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MAGPIES:

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

By
Sarah Shieff

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


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.

June and Bill Shieff
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: &quot;Waiata Poi&quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: <em>Hinemoa</em></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: <em>Landfall in Unknown Seas</em></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: <em>Sings Harry</em></td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: &quot;The Magpies&quot;</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six: <em>Pacific 3,2,1, Zero</em></td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I  Alfred Hill: &quot;Waiata Poi.&quot;</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Allen Curnow: &quot;Landfall in Unknown Seas.&quot;</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Denis Glover: &quot;Letter to Lilburn&quot; and &quot;Sings Harry.&quot;</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Denis Glover: &quot;The Magpies.&quot;</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Bibliography

| I Books and Articles | 239 |
| II Films            | 263 |
| III Miscellanea     | 264 |
| IV Recordings       | 265 |
| V Sheet Music       | 268 |
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fig.</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Dick Frizzell, from The Magpies By Denis Glover, 1987.</td>
<td>Frontispiece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(National Library of New Zealand).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Collection of the author).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Collection of Max Cryer).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>When the Cat's Been Spayed, &quot;Down the Hall.&quot; (Kiwi TC SLC-231).</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Collection of the author).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The opening theme of Alfred Hill's cantata Hinemoa (1896).</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Alexander Turnbull Library).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Programme for Wellington Industrial Exhibition opening concert, 1896.</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Alexander Turnbull Library).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The stage of Auckland City Hall, decorated for performances of Hinemoa</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-4 March, 1897. (Alexander Turnbull Library).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Bette Curnow, illustration for the Tasman Tercentennial poem &quot;Landfall</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in Unknown Seas&quot; (Canterbury University College Review, Christchurch:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caxton, 1943)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Cover of holograph manuscript conductor's score for Landfall in Unknown</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seas. (Alexander Turnbull Library).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Rita Cook [Angus], Douglas Lilburn. 1945. Watercolour.</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Rita Cook [Angus], Allen Curnow. Drawing.</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Book V, Christchurch: Caxton, 1942) 21.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Evelyn Page, Denis Glover. 1968.</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Auckland City Art Gallery).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 14. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry* (Song 1)  

Fig. 15. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry* (Song 2).  

Fig. 16. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry* (Song 4, "The Casual Man).  

Fig. 17. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry* (Song 5 "The Flowers of the Sea").  

Fig. 18. Douglas Lilburn, "The Magpies". Composer's holograph.  
(Alexander Turnbull Library).  

Fig. 19. Neil Colquhoun, "The Magpies". Rona Bailey and Herbert Roth,  
*Shanties by the Way*  
(Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1967) 140.  

Fig. 20. Six Volts, *The Hills are Alive* (CD Brai 9)  
(Collection of the author).  

Fig. 21. Dick Frizzell, from *The Magpies* by Denis Glover  
(Auckland: Century Hutchinson, 1987).  

Fig. 22. Dick Frizzell, from *The Magpies* by Denis Glover.  

Fig. 23. John M. Thomson, *Biographical Dictionary of New Zealand Composers*  

Fig. 24. The Hocket effect. From Scratch, *Out-In*  

Fig. 25. From Scratch, *Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero Parts 1&2*. Poster.  
(Collection of the author).  

Fig. 26. From Scratch, floor-plan for *Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero (Part One)*  
(Collection of Wystan Curnow).
INTRODUCTION
Introduction

I

The six works on which this thesis focuses have some important things in common. Firstly, all have been made in New Zealand. Secondly, each work is a mixture of language and music: in New Zealand it is possible to choose from a rich and chronologically extensive range of such 'combined' works. I have selected these generic mixtures for several reasons. I have found them to be more closely linked to each other than has previously been supposed. They are linked to their local and international contexts in ways which, until now, have not yet been fully explored. Covering a span and a history of nearly a century, they exist in sufficient numbers to form an 'intergenre' illustrating a variety of New Zealand nationalisms and localisms.

There are several reasons for my title. The magpie image works both literally and metaphorically in the thesis. On a literal level, one chapter has as its focus Denis Glover's poem "The Magpies", and the range of subsequent settings and reworkings in various media it has attracted.

The metaphorical reasons for my choice of title have to do with the habits of magpies themselves. Apart from making their nests from a wide variety of natural material, magpies sometimes also incorporate man-made items. These may include "barbed wire, string, cloth, cardboard, matchboxes, cotton wool, rubber, old spoons, glass and pieces of china."\footnote{Reader's Digest Complete Book of New Zealand Birds 305.} Like acquisitive magpies, artists everywhere — including those working in New Zealand — constantly collect and select their primary materials. They sift, select, save, reject and synthesise, and in so doing, define new positions by engaging with the old: "In a society as a whole, and in all its particular activities, the cultural tradition can be seen as a continual selection and re-selection of ancestors."\footnote{Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965) 69.}
in specific historic and economic contexts, and in turn redefines and complicates those contexts. The magpie metaphor I have chosen emphasises context, process and agency, while not discounting creativity, personality or 'inspiration'. If magpie-artists make conscious or unconscious decisions about what they include or exclude, what pressures might shape these choices? This thesis supposes that two opposing forces inform these choices. Centripetal forces synthesise and consolidate; centrifugal forces fragment or blow apart. Inevitably, however, every centrifugal description will have its centripetal complement, and vice versa.

Centrifugal and centripetal processes concern themselves with the relation between a 'centre' and its periphery. This relation might be expressed in terms of the work and it sources or references, in terms of the artist as an individual within his/her society, or in terms of the artist's culture and other cultures. Proceeding from a centre which may be the work, the artist or the art and moving outwards towards a periphery, this initial move is centrifugal. However, the postulation of a periphery presupposes another centre capable of charging that periphery with difference. Discussions of this sort will inevitably come to suppose a multi-centred field, in which each centre is only one possible inflection of the whole complex.

This point can best be illustrated by example. The desire for a New Zealand identity in the arts, at its strongest during the 1930s and '40s, can be seen as a quest for national artistic cohesion, characterised by a degree of introspection: a centripetal force. Poet Allen Curnow called for a location-centred poetic, which was to be explicitly centripetal in focus, and was to privilege the 'local' over the 'imported': "If the 'centripetally' guided work of New Zealanders is excluded, what is left of the country's poetry is a dull and random residue." However, the literary energy needed for the nationalist project — the energy needed to explode what were perceived as outdated literary traditions and establish in their place what they would claim was a truly 'New Zealand voice' in the arts — derived from contemporary English poetics, and therefore also demanded an external orientation. England's literary infrastructure was also a model for the development of local presses, publications and arts organisations.

Composer Douglas Lilburn's musical nationalism was similarly centripetally and centrifugally

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oriented. On one level an effort to establish a musical discourse that was unique to New Zealand, his orientation was also outwards, selecting vocabularies associated with other musical nationalisms — Jean Sibelius and Ralph Vaughan Williams were early influences — and rejecting the modernisms of Arnold Schoenberg or Igor Stravinsky at this early stage in his career. Again, Lilburn's recourse was to geographically remote examples.

Although centripetal, in that it aims to describe a specific geography, nation or volk⁴, nationalist music is also centrifugal, in that it explicitly refers away from itself as music, referring outwards to its extra-musical agenda, rather than maintaining an illusion of self-containment. Such 'outward turning' or centrifugally-oriented music runs counter to the abstraction and self-containment claimed for musical modernism, where "music itself does not signify anything."⁵

Another way of figuring the centre-periphery dynamic is in terms of the shifting boundary between Europe and the Pacific. The history of pakeha New Zealand art charted by this thesis reveals a gradual renegotiation of this boundary. A relatively autonomous artistic centre now replaces one which previously only existed on the periphery of empire, and defined itself in relation to distant centres. (The shift between Alfred Hill’s Eurocentrism, and the explicitly Pacific-centred works of From Scratch reflects this dynamic.) The products of both economies are of course hybrids, but hybrids of radically different natures.

The relationship between the past and the present can also be figured in terms of centre and periphery. The past may be regarded as being peripheral to the present. As a composer, Alfred Hill was enormously popular 'in his own day'. However, a generation later, Douglas Lilburn could relegate Hill's music to a remote periphery, and base his own style on the rejection of what he may have regarded as Hill's overblown sentimentality, his exploitation of indigenous music, or his lack or originality. Whatever Hill's shortcomings, his music exerted a strong (if negative) pressure on Lilburn's own composition. The influence of the past, therefore, can be at once central and peripheral.

⁵Igor Stravinsky, Conversations with Igor Stravinsky with Robert Craft (London: Faber and Faber, 1959) 112.
The thesis also explores some of the infrastructural forces which inform the selection and collection process. Until well into this century, the solo voice with piano accompaniment was the most popular form of domestic entertainment. Alfred Hill capitalised on this popularity, setting his song "Waiata Poi" for voice and piano. Douglas Lilburn bore in mind the particular resources of the choir for whom his setting of Denis Glover's poem "The Magpies" was conceived. Glover's willingness to publish poetry meant a viable alternative to conservative local newspapers, which, until the inception of Glover's Caxton Press, had monopolised the publication of locally-written verse. In her study of amateur music-making in Milton Keynes, music sociologist Ruth Finnegan was at pains to emphasise such infrastructural elements:

Musical activity, it must be remembered, is part of the economic nexus of society, and not as has sometimes been romantically pictured, some asocial and pure artistic activity divorced from the problems of material supply.  

While the products of every artistic community are mixtures, each historical and geographical community embodies a specifically different mixture. The formal orientation of my first example, Victorian composer Alfred Hill, was entirely towards England and Germany. Although he chose to include certain fragments from indigenous culture — language fragments in the case of "Waiata Poi" and a narrative in the case of Hinemoa — the form of the popular song and the cantata remained basically unchanged by the assimilation of these isolated fragments. The result was a locally-inflected hybrid of familiar European structures: Hill's formal orientation was entirely centrifugal.

My concluding example, the work of percussion ensemble From Scratch, places pressure on every aspect of traditional performance. Their forms, instruments and organisational structures are entirely peripheral to traditional Western models. They use as sound-sources syntheses of industrial and pre-industrial materials; their forms are based not on harmony, but on small repeatable rhythmic or pitch fragments. Rather than asserting the identity of any one performer, the goal is a sense of leaderless performance. Structures consist of interlocking but non-hierarchised performance units. From Scratch's use of text is also significantly unlike the other examples, where text has both structural and narrative functions. In From Scratch performances,

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the voice is not privileged, but is integrated with other instruments: words broken down into syllabic units fill a rhythmic and percussive function.

II

My intention is to tease out the various strands connecting texts with one another and with their contexts. In order to do this, I have posed a range of questions. Who was this writer reading? To whom was this composer listening? Why did he or she go to Germany and not London to study? Whose work was anathema? Who was available to print, play, record or broadcast what they produced? The list of questions is potentially endless. However, the more historical and contextual information provided, the fuller the eventual understanding of a text produced in New Zealand in 1896, 1942 or 1993.

There are many critical tools available for reading poetry and music as separate entities, but few critical approaches which deal either with music and poetry in conjunction, or in their social and geographical contexts. Like the texts themselves, the method adopted in this thesis is a hybrid, deriving in part from the perspectives of James Clifford\textsuperscript{7} and Clifford Geertz, with a particular emphasis on the latter's technique of "thick description."\textsuperscript{8} As an anthropologist, Geertz used the idea of thick description to describe both texts and patterns of human behavior; I have concentrated on texts. Such thick description ideally includes historical anecdote and biography, the effect of technological mediation, reception (both historical and contemporary), as well as various forms of close reading.\textsuperscript{9}

In keeping with an 'accretive' model of text and culture, my study consists of small, densely-
textured details, drawn from a variety of different fields and from both primary and secondary sources. Like the material itself, the thesis is syncretic rather than essentialist, heterogeneous rather that homogeneous.

Far from seeing the world populated by endangered authenticities which William Carlos Williams described as "pure products [going] crazy"\textsuperscript{10}, James Clifford points out that there are no such things as pure products in today’s world. He figures identity as conjunctival, not essential.\textsuperscript{11}

Following the thinking of Max Weber, Geertz describes culture as texture and as conjunction:

\begin{quote}
The concept of culture I espouse ... is essentially a semiotic one. Believing... that man [sic] is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs.\textsuperscript{12}
\end{quote}

The major problem with Geertz’s image of the web is that it is a spatial or "synchronic" metaphor which fails to account for change. Whereas Geertz’s model foregrounds texture, James Clifford’s notion of cultural invention foregrounds process. The two approaches are complementary rather than mutually exclusive: webs, after all, are a kind of improvisation or invention.

For Clifford, the processes are those of synthesis, quotation and invention:

\begin{quote}
New definitions of authenticity (cultural, personal, artistic) are making themselves felt, definitions no longer centred on a salvaged past. Rather, authenticity is reconceived as hybrid, creative activity in a local present-becoming-future. Non-Western cultural and artistic works are implicated by an interconnected world cultural system without necessarily being swamped by it. Local structures produce \textit{histories} rather than simply yielding to \textit{History}.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} Clifford, \textit{Predicament} 4.
\textsuperscript{11} Clifford, \textit{Predicament} 11.
\textsuperscript{12} Geertz, \textit{Interpretation} 5.
In one sense, just as every New Zealand poem and piece of music is in some ways an 'invention', every reading of them is an invention also, given that the cultural frameworks, reading strategies, and gestalts of every reader will be slightly different. The idea of pure invention is, however, restricted in the same way as that of 'pure culture': one supposes newness as the other supposes authenticity. In their effort to build New Zealand culture, the artists of the 1940s were not in fact starting from scratch. Rather, they were selecting and rejecting from available resources, modifying certain elements of a pre-existing (Western) high culture to a local situation. Notwithstanding the centripetal concerns of the artists of the 1940s, it is possible to read their efforts to produce a national culture in a non-essentialist manner.

III

Despite his energy, his productivity and his significance as a groundbreaker, Alfred Hill's music is infrequently performed today. Although enormously popular at the time (a contemporary critic thought that the cantata *Hinemoa* (1896) would "live in history as the most successful early effort of New Zealanders to crystallize in characteristic song one of the most romantic legends of the disappearing aboriginal race") a few of Hill's contemporaries found his music derivative. "It has been suggested that some of the music in this *Exhibition Ode*, 1906] is not quite original, and there can be no doubt that the work contains suggestions of Gounod's *Faust, The Mikado*, the *Tannhauser* Overture and Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha.*" More recent critics tend to agree. Following a 1990 performance of *Hinemoa*, critics commented that the work was "dogged by the drooping idioms of the late nineteenth century" and consisted of a "curious mishmash" of styles.

Such recent readings are problematic in that they are inevitably based on remote aesthetic criteria, which mean the work may be consigned to an unexamined past. However, while the tone of recent criticism of *Hinemoa* may be pejorative, the image of the "mishmash of styles" is

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17 John Button, "1990 The Spur for Imaginative Concert." *Dominion* (29 October 1990)
nevertheless highly appropriate. It is Hill's very "lack of originality" which renders his music particularly amenable to a study which aims less to judge or value, than to rehistoricise, foregrounding context and the magpie processes of selection and rejection. The seams of Hill's borrowings are often particularly clear.

The first two chapters of this thesis examine negotiations of centre and periphery in two of Hill's best known and most frequently performed works. The first chapter has as its focus Hill's song "Waiata Poi" (Hill provided his own text for the song, which was first published by John McIndoe in Dunedin in 1904.) The second chapter examines Hill's early cantata Hinemoa (Arthur H. Adams provided the libretto for this work, first performed in 1896.) Both texts illustrate the 'push and pull' forces which shaped the work of colonial artists working at a distance from perceived centres of culture.

After a brief biography of Hill, I contextualise "Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa, in order to show their position between the central and the peripheral. A series of questions helps place each text in its local and international context. What constituted the local and international musical environment of the last decades of the nineteenth century? Who was central to the formation of Hill's style? What were the circumstances of "Waiata Poi"'s composition? What constituted librettist Arthur H. Adams' literary context? What stylistic choices did he make? What circumstances surrounded Hinemoa's composition and first performance? What attitudes do "Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa display to their nominally indigenous subjects? In terms of contemporary images of Maori, what precedents and parallels existed in other artforms?

In the second part of these chapters I also look at the texts in their subsequent chronological contexts. "Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa can be seen as products of the late-Victorian musical and social environment. In the near-century since their first performance, however, audience expectations and assumptions have shifted radically, and continue to shift. One of the results is that the works start to look different: joins are exposed, "drooping idioms" noted. By their very survival, however, these texts also contribute to the contemporary milieu, and are woven in various ways into the present context.

Unlike "Waiata Poi", Landfall in Unknown Seas (1942), the subject of the thesis's third
chapter, was written for a specific occasion. Written in the middle of World War II, Allen Curnow’s poem "Landfall in Unknown Seas"\textsuperscript{18}, with incidental music for string orchestra by Douglas Lilburn, marked the three hundredth anniversary of Abel Tasman’s landfall in New Zealand. (The work’s immediate political context also included the proximity of New Zealand’s centennial celebrations in 1940.) \textit{Landfall in Unknown Seas} has come to occupy a significant position in a small national repertoire of public occasion music; as such it has received performances on many occasions of national historical importance.

Born in Timaru in June 1911 and educated at Christchurch Boys’ High School and the University Colleges of Christchurch and Auckland, Allen Curnow worked for the Christchurch \textit{Press} between 1935 and 1948. Exempted military service because of involvement journalism, which was considered an essential industry, Curnow spent the war years in Christchurch editing foreign news for \textit{The Press}.\textsuperscript{19}

Douglas Lilburn was born in Wanganui on 2 November 1915 and educated at Waitaki Boys’ High School and Canterbury University College.\textsuperscript{20} Lilburn and Curnow first met when Lilburn was a student in Christchurch in about 1937, when Lilburn was about twenty two and Curnow about twenty six.\textsuperscript{21} Having been a student at the Royal College of Music in London since 1937, Lilburn returned to New Zealand in May 1940. He had been exempted military service on account of poor eyesight, and returned to New Zealand to make a contribution to the war effort on his sister’s farm in Taihape. He moved to Christchurch in 1941 to work as a freelance musician. From 1943, when Lilburn became music critic, both men were working on \textit{The Press}.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{18}Italicised, \textit{Landfall in Unknown Seas} refers to the Curnow’s poem plus Lilburn’s music. "Landfall in Unknown Seas" refers to Curnow’s poem alone.


\textsuperscript{21}Allen Curnow, interview with author, 7 October 1992.

\textsuperscript{22}For a more extensive biography of Curnow, see Alan Roddick, \textit{Allen Curnow} (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1980) 59-60; and Curnow, \textit{Penguin 317}. 
Despite the efforts of Alfred Hill and his contemporaries, Curnow and Lilburn, plus many of their peers, identified what was felt to be a void in the place of New Zealand's high culture. They felt a need to start from scratch, dealing with local topics and concerns, and local history. This younger generation of artists wanted their work to be readily identifiable as a New Zealand product: for a long time New Zealand's colonial status meant that much of its European-based artistic identity was externally-oriented, deriving its forms from first-world centres of culture.

Along with the nationalism of the '30s and early '40s went the need to find an unmistakable "New Zealand voice" in the arts, one which set it apart from these first world centres. By the later '40s Lilburn and Curnow would claim that they could detect traces of this "national voice", the search for which had been driving both their efforts. In 1947, Lilburn wrote that "music has been written here and is being written here, but I feel that all of it is only the most tentative of beginnings towards solving that problem... — the discovery of our own identity." In March 1949 Curnow wrote that as an anthologist he "may approach his task in the confidence, which he could not have had ten years ago, that verse has begun to be recognised as purposive, a real expression of what the New Zealander is and a part of what he may become."

Curnow's poetry of the 1930s and 1940s also embodies a particular mix of the centripetally-focussed and the externally oriented. Throughout these years, and as late as his introduction to the 1960 Penguin anthology, Curnow's call was for poetry which dealt with the "local and special" reality of New Zealand: for him, the country provided the "human and historical context [for] the poetic vision." This "vision" was expressed in a poetic language revitalised by the reading of contemporary poetry, and a new emphasis on the language of everyday speech. This outward orientation resulted in a degree of eclecticism: New Zealand artists, like those everywhere, constantly collect and sift their material. The uniqueness of every situation lies not in the fact of this eclecticism, but in each specific mix.

Although acknowledging Alfred Hill as a professional example, Douglas Lilburn could not find

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in him the "musical ancestor" he had once been seeking.\textsuperscript{27} For Lilburn, Hill represented all that was crushing about musical Victorianism. Neither was Hill a "nationalist composer in the older meaning of the term — his interest in Maori music seems to have been transient and not deeply rooted in his psyche nor basically fruitful in his output."\textsuperscript{28} Lilburn regarded the inclusion of indigenous material as somehow inappropriate and also claimed that New Zealand had no folk tradition for him to draw on.\textsuperscript{29}

In setting Denis Glover's "Sings Harry" poems, Lilburn turned to the tradition of the European art song for his model. Initially written for baritone and piano, Lilburn later arranged the songs for tenor and piano and for tenor and guitar. Folk-music writer Christine Dann calls these settings "an embarrassing gaffe"\textsuperscript{30}, while musician Frederick Page called them "Lilburn’s finest achievement."\textsuperscript{31} I recently played a recording of \textit{Sings Harry} to a group of first-year University students, who laughed at the idea of the tenor "doing opera." The contrast between the rural subject matter and the "high-cultural" resonances of the art song struck them as inappropriate.

This range of responses can be accounted for by the changing agendas and expectations of the audience. As listening habits change, the elements that go to make up the hybrid will shift in and out of focus, and the work will appear variously opaque or transparent. An audience used to the "art song" tradition will regard \textit{Sings Harry} as relatively transparent: the songs fit expectations of the genre. However, they may seem incongruous if one is listening with expectations of "folk music" in mind, as Dann appears to be. This complication of readings helps to make the heterogeneity of the work visible: to expose the seams of its origins.

Like "Sings Harry", Denis Glover's widely-anthologised poem "The Magpies" is also a product of a particularly location-centred phase of New Zealand's literary history, written when writers


\textsuperscript{28}Lilburn, ["Alfred Hill"] [np].

\textsuperscript{29}Lilburn, \textit{Tradition} 10.


\textsuperscript{31}Frederick Page, "Elusive Lilburn", \textit{New Zealand Listener} (12 April 1980) 69.
and composers were quite consciously exploring the idea of what it meant to be writing or composing in New Zealand. Unlike "Sings Harry", however, "The Magpies" itself has become an important subject for artists working in other media. It has inspired a wide and chronologically extensive range of responses. These responses reveal the magpie processes of selection and rejection embodied in any text. They also show how some New Zealand artists have defined positions for themselves by engaging in various ways with a canonic text, and the history of reworkings it brings forward with it: the poem has come to occupy such a central position that it is often taken into account in artists' "choice of ancestors."

Curnow, Glover and Lilburn identified what they felt was a void in the place of New Zealand's high culture, and dealt with the problem by focussing on local topics and history in a poetic and musical language built up from generally imported sources. A generation later, the percussion ensemble From Scratch also began exploring a local identity in a perceived void. While acknowledging the group's antecedents in Cornelius Cardew's London-based Scratch Orchestra, and signalling an uncontested field in the place of a local avant-garde, the name From Scratch clearly signposts a new beginning. These artists too wanted their work to be readily identifiable as a New Zealand product and looked to a range of contemporary experimental and co-operative musics, plus various Pacific musics, for their raw materials.

Although their materials are radically different, the hybrid constructed by From Scratch is as local and specific as those constructed by Curnow, Glover and Lilburn. From Scratch's non-hierarchised organisational structure means that every member's input is individually valued. Unlike the traditional orchestral, instrumental and vocal forms described in the preceding chapters, From Scratch have assembled large-scale, cyclic forms from rhythmic and melodic fragments. Members have devised instruments from materials appropriated from industry and the Pacific rim: long lengths of PVC pipe come from building sites, and are percussed in the manner of Solomon Island bamboo bands. Empty kerosene tins, car hub-caps and footwear all feature as sound-sources.

From Scratch’s work Pacific 3,2,1 Zero is the focus of the final chapter of the thesis. Invited to perform at the Paris Biennale of 1982, From Scratch took the opportunity provided by the French to register protest against that country’s nuclear weapons testing in the South Pacific.
From Scratch’s protest formed part of a groundswell of opinion which ultimately lead to the dissolution of the ANZUS defence pact. Just as the dissolution of ANZUS signalled New Zealand’s resistance to centralised defence policies, so From Scratch’s location-specific musical economy of improvisation and fragmentation has far-reaching ramifications in terms of inventive local responses to global cultural centralisation.

IV

Bearing in mind Rose Rosengard Subotnik’s injunction that "good contextualist studies start from [the primary material] and lead back to it"\textsuperscript{32}, I will structure the thesis around the discussion of examples: "thick descriptions" of individual works and groupings of related works. I have been deliberately wide-ranging in my choice, both historically and across genres: my selection is eclectic following the principle of eclecticism which is central to my argument. However, it is also useful to remember that

> The process [of thickening of description] is an endless one in which the art work and its culture take on an ever-deepening significance. It is a reciprocal one in which the art work illuminates the context even as the context illuminates the artwork.... The process requires no recourse to questions of cause and effect: the notion of antecedent leading to consequent gives way to one of antecedent as a constitutive element of the context in which the consequent is meaningful.\textsuperscript{33}

This thesis is itself a magpie compilation. Its frontispiece comes from one of my selected texts: Dick Frizzell’s illustrations for "The Magpies."\textsuperscript{34} It both depicts and enlivens my central metaphor: that of the artist as magpie. The magpie-artists of my thesis have constructed their texts from a diverse range of local and imported fragments. The "raw material" from which they have taken their chosen fragments happened to be available at a specific time and in a specific place. I contend that their ‘New Zealandness’ is a chronologically specific intersection of discourses.

\textsuperscript{34}See Chapter Five.
ONE: "WAIATA POI"
Alfred Hill: Negotiations of Centre and Periphery

Composer Alfred Hill occupies a central position in the history of Western music in Australia and New Zealand. Working in New Zealand until the early this century and thereafter mostly in Australia, he was the most prominent and prolific colonial composer of his generation. By the 1930s Hill had become "the grand old man of Australian music"¹ and has been called "the most widely-recognized of the pre-World War One Australian composers."² Although born in Melbourne in 1870, Hill's early life was spent in New Zealand. He is the only New Zealand-affiliated composer to have become the subject of a book-length biography.³

Hill's family moved to New Zealand in 1872. In 1887 Alfred left Wellington for Leipzig where he studied violin and composition. Arriving back in Wellington in 1891, he set up as a teacher of violin, theory and composition. He also took over the position of conductor of the Wellington Orchestral Society. Soon after the turn of the century Hill settled in Sydney, where he spent the rest of his long life. Apart from Hinemoa and the song "Waiata Poi"⁴, for which he is perhaps best remembered, Hill also wrote thirteen symphonies, seven concerti, nine operas, string quartets, suites, sonatas, songs and a considerable amount of film music. In 1937 Hill was awarded a Coronation Medal for his services to music. He was awarded an OBE in 1953 and made CMG in 1960. Hill died on October 30 1960.⁵

For a colonial composer such as Alfred Hill, the pull exerted by traditional centres of high culture was enormously strong. Throughout his life his primary musical allegiance was towards these centres. Even works from the 1940s and 1950s bear all the musical hallmarks of Hill's late-Victorian formative years and his conservative German musical education. "Hill's ability to create, for example, a symphony in 1955 from a quartet of 1912 suggests that, while applauding innovations in the work of contemporaries, he remained loyal to the conservative German traditions accepted at Leipzig."⁶ Hill's biographer John Mansfield Thomson also commented

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⁴See Chapter Two: "Waiata Poi."
⁵For a more extensive biography of Hill, see Thomson, ADM.
that Hill's music "continually expressed itself in the style of nearly a hundred years before, that of the European romantic composers of his youth."\(^7\)

Despite his stylistic allegiance to traditional European centres, Hill chose to return to New Zealand on the completion of his musical studies and devoted his professional life to the promotion of local musical performances, professionalism and education. While Hill's compositional energy was committed to preserving at the periphery the received wisdom of the centre, his work as an educationalist and champion of local musical causes contributed to the establishment of a national musical infrastructure. "As a musician, [Hill] was...trying to create a vital tradition of music in the community and urging it to respect and value its composers. 'A composer needs a feeling of sympathy and interest' was a leit-motif that cropped up in conversations and writings."\(^8\)

Hill made an early call for the establishment of a New Zealand Conservatorium of Music, based on European models, where "our ambitious music students can revel in the study of an art, where a chance is given to develop their genius."\(^9\) This conservatorium, he suggested, could also "take charge of Maori culture musically and otherwise."\(^10\) Although this New Zealand conservatorium failed to eventuate, Hill was a founder of the Sydney Conservatorium of music and became one of its first professors. From this position he exerted far-reaching influence as a music teacher and administrator.

**Hill's musical context**

Hill's musical vocabulary was formed in the context of the antipodes' relationship to northern hemisphere centres of culture. However, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the dynamic relation between the music of England and New Zealand was not a straightforward one of centre and periphery. Although many New Zealanders regarded England as their true home, England was itself in some ways insular and provincial — the country's musical life depended on strong influences emanating from Europe. English composers of the time inherited a music limited and

\(^6\) Andrew McCredie, "Alfred Hill", Grove.
\(^7\) Thomson, ADM 3.
\(^9\) Thomson, ADM 54.
constrained by mid-Victorian musical attitudes, which left their own music open to cross-fertilisations from Europe: late-century English music was itself a hybrid, gravitating towards the magnetic centres of Europe and colonial student composers followed their English predecessors and contemporaries to Leipzig and Dresden.

Inhibitory mid-Victorian attitudes to music included a suspicion of music itself, amongst certain of the intelligentsia, on account of its ability to appeal directly to the emotions; the church music tradition was becoming ossified and stultifying; and a kind of social 'snobbery' also condemned the easy emotional appeal of music, especially if it had English words. (Certain choral works with biblical subjects were exempt, as the familiar texts could virtually be ignored.) "The result of this . . . attitude to the music of British composers was a continued rise in imported music and musicians." Mendelssohn, Dvorak, Berlioz, Wagner and Tchaikovsky all visited England. Their music dominated both the concert platforms and, until late in the century, the musical vocabularies of English composers themselves.

