
Oli Wilson

Editorial Introduction

This volume's opening article contributes to the discourse concerning Amami, Okinawa and Ogasawara archipelagos that previous *Perfect Beat* publications have established. This body of research, as summarized by author Henry Johnson, documents and theorizes musical localization practices as a form of selective absorption and/or syncretism. Local traditions have played an important role in establishing contemporary identities in this context, whereby musical and sonic components that are locally understood as being grounded in traditional culture, adapt new forms and functions amid rapid technological and cultural change. The focal point of Johnson's article is the 2009 feature film *A Midsummer's Okinawan Dream: Majirū of the Triangular Mountain* (*Manatsu no yo no Yume: Sankaku Yama no Majirū*). Johnson argues that the film epitomizes Okinawan modern cultural identity through the construction of a space that embodies Japaneseness as otherness. Johnson provides an ethnomusicological perspective that considers musical culture as reflecting the nature of broader societal structures. The research applies a dual analytical approach. Firstly, Johnson considers how musical style operates as distinct elements of the soundtrack through descriptive musical and scene analysis. Following this, functions are explored in relation to particular scenes, and across the film's broader narrative. This analysis demonstrates how the juxtaposition of diverse musical styles provides and enhances on-screen and background narratives.

The second article addresses the notion of 'Australianness' as a form of nationalism and cultural capital. The focus here are The Bee Gees, who were part of a wider group of musicians—mainly from the UK—who launched successful music careers in Australia. These artists include Olivia Newton-John, John Farnham and Jimmy Barnes, and are understood to have embodied a sense of rock-authenticity due to their origins outside of Australia. This is in contrast to early Australian rock, which had been dismissed as 'displaced' imitations. Despite their obvious link to American pop-culture, the article's author Pat O'Grady reminds us that The Bee Gees publicize Australia as their 'home', despite having spent only nine years in Australia. O'Grady offers an original insight into the Bee Gee's connections with Australia by addressing four key questions: what is The Bee Gees' connection to

Australia? How has this connection been constructed and continually reinforced? What forms of discursive resistance against their 'Australianness' exist in regard to these constructions? How might we critically understand the tensions that have emerged regarding their legitimacy as an 'Australian band'? O'Grady argues that The Bee Gee's 'Australianness' is evident through cultural texts, as well as their own commentary and narratives which are supported through their songs and live performances.

The third article explores the process of meaning-making through musical memory. Lauren Istvandy examines the nexus between memories of places, people, objects and music, and draws on qualitative data in the form of interviews with 28 Australia-based participants who identified as 'European' descent, and who ranged from 18 to 82 years of age. The study attempts to address the gap in sociological research concerning autobiographical memory, which has tended to favour collective cultural and social memory. Istvandy's study is novel in that her sample group also focuses on individuals who identify as musicians, many of whom have performed music regularly in an amateur, professional or semi-professional capacity throughout most of their adult lives. The research argues that their life-long engagement with performing music considerably impacts the way specific songs trigger autobiographical memories in these participants. For example, some report having ambivalent or negative associations with songs usually affiliated with special occasions, such as weddings and other celebrations, because they have performed them so frequently. This provides evidence to the existing belief that music-memory connections are fluid, and further demonstrates ways in which music-memory and sentiment can be perceived.

This issue also includes a Riff article in which Norman Meehan converses with New Zealand jazz musician Jonathan Cayford, who documents his recollections of his time in New York during the 1990s. The Riff narrative also resembles a jazz-solo in the sense that the theme is established, then digresses and varies, and then returns again to the theme. This issue was prepared by Oli Wilson as Acting Editor. Shelley Brunt will re-join the team as Editor for the next issue, and Oli will resume his duties as Assistant Editor.