms of operatic structure, high tessitura often signals a climactic
moment in the portrayal of the character. Lucia leaves behind an unwanted
reality through the delusions she suffers after killing Arturo. Salome
converses with the head of Jochanaan after she has commanded his death.
Otello chooses to believe an illusion about his wife, abdicating control of his
reason. In each scene, it is high tessitura which enables the voice to express
an abnormal emotional state and to sound against full orchestra as Tristan
does when he is struggling with his loss of memory.

1.1 Inversion and Inflection See Appendix Six (B)

If high tessitura is an accepted sign of dysfunction in character, then the
presence of this sign in the aria, "I Am The Cock That Killed The King",
contributes to the creation of the character of Quito. Set for the bass voice in
Quito, almost half the pitches sit between F₂ and C₃. About a quarter of the
pitches sit in the fifth above that, most of these in performance sung in full
voice; G₃, sung falsetto, occurs on words with strong emotional
connotations: "(my) wall (against the wind)", (Ex. 7. 5. 01). The pitch
approach to these high tones is very often by large leaps: sevenths, minor
and major; ninths, minor; and even a compound minor sixth from A₁ to F₃.
The contour of the modally influenced melody, parallelling a search for
understanding perhaps, rises and then falls away unfulfilled. The return so
frequently to the pitch, A, leaves final resolution wanting.

Ex. 7. 5. 01: Quito - My words seep through my skin - my wall against the wind.

Many of the compositional details in this aria operate in similar ways to
musical expression for other dysfunctional characters, fixating, being torn in
different directions, fighting loss of identity. Harmonic slipping on "Body,
mind and soul invaded; but hear the voices" accompanies text with similar
purpose in Quito as in Lucia, moving into the alien region (Ex. 7. 5. 02).
Ex. 7. 5. 02: Quito - Severed heads - Body, mind and soul invaded.

The inverting of the sign, tessitura, is achieved through the choice of the bass voice, often associated with power and authority (Edwards and Edwards
1994: 3). Further inflection occurs as a consequence of the array of voices which musically present this character; no one voice is used consistently to portray the character of Quito. This aria is sung by the bass voice; other arias are presented by the tenor, the alto and the soprano voice, or by all in ensemble. This is the musical equivalent of the morphing image. The character of Quito shifts between different performers. They do not each present the multiple aspects of identity of a different person; they present the multiple identities of one person, scattered among the ensemble.

2. Signs of Character Presented Mythically

Cultural theoretician, Jacques Attali argued that music was a simulacrum of sacrifice, in that violence and passion are channelled through it (Attali 1985: 29). He notes the presence of this in many myths and finds that order in music simulates the social order. There are certainly various signs which composers have used to indicate that their characters have been presented in mythical ways. These include linking the story of the character with elements of ancient myths, having the character listen to and communicate with nature by magical means and investing the character with the ability to move between the natural and supernatural worlds.

2.1.1 Tamino in Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)

The first of these signs is used in Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute), where two myths contribute to the story of Tamino and where the trials through which he passes are identified with codes of Freemasonry. The Greek myth of Demeter whose daughter is stolen by the god of the Underworld is paralleled in The Magic Flute when Pamina is stolen away by Sarastro. When Tamino agrees to rescue her, he is caught up in the mythic
dimensions of the story of Orpheus, which also is handed down through Greek mythology. Having reached the Underworld and rescued his wife, Orpheus must not look back to her as he leads her out. Similarly, in the mythic treatment of Tamino, he must not speak to Pamina in the course of his life-changing experiences.

The sources of the plot of The Magic Flute go back to Abbe Jean Terrasson, whose romance Sethos, according to Edward Dent, was widely read in Masonic circles in the period of the 1780s when Schikaneder came to Mozart with his libretto (Dent 1966: 225). It seems likely that the ancient myths were as familiar to composer and librettist as were the Masonic teachings which both believed.

Typically, the mythic descent of a hero to the Underworld involves great courage in a dangerous journey. Tamino's journey takes him to a particular feature of underworld myth: the river of flaming fire. In the final scene, Tamino and Pamina have discovered the protection of the music of the magic flute its rewards of "beauty and wisdom and an eternal crown", a translation of the text below (Ex. 7. 6. 01).

Ex. 7. 6. 01: Magic Flute - Die Schönheit und Weisheit.
2. 1. 2 Siegfried in *Siegfried*

In part 2 of *Oper und Drama*, Wagner proposed his requirements for a perfect opera libretto, returning to principles which he accredited to ancient Greece, where a universe is based on human nature and embodied in myth. In myth, everything was explained in human terms. Gods, who controlled both nature and humanity, were given human shapes and attributes. In Wagner's view as expressed in *The Artwork of the Future*, human beings tried to understand the world by compressing its wonders into events that could be assimilated (Wagner [transl.] 1895: 357-60). Of all the myths which Wagner re-created in his operas, Siegfried's myth is discussed here because it is central to the whole cycle of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring*). Musicologist Eero Tarasti has put forward a comprehensive reading of the mythic hero, Siegfried. From a semiotic perspective, he explores the mythic structure of Siegfried's story and traces the use of motifs when Siegfried is shown as fairy-tale hero and as mythic hero (Tarasti 1977: 181 ff).

In the context of this study, the character of Siegfried exemplifies another sign of mythic character in his supernaturally changed ability to listen and communicate. In the third part of *The Ring*, Siegfried is revealed as someone who has been excluded from society and whose skills in communicating are undeveloped, both with the gods and with human society.

Communication with nature by magical means, culminating in the fight against the dragon, forms the essential mythical content of the second act of *Siegfried*. Approaching the lair of the dragon Fafner, Siegfried hears but does not understand the song of the Woodbird. When Siegfried kills Fafner, he inadvertently tastes the dragon's blood, which gives him understanding
of the bird's song. Its message holds three important pieces of information for Siegfried: about the magic helmet and ring in Fafner’s lair, about Mime’s plan to kill him, and finally about Brünnhilde waiting asleep on a rock for the hero who will awaken her.

At the end of the third act, Siegfried acts on the information he has heard. The horn call motif of his maturity, rings out as he and Brünnhilde are united (Ex. 7. 7. 01). The text of this moment in Act 3 Scene 3 translates as: "In the fire our blood has kindled, in the flames that glow from our glances, in our burning, ardent enchantment, I find again my boldness of heart". Siegfried’s story is heightened to mythical significance.

Ex. 7. 7. 01: Siegfried - Wie des Blutes, Act 3 Scene 3.

Other readings of the Siegfried myth in The Ring are from Brünnhilde's perspective. When Wotan punishes Brünnhilde by removing her godly nature and leaving her to be discovered by a hero, he temporarily removes what Abbate calls Brünnhilde’s 'prophetic voice and listening ear' (Abbate 1991: 214). Abbate quotes Roland Barthes' statement that listening seeks to decipher the codes of the future (Barthes in Abbate 1991: 214). By losing the power to listen to nature and the gods, Brünnhilde temporarily loses the ability to decipher what the future holds. However, as Peter Morris-Keitel
and others state, at the end of *The Ring* it is Brünnhilde, herself restored, who restores nature in returning the ring (Morris-Keitel, Larson-Thorisch and Dundzila 1994: 68).

2.1. 3 Sadko in *Sadko*

A third sign of mythic character is an ability to move between natural and supernatural worlds. In Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Sadko*, the central character does this through his music. The opera, in seven tableaus, tells of a poor minstrel who wins the love of the Sea King’s daughter. Sadko’s praise of the Sea King in the sixth tableau begins: "Terrible, broad blue sea, dark and deep, bottomless sea, who shall measure you? Transparent tower, who built you? Who is your master? Glorious terrible Sea King!" (Ex. 7. 8. 01).

*Ex. 7. 8. 01: Sadko - Sadko’s aria for the Sea King, Sixth Tableau*
Sadko's descent to the sea kingdom is accompanied by an octatonic scale, alternating tones and semitones (most frequently C-sharp, D-sharp, E F-sharp, G, A, B-flat). In Sadko, this scale signals movement between the natural and supernatural worlds, sounding in the second tableau when the Sea Princess first appears to Sadko, and then in all subsequent scenes in which the minstrel moves to and from the supernatural world. In a similar way, the first motif of The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior signals the appearance of the spirit of Fernando and consistently accompanies text of subterfuge and betrayal.

2.2 Inversion and Inflection       See Appendix Seven (B)

It is the declared aim of Bright and Stewart to present a story from the recent past with mythic overtones (Bright interview 1994). All of the signs for characters presented in mythic ways are to be found in The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior. As the figure of Fernando moves from the underworld into the world of the present, there are mythic suggestions that could be the foreboding presence of the boatman of the Styx, or could be the unavenged spectre of those sea legends in which the underworld cannot contain the restlessness of the sailor who died at sea. While it is true that ancient heroes are more likely to be mythic, Adorno confirms that there have always been central characters in opera treated mythically (Adorno in Levin 1994: 33).

However, with Fernando, each sign is inverted. Unlike Tamino, Siegfried and Sadko, Fernando is powerless to act himself; he can only inspire the Activist to continue the campaign. Consequently, his identity is presented in shadow. As has been discussed, the audience makes inferences about his character from the way other characters describe themselves. Even the trials of the mythic hero are inflected here. In a sense, the false heroes, the DGSE
agents, undergo the trials that, in other contexts, would be those of the real hero.

Another sign of the mythic hero is his supernaturally changed ability to communicate. This is inverted with Fernando: he cannot communicate with the other protagonists; he can only communicate directly to the audience. This sign is further inflected. The sign of communication is everywhere in the opera: false communication is given in the interrogations, in the campaign sabotage of the infiltrating agent in the Greenpeace movement and in the announcements of the Official. In fact, the moments when the characters of this opera really communicate with each other are rare.

The ability to move between the natural and supernatural worlds, another sign of the mythic hero, is also present. Fernando moves from the underworld into the world of the present and to all the locations of the participants in the story. The sign is inverted because he is no longer at ease with those participants. It is further inflected by the movement across time and by the interweaving of temporal dimensions.

3. The question of agency in Fernando and Quito.

In the view of Stuart Hall, identity is increasingly fragmented across discourses which may be antagonistic to each other (Hall 1996: 4). What Bright and Wesley-Smith have done is to create characters in which fragmentation of one person's identity is externalised. However, it is not only the case that the attributes of the central figure emerge through the assembled characters of the stories. Both composers, in their incorporation of political material, raise the question of agency, of the will for action and
change; and they do so through the fragmentation of the identity of the central figure. The agency they want to address is that of the audience and to effect that, the characters combine in one fragmented identity to carry the political message.

Bright and Stewart have confirmed that purpose in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*:

The characters are enmeshed. The Activist and the Official are linked by the betrayal that has caused Fernando's death. There is also the notion of generational transference at work in the sense that, if a grandparent has been killed by somebody, then descendants may carry clan-like animosities that last for generations. Fernando's death and the testimony of the Tahitian woman carry into the future like this. The effect should be that even if the audience know everything there is to know about the Warrior and the bombing, they can not just sit there and be untouched. There has to be a point of being touched by the reality (Bright and Stewart Interview 1994).

As Fernando in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* is outside the re-enactment of the drama in which he once took part, so he has a different relationship with the audience from the other participants in the event. He gathers the opposing forces in the drama to confront each other in the present reality: "Two worlds confront the present" (Sc. 1). Addressing the audience, he places his death in context of all who died as a result of contamination from nuclear testing programs: "In my death are the many deaths, disappearances, contaminations covered up - history revised" (Sc. 2). Directing the mood of the audience response, he comments on the French reading of the bombing: "Revise, repeat, rewrite the past; murderers soon made heroes" (Sc. 1) and summons the places and people, as if calling them to appear in court: "Mururoa, place of great secrets, face your victim the present" (Sc. 1).
The libretto states that the spirit of Fernando is "unseen by all other performers throughout the opera" and "constantly unsuccessful in influencing events" (1994: 1). Nevertheless, it is Fernando who controls the construction of the narrative and composer and librettist make sure that the audience know that. By invoking past and future events simultaneously, Fernando has made it possible for the audience to experience the musical vortex into which the characters are drawn and the cracked surface of the French story: "The vortex opens, the surface implodes" (Sc. 6).