Alfred Hill belonged to a generation of colonial musicians who followed the inclination of English composers towards German music. (Even the names Hill chose for his children reflected his love of Wagner. He called them Tristan, Isolde and Elsa.12) Of Hill's English near-contemporaries who also gravitated towards Germany, Hubert Parry (1848-1918) counted Wagner and J.S. Bach amongst his most significant influences. Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), attended the Leipzig conservatory between 1858 and 1861. Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) studied at Leipzig between 1874 and 1876.13 Stanford and Parry went on to lay the groundwork for the emergence of a later generation of English composers, including Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, whose nationalism pulled them away from the centrifugal attraction of Germany and back to the music of Purcell and English folk music.14 Australians who also made the trip to Leipzig included composers Ernest Hutcheson and Ernest Truman15 and the writer Henry Handel Richardson (pen-name of Ethel F.L. Robertson), who studied music in Leipzig at the same time as Hill.16

13 Bacharach 21.
14 In turn, Vaughan Williams' musical nationalism attracted the young New Zealand composer Douglas Lilburn. See Chapters Three and Four.
15 Andrew McCreadie, "Alfred Hill" *Grove*.
In his later call for a location-centred musical vocabulary for New Zealand, composer Douglas Lilburn described what he saw as the impoverishment of late-century English music:

Music [in England in the nineteenth century] had become almost entirely a foreign prerogative. There were no composers in the real sense until Elgar; instrumentalists and orchestras were of a low standard; there was no native opera or ballet; and folksong and folk dancing were slowly dying as a result of industrialism.... What composers there were amongst them did little more than continue a tradition derived from Handel and Mendelssohn and prodigious numbers of bad oratorios and services and hymns were the main result.17

Alfred Hill and the New Zealand musical context

By the time of Hill’s return to Wellington on 27 December 1891, a vigorous choral, orchestral, brass band and domestic musical life had taken root in New Zealand, enlivened by visiting opera companies, singers and instrumentalists.18 William Saurin Lyster’s Melbourne-based opera company toured successfully in 1864 and the Simonsen Grand Opera Company made tours from the 1860s until the end of the century. Australian impresario J.C. Williamson’s long association with New Zealand began in 1882, with a Dunedin production of Gilbert and Sullivan’s Patience.19 The Pollard Opera Company made a successful tour of the pantomime Aladdin in 1893, followed by Djin Djin in 1896.20 Adrienne Simpson has established that between the years 1871 and 1885 there was always at least one foreign opera company on tour in New Zealand.21

The strongest musical traditions were those of brass band, church and choir.22 Wellington musical life was also shaped by the presence of several expatriate English musicians: organist

17 Lilburn, Tradition 18.
19 Thomson, History 78.
20 See also Thomson, History 72-87.
22 "It was these — and not orchestras — which flourished in the new country." Joy Tonks, The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: The First Forty Years. (Auckland: Reed Methuen, 1986) 4.
and composer Thomas Tallis Trimmell (1827-97), conductor and organist Robert Parker (1847-1937) and organist, composer and conductor Maughan Barnett (1867-1938). The Wellington Orchestral Society, founded in 1875, consisted mainly of keen amateurs, many of professional standard. Robert Parker revived the orchestra in 1882, but in 1886 was forced to give up conducting because of ill-health. There were two further conductors until Hill took over on his return from Germany in 1891. The Society enjoyed its best success in the years 1892-6, under the baton of Alfred Hill.

On his resignation from the Wellington Orchestral Society in 1896, Hill joined American violinist Ovide Musin’s Company and travelled with them as far as Sydney, where the company disbanded. From 1915, when Hill was appointed Professor of Composition at the newly-formed New South Wales Conservatorium of Music, Hill’s ties with New Zealand weakened. Apart from visits in 1930 and 1938 to write film music for Alexander Marky and Rudall Hayward who had chosen Hill because of his knowledge of Maori music, Hill only returned to New Zealand occasionally to visit his family and to take part in concerts.

"Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa

The parlour song "Waiata Poi" first published in 1904, is the focus of the first chapter of the thesis. The second chapter puts Hill’s cantata Hinemoa (1896) in the context of the late nineteenth century musical and literary environment in New Zealand. "Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa both show Hill’s interest in nominally Maori subjects; both are locally-inflected variations on imported Western musical forms. However, "Waiata Poi" and Hinemoa are different in three significant ways. Firstly, their media are quite different. "Waiata Poi" is a small-scale work for solo voice and piano, intended for domestic consumption. Hinemoa was composed for symphony orchestra, choir and soloists. Secondly, "Waiata Poi" has stayed in the performance repertoire, unlike Hinemoa, which has had only intermittent revivals. (There are at least seven recorded versions of "Waiata Poi", the most recent recording dating from 1993.) Thirdly, the

23 Thomson, ADM 18.
24 Tonks 4.
25 Thomson, History 219. For Hill’s involvement with Alexander Marky’s film Hei Tiki (1930) and Rudall Hayward’s film Rewi’s Last Stand (1938) see Chapter Two "Waiata Poi".
26 Alfred Hill, "Waiata Poi" (Dunedin: John McIndoe, [No Date]).
27 Gracie Fields [no date or recording details, c1940s. Collection of William Dart]; "When the Cat’s Been Spayed" (Kiwi TC SLC 231 1993); James Galway, (SPCD 1131 RCA/BMG); Ana Hato, (HMV PMCM 6021); Waiherere Maori Club, (Kiwi SLC-117); Hubert Milverton-Carta, (Kiwi EP EA-48); Inia te Wiata, [BBC;
generic title "Waiata Poi" ("Poi Song") claims for the song a certain authentic formal status. (The title Hinemoa is also Maori. This, however, refers to a specific narrative rather than a form.) This first chapter also examines the relationship between Hill's "Waiata Poi" and 'traditional' indigenous forms.

Fig. 2. Alfred Hill, "Waiata Poi", 16th Edition. (Dunedin: John McIndoe).

collection of Beryl te Wiata.)
"Waiata Poi"

The Parlour Song and Colonial Domestic Music

The parlour song was central to the domestic music repertoire of colonial society.

Parlour songs were written, composed and published [in New Zealand] for the piano and voice. Before the age of mass entertainment, portable folk instruments may have been found out in the working men's camps, but in the colonial rural home and urban homestead the piano was preferred for evening entertainment.28

Pianos were counted amongst essential items for society emigrants. "If a lady were hesitating whether to pay the freight for her piano or a chest of drawers, I would decidedly recommend her to prefer the piano. It will afford more gratification and cheerfulness from associations aroused by its music than can be supplied by more practically useful furniture, for which, after all, it is easy to get a substitute from any skilful carpenter."29 Charles Begg, a piano-maker from Scotland, arrived in New Zealand in 1861 and exhibited the first New Zealand made pianos at the Dunedin Exhibition of 1865.30

Along with the popularity of the piano went a demand for approachable songs for voice with piano accompaniment. (This was a self-perpetuating system: the quantity, variety and availability of printed music meant that the piano remained central to domestic entertainment until the advent of the gramophone.) With the large market went a demand for novelty, which in turn may have meant a certain reliance on compositional formulae: Hill's parlour songs are no exception. "Waiata Poi"'s central placing within the parlour-song genre is in part due to these formulaic qualities: centrality belongs to the familiar or canonic work while innovation tends to belong to the peripheral. (This, plus the comfortable and comforting aspects of familiarity, perhaps mark analogies with the modern pop market.)

"Waiata Poi": a Drawing-room or Parlour Song

The parlour or drawing-room song formed an important part of the popular music repertoire of nineteenth-century Britain. The "popular" (as opposed to "serious") repertoire consisted of "recreational song for a mass middle-class amateur market, songs for edifying the lower and poorer classes, as well as folksong."\(^{32}\) Solo songs with piano accompaniment formed the backbone of both repertoires. "Popular" songs generally had a simple harmonic accompaniment and "often adhered to foursquare... melodies... repeated for all the stanzas of the text."\(^{33}\)

In Britain, large numbers of drawing-room ballads, many originally theatre songs, mainly strophic, with separate introductions and simple chordal accompaniments, were produced for the amateur market; in them composers focussed their interest primarily ... on producing well-turned and singable melodies and mostly ignored the potential of the piano accompaniment.\(^{34}\)

Often, composers adapted the parlour song to its New Zealand environment by adding various amounts of 'local colour.' Such colour frequently consisted of a picturesque local subject or setting and/or the odd word or phrase in Maori. Hill's songs "Waiata Poi", "Her Little Flaxen Skirt" and "Home Little Maori Home" represent the sub-genre of the locally-inflected parlour song: their subject-matter and setting are nominally New Zealand, although romanticised. (There is a large literature of locally-composed songs in this sub-genre.)\(^{35}\) Hill also wrote songs on non-Maori themes. Songs on the theme of Empire, for example, include "Anzac Song", "The Volunteer Soldier" ("A splendid song for Military Dinners, etc.") and "When the Empire Calls." Songs with more sentimental subjects include "My Fairest Child" (with violin obbligato), "Wake Not But Hear My Love" and "No! Means No!"\(^{36}\)

"Waiata Poi" epitomises the genre of the parlour song. It imposes few technical demands on

\(^{31}\) This distinction is made by Geoffrey Chew in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians ("Song" #9: 1815-1910.) Chew divides the repertoire into the "serious" and the "popular." "Serious" songs were "written for connoisseurs and regarded as avoiding the vulgarity of the mass market." (Chew)

\(^{32}\) Chew, "Song" #9, New Grove.

\(^{33}\) Chew, "Song" #9, New Grove.

\(^{34}\) Chew, "Song" #9, New Grove.

\(^{35}\) See Max Cryer "Parlour Pearls" New Zealand Listener 12 September 1987; Mike Harding, When the Pakeha Sings of Home A Source Guide to the Folk and Popular Songs of New Zealand (Wellington, Godwit: 1992), especially Chapter 3.3: "Parlour song: Published Sheet Music, 1850-1949."

\(^{36}\) All published by Allen and Co., Melbourne.
either pianist or singer. The key is accessible (F Major) and the range fairly narrow, covering a
tenth (D to F). Its narrow range and rhythmical and harmonic simplicity render it amenable to
amateur performance. An eight-bar syncopated piano introduction leads to the first vocal verse.
The first verse consists of two eight bar phrases, covering an octave (F to F). The phrases are
separated by four bars of piano in which the rhythmical and melodic material derives from the
immediately preceeding vocal bars. The verse modulates via A minor to the Dominant (V7),
concluding with eight bars of Maori, "more shouted than sung."37

The chorus ("Watch her supple wrist...") resumes in F major, passes briefly through A major
and again concludes with four bars in Maori. The structure is repeated da capo, with new
words in the verse section. The bars in Maori and the chorus remain unchanged. Throughout the
verse and chorus, the piano doubles the voice an octave below, another feature facilitating
amateur performance. (The accompaniment of the chanted sections is chordal.) Rhythmic
features include syncopated chords in the right hand and a semiquaver triplet figure in the chorus,
the latter perhaps meant to evoke the twirling of the poi.

Mara, Maori maiden brown,
Famed for poi play;
For on winds her name is blown,
Dusky, lithesome, fay.

Kiarite, Kiarite,
Poi porotiti tapara patua,
Hei! ha! hei! Hei! ha!
Hei! ha! hei! Hei! ha!38

Although formally representative of this genre and one of a vast number of parlour songs
composed in New Zealand late last century39, "Waiata Poi" was unusual for its great popularity.
Hill capitalised on this. He made numerous arrangements of the song, including an arrangement
for string quartet,40 two arrangements for orchestra,41 an arrangement for violin and piano42

37 Alfred Hill, "Waiata Poi."
38 The Maori chorus is a set of performance instructions: "All together now... Make the poi swing in a circle,
Make the poi slap"... Hei! ha! hei! etc being the slapping or thumping rhythm." (Translation by John Hovell,
University of Auckland.) For full text and Hill's gloss on the Maori, see Appendix I.
39 See Max Cryer "Parlour Pearls", New Zealand Listener 12 September 1987; and Harding When the Pakeha
Sings of Home.
41 1) [c. 1920] [No catalogue or accession number] Sydney Conservatorium of Music Library, (Rare Music
Dedicated to C. F. GOLDIE, Esq.

WAIATA POI (Poi Song).

Words and Music by ALFRED HILL.

Fig. 3. Alfred Hill, "Waiata Poi." Note dedication to C.F. Goldie, Esq.

Section).

2) Full score of arrangement for orchestra: (6, 6, 4, 3, 2; 2, 2, 2, 2; 4, 2, 3, 1; 2 perc, 1 harp) 528/Box 10,
Mitchell Library Alfred Hill papers.
42 [no date] [No catalogue or accession number] Sydney Conservatorium of Music Library, (Rare Music
Section).
and an arrangement for guitar and voice.\textsuperscript{43} He also sketched an arrangement for solo voice and chorus.\textsuperscript{44} Film-maker Rudall Hayward suggested including "Waiata Poi" in his film \textit{Rewi's Last Stand}.

We have room in the film for two songs ... and we propose to record your 'Waiata Poi' at Rotorua next week with a background of Poi dances .... The Rotorua Poi teams are already well rehearsed in 'Waiata Poi' and getting them does not entail much expense.\textsuperscript{45}

**Alfred Hill and the "Invention" of Maori Music**

Stylistically closely-related to Hill's parlour songs are his arrangements of 'traditional' Maori songs. Despite the title, his \textit{Songs of the Maori}\textsuperscript{46} also represent the parlour-song genre. The eight arrangements include several "poi" songs, "love songs", "a nonsense song", "Titi Torea (stick-throwing game)" and "Song of the Locust (a very old rhythmic shouting song)."\textsuperscript{47} While Hill acknowledged the help of Maggie and Bella Papakura, Eldsen Best [sic], A.T. Ngata and others in a foreword to \textit{Songs of the Maori}, the arrangements are homogeneous in genre, melody, form and rhythm. The waiata are arranged as short parlour-songs, firmly tonal, melodically and rhythmically straightforward.\textsuperscript{48} Maori composers also worked in this genre. Hemi Piripata's \textit{Ten Little Maori Songs},\textsuperscript{49} arranged for voice and piano, are stylistically indistinguishable from Hill's \textit{Songs of the Maori}.

It is important to remember, however, that ever since Maori and pakeha came into contact, Maori music had been undergoing change and by Hill's time there were already strong traditions of popular and church music co-existing with more 'traditional' forms.

Hill noted several examples of this accreting process at work, one of which has the composer himself as a link in the chain of transmission.

\textsuperscript{43}528/Box 1. Mitchell Library, Alfred Hill papers.
\textsuperscript{44}528/Box 10. Mitchell Library, Alfred Hill papers.
\textsuperscript{45}October 27 1938. Mitchell Library, Alfred Hill Papers 528/3.
\textsuperscript{46}Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1926.
\textsuperscript{47}Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1926.
\textsuperscript{48}In a prefatory note to \textit{Songs of the Maori}, Hill noted that "as these settings are primarily for the use of the Maoris, they have been made as simple as possible." Alfred Hill, \textit{Songs of the Maori} 1926.
\textsuperscript{49}Auckland: Arthur Eady, 1928.
[The Maori] valued songs, especially from other tribes. I remember on one occasion I happened to sing [in Rotorua] a song I got from the Wanganui natives. Coming home late at night to my hotel I noticed two girls sitting on the bridge. They were very mysterious and I thought to myself 'What are these girls doing?' So I went up to them and after a lot of giggling and nervousness I found out they were piecing together the song I had sung to them. One knew a bit and the other knew a bit and by degrees they'd got it all down.50

Hill also remarked on the effect of pakeha music on Maori song. "Songs written [by the Maori] after the advent of the white man introduce a lot of white colour. They lost some of that primitive greatness in them and they became English tunes with Maori words. They've been pulling the white man's leg for years."51 Hill gave as an example the song "Now is the Hour" ("Haere Ra"), which he described as a kind of musical joke at the expense of the pakeha.

'Now is the Hour' was another one they pulled the foot [sic] of the white man with. That was written by a man by the name of Saunders in Sydney and sold to Palings [a Sydney music publisher] as the 'Swiss Cradle Song', in 4/4 time. The Maori got hold of it and turned it into 3/4 time and put Maori words to it and sang it very, very slowly. It sounded like a Maori tune. All the people have accepted it as a Maori tune, and of course it's nothing of the kind.52

Although he couched his examples in more negative terms, Elsdon Best also recorded several examples of "borrowing" from pre-existing sources.

It has been observed that ... modern songs are largely based on old ones. The writer once had an opportunity to observe the composition of a song by a man and wife who wished to lament the death of a neighbour's child. The task of composing a short song occupied them about three quarters of an hour, but an examination of it proved that it was largely the result of plagiarism.53

53 Elsdon Best, *Games and Pastimes of the Maori* (Wellington: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1925) 116. Still on the topic of "invention", Best reserved his most judgemental remarks for the difficulties neologism presented the translator of Maori poetry: "Apart from the reprehensible habit common among song composers of resurrecting obsolete words and archaic sacerdotal expressions, there exists yet another stumbling block for the translator of
Hill was as much 'magpie' as these Maori eclectics. Although given access to a fertile and complex — but rapidly acculturating — tradition, his own musical tastes and background lead him to use Maori music as a veneer over traditional Western forms. Although his origins are obvious within the Western musical tradition, Hill's use of local sources is largely inaudible: the local tradition for which he claims to speak is almost silenced in its translation to Western media. While no doubt sincere, Hill's interest in Maori music was also expedient and opportunistic. His introduction to Maori music had come via Wellington journalist E.D. Hoben who had "lived among the Maoris all his life and he sang me a song, and I said 'By Jove! Here's something novel. If I can't make a success any other way I might make it by this idea of developing Maori music.'"55

Film-maker Rudall Hayward described as "the Alfred Hill treatment" the composer's setting of Maori "chants" in Western orchestrations.

Hill [had] great patience in searching for original chants and building around them. He [tried] to make chants that would be difficult for us to understand acceptable to the European ear by twining round them those lovely obbligatos with fiddles and sometimes the cor anglais — he [used] that a lot — and of course his favorite instrument the viola.57

On a joint camping holiday in the Rotorua district, Hayward found Hill talking with "an old-time Maori woman." Hill was "busy with his pencil and his manuscript. A chant was being set down for posterity and perhaps some beautiful flute or viola obbligato would be wound around it."59

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native songs. This consists of a deplorable habit of coining new words to express some action, emotion or thought, such words never being met with again." Best, Games and Pastimes of the Maori 107.

54While Hill's "Maori" music may now appear rather naive, his use of indigenous material was probably well-intentioned. Hill's biographer John M. Thomson maintains that Hill had "an instinctive rapport with the Maori people, made lasting friendships with them, and may be said to have played an individual part in rekindling appreciation of their culture." Thomson, ADM 189.


56[Rudall Hayward remembers Alfred Hill], Sound recording from Radio New Zealand Sound Archive, T1931.

57Rudall Hayward, T1931.

58Rudall Hayward T1931.

59Rudall Hayward T1931.
Hayward also noted Hill giving Aboriginal music the 'treatment' which had proved so popular in New Zealand. In the last years of the composer's life, Hayward found Hill at his home in Sydney,

busy on tape-recordings of Aborigine chants and singsongs that had been brought back from the far north by an Australian scientific expedition [of 1950]. Alfred was giving them the 'Alfred Hill treatment': playing them over and working them in and out with those lovely melodies or rather counter melodies and the result was really superb.60

Although fascinated by Maori music, the implications of attempting to combine two entirely remote musical traditions did not appear to occupy Hill unduly. While he may have drawn on isolated elements from indigenous musics such as rhythm or language fragments, Hill's colouristic, exotic additions left Western forms intact. For Hill, the indigenous served as a thin veneer over familiar Western forms. As late as 1950 he could still ignore the ramifications of grafting Western music onto an aboriginal tradition — or, rather, attempting to assimilate the latter into the former. Of the recordings of Aboriginal music mentioned by Hayward, Hill himself commented that "there is enough material in these recordings [from Central and Northern Australia] to start an entirely Australian school of music, as different in idiom as Vaughan Williams and the English school from anything else. It's a gold-mine. If I had anything like that in New Zealand 50 years ago; but it was too late"…61

Hill's undoubted significance as a pioneer in colonial Western music, and respect for his sincerity, has perhaps distorted the perception of his work with indigenous music which is still regarded as ethnomusicologically significant, and generally goes unquestioned. In 1952 music writer Owen Jensen was alone in voicing scepticism about the "authenticity" of Hill's relationship with Maori music. "Alfred Hill has dabbled in the music of the Maoris but that is so long ago that we cannot be sure now whether he discovered Maori music or invented it."62

The tendency to take Hill at his own estimation of himself is still strong. In 1981 ethnomusicologist Allan Thomas commented that "when pioneer composer Alfred Hill began his work collecting and arranging Maori songs in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, it may have seemed that New Zealand was set on a bicultural path in music that could have yielded

60Rudall Hayward T1931.
61Thomson, ADM 225.
a unique national style.... In fact... after Hill little was achieved for many decades in the study or appreciation of Maori music by the dominant European population.  "63

John Mansfield Thomson also failed to question the validity of the claim that Hill's work somehow embodied an 'essential' Maoriness. He described Hinemoa as "the first European work to set Maori melodies in a Western harmonic context." 64 Other works "embodying Maori themes" 65 followed Hinemoa. These included "Tangi, a Maori lament, the 'Maori' Symphony, the cantata Tawhaki, and the song 'Waiata Poi' and its successor 'Waiata Maori', both of which introduced countless overseas audiences to Maori music for the first time." 66 What overseas audiences were in fact being introduced to was New Zealand-made Victorian music, owing almost nothing to the traditional Maori forms it invoked.

While Hill was nominally salvage-oriented, his attitude to his Maori informants was at least paternalistic, and often actively patronising. He 'used' Maori music as a colourful veneer over traditional Western forms, in a way which did not disrupt the hierarchies and structures of the Western musical language to which he owed his first and only allegiance. However, Hill's musical and social attitudes were specific to a particular time and place. His status as an authority on Maori music is secondary to this enquiry. Of primary concern is his particular variety of eclecticism.

Hill's collecting style reveals a strong tendency to regularise metres and pitches, 'producing', or, as Jensen suggests, "inventing" 67 Maori music. Hill's attitude to Maori music was paternalistic — his settings corrected perceived inherent deficiencies, providing "atmosphere and rhythmic and melodic colouring" 68 otherwise lacking. Although his ostensible wish was to preserve vanishing non-European musical systems in New Zealand and Australia, 69 he did not incline

64 Thomson, History 218.
65 Thomson, History 218.
66 Thomson, History 218.
67 See note 53 above. "Alfred Hill has dabbled in the music of the Maoris but that is so long ago that we cannot be sure now whether he discovered Maori music or invented it." Owen Jensen, "Alfred Hill, Douglas Lilburn, Burl Ives and All."
68 "Hill expressed this view to Ashley Heenan in Auckland in 1952, when several hours of conversation were recorded." Thomson, ADM 189.
69 Thomson, ADM 224.
towards an ethnomusicologically appropriate recording system, unlike the systems employed by his near-contemporaries Bartók and Kodály. This lack renders Hill’s collections unreliable, and possibly more interesting for the ethos of they represent rather than having ethnomusicological significance in their own right.

Hill’s involvement with Alfred Marky’s film *Hei-tiki* illustrates his tendency to ‘polish up’ his primary material. Marky’s ill-fated film was in production by February 1930. Hill, by then living in Australia but still known as “the popular Maori music composer,” was invited to write the score: coming as it did at the very end of the “silent” era, the film required continuous music. With the intention of ‘improving’ his material, Hill set about ‘neatening and straightening’ the haka “Ka Mate Ka Mate.” Ben Biddle, the male lead in the film, remembered quite clearly Hill’s involvement:

> Alfred Hill made some mess over here because he is a great Maori song composer Alfred Hill was supposed to be, but he doesn’t speak a word of Maori. You see this day we were down the beach at Omouri. Marky wanted the old Maori, the real old Maori — and we had several of them there — to do the haka ‘Ka Mate Ka Mate.’ Well ‘Ka Mate Ka Mate’ there’s no beat in the old Maori song — nothing, just war and vicious and all this sort of thing. But Alfred Hill wants a beat.71

By the time Hill had finished arranging the haka, the chant had become a tune, and the rhythmic complexities of the haka rhythm had been ironed out into an even 3/4 metre.72 Although Hill had hoped to use film as an opportunity to compose a major work of “Maori” music, his relationship with Marky ended in acrimony. Hill received little payment for his work and later accused Marky of plagiarising his score. Marky left much bitterness and disappointment in his wake after his return to America. *Hei-tiki* premiered in New York in 1935, but it was a commercial and critical failure.73

Hill’s contemporaries, ethnographers S. Percy Smith and Elsdon Best, revealed similar collecting habits.74 Although they saw themselves primarily as recorders, as Peter Gibbons has

70 *Hei-Tiki: Adventures in Maoriland*, Written and Directed by Geoff Steven, Produced by John Maynard. A Phase Three Film Production. [no date]
71 Steven, *Hei-Tiki: Adventures in Maoriland*.
72 Steven, *Hei-Tiki: Adventures in Maoriland*.
73 Steven, *Hei-Tiki: Adventures in Maoriland*.
74 Hill’s interest in Maori music coincided with that of scholars such as Best, Johannes C. Andersen, James
said, "[it] so happened that in the course of their recording they felt the need to tidy up, classify, tabulate, and resolve the contradictions in the work they collected, and perhaps inadvertently, they created new intellectual mythologies."75

During the winter of 1896 Elsdon Best himself collected more than four hundred different waiata from an informant in the Urewera country.76 Best's interest in Maori poetry was, however, textual rather than musical. His comments on the musical aspects of Maori song reveal a mixture of acute observation, combined with ears thoroughly attuned to Western tonality.

Maori singing has been said to resemble the Gregorian chant, and melody, to the native ear, seems to be produced by slight modulations of the voice, lengthened vowel sounds, and the hianga, or dropping of the voice. The English ear detects nothing to admire in this mode of singing, and we condemn it as monotonous and tuneless.... Maori songs have won a meed of praise from some writers on account of their pathos or beauty of expression, but no one has bestowed praise on Maori singing; its, to them, changeless monotone falls flat on English ears.77

There is no evidence in the Alfred Hill papers, held in the Mitchell Library of the State Library of New South Wales, to suggest that he took part in expeditions to record Maori music, although he was friendly with biographer, historian and journalist James Cowan, and with draughtsman and photographer James McDonald, both of whom took a quasi-ethnographic interest in Maori history and culture. Hill subsequently stated that he was instrumental in Cowan and McDonald going into the King Country in around 1905, to make recordings.78 Hill suggested the men travel "with a dictaphone and take down a number of melodies but be sure that two people sang the songs to make sure it wasn't an inflection of the voice, that it was an actual mode they were singing. They did this and they came back with two hundred dictaphone records of old chants and a very valuable collection of these ancient melodies."79 Hill later recalled that Percy Grainger heard the collection and "was very much taken with them. He thought they would be

Cowan, James McDonald, and Edward Tregear. Thomson, ADM 189.
77 Best, Games and Pastimes of the Maori 106.
79 "Portrait of Alfred Hill", T1934.
very useful to composers and we might develop a school of New Zealand music by them."\textsuperscript{80} Hill himself, however, never heard the recordings.\textsuperscript{81}

In 1916, when Hill was living in Sydney, his friend painter C.F. Goldie sent him a letter suggesting a combined painting and recording trip into the Ureweras. Goldie thought the area "would be an ideal place for [Hill's] work as the natives there have had very little contact with Europeans, so that [Hill] would have a better chance of getting the 'real stuff.'" The Ureweras were chosen as they were "very wild country where the natives are probably less civilised than any maoris in New Zealand."\textsuperscript{82} There is, however, no evidence to suggest that this trip took place. Hill and ethnographer James Cowan also corresponded about their "mutual maori waiata interests."\textsuperscript{83}

As a group, the interest in Maori music of these proto-ethnographers was "sporadic"\textsuperscript{84} compared to the systematic approach of their near contemporaries Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles in Britain, or Bela Bartók and Zoltan Kodály in Hungary. About the time Hill was listening to his informants in Goldie's studio, Bartók (1881-1945) and Kodály (1882-1967) were making their historic folksong recordings in Eastern Europe. Kodály began his annual collecting tours in 1905. His first folksong transcriptions were published in the magazine \textit{Ethnographia} the same year. A year earlier, Bartók had made his first notation of a Hungarian peasant song, sung by a young woman in the Gömör district. (Bartók recognised that the folk-like popular songs the Hungarian nationalist composers had, until then, used as models were not indigenous Hungarian folksongs.) In 1906 Bartók joined Kodály on his collecting tours. Together they made many recordings of folksong on an Edison wax-cylinder phonograph.\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{81}Alfred Hill interview by J.M. Thomson. T1935-7. "McDonald's and Cowan's recordings form part of a collection of Edison wax cylinders of Maori music which came into the possession of the Alexander Turnbull Library in 1955. The collection was recorded at various times, those of 1906-7 being the earliest, possibly recorded at the Christchurch Exhibition of 1906-7, and continuing in 1919, 1920, 1921 and 1923, when Eldson Best, J.C. Andersen, James McDonald and possibly James Cowan and Gilbert Mair seem likely to have been involved." Thomson, \textit{ADM} 189. The Library succeeded in having most of these cylinders transcribed. The original material is now lodged with the National Museum, Wellington. Tape copies and transcripts are with the Archive of Maori and Pacific Music in the University of Auckland. Thomson, \textit{ADM} 189.
\textsuperscript{83}James Cowan, letter to Alfred Hill [unspecified date] 1919., Mitchell Library Alfred Hill papers: 528/2.
\textsuperscript{84}Thomson, \textit{ADM} 189.
\textsuperscript{85}Vera Lampert and Laszlo Somfai, "Bartók", \textit{Grove} 197-225.
"Waiata Poi" and Waiata Poi

Hill's eclecticism is slightly more obvious to an audience removed from the conditions which allowed his authority as a transcriber of traditional Maori song to be taken at face value. "Waiata Poi" now appears as a palimpsest in that it effaces what can be seen as traditional waiata form and inscribes a Western form in its place. While formally a parlour song, "Waiata Poi" also invokes two kinds of traditional Maori music: waiata poi and haka. It is also a paraphrase of a newly-coined musical form: the waiata-a-ringa, or action song. Waiata-a-ringa was one of several forms which appeared in the early years of this century, which "[made] use of popular European tunes, [were] performed with movements illustrative of the sentiments expressed, and often [drew] ideas and phrases from earlier pao and waiata."

Although melodically passing for a waiata-a-ringa, Hill's text is self-reflexive, unlike the texts of either the Maori-language poi songs elsewhere arranged by him, or the texts of the traditional waiata poi collected by Mervyn McLean and Margaret Orbell. Contemporaneous with Hill's song, the highly topical Poi Poowhiri was composed to welcome the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall on their visit to Rotorua in June 1901:

Aue ii, whose is the train sweeping towards Rotorua?  
Aue ii, it is yours, Duke! Straight towards your subject, hinawa!  
Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome!  
Aue ii, June is the month when the tribes come!  
Aue ii, the tribes come to see you, hinawa!  
Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome!

87 See "Two Poi Songs" Songs of the Maori, collected and arranged by Alfred Hill (Dunedin: John McIndoe 1926.)
88 For examples of traditional poi, see Mervyn McLean and Margaret Orbell, Traditional Songs of the Maori (Rev. ed. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1990) no. 27 pp 186-7 and no.36 pp 234-237.
89 As sung by Pairoa Wineera of Ngaati Toa and Ngaati Ruakawa tribes. McLean and Orbell 186. Margaret Orbell elsewhere commented that traditional waiata — a sung form, as distinct from the chanted haka — always took the form of complaints. "Most of them are waiata aroha, 'songs of yearning', in which women complain
Apart from the form of the waiata poi suggested by the title, Hill's "Waiata Poi" also invokes the traditional form of the haka: the song's performance instruction is "Haka rhythm" (see Fig. 3). Barry Mitcalfe explains that as dance and specialised song forms, poi or waiata poi have become closely associated with the haka. The association was also recognised by Best: "the poi may be said to be allied to the haka and is so styled by the natives." Haka, of all traditional forms, are most likely to be metric in the Western sense. This has been attributed to regular foot-stamping.

