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INTRODUCTION

Perfect Beat v3n2 continues the journal's attempt to address both the historical context of popular music in the Pacific and aspects of its contemporary cultural and technological diffusions and transformations. This issue represents the spectrum of such research through its combination of historical case-studies, analyses of recent musical practices and discussions of the impact of new technologies upon communities of music aficionados. Michael Webb provides a detailed account of the development of musical practices in colonial Rabaul – on New Britain island, Papua New Guinea – in the 1920s and 1930s. His study emphasises the manner in which various syncretic, inter-cultural practices flourished at a particular colonial crossroads – albeit with various socio-political constraints – long before contemporary 'world beat' practices began to proliferate. Alex Gibb and Meaghan Loader's case-study of the establishment of the Martenitsa Choir in Sydney, as a vocal ensemble dedicated to the performance of Bulgarian women's choral music, gives a more contemporary account of the transplantation of musical styles and the nature of what might be described as 'uprooted' folkloric practices. David Goldsworthy's study of the development of contemporary kaneka music in New Caledonia emphasises the manner in which, in specific local contexts, contemporary music can be created and propagated as an means of expressing contemporary cultural – and political – difference *despite* the stylistic profusion and (supposed) inclusiveness of world music/world beat as late 20th Century categories and frames of reference.

The remaining two articles in this volume expand upon the studies of the New Zealand music industry offered in Hayward, Mitchell and Shuker (eds) *North Meets South* (1994) and analyse aspects of the diffusion and popularisation of contemporary New Zealand rock music in North America and, more broadly, through the medium of the Internet. Geoff Stahl addresses the manner in which the (associated) fan-base, fanzine and fringe industrial distribution networks in North America foster a shared community of taste which provides the context for the popularisation of NZ indie rock music in the region. Complementing Stahl's article, Mitchell provides a detailed case study of the organisation, nature of interactions and taste agendas of the NZPOP Internet mailing list, illustrating the manner in which musical identity comes to be displaced and (re)defined through particular sets of discursive practices.

This issue also sees the introduction of a new section entitled 'Riffs'. This has been

added, at the suggestion of the editorial board, to allow for the publication of short (ie 500–2000 word) pieces which up-date or comment on articles previously published in the journal. While this section will not be refereed in the same manner as the rest of the journal, all submissions will be submitted to a member of the editorial board with expertise in the field before being accepted for publication and – as per usual – additions, revisions and/or amendments may be requested. Intending contributors should follow the standard style-guide published at the rear of each issue of the journal. (NB please note the minor revisions to the Style Guide – and new guidelines for citing Internet and e-mail references – from this issue on).

This issue also sees a re-organisation of the editorial board. A number of members who joined in July 1994 are standing down and several new members are joining. Many thanks to the departing individuals for their contribution over the last two years. As of this issue, the journal also has a new assistant editor, Mark Evans, and a research associate, Clarice Butkus, both of whom have been working with the journal on an informal basis for the past year. *Perfect Beat* continues to be supported by the Department of Media and Communication Studies at Macquarie University – many thanks to them for their unwavering enthusiasm for the publication.

Philip Hayward

DISPLACED ACAPPELLA

The Bulgarian Choral Tradition and Sydney's Martenitsa Choir

ALEX GIBB and MEAGAN LOADER

Bulgarian women's choral music first came to prominence in the West in the 1980s when the Swiss record producer Marcel Cellier released a series of albums entitled *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares* on his label Disques Celliers. These records comprised a selection of contemporary choral arrangements of Bulgarian folk songs performed by professional female choristers which had been previously released by the Bulgarian state recording company Balkanton. A single album of this material was subsequently released on the fashionable British rock label 4AD in 1987, under the same title, to considerable acclaim. Since then, "a growing number of Bulgarian choirs have released recordings and organized concert tours" using the name 'Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares' as a "marketing label" (Rice, 1995: 275).

Over the last decade, Bulgarian women's choral music has come to enjoy a popular reputation as a powerful, evocative and *mysterious* form of music. This reputation has involved both an appreciation of the music itself and a mystification of the form and its origins. These two aspects are combined in the sleeve notes for the 4AD CD version of *Le Mystère ...* which includes Cellier's comments that:

Bulgarian people ... respect the art of singing above all other forms of artistic expression. Their genius in this field is the fruit of a thousand year history of tears and suffering, and it draws its life from the roots of another world: Byzantium. The ramifications of these roots get lost further in the ancient and obscure civilization of the Thracians, whose exceptional music genius was renowned at the time. These roots disappear at the cavernous source of the River Trigradska, where Orpheus entered the Underworld in search of Eurydice.

Juxtaposed with this mytho-historical romanticisation is 4AD owner Ivo Watts-