In their program note for the 1994 production of Quito, the Wesley-Smiths express their hope for change and acknowledge the heroic efforts of all who have worked behind the scenes for mental health; and all who have kept the East Timor issue alive: people who have demonstrated, written letters, books and articles, collected petitions, published newsletters, taken photographs, attended conferences, out of concern for a people who, in their opinion, have been shockingly treated. Their efforts in the fight against injustice will become at last a river of change both for schizophrenics and East Timor. That is our hope. And that is the hope embedded in Quito (Program note 1994).

Quito's relationship with the audience is formed by several factors. The stage direction for the first scene in the libretto, for the cast to usher audience members to their seats, sets a pattern for the performers' physical invasion of the audience space. Moreover, while all the characters play Quito at different times, the use of the child-sized puppet provides a unifying focus. Its size and inability to move (without the puppeteers) are metaphors both of the helplessness of a person suffering with schizophrenia and of a country suffering invasion. When the puppet is dismembered, that powerful image seeks a reaction from the audience and conveys a political
message. Once again, as with the first three operas discussed in Chapter Two, there is no question of neutrality from composer and librettist.

1 For example, Geoffrey Edwards and Ryan Edwards state that in the bel canto period, baritone characters are habitually older men weighted with "implacable authority, political power, social status or religious prerogative" (Edwards and Edwards 1994: 3).

2 Catherine Clement (1988), Carolyn Abbate (1991) and Peter Morris Keitel, Alexa Larson-Thorisch and Audrius Dundzila (1994) have contributed to the breadth of readings which reinterpret the role of Brünnhilde in The Ring.

3 Lance Strate has studied the relationship between media environments and conceptions of the hero, in Heroes and Humans. His premise is that cultural conceptions of a hero are related to the type of media environment which develops in any period of history. For instance, the heroes of eighth century Greece were more likely to be mythic heroes because the media environment was an oral one, characterised by a limited capacity to store information (Strate 1991: 532). Since oral cultures rely on society's collective memory, the acts heroes perform and the scenes they inhabit must be memorable. As a consequence, they tend to have great courage, leadership and superhuman strength. Their acts tend to be dramatic so that they will be remembered (Strate 1991: 533).
Chapter Eight: Conclusions - Operatic Dimensions in Australia in the 1990s

This thesis set out to discover operatic dimensions reconfigured in Australian contexts by focusing on a central character in a number of operas. The seven operas chosen - Black River, The Bride of Fortune, Lindy, Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, The Eighth Wonder, Quito and The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior - are different from each other in style and scope. It is the fact that all address stories of Australian experience that links them. They have also been grouped in this thesis in ways which have allowed exploration of specific aspects of identity. The first group of operas reflects upon issues that affect the identity of women, the second group presents certain approaches to cultural identity and the third group responds to political situations.

In drawing together the shifts in dimensions that these operas display, a common thread emerges. Authenticity is an issue for all of the composers and librettists in this study. It may be that concern with authenticity draws attention to issues on which the story sheds light, as is the situation with Black River and Lindy. Concern with authenticity may emerge in the careful recreation of the sound of a place or a period of time. Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, The Eighth Wonder and The Bride of Fortune exemplify this approach. In recounting experiences from another culture a different aspect of authenticity arises, as is seen in The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior (in the testimony of the woman from the Pacific Islands) and Quito (in the Timorese story). Both pairs of composers and librettists do not speak for characters who represent different cultures but, in those moments, report the events, such as the contamination and the murders.
This concern with authenticity, then, manifests itself in the operas in this study in many ways. One common way is through the central character. The composers and librettists do not take a neutral position in presenting the issues. Rather, their commitment to authenticity in their reflection on events rests on a central character. The central character has established integrity, in the sense that the story is 'theirs'. They may be unreliable in 'their' construction of the story, but they are not inconsistent in its telling.

As discussed in Chapter One, the presentation of contemporary situations and events is one of the ways that opera is reinventing itself at the end of the twentieth century. The notion of authenticity is critical to such presentation. As Ruth Solie says:

> It matters to whom they [cultural works of art] belong, and who is empowered to speak about them. It matters about whom they speak, and what they say (Solie 1993: 20).

This concern with authenticity has tensions with poststructuralist strategies that see the meaning-connection between signifier and signified as unstable and fluidly re-attaching in new combinations (Harvey 1990: 49). These combinations are not only created by a composer and a librettist; they are 'created' by a reader or a member of an audience. There is no one 'reality'. However, the composers and librettists in this study want to convey 'truth' in their reflection on events; they may represent different readings of events but they do not give them equal value.

The question arises: if texts, in this case both music and words, can convey a different meaning from the intentions of their creators, where does that leave the issue of authenticity? Carolyn Abbate argues that the source of authenticity lies with performers: "with their capacity to speak what they
have not literally created, the performers, by decentering authority, lend music its uncanny resonance" (Abbate in Solie 1993: 236n). However, while performers may lend resonance, the premise of this thesis has been that characters, on whom the story-telling role is centralised, are signifiers of the composers' and librettists' reflections on contemporary events and conditions. While the readings of the central characters in this thesis are the writer's interpretations, they are validated by the composers and librettists of the study and by the music of the operas themselves.

Authenticity of voice is linked to cultural identity by literary theorist Linda Hutcheon when she uses the term "authentic voice of a people" (Hutcheon in Dellamora and Fischlin 1997: 235). Moreover, this study has argued that there are demonstrable authenticities of voice which are indigenous, which refer to women, and which are related to all axes of identification from religious belief to social protest. The voice of Miriam in Black River is established by a slow tempo emphasising her stillness, by a distinctive motif emerging from a harmonic source in the Prelude and by the emotion and commitment in the disclosure of Scene 8. The communication by letter reveals the most direct aspects of Grazia in The Bride of Fortune and the evidence of Lindy in Lindy - The Trial Scene exposes the raw nerves of the distressed mother and her way of using the separateness of her status in the court as a retreat from the pressure of questions when she recalls her child.

The way in which Olive clings to the past in Summer of the Seventeenth Doll is revealed by motifs with a referential function and by ensemble textures such as the Act 2 passacaglia which confines her vocal part within a particular chord progression and tonality. In The Eighth Wonder, Alex's performing energy is conveyed by the curving decorative lines which extend the melodic ideas with which the building is described. In quite
specific ways, these voices frame a particular kind of cultural identity in Australia, a cultural identity which has already changed. The operas in which these characters appear are nostalgic.

In a quite different sense, the voice of Quito in *Quito* is revealed by the use of the motif from the motet "Timor et Tremor", conveying Quito's spiritual identity and by excerpts of the actual Quito's music; and his schizophrenia is demonstrated by the shifts between the voices of members of the ensemble of singers. In *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, the Narrator Fernando summons the participants in the events but only has power for his story to be heard by virtue of those other protagonists.

**Authenticity - The Narrative Voice of the Central Character**

It is argued here that the composers and librettists in this study have constructed characters which accord with theories of multiple identities to demonstrate their authenticity. For example, a female character such as Grazia flows from one specific identity to another: sister, wife, migrant, factory worker, victim of a siege. Readings in this thesis are based on the correlation of a musical signifier and a signified identity of the central character. In this way, each of these operas presents what Abbate calls a performed narrative, removing narrators of uncertain reliability in order to ensure belief in the story (Abbate 1991: 160). They provide an audience with an opportunity to read events presented in multi-layered texts.

Each of the seven operas in this study is committed to such belief. *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* addresses this by presenting familiar traits of character, while *The Eighth Wonder* interweaves characters based upon real and imagined people. Even more significantly, four of the seven operas in
this study, namely *The Bride of Fortune*, *Lindy*, *Quito* and *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, use the device of commencing the story at the end, and enacting the events leading there. *Black River* also incorporates flashbacks to the past, so vividly conveyed by music and text that they function, not as reports but as re-lived moments, through the medium of the central character. These are operas that are concerned to re-present and reflect upon authenticity.

In *The Bride of Fortune*, composer and librettist set out to bring a piece of recent Australian history to the operatic stage. Grazia’s story is an amalgam of the experiences of many women who were proxy brides from Italy in the 1950s. Recreating the musical traditions of those women, as well as their embodiment of the meeting of cultures in their letter writing, is essential to this opera. The use of court transcripts in *Lindy* and the short span of time from when this story occurred necessitate negotiations with the living participants. Such negotiations, ongoing at the time of writing, are outside the frame of reference of this thesis. Nevertheless, they also serve to indicate concerns with re-presenting authenticity.

These seven operas do more than redefine events based on actual occurrences. They offer a way of seeing an otherwise hidden dimension of 'reality'. *Quito*, *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* and *Black River* are similarly concerned with accuracy of account in the presentation of people and events of the recent past. These operas establish aspects of the identity of the central characters by including tapes of music and speeches (as in *Quito*), identifying timbres (the log drums in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*) and vocal sound patterns (the opening words of Miriam in *Black River*).
The Central Character and the Discourse

The themes of the seven operas, such as justice issues and alienation, are not new to the operatic repertoire. However, the central characters in these operas come from groups in society which are minorities. The characters come from women accused of crime, from migrants, from indigenous peoples, from women artists, from environmental protest groups. They are not dominant groups in society. Moreover, the operas in this study do more than retranslate universal themes. The frame of each opera is wider than events alone and has more depth. *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior* goes beyond the events of a bombing and its subsequent investigation. Similarly, the dual narrative in *Quito* records more than the relationships of the deaths of Quito and of many oppressed Timorese people. Revealing the complexity of the socio-political issues, the composers and librettists of these operas seek to move an audience to make a response.

Continuing this idea of the wide frame, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Eighth Wonder* are not only about one lay-off season, or the connection of a singer and one extraordinary building, but are also nostalgic reflections on cultural images of particular periods in Australia. *Lindy*, too, raises issues of justice that extend beyond the courtroom. *The Bride of Fortune* brings a chapter of Australian history to light from a woman's perspective and *Black River*, in telling the story of the death of Miriam's son, draws attention to crucial issues in the process of reconciliation with Australia's indigenous people.

Discussions of these operas have produced connections with operas established in the tradition. While exploring the contemporary works, several chapters have drawn attention to operas which have investigated
issues of alienation such as Peter Grimes, of mental dysfunction such as Lucia Di Lammermoor, Salome, Tristan und Isolde and Otello, and of the mythical treatment of characters such as Die Zauberflöte, Siegfried and Sadko. There have also been similar uses of musical forms such as the 'set piece' in Don Carlos, and similar plot situations, such as the letter scene of Eugene Onegin and the scene of accusation in Maria Stuarda. In these ways, the seven operas in this study connect with operatic tradition. However, they re-invent it in stories of local and topical experience.

Some of the events the operas in this study describe happened as recently as 1980 (the disappearance of Azaria Chamberlain at Uluru - Ayers Rock - with the inquests, trials and verdicts continuing until 1995), 1985 (the bomb attack on the Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour), and 1990 (the death of Francisco Pires known as Quito). Lindenberger describes opera as eclectically "appropriating forms of discourse from virtually all other arts to articulate its meanings" (Lindenberger 1984: 75). The works in this study demonstrate that opera also appropriates characters from the recent past; it plunders sources such as media reports and creates a style of personal epic.