While noting that many haka and poi rhythms have compound metres, McLean also gives an example of poi in simple time. This is characterised by off-beat accents and added rhythms which give the effect of syncopation. (Hill's "Waiata Poi" is in simple duple time: each beat is divided into two main parts, with two main beats per bar. The song begins with a two-bar repeated syncopated pattern, and the chorus features an off-beat figure in the right hand.)

Unlike traditional waiata, however, Hill's song is for solo voice. "The main overall characteristics of most styles [of traditional waiata] are performance in unison by groups of singers with a song leader, performance continuity, extremely narrow range and the use of additive rhythms. Sung styles have a strong emphasis upon a durational tonic, centrally organised. The range is generally limited to a fourth. Melodic intervals are mostly major and minor seconds and minor thirds." Waiata were by far the most important of the melodic songs. They were generally laments or complaints and were usually sung publicly, on a marae or elsewhere, to express the poet's feelings, convey a message and sway the listener's emotions. Their language is often elaborate, with specialised expressions and complex allusions. They were sung very slowly, with melodies in which endlessly inventive use was made of a small range of notes.

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90 Mitcalfe 178-9
91 McLean and Orbell 21.
92 In compound metres, each beat is divided into three parts, with the slap of the poi occurring on the first beat of each group. McLean 18.
93 McLean and Orbell 236-237.
94 McLean and Orbell 21.
Although the range of Hill's "Waiata Poi" is also fairly narrow (probably to facilitate amateur performance) there is no sense of a sustained central pitch in the verse. The melody of the first phrase proceeds by leap rather than by step, and covers an octave.

In common with the haka, and characteristic of most song styles, the endings of each verse of the poi are spoken. The terminal glissando is also characteristic. Hill's version of the waiata poi includes two sections centred around a sustained pitch. The chorus ("Watch her supple wrist") begins with four bars of repeated F-natural and an eight-bar "chanted" section concludes each verse. This moves around the central pitch of C-natural, which both suggests a chant and helps define the modulation to the Dominant. This chanted section concludes with a descending glissando.

"Waiata Poi": Circumstances of Composition

The circumstances surrounding the composition of "Waiata Poi" were related by Hill to music historian John Mansfield Thomson, in a taped interview given not long before the composer's death. During the early years of the century, Hill and his contemporary, painter C.F. Goldie (1870-1942), became friendly.

Charlie Goldie had a studio in Shortland Street and he used to paint nothing but Maoris — old tattooed Maoris. When he had finished with them, when the light had gone, Charlie handed them over to me.... These old people used to sing to me half-remembered chants of the old days, and that's where I got most of my collection of Maori music, music that went back probably fifty or sixty or more years. Not music they sing today, but the really old-time stuff.

"Waiata Poi" was composed one night in Goldie's studio.

Charlie ... had nothing in the place to give me a supper. He used to go behind the screens and provided marvellous meals. Charlie seemed to have

96 McLean and Orbell 21.
97 These tapes are held in the Sound Archive of Radio New Zealand, D925 1952.
98 D925 1952.
a restaurant behind that screen and he'd put on a wonderful feed. However this night there was nothing so he went out to buy something, and while he was out I sat on a sofa and a little mouse came playing on the carpet. I watched for a while and suddenly the refrain of a poi came into my mind. When Charlie came back I said 'Charlie! Listen to this! I've got a world-beater!' And I sang the refrain of the poi, words and music. It wasn't long before I had finished the whole song and dedicated it to Charlie Goldie in memory of all the kind things he'd done for me. That was the start of writing more Maori music.99

Among Hill's informants were Goldie's subjects Ina te Papatahi and Patara te Tuhi.100 "These fine old people used to sing to me and I got snatches of song from a good many of them, some of them very valuable. I used them later on in compositions: string quartets and sonatas and all sorts of things."101 In a radio documentary, subsequently made for the New Zealand Broadcasting Service, Hill recalled that Goldie's and his own generalised "favourite subject" was "a sedentary kind of a person. He'd sit in the studio all day long and never say anything, just sleep most of the time and when we went to lunch we used to lock 'em in and they'd be there when we came back."102

Dedicated to Goldie, the song was first published by John MacIndoe in Dunedin in 1904. John M. Thomson suggests that the piece's musical origin was a poi song popular in the days of Maggie and Bella Papakura.103 Liner notes to the Waihirere Maori Club recording of "Waiata Poi" also suggest "traditional" origins, although without substantiation: "This well-known song was based on a fragment of Maori traditional song by its composer, Alfred Hill."104 "Waiata Poi" was sung by every amateur who could encompass it and by artists such as Kennerly Rumford and Clara Butt and became the first of his works to be recorded."105 Rumford later took the song to London "and made it famous. Rosina Buckman did the same and then Peter

99 D925 1952.
102 "Portrait of Alfred Hill" Sound Archive of Radio New Zealand, [1950s] T1934. Elsewhere Hill remembered that Goldie often paid large sums to these models. "Sometimes he had to pay them quite a lump sum and put up with a lot of inconvenience because not only the Maoris came to his studio but their relatives. They used to drink his tea and smoke his cigarettes and he had great difficulty in getting rid of them." Alfred Hill interview by J.M. Thomson. Sound Archive of Radio New Zealand, T1935-7.
103 Thomson, ADM 82.
104 Waihirere Maori Club (Kiwi SLC-117)
105 Thomson, ADM 83.
Dawson. Now the dogs bark it."\textsuperscript{106}

**Hill and contemporary images of the Maori**

At the bottom of the first page of "Waiata Poi" Hill has provided a translation of some of the song's Maori text. His gloss on the poi suggests the "novelty value" of this veneer of "local colour": "The graceful wrist movements [of the poi-dancer] together with the sound of the balls striking some part of the body, to the accompaniment of a crooning song, make a very novel and pleasing effect." (See Fig.3). Although his tone now sounds somewhat patronising, Hill's attitude to his subject was not unusual, and probably reflected widely-held attitudes of the time.

Goldie and Hill were fascinated by the Maori, and both exploited the potential of their 'exotic' subject. Practically Goldie's entire oeuvre is devoted to scrupulously detailed images of elderly, melancholy Maori, typically depicted as the last survivors of their race. In common with Hill's 'Maori' music, Goldie's Maori are essentially his own 'creation', "characterised by picturesque, nostalgic, decorative and anecdotal effects that were at several removes from contemporary social and psychological reality."\textsuperscript{107}

Goldie's nostalgic view of the 'old time Maori' was the "product of a European painter's artistic training and social attitudes, not Maori life as it had actually been lived and experienced by the Maoris themselves."\textsuperscript{108} Goldie, like Hill, "was fiercely anti-modernist and vigorously defended mid-nineteenth-century ideas about art promoted by the Academics. He adopted a self-consciously conservative stance. For him, every new development, from impressionism on, was 'farcist' and worthless."\textsuperscript{109}

A full-colour reproduction of Goldie's *Ena te Papatahi* (1930) takes up the entire cover of the disc *The Great Songs of the Maori: Ana Hato and Deane Waretini* [c. 1960s]\textsuperscript{110} which contains a recording of "Waiata Poi." The choice of cover illustration reinforces the Hill-Goldie


\textsuperscript{107}Leonard Bell, *The Maori in European Art* (Wellington: Reed, 1980) 72.

\textsuperscript{108}Bell 72.

\textsuperscript{109}Bell 70.

\textsuperscript{110}HMV PMCM 6021. Although there is no full attribution note, listeners are advised that "A mounted reproduction of the Goldie painting on this cover ... suitable for framing may be purchased from the New Zealand Art Club."
connection, and reveals the same sentimental and somewhat patronising attitude: "This recording has been released as a lasting tribute to the late Ana Hato and to Deane Waretini, both worthy representatives of the Maori people."111 The disc also includes Hill's "Home Little Maori Home" and "In Fairyland."

The sentimental, romantic image of the Maori in these songs is of a piece with the image of the Maori which had helped make New Zealand an attractive destination for tourists.

Fig. 4. Hubert Milverton-Carta sings "Waiata Poi." (Kiwi EP EA-48)

111Liner notes to HMV PMCM 6021.
The reclining girl who appeared in a number of pamphlets and books in the early twentieth century, was an object for sale. She was one of the 'sights' of New Zealand.... Rather than being presented as an individual human being living an ordinary, everyday life, [the girl] was given an artificial guise that had little to do with the realities of either her own life or that of her people. Yet fictions of this sort, circulated by Europeans for mercenary reasons, were often accepted as 'real' by viewers otherwise unacquainted with Maori life at the turn of the century.112

The prevalent 'souvenirs of Maoriland' attitude also shapes the content and imagery of an EP recording made by tenor Hubert Milverton-Carta, accompanied on the piano by his wife Elizabeth.113 (This recording, made in about 1960, features "Waiata Poi" and Hill's less well-known song "Tangi.") A smiling Maori woman appears on the cover of the disc. (See Fig.4). The image is framed like a slide or postcard, defined by the outline of a poi. She stands against a background of steaming fumeroles, dressed in piu piu and swinging poi above her head. The musical content of the record is equally staged. Although the liner notes describe the contents as "a refreshingly varied selection of Maori songs", three out of the five songs are by pakeha. Apart from the two numbers by Alfred Hill, "Hoea Te Waka... is a canoe song with words by Hubert Milverton-Carta and music by Wainwright Morgan."114 The two remaining items are "E Pakia Kia Rite... an old Maori shouting song" and "E Papa Waiari... a group of stick-throwing game songs arranged by Hemi Piripata."115

Alfred Hill and musical nationalism

If Bartók and Kodály were motivated by a nationalist, centripetal vision of "an educated Hungary, reborn from the people,"116 Hill was "]not] really a nationalistic composer in the older meaning of the term — his interest in Maori music seems to have been transient, not deeply rooted in his psyche nor basically fruitful in his output. He used these sources just as he later used Aboriginal musical sources, as grist to his mill."117 (Hill's friendship with Ray Sheridan, who had collected songs while posted in New Guinea during World War II, led to Hill's

112Bell 6.
113Kiwi EP EA-48 [c.1960]
incorporation of New Guinea music in much the same way as he had earlier incorporated Maori and aboriginal material.\textsuperscript{118} John M. Thomson also maintains that Hill was not aware of himself as a musical nationalist. Acting instinctively and according to his own talents and interests, he was essentially a practical composer, a craftsman working within a transplanted idiom at a distance from centres of cultural dissemination.\textsuperscript{119}

As illustrated by Hinemoa, "Waiata Poi" and his music for film, Hill's musical vocabulary reflected unquestioned faith in Victorian English and German Romantic musical idioms. This conservatism was partly a function of geographical isolation. According to classical theories of the diffusion of culture, held by Herder, Ritter, Darwin, Sachs and others and known as the law of "peripheral survival", "marginal areas (of a style or culture) always conserved the earlier stages of the particular style or culture. So we find that Victorian Romanticism was faithfully preserved along with the moral, spiritual and religious beliefs of Victorian England long after they had been dispersed or dissolved in the parent country."\textsuperscript{120}

Although geographically peripheral to the Western musical tradition in which he was immersed, Hill's musical structures derived entirely from that tradition. While he drew superficially on Maori elements, Hill's exoticist and colouristic inclusions from non-Western music left those structures intact. The colonial musician involved in the production of a new local tradition was engaged in a selection process. Superficial 'local colour' could be supplied by transposing certain decontextualised elements from a marginalised local system (such as indigenous myth and legend; language; or characteristic rhythms and scale patterns divorced from their initial musical contexts) onto self-contained, pre-existing Western musical structures. Jack Body has detected such isolation of elements in Gillian Whitehead's Whakatau-ki (1970) and Ian McDonald's Ten Songs for the Sun and the Earth (1979) where the composers set Maori texts: "Both pieces create a slightly uncomfortable impression, since they don't seem to attempt to follow or explore the natural contours of the Maori language."\textsuperscript{121} The incorporation of an isolated element (for example language, scale patterns or rhythm) and its new placement in a context designed to make it non-functional, often meant leaving behind all that reinforced and made sense of that element in its original context.

\textsuperscript{118}Thomson, ADM 196-7.
Alfred Hill, Douglas Lilburn and indigenous musics

Composer Douglas Lilburn met Hill in Sydney in 1956 and later expressed grave doubts about Hill's attitude to indigenous material. Lilburn's own approach was circumspect and may have had something to do with a suspicion of Hill's attitude: Lilburn in part defined his own nationalism in opposition to Hill's colouristic exoticism.

I distrust immediately the idea that one should make use of something which is part of another culture. In fact I think this is what Alfred Hill possibly set out to do about 1900 — to make use of Maori tunes — it was the fashionable thing to do then. But that didn't develop of course and what I've learned of traditional Maori music makes me very afraid of trying to make use of it in any way at all.

While Lilburn acknowledged Hill's significance as "the first of our real composers", he rejected Hill as a musical model. Lilburn found Hill's "small concern" for younger New Zealand composers alienating; he was also sceptical about the older composer's "use" of Maori music as a way of improvising a local pakeha tradition. Lilburn's own desire to establish a characteristically New Zealand musical voice led him away from the perceived ethnic remoteness of Maori music (despite its geographical proximity) and towards a synthesised vocabulary: "the result of a deliberate process of selection, of sorting out from the world's music those ways of expression that come closest to meeting [the New Zealand composer's] own needs."

Throughout his career, from his early compositions in traditional media through his later electro-acoustic works, Lilburn aimed to devise a national (pakeha) musical language, to be constituted without the appropriation of indigenous musical material. His first electro-acoustic sound-

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122 Douglas Lilburn's variety of musical nationalism will be covered in Chapters Three and Four following.
124 Lilburn, Tradition 22.
125 Lilburn, ["Alfred Hill"] [np].
126 Lilburn, Tradition 24.
image, realised in 1965 to accompany Alistair Campbell’s poem “The Return”\textsuperscript{128}, was one such attempt.

Lilburn chose a range of environmental sounds and the names of some native trees spoken in Maori, as his raw material. In two main sections, the work consists of Lilburn’s realisation (without Campbell’s text), followed by a reading of the poem over a pared-down version of the sound-image. Arc-shaped in form, the realisation derives much of its acoustic imagery from the poem. Significant sound-sources include wind and sea effects, cymbals and both live and synthesised bird calls. Campbell’s "gulls passing over with shrill cries" have their parallel in acoustically-recorded seagull cries and synthesised bird calls suggest the "antique bird-like chatter" of the poem’s ancestral figures.

However, the most prominent acoustically-derived sound-source is Mahi Potiki speaking the Maori names of trees: kahikatea, rimu, totara, rewarewa, kauri, matai. Although the voice has been modified to suggest the vocal style of a traditional chant or waiata, the Maori language component is not merely colouristic, but of central structural and thematic significance. Structurally it dominates the long middle section of the work and thematically it relates to the poem’s migrating "plant gods, tree gods, gods of the middle world."\textsuperscript{129}

From Scratch\textsuperscript{130} too have used chanted names to make a point about a specific location, in this case, Pacific atolls contaminated by nuclear testing. Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One) was devised in protest against French nuclear weapons testing in the South Pacific. Structurally, dramatically and thematically central to the work, the section in which the names of contaminated atolls feature most prominently draws an inevitable link between the work’s violence and anger and an exact geographical location. Having synthesised for themselves a location-specific musical identity and taken up a position from which to address an international audience, From Scratch took to the very centre (the work was the result of an informal commission from the French) a protest on behalf of powerless, voiceless and silenced local identities.


\textsuperscript{130}See Chapter Six: Pacific 3, 2, 1. Zero.
"Waiata Poi" in some subsequent contexts

"Waiata Poi" has a long and varied performance history. Its great popularity can be gauged by the number of professional recordings in existence: of the seven noted, the most recent dates from 1993. One of the most notable features of the song’s history is the fact of its absorption into both Maori and Pakeha musical cultures. Ana Hato, Inia Te Wiata and the Waierere Maori Club all made recordings of the song. "Ana Hato will be best remembered for her rendition of the song 'Waiata Poi' by Alfred Hill. It was often said the composition was Alfred Hill's, but the personification was Ana Hato's." 

Internationally successful bass Inia Te Wiata made several recordings of "Waiata Poi" while working for the BBC in London during the 1950s and 1960s. Despite his disregard of songs which were not "true" and his disapproval of "souped up things," Te Wiata selected "Waiata Poi" as his theme song because "he enjoyed it and audiences loved it." He often used it as an extra encore and as his entrance tune. Recorded as part of the BBC's "Friday Night is Music Night" programme and broadcast live to air, the song was also recorded in front of a live audience as part of an interview made for the BBC programme "Desert Island Discs."

Te Wiata also performed the song in America. While in New York in 1957, he "was thrilled to sing on the popular Ed Sullivan Show. One of his songs was Alfred Hill's 'Waiata Poi' and the Americans loved it just as much as did English audiences. It had in fact become so popular in England that it was regarded as his theme-tune and a few bars of it were played wherever he appeared." The song was also performed on Te Wiata's 1961 tour of the Soviet Union.

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[132] Liner notes to HMV PMCM 6021 *The Great Songs of the Maori*. Other "Maori" songs by Hill included on this LP (all transferred from 78 R.P.M. recordings) include "Home Little Maori Home" and "In Fairyland." Inia Te Wiata also recorded an EP of Hill's song "Home Little Maori Home." (Beryl te Wiata, interview with author, 23 June 1992.)


[139] Te Wiata 117.
Fig. 5. When the Cat's Been Spayed, "Down the Hall." (Kiwi TC SLC-231)
The Waiherere Maori Club of Gisborne recorded "Waiata Poi" at a South Pacific Festival of the Arts, Suva, Fiji. Arranged for divisi men's and women's chorus accompanied by guitar, this is the only recorded evidence of the song being performed as a waiata poi as such: the thudding poi are clearly audible on the recording.

Flautist James Galway has released "Waiata Poi" on two discs: Songs of the Southern Cross and The Pachelbel Canon and Others. Both appear to have been made with Southern Hemisphere audiences specifically in mind. Arranged by "Hirst", Galway performed the song with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Measham.

The all-woman folk group When the Cat's Been Spayed made a recording of "Waiata Poi" for Radio New Zealand's National Programme; the arrangement was also included in an album of New Zealand folk songs entitled "Down the Hall and Other Classic Kiwi Folk Songs." (See Fig. 5.) Member Charlotte Yates commented that the group chose the song as part of the radio programme "because it was relatively old and a song of a Pakeha's view of Maori then. As far as folk tunes go, it was certainly one of the most interesting melodically."

Decay and loss, or "new orders of difference"?

Several contemporary ethnomusicologists have expressed a degree of nostalgia for the loss of 'pure' indigenous forms. Barry Mitcalfe lamented that "change is not a simple process. The impact of new media on fixed form compositions, together with shifts in the social setting, have left fragments of old songs set in new relationships, with new functions and new forms. The main social change has been the vulgarization, the disintegration of the whole system of sacredness, the replacement of karakia with music for all, through the ubiquitous action song and hymn, drawn directly from pakeha sources." All the Thomas suggested that the juxtaposition of performance styles may erode the ceremonial or

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140 Kiwi SLC-117. [no date: c. late 1960s]
141 Kiwi SLC-117.
143 SPCD 1131 RCA/BMG 1981.
144 SLC 231 1993.
146 Mitcalfe 196.
ritual significance of some non-Western musics. He noted that the singing style of traditional waiata suited outdoor performance. Performance conventions dictate

a relatively harsh and penetrating sound.... When it is transferred by a composer from its ritual setting to a concert, where the audience may not understand the meaning or associations of the words, too many changes have been made for the chant to retain its power.  

As a further example of inappropriate mixing of styles, Thomas cites Gavin Saunders' setting for viola of a song from Lifou (Loyalty Islands). In these settings, "idiomatic string writing, so tied to its virtuoso European musical associations, destroys the island ambience, making the melodies foreign and almost unrecognisable."  

Recent revisionist attempts to salvage a precontact 'pure' Maori performance tradition can also be seen as essentialist nostalgia for vanishing forms:

Maori dance forms took on board pop tunes with new lyrics to accord with the function or occasion. This 'borrowing' of tunes was used by many people to popularise action songs. Over the past few years there have been deliberate moves to discourage this kind of plagiarism by the competition authorities.  

Pierre Boulez has lamented the same kinds of losses in a European context.

In Europe we have no folklore left.... Ethnomusicologists in Paris tell me they are appalled at its demise in Africa under the impact of music machines. It amounts to the loss of the origin of a culture. French folklore is a joke; in Spain even flamenco is now a tourist operation. In Hungary folk music was disappearing in Bartok's time.  

James Clifford and Simon During have offered correctives for such regret over the breakdown of traditional forms, ones which figure cultural change as a positive process. "Twentieth-century

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147 Allan Thomas, "Pacific Awareness in New Zealand Composition".
148 Thomas 30.
identities no longer presuppose continuous cultures or traditions. Everywhere individuals and groups improvise local performances from (re)collected pasts, drawing on foreign media, symbols and languages. This existence among fragments has often been portrayed as a process of ruin and cultural decay." During has noted that "a New Zealand identity can be constructed, not simply from a Maori or Pakeha viewpoint, but by Maori-ising Pakeha formations and vice-versa. This social programme counters the Europeanisation of the Maori by constructing non-essentialist unity across a maintained difference."151

Hill chose to place elements isolated from Maori music in a context governed by an authoritative, inflexible and geographically remote musical centre. Despite the stringent rules of that centre, Hill's output represents a location-specific inflection of that distant tradition. Hill was not merely a Victorian composer, but a Victorian composer who chose to live and work at a great distance from the centre towards which he gravitated. Since Hill's time, New Zealand composers of many ethnicities have altered their orientation away from distant magnetic centres and centres represented by 'traditional' forms, to formulate a range of hybrid, local musics.153

Working outside the circumscribed arena of 'traditional' forms, Maori and Pacific Island performers working in the musical mass-media have synthesised characteristic mixtures from a variety of local and imported musical and phonic languages. "Mokai ... won the band section of the television programme, Star Quest. The recording output of Maori/Island groups attests to the fine shape that beat music is enjoying at their hands. Bands like Ardijah, Aotearoa, Black Katz, Herbs, Meg and the Fones... all had successful releases of albums last year. From these people have come a wealth of original stuff using either English or Maori or a mixture of both languages."154 Although producing music in many ways similar to that of their North American counterparts, the use of local languages in New Zealand rock ensures that the New Zealand product is a hybrid as specific to its time and place as was Alfred Hill's version of the popular song.

In his description of the effect of political change on traditional dance forms in Ghana, Steve

151 Clifford, Predicament 14.
153 For a group of pakeha musicians working outside traditional compositional and performance parameters, see Chapter Six: Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero.
Reich too notes the emergence of hybridised forms. However, regret over the demise of traditional forms does not exclude engagement with the new: "You can say this is the way of the world; you can say this is great; or you can say something has been lost. I think all three are true."\textsuperscript{155}

For James Clifford, a focus on historical process subjects "the old geopolitical oppositions modern/traditional, literate/oral, country/city, centre/periphery, first/third [to] local mix and match, contextual tactical shifting, syncretic recombination, import-export. Culture is migration as well as rooting — within and between groups, within and between individual persons."\textsuperscript{156} Corollary to this, "cultures" can be seen as

arenas not merely of structural order and symbolic pattern but also of conflict, disorder and emergence.... A significant provocation for these changes of orientation has clearly been the emergence of non-western and feminist subjects whose works and discourses are different, strong and complex but clearly not 'authentic' in conventional ways.... New definitions of authenticity... are making themselves felt, definitions no longer centred on a salvaged past. Rather, authenticity is reconceived as hybrid, creative activity...\textsuperscript{157}

While Clifford does not downplay "the destructive, homogenizing effects of global economic and cultural centralization"\textsuperscript{158}, he also suggests that where Claude Levi-Strauss, the disillusioned traveller of Tristes tropiques, saw "filth", thrown in the face of the world's societies by an expansive West, it is also possible to see raw material, "compost for new orders of difference."\textsuperscript{159}

Traditional waiata can be seen as part of the raw material or "compost" from which Hill drew his stylistic vocabulary. His song has not only stayed in the performance repertoire, but has itself become "compost" or raw material for later generations of magpies.

\textsuperscript{156}Clifford, "Paradigm"126.
\textsuperscript{157}Clifford, "Paradigm"126.
\textsuperscript{158}Clifford, Predicament 15.
\textsuperscript{159}Clifford, Predicament 15.
TWO: HINEMOA
Hinemoa

Hill's cantata Hinemoa (1896) is pertinent to this thesis in several important ways. Firstly, it is a music/text hybrid. Secondly, while peripheral to the Western compositional tradition as a whole, Hill and Hinemoa are both significant because of their pioneer positions: Hinemoa was the largest-scale orchestral work until then composed in New Zealand.¹

Although not specifically a commemorative composition, Hinemoa received its first performance on a publicly significant occasion: the opening of the Wellington Industrial Exhibition of 1896. Hence, it occupies an important position in the small local repertoire of "public occasion" music.² Despite its historical centrality, modern listeners have found the work musically slight.³ Distance in time means changes in audience requirements: changing tastes and this perceived musical insubstantiality have meant Hinemoa's exclusion from the contemporary concert repertoire. It has, however, received performances at wide intervals, all of them commemorative or celebratory in nature.

Hinemoa

Although at first Hill did not profess any particular affinity for Maori music — his first musical allegiances were to England and Germany — his interest in Maori music had been aroused by E.D. Hoben, who sang him a melody remembered from a youth spent in Tauranga, in close proximity to "a friendly Maori pa."⁴ This tune formed the basis of Tutanekai's flute motif, which opens the cantata. The melody was later found to be (ostensibly) Rarotongan in origin. (See Fig.6: flute motif from first page of conductor's score.)

The Maori air which runs through this work, was obtained many years ago from a white man, Mr E.D. Hoban [sic]. Years later a half-caste Maori, Wi Duncan, asserted that it was a Raratongan [sic] melody. Others claimed that the Rev. Williams of Hawkes Bay wrote the words and a Maori friend the tune. Finally, Hari Hongi, a Government Interpreter and author of the well-known Maori Grammar etc. verified Wi Duncan's assertion that the air

¹The Hawera and Normanby Star reported that Hinemoa was "the boldest work of the kind that New Zealand has yet produced." Saturday December 5 1896. Alfred Hill Papers ML MSS 528/10-13 (Newscuttings 1854-1960), Mitchell Library, Sydney.
²Landfall in Unknown Seas (1942) is another such "public" composition. (See Chapters Three and Four)
⁴Thomson, ADM 57.
Fig. 6. The opening theme of Alfred Hill's cantata *Hinemoa* (1896).
came from Raratonga. It appears that a Chief who came from Raratonga in 1868 to visit the Maori Chief Tawhio, first brought the air to New Zealand. The Maoris quickly appropriated it and turned it into a Hymn.5

Whatever the 'ultimate origin' of the tune, its chain of transmission is long and complex and qualifies any claim for 'authenticity.' Hill received the motif from Hoben, who had heard it as a Maori hymn, which in turn derived from Rarotonga. However, the tonality and metric structure of the tune suggests European derivation. Notwithstanding this, Hill's contemporaries still remarked on the "weird, romantic" nature of the music.6 (The "authenticity" of the "genuine Maori" flute motif was never questioned.) The opening flute motif and its origin, plus the "Ra-Ha" chorus, were often singled out for special mention. "The liemotif of "Hinemoa" is a genuine Maori melody, a lament which is sung by one of the Native tribes of the Poverty Bay district."7

Despite Hill's initial lack of interest, he professed a long-standing desire to work on the Hinemoa legend.8 He later recalled that poet Arthur Adams conceived the idea of "writing Hinemoa as a legend."9

Arthur wrote the legend, and I decided to set it to music. The citizens of Wellington rather laughed at the idea that we could get anything from the dirty lazy Maori. At that time of course they lived so near to the Maoris, and there were so many of them about, that they didn't think much of them, especially artistically. 'You wait and see' I said.10

Adams, only twenty-one at the time of writing Hinemoa, was born in Otago on 6 June 1872. Hill recalled him as "a considerable poet."11

His father was chief surveyor of Otago and I think Arthur got most of his encouragement from his mother. ... Arthur eventually went to Australia and

9 Alfred Hill, D925.
10 Alfred Hill, D925.
11 Alfred Hill, D925.
became the editor of *The Red Page* and wrote novels and plays and poetry and was esteemed as one of our great poets of Australasia.\(^\text{12}\)

Novelist, poet, journalist and dramatist, Adams's works included *Maoriland and Other Verses* (1899) and the novel *Tussock Land: A Romance fo New Zealand and the Commonwealth* (1904). He worked on the editorial staff of both the *New Zealand Times* and the *Sydeny Bulletin*. Adams died in 1936.\(^\text{13}\)

### Hinemoa: beginnings

With Adams as librettist, Hill he began work on the cantata in late 1895. Hill and Adams had worked together previously. Around 1893 they collaborated on the comic opera *The Whipping Boy*, which was never produced.\(^\text{14}\) *Hinemoa* was first performed on 18 November 1896, to mark the opening of the Wellington Industrial Exhibition.\(^\text{15}\) Apart from the patriotic inclusion of "God Save the Queen" at the conclusion of the evening, the programme consisted of entirely locally-composed works. Maughan Barnett's short *Concert Overture*, conducted by the composer, opened the programme. This was followed by *Hinemoa*, the main item on a programme. Performed by Mr. Maughan Barnett's Musical Society under the baton of Alfred Hill, Madame Eveleen Carlton (Soprano) took the role of Hinemoa, and "Mr. Harry Smith [Baritone], of Dunedin, [was] specially engaged to sing the part of Tutanekai."\(^\text{16}\) Alfred's older brother John sang the tenor role of Tiki, and the role of Tohunga (bass) was taken by Mr. Harold Widdup.

The second half of the programme contained a setting of Psalm 8 ("O Lord, our Governor"), composed and conducted by Mr. Robert Parker. This was followed by Thomas Tallis Trimnell's setting of Psalm 24. ("The Earth is the Lord's, and the Fullness Thereof.") The composer conducted. The programme concluded with the National Anthem, all three verses of which were printed in the programme. This was to be sung by the evening's "combined choruses and the audience."\(^\text{17}\)

\(^{12}\) Alfred Hill, D925.
\(^{13}\) G.H. Schofield, ed., *A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940).
\(^{14}\) Thomson, *ADM* 51.
PROGRAMME.

PART I.

By Mr. Maughan Barnett’s Musical Society.

8 p.m. CONCERT OVERTURE (E minor) for Orchestra ... Composed and conducted by Maughan Barnett

8.10 p.m. “HINEMOAI."

A Maori Legend for Soli, Chorus and Orchestra.

Written by Arthur H. Adams, B.A.; Composed and Conducted by Alfred F. Hill, R.C.M.L.

CHARACTERS:

Hinemoa .......... (A Maori Maiden) .......... Madame Eveleen Carlton (Soprano) .......... Mr. Harry Smith (Barytone) .......... Mr. Harry W. Hill (Tenor)

CONDUCTED BY ALFRED F. HILL, R.C.M.L.

THE LEGEND.

