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MAGPIES:
NEGOTIATIONS OF CENTRE AND PERIPHERY
IN
SETTINGS OF NEW ZEALAND POEMS BY NEW ZEALAND COMPOSERS,
1896 TO 1993.

By
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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Fig. 1. Dick Frizzell, from *The Magpies* By Denis Glover, 1987.
(National Library of New Zealand).

ABSTRACT

Magpies: Negotiations of Centre and Periphery in New Zealand Poetry and Music, 1896-1993.

The thesis will show that a distinctive New Zealand voice in the arts may be found not in an "essence", as has sometimes been suggested, but at chronologically specific intersections of discourses. Each of the six works I examine has been made in New Zealand and is a mixture of music and language. As generic hybrids, combinations of music and language make appropriate objects of study for a thesis that explores a specific local dialogue between the 'mixture' and the 'essence', the 'hybrid' and the 'authentic', the 'indigenous' and the 'exotic', the 'local' and the 'imported', the 'centre' and the 'periphery.'

Like acquisitive magpies, New Zealand artists constantly collect and select their material. They sift, save, reject and synthesise, and in so doing they create new combinations out of old ingredients. One of the characteristics of New Zealand poetry is that it has often been combined with music. There have been many collaborations between poets and musicians since colonial times. These collaborative texts occupy a complex space between art forms, just as New Zealand artists negotiate between orientations, positioning themselves between different cultural traditions. In its own process of selection, the thesis selects six works for close analysis which represent not only different periods but also different forms of synthesis. Each work represents 'New Zealand', yet what this means in practice is different in each case.

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For my parents,
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