Performed Narratives: Survival Stories

Three of the operas (Black River, The Bride of Fortune and Lindy) articulate survival stories from the perspective of women from minority groups. Of these three operas, Black River brings Australian indigenous story through the central character of Miriam to the operatic stage. As has already been noted in Chapter Three, these operas differ from nineteenth century works in the ways in which women figure as central characters. It could be argued that the final scene of Black River does not guarantee Miriam's survival but leaves it open-ended. However, the visual gesture of the arms
outstretched to Miriam and the aural gesture of the voices which call her are powerful symbols of hope and renewal. The moment of stasis in the music calls attention to the gesture from all the characters in the interest of Miriam's survival.

In *The Bride of Fortune*, Grazia's re-construction of her family group, after her husband's death, is the key factor in her survival. In her final aria, she is determined not only to endure, but also to create a better life for her child than the life she had known. It is unusual for a journey into a new culture to be told from a woman's perspective. Grazia is a character formed by a blend of cultures. In a similar way, the final scenes of *Lindy* are filled with a spirit of life-giving energy when she affirms "I am not destroyed. I have survived. My family has survived" and "the child is one with the country's wildness".

**Stylised Cultural Images**

*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *The Eighth Wonder* present stylised references to places and cultural images. Historian, Richard Nile writes about Australia seeing itself as "always arriving but ... not yet quite arrived... [as] a community of perpetual provisionality... [and] our provisional condition is a charm against delusions of grandeur" (Nile 1994: 21). The perception of this comment has resonance with the pre-eminence accorded to youth through the central characters in these two works.

In *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, Olive resists impulses to change. It is the passing of her youth that she struggles against when she reflects:

Give me back the year that's passed, and all the other years before, relived again, unchanged the way they were. I want the stroke of
midnight stopped, the clocks turned back; I want my summers past, again (Act 3 Sc. 1).

Emma recognises this and puts it simply for them all: "You and Barney and Olive - you're getting old" (Act 3 Sc. 4). The notion of aging becomes a metaphor of changing time and changing social fabric. However, the diversity in Australian collective consciousness has moved beyond images from the 1950s. This single fact establishes Mills' opera as reflecting on a cultural identity which has already changed.

In *The Eighth Wonder*, the parallel stories - of the creation of the Sydney Opera House, and of the young singer Alex who becomes an opera diva - are used as symbols of Australian culture by the composer and librettist. Consequently these stylised images are used to reconstruct social memory and cultural identity in a particular way. Historian Raymond Williams argued that "the distinction of a culture in common is that the selection is freely and commonly made and remade" (Williams 1963: 322). However the view of culture in *The Eighth Wonder* sees 'reality' in terms of cause-and-effect when it might be seen as ambiguous, and the interaction of storylines as sequential when they might be seen as inter-dependent.

**Fragmentation of Voice and Identity**

Two of the operas in this study fragment the story-telling character, so that it is presented by the ensemble of vocal performers. In *Quito*, this fragmentation is used as one of the ways to convey the schizophrenic sufferings of Quito. This change from previous modes of presentation of a character's identity elicits the analogy of the relationship of a sub-culture with a dominant culture. The positive side of fragmenting is visible in mosaic, and the presentation of one character by an ensemble can also be
read as a visual metaphor of social diversity, just as the dialogue, taped speeches, vocalise, scat, solo song and ensemble vocal harmony are a musical metaphor of that diversity.

By contrast, in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, the character of Fernando, who summons up the participants in the event which claimed him as victim, is a spectre, unable to project his own reading of what happened and defined totally by the other participants of the story in their own readings. There is no single perspective of this character which prevails. The story breaks the linear notions of time, just as the character of Fernando does.

**The Voices of the Composer**

In this study, operatic narrative is sometimes carried by music alone, transcending verbal communication. At such a moment a composer can connect characters musically. In the final scene of *Black River*, Schultz links the Judge and Miriam by supporting their vocal lines with the same ground bass. In a slightly different way, the fire of Olive’s passion, the fire of Barney’s account of the fight, and the fire of the destruction of Roo and Olive’s relationship are musically linked by Mills in the use of related harmonies in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*.

At other times, music narrates when a composer consciously refers to musical influences. In the second act aria for Alex in *The Eighth Wonder*, John incorporates the styles of Malcolm Williamson and Peter Sculthorpe, placing the aria musically in a specific era. In the Trial Scene of *Lindy*, Henderson comments on the deference with which expert witness was treated, by incorporating music from the Disney cartoon film, "Bambi".
Martin Wesley-Smith, in *Quito*, incorporates the lament of Orlando di Lasso, presenting it as a frame for the suffering expressed in the dual narratives of invasion and schizophrenia.

For two operas in this study, moments of musical narration occur when the composer gives voice to an ironic response to a situation. In Grazia's promise about being a good wife (Act 1 Sc. 6 and Act 3 Sc. 3) in *The Bride of Fortune*, Whitehead consciously connects the text with harmonies previously associated with a sceptical attitude. The stuttering music written for the Official, in *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*, reflects Bright's enjoyment of the discomfort of the embarrassed politician. All seven operas include moments where the composer's voice is evident.

This study has demonstrated that the seven operas in Australia have shifted the emphasis on authenticity in their reflections on stories of Australian experience. It is not possible to predict whether such shifts in operatic dimensions may continue. It is certainly evident that the shift is integrally connected to the 'reality' of the stories which have inspired the operas and that central characters such as these reflect opera's power to engage audiences with recent events.

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1 See Chapter One, 14. It is also relevant to consider the opera *Mario and the Magician* (1992) by Canadian composer Harry Somers with libretto by Rod Anderson. This is explored in the engaging chapter by Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon (in Dellamora and Fischlin 1997: 235 ff).
Appendix One (A) and (B)

Andrew Schultz

*Black River* Scene 8
Notes made by Andrew Schultz in 1988 and Discussions 1993-97

Notes for Musical Synopsis 1988

There will be interlinked set pieces with recurrent musical-dramatic themes: rain, isolation in an alien environment, fear, conflict of personalities. A major preoccupation in the music is with the way sounds die and what can emerge from them. This notion of resonance, which is essentially a study in time is placed deliberately at odds with the dramatic realities of confinement, hostility and escape. The conflict will be expressed musically. For example, the Prelude's slowness contrasts with the aggression of the opening of Scene 1. Resonance is also explored through the connotations of the cell: its haunted past, its paradoxical role as a refuge.

Each character will carry their own musical qualities: a tempo, actual notes, preferred intervals or melodic shapes. For instance, Miriam's music will be mostly slow, with brief moments of real speed. Most of Miriam's music will grow out of the sustained brass music of the Prelude. Her music is concerned with resonance, the passing of time and time past. As seen in the opening of Scene 1, her physical movements are ritualised and closely linked to a form of dance. In a continuous form, the scenes connect:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prelude</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td>resonance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 1</td>
<td>3-4 minutes</td>
<td>rain calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 2</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td>rain music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 3</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 4</td>
<td>6 minutes</td>
<td>Miriam solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td>Reg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 6</td>
<td>6 minutes</td>
<td>inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 7</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 8</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>time - resonance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 9</td>
<td>9 minutes</td>
<td>fear - escape - resonance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussions 1993-97

Referring to Scenes 1-2

In Scene 1, the accompaniment emerges from quiet figures below. The vocal line happens against rain calls and alternated instrumental figures in the gaps. The voice is an imitation of sounds. It's very sparse and other-worldly. The rain patterns in Scene 2 continue as background to high song. The drummed patterns give a constant hollow sound, as of rain on iron. Three chords representing the river keep going with relative pitches in patterns which follow drumming contour.

Referring to Scenes 7-9

Before the start of Scene 8, the climax collapses. In an instrumental passage, the climax rebuilds with high repeated notes and groundswells underneath. Miriam's disclosure in Scene 8 is like a suspended trough. There is an unexpected and unresolved element to the music. In Scene 9, the helicopter and the rain music are combined. Instrumental music, as helicopter arrives, contains pulsing sounds. In the acceleration of tempo, there is a feeling of passing over a bridge, looking through railings, being able to see the individual railings and then seeing the blurred vision beyond. This increases till the pulse changes and then seems to slow down. There is a recap of the Prelude (transformed). The Coda includes high repeated notes with runs to a high note, intercut with clicking and instrumental support for voice part.

Referring to characters

The Judge is a character usually able to take command; but not in this situation of the rising flood. Anna's primary concern is in reporting the
worsening situation. Miriam galvanises the scenes. As the singer portraying Miriam worked on the part, some adjustments were made to use more of the low ethereal quality of her voice. The outstretched hand of reconciliation is more important to Miriam at the end than rescue; she feels no need of rescue.

Referring to structure

There are several levels of structure in the work. The first is harmonic and relies on the use of zones of harmony, a technique I have used for some time. In this technique, pitch material is derived from a harmonic source for a given section so that in Black River a relatively small number of chordal sources provide the harmonic background throughout the work. These harmonic backgrounds can provide some passage of drone-like simplicity; or they can provide contrapuntal devices; or they can evolve into a new harmonic zone.
Appendix Two (A) and (B)

Interviews with Gillian Whitehead

_The Bride of Fortune_  Act 1 Sc. 6
Interviews with Gillian Whitehead

13. 6. 1992

A P: How early was there input from the director of The Bride of Fortune?

G W: The performance was scheduled first of all for 1989 but there were hitches in funding and it was put off for a couple of years. Initially, Louis Nowra was to direct and he had some input into the shape of the piece. In other words there was some production input and the piece was complete before John Milson became the person who finally directed the piece. It was Nowra who suggested that we establish a point by actually seeing Grazia and Vito as being in love with one another. In response, we put in the scene in the park [Act 2 Sc. 3]. So the scene in the park was a direct result of collaboration with someone who did not actually produce the piece but was involved in the early stages of production.

In August 1990, about six months before the production, there was a workshop. Merlyn Quaife [who sang Grazia] couldn’t be there but the majority of people who were in the production were there. It was a two-week workshop and Anna [Maria Dell’Oso] and I went across [to Perth from Sydney] for the second week. This was largely to see if there were musical problems for the producer and get the shape of the whole thing and understand the sound world of it.

In the workshop the conductor [David Cram] suggested cutting a short section right at the end of the second act. Vito and Grazia are in the middle of an argument and they retreat into their own worlds for a time. He thought that bit should go and I said "Wait and see it in rehearsal; then if you want to cut it, cut it." And he kept it.
The only other thing that came out of the workshop stage was that by the
time the scene of Mario's flat had been totally wrecked [in Act 3 Sc. 3], it had
to be returned to its pristine condition for the scene in the present which
ends the opera. So I wrote something to cover that. Because when we were
originally planning it, we weren't quite sure how it was going to be staged.
So there's some music in there that wasn't written originally. But these are
the only changes we made.

A P: Did stage directions change?

G W: We kept stage directions in the libretto and score fairly fluid to
accommodate production input. When Anna and I had envisaged the flat,
we'd thought of it as taking up a lot of space, whereas it was a small space [in
the Western Australian Opera Company's production]. One or two of the
reviews were critical of the appearance of the end of the piece because the
police and the stretcher overwhelmed the space. These problems at the first
performance were worked through before the next performance in the run.
John Milson was very sympathetic to the piece. One of the things about this
piece was that everyone worked so well as a team. It was a very happy
occasion. The cast enjoyed the piece and I think that had to do with both
David Cram and John Milson.

John Milson was also responsible for putting together the tapes of the
environmental sound. I suggested the sounds in the score and he made
them - the shipboard announcements, the waves and so on. Also, in that
interlude I wrote for the scene change near the end, the first time we heard
the music, it did not completely cover the sounds of the changing scene. I'd
already written in the score 'wind sound', that desolate wind sound that
you get when the child is buried [Act 3 Sc. 1], and so the two sounds were combined in the interlude before the commencement of the last scene.