The argument of the cantata is as follows—Hinemoa, a maiden of great beauty, was secretly loved by Tutanekai, the younger son of a great chief whose tribe was at war with that of Hinemoa. Tutanekai lived on the island of Mokoia, in Botuma lake, and Hinemoa dwelt on the shores of the lake. Her lover sent his friend, Tiki, to tell her of his love, and Hinemoa, who had long loved Tutanekai secretly, agreed to escape in a canoe across the lake to him.

Tiki and Tutanekai were accustomed in the evenings to play upon the horn and flute, and their music was wafted across the lake to where Hinemoa lay; and the signal and guide for her in her escape was to be the flute of her lover. But when one night Hinemoa stole away from her tribe, she found that the canoes by which she meant to escape had been drawn up on the beach by her suspicious friends, and her feeble force could not launch one of them. Then, as she cast herself down in despair, the sound of the flute of her lover came to her across the water, and encouraged by fairy voices Hinemoa plunged into the lake and swam across to her lover’s village, ever having for her guidance the flute-song of Tutanekai.

Greatly exhausted, Hinemoa ﬂung herself into a warm pool by the side of the lake; and there Tutanekai, coming to kill the enemy whom he thought was lurking in the pool, found his brave bride, Hinemoa.

Fig.7. Programme for Wellington Industrial Exhibition Opening Concert (1896), page 2. (Alexander Turnbull Library).

Two more Wellington performances of *Hinemoa* followed, to great acclaim: *Hinemoa* featured in Maughan Barnett's "Exhibition Music Festival" held in December, in the Industrial Exhibition Hall.\(^18\) By the time of the third performance on 18 December, the popularity of the work was such that "every seat in the hall was reserved twenty-four hours before the performance, and last night crowds stood vainly importuning entrance at the doors, while several hundreds got upon the grandstand on the roof and heard the work under absolutely novel conditions."\(^19\)

We gave *Hinemoa* at the opening of the [Wellington Industrial] Exhibition. I remember the Governor was sitting in the body of the hall and he was so impressed after *Hinemoa* and the people kicked up such a row about it and they were so enthusiastic that he called Arthur and I in front of him, in front of that vast audience, and complimented us. The result was that the work was given again a few days later and so much interest was aroused in it that as near as most people got to it was the roof of the concert hall. The roof of the concert hall had seats on for a bicycle ground outside where bicycle sports were held. There was a lean-to roof and it had a thousand seats on it. That's as near as most people got to the second performance of *Hinemoa*. They heard it through the roof.\(^20\)

Ovid Musin's company later performed *Hinemoa* in Hastings — where Hill himself took the role of Tutanekai\(^21\) — and in Napier, Wanganui and Auckland. (Hill had joined the Musin Company earlier in 1896.) The Company took the same production to Sydney, where it was first performed in its entirety in July 1897.\(^22\) Hill recalled that *Hinemoa* had been published by Schirmer in New York and Allen's in Melbourne,\(^23\) and was performed "in every city in New Zealand and in many towns in Australia."\(^24\)

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\(^{18}\) Thomson, *ADM* 63.

\(^{19}\) *Evening Post* 19 December 1896. ML MSS 528/10-13, Mitchell Library, Sydney.


\(^{21}\) *Hawkes Bay Herald* Thursday 21 January 1897. ML MSS 528/10-13.

\(^{22}\) Thomson, *ADM* 68. At a private read-through at Palings, prior to the first Sydney performance, "the composer (who has the voice unusually associated with composers) not only doubled the important baritone part of Tutanekai and the bass role of the Tohunga, but also sang the soprano, alto, tenor and bass of the choruses, the trombone, flute and various other orchestral voices that were missing, and acted as conductor, and interpreter of the plot." *The Sydney Mail* 27 March 1897. ML MSS 528/10-13.

\(^{23}\) Alfred Hill, "Hill talks about 'Hinemoa' and 'Waiata Poi.'" D925.

A photograph of a stage set, assembled for the Auckland performances of *Hinemoa* (1–4 March 1897), has been pasted in the front of the conductor's score of the cantata.  

Fig. 8. The stage of Auckland City Hall, decorated for performances of *Hinemoa* 1–4 March, 1897. (Alexander Turnbull Library.)

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The mixture of imagery shows this fascination for the indigenous. (See Fig. 8). The Auckland City Hall was festooned with nikau palms, garlands and fronds of punga. Maori artifacts included the prow and paddle of a canoe and carved posts. A small pataka appeared behind the harp and the conductor’s podium was obscured by toi-toi fronds. The whole was ranged in front of a painted backdrop depicting lake Rotorua. Members of the chorus, dressed in white, "wore a white feather in their hair after the Maori fashion":

since 'Hinemoa' was produced at the City Hall, and the female chorus singers took to sticking feathers in their hair, half the roosters in Auckland fowl-yards are going about in a dismantled condition, looking as if they had been struck by a cyclone.

The flags at either side of the setting are possibly part of the flag of the United Tribes. Summoned into being partly by the need for ships run by the Maori to bear a flag of their country of origin, the flag was adopted in 1834 and flown to prevent from seizure unidentified ships trading from New Zealand. The flag consisted of a a red St. George’s Cross on a white ground and in the first quarter, a red St. George’s Cross on a blue ground pierced with four white stars. This flag remained New Zealand’s national ensign until superceded by the Union Jack in 1840. The selection of this, rather than the Union Jack, suggests the background of intertribal (rather than inter-racial) conflict against which the legend is set. The reversal of the flag’s background colour across the stage also suggests a Romeo and Juliet-type internecine struggle.

Also stuck in the front of the score, from which Hill conducted, were two sonnets by J. Liddell Kelly of Woolston, published in The New Zealand Mail of 23 September 1896. "Tutanekai" and

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26 A word of praise is due to Mr. Theo Queree for the beautiful stage decorations. At the back was a lake scene, and the front was ornamented with toi-toi, raupo, nikau, tree ferns, flags, and Maori trophies, the name "Hinemoa" being suspended across the centre in large letters formed by evergreens. The Evening Star Tuesday 2 March 1897. Alfred Hill. Newscuttings 1854-1960, Mitchell Library, Sydney.


28 The New Zealand Observer Saturday 6 March 1897. Alfred Hill. Newscuttings 1854-1960. The same writer asked "Why the Maori warriors in "Hinemoa" didn't tattoo their faces, seeing that the maidens of the chorus stuck feathers in their hair to shew they were quite up in the latest Maori fashions."


30 Flags of Early New Zealand (No place of publication: Shell Company of New Zealand, 1959) [np.] The new Zealand blue ensign, consisting of four stars on a blue ground, with the Union Jack in the first quarter, was not officially adopted as the New Zealand flag until 1902. Keith Sinclair, A Destiny Apart: New Zealand’s Search for National Identity, (Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1986) 39.
"His Wooing and Wedding" appeared two months before the premiere of Hinemoa (18 Nov 1896) and attest to the current popularity of the Hinemoa story.\textsuperscript{31}

Despite Hinemoa's initial success there were no calls for sequels, as there had been for Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's contemporary epic Haiawatha.\textsuperscript{32} Although fully-staged productions on New Zealand themes were not uncommon, hopes and plans to turn the cantata into an opera came to nothing. "M. Musin,... will, in conjunction with Mr Hill, produce [Hinemoa] in Melbourne and Sydney. If it 'catches on' there, it will probably be turned into an opera and performed in America, London and Paris."\textsuperscript{33} Adams's hopes to turn the cantata into an opera were never realised\textsuperscript{34}; similarly, Rudall Hayward's planned film of the cantata never eventuated.\textsuperscript{35}

The success of Hinemoa did however lead to a further production on a Maori theme. The opera Tapu followed, again written in conjunction with Arthur Adams. Tapu was set in the Rotorua region. "Into post-eruption Tarawera comes a touring opera company which, finding itself stranded, engages in a vocal drama with the Maori inhabitants."\textsuperscript{36} The first performance of Tapu, produced in New Zealand by the Pollard Opera Co. took place on 16 February 1903.

With such sure-fire items as a haka and a poi dance, with a large number of attractive solos and ensembles, and with the opportunities it offered for scenic display — a Maori Pa in Act I, the Pink Terraces in Act II— it is not surprising that in 1903 Tapu exerted a wide appeal and scored such a clamorous success.\textsuperscript{37}

In 1906, three years after the successful production of Tapu, Hill returned to assemble and conduct New Zealand's first professional orchestra. The fifty-three piece ensemble was formed for the Christchurch Exhibition of that year, held to celebrate New Zealand's transition from

\textsuperscript{31}Leonard Bell has also noted the popularity of the Hinemoa legend. See Leonard Bell, \textit{Colonial Constructs} (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992) 211-212.
\textsuperscript{33}Wairarapa Daily Times 19 November 1896. ML MSS 528/10-13.
\textsuperscript{34}Evening Post 19 November 1896. ML MSS 528/10-13.
\textsuperscript{35}I am writing to see if you would be interested in the idea of making a sound-film version of your Maori Opera "Hinemoa" for overseas release.... It would be necessary to change the story somewhat for picture purposes but the music and lyrics could be adapted with great advantage." Rudall Hayward, letter to Alfred Hill, 14 September 1932. Alfred Hill Papers 528/3, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
colonial to dominion status. Until then, "the orchestras established in the larger cities in the
nineteenth century remained largely semi-professional, giving vigorous but brief seasons of from
five to six concerts a year."38 The New Zealand International Exhibition Orchestra toured for
six months after the Exhibition closed in 1907. Despite the success of the tour, and pleas to the
government, the orchestra disbanded, due to the lack of patrons and funds. It was to be another
forty years before a permanent symphony orchestra was established in New Zealand: the

The 1906 Christchurch International Exhibition concert opened with Hill's specially-composed
"Exhibition Ode", to a text by Johannes C. Andersen, for soloists, chorus, military band and
orchestra.39 Hill's contemporaries pointed out the hybrid nature of the Exhibition Ode's
stylistic vocabulary.

It has been suggested that some of the music in this Ode is not quite
original, and there can be no doubt that the work contains suggestions of
Gounod's Faust, the Mikado, the Tannhauser Overture and Coleridge-
Taylor's Haiawatha. These, however, are merely accidental similarites and
not intentional imitations.40

Hill's Ode replaced Sullivan's Te Deum, which was the initial choice for the opening
ceremony.41

Despite the decision to celebrate the change in status from colony to dominion with music written
in New Zealand rather in England, the music of the Exhibition Ode itself reveals New Zealand's
client status. Whether or not Hill's references are "merely accidental similarites" or "intentional
imitations", they clearly show his centrifugal or 'outward' identification with recent, popular
stage music of England, Germany and France: the sources shaping his musical consciousness. By
1906, moves towards political independence were incomplete, notwithstanding the claims for a
new degree of political independence signified by the change in status from colony to dominion.
Hill's musical vocabulary, which has been seen as derivative, models New Zealand's peripheral
political position, just as Johannes C. Andersen's lyrics echo the aspirations of American
immigration policy of the day:

38 John Thomson, Into a New Key: The Origins and History of the Music Federation of New Zealand 1950-
39 Thomson, ADM 226.
41 Thomson, ADM 98.
Wider and wider fling the gate,  
Who will aid may enter;  
Teacher, artist, man of state,  
Artisan, inventor... 

Hinemoa: the plot

Hill's daughter Isolde's version of "The Maori Legend of Hinemoa" prefaces the vocal score of Hinemoa. This is the version Adams chose to use as the basis for his libretto. Against a backdrop of war, the characters play out "A story older than the ages ... Yet ever new recurrent like the dawn." 

A Maori chief and his four sons inhabited Mokoia Island, which lies in the middle of Lake Rotorua. Tutanekai, the youngest son, and Hinemoa, the daughter of the chief of an enemy tribe who dwelt on the shores of the lake, had fallen in love. At night Tutanekai would play his flute or koauau in the hope that Hinemoa would hear the music and think of him. Via his servant Tiki, Tutanekai sent a message to Hinemoa, asking her to come to him at night. Unfortunately all the canoes were drawn up on the shore, and Hinemoa was unable to move them. Guided by the sound of Tutanekai's flute she swam the mile and a half to the island across the lake.

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42 Thomson, ADM 98.
43 The full score is prefaced with the note that "There are many versions of the story of Hinemoa, the maiden of Rotorua, and the version chosen as the argument for the present musical setting is merely that which was most suitable for the purposes of a cantata." Alfred Hill Collection IMS 4304, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
45 See J.C. Andersen, Maori Music in its Polynesian Background (Memoir No.10 Installment No. 8 Wellington: Polynesian Society, 1934) 237. The reputed "flute of Tutanekai" is held in the Auckland Institute and Museum. (Cat. no. AIM 69.) "Human bone, three fingerholes. Upper and lower ends carved, and carrying cord carved in the underside." See Gilbert Mair "Te Murirangaranga — Tutanekai's Flute" in Richard Moyle, The Sounds of Oceania (Auckland: Auckland Institute and Museum, 1989) 11-12. Andersen suggests that Tutanekai's friend Tiki may in fact have played the koauau, and further suggests that the flute held the Auckland Institute and Museum "may be the historic flute of Mokoia, or it may not — this honour is claimed for about ten different flutes." (Andersen, 239-240.) Hill recalled discussing the design of the koauau with one of the principal actors in Rudall Hayward's film Rewi's Last Stand. Hill wondered about the origin of the position of the flute's tone-holes. Hill's informant told him that the holes corresponded to the gaps between the different knuckles of the finger. Hill noted that as every hand is different, the tune "must be made to suit the holes on the flute. He said 'That's right. When you get sick of the tune you block them up and make another lot of holes.' Hill subsequently noted flutes held in the Auckland Museum with such blocked and rebored holes. Audiotape, "Portrait of Alfred Hill." [c1950s] Sound Archive of Radio New Zealand, T1934.
On her arrival, cold and exhausted, she fell into a warm pool which restored her strength. A slave with a calabash came by the pool on his way to the lake to get a drink for his master Tutanekai. Hinemoa called out in a man's voice, asking for a drink. She then broke the calabash and sent the slave back to his master. This happened again.

When Tutanekai heard the tale he seized his war weapons and ran to wreak vengeance upon the rascal who dared to break his calabashes. Reaching the spot where Hinemoa was shyly hiding he called out 'Where is the fellow who broke my calabashes?' No one answered and he leant over the pool and caught hold of a small hand. Wonderingly he cried 'Ha, who is this?' and Hinemoa answered, 'It is I, Hinemoa.' Overjoyed, Tutanekai caught her other hand and drew her to the edge of the water.... Removing his cloak, Tutanekai wrapped it round her lovely form and took her to his own house, which according to the ancient law of the Maori made them man and wife, and great was the surprise and rejoicing next day on the island of Mokoia.46

Hill's setting is for Soprano ("Hinemoa, A Maori Maiden"), Tenor, Baritone (Tiki and Tutanekai respectively, "Maori Youths"), and Bass ("Tohunga, A Maori Wizard"), SATB chorus (taking the part of various "Maori Maidens, Fairies and Ra-Ha Warriors") and orchestra.47

The Tohunga's brief moralising Prologue (A minor, Lento) follows the 32 bar orchestral Introduction (A Major, Andantino), in which Tutanekai's flute motif is heard for the first time. (See Fig.6). (The score notes that the flute solo — "a traditional Maori air" — is to be played offstage.) The first Scene ("A Maori Pa (Village)") consists of the female chorus ("Comes a Merry Chorus of Maori Maidens": A Major, Allegro), singing Hinemoa's praises. Hinemoa's Ballad "When the Tired Winds are Sleeping" (F Major, Lento) takes place at "The Lake-Side, Evening" (Scene II). Here Hinemoa declares her love for the absent and presumed unaware Tutanekai.

The male warriors' chorus "Ra-Ha" ("Scene III: The Pa (Village), Night." D♭ Major, Allegro: minim=138) gives the first hint of intertribal conflict. ("Ra-ha" itself appears to be an abbreviation of the name of the Ngatitoa warrior-chief Te Rauparaha: Thomas Bracken uses the same abbreviation in "The March of Te Rauparaha.")48 In recitative, (No. 4, "The Lake-side":

46 Alfred Hill, *Hinemoa an Epic of New Zealand* [vocal score] (Melbourne: Allan, 1935) [np]
47 All details from Alfred Hill, *Hinemoa* [vocal score].
Maestoso) Tutanekai’s friend Tiki tells Hinemoa of Tutanekai’s love for her, and that she should go to him across the lake, under cover of darkness. A barcarolle-style orchestral interlude follows, in which "Tiki’s horn and Tutanekai’s flute are heard across the water." ("Scene IV, The Lake, Evening." Bb Major, Tranquillo, 6/8) Scene V, in which Tutanekai calls on his flute to convey his love to Hinemoa, takes place on Mokoia Island at evening. (Bb Major, Andantino). Hinemoa’s Ballad of secret farewell to her tribe (Scene VI, No. 7: F# Major, Tranquillo ) takes place during the same lakeside evening.

A dramatic hiatus follows. (No.8 "Scena — Hinemoa": F# Major, Moltò allegro). After hearing Tutanekai’s flute across the lake, Hinemoa finds she cannot go to him, as all the canoes drawn up on the shore. Fairies come to Hinemoa’s aid (No.9: Eb Major, Andante), offering to guide her over the water. Hinemoa "plunges into the lake." No.9 segues into No. 10, in which the fairies cast a protecting charm over Hinemoa as she swims. ("Scene VII — The Lake, Night": Eb Major, Allegro.) Tutanekai discovers a figure hiding in the rushes, and thinking Hinemoa is an enemy slave, threatens her with death (No.11: C# minor, Allegro). Hinemoa speaks, and realising his mistake, Tutanekai proclaims her bravery. In their final duet (No. 12, E Major, Allegro con fuoco), the lovers are reconciled, and vow never again to be parted. The Finale ("Scene IX — The Native Pa (Village), Morning") begins with a 40-bar orchestral introduction ( A Major, Maestoso) The chorus praises Hinemoa’s courage, and the power of love to bring peace: “Maiden’s love has vanquished war.”

The orchestration of No. 1 (Introduction and Prologue) is fairly characteristic of the whole, calling for double woodwind, cornets in A, tympani in E and A, triangle, strings and harp. The flute doubles piccolo in No. 3 (Chorus of Warriors) which also adds cymbals, two tenor trombones and one bass trombone. The harp is not used in this number, but appears again at the end of No. 4, (Duet of Tiki and Hinemoa). It also features in Nos. 5 and 6. (Orchestral Interlude and Tutanekai’s apostrophe to his flute.)

This harp part, written especially for the English-trained harpist Constance Hatherly, shows Hill capitalising not only on the popularity of his chosen musical idiom, but on the high public profile of one of his performers. Hatherly was prominent both as a musician, and as the "champion lady plunge-diver of the colony," having "carried off gold medals both for high

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49 Details from Conductor’s Score of Alfred Hill, Hinemoa IMS Papers 4304, Alfred Hill Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
and long distance diving (competitions open to both sexes)." Hatherly travelled to Sydney with Ovid Musin’s company, described as "a kind of Chrichton in petticoats, being a chess player of weight and a swimmer of amazing mettle, [who] has already, though young, won distinction as a harper." 

The tessitura of the soprano part is fairly high (the penultimate bar of no. 8 contains a fermata B♭, No. 12 concludes with a 4-bar B natural) and the baritone range extends down to a G♯, although an ossia is offered. Although the vocal lines appear to challenge both soloists and choir, the rhythmic and melodic interest of the parts is strictly limited. Dramatically and musically unrelated numbers follow each other, with recitatives advancing the narrative to some extent. The story tends to proceed through parenthetical commentaries such as "Hinemoa finds that she is unable to move a canoe, all having been drawn up from the water’s edge." (No. 8 Scena — Hinemoa) These were not intended to be part of a performance: the story was well known and a synopsis of the legend was included in the programme for the 1896 performance.

The orchestral thematic material is also limited: the opening flute "leitmotif" is repeated many times, with minimal harmonic variation. The orchestration is colourful, but tends to be thick. The harp part features prominently.

For Adams, characterisation took second place to the demands of the narrative, which he embellished with "fairies' choruses," set pieces and elaborate personifications. Apart from the names of the characters, a few nouns are the only Maori-language component in the libretto. Pronunciation guides and the occasional gloss appear at the foot of the page on which they occur: "Raupo" — "Pronounced 'Row-po' ('Row' like 'prow')" and "Toi" — "Pronounced 'Taw-ee'; "Hei konei" — "Pronounced 'Hey ko-ney'" and "Haere ra" — "'Hi-rey rah' a Maori farewell"; and "Mere" — "Pronounced 'Merry'. A battledore shaped club; a stone weapon for hand to hand fighting."

Adams made Hinemoa, the "Peerless Queen of Rotorua", exotic and voluptuous. She has hair "like the night." Her "bosom bare" which throbbed "with longing for her love", and her

"[fragrance] sweet beyond surmise" gave her a slightly risqué quality. The warrior Tutanekai displayed both savagery and tenderness: ready to kill the lurking stranger who later turns out to be Hinemoa herself, he also sings an apostrophe to his flute, which he asks to speak for him, his own voice failing for love:

Wake, my tender thrilling flute,
For my voice is all too weak:
O'er the waves my love salute.
Speak the words I dare not speak!

The secondary figures of Tiki and the Tohunga are not individually characterised. Their main function is to advance the narrative. The male and female choruses have set pieces which add atmosphere. The first women's chorus (No.1) sings Hinemoa's praises. Their next contribution is as a "fairy chorus" (No. 9). The first male chorus (No.3) was probably intended to show the 'warlike nature' of the Maori, and the background of war against which the story is set. It is unclear to which tribe the men belong. Known as the "Ra-Ha" chorus, it was Hinemoa's most frequently encored item.

Ra Ha! Ra Ha! Ra Ha! Ra Ha!
On the breast of the tempest is borne through the land
The Spirit of war with the ravening hand,
With his wide waving pinions the faction is fanned,
And peace is no more!

Ra Ha! Ra Ha! Ra Ha! Ra Ha!
There are murmurs and rumours that ride through the air,
And love has no place; there is hate everywhere;
And the blood-hunger wakes, and still pulses stir,
And the word is for war!

The famous "Ra-ha" chorus for male voices [is] perhaps the most effective morceau in the composition. One can imagine a band of dusky warriors, with their grotesque contortions and deep-mouthed growls of fury, executing a real war dance, with the fine crescendo ending in a "fff ugh" as a climax.55

The "Ra-ha" chorus for Maori warriors ... is a marvel of musical cleverness. One can see as it were the warriors in ranks, leaping, gesticulating, grimacing, clanging their rude weapons of war, the while they make the earth shake with the rhythm of their feet-beats.56

Part of Hinemoa’s immediate success may have lain in its setting of a familiar legend in a familiar and popular medium: the cantata was central in the work of many of Hill’s English contemporaries.

**Hinemoa in its international musical context**

Hinemoa lies firmly within the choral tradition of large-scale works for choir, soloists and orchestra. These had been prominent in the work of all the significant figures of late nineteenth-century English music. As the name implies, the cantata is a vocal composition, for one or more voices and instrumental accompaniment, and historically, either secular or religious in its subject-matter. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the cantata had most usually been written for chorus and orchestra, generally a setting of a secular text.

Hill’s selection of cantata form had contemporary parallels in England. C. Hubert H. Parry made two settings of Milton — the enormously popular *Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887) and *L’allegro ed il penseroso* (1890). He also set scenes from Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound* (1880) and a choric song from Tennyson’s *Lotus Eaters* (1892). Stanford’s secular choral works included a setting of *The Golden Legend* (1875) and Tennyson’s *The Revenge: A Ballad of the Fleet* (1886). Arthur Sullivan, although best known for his collaborations with W.S. Gilbert, was also prolific as a composer of “serious” music. He completed several oratorios and cantatas, including an *Ode for the Opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition* (1886), a setting of a text by Tennyson. The cantata *The Golden Legend* (1886) was a setting of a text by J. Bennett, after Longfellow. The oratorio *The Prodigal Son* was completed in 1869. Edward Elgar’s choral works from this time include the cantatas *The Black Knight* (1889-92) and *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf* also a setting of Longfellow, (1894-6) and the still frequently-performed oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius* (1899-1900).

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57 Although formally similar, the oratorio and the cantata have distinct genealogies as genres. The former is an extended musical setting of a sacred text made up of dramatic, narrative and contemplative elements. The style tends to approximate that of operas. Haydn’s *Creation*, Spohr’s *Calvary*, and Mendelssohn’s *Saint Paul* and *Elijah* all had performances in England during the first half of the nineteenth century. Large-scale works on religious subjects roughly contemporary with Hinemoa include Hubert Parry’s *Job* which appeared in 1892, and his *King Saul*, first performed in about 1894.
Hinemoa in its local context: New Zealand poetry, fiction and drama in the late Nineteenth Century

Poetry: some epic poems on Maori themes

Alfred Hill selected European musical models, occasionally grafting a veneer of local colour, usually local language, onto transplanted musical idioms. In much the same way, many of Hill's and Adams' literary contemporaries gravitated towards a distant and idealised literary centre.

Alfred Domett's (1811-1887) epic poem Ranolf and Amohia: A South-Sea Day Dream (1872), for example, tells of a British sailor, shipwrecked on the New Zealand coast, who saves the Maori princess Amohia from two male tormentors. He learns her language and eventually elopes with her. After various separations and misunderstandings, the lovers are finally reunited. Domett's aspiration towards the literary centre led him to seek for this poem the approval of Tennyson, Browning and Longfellow. Tennyson found the poem an "embarass de richesses" while Browning found it "a great and astonishing performance, of very varied beauty and power."58 "It reminded Longfellow of 'what a Western woman said when she first saw the ocean: 'Well I am glad at last to see enough of something.'"59 Hill later used Ranolf and Amohia as the basis for his cantata Tawhaki.60

Film-maker Rudall Hayward later expressed a desire to turn Domett's poem into a film. Writing to Alfred Hill in 1938, Hayward said that he had "been dreaming about [a Maori musical film] for years."61

My pet subject is the Right Hon. Alfred Domett's classic poem Ranolf and Amohia, which to my mind has screen possibilities. It would take you a week to wade through the poem but it is an ideal subject for a musical film, planned for world-wide release, if possible in colour. It is one of the few stories that set in Rotorua in 1845 (approx) still retains the true atmosphere of the olden Maori, as he was before the inroads of missionary and trader, and yet has a white hero, which is good for the box office.62

59 Allen Curnow, Penguin 32-34. For further discussion of Curnow's attitude to Victorian poetry, see Chapter Three: "Landfall in Unknown Seas."
60 Thomson, A Distant Music 226.
The film project never eventuated.

Thomas Bracken (1843-98), perhaps best remembered as the author of one of New Zealand's two National Anthems, also cast a reverential eye in the direction of English contemporaries. Bracken's *Musings in Maoriland* appeared in 1890, and is dedicated to "Alfred Lord Tennyson...with the sincere admiration of the Author." The volume contains an elegy to Longfellow, in which Bracken may be idealising his own relationship with his 'native' sources:

He gathered from the Northland plains
Old echoes wild of Indian strains;
He beautified the songs of yore,
Then gave them to the woods once more —
Excelsior!

*Musings in Maoriland* features Bracken's epic poem "The March of Te Rauparaha." The metre of the poem is mixed, but the narrative is generally set in trochaic tetrameters: Longfellow's "Haiawatha" metre: "the one American poet to whom nineteenth century New Zealand versifiers frequently turned was Longfellow — especially when bent on immortalising their local Hiawathas and Minnehahas." Longfellow's trochaic metre also attracted Arthur Adams. Adams' epic, "The Coming of Te Rauparaha," is set at the death-bed of "Hipe", who lacks a successor to protect his people from "the onrush/ Of the white-faced strangers." The young Te Rauparaha is the only warrior brave enough to accept the challenge. However, where Bracken depicts the Maori as savage cannibals, Adams' characters are embattled and facing change.

**Drama**

Plays from the latter part of the century often displayed the Maori in a similarly romantic light. The expense of touring overseas shows and the cost of purchase of copyright meant that several actor-managers turned playwright and "compensated for a script's lack of an international

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reputation by insisting on a plethora of local colour." (The ephemeral nature of many of these productions meant that few scripts from the late nineteenth century survive.) Productions with New Zealand subjects included Barrie Marschel's The Murder at the Octagon (1895) and Humerire Taniwha (1898). Less successful was Australian impresario Alfred Dampier's "The Growing of Rata" (1904), which was condemned for "a lack of motivation and morality." "The Land of the Moa", "the most successful Nineteenth Century melodrama on a New Zealand subject," was produced by George Leitch in 1895.

In terms of spectacle and exploitation of ethnic detail, the achievement of "The Land of the Moa" was most nearly paralleled by local opera. Maori themes were no novelty to this genre. As early as 1880, 'a Mr Griffen of Wanganui had written a musical extravaganza entitled 'Hinemoa', for which the New Zealand Times had predicted a substantial future: 'It will form the groundwork of a permanent entertainment, which might be worked successfully throughout the Colonies, one of the principal features being the introduction of a series of panoramic views, illustrating the Middle Island Sounds and the Hot Lakes of the North Island.' Though Griffen wrote more for the local stage, 'Hinemoa' appears not to have been revived.

A contemporary preview of the play Philo Maori, or New Zealand as it Is (1870) used the promise of exotic display as a drawcard: "Real Maoris are to be introduced, and go through the war dance, and such other little arrangements as aboriginals are liable to." The exotic element 'saved' the production, as a subsequent reviewer noted:

[H]ad it not been for the novelty of several 'real Maoris', who played the parts of the savages, the piece would have been a complete failure, but these gentlemen kept the audience in a pretty good humour by their dance — the first of which by-the-way, was anything but a pleasing exhibition — and general movements.

66 McNaughton, New Zealand Drama 26.
67 McNaughton, New Zealand Drama 26.
68 McNaughton, New Zealand Drama 16. Set during the "Maori Wars", The Land of the Moa relied on stock melodrama characters: the rapacious American or European villain, with Maori generally depicted as noble savages sympathetic to the causes of British imperialism. The final affirmation of The Land of the Moa was patriotic and ended with the singing of "Rule Britannia." "Maori supernumeries were employed for war dances and group effects, but all the principle Maori parts were played by Europeans." (McNaughton, New Zealand Drama 23) George Leitch's The Land of the Moa, in a new edition edited by Adrian Kiernander, was published in 1990 by Victoria University Press. (Wellington: VUP, 1990).
69 McNaughton, New Zealand Drama 26.
70 Howard McNaughton, "Drama." Sturm ed., Oxford History 274.
The first locally-written play to be published in New Zealand was Griffen's "New Grand Semi-Maori Christmas Pantomine", fully entitled *Kainga of the Ladye Birds or Harlequin Prince Tumanako, the Fair Ataahua, and the Demon of Colonial Finance* (1879). Ironically, although Griffen rejected the possibility of a Maori cast, he capitalised on the theatrical and colourful potential of his local subject: "All of the dramatic characters are Maori (played by Europeans) and the locations tribal."\(^7\)

**Fiction**

George Wilson's novel *Ena; or, the Ancient Maori* (1875) was an attempt to exploit Maori materials for the purposes of Ossianic tragic epic, replete with epic similes and picturesque description, a prose *Ranolf and Amohia*.... It is the pattern of melodramatic romance that is found most frequently in conventional fictions [of the late nineteenth century], with the New Zealand scene providing an exotic local.... Artful commercial exploitations of Maori material can be found in two Australian-written Maori romances, Robert Whitworth's *Hine Ra; of, the Maori Scout: A Romance of the New Zealand War* (1887) and Rolf Boldrewood's *War to the Knife'; or, Tangata Maori* (1899).... The Maori romance had become such a popular form that R. Ward could parody it in his *Supplejack; A Romance of Maoridom* (1894).\(^7\)

*Hinemoa* tapped into the popularity of the musical extravaganza which, by 1896, was well established as a genre. 'A large public had by then acquired a taste for musical dramas on romanticised Maori themes. The subject offered the chance of exotic display, and also seemed an appropriate place to begin a characteristic, "colourful" — if not yet nationalistic — local performance tradition.