**A P:** Did you always intend the crowd to be singing at the end of Act 1 Sc. 5 [the shipboard farewell scene]?

**G W:** With the end of Sc. 5, I thought initially the chorus would be on stage. The first time they sang [in the WA Opera production] they sang offstage. Then they went up a ladder and stood on a deck above the stage, holding candles. There were slides of immigrant ships and then slides of the sea. There are lots of ways that farewell could be done and that was John Milson's choice. It was basically a ship leaving; there's no one way to stage that. My idea was to see the ship from the shore, and then the duet on the ship, and then the shore recedes. So the music has three perspectives. The staging captured that. Even though you didn't have the crowd on stage. And it was interesting during that scene - I wondered why people in the audience were talking till I actually sat next to a couple, when the husband nudged his wife and said "Hey, you remember the ship we came out on - it was just like that." Those were the kinds of comments that people were making. It was really people reliving their experiences.

**A P:** Will you talk a little about the musical differentiation of the scenes in Italy, being spoken, from the scenes in Australia?

**G W:** One of the reasons for putting those Italian scenes into speech was that initially Mario [Vito's friend] and Ennio [Grazia's brother] were supposed to double one another. And, if that had happened I didn't want the same vocal quality. Ennio was singing in the scenes in Italy [in Act 1] but then in Act 2, it was as though Italy became the background. It wasn't so
much my preference as practicality, at first. We were limited in the number of singers we had - initially it was a maximum of twelve but in the end we finished up with a couple more - so we had some compromise to work out. And we thought that by doubling Ennio and Mario, we could make that distinction, song and speech. We finished up using two people but the music was already written with speech in mind and I stayed with the decision to make the Italian scenes spoken in Acts 2 and 3.

11. 7. 1992

A P: Did you find yourself drawn to particular pitches in the piece?

G W: In the piece I worked a lot with the notes D - G-sharp and B - F which are all part of the same series of minor thirds. I was consciously making references quite a lot of the time. While there are some things that you do consciously, there are always sub-conscious levels working underneath that.

A P: Does playing with numbers fascinate you?

G W: Yes. I always liked working out jigsaw puzzles when I was a kid. I've always had a mind that likes crossword puzzles. I discovered mathematics through writing music actually. The magic square canon is part of that thinking. Often as a way of starting a piece, I'll use some numbers in what I call a 'natural' way. There was a book of John Mitchell's called *A View from Atlantis*, and in it I saw the numbers and thought it would be interesting to see what would happen if I played with them. So I started doing that and it all took off from that. But I didn't use this technique except in the opening of Act 2 in this piece - I rarely do in text-driven work.
A P: In your musical vocabulary, what are you most conscious of?

G W: I'm conscious of working with twelve pitches all the time but you'll often find that there's an area where maybe I'm concentrating on, say, seven pitches. Then you'll quite possibly find that the next change is into something which uses the other five. So it's often balancing. I don't think particularly in terms of conventional tonalities. If I'm working against a pedal or something, you'll probably find that all the other eleven pitches are cycled above it. When I've worked through all twelve of them, then the chord may change. Or something like that. It's difficult to generalise. Certainly I work with twelve pitches rather than within a tonal system.

Sometimes in an opera, there are considerations which change patterns. I made one or two alterations after I'd finished the piece. Like making the tenor line a bit easier than it had been. Certain patterns can be broken by that.

As the piece goes on, it becomes more and more referential backwards. So that by the end, there's probably nothing that comes into the score that hasn't been heard before. The first time I use something, it's spontaneous. After that, it'll become referential.

A P: Was there a nod to Les Noces in the wedding scene?

G W: Yes. I wanted that sort of urgency. And also the piece at that stage needed something fairly lively. After what had gone before and what was coming after. It was the only chance to have something really fast happening for a while!
A P: Vito becomes more of a focus in Act 3 Sc. 3 and his music changes. What are the some of the things that led you to those musical choices?

G W: You become more aware of Vito as a person in the siege scene. Up to that point, he's been locked in to a certain kind of response that's almost stereotypical. Until that point, Grazia has not seen him as a person with a former life. I often make use of the equivalent of speech characteristics of people. Certain people use the same phrase over and over again. I used that a lot harmonically for Vito in the second act and early in the third. And then [in Act 3 Sc. 3] it breaks away from that. So that he has a wider harmonic frame of reference which ties up with more awareness of his character.

A P: Can you talk a little about your use of motifs?

G W: In the scene that opens the opera, I wrote a motif of a bird call. I was thinking not so much of a specific bird as of birds generally. It represents Grazia's recalling Italy and it also seemed appropriate to bring that back in the park scene [Act 2 Sc. 3]. When I was writing about the snow in the opening scene, I wrote music which was fairly descriptive of snow and then I brought that back when Grazia threw the money up in the air [in Act 3 Sc. 2]. And it returns that harmonic structure.

The opening of the opera becomes associated with Grazia. At first, the phrase is just the introduction to the piece but then you want to tie things up. In the sixth scene it returns. The aria in Act 1 Sc. 6 starts with that motif. And all the chords that work through that aria are chords we've heard before, sometimes at the same pitch, sometimes transposed or reworked. Everything as the act comes to a close was derived from previous material.
At that point and after that, I used that opening motif as material that specifically had to do with Grazia. It's structural and also referential. It refers to the character and is a way of unifying the music. I think the recycling of material in that way can reinforce connections between scenes, between people and events, states of mind.

30.7.98

A P: How much did the different aspects of Grazia's character, as sister, wife, worker, land-owner, victim of a siege come into your decisions about writing her part?

G W: As I was working [The Bride of Fortune] I was very much aware of the different aspects of Grazia's character, because writing something like this, you get to know the characters so well. So I was aware of her relationship with each of the people or the situations. It's the same as for me: I'm a composer, I'm a teacher, I'm Maori. All those things are different aspects of me but it's all part of a whole. In a similar way, this is so for Grazia. I was aware of her being all these things. I think the characterisation of the different aspects does come across in the music, but it's not something I work with consciously. I believe I think holistically.

A P: Letters are obviously very important in this opera. What did they mean to you in composing the piece?

G W: The letters are soliloquies. Grazia's expressing there what she obviously can't express to people directly. The letters are cyclic in a way because the opening and closing letters are really the same letter.
In the letter of Act 1 Sc. 6, Grazia writes from her heart about what she's feeling about love's potential. And, of course, she doesn't send the letter. It is related to the way she writes to Fiorina - in the directness of the expression. It's always in letters that Grazia expresses herself in a most open way.

A P: There's been recent research about women's roles of keeping "kinship ties" through letters, cards, the organising of family functions, the collecting of family histories. Do you see this story as resonating with that?

G W: Certainly the keeping contact with family and friends is the province of women. I think it has always been the women's job to keep family ties going. In my own family, it's the women: an aunt has done all the history on one side of the family. It seems to be the women on the Maori side, including myself, who are trying to do that. Other people too, like Fleur Adcock with whom I've worked on various things [Eleanor of Aquitaine, for one]. Her main work at the moment is tracing her family. And of course, if you're cut off from your family like Grazia was, then you use the way that is left open to you to communicate. Certainly at this time, the letter was very important. And in this opera, it's the device by which you know what she is feeling as opposed to how she is working out her relationships on a daily basis. It affords the opportunity to show Grazia more reflectively than those relationships do.

A P: The flourishes for flute [at figure S3] and violin [at two bars before U3] that separate sections of Grazia's letter in Scene 6, are they related to the rippling patterns that arrive at the end of the aria [from four bars after U3]? Because they're all arpeggiated?
G W: The flute phrase that ends the first part of the letter comes from the very beginning of the piece, when she [Grazia] is talking about the fields. So in a way it has to do with the continuation of life, "day follows night on the water". The violin phrase that separates another part of the letter comes in the first scene as well. So they are phrases that are linked [to previous ideas]. And they are arpeggiated. As the piece progresses, that arpeggiation becomes more pronounced. Like an upwelling of emotion. Well, that kind of figuration feels a very appropriate way of expressing emotion in this particular piece. When I used the arpeggiated figures later [in Act 3 Sc. 3] that was very definitely concerned with emotional expression. This scene [Act 1 Sc. 6] is pointing to the later one.

There are similar situations in the opera I'm writing at the moment. Sometimes I find myself using similar figurations as well. In the new opera [Maryann in Outrageous Fortune], a young woman falls pregnant and is abandoned by the father of the child. Again I've used arpeggiated figures almost always associated with her. I think I only do that with her. The others are expressed in different ways.

A P: Was authenticity in the music an issue for you?

G W: In the music there were certain ways in which I tried to have the sound authentic. For instance, in the opening scene of Act 2, I was thinking of sounds coming from the radio, someone practising piano nearby and the sounds coming in the open window, while Vito waited in the flat, preparing to meet Grazia. I was basing that section on certain intervals, and this part was on a diminished seventh chord. And I just used snatches of melody based on a diminished seventh chord: one was a Scott Joplin piece; the other bit was from the Hammerklavier. I was envisaging open windows
because of the hot day. You know you sometimes hear people's radios and
snatches of this and that? I had actually always envisaged there'd be a big
radio on the stage. That same music is recycled when Vito and Grazia are
together after the gambling scene. It's the same music which again suggests
the window open and the sounds drifting in, but the second time it's
stretched because of the dialogue superimposed on it.

A P: There are various social contexts explored in chorus or ensemble
music: the village women, the relatives at the wedding, the immigrants on
the ship, the factory workers, the gamblers. Did you talk about that kind of
communal sound with Anna Maria Dell 'Oso before starting the piece? And
there are comparatively few places in the score where two characters sing
together. Would you talk about your composition choices regarding
ensembles and duets?

G W: I said to Anna [Maria Dell 'Oso] that I wanted quite a lot of ensemble
work. Because an awful lot of contemporary opera doesn't have any
ensemble work. And this is something I want to write. So there's quite a lot
of chorus work [in The Bride of Fortune] but in order to do this you need
from the librettist the kind of words that you can express simultaneously. I
would like to find a way of writing more duets. In this text, the words have
to be heard and the continuity of thought is important. If people reflected
together in this piece, it would be much too long. So, two people don't
reflect together much in this piece. That's an area I would really like to
explore more in opera.
Scene VI

Part said in the moonlight. ...alien... on the deck, reading.

[Music notation]
Oreatly, my Unknown, you are the spirit who calls. May your ray burn free on my flesh.
willingly, I am marked by you. I am the bird who can never look backward, but must fly straight into the
As I whisper your name, my Un-Known, who are you? So close to my flesh, yet more
Distant from the earth's red rim
I have felt your breath in the air as I fly, as I fly to

words you: I have seen your eyes in the light of the waves
Words in the breeze all over you
Known, the cattle pour out in the fields.

In the cool of the evening.
you have been beside me

Over the morning hills

in the white snowfall

repeat over, a.f. a.p.
I have heard you calling. My unknown. I will

love you a good wife, better than any fragile beauty against wild waves, though the cold light of
Over the spinning wheel of the earth

I fly to you, I fly to you

Expect these pitches over, each instrument independently beginning with sparse attacks, increasing in frequency.
Figures scale, reading - reading fact, each independent
"Someone throws the letter into the waves."
Appendix Three

Reports from the National Festival of
Australian Theatre 1994 -

*Lindy* The Trial Scene: Presented as a Work-in-progress
In 1994 the National Festival of Australian Theatre included two works-in-progress that had been commissioned by The Australian Opera. At the launch, Festival Director Robyn Archer celebrated the nature of the two works:

[W]hy shouldn't Australia provide epic opera themes? In fact it has... [and she named the operas, *Lindy* and *The Eighth Wonder*]. The works-in-progress [provide] an evening with librettists and composers and four prime artists who are trying to capture the epic nature in Australian life. The works were commissioned by the Australian Opera (who are) serious about commissioning work by Australian artists" (Archer 1994: 5).

Co-librettist of *Lindy* Judith Rodriguez recalled in 1997 that "a paying audience saw the work-in-progress... [and that] people were eager to know when the work would be staged" (Rodriguez 1997: 16).

Arts Editor Macklin commented that people who came to see *Lindy* at the Canberra Theatre Centre would also have the opportunity to view a display from the National Museum of Australia called *Lindy's Story*:

The main reason for [the display] is to provide an authentic touch, a confrontation with reality, as Festival patrons gather for The Australian Opera's work-in-progress *Lindy*... Museum spokeswoman Cinden Lester said, "The items [which have come to us] from Lindy [Chamberlain] are part of our wider collecting project related to the Chamberlain case, including ... the piece of car dashboard that was in evidence - with stains that were claimed to be blood, but turned out to be sound deadener." (Macklin 1994: 3).
Musicologist Covell wrote that:

At first glance the two works [in progress] might seem to be contributing to a new era of opera as photo-journalism, verismo carried to the extent of sharing territory with newspapers, radio news and television. But these subjects have already attained the mythic status for which opera seems the inevitable final medium... [Lindy ] on the evidence of the two short scenes presented... seems to [include] echoes of Brecht-Weill and quick-change cabaret or commedia dell'arte. The ensembles, [demonstrating the] crass taunting and unthinking clumsiness on the part of press and police, have a pell-mell directness... [while] Lindy's words are allowed time to register as the statement of a solitary human being in extremis. (Covell 1994:16).

Moya Henderson also reflected on the ideas to be assimilated from The Australian Opera's 1994 workshop on Lindy. This preceded the Festival in Canberra and involved a music panel and a literary panel. She stated:

[Novelist] David Malouf's idea of 'trespass' became very important to me. [Theatre Director] Robyn Nevin's obsession with the Aborigines in the opera (which has been ours as well) gave further reason to reiterate this as much as possible: their testimony has still not been acknowledged in the final coroner's inquest... It was good to have those ideas reinforced. (Henderson 1997: 17).
Appendix Four (A) and (B)

Program Note of Richard Mills

*Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*  Act 1 Sc. 1 Trio
Program Note of Richard Mills 1996 - an Excerpt

My problem in setting *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* was to find a way of distilling the important naturalistic essences - the careful plot setting, the rich character, the abundant narrative detail, into forms which explore the realities of the characters' implicit emotional states, not articulated but inferred from Lawler's dramatic text. These forms allow a composer to render the joys and sorrows of the inarticulate hearts of these characters in music. The dramatic process is perfectly designed and shows the disintegration of the world of seventeen summers which is plotted like a master chess-game with an economy of purpose that recalls Greek tragedy.

As is the way with opera, the composer's problems generally become the librettist's problems and the craft and inspiration of Peter Goldsworthy are demonstrated in such achievements as Emma's first monologue, Olive's Act 1 aria and the New Year's Eve quartet... The music for *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* is driven by processes - both harmonic and melodic - which form a language to tell the story and express the feelings of the characters. This language has its roots in the chord changes of popular songs of the '30s, '40s and '50s, the music of Berg, Weil, Korngold, Richard Strauss, Broadway musicals and the great composers of Hollywood as well as in some procedures that could be called Wagnerian.

The opera is tinged with nostalgia for the '50s - my childhood years - my memories of my parents and their friends in their younger years and the voice of Emma as an echo of my grandmother and my mother. It is nostalgic for what we now perceive as a simpler Australia, more innocent perhaps.
Appendix Five (A) and (B)

Interview with Alan John

*The Eighth Wonder*  Act 2 Sc. 1 Aria
Interview Alan John 1. 8. 98

A P: What sort of changes would be made to *The Eighth Wonder* in a second season?

A J: It's not confirmed but it looks like Opera Australia will revive the piece for 2000. I know Neil [Armfield] had second thoughts about the staging of the Aztec scenes. He basically inherited a lot of the production from Jim Sharman and there were certain things he could change and other things that were too well developed to alter. Towards the end of the run, Neil had a flash of a different way of staging the Aztec scenes. I know he wanted to make a few changes.

Whether I'll get a chance to revise the score I'm not sure. There are some orchestrations I wouldn't mind having a second go at. Just the experience of what worked in that pit and what didn't. A lot of the orchestral problems were well and truly resolved by the end of the run. The orchestra did a remarkable job really. We were into production week and some scenes had only been played through once.

Personally I really liked writing for David Hobson. If the Architect is sung by someone else, the part will need to be revised because he's got an effortless kind of stratospheric top. It's certainly light but that very pure tone was what I had in mind for the Architect. The ideal would be that pure tone in a voice that can penetrate the choral texture, reinforced with brass.

A P: Alex's character seems to make the story of the Opera House tangible for an audience.
A J: That was the idea, for sure. She humanises the story. Way back at that stage when the libretto was just a synopsis, Dennis [Watkins] and I were adamant that, while there was something that appealed to us about blokes in suits singing opera, the story could get terribly bogged down in male politics. For musical reasons, it needed a soprano. Then Alex's character grew in the course of the conception of the opera. But I think it was always intended that the two lead roles be of equal weight. And in fact, there's an interesting arc between them. At her lowest ebb, the Architect is at his peak and it looks as though everything is going his way. And the reverse happens.

So at the end her singing in some way transcends the limitations of the building and in some sense completes his vision. I feel I contributed quite a lot in humanising Alex, and this is partly because during the writing my wife had our second child. So there was no shortage of gritty life stuff while I was writing it! I think it was from the barbecue scene [Act 1 Sc. 7], the first domestic scene with Alex and her parents, that I started to provide input to the libretto. I wanted the libretto to reflect the way that people, more often than not, look after women in the late stages of pregnancy and I started in the duet in that scene to take the libretto apart and write some of my own words.

And the scene where the Architect and Alex meet is substantially my work on the libretto. Which was fine with Dennis. He had several versions of it but the music and the words seemed to have to come together at that point. I always feel that Alex is the character I most associate with. She is very much a symbol, I know.
A P: Before Alex appears in Sc. 3, there are forerunners of her and she completes them.

A J: Yes. And she is the nation, the young nation with so much to offer. Needing a place where her gifts can be shared.

That first aria [in Act 1 Sc. 4] when she has her mini-epiphany, when she sees the model of the Opera House, is relatively small scale and a little bit fragile and naive. By the end of the opera, she is an absolutely commanding presence on the stage. And she is taking on the music from the scene of the Architect's epiphany, which is grandiose and universal, as opposed to the smaller scale of Alex in Act 1. The Architect is no longer there, and she takes his lines and soars beyond them. She's a vulnerable person but a woman of great determination. And very much struggling with those things that women struggled with in the 1960s. And especially talented women. And talented singers specifically.

When we first presented the workshop, people would come up to Dennis to say: "so this is based on Sutherland". Everyone assumed the singing teacher was based on Madame Marianne Mathy. And in fact Dennis didn't even know that teacher. It was just serendipitous really. There are probably a lot of actual singers embodied in Alex.

A P: So it's more a question of resonating with things that have happened rather than representing something authentic about one person.

A J: Yes. And also everything goes back metaphorically to the Earth and Sky - pragmatism versus inspiration - problem. The synopsis was quite complete and powerful at an early stage but there was a big hole in the middle of Act 2
where the Architect and Alex meet. What would they sing about together? What was the point of connection between them? Dennis suggested several possibilities. One was to do with "struggling with doubts". Another was a sailing image: "Against the wind, oceans can be crossed, new worlds discovered if we trust ourselves... Part of a mystery, deep as the ocean, old as the earth ... spirits dreaming of another time". I felt that these ideas still didn't get to grips with what it was really about. I felt it was about giftedness and so I ended up writing a lot of this part of the libretto. Giftedness knows no social boundaries. With gifted singers, it can be a kind of miracle that they emerge. Families might have to scrape to support the development of the talent. But there's something there that must shine through.

In the rare interviews with Utzon that I'd seen, I was struck by his generosity and a serene humility. He might still have been difficult to work with and incredibly demanding. But clearly, a man with immense gifts. And he constantly talked about the Opera House as a gift to the city and to the nation. And a meeting place for all walks of life.

So when the Architect and Alex sing together, it's about the gifts that they were given that must be shared with the world. Alex's pain is that her gift has been stifled, thwarted. The Architect's joy is that he's demonstrating his gift through an opportunity that has come from a country that's young and unencumbered by traditional pressures. But his gifts are about to be thwarted. In Act 2 Sc. 12, when the Architect and Alex sing together, the feeling is: "what must be will be - things will turn out right". It's part of history what happens next to the Architect, so there's a dramatic irony under all that, too.
What started all that was thinking about Earth and Sky - pragmatism and inspiration. For a singer, you need the Earth. You need the technique, the routine, stability, financial security. You need life experience. And yet the Earth can drag you down. In the Architect's case, while he wants to remain totally free of the world of politics, he needs that world. Our dreams are incredibly important to us and yet you can't just be a dreamer. These are decisions that are crucial to an artist.

A P: Did you consider the problem of the 'recognised singer' being asked to sing, when writing Alex's aria in Act 2?

A J: When she's been singing everything up to there? Yes. There's a slightly playful side to the whole opera, because it's an opera about opera, an Opera House and opera singers. Lots of people have talked about the odd sensation of sitting in the Opera Theatre, hearing an opera where they're singing about the problems of the orchestra pit. All of that strange self-referential stuff. In another way, we also wanted it to be a tribute to the Australian Opera Company. And at the same time, we were trying to follow Jim Sharman's advice to beware of the dangers of an opera full of in-jokes. While an element of satire was very much present in the libretto, it always had a universal resonance.

Part of the playfulness emerged in the traditions used: a sextet, trios and arias. All those elements were related to the self-referential quality. In the case of Alex's aria in Act 1, it's quite formal. It's a recitative and aria da capo. There's even a conscious reference to the coda from Donna Anna's big aria in Don Giovanni at the start of the recitative. So, in the expression of her dreams, she can be formal and be imagining herself and projecting herself on to the stage.
At particular moments, you are aware of her being a professional singer. In the Act 2 aria, that was resolved because it's given so much space around it. I was concentrating on it being a special moment in the opera. The opera has a lot of action in it. There's a lot to take in. The one moment of real stillness is Alex's aria in Act 2. To me, that moment should represent a sense of the timeless. The text is formal: Dennis wrote a sonnet about the harbour. Musically, what I wanted to show was that the Opera House was in tune with timeless qualities of the harbour itself. The harbour and the Opera House - to me, they stand outside the temporal.

The first half of Alex's aria is, in some ways, a parody of a Malcolm Williamson kind of occasional piece. It's looking at how such a composer in about 1963 might have written such a piece for the Queen. The second half of it is actually more like Peter Sculthorpe. It's partly because it uses Peter Sculthorpe's favourite Balinese scale. It's a very still moment, standing on its own. It's very much a recital and is scored for piano and string trio. Then the other instruments come in at the end, as the context of the scene moves from the specific to the general. The stillness of the aria is even more marked because of what's gone before it. The buzz at the start of Act 2.

We were under huge pressure to cut that. From Jim [Sharman] in the stages when we were writing it. And then from people in the opera company who thought it was too light-weight. I wanted to keep that because of Alex's aria. You couldn't just open Act 2 with that aria. It would be meaningless. The aria's stillness is only meaningful in relation to the frivolous chatter.
A P: The opening bars of the whole opera could be read as part of the same tonality but they are spelled differently for the vocal lines and for the accompaniment. Is that a conscious ambiguity?

A J: The opening bars came suddenly. I was struggling with another scene. And instead the opening bars came out. The melody is an attempt to capture the arching lines of the building over a figure which I connected with the movement of the water. It's a pictorial idea. At the end of the opera, the melody is sung by everyone and it's the representation of the completed building.