Despite its popularity and its scale, few noted *Hinemoa's* importance as an early locally-composed symphonic work. One of the few commentators to mention *Hinemoa's* status found the work's programmatic elements more noteworthy than its signal position in an embryonic pakeha tradition.

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\(^7\)Howard McNaughton, "Drama." Sturm ed., *Oxford History* 274.

\(^7\)Howard McNaughton, "Drama." Sturm ed., *Oxford History* 275.

We reached a marked stage in our musical history with the production of a national cantata — *Hinemoa* — by two young New Zealanders, ... who have succeeded in producing an effort instinct with Maori poetry, and breathing of war and love, of lakeside whispers, of thundering waters, of the shale of the waves, and the throb of the seas by night.\(^7^4\)

**Hill and the Maori**

This romanticised view of 'Maoriland' and its inhabitants held a strong fascination — writers, artists and commentators had long seen the potential in basing local productions on Maori themes.\(^7^5\) Hill and ethnographer Johannes C. Andersen both saw the potential of Maori music for the development of (pakeha) New Zealand art "on characteristic lines."\(^7^6\) It was hoped that these "characteristic lines" would appear in the translation of Maori narratives and music into pakeha media.

A naive 'good faith' was the only prerequisite for the appropriation of indigenous material. There is no evidence to suggest that Hill undertook primary research at first hand. However, Hill maintained friendships and correspondences with several Maori, and often used them as sources. Makere Mohoa\(^7^7\) offered to collect Maori songs on Hill's behalf, and Hori Makaire\(^7^8\) offered Hill some Maori words to set. Makarete (Maggie) Papakura expressed her regard for Hill's work with Maori music: "I fully understand your love for the Maoris, and appreciate it. There are so few who really understand our people."\(^7^9\) A week later Papakura added "You are right in all you say with regard to Maori songs. Cannot bear our people to sing coon songs and what you suggest re- our Maori songs has been my greatest ambition. The beautiful songs of the Maori which are dying out [sic]."\(^8^0\)

Painter C.F. Goldie too saw a need to select Maori subjects, working quickly to record a "dying


\(^{75}\) See following for discussion of the image of the Maori in Pakeha drama and fiction in the late 19th Century. See also Chapter Two: "Waiata Poi."


\(^{77}\) Makere Mohoa, letter to Alfred Hill, 28 February 1930. Alfred Hill Papers 528/4, Mitchell Library.

\(^{78}\) Hori Makaire, letter to Alfred Hill, 23 October 1930. Alfred Hill Papers 528/4, Mitchell Library.


\(^{80}\) 29 October 1909. Alfred Hill Papers 528/2, Mitchell Library.
race." He urged his friend Hill to do the same. In 1916 Goldie wrote to Hill:

I am very pleased to hear that you are still keen on Maori stuff and undoubtedly there is no one who can touch it but yourself. You must not delay getting as much material as possible, such can only be procurable from the old maori, who in a very short [sic] will be a thing of the past. It is surprising how quickly they are dying off.81

Adams' characterisations in "The Coming of Te Rauparaha" were perhaps informed by the prevalent nostalgia for what was seen as the passing of a noble race.

**New contexts for old**

*Hinemoa* can be read in several ways. Firstly, taken in its original historical context, it stands in relation to its musical and literary predecessors and its immediate social, musical and literary environment. Any contemporary reading of the work must bear in mind this original context, and the warmth of its initial reception. Praise for the work came from all quarters.

Poet and politician Edward Tregear wrote to Hill that he could not have believed that any European music could have so well interpreted the genius of the Maori feeling. The Ra-ha chorus had all the fire and martial rousing that I have felt stir the blood and light the eye in the native war-dance, while the instrumental effects and live songs were very fine and pathetic — 'simpatica.'82

Politician Robert Stout "most heartily [congratulated]" Hill on the production83, and one James R. Purdy hoped that "Hinemoa will be heard of again and again and that its original performance will be of great interest."84

The press was similarly ecstatic. The *Evening Post* wrote that

the main theme of the work — the 'magic flute' melody — fascinated the listeners with its weird charm. The cleverly descriptive lake music was also much admired, but the great descriptive power shown in the 'Ra-ha'

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chorus... simply carried the audience away, and caused the talented composer to receive a perfect ovation.85

The Wairarapa Daily Times noted that

there must have been fully two thousand people in the concert hall to hear the musical entertainment, the feature of which was the production of Messrs Adams and Hill's cantata 'Hinemoa.' This proved one of the greatest musical treats ever heard in Wellington. Everyone was delighted with it and the very clever melodies and choruses were received with most enthusiastic applause. The composition is both original and clever, and sufficient to entitle Mr. Hill to the title of the Mascagni of New Zealand.86

The work quickly became popular. The third performance took place on 18 December 1896, a month after its first performance. Several hundred people climbed on to the grandstand roof of the hall "and heard the work under absolutely novel conditions."87 News of Hill's triumph carried as far as London. The London Musical Courier noted that at the conclusion of this first performance, "Mr. Hill received an ovation, and was presented with several floral tributes, one taking the form of a shield of white flowers with 'Hinemoa' in blue flowers traversing it."88

Hinemoa: some subsequent performances

The first part of this chapter attempted to recover an aesthetically and chronologically peripheral text, by reconstructing the situation in which it was produced. In the final part of the chapter, I will look at Hinemoa in some more recent contexts. By today's standards Hinemoa may seem a late Victorian confection of little musical interest, dated even for its time. However, aesthetic considerations and value-judgements tend to be irrelevant when reading for centrality and peripherality. If a historically peripheral work resurfaces in a later time or in a remote aesthetic context, there are likely to be historically and culturally valid reasons for its (albeit temporary) resurrection. Hinemoa's initial success may have had something to do with the colourful treatment of an 'exotic' subject. However, its subsequent reappearances have had as their pretext occasions of commemoration or celebration, honouring the singular position of the work and its composer, rather than with any perceived 'aesthetic' value.

85 *Evening Post* Saturday 21 November 1896. ML MSS 528/10-13, Alfred Hill Papers, Mitchell Library.
Much of the music produced in New Zealand's colonial and late-colonial period is now canonically peripheral. Performances of such peripheral works offer opportunity to address those historical questions Terry Sturm has asked of canonically peripheral literature of the same period. He called for a re-reading of early twentieth century writing, from before "that time from which so many received accounts date the 'real' beginnings of a national literature."89 (The same accounts might equate the 'real' beginning of a 'national music' and Douglas Lilburn's return from England in 1942.90)

The purpose of this re-reading is "not to unearth forgotten nineteenth century masterpieces, but to ask different questions about [a national literature]. What were its most vital forms? ... In what ways was writing [or music] involved... 'in the processes of colonisation, in the implementation of European power, in the description and justification of the European presence as normative?'"91 These questions fall into line with those formulated by Stephen Greenblatt for dealing with chronologically and aesthetically remote texts, such as Hinemoa: "Why might readers at a particular time and place find this work compelling?' 'Are there differences between my values and the values implicit in the work I am reading?'"92

Although Alfred Hill was peripheral to the Western musical tradition as a whole, he was central in terms of the transplantation of that tradition to New Zealand and Australia. Although the works may have no great stature of their own, Hill himself is celebrated as a pioneer — the pioneer being one who is at once both peripheral (to the old) and central (to the new). Even though Hinemoa has dropped from the concert repertoire, it has received performances at widely-spaced intervals. All of these intermittent performances have been commemorative in nature, celebrating Hill's position as a groundbreaker. Intermittent revival suggest that Hinemoa is still an historically significant text, even though audience reaction to the work has changed radically. Where once it was central to, and had a constitutive position in the pakeha performance canon in New Zealand, as a performed text it is now peripheral to all but the most historicist readings of New Zealand music.

The New Zealand Music Council brought Hill to New Zealand in 1952 to take part in the

89Terry Sturm, Introduction, Oxford History xi.
90See Chapter Three: Landfall in Unknown Seas.
91Sturm xi.
92Stephen Greenblatt, "Culture", Lentorichia and McLaughlin 226.
Auckland Music Festival and his visit was commemorated with a performance of *Hinemoa*. Reviewing that concert, Owen Jensen wrote

Written when he must have been in his early twenties — he is past eighty now — it is, of course, of the fashion of those days. Placed in its period, however, *Hinemoa* has an astonishing freshness, with passages of orchestral colour of real beauty. It is characteristic of Alfred Hill that he should account for some banality in the final passages of *Hinemoa* by suggesting that he owed it to his audience not to make their listening too difficult at that stage of the concert. Maybe he is right. Today we are hardly in a position to judge. A reference to some of the programmes of New Zealand in the 1890s would substantiate the belief that Alfred Hill may have gauged his audiences accurately. *Hinemoa* may be too pallid to excite today, but, historically, it is a significant work.93

Saturday 16 December 1959 saw a performance of *Hinemoa* given in Sydney by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, as part of an 89th birthday tribute to Hill.94

*Hinemoa* was most recently performed as part of a concert entitled "A Celebration of New Zealand Commemorative Music" given by the Wellington Regional Orchestra and the Orpheus Choir, conducted by Patrick Thomas, in St. Paul's Cathedral, Wellington, on 26 October 1990. All the works on the programme had texts. The non-representational nature of music limits and renders slippery its powers of signification. If music is required to carry a programme as specific as as commemoration or celebration, the presence of a text will ground an otherwise ambiguous signification system.

The concert was a "New Zealand 1990" sesquicentennial project, funded in part by the 1990 Commission.95 The New Zealand Composers' Foundation had put a proposal to the Sesquicentennial Committee to

do for New Zealand Music in 1990 that which the New Zealand Government had done for New Zealand Literature in 1940. Regrettably, the Government in 1990 did not... provide the basis on which such a scheme

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94Thomson, *ADM* 218.
95The 1990 Commission was established to "co-ordinate and promote activities for the 1990 year which will involve all in the community in a way that gives full expression to what it means to be a New Zealander." 1990 Commission *Mission Statement* 1990 Commission Auckland launch. Thursday 4 August 1988. Auckland War Memorial Museum.
could be implemented.... However, salvaged from the wreckage was a proposal to present a Concert in Wellington of certain historical New Zealand works.96

This commemorative concert was recorded for later broadcast by Radio New Zealand97, and was sent to air on Waitangi Day, 6 February 1991: another occasion of national commemoration.

The first item on the programme was Terence Vaughan's setting of Ruth France's poem "The Stream and the Discovery." This "royal ode" was the outcome of national competitions, for both the poem and its musical setting, organised by the New Zealand Broadcasting Service to commemorate the Queen Elizabeth II's first visit to New Zealand after her succession to the throne. This was followed by Allen Curnow and Douglas Lilburn's more frequently-performed *Landfall in Unknown Seas*. Poet Curnow narrated his own poem, written to commemorate the tercentennial of Abel Tasman's 1642 landfall in New Zealand.98 *Hinemoa* concluded the programme. Soloists were Soprano Anne Cheng (Hinemoa), Tenor Peter Baillie (Tiki), Baritone Roger Wilson (Tutanekai), and Bass Bruce Carson (Tohunga).99

The programming of a work such as *Hinemoa* probably posed certain problems. Its idiom, its unfamiliarity, and the treatment of its subject all point towards a potentially uncomfortable experience for a modern audience. John M. Thomson's preliminary presentation and written notes provided context for a work that otherwise might appear a mere Victorian curio. Both oral and written presentations included relevant historical and musical anecdotes. An interview with Hill, recorded by Thomson in the late 1950s, provided further personal and historical context. There appears to be no trace of irony, however, in Thomson's remark that "the libretto, despite the passage of time, has no traces of condescension in its portrayal of the Maori people. It has the same fidelity of approach to its theme as the music."100

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96 Ashley Heenan, letter to author, 9 September 1992. Heenan may be referring to the series of New Zealand Centennial Surveys, published at monthly intervals throughout 1940, the year of the centennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The series presented "a comprehensive picture of the nation's development." (F.L.W. Wood *Centennial Survey XI: New Zealand and the World* (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940) [np]


98 For discussion of *Landfall in Unknown Seas* see Chapter Three.


100 See Chapter One "Waiata Poi" for further discussion of Hill's relationship with Maori music.
Hinemoa was the only work on the programme introduced in such detail. Ashley Heenan provided a written programme note for Landfall in Unknown Seas. Terence Vaughan provided his own programme note to The Stream and the Discovery. Although not often performed, the familiarity of the ceremonial function and idiom of the latter work perhaps rendered it less in need of explication.101

John Button reviewed the concert for The Dominion102 and a review by John Thomson appeared in Music in New Zealand.103 Both pointed out the historical significance of the occasion, and given this, the relevance of the choice of programme. Both writers emphasised the content of the programme rather than the performance itself. Button described Hinemoa as "the least distinguished music on the programme; a curious mish-mash of Sullivan, Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer, set to some of the most banal words imaginable." Thomson noted that Hinemoa "encapsulated the weaknesses rather than the strengths of the composer’s style, one which, instead of developing, remained virtually unchanged for the rest of his life."104

It is important to note that readings which equate second-hand idiom and weakness tell an incomplete story. The significance of Hinemoa as an important work in a 'thin' local music history can be gauged by the effort expended to save the score for posterity.

In 1987, Allan's Music had sent Hill's autograph manuscript to the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra "on perusal."105 Mended with sellotape and beginning to disintegrate, the composer's score had been sent as a working conductor's score.106 Heenan approached Allan's to make the original full score available to the National Archive as part of the 1990 Special Events. ("As a 1990 commemorative project the New Zealand Composers' Federation had proposed to record an anthology of recorded New Zealand music covering one hundred and fifty years. One part of the project was to record Alf's Hinemoa."107) In exchange, the Composers' Foundation of New Zealand offered to arrange for a newly-copied full score.108 On 28 February 1989 Allan's

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101 Vaughan's musical antecedents are also clearly audible. John M. Thomson detected "an ear attuned to Walton, Elgar and the English rhetorical tradition." Music in New Zealand (Summer 1990/91): 75.
102 '1990 Spur for Imaginative Concert" Dominion 29 October 1990.
103 Music in New Zealand (Summer 1990/91): 75.
104 Music in New Zealand (Summer 1990/91): 75.
106 Ashley Heenan, letter to Peter Nisbet, 8 November 1987, coll. Ashley Heenan.
Music offered the manuscript to the National Archive on permanent loan. "The Composer’s Foundation paid for its restoration — removal of sellotape etc."

The historical significance of the work is emphasised by its selection for placement in the Alexander Turnbull Library, to mark New Zealand’s sesquicentennial celebration. "In recognition of New Zealand's sesquicentenary, Allan's Music (Australia) Pty, Ltd. has generously deposited [in the Alexander Turnbull Library] the original full orchestral score of Alfred Hill's cantata *Hinemoa*. This score, from which Hill conducted, is a unique working document and a companion document to the piano score which the composer donated to the Library in 1952."

**Conclusion**

*Hinemoa* occupies a central but at the same time peripheral position in one part of New Zealand's history: peripheral to the modern performance canon, it also occupies a central position in the history of pakeha New Zealand's musical high culture. Especially pertinent on occasions of national historical retrospect such as the sesquicentennial celebration, careful modern performances of such canonically peripheral works can give a fresh sense of the remoteness of the past; such performances may also remind audiences of the past's constituting pressure on the present, and the present's re-invention of the past.

Hill's style as embodied in *Hinemoa* may seem transparently derivative or "second-hand." However, this "derivation" mirrors the processes of accretion and derivation also at work in Hill's wider cultural context. As with any culture, Hill's late-Victorian context was defined by its borrowings, exclusions and inclusions. It is this very transparency which renders *Hinemoa* an especially illustrative example of this process, as it shows the 'seams of its borrowings' quite clearly. These borrowings are chronologically and geographically specific, and represent a conflation of Hill's selection of a Maori story with Maori language fragments with the musical

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108 Ashley Heenan, letter to J. Sturman, 30 September 1988, coll Ashley Heenan.
109 B. Chapman, Managing Director, Allans Music (Australia) Pty, letter to Ashley Heenan, 28 February 1989. The score was given with the proviso that when displayed it was to be accompanied by the acknowledgement "Displayed by Courtesy of the Publishers Allans Music (Australia) Pty."
111 "Notable Acquisitions", *The Turnbull Library Record* 23 (1990). In 1952 Heenan had persuaded Hill to deposit the original manuscript piano score of *Hinemoa* in the Alexander Turnbull Library. Ashley Heenan, letter to author, 9 September 1992.
language of his European cultural heritage. It is this conflation of the local and the imported which defines a characteristic and specifically indigenous mix and negotiates for Hinemoa its at once central and peripheral position.
THREE: LANDFALL IN UNKNOWN SEAS
Landfall in Unknown Seas

Growing up in the first decades of the century, "in almost complete musical isolation," Douglas Lilburn found himself thinking that "all proper music had already been composed by Great Masters who lived overseas about a hundred years ago... Yet there was one magical name, Alfred Hill, to reassure me that music could and indeed had been composed here."¹ Despite acknowledging Hill's significance as "the first of our real composers"², Lilburn found Hill's conservative idiom irrelevant to his own goal, which was the establishment of "a living tradition of music created in this country, a music that will satisfy those parts of our being that cannot be satisfied by the music of other nations."³ Lilburn rejected the "pseudo-tradition transplanted from Victorian England"⁴ with which Hill was so deeply involved. He also condemned Hill's colouristic "use" of Maori music, "distrusting immediately the idea that one should make use of something which is part of another culture."⁵ Lilburn rejected the incorporation of indigenous music into his own stylistic vocabulary.

What I've learned of traditional Maori music makes me very afraid of trying to make use of it in any way at all — it's something I find rather difficult to understand although I'm fascinated by it. I think it would need a much greater fusion of the two cultures here before that music could be validly be put into European media.⁶

Although he did not share Hill's musical conservatism, Lilburn also rejected the avant-garde of his day; at this stage of his career rejecting serialism, having "little time" for the Second Viennese School.⁷ Lilburn felt that the development of the local musical vocabulary was no

¹Lilburn, ["Alfred Hill"] [no page.]
²Lilburn, Tradition 22.
³Lilburn, Tradition 10.
⁵Jack Body interviews Douglas Lilburn, Douglas Lilburn Papers MS Papers 2483: 97a. (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library.)
more compatible with the transplantation of musical "fashions" from Germany, than with the outmoded idioms of Hill and his contemporaries.

Lilburn's perception of his own style was one of reaction "against the whole musical tradition" and his string writing of the period, exemplified by Landfall in Unknown Seas, is certainly idiosyncratic. He explained his unconventional approach to harmony in terms of a wheel-tapper, who tests train wheels for cracks: various combinations of sounds were "tried out" until he found one that "fitted". However, Landfall in Unknown Seas still exhibits a stylistic relationship with some contemporary English and European music for string orchestra. Lilburn looked to recent and contemporary English music and to the music of other nationalisms for his models, acknowledging the germinal influences of Constant Lambert, Bela Bartok, Jean Sibelius, Benjamin Britten, and Lilburn's own teacher Ralph Vaughan Williams.

**Lilburn's eclecticm**

Throughout his career, Lilburn's attitude has been one of eclectic pragmatism. In 1946 he said that a student composer should listen

> to as much as he can of everything, studying the technique of it, and absorbing as much of it as seems to fit his own personality. The whole time too he must be writing as much as he can, because it is only in this way he can find out how much of what he's heard has really become part of him, and how much of it remains undigested. It is only in this way he can achieve... the discovery of his own identity and his real feeling towards the people and the environment about him.10

In 1969, he again affirmed that "New Zealand musicians really have no choice at this time other

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10Lilburn, Tradition 23.
than to be eclectic"; and in 1975 he commented that New Zealand's music was characterised by a necessary eclecticism, "which seems to be very natural for a small remote country.... Until we have a tradition of our own, a strong one, we necessarily listen to everything, select what seems appropriate, and reject other things."

Despite his call for eclecticism, Lilburn lamented the need felt by young composers to leave New Zealand. Any local artist had to come to terms with the inevitable "push-pull" effect resulting from the strong influence of cultural centres overseas, and an unwillingness in the local community to give composers the economic and spiritual support and encouragement necessary for their artistic survival. It is also clear that "eclecticism" is a relative matter, since Lilburn's music is less diverse than that of American composers such as Charles Ives or Lou Harrison, for example.

Lilburn's commitment to the development of location-specific music extended to the texts he chose to set: the vast majority were by contemporary New Zealand poets. In chronological order, Lilburn's settings of New Zealand poems for voice include: James K. Baxter's *A Song for Otago University* (1945); R.A.K. Mason's translation of Horace's *O Fons Bandusiae*; Baxter's *Li Po in Spring* (1947); Basil Dowling's *Summer Afternoon* (1947); Charles Brasch's *The Islands* (1948); Basil Dowling's *Lines in Autumn* (1950); and Alistair Campbell's *Elegy*, a cycle of eight songs for baritone and piano (1951). His setting Glover's "Sings Harry" poems was published in 1953. In 1954 Lilburn set Ruth Dallas's poems *Clear Sky* and *The Picnic*, and made an arrangement of the "Sings Harry" songs.

Aside from incidental music to plays and readings, Lilburn set few non-New Zealand authors. He did however, use Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself" along with Robin Hyde's "Journey from New Zealand" and Curnow's "New Zealand City" in *Prodigal Country* (1939). In

12 Jack Body interviews Douglas Lilburn (1975), Lilburn Douglas Lilburn Papers MS Papers 2483:97a (Alexander Turnbull Library.)
14 Appendix C of Norman, "Origins and Development" : Year by year list of Lilburn's compositions. Few of these settings are in print. Most are in manuscript, held in the collection of Douglas Lilburn Manuscripts in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
the four-movement *Elegy (I.M. Noel Newson)* (1945) he set poems by Herrick, Blake, Herbert and Shakespeare. Along with Curnow's poem "The Changeling", he set the traditional ballad "Sir Patrick Spens" and "Come unto these yellow sands" as *Three Poems of the Sea* (1958).

By the mid-1950s, however, Lilburn felt that he had "worked through to the end of a long apprentice period of composition based on that literary nationalism of the thirties."16 During study leave in 1955, "after fifteen years of isolation", Lilburn was "disconcerted to find how inadequate [his] compositional technique was in relation to the best of the new musical contexts [he] found [overseas.]"17 Toward the end of his career, Lilburn became profoundly involved with *musique concrète* (partly for practical reasons, since the tape recorder did away with the need for performers), and also became interested in serial techniques. His most significant serial work is the *Third Symphony* (1961).18

The desire for a national voice in the arts, at its most explicit during the 1940s, can be seen as a quest for artistic cohesion: a centripetal force. And yet, Douglas Lilburn's musical nationalism was at once centrifugally and centripetally oriented. Although Lilburn made an attempt to establish a musical discourse that was unique to New Zealand, he was also attracted to geographically remote examples. A national tradition has to be built on *something*, and Lilburn had some favourite overseas models of nationalism. The resolution of these contrary allegiances lay in his avowed eclecticism. Granted, his eclecticism had specific limits. The British tradition retained an important — perhaps central — role, as it did for Curnow's poetry (at least until the 1960s). Curnow and Lilburn combined their own mix of nationalism, driving it with a 'piecemeal' modernism, selecting what they saw as relevant to the New Zealand situation, producing what they hoped would be a location-specific blend.

Allen Curnow's poetic was explicitly centripetal in focus, and in his critical statements he

15 Douglas Lilburn collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, fMS Papers 2483 Folder 57.
18 Ross Harris, "Douglas Lilburn’s Symphony No. 3 (in one movement)" *Canzona* 1.5 (1980): 3-7.
consistently privileged the 'local' over the imported: "if the centripetally-guided work of New Zealanders is excluded, what is left of the country's poetry is a dull and random residue."

However, this "centripetal" aim had its centrifugal aspects. The literary energy needed for the nationalist project — the energy needed to explode what were perceived as outdated literary traditions and establish in their place a truly "New Zealand" voice in the arts — was derived in large part from the innovative energy of contemporary British poetry. Ironically, this modernism itself was driven in good part by the perceived failure of the centre to hold.

"Landfall in Unknown Seas"

Early in 1942, historian J.C. Beaglehole invited Allen Curnow to write a poem for the tercentennial of Abel Tasman's 1642 landfall in New Zealand. Beaglehole had himself previously evoked the excitement of a (re)discovery which had taken place nearly three hundred years before:

Towards midday on December 13 in the year 1642... the eyes of a sailor, straining over the waters of the Pacific, saw about sixty miles to the eastward 'a great land uplifted high'; as his ship drew nearer he saw that huge billows thundering in surf on the shore made a landing impossible, and he altered his course to sail north.... This sailor was Abel Janszoon Tasman, the ablest of the captains in the service of the Dutch East India Company, who was engaged in the search for fresh avenues of investment for his masters.

Abel Tasman made landfall on the West Coast of New Zealand's South Island later that day. On 17 December, the Heemskerke and the Zeehaen dropped anchor somewhere west of Separation Point. The next day, 18 December, a party was sent out from the Zeehaen to look for anchorage near the land and for a watering-place. Two boats approached from

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Fig. 9. Bette Curnow, illustration for the Tasman Tercentennial poem "Landfall in Unknown Seas." (Canterbury University College Review, Christchurch: Caxton, 1943) 4.
shore and the Dutchmen returned to their ship. The following day a larger party approached the Dutch vessels. Tasman noted

they called out several times which we did not understand, the language bearing no resemblance to the vocabulary given us over there by the Honourable Governor General and Councillors of the Indies, but this is not to be wondered at as it contains the language of the Salamonis Islands etc. 23

The journal then relates details of an attack on the cockboat of the Zeehaen and the Dutch retaliation. Four Dutch sailors died, and although the Dutch retaliated with cannon fire, the extent of Maori losses went unrecorded by Tasman. The journal notes: "since the destestable deed of these inhabitants... teaches us a lesson, we consider the inhabitants of this country as enemies." 24 Leaving what he named "Murderer's Bay" later in the afternoon of 19 December, Tasman and his crew sailed up the West Coast of New Zealand's North Island. The ships finally sailed away on 6 January 1643, without landing.

Beaglehole's commission to Allen Curnow was made on behalf of the National Historical Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, which was to publish Curnow's poem in a special edition of Tasman's journal, with an introductory essay by Beaglehole. "This book, Abel Janszoon Tasman and the Discovery of New Zealand, was produced by the Department for official and private distribution; it was entirely John Beaglehole's conception, both as historian and typographical designer." 25 (The book never went on public sale. Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs Joseph Heenan kept it for official presentation.) 26 Curnow worked on the poem for most of 1942, 27 reading historical records "more with the idea of keeping history out of the poem than cramming it in." 28

23 Abel Janszoon Tasman 49.
24 Abel Janszoon Tasman 53.
28 Liner notes to LP, Landfall in Unknown Seas Kiwi LD-2.
On one of Curnow’s visits to Lilburn on his way to work at *The Press*, the composer asked the poet for a text to set to music. (Since his arrival in Christchurch, Lilburn had been looking for opportunities for composition. Anton Vogt had previously asked him to provide music for a play about the war in Crete but Curnow maintains that Lilburn "found it unsuitable."29) On another afternoon visit in September 1942, Curnow gave Lilburn the poem "Landfall in Unknown Seas" to read.30

When I had finished, I showed the poem to Lilburn.... I would have called, as I so often did, on my way to work at *The Press*. I hoped it would strike him as a subject for music. By great good fortune it did, though part of the fortune was (I am glad to think) that we knew each other's minds so well; no-one would have been quicker to perceive, than Lilburn, if the poem and his music could not agree. With an immediate response from [J.C.] Beaglehole and from Joe (afterwards Sir Joseph) Heenan, then head of Internal Affairs, the music was completed and the first performance arranged. Without the music or (as I would always prefer it) with it, the poem has been performed many times since the tercentennial of 1642, and broadcast both in New Zealand and by the BBC.31

Lilburn wrote the music without commission but hoped for a radio fee. "The notion of the incidental music for a broadcast of the poem came from dire need of money to survive."32 The National Broadcasting Service bought the performance rights to his four-movement incidental music.33 The work was first performed in a broadcast from 2YA (Wellington) on 13 December 1942, the three hundredth anniversary of Tasman's landfall. The strings of the National Broadcasting Service Orchestra were conducted by Anderson Tyrer and the narrator was Eton Hurley, a Wellington lawyer with an interest in amateur dramatics. The poet himself commented that he would "probably have read the poem himself if anybody (himself included) had thought of it."34 At the time he had read little of his own work in public.35 Curnow has,

32 Douglas Lilburn, correspondence with author, 6 October 1993.
however, been involved in many subsequent performances. His first reading took place at the first live performance of *Landfall in Unknown Seas*, given in the Great Hall of Canterbury University College on 13 September 1943 as part of the first concert devoted entirely to Lilburn's work.\(^{36}\) The Christchurch Strings were conducted by the composer. Curnow remembers having difficulty with his entries and asked Lilburn to cue him in near the end of the music sections.\(^{37}\)

Some of the many later performances of the work include: a performance to delegates of the South East Asian Treaty Organisation Council of Foreign Ministers in Wellington in April 1959;\(^{38}\) a performance narrated by Curnow given on 6 May 1973 at the Canterbury University centennial concert;\(^{39}\) and in February 1990 a broadcast commemorated the centennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.\(^{40}\) The work was also broadcast on Concert FM Wednesday 29 December 1993, as part of a programme entitled "Pupil and Teacher." (The other work on the programme was Ralph Vaughan Williams' *A London Symphony.*)\(^{41}\)

At the time of writing, Curnow's most recent public performance of *Landfall in Unknown Seas* was on 26 October 1990, as part of the previously mentioned concert entitled "A Celebration of New Zealand Commemorative Music."\(^{42}\) The programme included *Landfall in Unknown Seas*, Terence Vaughan's "royal ode" entitled "The Stream and the Discovery", and Alfred Hill's cantata *Hinemoa*.\(^{43}\) (Although not broadcast live, this concert was later sent to

\(^{34}\) Allen Curnow, interview with author, 4 December 1988.

\(^{35}\) Allen Curnow, interview with author, 4 December 1988.

\(^{36}\) Harris and Norman 102.

\(^{37}\) Allen Curnow, interview with author, 4 December 1988.


\(^{39}\) "Sounds Historical" Radio New Zealand Sound Archive.

\(^{40}\) *Listener*, 5-11 February 1990.

\(^{41}\) *Listener*, 25 December 1993.