There's slightly odd harmonic spelling through the piece. Sometimes the spelling is to do with the look. The melody visually on the page should look like it's from a separate world from the accompaniment beneath it. And yet they come in and out of resolution.

Sometimes the spelling is to do with meanings I associate with keys. The piece is "in" D major - the whole opera. D major has built up a very particular significance over the last few centuries, probably stemming from its symbolism for Bach: bright, gold, sunny, trumpety. For me, D is the key of epiphany, the key of inspiration, the flash of those moments. Whenever D happens in the opera it's significant. And similarly C-sharp is significant. It's the key of serenity. It's angelic - the world of the angels. It sits under D and helps bolster it and push it up. Whereas E-flat, either major or minor, is a key that sits over the D and pushes it down, grinds it down.

A P: Does that relate to the motif that Alex sings with the text "buried alive" [Ex. 4. 2. 14]?
A J: That's right. It's moving up and then it's thwarted. That "buried alive" motif shows the strange organic process of writing a long piece. When Dennis wrote the text "buried alive" he was thinking of the scene from Aida. It's also a very apt metaphor of how Alex feels at that time. And the motif comes up in different guises in the opera, especially after the argument with Stephen [in Act 2 Sc. 11].

The other tonal metaphor has to do with being on steps. I wanted to suggest that Escher optical illusion of moving and yet standing still. From "ascending to the clouds" [in Act 1 Sc. 2] there's a gradual ascent through triads connected by pivoting notes. [The progression mentioned is E-flat major, G major, B major, C minor - E minor, G-sharp minor - A-flat major, C major, E major, F minor, A minor, C-sharp minor - C-sharp major.]

In the opening bars, a similar technique is applied, and that accounts for some of the spelling. To me, the pivot note progressions are about a less human, more serene but no less dynamic form of movement than the traditional 'striving and resolving' inherent in leading note progressions.

A P: Do you see your role as a composer in this opera as tied up with social memories?

A J: I've got strong memories as a child of going to visit the site and the scaffolding. In the newspapers, the letters to the Editor, both for and against. Dennis and I grew up with the building. I'll never forget climbing the stairs the first time I went when the building had opened. It had a profound influence I think. Another person who nurtured my direction as a composer is Richard Gill, who ended up conducting this work. There are all sorts of personal memories that get wrapped up in the writing. I don't know
how as a composer you can chronicle that musically. But a lot of the most exhilarating moments in the work are my expression of seeing that building for the first time. It can still thrill in that way. It's a building with a great spiritual meaning really and an uplifting effect. I wanted the music to do that.

In a sense, *The Eighth Wonder* is a social pageant. That scene [Act 2 Sc. 12] where the roof has been completed and the workers raise the Eureka flag [the flag raised at the Eureka Stockade in 1854 as a symbol of the rights of workers] had enormous resonance. That spirit of optimism was very much of 1995 [when the work premiered]. That has only taken a few years to completely deflate. For me, the character of Premier Cahill was modelled on [ex-Prime Minister Paul] Keating. The unlikely visionary. I wasn't around when Cahill was there so I imagined him in a different way. It's an amazing story. It's absolutely astounding that a building that looks like it's come from another world could have been commissioned by a politician in 1957.

And the period from then to when it opened was a period of profound cultural change for the country. The building is actually a multicultural edifice. It was designed by a Dane. His influences were Asian and Central American. Many of the people involved in the building construction were migrant workers.

* A P: Do you reflect some of those different cultures in, say, the motif that becomes associated with destruction [Act 1 Sc. 2: Ex. 4. 2. 04] - "our life on earth"?

* A J: I've always loved Latin American music. It's an amalgam of Spanish music and the native Indian music of the region. Both would seem to be
interested in hemiola. I've always loved the ambiguity of that. Things that can be simultaneously perceived in two different ways. So when I was working on that Aztec scene, the whole thing is in an ambiguous 6/4 - 3/2 meter; and within that there's 6/8 - 3/4 sub-units. It gives a kind of slightly jagged movement but a drive through it, too. That particular motif is influenced by a bit of Dallapicola's Prisoners' Songs. Some of the orchestration is reminiscent of that, too. Then it comes again in Act 2 with the Politician and the Architect; a quite deliberate reprise of all that music.

The changing meter also accommodates very natural sounding speech rhythm. I'm careful about not letting the natural rhythm of language be submerged by other dramatic considerations. I dislike word setting that is unnatural and capturing Australian speech rhythms is an obsession of mine. It's particularly difficult when you want to capture the flatness of the vocal range. There are moments in this piece where you have to get that. Alex's father is the most 'ocker' character and yet he really loves her singing and pushes for that. It's an expression of that longing for beauty which is quite universal. In the Act 1 duet with Alex, he gets a chance to soar.

A P: Where there any ways in which writing the scores for the Stephen Sewell plays prepared you for the number of scenes which move quickly in The Eighth Wonder?

A J: Those experiences were a significant but indirect influence. It goes back to Stephen Sewell's play The Blind Giant Is Dancing in 1983. Dreams In An Empty City was in 1986 and was designed as part two of a trilogy. Both were directed by Neil Armfield. They're huge sprawling plays in three acts. The first act is usually an hour long. The second and third acts about an hour and a half each. I used to think of them like huge symphonies. The first acts
are fantastically tight, the exposition. The themes that are set up in the exposition are so enormous that, in order to develop them, the structure almost topples with its own weight.

But I was incredibly excited by *Blind Giant*. I've worked on writing music a lot of plays directed by Neil Armfield [director of *The Eighth Wonder* in the end]. We actually went to school together. I had been working with the Nimrod company [in Sydney] and then was invited by Jim Sharman to be part of his Lighthouse company [in Adelaide] from 1982-3. Jim was Artistic Director and Neil Armfield was Associate Director. That's where I cut my teeth as a theatre composer. I would never have been able to write this opera without Jim's encouragement in those days.

I wrote a soundscape to *Blind Giant* and the thing it has in common with *The Eighth Wonder* is the rapid change of scenes. Neil Armfield was always conscious of the need for pace and used revolving staging in both *Blind Giant* and *The Eighth Wonder*. In those days in the early 1980s, I started forming notions of a dramaturgical function of music, using music in a similar way to a lighting designer's use of light: to burn an image of a character and to create connections that can go over quite a long night of theatre.

Music can do that through particular timbral colour or melodic motif. It can be used subliminally to work through the structure of a quite complicated play. Working on those Stephen Sewell plays helped shape that skill. Also the notion of using ostinato to push along scenes. Some scenes need to be really driven. If a still scene is coming up, the concern will be with contrast and balance. *Dreams In An Empty City* continued and extended my thinking about this.
A P: So two different kinds of thinking join in *The Eighth Wonder* with traditional forms like the sextet and your ideas of the dramaturgical-referential function of music?

A J: Yes. And my experience writing musicals is part of it, too. In 1985, I worked on a musical with Nick Enright, at Jim Sharman's instigation. It didn't see the light of day because of funding problems, but I learned a lot about writing set pieces and numbers. And scenes that progressively build from solos into trios into larger ensembles. I designed the end of the Britannia scene [Act 2 Sc. 1] in that way. Coming out of the stillness of Alex's aria, there's a growing sense of excitement for all the characters in the ensemble. For each one, something special has happened to them in that night, and then it rushes to an ecstatic end. I really like the pacing of that. From Alex's aria through to the scene in the Parliament [Act 2 Sc. 2]. It's striving for a kind of intimate connection of music and drama. I can't contemplate writing any other way - that's my function as a theatre composer.
in honour of this Royal visit, Miss Alexander-McKenzie.

will be accompanied by her husband, Mr. Stephen Mackinnon.

When English ships first sailed between the heads and skirted inside the harbour's

pen arms...
spread and bade their flanks with blue, with blue refreshing balms.

and English soldiers armed with flag and drum, set foot on land and camped beside its streams.

to toast their king with shots of Navy Rum.
build heir grill be—seb his port of dreams

Largo: (4:60=60) dolce, leggiero

The roar, though was never

held in the all. It watched a city grow, watched a city grow and

treaded time, and treaded time.
It spoke in whispers of the things it saw.

and nightly washed, washed the

She sings like an angel.

Music defies time.
and now each night as lights reflected glisten, the harbour wakes,

but need its time keepers. Even beauty must sometimes grasp the grubby

the harbour wakes to watch its city dream, to watch its city

dream.

Guests hurry to join final party on the other deck.
Appendix Six (A) and (B)

Interview with Martin Wesley-Smith

Quito "I Am The Cock That Killed The King"
Interview Martin Wesley-Smith 7. 8. 98

A P: The 1994 stage directions no longer exist but can you talk about the use of the puppet in that production?

M W-S: Yes. The puppet was an original idea within Quito, which was a way of facing the problem of having a piece about a young Timorese man with actor-singers who were white middle-class adults. I think there's nothing worse than people trying to pretend that they're from another culture. It just rings very untrue. Quito was Timorese, a kid in Darwin. How do you get these singers to portray him? So the puppet was a vehicle to do that. And it was, I thought, very effective. The singers spent time being instructed how to use the puppet. After a remarkably short time you heard one of the songs and saw the puppet and it just about broke your heart. It was so moving.

In composing this piece, I was trying to understand something about a different world. Quito's world. His schizophrenia. And his popular music. Before coming to know his music, I would have described it as a sort that I don't like very much; but I grew to like it. The Song company also had their reservations about it but, in the end, one of the most impressive things for me was that they were singing his music with passion. The song that Jo [Burton] sings: "My night is falling" - such a heart-rending song. That's written by this nineteen year-old Timorese boy with his guitar. And it gave me an insight - put something simple in another context and it suddenly comes out with amazing strength and pathos.
So, through the puppet, there was a way to crystallise a lot of things. In the present [1998] production, you need the singers, the sound equipment and a projector. If you used the puppet, you'd need a good lighting person.

A P: What was not realised in the 1994 production?

M W-S: Right from the beginning, I talked about this as a piece of audio-visual music theatre. I called it this in the description of the piece so that it would be clear that the slides were very important. I've worked with images all my life. It's a fundamental part of my approach as a composer. The work was composed incorporating the necessity of some of the information being presented in the slides. In the 1994 production, the slides were pushed off to the side, which meant that people had to physically move their heads. That was difficult. I discovered that people will always look at something that's happening live over something that's happening on a screen. So they might be looking at the slides and the singers would move in directed stage business, and the audience would turn their attention to the stage. The director [John Wregg] did not want gaps in the stage action but I wanted people to be watching the images. They were important, beautiful images. Stage business took attention away from the meaning of the work at that time.

The present production came about in a series of steps. First, the ABC [National Broadcaster] suggested transforming the piece into a radio work. That was a defining moment, I think. The piece became the radio documentary music drama that is now on CD. Next, it became clear that it was possible to do live performances of that. We took that to Holland and Belgium last year [1997]. I remixed the tape, taking out the vocal parts for the live performance.
A P: Do you see this work as part of a continuum with other pieces of yours concerned with issues from East Timor?

MW-S: When I look back, everything is part of a continuum. I notice the work of other composers where each piece seems to be growing out of the last one. Maybe that's happening for me but it's harder to see because I jump around a bit in the kinds of pieces that I write. Ultimately the pieces of music that I feel are most successful are the ones where I've tried to be as honest to myself and my own way of doing things as possible.

I suppose the first piece that I really did that with was "Who Killed Cock Robin?" where I was under pressure to write choral music which was very difficult to sing, difficult to listen to, atonal - because that's what people wrote. There's a lot of that in it, but I couldn't resist going in to some songs, as I thought it was highly appropriate. And I remember thinking "I'll be savagely reviewed". And to some extent that happened. While it was a very successful piece in lots of ways, some people decided from that time on that I wasn't a serious composer.