\(^{42}\) See Chapter Two: *Hinemoa*.

\(^{43}\) See Chapter Two: *Hinemoa*. 
air on 28 August 1991 and 4 January 1992.) The most recent performance was given in on 26 June 1992—"New Zealand Day" — at Expo in Seville. Allen Curnow attended this performance by narrator Ian Fraser with the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra.44

There is one commercial recording of Landfall in Unknown Seas, recorded in 1960 by the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra. Curnow narrated.45 This was very much a studio product since the strings were recorded in Wellington and Curnow recorded the poem in the Broadcasting Service's Durham Street studio in Auckland.46 During 1993, journalist Ian Fraser proposed a recording of the work, to be played by the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra with Sir Edmund Hillary as narrator.47 Curnow, however, did not give his support to this project.48

The Poem49

Curnow's poem, a pindaric ode50, was conceived in explicitly musical terms.

I thought of it in three 'movements.' First, a kind of recitative, setting the historical scene, and the setting-forth of the voyagers into the unknown — likening them too, to the ancient Polynesian voyagers. Second, a dramatic lyric, in rapid, short metre and strict pattern, recounting the Landfall in New Zealand, the bloody clash with the islanders, and Tasman's departure. Third, a lyric meditation, harmonising the vision and action of the first two parts, and offering a possible meaning for the whole to our own age and nation.51

44Ian Fraser, interview with author, 30 September 1993.
45Kiwi LP LD-2.
46Allen Curnow, interview with author, 4 December 1988.
47Ian Fraser, interview with author, 30 September 1993.
48Wystan Curnow, interview with author, 12 December 1993. The new recording threatened to under-read the poem, which, in its initial context, questioned these very displays of jingoistic national pride.
49For full text of "Landfall in Unknown Seas" see Appendix II.
51Liner notes to Kiwi LP LD-2.
The poem set out to re-create the circumstances of the Tasman incident, and to contextualise the events in the light of New Zealand's contemporary history: New Zealanders had been actively involved in World War Two since January 1940.\(^{52}\)

The first section of the poem outlines the commercial and intellectual optimism of the Dutch, which sent Tasman on his voyage from Batavia: "Simply by sailing in a new direction/You could enlarge the world." Curnow's scientifically-minded Dutch pragmatically reduce "guesses at golden coasts and tales of monsters" to "plain instructions / For likely and unlikely situations." However, the last lines of the first section offer a hint of anxiety at the effect of Dutch exploration on the about-to-be colonised:

There, where your Indies had already sprinkled  
Their tribes like ocean rains, you aimed your voyage;  
Like them invoked your God, gave seas to history  
And islands to new hazardous tomorrows.

Uncertainty about the future eventually dominates the final section of the poem.

The longer lines and idiomatic register of the first section give way to the heightened language of the poem's second section. The excitement of discovery is conveyed in alliterative, short lines:

Suddenly exhilaration  
Went off like a gun, the whole  
Horizon, the long chase done,  
Hove to.

The last line of the second stanza, although literally referring to the country's exposed West Coast, casts an ominous shadow into the final stanza of the second section.

Here the uplifted structure,  
Peak and pillar of cloud —  
O splendour of desolation — reared

Tall from the pit of the swell,
With a shadow, a finger of wind, forbade
Hopes of a lucky landing.

Always to islanders danger
Is what comes over the sea;
Over the yellow sands and the clear
Shallows, the dull filament
Flickers, the blood of strangers:
Death discovered the Sailor
O in a flash, in a flat calm
A clash of boats in the bay
And the day marred with murder.

No blame is explicitly attached to the conflict: both parties are "strangers" to the other. The Dutch, once more pragmatic, "[noted] the failure" and "[p]ushed on with a reconnaissance /To the north..."

The third section of the poem resumes the conversational, matter-of-fact tone of the first section. However, where the speaker of the first section addressed the colonising Dutch, the implied audience now comprises the speaker's contemporaries and compatriots. The last section of the poem begins with a tone of slight smugness. However, this complacency is quickly undercut:

Well, home is the Sailor, and that is a chapter
In a schoolbook, a relevant yesterday
We thought we knew all about, being much apter
To profit, sure of our ground,
No murderers mooring in our Golden Bay.

Faith in inherited bodies of knowledge offers no safe harbour in the poem's present. The certainties of history, literature, and commerce are invoked only to be displaced. Tasman's

53The Sailor discovered by Death in the poem's second section has become, by the final section of the poem, the sailor of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Requiem": "Home is the sailor, home from the sea/And the hunter home from the hill." Robert Louis Stevenson, Collected Poems (London: Granada, 1971). Curnow also alludes to this poem in "House and Land."
"Murderer's Bay" was subsequently renamed Golden Bay; in the 1960 recording of the poem, Curnow's tone questions the assumed distance between a bloody past and an enlightened present: no murderers moor in our Golden Bay.\textsuperscript{54} The "hazardous tomorrows" of the pre-colonial islands have become the poem's anxious present, and the present's own "risky horizons" must be negotiated with a different understanding of history — one which is faithful not to the sanitised history of public celebration, but to "the stain of blood that writes an island story."

The music

In December 1941, British violinist Thomas Mathews arrived in New Zealand. He had been on tour in the Pacific at the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, and had been diverted to New Zealand. He expressed interest in Lilburn's work during a brief stay in Christchurch, and this prompted Lilburn to complete his Allegro for string orchestra. This was the first of eight works for string orchestra written between 1941 and 1946, during which time New Zealand had no full-time symphony orchestra. (Outside of this period, Lilburn wrote only two works for string orchestra.\textsuperscript{55}) Apart from the Allegro and \textit{Landfall in Unknown Seas}, Lilburn's other works from 1942 for string orchestra include \textit{Concert Overture} No. 1 in D, since retitled \textit{Concert Overture}, and \textit{Concert Overture} No. 2 in B-flat, since retitled \textit{Introduction and Allegro for Strings}.\textsuperscript{56}

Due to the exigencies of war, the thirty-four member National Broadcasting Service orchestra, formed for the Centennial Celebrations of 1940, was forced to disband. (Leader Maurice Clare entered military service in 1941 and left New Zealand permanently.\textsuperscript{57}) Although there was no symphony orchestra in New Zealand between the demise of the Centennial orchestra and the National Orchestra of the National Broadcasting Service's first concerts in 1947, there were a number of string orchestras working on a regular basis. These included the national Broadcasting Service String Orchestra, the Auckland String Players, and the radio studio

\textsuperscript{54} Kiwi LP LD 2.
\textsuperscript{55}Norman, "Origins and Development" 152.
\textsuperscript{56}See year-by-year list of Lilburn's compositions, Harris and Norman 101-106.
\textsuperscript{57}Joy Tonks, \textit{The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra} (Auckland: Reed, 1986) 14.
orchestras of 1YA, 1ZB, 2YA, 3YA and 4YA.58

In line with the National Broadcasting Service's initial intention to form a State Orchestra (Director of Broadcasting Professor James Shelley and Musician's Union secretary Jim Collins had been discussing the possibility of a permanent orchestra since 1937), a nucleus of string players was kept on for the duration of the war. "Performances were given in military camps and, augmented by studio orchestras, major tours were made with Noel Coward in 1941 and Peter Dawson in 1942."59 It was this nucleus which gave the first performance of Landfall in Unknown Seas in December 1942.60

Lilburn's music introduces and ends the poem, and is placed between the poem's three sections. The incidental music is scored for a five-part string orchestra. Lilburn recalled performances by a twelve-piece string ensemble.61

I think Prodigal Country [1939] is the only work in which I took courage to set/sing works of Allen Curnow — for the rest I sometimes succeeded in surrounding them with music but left the diction to a narrator — Landfall of course, and Three Poems of the Sea [1958].62

The composer's holograph manuscript conducting score is held in the collection of Douglas Lilburn Manuscripts in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.63 (See Fig. 10) The cover of the score is inscribed in the composer's hand: "Incidental Music by Douglas Lilburn to the Poem Landfall in Unknown Seas by Allen Curnow. Written and composed for the Tercentennial of the discovery of New Zealand by A.J.Tasman. Duration words and music c. 16m."

58 Tonks 10-15.
59 Tonks 15.
60 Tonks 15.
63 Wellington: Lilburn Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library. FMS Papers 2483 Folder 41.
Fig. 10. Cover of holograph manuscript conductor's score for Landfall in Unknown Seas.
(Alexander Turnbull Library).
Interleaved with the incidental music is a typescript of the text of the poem. The last section of the poem is signed "Allen Curnow November '42". The last page of the score is signed "D.G. Lilburn Nov '42."

The first movement is marked *moderato*: the tempo indication is alla breve, with minim at c.108. The movement contains three main melodic ideas. The first violins open with a legato, diatonic melody in the home key of G major, over an accompanying figure in the second violins and sustained chords in the lower strings. This melody moves mostly by step and covers less than an octave (D1-C2). The second subject is an incisive staccato crochet motif of two bars' duration, shared between the parts and repeated at an octave, with ornamentation on the repeat. The third melody consists of several repetitions of one germinal bar which features one of Lilburn's most characteristic gestures: the rising or falling minor third combined with a "Scotch snap" syncopation, which appears throughout Lilburn's acoustic music.64 The first movement of *Landfall in Unknown Seas* is bright in character, transparent in texture and clear in structure, only rarely passing through minor keys. It suggests an eighteenth century dance movement and in style is reminiscent of concerto grosso writing.

The second movement is marked *allegro* (3/4) with dotted minim equaling 58. A sforzando chord establishes the key of E minor. An agitated staccato quaver figure is the main rhythmic and melodic feature in the first section of the movement (to rehearsal letter D). Beginning on the second quaver in the bar, the melody is anchored around a pitch centre of G-natural and interlocks rhythmically with an ostinato pattern in the cello. The section is in two parts: twenty-nine bars of the quaver pattern and related material, and a written-out repeat. Between rehearsal letters D and E is a chromatic, legato section, mostly in crochets, again featuring Lilburn's characteristic strong-weak pulse. Following letter E there is a pronounced displacement of the beat: ties across the bar-line are followed by an accent on the last beat of the bar. A feeling of anxiety is further evoked by a progressively rising tremolando quaver section, which leads to letter F, where there is a sudden brightening out into E major. The ten bar

64 After Gordon Burt, Philip Norman dubs this hallmark of Lilburn's style the "strong-weak rhythmic whiplash." Whereas the Scotch snap properly contains only two notes, Lilburn often uses three or more notes in conjunction with the rhythmic motif. See Norman, "Origins and Development" 306.
The concluding fifteen bars begin high and loud and are marked allargando. The melodic line decreases in volume as it descends. The movement ends "legatissime" and ppp in the home key of E minor.

The third movement is marked adagio sostenuto (non troppo) con sordini. (4/4, crochet =72.) The double bass begins the movement with a pianissimo pedal C natural, which is sustained into the tenth bar. The other strings follow with staggered entries on the fourth beat of the first three bars: celli enter after the bass (the only non divisi part), then violas, followed by second violins, with the first violins entering in the seventh bar. Entries are in octaves or major seconds. The movement is homophonic in texture, and the least dance-like of the four. Parts move mostly in minims and crochets. The sostenuto effect is maintained throughout the first half of the movement, and results from this slow rate of change from note to note, the close-voiced, slightly dissonant writing and the p to mp dynamic. (The entire movement is only forty-one bars in length.) The divisi, chromatic writing in the upper strings gradually rises stepwise in pitch and increases in volume, to a high point at bar 20. Suddenly the upper strings drop onto a tremolando which is maintained for two bars, dissolving back into the sostenuto, somewhat dissonant texture. After its tonal ambiguity, the movement relaxes onto the tonic chord of C major, ending as it began, sostenuto and legato.

The final movement is marked 3/4, allegro. The score contains two versions; the first version, although signed by the composer, has been cancelled. It is marked crochet = 160. The second version, also in the composer’s hand, contains several substantive alterations. The tempo is marked as dotted minim =60 although the conductor’s marking suggests it may have been beaten in 3. This is another dance-like movement, which shows a return to the first movement’s concerto grosso manner. The opening melody is modal in flavour, although the key signature indicates C major. The movement is characterised by displaced accents in "weak" parts of bars. These accents often follow a rest in the middle of a phrase: the rests further punctuate the off-beat accent. Bar-lines are also displaced: a hemiola effect occurs over bars 43-45 and 136-138. The disruption of the symmetrical rhythmic progression gives a feeling of uneasy yet inevitable forward movement. The tonality of the movement is modal, outlined in the scalic passages of the last 15 bars. These last bars vacillate between a modal
inflection of C minor (a $D^b$ is added to the scale) and C major: the unsettled tonality is strongly suggestive of the ambivalent tone of the poem's ending, which Lilburn had noted and consciously evoked in this final movement.65

The Formation of Lilburn's Style

Pre-war Christchurch was, by New Zealand standards, "a very advanced outpost"66 for performances of contemporary European music. Formative musical experiences for Lilburn included Victor Peter's Harmonic Society's performances of William Walton's Belshazzar's Feast and Constant Lambert's Rio Grande. In 1935, he heard Bela Bartok's First String Quartet on "an old portable gramophone"67 and was "absolutely baffled by the sound, mad, mad, mad sound you know."68

"Vaughan Williams had already, along with Stravinsky and Bartok, become a presence in Christchurch, I suppose through works like Wenlock Edge... And the Tallis Fantasia which is, I think, an incredible piece of music."69 As a student at Canterbury College, Lilburn's ambition was to study with Vaughan Williams in London.

It wasn't just a question of hoping to learn some of his technique, because at that time I was dazzled by things like Lambert's Rio Grande, and Walton's Belshazzar's Feast, and Sibelius of course. I knew very little of Vaughan Williams' music then, but there was some curious mana attached to his name, a sense of absolute integrity, a feeling that he was steering a sane course through all the welter and confusion of twentieth century music making.70

66Harris and Norman 20.
68Harris and Norman 20.
69Harris and Norman 21.
**Vaughan Williams**

Between 1937 and 1940, Lilburn achieved his ambition of studying with Vaughan Williams at London's Royal College of Music. In May 1940 he returned to New Zealand to comparative musical isolation, but inspired by his contact with recent literary and musical nationalism: "Yeats and others have reminded us that if we want to be universal, we must first discover truth of experience in our own village."⁷¹ Lilburn also continued to admire Vaughan Williams' musical nationalism, which had left him with the similar message that a composer could not be "universal without at first having been local."⁷²

He saw Vaughan Williams as having developed his musical nationalism partly by "fossicking about amongst Elizabethan music and collecting folk tunes"⁷³, but Lilburn could find no parallel folk tradition in New Zealand. "We have no folk-song, nor characteristic rhythms of the kind that arise from folk dance, and without these two things a national music in the accepted sense is out of the question."⁷⁴ He rejected Maori music as source material both because of finding it "difficult to understand"⁷⁵ and because it appeared to have been corrupted by "missionary hymns and other early influences."⁷⁶ In terms of pakeha folk music, the tradition was thin. Lilburn felt that British folksong was "no longer the real influence that [it] might have been even twenty years ago."⁷⁷

It is possible Lilburn, admired Vaughan Williams as much for his functional approach to composition as for his nationalism. This popular British composer wrote not only for cathedrals and concert halls, but for village choirs and brass bands, and generally for communal rather than solo performance. "The composer must not shut himself up and think

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⁷³Douglas Lilburn, "Vaughan Williams."
⁷⁵Jack Body interviews Douglas Lilburn, Douglas Lilburn Papers MS Papers 2483: 97a (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library)
about art; he must live with his fellows and make his art an expression of the whole life of the community." Lilburn felt that a national voice could best be established in New Zealand by such a functional and community approach to composition. This did not, however, mean sacrificing standards and embracing some condescending form of populism.

Britten and Auden

Although he noted later that during his stay in London, W.H. Auden and Benjamin Britten were "more heard-of than heard", Lilburn had seen at first hand the results of this close working relationship between poet and composer: several of their works received first performances during Lilburn's stay. The idea of two artists collaborating may have appealed to the young composer, since it illustrated the possibility of a community of shared interests and a functional and occasional approach to composition. (Auden and Britten wrote music for films and plays).

Britten and Auden were initially brought together in 1935 to work in John Grierson's GPO Film Unit. Their first major collaboration was *Our Hunting Fathers* (Op. 8, 1936). Britten had been invited to compose a work for the Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Festival of that year, and asked Auden to devise a libretto. 1937 saw the song-cycle *On This Island* (five songs for high voice and piano, op. 11), *Two Ballads* and *Fish in the Unruffled Lakes*. In the following year there was *Ballad of Heroes* (Op 14.) for tenor or soprano solo, chorus and orchestra. Britten provided incidental music to two plays by Auden and Isherwood, produced by the Group Theatre: *The Ascent of F6* (1937) and *On the Frontier* (1938). Music for other

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80 Douglas Lilburn, correspondence with author, 6 October 1993.
81 In the late 1930s New Zealander film-maker Len Lye also worked for the GPO Film Unit. "The Unit financed or helped Len Lye to find commercial sponsors for one or two films a year, beginning with *Colour Box* in 1935." Wystan Curnow and Roger Horrocks, *Figures of Motion: Len Lye/Selected Writings* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1984) xiv. However, Lilburn appears to have had no contact with Lye in London.
82 First performed in Norwich on 25 September 1936, *Our Hunting Fathers* is a symphonic cycle for high voice and orchestra.
Group Theatre productions included *Timon of Athens* (1935), *Agamemnon* (1936), translated by Louis MacNeice, and MacNeice's verse play *Out of the Picture* (1937). One of Auden and Britten's last major collaborations was the commemorative work *The Ballad of Heroes* (1939), written specially for the "Festival of Music for the People", organised in London by "musicians of the progressive movement in Britain." This work honoured "the men of the British Battalion, International Brigade", who had fallen in the Spanish Civil War, and was first performed on 5 April 1939. Britten and Auden collaborated on the operetta *Paul Bunyan*, (first performed 1941) and Auden provided the words for the *Hymn to St. Cecelia* (Op 27) in 1942.

Although Lilburn has stated that it never occurred to him that he might be emulating Auden and Britten, much of this activity took place during the young composer's stay in London. The close working relationship of the English poet with Lilburn's near contemporary may have served as a role model or inspiration. Britten was only two years older than Lilburn, and Auden was four years' Curnow's senior.

Britten and Auden were willing to compose for occasions and commemorations. Lilburn saw the offering and filling of commissions as a way of integrating composers into the New Zealand community. The musical environment would be lively if the community developed the habit of asking [composers for live music], if incidental music were commissioned for plays, wherever they are put on, or if the civic authorities of the broadcasting service commissioned work for special occasions as is done in some countries. Most of this music would probably be very bad, but I think that in time something would come of it, and meanwhile the community might develop the habit of looking on music less as an immortal art and more as a simple commodity, something to be created for our everyday needs, and written for whatever combination of instruments are available.

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83 See Eric Walter White, *Benjamin Britten His Life and Operas* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983) 32.
84 See Eric Walter White 28-33.
85 Douglas Lilburn, correspondence with author, 6 October 1993.
86 Benjamin Britten born 22.11.1913. Douglas Gordon Lilburn born 2.11.1915.
The music for *Landfall in Unknown Seas*, though written without the assurance of financial backing, was the result of such an opportunity. Lilburn offered other practical examples of this "occasional" approach to composition. Between 1943 and 1946 he composed incidental music for five productions of Shakespeare, directed by Ngaio Marsh for the Canterbury University College Drama Society in Christchurch. Working as a gesture of goodwill to friends at the theatre and without commission, Lilburn was surprised when a cheque for ten pounds arrived subsequently. New Zealand's National Film Unit was established in 1941 and over the following decade, Lilburn wrote extensively for films, including *Backblocks Hospital* in 1947, *Rhythm and Movement*, *Infant Schools* and *Journey for Three* in 1948; and in 1949 provided orchestral music for *This is New Zealand*, a BBC documentary produced by D.G. Bridson. He also provided incidental music for a poetry reading at Auckland University College on 9 August 1952. Readers included James K. Baxter, Curnow, A.R.D. Fairburn, M.K. Joseph, R.A.K. Mason, Keith Sinclair, and Kendrick Smithyman.

**The Christchurch Community**

On his return from London, Lilburn would have been heartened by the strong sense of artistic community in Christchurch. Also living in Christchurch in the early 1940s were Allen Curnow and his wife, artist Bette Curnow, Leo Bensemann, Rita Angus (see figs 11 and 12), Douglas MacDiarmid, Denis Glover, Ursula Bethel and Lawrence Baigent.

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89These included incidental music for *Hamlet* for 3 violins and tubular bell (1943); *Othello* for violin and piano (1944); *King Henry V* for 2 trumpets (1945); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for flute, cornet and 2 french horns (1945); *Macbeth* for cello timpani, recorder trumpet and piper (1946). See Harris and Norman, "Chronological List of Compositions" 101-106.
92See See Harris and Norman, "Chronological List of Compositions" 101-106.
93Douglas Lilburn Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library. FMS Papers 4464 (sketch only). Later retitled *Salutes to Seven Poets* for violin and piano; Douglas Lilburn Collection FMS Papers 4153.
94See woodcut "Landfall in Unknown Seas."
Fig. 11. Rita Cook [Angus], Douglas Lilburn. 1945. Watercolour. (Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa).
Musicologist and champion of new music Frederick Page had returned to Christchurch in 1938 with his wife, painter Evelyn Page (see fig. 13), and was living in Governor's Bay. Page counted among his friends emigre philosophers Karl Popper and Helmut Pappe, and architects Erwin Ziffer and Ernst Plischke. The influx of refugees over the war years had a profound effect on the Christchurch context in which Lilburn worked: "even if they did not like a work, at least they would listen tolerantly." English violinist Maurice Clare and German poet Karl Wolfskehl arrived in 1938. Clare was to give Lilburn "invaluable insights" into string technique.

Lilburn was aware that he was the only composer in a group of painters and poets. "In Christchurch there was a large group of people who took themselves quite seriously as painters, as writers, as poets and musicians and so it seemed to me quite a natural thing to set up business as a composer. All those writers and painters I knew listened readily to music and could talk very intelligently about it and in fact they gave me a lot of encouragement." Curnow later commented that "[f]rom the start — as far back as the 'thirties, but more especially in the forties — a few of us poets, and painters, and musicians realised that in Douglas our New Zealand generation had found its composer."

**Allen Curnow and Victorian poetry**

Just as Lilburn found Hill wanting as a musical ancestor, Allen Curnow found the work of his late-Victorian predecessors largely irrelevant. "Re-reading this verse and much that is similar, a New Zealander can find nothing upon which a continuity of tradition might be established."

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101. Harris and Norman 36.
Fig. 12. Rita Cook [Angus], Allen Curnow. Drawing. (Book V, Christchurch: Caxton, 1942) 21.

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102 Curnow, Penguin 29.
Curnow singled out Alfred Domnett’s epic poem *Ranolf and Amohia* (1872) for special condemnation. His obvious distaste for the poem was, however, complicated by an equally strong fascination. He devoted six paragraphs of his introduction to *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1960) to the poem’s inadequacies. The twenty five cantos of the “huge ramshackle composition” *Ranolf and Amohia* are “piled at the door into New Zealand’s verse tradition. They have to be tunnelled through; there is no way round.”

Victorian poetry in New Zealand attempted to reconcile two sets of experiences: that of the inherited poetic tradition, and the expansion of that tradition in a ‘new’ landscape. For Curnow, literary Victorianism — exemplified by *Ranolf and Amohia* — was too centrifugally (or externally) oriented, and hence failed to come to terms with the local and specific.

Curnow argued for a distinctive, centripetally-oriented New Zealand literature, one which articulated “the meaning of colonial experience” and he castigated Domnett for what he saw as his failure to come to terms with this experience. Rejecting Domnett’s explicitly centrifugally-oriented poetic as a false start, Curnow called for a centripetal, location-specific poetic. The only points at which Curnow conceded *Ranolf and Amohia* might be worth saving were when it coincided with his own programme: “We can see how hard [Dommett] worked to get some of the reality of that early New Zealand experience into passages like ‘And thus o’er many a mountain’: the actual colours and contours do begin to appear, crackling and bulging the shabby Parnassian facade.”

Curnow here wrote as critic, his criticism shot through with a desire as poet to distance himself from the excesses of Victorian sentimentality. Later Penguin anthologist Ian Wedde recognised Dommett’s nostalgia for an established literary tradition, one to which the poet desperately aspired. As previously noted, Domett sought validation from his famous

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104 Curnow, *Penguin* 32.
106 Curnow, *Penguin* 34.
108 See Chapter Two: Hinemoa.
contemporaries, soliciting responses to *Ranolf and Amohia* from Browning, Tennyson and Longfellow. (It was not only the poets themselves who sought correspondences with distant, admired writers. Auckland City boasts two Bracken Avenues: one runs off Burns Ave and is between Byron Ave and Tennyson Ave; the other lies between Domett Ave and Kipling Ave.) Wedde further noted that the aspiration towards the English verse tradition was more a desire for the social and literary infrastructure it represented than for the poetry itself.  

Twenty-five years separate two different versions of *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse*. The two editors have quite different perspectives on the verse of the late nineteenth century. Curnow by and large disparages, while Wedde uses the verse — even at its worst — to illustrate his sense of history: "what is called "New Zealand poetry" is ... a process, not a national condition."  

Wedde’s reading of the influence of the late Victorians on local poetry is contextual rather than castigatory. Whereas Curnow defined himself in opposition to his Victorian predecessors, Wedde took a step further back, in part defining himself, as critic, in opposition to Curnow, and saw the generative potential of such frictions.

A major 'imported' poetic influence must inevitably bring its larger context with it. Earlier this century, the transposition to a somewhat garrison situation of Tennyson's Italianate English salon sonorities, for example, resulted in some startlingly inappropriate collisions of language, time and place.... It is equally possible that some poets importing such influences desire the milieu rather than the poetics: prising language and context apart, they go for a poetics that will best decode its desired milieu, as a kind of template, in their own situation.

The problem for the younger generation, for whom Curnow became an early spokesman, was that the contemporary verse centre in New Zealand remained in the direct line of Victorian descent: Curnow rejected this variety of contemporary verse which came to be known as

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"Kowhai Gold" poetry, after Quentin Pope's 1930 anthology.\(^{112}\) (This collection represented itself as "the poetic achievement of fifty-seven New Zealanders in the twelve years following the Great War."\(^{113}\) The Epigram to *Kowhai Gold* shows the editor's orientation towards his English audience, and displays the sentimental tone which found such disfavour with Curnow and his contemporaries. Although Fairburn and R.A.K. Mason had poems in *Kowhai Gold*, and represented "exceptions" who had "something to say to their own generation", Curnow found that the collection "owed its anthology bulk mainly to magazine verse of not a very high order.\(^{114}\)

And as your summer slips away in Tears  
Spring wakes our lovely lady of the Bush  
The Kowhai; and she hastes to wrap herself  
All in a mantle wrought of living gold.\(^{115}\)

The anthology *New Zealand Best Poems* also exemplified the "Kowhai Gold" manner. Appearing annually between 1932 and 1943, the collection was edited by journalist C.A. Marris. Marris was the butt of Denis Glover's satirical poem "The Arraignment of Paris" (1937) and featured in the twenty-three year old Glover's "Short Reflection on the Present State of Literature in this Country" (1935):

Three men who hold within their hand  
the literary of the land  
and lead this little pilgrim band,  
Mulgan, Marris, Schroder.

Alas, these words will never bust  
into the literary column:  
Mulgan, Marris, Schroder must  
keep it solemn, solemn, solemn.\(^{116}\)

\(^{116}\)Qtd in Sinclair, *Destiny* 248.
It was partly a factor of the size of the audience for poetry in New Zealand which forced this overseas orientation. "A book published in New Zealand has virtually no market outside New Zealand. A New Zealand publisher has estimated that an author cannot reasonably look for a greater sale than five hundred copies in his own country... If he can get publication in London, he may sell in thousands."\textsuperscript{117}

Historian and poet Keith Sinclair later suggested that the local publication of poetry "enabled the poets to abandon the practice of seeking London publishers, which in turn meant subjection to English taste."\textsuperscript{118} Curnow further noted that by publishing writing they thought "good" and printing it well, Glover at Caxton in Christchurch and Bob Lowry at the Pelorus Press in Auckland "created an audience for verse which formerly might have found none in New Zealand. Some verse they actually called into being, because they were at hand to print it."\textsuperscript{119}

The early 1930s saw the first publications to offer local alternatives to those of Marris, Alan Mulgan, and J.H.E. Schroder, who between them, as Glover pointed out, controlled the literary pages of the daily papers and selected annual volumes of verse. The first of these was the short-lived but influential \textit{Phoenix} (1932-3), printed by Bob Lowry and published by Auckland University students. This carried poetry by J.C. Beaglehole, Charles Brasch, D'Arcy Cresswell, Allen Curnow, A.R.D. Fairburn and R.A.K. Mason. Inspired by \textit{Phoenix}, and acting as manager, printer and editor, Denis Glover produced the short-lived journal \textit{Oriflamme} (1933) at the Caxton Press Club in Christchurch.\textsuperscript{120}

Between its inception in 1935 and 1941, Glover's Caxton Press published poetry by Ursula Bethell, Charles Brasch, Allen Curnow, Basil Dowling, W. Hart-Smith, J.R. Hervey and Kendrick Smithyman. Douglas Lilburns' \textit{Four Preludes for Piano} (1942-44) (with artwork by Leo Bensemann) was published in 1945. Reviewing this publication in \textit{The New Zealand Listener} in July 1945, "D.F.T."'s excitement acknowledged the germinal significance of this

\textsuperscript{117}Alan Mulgan, \textit{Literature and Authorship in New Zealand} (London: Allen and Unwin, 1943) 41.

\textsuperscript{118}Sinclair, \textit{Destiny} 248.

\textsuperscript{119}Allen Curnow, Introduction, \textit{Caxton} 37.

Here is music that has been made only a few hundred miles away instead of at the other side of the world. Yet the publishers have refrained from drawing attention to these aspects of the matter, and for the reviewer to be showing less composure than the publishers seems to put the whole thing on an improper footing right at the outset.121

Lilburn's *A Song for Otago University*, with a text by James K. Baxter appeared in *Book VII* in 1946.122

The circumstances surrounding the appearance of Curnow's collection *Jack Without Magic* (1946) illustrate his point about the symbiotic relationship between poet and printer. After his return from active service in 1945, Glover contacted Curnow to say that he had

an off-cut of handmade paper (almost impossible to get), enough for a limited printing of a small book; he wanted to hand-set something in Blado italic type. Did I have any poems? I did have a few, but no idea, 'til he spoke, of collecting them for print. The result was *Jack Without Magic*, an edition of 200 copies... Glover had the paper, the typeface, the press; my poems in this case were simply the necessary 'something.'123

Curnow and his contemporaries saw themselves as social commentators, who rejected the sentimental *Kowhai Gold* style, replacing it with a more serious awareness of New Zealand poetry in its social context: paramount to many of Curnow's generation was "the explicit reference of a poem to problems of facts of social life in a New Zealand environment."124

From the 1930s, *Kowhai Gold* effusions were being replaced by the responsible and public poetry of Curnow and his contemporaries, in which New Zealand's social, economic, political, and historical circumstances were treated with a new tough-mindedness, and a vein of

121 Harris and Norman 35
122 *Book VII* (Christchurch: Caxton 1946)
'Observe the young and tender frond
of this punga: shaped and curved
like the scroll of a fiddle: fit instrument
to play archaic tunes.'
I see
the shape of a coiled spring.\textsuperscript{125}

You are on a holiday trip, sir,
And what do you think of our country?
Let us discuss beauty
And various scenic attractions:
Tell me our alps excel
Switzerland and the Rockies.\textsuperscript{126}

Curnow and contemporary English poetry

Despite Curnow's nationalist, centripetally-focussed concerns, his emphasis on social issues, choice of language and forms all have counterparts in contemporary English poetry.

If the Depression "made it difficult for all but the most blinkered of poets to continue writing optimistic pieties and trivialities",\textsuperscript{127} the road out of "fairyland\textsuperscript{128} was in part shown by contemporary English poets: "we all began reading Pound and Eliot, or shared our modernity with Auden, MacNeice, Day Lewis or Spender."\textsuperscript{129}

Spender... and his contemporaries...were putting the subject back into poetry. They were dedicated to 'truth' — the truth of urban squalor and economic repression.... Poetry became responsible and public, and the most influential new voice in Britain, and surely in New Zealand too, was W.H. Auden's. So in New Zealand we find poets as different as Fairburn, Glover and Curnow in revolt against Georgian sentimentalism...\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{125}A.R.D. Fairburn, "Album Leaves," \textit{Dominion} (Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1938)
\textsuperscript{126}Allen Curnow, "Not in Narrow Seas XI," \textit{Collected Poems} 71.
\textsuperscript{128}Sinclair, \textit{Destiny} 250.
\textsuperscript{129}Curnow, "Introduction", \textit{Denis Glover: Selected Poems} xiv.
Curnow's writing of the late thirties and early forties is informed with a sense of the social responsibility of poetry, the proper function of which is in part visionary: "the warning and encouragement of the present and the future." He found this sense of social conscience in the writing of "our late contemporary English poets", Auden, Day Lewis and Spender, as well as in the writing of his New Zealand contemporary A.R.D. Fairburn: "By visions is meant, of course, things actually seen and faithfully reported: not Ezekiel wheels but real wheels, not turnip spooks but turnips at market prices. It is out of such things that vision is required of a poet here and now."

The social vision of the poet could best be conveyed in the language of the time: "poetry must have its feet on the familiar earth of plain speech... When the present speaks to the present, it must use the language of the present — not the leavings of the language of 50 or 500 years ago." For Curnow, as with Auden, the use of "the language of the present" to express matters of social relevance was not incompatible with the use of closed forms. In his poems of the late thirties and early forties, Curnow favoured stanzaic forms, with various rhyme schemes. In C.K. Stead's view, this formal orientation alone aligned him with Auden.

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133 Allen Curnow, "Rata Blossom or Reality? New Zealand and a Significant Contribution" (1938), Look Back Harder 10
134 Allen Curnow, "Poets in New Zealand: Problems of Writing and Criticism" (1937), Look Back Harder 4.
135 Stead, "Wystan to Carlos" 469. Auden and Curnow both used sonnet and sestina form. The twelve sonnets of Sailing or Drowning (1943) find formal parallel in Auden's sequences "Sonnets from China" and "A Voyage" of 1938, and "The Quest" of 1940. Curnow prefaced his collection Not in Narrow Seas (1939) with a sestina ("Statement"), and included a Sestina in the collection Island and Time (1941). Auden chose this form for "Paysage Morlique" (1933).
Centre and periphery

While most of the poets and composers working in New Zealand at this time were occupied with issues of nationhood and cultural independence, the desired proportion of overseas models versus local input varied across a wide spectrum.

Curnow showed a complicated orientation in the preface to his early collection *Enemies*, in which he expressed his desire to tread a careful path between his New Zealand subject-matter and the slavish imitation of overseas models. While admiring the products of the "technical research laboratory" of contemporary English poetry, Curnow excluded from this early collection poems which

were merely (or chiefly) written in satisfaction of the desire to emulate some admired poet. Such work seems to me to be too common in New Zealand.... I have tried to show the possibility of a technical development pari passu with that of recent English poetry. Whatever may be said or written about a national literature in New Zealand, England remains at the very least the 'technical research laboratory', where the finest and most advanced work is done with that subtle material, the English language.

The emphasis of Curnow's poetic changed from his early position, exemplified in his preface to *Enemies* and his later comment that "we all began reading Pound and Eliot, or shared our modernity with Auden, MacNeice, Day Lewis or Spender", to one defending the need for a location-centred poetic. Frederick Page recalled meeting Curnow soon after the former's return from Europe in 1938, a year after the publication of *Enemies*. Curnow expressed an almost aggressive reaction to the need for New Zealand artists to experience European culture at first hand: "On the... days across the Tasman it was born in on me how very far New Zealand is. Lyttelton looked like a toy town. The first day I ran into Allen Curnow who said: 'we don't want to know what you have been doing, everything's going on here now.'" A few years

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136 Allen Curnow *Enemies* (Christchurch: Caxton 1937).
137 Curnow, *Enemies* [Preface, n.p.].
earlier, A.R.D. Fairburn had been quite explicit in his desire to 'cut the apron strings' which tied New Zealand to the culture of Europe. In 1932 he wrote to R.A.K. Mason, expressing a desire to define "New Zealand culture":

I would like to live in the backblocks of New Zealand, and try to realise in my mind the real culture of the place: somewhere I might escape the vast halitosis of the Press, and the whole dreadful weight of modern art and literature. Because we really are people of a different race and have no right to be monkeying around with European culture. 140

Writing about The Axe, first performed 1947, Curnow commented that

I wanted to place New Zealand at the centre, the only possible place. Never mind the provincial cold-shudder at the thought that this is not the place at all, and never can be, that here is a centre of sorts, but not the centre, wherever that may be. The islander, even while he shudders, is feeling something at his own centre. 141

Lilburn was perhaps more diffident than Curnow about the relevance of overseas models for a local compositional practice. This ambivalence extended also to the necessity for musicians to leave New Zealand. While pointing out the inadequacy of the usual rationale for the need to leave New Zealand — "you've got to get away from this place to do anything. There's nothing to write about here, but plenty to write about in London" 142 — he balanced this with the observation that New Zealand's lack of a symphony orchestra and conservatorium meant that this "overseas experience" was "a good thing." 143 The acquisition of musical and compositional technique overseas meant that New Zealand's particular "cultural problems" could be worked out locally. "We are New Zealanders [and] our cultural problems have to be worked out in the totally new context of these islands we live in." 144

141 Allen Curnow Four Plays (Wellington: Reed, 1972) 7.
142 Lilburn, Tradition 12.
143 Lilburn, Tradition 12.
144 Lilburn, Tradition 11.
Essayist Monte Holcroft echoed this doubt. While expressing a strong sense of the intellectual isolation of those "who do their work twelve thousand miles from the central scene of literary activity in the British Commonwealth," he also criticised verse "[preoccupied] with ideas that have been borrowed from overseas and related in merely superficial ways to local conditions."

Lilburn expressed a similar ambivalence about the relevance of overseas models for a potential national compositional voice.

When you are listening to a symphony by Shostakovich or by Roy Harris, does it make you feel that being a New Zealander at this present time is very like being a Russian or an American? Do we fully believe in the values that their music sets out to represent, or is it just that our minds and our ears take a lively interest in the sound, while our hearts sit back and say to us — 'No, I don't feel that I'm altogether like a present-day Russian or American'. We are New Zealanders...there is a part of ourselves that we cannot identify with this other music, and... it is necessary for us to discover our own as best we can.

Commemorations and celebrations

The Tasman Tercentennial came two years after the Waitangi Centennial. In 1936, the Hon W.E. Parry, then Minister of Internal Affairs and Minister in charge of the New Zealand Centennial Celebrations, commented,

[i]t is high time we ceased to labour the point of view of our being a young country. New Zealand is within four years of its Centennial, and the people with their enterprise and progress are ready for serious consideration of the future. We should look to 1940 as the year of our national coming-of-age, a year in which we should plan for the future in all the pride and independence of the grown man. Our Centennial will afford us an

145 Monte Holcroft, The Deepening Stream (Christchurch: Caxton 1946) 55.
146 Holcroft, Stream 64.
147 Lilburn, Language 16.
opportunity we have not yet had of creating a national spirit and guiding it not in any direction of national aggrandisement, but for the benefit of mankind.\textsuperscript{148}

The principal national celebration was a Centennial Exhibition in Wellington. This was no "mere fair, but 'the measure of our worth, the evidence of national manhood that we present the world.'\textsuperscript{149} Although public and celebrative, the occasion which provided the impetus for "Landfall in Unknown Seas" also offered a platform for Curnow's personal, circumspect view of New Zealand's history and present position, which ran against the current of national celebration.

The fact of being 'discovered', whether by Tasman or Cook, was the occasion, not the whole subject, of poems such as 'Landfall in Unknown Seas.' ... Nothing can be discovered twice. After the event, the questions crowd in. What next? What now? Who was on the beach to discover the discoverers?\textsuperscript{150}

Curnow's doubts also found voice in other poems from the late 30s and early 40s. The collections Not in Narrow Seas: Poems with Prose (1939),\textsuperscript{151} "a study of the birth, life and growth of a nation now nearly 100 years old", Island and Time (1941),\textsuperscript{152} and Sailing or Drowning (1943)\textsuperscript{153} all contain poems which offer anxious readings of New Zealand's "discovery" and settlement. An uneasy present lying uncomfortably over a compromised past also informs the poems "House and Land" (1941), "The Victim" (1941), "The Unhistoric Story" (1941 and 1943), and "Discovery" (1943).

The differences between "Landfall in Unknown Seas" and the sonnet "The Navigators", both collected in Sailing or Drowning (1943), show the extent to which Curnow assumed a "public" voice for a public celebration. The poems' topics are similar, with varying degrees of

\textsuperscript{149} Sinclair, Destiny 239.
\textsuperscript{150} Curnow, Four Plays 8.
\textsuperscript{151} Not in Narrow Seas: Poems with Prose (Christchurch: Caxton, 1939).
\textsuperscript{152} Island and Time (Christchurch: Caxton, 1941).
\textsuperscript{153} Sailing or Drowning (Wellington: Progressive Publishing Society, 1943).
specificity, both refer to the appropriation of territory and property. Despite the ambivalent conclusion, the narrative element of Tasman's voyage is prominent in "Landfall in Unknown Seas": the first two sections contextualise the journey, and dramatically evoke a central event. The sonnet deals less specifically with the details of the voyage, focusing more closely on the implications of colonisation — the blood in which Pacific history is written. Lady Macbeth's guilt also haunts the dreams of the explorers:

O rational successful hands that swept  
Sea treasures up, by sunlight as in fog  
Fumbling for islands, is there no wave big  
Enough to wash your red ones green? O kept  
In suavest history, gloved, quite dark how dipped  
In red lagoons, the bright stain like a flag  
Flowing and floating. Cradled in the vague  
Currents where cables mumble murder slept  
And sleeps, but dreams, hands that will not come clean  
In endless dumb show utter what they did;  
Because it was their rational violence  
To think discreet discharge of guns would add  
Island on island, that the seas would fence,  
And time confirm them, in a change of scene.

The 1940 Waitangi Centennial

6 February 1940 saw celebrations commemorating the centennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, under whose terms New Zealand was annexed to the British Crown. The Centennial celebrations took the form of a public celebration of nationhood, and took place against the background of a World War: the first New Zealander soldiers had been farewelled only a month before, leaving Wellington on 4 January 1940.

Some of the celebrations were muted, or even cancelled, because the Second World War had begun.... In Auckland a centennial procession,
The March to Nationhood', was cancelled. Nevertheless there were pageants in most towns and cities, as well as in numerous rural districts... In many places centennial parks were dedicated or halls erected. There were also some public thanksgiving services.\(^{156}\)

The centripetal focus of the Waitangi celebration of 1940 was complicated by the reality of New Zealand's Dominion status: along with statements of nationhood and independence went the fact that New Zealand was still entirely implicated in the foreign policy of Great Britain.

When war came in September 1939 it showed conclusively how closely New Zealand was bound to Europe... it is perhaps significant that New Zealand was deemed to have been at war from the same moment as the United Kingdom.... New Zealand launched vigorously into war on the express basis that her manpower and economic resources were entirely at Britain's command. Plans prepared beforehand were promptly executed, and in addition it was made a point of pride that every suggestion received from the British Government had been accepted and carried out. 'Both with gratitude for the past and with confidence for the future,' said the Prime Minister, 'we range ourselves without fear beside Britain.'\(^{157}\)

(New Zealand's constitutional separation from England did not take place until 1947. "The war induced the New Zealand Government to grasp a fuller measure of independence.... In 1947 the Statute of Westminster was at last adopted, giving legal fulfilment to the fact of sovereignty."\(^{158}\))

Bureaucrats and broadcasters had formulated a Waitangi Centennial celebration programme by 1938. Director of Broadcasting Professor James Shelley and Musicians' Union Secretary Jim Collins discussed the idea of a permanent orchestra which would provide music for the celebrations. A committee formed to discuss the proposal, consisting of representatives from Broadcasting, Treasury and Internal Affairs, who reported to their various ministers that "[they felt] that the advantage should be taken by the Centennial, with its two-fold objective of

\(^{156}\)Sinclair Destiny 239.


\(^{158}\)Keith Sinclair, A History of New Zealand (Hammondswood: Penguin, 1959) 274.
celebrating the past hundred years, and laying a foundation for the next hundred years, to make a special feature of the musical and dramatic side of the celebrations."\textsuperscript{159}

The Centennial Orchestra of thirty-four players was conducted by Andersen Tyrer and led by Maurice Clare. In 1940 a week of celebratory musical activities was planned for each centre, with the touring orchestra being supplemented by players from local studio orchestras.\textsuperscript{160} Tyrer judged the finals of the Centennial choir and string quartet competitions, which were broadcast at the end of the festival.\textsuperscript{161} Douglas Lilburn, who had been studying at the Royal College of Music since 1937, returned to New Zealand to find that he had been awarded first and second prizes in the New Zealand Centennial Celebrations Music Competitions. *Drysdale Overture*, written in 1938, took first prize in the Orchestral Composition section, with the *Festival Overture* (1939) taking second prize in the same section. *Prodigal Country* (1939), for baritone, chorus and orchestra, took first prize in the Choral Composition section. *Aotearoa Overture*, also written while Lilburn was at the Royal College, had opened the Centennial Matinee in the Haymarket on 15 April, 1940. The Sadler's Wells Orchestra had been conducted by expatriate New Zealander Warwick Braithwaite.\textsuperscript{162}

The most significant literary project associated with the Centennial was a series of thirteen book-length Centennial Surveys, edited by E.H. McCormick. The first volume appeared in December 1939. Further volumes followed at monthly intervals. The series was to "present a comprehensive picture of the nation's development"\textsuperscript{163} and summarised to date many aspects of the country's history. Among the authors were Sir Apirana Ngata, J.C. Beaglehole, James Cowan, C.E. Beeby and Oliver Duff. Many entries in the literary competitions also associated

\textsuperscript{159}Tonks 8.

\textsuperscript{160}Tonks 10. War made a permanent orchestra impossible and the Centennial Orchestra was disbanded in June 1940. However, by June 1946 Professor James Shelley's proposal for a national broadcasting orchestra had been accepted and on 6 March 1947 the National Orchestra under Andersen Tyrer gave its first performance in the Wellington Town Hall. Tonks 22.

\textsuperscript{161}Tonks 13.

\textsuperscript{162}Norman, "Origins and Development" 56-57. The overture was not performed in New Zealand until 1959, with John Hopkins conducting the National Orchestra. Harris and Norman 29.

\textsuperscript{163}Dust jacket blurb to F.L.W. Wood, *New Zealand in the World* (New Zealand Centennial Surveys XI) (Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs, 1940).
with the centennial were as explicitly centripetal in focus as Lilburn's prizewinning compositions. Monte Holcroft's "The Deepening Stream: Cultural Influences in New Zealand" won the essay section of the Centennial Literary Competition, and Frank Sargeson's "The Making of a New Zealander" was placed first equal in the short story competition.\textsuperscript{164}

In 1972 Curnow supplied a context for his own mixed feelings about these wartime celebrations.

\begin{quote}
[\textit{I}n the shadow of a world war, in the pause of the armies and the bombs, we read, re-read, re-wrote our fragments of history, before and since the date when these islands became a British colony. ... The state of war, which the whole world was in while we were commemorating what we had to commemorate, was a constant (and conscious) concern.\textsuperscript{165}]
\end{quote}

Although "Landfall in Unknown Seas" has become an icon of the "New Zealand tradition" and seems an archetypal expression of nationalism, it is also complicated by a certain scepticism about national self-congratulation. Undoubtedly, the backdrop of war compromised any too thorough-going optimism. The final section of "Landfall in Unknown Seas" contains an implicit criticism of the public chest-thumping associated with the Centennial. Curnow's long view of history probably extended to the contemporary context of "Landfall in Unknown Seas": a new bloody chapter was being added to "an island story".

\begin{quote}
...Who reaches
A future down for us from the high shelf
Of spiritual daring? Not those speeches
Pinning on the Past like a decoration
For merit that congratulates itself.

O not the self-important celebration
Or most painstaking history can release
The current of a discoverer's elation
And silence the voices saying,
'Here is the world's end where wonders cease.'
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{164} Sinclair \textit{Destiny} 241.

\textsuperscript{165} Curnow, \textit{Four Plays} 7.
Alex Lindsay's reaction to the introspective tone of Lilburn's concluding passage hints at the attitude to the commemoration which Lilburn also sought to question.  

I once tried to persuade him to rewrite the last movement of Landfall. He at least considered it, but eventually said to me, 'I can't do it and that's that.' I had thought it sounded too inconclusive. 'Well, that's how it's supposed to sound,' he said. 'The poem's inconclusive. It leaves a question in the mind.'

The poet maintains a circumspect distance from events throughout the last section of the poem, consistently offering "a more faithful memory": one which reminds readers of the violent tenor of the history-making process. Lilburn had noted the ambivalent tone of the last section of the poem, however, and consciously evoked this in the music.

The anxiety expressed in the final section of "Landfall in Unknown Seas" is perhaps an attempt to rehistoricise the myths surrounding the first "discovery" and settlement of New Zealand. As they stood, these myths may have grated against Curnow's painful awareness of both world events and the compromised history of the Pakeha occupation of New Zealand. "What myth gives [to the world] is a natural image of [historic] reality... Myth is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things: in it, things lose the memory that they once were made..."

In "The Unhistoric Story" Curnow attempts to tell a more true history. He questions received certainties and justifications — the "goes without saying" of history:

The pilgrim dream pricked by a cold dawn died
Among the chemical farmers, the fresh towns; among

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166 Alex Lindsay confessed to Lilburn that he did not like the way the music ended. He felt something more "celebratory" was in order. Douglas Lilburn, interview with author, 16 March 1988.

167 Alex Lindsay, "Birthday Tribute", Harris and Norman 28.


Miners, not husbandmen, who piercing the side
Let the land's life, found that like all who had so long
Bloodily or tenderly striven
To rearrange the given,
It was something different, something
Nobody counted on.

Although the Waitangi Centennial celebration provided a focus for cultural activities, the decade also saw other significant events: the pre-war years saw an upsurge in literary activity. Frederick Page reviewed new music for Dr Vernon Griffith's *Music in New Zealand*, which appeared monthly between 1931 and 1937.\(^{170}\) The first edition of the *New Zealand Listener*, "issued free to all householders", appeared on June 30 1939. Another national weekly, the left-wing review *Tomorrow*, ran from July 1934 to May 1940.

There are at least two varieties of nationalism visible in the celebrations of the 1940s. The slightly cynical, politically aware nationalism of Curnow, Lilburn and Glover questioned the officially-sanctioned optimism: the response to the rally was by no means unanimous civic and national self-congratulation. The celebration also offered artists a unique forum for asking some hard questions about the direction in which New Zealand was headed.

In the year of centennial splendour
There were fireworks and decorated cars
And pungas drooping from the verandahs
—But no one remembered our failures.

The politicians like bubbles from a marsh
Rose to a platform, hanging in every place
Their comfortable platitudes like plush
—Without one word of our failures.\(^{171}\)

C. K. Stead noted that these "public themes" were not

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simply political as they tended to be in Britain; they were broadened to express a regional awareness and a national consciousness. Curnow in particular, but also Glover, wrote public poetry which had none of that hollow official flavour, none of the thumbs-in-braces bombast that characterised nineteenth century poetry for public occasions. It was a fortunate moment for New Zealand literature.172

Reviewing Wellington’s Centennial Exhibition under the heading “Nation or Colony” in the left-wing paper Tomorrow, Martyn Findlay regretted that “in this exhibition of New Zealand’s claim to Nationhood, there was scarcely a reference to music, literature or art.”173 Although a touring exhibition of New Zealand art was organised to celebrate the centennial, the organiser, A.H. McLintok, could still comment that “it was quite apparent that at the present time New Zealand is far from possessing an art truly national.” The retrospective exhibition included that art of the earliest European explorers but excluded Maori art.174

Both Curnow and Lilburn had been occupied with questions of cultural identity, and the Tasman commemoration offered a public opportunity for the further exploration of these. In an address to the first Cambridge music school, held in the Waikato in the summer of 1946, Douglas Lilburn reviewed the history of New Zealand composition and made some suggestions for its direction in the future. “We are all conscious of the fact [of being New Zealanders] to some degree or other, and we grumble about it, but as yet I don’t think we’ve explored deeply enough into it. Perhaps I could say that we’re not really New Zealanders at all, that we are only in process of becoming.”175 Lilburn described the experience of travelling at night by train through the central North Island, marvelling at the “uncanny picture” of Mount Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu. “At that moment the world that Mozart lived in seemed about as remote as the moon, and in no way related to my experience. What my feelings were I don’t really know until someone can make them articulate in painting or poetry or music.”176

173 Sinclair, Destiny 240.
174 Sinclair, Destiny 240.
175 Lilburn, Tradition 8.
176 Lilburn, Tradition 9-10.
Around the same time, Curnow was calling on artists to articulate their different "New Zealands", thereby bringing the country into clearer focus:

Strictly speaking, New Zealand doesn't exist yet, though some possible New Zealands glimmer in some poems and on some canvases. It remains to be created — should I say invented — by writers, musicians, artists, architects, publishers; even a politician might help.\footnote{177 Allen Curnow and Ngaio Marsh, "Dialogue by Way of Introduction," Howard Wadman ed., \textit{First Yearbook of the Arts in New Zealand} (Wellington: H.H. Tombs, 1945) 2.}

\textit{Landfall in Unknown Seas} is still frequently performed. Its combination of accessible music and 'public occasion' poetry means that it still occupies a central position in the 'public commemorative' repertoire. It is occasionally broadcast on Waitangi Day; it was broadcast on national radio on 13 December 1992, the 350th anniversary of Tasman's landfall. The same year it received a performance as part of a concert at New Zealand's Expo centre in Seville. Obviously, the work still participates in the rhetoric of national self-definition.

Part of "Landfall in Unknown Seas" also appeared at Expo in a different guise. In consultation with Allen Curnow, composer Don McGlashan set the first few lines of the poem's first section, as a "cantata"\footnote{178 Allen Curnow, interview with author, 7 October 1992. Curnow was at pains to explain that his words should be exactly followed: Don McGlashan was not to "tamper with the order of the words." Allen Curnow, interview with author, 7 October 1992.} in a musical texture perhaps intended to suggest New Zealand's ethnic mix. The text is sung first in English, then in a Spanish translation. It was designed to accompany a multi-screen video presentation at the New Zealand pavillion.

Why might this poem have been selected for reworking? According to ethnomusicologist Alan P. Merriam, the "use-factor" can help determine the "meaning" of music:

\begin{quote}
In the study of human behaviour we search constantly... not only for the descriptive facts about music, but, more important, for the meaning of music.... We wish to know not only what a thing is, but more significantly, what it does for people and how it does it.\footnote{179}
\end{quote}
What might new performances of *Landfall in Unknown Seas* "do" for contemporary audiences? The poem brings at least two histories forward with it: one is the story it narrates, the other is the history of subsequent performances of the poem itself. In the fifty years since the poem's first performance, Curnow's sceptical and, given its initial context, marginal sense of history has now become the 'official' story: pakeha deaths cannot be remembered without also remembering Maori losses, the narrative of 'discovery' cannot be retold without the history of loss which is its complement.

New contexts and old participate in the on-going process of hybridisation. Every previous performance is 'laid over' every new performance of the work, enriching and complicating the audience's sense of itself and of occasion, and its sense of the work itself. Every remembered 'old' context adds richness and complexity to new senses of occasion, hence the choice to perform *Hinemoa* and *Landfall in Unknown Seas* in the sesquicentennial year. Both are examples of a comparatively thin history of music associated with public occasions, and therefore help enrich contemporary celebrations with a specific sense of the past.

Appearing to tie in to Expo's theme of the commemoration of exploration and 'discovery' — 1992 was the quincentennial of Columbus's voyage to the Americas — *Landfall in Unknown Seas* may have seemed a logical choice. The implied connection between Tasman and Columbus links New Zealand and Spain. Taken out of context, the poem's opening lines appear to ennoble and flatter imperialists everywhere: it may have been meant as a kind of tribute to the Spanish, who were celebrating their own imperial history in 1992. Perhaps, too, the first lines of the poem were meant to acquire metaphorical force in what was undoubtedly a primarily commercial enterprise: New Zealand was on display in an international marketplace. Perhaps the lines were to inspire visitors to "sail in a new direction," and try New Zealand's produce, or to try the country as a holiday destination.

On one hand, *Landfall in Unknown Seas* solidifies a paradigmatic moment of nationalism, and as such represents an appropriate choice for a venue such as an international exposition. On the

other hand the poem is qualified by a painful awareness of the violence of the history-making process. Curnow wrote the poem in the depths of world war, and in it he shows a profound ambivalence about the process of nation-building: he qualifies the triumph of discovery with an anxiety about the future, and an acute awareness that history is written in blood. None of this finds voice in the extract chosen for the new setting. Whoever decided that "Landfall in Unknown Seas" should be reset also decided not to remind audiences of the silencing that goes on in order that an 'official history' should be written.

**Conclusion**

Art critic Robert Leonard identified in painter Colin McCahon an eclectic modernism\(^{180}\) that might equally be applied to the work of his near contemporaries Curnow and Lilburn. Leonard suggests that McCahon made his own combination of the local and the imported, the modern and the nationalist. In Leonard's terms, the result was a 'wonky', but unique (in its mix) modern art, one which had both lost and gained in its bumpy transition from its various points of overseas origin. Leonard commented that McCahon's "landscape-based work was central to the dominant nationalist argument, and yet, ironically, it was also very 'international' in its sources."\(^{181}\)

Robert Leonard places McCahon *between* the national and the modern, thereby reducing the modern/national dynamic to an opposition: "in a sense, nationalism was our modernism."\(^{182}\) In order to dismantle this opposition I would like to suggest that if nationalism was the project, certain selected "modern" tools were used to construct the edifice: the two components can best be seen in relation rather than in opposition. It is the characteristic combination of the modern and the national which is peculiar to the New Zealand in the early 40s, and that which gives the texts of the time their particular variety of indigeneity.

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\(^{181}\) Leonard, "Mod Cons", Barr 167.

FOUR: SINGS HARRY
Sings Harry

The next two chapters focus on the poetry of Denis Glover, and on musical settings of two of his best-known and most widely anthologised poems, "Sings Harry," and "The Magpies." In this chapter I will discuss Sings Harry, Douglas Lilburn's 1953 setting of six poems from the fourteen-poem "Sings Harry" sequence.1

The first poems of the "Sings Harry" sequence (Glover's "Songs" 1, 2 and 3) appeared initially in his collection Recent Poems (1941),2 and were reprinted in The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1934-44 (1945),3 the collection which also saw the first publication of "The Magpies." The whole "Sings Harry" sequence was written over a ten-year period, with poems appearing intermittently throughout the 1940s. Sings Harry and Other Poems (1951)4 saw the first publication of the completed sequence.

Both "The Magpies" and "Sings Harry" have become canonic. They are embedded in, and are historically central to, one phase of New Zealand's literary history. Along with the "Arawata Bill" poems, "Sings Harry" and "The Magpies" are the most frequently anthologised of Glover's poems, appearing first in Allen Curnow's anthology A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923-45.5

As with other music/text combinations such as "Waiata Poi" and Landfall in Unknown Seas, these poems also have separate and distinct histories of initial and subsequent 'use'. Like them,

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1As with Landfall in Unknown Seas, "Sings Harry" refers to Glover's poems alone, while Sings Harry refers to Lilburn's six-song cycle. See Appendix IV for the text of the Sings Harry cycle.
2Recent Poems (Christchurch: Caxton, 1941).
4Sings Harry and Other Poems (Christchurch: Caxton, 1951).
they can be read as layered archaeological sites. There are more layers over "The Magpies" than those built up around "Sings Harry." Although Lilburn's setting constitutes one of the very few layers over the latter work, it has become as canonic as the poems themselves. Lilburn's setting of "The Mapies" has only very recently come to light and is but one of a number of engagements by other artists with Glover's text.

"Sings Harry"

Denis James Matthews Glover, a contemporary of Curnow and Lilburn, was born in Dunedin in early December 1912. While a student at Canterbury University College, Glover was instrumental in setting up The Caxton Club Press in 1932, inspired by Bob Lowry's printing ventures at Auckland University College. Glover was seconded to the Royal Navy in 1941, and returned to Christchurch in late 1944 after three years' war service. Within six months, he had begun work at the Caxton Press on publications by James K. Baxter, Mary Ursula Bethell, R.M. Burdon, Allen Curnow, Basil Dowling, A.P. Gaskell, Monte Holcroft and his own collection, The Wind and the Sand. Douglas Lilburn's Four Preludes for Piano (1942-4) appeared in 1945, set by "musician-calligrapher" Leo Bensemann, then Glover's partner. At Caxton, "[Glover] created and kept in being for more than ten years a centre which, under his care, did more than any other to help good writing in New Zealand and to raise publishing and book production standards." The completed "Sings Harry" sequence finally appeared in book form in 1951. The individual poems had been written over the previous ten years. "Songs" 1, 2 and 3 first appeared in Glover's Recent Poems (1941). Glover met publisher John Lehmann in London in 1942. The completed "Sings Harry" sequence finally appeared in book form in 1951. The individual poems had been written over the previous ten years. "Songs" 1, 2 and 3 first appeared in Glover's Recent Poems (1941). This work has been very few reworkings of the "Sings Harry" poems. Les Cleveland set Glover's "Songs" 1, 2 and 3, and "The Casual Man" and collected them in The Great New Zealand Song Book (Auckland: Godwit, 1991).