*Boojum!* was going to be the piece where I brought all the threads of my experience together: the days when I used to play in a Dixieland jazz band, enjoy singing, electronic music, audio-visual, all my serious study. I wanted to draw on it all. The version that's on CD is, I feel, very much me.

Working on *Quito* came about through my brother, Rob, who was a friend of Quito's. He rang me and said "Quito's hanged himself. They've cut his body down. He's still alive but they reckon he'll be gone in a couple of days". And then Rob rang me with the news of Quito's death. I thought about it and then contacted Peter [Martin's brother who wrote the libretto].
We have debates about the level of polemic involved in something like this. He says: "Be subtle, be subtle". I tend to be too much the other way: get out there, be very polemical, put the political position, make a speech.

A P: The use of different voices for Quito does interesting things to the character's identity. What were some of your reasons here?

M W-S: I wanted different voices to be Quito. The audience focus on the puppet allowed that. I thought it was a superb vehicle to allow the feminine side of his character to emerge by having a woman sing. It's not important that Quito necessarily be a man. Quito's schizophrenic experience can occur anywhere and crosses such things as age and gender.

A P: Do you think of technology as an extension of stage machinery?

M W-S: Yes. The tapes will remain as they are now in Quito but the images are probably going to evolve. A different slant. Change of emphasis. That's going to be interesting. The visual part can be fully flexible. In the 1998 production I would normally have preferred the visuals as slides, like the 1994 production. But these days, it's not necessary to take such heavy gear about. So I thought if I could do something with these small LCD data projectors and a computer, the production becomes more portable.

I've developed this audio-visual area of composition. What I'm trying to get is an array of visual images and quality performances - the best of both worlds. It's like doing something for an instrument and tape. The tape part gives you fine control and the exact special effects that you can only get in a studio, and the performer gives you all that live dynamic. And you get that
now with Quito. I'm working on developing a mobile system that is effective and quick to program.

A P: The Orlando di Lasso motet, what attracted you to it?

M W-S: The first thing that attracted me was the word Timor in the title. For about 400 years, Timor has often been called the Isle of Fear. For another thing, I used to sing in madrigal groups when I was young and I loved a capella. I still do. And I'd always loved that particular era of composition.

A P: Do you relate this motet to Quito's spiritual identity?

M W-S: Yes. Quito's family was Catholic. Before the Indonesian invasion about twenty percent of the population were Catholic. After the invasion, it was about ninety-two percent. And the Church has given great support to the people - the priests on the ground. There's also a bunch of radical nuns who go to East Timor and help the people in a very direct way.

The spiritual aspect was very important to my getting into Quito's world. Different age, different culture. So I went into the kinds of music that has been associated with Catholicism. That included Orlando di Lasso. So I thought "There's music which I can use for its own strength". We moved from the original words into text more appropriate to Quito. And it gave me a musical motif which I could work further into other songs. And combine it with some of Quito's songs.

A P: Did that referential idea have a structural purpose?
M W-S: In the sense of linking various things. I was certainly conscious of putting it in various places. One of the songs that I feel was most successful in the piece was "Oh Lord, I'm so filled with fear". I brought together snippets of Quito's own song and snippets of this Orlando di Lasso motet. Such an emotional song. And I feel particularly pleased that I was able to create something like that by putting together two completely disparate sources. This singer/songwriter/guitarist from Darwin and Orlando di Lasso. So the motet was quite important in the whole piece.

A P: Did you intentionally keep the use of scat syllables for the Timorese stories as distinct from Quito's story?

M W-S: Well, the original idea was to have the Song Company operating as a drum machine. I was playing with the idea of a drum machine as a symbol of Quito because he used one in his band.

A P: So, it's more a link of the stories than a separation?

M W-S: In the 1994 production at the beginning, it was like life came through the drum machine. I was playing with a quite dangerous idea of having a corny thing like a drum machine represent something very noble. In a song like "Aunt Alexandrina", the syllables are there because of this notion of the drum machine. I think that you start some work like this with lots of ideas and you tame them as you go. Some ideas get dissipated, not developed. They might even disappear but others come in and start to take on a life of their own. I think ideally I would like to write a piece whose main point was to continue to evolve. Quito can do that to some extent. Just taking account of some of the contemporary political events. There are
all kinds of symbols. Xanana [Gusmão] in gaol is a symbol. That will change when he gets released.

A P: Would you comment on the high tessitura for "I Am The Cock That Killed The King"?

M W-S: When I came to write this song, I had the bass voice immediately in mind, for Clive [Birch]. I knew that he could sing quite high. So I wrote some parts in his falsetto register and I was a bit worried that it might be too high for him. So I took it to him and said "About these notes, what do you think?"; and he said "No, but if you put them up a fourth, I'd be much happier because the higher falsetto notes are stronger". It overturns the conventions, and was a great outcome for writing for a particular person. Doing it in combination with that person. It will be interesting to see whether another singer might sing it. It's a very emotional song. The words are strong and recap a lot of themes of the piece.

A P: Can you say something about authenticity in the piece?

M W-S: The only way I can compose is to work with my limitations, work with absolute integrity and honesty, and go for something which is as original as possible. "Write for yourself and hope an audience will respond". If I don't have that authenticity and honesty, then there's no point in doing it.
Quito’s Voice: “I am the Cock That Killed the King!”
I'm listening to my voices listening to my voices Qui-to Qui-to

accen rit accel

main melody:

I see the world my own way— my own logic my own

my own passion fashioning my own rules listening

my own

passion— fashioning— my own rules listening— to my own
all but BB:

Your words my voices your

You're crazy Qui-to

We've all got problems What makes you

You should be getting a job

Your guitar! You're wasting your time sitting in your

Pull yourself together Qui-to

speeches my choices
I don’t know what you’re saying—it’s all in your imagination. Who do you think yours are so special? Getting a job, act like a man! Writing songs that are useless, useless, useless—Get your act together.

Don’t know what you’re saying—it’s all in your imagination. Who do you think you are? Act like a man! Writing songs that are useless, useless, useless—Get your act together.

It’s all in your imagination. Who do you think you are? Act like a man! Writing songs that are useless, useless, useless—Get your act together.

Power—my rage your reason my pride your act together.
our love Like the winds that come from the sea

our love Like the winds that come from the sea

our love Like the winds that come from the sea

our love Like the winds that come from the sea

manhood your manners my lust your love Like the winds that come from the sea your

free tempo a tempo

skin Qui-to Qui-to

skin Qui-to Qui-to

skin Qui-to Qui-to

skin Qui-to Qui-to

words see through my skin my pores my poor dissolving skin my raw dissected parts my
bleeding holes breaches in the wall my wall against the wind through which intruders

a tempo

swarm

alien thoughts too awful to believe
Qui- to
list-'ing to my voi - ces

Qui- to
list-'ing to my voi - ces

as - sailing words rampa - ging voi - ces

Qui- to

voi - ces

Qui- to

list-'ing to my voi - ces

Qui- to

as - sailing words rampa - ging voi - ces

Qui- to

voi - ces

Qui- to

list-'ing to my voi - ces

Qui- to

list-'ing to my voi - ces

Qui- to

list-'ing to my voi - ces
chopper blades soccer balls turn into

severed heads

free tempo
horror

body mind and soul invaded

But hear the voices!

The rhythm of the blood

The rhythm of the blood

Music of the body

The rhythm of the blood

Music of the body

The rhythm of the blood
Cock fight!

Quito makes one last attack against invading forces (the voices in his head, the police bullet, Modecate, and Indonesian troops).

But the odds are too great...
Appendix Seven (A) and (B)

Interviews with Colin Bright and Amanda Stewart

The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior  Appearance of the Narrator Fernando
A P: You create an atmosphere in the Prelude. There's a rich series of rhythmic and melodic gestures, with an extended idea from the clarinet beginning on page 4 of the Prelude. Did that represent something to you?

C B: The Prelude was like a summation of the ideas in the piece. I wrote it after completing the scenes and I used the sound of the bass clarinet to announce the character of Fernando. The relationship of the clarinet and Fernando is all the way through the piece.

A P: Did you and Amanda [Stewart] discuss using the Marseillaise references [in Sc. 1]?

C B: Yes. And I used those as a way of quickly linking the Official and the DGSE agents as a group. That was important because of the simultaneous subscenes, where one group was French and one was the Greenpeace workers.

A P: In the subscene with the Activist and Frederique, the predominant intervals are minor seconds. These are often part of your melodic contours. Do they have any particular associations with the text here?

C B: This subscene is all about betrayal and disloyalty but the nature of that is still obscure at this time. The close intervals move around each other. Briefly they are together and then, they are not: the interaction of friendship/alliance and betrayal.
A P: The instrumental tessituras are quite often at extremes in this scene. Were you after a particular instrumental sound or was it more a decision to do with the singers?

C B: As the music was conceived for an outdoor setting, I wanted it to sound quite spacious, quite "Pacific". Juxtaposing extremely high and low tessituras with voices in between is one way of achieving this. It also leaves a clear space for the singers and gives the text clarity.

A P: In Scene 2, the first interrogation of the French Captain and the Major gives a lot of prominence to a polychord of A minor superimposed with tones of B flat, C sharp and D sharp. It clearly represents something unstable. What was your thinking here?

C B: When this scene was devised there was a lot of information to be conveyed. The investigations of the DGSE agents after the bombing took some time. In this scene, all those investigations follow each other. There was a feeling that the investigations may not produce the needed break-through. That they might be suppressed at a political level. So I looked for a way to convey the stasis of those continuing investigations with that chord.

A P: Did you write many versions of the Official's back-down announcement before you decided on this one or did that come quickly?

C B: Oh, that came quickly. I think it's very Australian to enjoy a politician being embarrassed. Something about not letting people take themselves too seriously. And cutting down tall poppies. There is an ironic humour which
was a consequence of the subsequent cover-ups and exposes of "L'Affaire Greenpeace". It is an integral part of the symbolic "Official's" character.

A P: I want to jump over to Scene 4, the opening of the Activist's song sounds like keening. It is very moving. Were you after a contrast in the violin's part for the singer's matter-of-fact delivery to work against. The violin's part becomes more tonally distorted after the Activist sings of the third baby. Was your first priority clarity in the text here?

C B: Scene 4 is a duet for voice and violin; the violin follows the voice quite a bit, as an echo of the voice. Not that it's always playing the same notes but it's an echoing accompaniment. The main consideration was dealing with the testimony; it's the most emotional material in the whole piece. I thought it should be matter-of-fact in the way it's presented; in an almost documentary style. So the singer never really gets right over the top, in an over-emotional way. (It does get towards it.) So the effect of it should be that even if you know everything there is to know about the Warrior and the bombing and all the related politics, you cannot just sit there and be untouched. There had to be a point of being touched by the reality and the tragedy through the experience of Toimata and the births of her children.

A P: When the Activist sings of the fourth baby the texture changes with the other voices. What was your intention here?

C B: One of the ideas we've used throughout the piece is to use all of the singers as a chorus, as well as in their individual roles. They're not even necessarily seen; this is one of the moments where the visuals could take over.
The inclusion of the other voices, with only bass clarinet, was a way of dramatically changing the texture for the "wailing" section and avoiding the sense of being too long and drawn out, in detailing the deaths of all the babies. It seemed they should all be mentioned so as not to understate the full impact of the tragedy. The device of using the other voices there moves the action along.

A P: Did you discuss with Amanda the use of speech for the fact about the death certificate?

C B: I set that in about three different ways before settling on the way that I wanted. It has to be there and not overly worked. Speech was used in that part for variety; it could sound melodramatic if it was sung. The intention was again to be matter-of-fact which is a part of the Australian character, related to the speech patterns and attitudes.

A S: The process that Colin and I evolved was to constantly exchange our material until we did finally find a common language for the piece. I found, as a poet, that writing a libretto was extremely difficult. Poetry contains its own music and for me part of the problem was how to reconcile this with the composer's music. Scene 4 is a translation of a testimony by a Tahitian woman whose husband worked at Moruroa Atoll. I felt uncomfortable with the idea of writing on behalf of an indigenous person and Colin and I spent some time trying to find someone from that area to work with me on this part of the libretto. Unfortunately this was not possible but we felt that by including a verbatim statement this was in keeping with the mixture of documentary, mythic and archival references that we weave throughout the piece.
It is important that the activist is relaying this translation as opposed to assuming the Tahitian woman's identity. This is exactly the process that occurred in the recording and printing of the testimony by Greenpeace. Many Tahitian people have been contaminated but it's actually very hard to prove. I also think the French were concerned about the links being forged at that time between the antinuclear testing cause and the resistance to colonialism by various indigenous peoples. The issues that are raised in this section are crucial to the piece.

A P: The overlapping of the stories of the fifth to the tenth babies provides further contrast. The final accusation, that the deaths were linked to the husband's work at Moruroa, is similar in style to the opening. Did the structure of this monologue fall into place quickly? How important for you was structure in a scene like this?

C B: Giving structure to the monologue was mainly a question of editing. There were a lot more personal testimonies that could have been included but they would have overwhelmed the whole piece. Even with Toimata's testimony we had to edit to the essentials. I usually think of structure from the outside in; then I start on the details. Especially so in a scene like this where the emotional content is to be so carefully treated.

A P: In Scene 5, the build-up of the two opposing choruses is full of potential for the stage. Do you see this as a more challenging section for them to pitch?
C B: The build up of the opposing choruses has been workshopped. It does get high but they have sung this. It's just that the way of dealing with the accompaniment hadn't been really worked out. The accompaniment is now juxtaposed rhythmically with the voices, and so it doesn't get in their way.

A P: In Scene 6, there's an open-ended approach. Can you talk a little about that?

A S: Scene 6 was always meant to be the synthesis of arguments distributed through the piece. We both felt that this scene needed to make some statement about the role of this event in history. At the end, we focus on the Activist and the Official, who are equally strong in this final confrontation; there is no answer or solution to the proceedings. Both stick to the premises from which they began.

We both felt that Scene 6 needed to make some statement about the role of this event in history. The characters become representative of tragic or political positions, so here they are enmeshed. And the idea of betrayal, in a sense, is one of the main propulsions in the piece. The person who suddenly turns and acts as a go-between from one pole of authority to another is the crucial link that the whole catastrophe hinges upon. The spies and Frederique are those links. Fernando's death is a consequence of that betrayal, as is what happened to the Activist who, in a sense, is his representative in the visible world. At the end, we focus on the Activist and the Official, who are equally strong in this final confrontation; there is no answer or solution to the proceedings. Both stick to the premises from which they began.
A S: The Activist is now able to see the whole maelstrom. But rather than take a nihilistic position, she becomes more cynically determined. The Official is reduced to a mixture of simulacra and tragic impotence. His last lines are about being a puppet, subject to all the cliches. He is constantly appropriating distinctions to serve his own hidden constructions. The underworld remains invisible. The clues to understanding the catastrophe are underneath, with the levels of subterfuge. At the end, Fernando dissolves the scene and his own re-emergence.

A P: The instrumental lines represent Fernando's maelstrom. If you planned that to lead to a confrontation of the Activist and the Official, why did you give the Official a less distinctive role earlier in the opera?

C B: The instrumental music is doing the spinning of the maelstrom. The characters are really a part of that. The Official and the spies have hip rap-type lines. Politicians constantly appropriate the latest Green language, the latest fashionable thing. They change their groove, "things have changed, we can be green, we're green too", as they change an article of dress.

A S: In the early scenes, the Official appears to simply react to events. At the end, he has redefined his approach. In Scene 6, the shifting modes of language allow quite different meanings. Our piece is about the convergence of these types of discourse as much as it is about theatrical content in the narrative. Documentary and mythic references are combined in a narrative that continually shifts temporal and spatial frames. Sometimes there are two or three frames occurring simultaneously on stage. At the end, the Activist and the Official are in a separate frame from Fernando, with their duality
unresolved. In some sense their oppositionary roles determine each other in a kind of bond.

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A P: You're planning a radiophonic version of the opera for next year (1999). How do you envisage the piece will change to accommodate the different medium?

C B: It will not change in any major sense. There will be some additional text which will link scenes and locate where they are happening; but the duration is expected to remain the same. After the broadcast, there will be a CD release.

A P: Was authenticity an issue in this piece? How did that come out in text and score?

A S: It was a huge issue. As we were writing a piece about a very serious event that affected a lot of people, we felt our first duty was to respect that story and do our best not to misrepresent anyone. One of the ways we attempted to do this was by mixing documentary, mythic and poetic elements. Somehow in western society, these forms are more often separated. Different types of information are admissible in each paradigm.

A P: What kind of response to the events do you try to engender through the music?
C B: An artistic response not a political one. People are meant to derive their own meaning. The stepping stones are there.

A P: You renamed the character of Fernando as the Narrator in the 1997 production. What were your reasons for that?

C B: In an early draft, we had two characters - Fernando and a kind of Sea-God/Narrator. We left that idea quite early as well, but we re-established the idea of a Narrator through Fernando as a functional role.

A S: We combined the two really and that fits with the idea of this spectre spinning the stories as well, summoning the others. And that also fits with the idea of memory and how we tell ourselves stories. And myth and documentary. If it's just Fernando, then it seems like he's having a realist function as a character in a story. Instead what he does is to create all those different time frames. He's actually making the stories audible or visible through his absence. It's the basis of haunting and memory as people remember these things.

A P: There are many screening metaphors in the piece, like the swimmers emerging from the water which has screened them, or words of text emerging from a complex texture. Did you focus on these yourselves?

A S: In this piece, there's this metaphor of the seen and the unseen. The things that are hidden at first emerge later.
CB: There's also the idea of shades of intelligibility in setting the text. Where it was intended that the words be really clear, they were. At other times, as when using transcripts of the trial, we compressed these transcripts, so that you get the sense of parallel interrogations and fragments of intelligibility.

AS: They form a dance, a kind of sculptural dance.

AP: Do you see the creation of the character of the Narrator/Fernando as subversive?

CB: What we were trying to do was not have traditional operatic unidimensional characters. We tried instead to create some kind of mythical character from several elements, not one specific character.

AS: The myth of the resurrected hero is quite a common myth. The hero returns and then reveals the story of his death.

CB: So it was more that general direction and then that allowed the character to be somewhat subversive in action, to inaugurate things, to set things in motion.

AS: In the case of the Rainbow Warrior story, it was virtually impossible to do a realist thing. We only had six singers and we had to somehow condense all the characters into symbols. We had to be concerned with what were the main polarities and structures in the story, how it unfolded, what were the undercurrents. In a sense, the event itself is like a rupture. It was only that the bombing was bungled that so much came to the surface.
A P: So this accounts for your decision not to make the interrogations the climax of the piece?

A S: To use the trial in a representational way would have meant that the nature of the opera would start lending itself towards a narrative, rather than being able to deal with dreaming and poetic dimensions. We also would have needed a cast of at least twelve to fifteen singers.

C B: In the Interrogations, we wanted to avoid a lengthy question-and-answer exchange. We wanted to crystallise all the exchanges into three bursts and have everything overlaid.

A P: Some of the things that emerge in mythic stories are things like communication by magical means. Do you see any resonance with that in your piece?

A S: In the poetic realm, you can cross time and space and create metaphors. In documentary, it's more didactic. Both those dimensions are there. There are a lot of different quotations, set in a lot of different ways and then there are more poetic sections which allow the magical.

C B: There had to be some power to pull the disparate ideas and statements together and to summon the protagonists. And that's done by Fernando in Scene 1. Just to locate the event and have it make sense, there had to be a kind of magical ability to summon from different times and highlight the
protagonists. They're impelled into their statements. His character had to have some power like that, to make the re-enactment possible.
Appendix Eight

List of Operas Not Included In This Study

1988-1998
Operas 1988-1998 Not Included in this Study

*The Heiress* (performed 1988), music and libretto by Donald Hollier, adapted from the Henry James novel *Washington Square*;

*The Bamboo Flute* (performed 1989), music by Michael Whiticker, and libretto adapted by composer from medieval Japanese saga, *Tale of the Heike*;

*The Hammer that Shapes* (performed 1989), music by Elliott Gyger and libretto by Marcia Balzer after a quotation from Tolstoy;

*Recital* (performed 1989), music by David Chesworth and libretto about European operatic convention of divas by Douglas Horton and Helen Noonan;

*The Remedy* (performed 1989), music by Raffaele Marcellino, with libretto by Marguerite Bunce, after a story from the *Decameron*;

*Days and Nights with Christ* (performed 1990), music by Constantine Koukias, with text from ecclesiastical and modern Greek;

*Seduction of a General* (performed 1990), music by Martin Friedel and libretto about Central American dictatorships by Friedel and JanFriedl;

*Tales of Love* (performed 1990), original music by Richard Vella, re-contextualising songs and arias from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries;

*Mer de Glace* (performed 1991), composed by Richard Meale, with libretto about Byron by David Malouf;

*Sweet Death* (performed 1991), music by Andree Greenwell and libretto by Abe Pogos after the novel *Une Morte Sucree* by Claude Tardat;

*Foxy* (performed 1992), music and libretto about the Manhattan Project by Martin Friedel;

*Fahrenheit 451* (performed 1992), music and libretto by Brenton Broadstock, based on Ray Bradbury's science fiction novel;
Love Burns (performed 1992), music by Graeme Koehne and libretto by Louis Nowra, based on a true story of American serial killers;

Heloise and Abelard (performed 1993), music by Peter Tahourdin, with libretto based on the twelfth century French story;

The Golem (performed 1993), composed by Larry Sitsky, with libretto by Gwen Harwood, based on a Jewish legend set in Prague;

Medea (performed 1993), composed by Gordon Kerry, with libretto by Justin MacDonnell after Seneca;

The Oresteia (performed 1993), composed by Liza Lim, with libretto comprising fragments of Aeschylus' Greek text, Tony Harrison's english translation of Agamemnon and Sapho's poetry in Greek;

The Burrow (performed 1994), composed by Michael Smetanin, with libretto by Alison Croggon, based on Kafka's writings;

The Two Executioners (performed 1994), music by David Chesworth. Based on the Spanish play by Fernando Arrabal, adapted by Douglas Horton;

Casanova Confined (performed 1995), music by Andrew Ford, with libretto by Margaret Morgan;

Tresno (performed 1995), music and libretto by Jacqui Rutten, based on a story of Dutch plantation owners living in Java in the nineteenth century;

Lenz (performed 1996), music by Michael Smetanin and libretto by Alison Croggon based on the novella by George Buchman;

Iphis (performed 1997), composed by Elena Kats-Cherning, with libretto by Richard Toop, based on Ovid's writings.
Works Consulted

Primary Sources


Whitehead, Gillian. (1988). *The Bride of Fortune*. Libretto by Anna Maria Dell 'Oso. Conductor, David Kram, with instrumental ensemble from WA Symphony Orchestra. Directed by John Middleton. Designed by Ian Jackson, Cordula Albrecht, Kenneth Rayner. Perf. Merlyn Quaife (Grazia), Geoffrey Harris (Vito), Emma Lysons (Fiorina), James Orange (Mario), Andrew Foote (Ennio), and members of the WA Opera Company. Score and tape held at Australian Music Centre.

Reviews


Comparison Sources


Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. (1913). *Sadko*. Vocal score. Leningrad:


**Secondary Sources**