6 There have been very few reworkings of the "Sings Harry" poems. Les Cleveland set Glover's "Songs" 1, 2 and 3, and "The Casual Man" and collected them in The Great New Zealand Song Book (Auckland: Godwit, 1991).
8 See Chapter Five: "The Magpies."
11 Curnow, Penguin 320.
12 Sings Harry and Other Poems (Christchurch: Caxton, 1951).
13 Recent Poems (Christchurch: Caxton, 1941).
Fig. 13. Evelyn Page, Denis Glover. 1968. (Auckland City Art Gallery).
same year, Lehmann took "Harry in the Windbreak" ("Song" 2) for the Tribune, of which he was then literary editor. The poem also appeared in the 1943 edition of More Poems from the Forces. These three songs were reprinted in The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1934-44.14

"Once the Days", ultimately the sixth poem in the sequence, appeared in Book VII: A Miscellany from the Caxton Press.16 "I Remember", which was to become the fifth poem in the sequence, appeared six months later, in Book VIII.17 For its first publication, the latter poem was entitled "I Remember, Sang Harry", with the chorus or refrain also in the past tense. (For its inclusion in the collection Sings Harry and Other Poems (1951), the chorus was brought into line with the present tense of all but the last of the poems. The past tense is reserved for the chorus of the final poem, "On the Headland": funereal imagery and a resigned tone mark the end of the cycle.)

The remainder of the "Sings Harry" sequence appeared in Sings Harry and Other Poems(1951)18. This collection was one of Glover's last typographical works at The Caxton Press. After a brief stint as a director of Albion Wright's Pegasus Press, Glover moved to Wellington in 1954. A variety of jobs followed, in publishing, advertising, teaching and writing. Glover died in 1980.

The whole "Sings Harry" cycle consists of fourteen poems. "Songs" 1, 2, and 3 are followed by "Fool's Song", which appears as an epigram to the 1951 collection Sings Harry and Other Poems but is placed fourth in the sequence in Glover's Selected Poems (1981)19. "Fool's Song" is followed by "I Remember", "Once the Days", "Lake, Mountain, Tree", "The Casual Man", "Thistledown", "The Park", "Mountain Clearing", "The Flowers of the Sea", "Themes" and "On the Headland."

The first poem of the sequence is also the most self-reflexive. It sets up a frame for the following poems, all of which carry the "Sings Harry" refrain.

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17 Book VIII (Christchurch: Caxton, August 1946).
18 Sings Harry and Other Poems (Christchurch: Caxton, 1951).
These songs will not stand—  
The wind and the sand will smother.

Not I but another  
Will make songs worth the bother:  
The rimu or kauri he,  
I'm but the cabbage tree,  
*Sings Harry to an old guitar.*

Harry's analogy in "Song" relates to the comparative longevity of several New Zealand native trees. The rimu and kauri are both long-lived, deep-rooted hardwood species. The "cabbage tree" is a fast-growing, shallow rooted softwood: Harry's analogy displays his diffidence about the significance of his artistic contribution. Glover's assessment of his own gift was also tinged with polite self-deprecation: "Poetry I gave a good deal of time to but I was never as good as my friends. Some of them really were poets." Perhaps ironically, however, (and partly to do with the contribution of "another"), these songs have "stood."

Although the metaphors are different, the speaker in Glover's "Song" adopts a parallel rhetorical position to the one occupied by the speaker in Allen Curnow's poem "Attitudes for a New Zealand Poet (III): The Skeleton of the Great Moa in the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch":

Not I, some child, born in a marvellous year  
Will learn the trick of standing upright here.

Both speakers claim a position at the beginning of a tradition; their efforts in the present are at best ephemeral, and they look to the future as the site of personal and artistic identity.

However, despite these possibly disingenuous disclaimers, both Curnow's and Glover's texts are now canonic examples of a self-consciously centripetal phase of New Zealand's literary tradition. Allen Curnow's introductions to *A Book of New Zealand Verse* (1945) and the later *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1960) are perhaps the clearest manifestos for this centripetal, location-specific poetic. (Curnow was subsequently accused of partiality, selecting for these anthologies poems which focus on local history, identity and society. His role as anthologist in what has been seen as a prescriptive and exclusive poetic has been discussed by Denis Glover, *Hot Water Sailor and Landlubber Ho!* (Auckland: Collins, 1962) 102.
Around the same time, Douglas Lilburn was also expressing his ambition to devise a location-specific musical discourse; he too perceived himself as being at the beginning of a tradition—"perhaps I could say that we're not really New Zealanders at all, that we are only in the process of becoming." Lilburn's search for a tradition involved the development of a musical discourse that was both local and personal—"a music of our own, a living tradition of music created in this country, a music that will satisfy those parts of our being that cannot be satisfied by the music of other nations." Parallel with Lilburn's ambition to establish a musical tradition in New Zealand, Glover's ambition was to develop poetry, and a prerequisite publishing infrastructure, in what he too perceived as a thin and uninteresting local situation. "A great deal of our poetry is too dull even to be bad. Some New Zealander not afraid of a big task may some day collect our really bad verse under such a title as *The Mournful Morepork*; after that other book, *The Stuffed Owl.*" For Glover, as for Curnow and Lilburn, this embryonic tradition had to be locally inflected, notwithstanding its debts to English poetry. Glover's most fully-realised protagonists, Arawata Bill, Mick Stimpson and Harry, were masculine, rugged loners, who lived away from the city, communing with the sea and the landscape, if not actively in flight from, at least content without human company. Harry is the only character of the three who is self-consciously articulate about his flight from the values of home and family.

"Sings Harry" provided an ideal vehicle for Lilburn's experimentation with a synthesised folk idiom. Both Harry and the anonymous interlocutor directly invoke music: "Not I but another/Will make songs worth the bother... Sings Harry to an old guitar." Glover's lyrics are pastoral, and their tone is nostalgic. Lilburn chose to set the poems which most poignantly articulate the nostalgia of lost youth, alienation from home and family and individual isolation. It is also possible that the idea of the poet hiding behind the mask of a persona appealed to the reclusive

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Lilburn.

Harry’s history is perhaps more Lilburn’s than Glover’s own. The youngest child of seven, and five years younger than his closest siblings, Lilburn grew up “a rather solitary child” on a large sheep station near Hunterville.

The farm was Drysdale Station which was at Pukeroa which is eighteen miles out of Hunterville on the upper reaches of the Turakina River, way back in the bush — a beautiful place, beautiful... I just had this paradise to roam around in and there were some neighbourhood kids that I could play with. But there was a slight barrier there because they were the children of people who were working on the Station and always at a certain point they went back to the small houses and I went back to the big house. When my parents came back [from an extended holiday in Europe] they moved into Wanganui to retire and took me with them and I went to school there. But on holidays of course I always went straight back to one of the farms.25

I remember paddocks opening green
On mountains tussock-brown,
And the rim of fire on the hills,
And the river running down...26

Lilburn’s family background was not musical, and his decision to become a composer was met with bemusement. His father said “Everyone wants to go to London. You’ll get over it.”27 Lilburn felt the need to cut himself off from his family, and it was forty years before he had reconciled himself to the rift his career decision had caused.28

Once the days were clear
Like mountains in water,
The mountains were always there
And the mountain water;

And I was a fool leaving
Good land to moulder,
Leaving the fences sagging

And the old man older
To follow my wild thoughts
Away over the hill,
Where there is only the world
And the world's ill,
_Sings Harry._

A measure of family approval came when Lilburn was awarded the Percy Grainger prize for his orchestral tone-poem _Forest_ (1936), composed while a student at Canterbury University College. It took a letter from the President of the Farmers' Union, congratulating him on his son's success, to persuade Lilburn's father that there was any substance to his son's achievement. "I think [the letter] shook him a bit because he couldn't believe it. He used to say it _had_ to be music, couldn't it be the bagpipes!" 29

[The Percy Grainger Prize] gave me twenty five pounds.... It was enough to impress my family that there might have been a bit of money in it you know.... My father agreed to send me to London to study on the strength of the Percy Grainger prize. He agreed to give me an allowance of three pounds a week, which wasn't lavish. And he gave me a two-berth cabin to go in because he thought his brother who might be in Auckland might come to see me off — I wasn't going to be seen off in anything less than a two-berth cabin. 30

Glover made several acknowledgments of Lilburn's contribution to the "Sings Harry" sequence. At the time he wrote "I am very delighted (and flattered) that you have managed to bend Harry into musical form and make the old bastard sing to the chromatic scale. I didn't see how it could be done!" 31 In the 65th birthday tribute to Lilburn published by the _New Zealand Listener_, Glover wrote:

The 'Sings Harry' sequence (of which you set some poems over quite a number of years before you were pleased with what you did, and meticulously, what you wanted your performers to do) fills me with fright and delight and distrust. The plain gingerbread of those poems does not deserve such beautiful icing. 32

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29 Harris and Norman 19.
30 Harris and Norman 19.
The *Festschrift*[^33] published to mark the composer's retirement from Victoria University contains Glover's poem "Letter to Lilburn."[^34] Editor Philip Norman commented that "I am fairly certain 'Letter to Lilburn' was written especially for the *Festschrift*. I have a vague recollection of thinking shortly after Denis Glover's death that it may well have been the last poem he wrote."[^35]

**Sings Harry**

Douglas Lilburn chose to set six of the fourteen "Sings Harry" poems: "Songs" I and III, "I Remember", "Once the Days", "The Casual Man" and "The Flowers of the Sea".[^36] He has not followed the order of the poems as they appear in *Sings Harry and Other Poems* or the *Selected Poems*, but has arranged them in a series which alternates slow and fast, introspective and more exuberant songs.

The *Sings Harry* song-cycle exists in several variants. The first version was written in 1953, for baritone and piano, "with [baritone] Donald Munroe in mind."[^37] This version was published by Otago University Press in 1966. It erroneously dates the score as 1954: the composer's holograph manuscript is dated "[19]53".[^38] A second version, for tenor and piano or guitar[^39], was realised shortly afterwards, "since Glover liked [tenor Terence] Finnigan's Irish style."[^40] Philip Norman suggested that although Lilburn's original setting was for piano, the guitar which figures so prominently in the poem lay behind both the range and the melodic shape of the

[^33]: Harris and Norman.
[^34]: See Appendix III.
setting:

The range of pitch used in the piano line of the Otago University Press version keeps, in the main, to the range of a guitar.... Only in Song 5 are chords containing more than six notes introduced, and it is rare (except in Song 1) that any chord scored is, in theory, unplayable on the guitar for reasons of spacing.41

Les Cleveland also maintained that the songs were originally intended to be sung with instrumental accompaniment.42

The third version for tenor and piano was arranged in 195443, because "no suitable guitarist could be found."44 It is this version which was recorded by Terence Finnigan and pianist Frederick Page in 1960.45 The tenor and guitar version was recorded by guitarist Milton Parker and tenor Robert Oliver in 1977.46 The songs are still frequently performed.47

The arrangements for guitar and piano illustrate different aspects of Lilburn's "search for a tradition."48 To a certain extent Harry's guitar, to which the interlocutor refers, 'begs the question' of a folk setting; although predating the international folk-song revival of the 1960s, the arrangement for guitar brings with it associations with the tradition of folk music. The guitar setting also literalises the poem's refrain: in performance, the setting collapses the distinction between Harry (the subject of the poem) and the speaker in the poem, who distances himself from Harry, commenting that it is Harry (not "I") who sings.

Although Lilburn rejected the musical vocabulary of Alfred Hill and his contemporaries, the medium chosen for Sings Harry is also that chosen by Hill for "Waiata Poi". The medium

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41Norman, "Origins and Development" 412.
42Liner notes to Kiwi LP SLD-28.
43Sings Harry (for tenor and guitar), Holograph score, 1954, fMS Papers 2483 Folder 73/1, Douglas Lilburn collection. Alexander Turnbull Library.
45Kiwi EC-26.
46Kiwi SLD-47.
47Frederick Page reviewed Sings Harry, after a concert of Lilburn's work given at Victoria University ("Elusive Lilburn" NZ Listener (12 April 1980): 69). An entrant in the 1991 Mobil song quest included "Song One" in his competition repertoire; David Griffiths (baritone) and Terence Dennis (piano) broadcast the Sings Harry cycle as part of a programme entitled "Two New Zealand Song Cycles". Broadcast Monday 23 November 1992.
48See Lilburn, Tradition.
carries with it the history of European song forms. These associations were inevitable, and an important aspect of Lilburn's "search for a musical tradition" for New Zealand. This search was informed by a conscious and explicit process of selection: "Our attitude should be one of greater selectiveness.... By selectiveness, I mean something more than the mere liking or disliking of a thing. I mean a conscious awareness of why it is that we do this..."49

While he protested that indigenous music and the music of other countries and contexts tended to be irrelevant to the establishment of a musical idiom appropriate to New Zealand, Lilburn also acknowledged that a local musical idiom would inevitably be an assimilation and synthesis of the musical media and discourses of other countries, and that New Zealand composers would filter out and select those sounds most appropriate to "the New Zealand context"50. His ambition was to discover a local music that, like the writing of his contemporaries, could satisfy the "small part" of him that he could not discover in reading "Shakespeare or Tolstoi or the modern English poets."51

Selection of a synthesised folk or vernacular musical idiom

Lilburn desired to emulate an established high culture, but also to give it local inflection, in terms of treatment and subject-matter. If these settings belong in part to the art-song genre, Lilburn's search for a vernacular idiom may have suggested his other musical line of enquiry.

When did I decide to set these poems? — Impossible to say. But I did give them a long period of thought, wondering how I could possibly match their so-seeming casual qualities with equivalent harmonies and rhythms of a "vernacular" style still unformed in our music.52

Lilburn's suggestion that New Zealand's vernacular tradition was as yet embryonic represents a softening of his 1946 claim that "we have no folk song."53 Here he ignored the existing local musical traditions which did not fit his parameters for a musical vernacular. At this time, seven

49Lilburn, Tradition 15
50Lilburn, Tradition 11. See also Chapter Three: Landfall in Unknown Seas, especially the section entitled "Lilburn's eclecticism."
51Lilburn, Tradition 14.
53Lilburn, Tradition 10.
years before the writing of *Sings Harry*, Lilburn's "own cultural sources"54 were implicitly European, and high-cultural. This meant the exclusion of popular and domestic music, and the music of brass band and church choir. Indigenous music was also excluded. "My impressions of [Maori music] are that in its purer state as a part of Polynesian culture, it is about as foreign to our own cultural sources as say Javanese or Siberian folk music."55

Ironically, Lilburn's "vernacular" was to be established via British high-cultural models.

For Glover and Lilburn, the desire for a vernacular in the arts lead to the selection of a specific range of models, turning to countries, and thence to individuals, who displayed a special concern with their own "volk." A yearning for a sense of location in poetry lead Glover to Wordsworth's rediscovery of rural themes.56 For Douglas Lilburn, Vaughan Williams's engagement with English folk song filled a similar role.57 In his effort to establish a New Zealand vernacular, by the 1950s Lilburn had selected a centripetal 'roots and the soil' approach, borrowed from his teacher and mentor Ralph Vaughan Williams. (Vaughan Williams had championed English folk music in the face of the pervasive influence of Germany on English music of the nineteenth century.58) However, instead of resorting to what he perceived as a very thin local folksong tradition,59 Lilburn turned to a transplanted Gaelic or modal idiom, as colonial folksong was often nostalgic for the musical idioms of "home", and Lilburn identified Harry and Glover as

56 The absence of a folk poetry in New Zealand was also felt by James K. Baxter. "Unfortunately, after McKee Wright, there has been no vigorous undergrowth of ballad poetry. Without even the shadow of a folk culture, our poets and poetesses have been forced into ivory towers." James K. Baxter, *Recent Trends in New Zealand Poetry* (Christchurch: Caxton, 1951) 6. Baxter chose the ballad form for his poems "Lament for Barney Flanagan", "Ballad of Stonegut Sugarworks" and "A Rope for Harry Fat."
58 See Chapter One: "Waiata Poi."
In common with local centripetally-oriented writers, Lilburn's musical orientation was ostensibly inward, in that his stated aim was the establishment of an indigenous musical tradition. The models for the vocabularies of writers and composer were, however, frequently externally situated. On one level, Lilburn's setting can be seen as a musical vernacular which parallels Glover's "folk" or rural subject-matter. On another, neither is a pure "vernacular" but rather a reading of, and a transposition of, a pre-existing tradition. In Lilburn's case, the would-be vernacular was complicated by the genre's associations with the European art song, and in Glover's with romantic rather than folk poetry.

Glover's sequence seems particularly amenable to pseudo-folk treatment, as the figure of Harry, while rural and rustic, is also musical. In its musical setting, Harry's self-deprecatory line "Not I but another/ Will make songs worth the bother" takes on a further ironic twist, especially given Glover's professed ignorance of Lilburn's intention to set the verses: "I don't remember that Glover had any inkling I was busy in this way until I told him the sequence was written ('53)."

The folksong element in these settings is important, and is particularly obvious in the re-arrangement for guitar. The very presence of the versions for piano and guitar suggests Lilburn's desire to 'have it both ways'. While the arrangement for guitar emphasises the folk-like subject of the poems, the piano arrangement emphasises the high-cultural aspect of the project, of "making songs worth the bother", although with a diffidence hinted at in the last bar of the "Song One": the accompaniment resolves onto the tonic, but then moves away again, hanging suspended on the fifth. This seems to emphasise both the modality of the setting and the introspection which also characterises the poem.

Philip Norman described *Sings Harry* as "Lilburn's contribution to the folk tradition he wished, throughout the 1940s and his 'nationalist' phase of writing, that New Zealand possessed." (Lilburn himself lamented the "lack of any tradition [to guide the young composer], either of a folk music or of serious music written in his own country — he is poverty-stricken."
Despite the fact that Lilburn's aural imagination was "drawn towards piano works and chamber music," he produced a large number of settings of poems by New Zealand writers during this centripetally-focussed period, feeling that "some New Zealand poetry of the time invited such settings." Between 1945 and 1954, he composed nine works for voice and piano: all are settings of poems by New Zealand poets. The arrangement of "Sings Harry" for tenor and piano was the last of his works for this medium. (Lilburn later described his relationship with New Zealand poetry as "continuous and rewarding." )

For the Sings Harry cycle, Lilburn synthesised 'folk tunes' out of a few melodic and rhythmic building blocks. Although basically tonal, the melodies have a modal, 'haunting' quality, characterised by open fourths and fifths and flattened leading-notes. Settings are generally syllabic and rhythmically straightforward. Songs One to Four, and Song Six, are in 4/4 time. Song Five is in 3/4 time. All the songs are characterised by a modal flavour and an ingenuous lyricism. Sings Harry is unique among Lilburn's works in that he used English rather than Italian for some of his tempo indications. This seems appropriate to the "English folk" idiom, to which the work also owes certain debts.

Song One, "These Songs Will Not Stand", is marked "Rather Slow" (crochet = c.46) The key signature is E minor, but the persistent D-natural suggests the aeolian mode on E. Throughout, the accompaniment features Lilburn's characteristic short-long (in this instance, quaver-crochet) syncopated figure. The figure is repeated throughout the movement, shared between left and right hands. It gives the feeling of a slow, lilting sarabande-like dance, accompanied by arpeggiated "drone" chords: the bare E-B fifth is sustained as an ostinato throughout the song. (The accompaniments to songs One, Five and Six all use these spread chords, suggesting Harry's strummed guitar.)

The melody of Song One covers an octave in range (B-B) and is built on the pentatonic scale E-G-A-B-D-natural. (The second (F#) and sixth degrees (C) of the scale of E minor are missing.)

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63 Lilburn, Tradition 21.
66 See Chapter Three: Landfall in Unknown Seas.
67 Douglas Lilburn, correspondence with author, 6 October 1993.
Rather slow \( \text{\textdagger c.46} \)

These songs will not stand... The wind and the sand will smother...
Not I but another will make songs worth the bother...
The rimu or kauri he.

Fig. 14. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry*, Song 1. (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 1966)
This gives the melody a bare, celtic "whole-tone" flavour. The refrain "Sings Harry to an oldguitar" is followed immediately by a rapid descending arpeggio figure (bars 22 and 23) which outlines the modal scale, again giving the effect of a strummed instrument. The trochee "Harry" neatly fits Lilburn's "thumbprint" rhythmic gesture.⁶⁸ Although the pitches are never the same twice, the short-long, strong-weak impulse recurs throughout the cycle as the rhythmic motif for the "Sings Harry" refrain.

Fig. 15. Douglas Lilburn, Sings Harry, Song 2. ("When I am old").

⁶⁸See Chapter Three for further discussion of this rhythmic gesture.
Lilburn’s second song (Glover’s “Song” III: “When I am Old”) is marked “Moderately fast”, crochet = c88. The lively tempo seems appropriate to Harry’s slightly lecherous crystal-ball gazing into the future. The key is the same as the previous song, but the vocal range is a fourth wider (B-E¹). The central point of the verse, and the highest point in the vocal line — “girls” — is marked by the harmonically unexpected C♯-E portamento, suggesting the speaker’s voyeuristic excitement at the prospect of watching the girls pass on their bicycles:

When I am old  
*Sings Harry*  
Will my thoughts grow cold?  
Will I find  
*Sings Harry*  
For my sunset mind  
Girls on bicycles  
Turning into the wind?  

Or will my old eyes feast  
Upon some private movie of the past?  
*Sings Harry.*

The piano part is spare in texture and rhythmically straightforward, limited to two simple ideas. The first is a quaver “vamp” figure, alternating on the half beat between left and right hands. This suggests a picked guitar accompaniment. The other prominent feature is an urgent, slightly syncopated descending semiquaver pattern, repeated seven times in the 29 bars of the song.

The ascending, step-wise diatonic motion of the melodic lines in the third song (Glover’s sixth) “Once the Days” (“Simply and Distantly” crochet = c60) also outlines a modal scale: again aeolian, starting on B. Although the note-lengths in the melody are fairly uniform, the vocal line is irregularly phrased across bar-lines, which gives a gently lilting quality. The vocal line and the two melodic lines in the accompaniment answer each other, interweaving almost canonically. Lilburn’s setting matches the melancholy, nostalgic tone of the poem. Again the ending is speculative, with the fourth and fifth finally more prominent than the tonic of the scale.

Marked at crochet = c 138, Lilburn’s fourth song, “The Casual Man”, the eighth poem in Glover’s sequence, is the most lively of the set. The cheerful tone of the setting compliments Harry’s blithe disregard for possessions and the preoccupations of the clock-watchers of the
Lively \( J = c.138 \)

Come, mint me up the golden gorse, Mine me the yellow clay. There’s no money in my purse, For a rowdy day, sings Harry.

My father left me his old coat, Nothing more than that; And will my head —

They take hurt in an old hat! sings Harry.

Fig. 16. Douglas Lilburn, Sings Harry, Song 4. ("The Casual Man").
world.

My father left me his old coat,
Nothing more than that;
And will my head take hurt
In an old hat?

*Sings Harry.*

They all concern themselves too much
With what the clock shows.
But does the casual man care
How the world goes?

*Sings Harry.*

The form is strophic, with each stanza divided in mirrored halves, with a "Sings Harry" refrain. The piano opens with the "Sings Harry" motif — the only point in the cycle where the piano has this figure. The key of the song is F major, based on the pentatonic scale F-G-A-C-D: the fourth (B♭) and seventh (E♭) degrees of the major scale are missing, again giving a modal, folk-like quality. Lilburn alternates the A-natural of the scale with a foreign "blue" flattened third (A♭), appropriate to a folk or country idiom.

The fifth song, "The Flowers of the Sea" (Glover's twelfth), returns to the reflective moods of the first and third songs. Although the piece is marked crochet = c. 58, the instruction "Not too slow" is perhaps an indication to performers not to let the pensive, introspective tone of the song get the better of them. The mode of this song is aeolian on G. The structure is strophic, with four slightly ornamented repetitions of the verse, before the "Sings Harry" refrain. A degree of chromaticism is introduced here: the refrain used the chords of E♭ minor, then D♭ major. The following 7-bar coda, marked lonato, alternates between G minor and G♭ major chords in the piano.

Marked an "Unhurried" crochet = c. 100, the piano accompaniment of "I Remember" the sixth and final song, features the quaver guitar "vamp" figure of the second song. The form of the song is ternary (A-B-A¹). The 'A' section sets the first two verses, the 'B' section the middle three, and the 'A¹' section the final verse and coda. The first section is in C major modulating to A minor, and is the most firmly tonal part of the cycle. The 'B' section is a kind of recitative in E♭ major.

[^69]: See Appendix III for complete text of "The Casual Man."
Fig. 17. Douglas Lilburn, *Sings Harry*, Song 5. ("Flowers of the Sea").
and D\textsuperscript{b} major. The 'A\textsuperscript{1}' section concludes in the home key of C major. The image of "the river running down", repeated three times in the poem, is also given special emphasis in the setting. At the bar containing the words "and the river", the texture changes from the quaver vamp figure to two arpeggiated minim chords. This bar is marked "broadly", and the second time "very broadly." The triplet quaver figure of the following bar ("running down") is marked "quicken" or \textit{a tempo}, programmatically suggesting running water.

**Glover the Romantic**

A Romantic in corsets I once called you
Laughing admiring to your face.
(In those days to be labelled Romantic
Was a disgrace.)\textsuperscript{70}

Perhaps perceiving his own 'sins' writ large in another, Glover affectionately accused Lilburn of being a covert romantic. Glover's own romantic and lyrical tendencies are obvious in the "Sings Harry" poems, in which he has chosen to work in Wordsworthian pastoral, and Yeatsean lyric modes.

The stereotypical 'masculinity' of Glover's subjects betrays his anxiety about writing poetry in a society which perceived itself as still largely rural and masculine. Along with the privileging of the pioneering (and wartime) 'masculine' virtues of independence and toughness went a distrust of the emotions, a concomitant suspicion of the effeminacy of the arts, and a degree of misogyny. In the "Sings Harry" poems, the poet adopted a persona to whom he allowed a degree of lyricism, but only on the condition that Harry was also depicted as a 'real country bloke': these poems attempted to validate the urban and articulate arts by association with the more 'authentic' rural and inarticulate. Glover conflated 'real' (rural, masculine) New Zealand and the slightly suspect arts in the figure of the tough and rural, but articulate and musical Harry, who is 'saved' from possible effeminacy by his hard, isolated rural past.

Glover had an abiding horror of what he perceived as the fey and effeminate in New Zealand literature. Of the purpose of the Caxton Press he wrote "It was time to impart new vitality to New Zealand verse. No more leisurely-whimsy, feminine-mimsy stuff."\textsuperscript{71} Publicly, he championed

\textsuperscript{70}Denis Glover, "Letter to Lilburn." See Appendix III for complete text.

\textsuperscript{71}Denis Glover, \textit{Hot Water Sailor and Landlubber Ho!} 94.
the manly outdoor pursuits of boxing, rugby and sailing, and may have valued his D.S.C and Soviet War Medal medal more highly than his D.Litt. for services to literature.\textsuperscript{72} In "The Arraignment of Paris", Glover had attacked C.A Marris for his editorial promotion of a variety of sentimental, "feminine", rural poetry:

He would not serve the Muses as a lackey
where dung lies deep, as in, say, Taranaki.
To colalmine themes he'd never tune his lyre:
he only wants the pictures in the fire.\textsuperscript{73}

Despite the toughness and 'masculinity' of his characters, and the unglamorised rural settings (in conscious contrast to the florid, picturesque rural poetry of the type of Georgianism he despised), the language and imagery of the poems belies Glover's tough ideal. "Sings Harry" reveals Glover's strong lyrical impulse — "sentiment saved (by a hair!) from sentimentality."\textsuperscript{74} The lyricism of Wordsworth's "Lucy" poems is clear in "Lake, Mountain, Tree":

Water brimmed against the shore
Oozing among the reeds,
And looking into the lake I saw
Myself and mountains and weeds.

From the crystal uttermost ridge
Dwarfed was the river's course;
Cloud-shouting, to the world's edge
I rode a whole island for my horse.

Forlorn at the last tree,
Grey shingle bruised our bones;
But there holding tenaciously
Were roots among the stones.

Knowing less now, and alone,
These things make for me
A gauge to measure the unknown
— Lake, mountain, tree,
\textit{Sings Harry}.

\textsuperscript{72}Denis Glover, \textit{Hot Water Sailor and Landlubber Ho!} 244.
\textsuperscript{73}Denis Glover, "The Arraignment of Paris", \textit{Selected Poems} 6-13.
\textsuperscript{74}Allen Curnow, Introduction, \textit{Denis Glover: Selected Poems} xvii.
Not only are the rhyme scheme, metre and diction of this poem those of the "Lucy" poems; the poets also share a pantheistic sense of unity with nature. Glover's early poetic included a version of Wordsworth's "emotion recollected in tranquillity":

It seems to me that a universality of expression can best be achieved in the detachment of objectivity...If we go back to Wordsworth we see that it is the recollection and the tranquility that alone are likely to give perfection of thought and form. A stew is always better when kept for a day or two.

In common with his Romantic models, Glover's poems such as "The Roadbuilders", "Root and Crop and Stone", "The Magpies" and "In Fascist Countries" illustrate his call for socially responsible poetry. This should be able to "[stir] the hot blood against injustice and tyranny of all sorts, and [bring] vividly to mind the disgraceful indifference of those squatting, comfortably enough, on the sharp shoulder-blades of the poor." Also in step with the Wordsworth of the Lyrical Ballads, Glover reviled the city as the site of material values and hypocrisy. In satirical mode, he described a class of affluent philistine who professed a "rare and exquisite appreciation of the fashionable poets." He also described "another class of men, having not even the pretended zeal for the poets. They dwell in the concrete catacombs of the city, and it is their peculiar virtue to read columns of figures as we ordinary people read the pages of a book."

Glover's avowed anti-sentimentalism coexisted with a romantic privileging of the countryside, which both Glover and Wordsworth perceived as the site of abiding values.

Poetry will take us wandering among our own thoughts, than which no garden should be more lovely. And it will teach us, after the bludgeoning of steel and concrete, what strength there is in running water and the reed that is tempered by the wind.

Wordsworth's explanation for his choice of subject in the Lyrical Ballads could equally apply to

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75 "Nature will still be waiting when men turn from their folly, but at present to draw attention to the simplicity and quiet joy of a tree is like comforting the afflicted with pictures of their happiness in a previous incarnation." [1937] Denis Glover, Bedside Book 94.
76 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 90.
77 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 95.
78 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 91-2.
79 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 92.
80 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 95.
the Glover of Arawata Bill, Sings Harry and Mick Stimpson.

Low and rustic life was generally chosen because in that situation the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; ... and lastly, because in that situation the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language too of these men is adopted... because... being less under the action of social vanity they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborate expressions.81

"Sings Harry" and "The Magpies" represent different aspects of the ballad form as it appears in the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordworth and Coleridge. The "Sings Harry" sequence is ballad-like in its subject and theme rather than its structure, having as its protagonist a generic Romantic wander: among the *Lyrical Ballads* are poems about the wandering and the dispossessed: "The Female Vagrant", "Old Man Travelling; Animal Tranquillity and Decay" and "Michael". "The Magpies" relates to the *Lyrical Ballads* in both its subject and form. Although deceptively light in tone, the poem deals with the suffering of the rural working class, and has the same rhyme-scheme and metrical structure as "The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere" and "Love."

Glover, however, later attempted to recant his neo-romanticism. "Wordsworth said poetry was emotion recollected in tranquillity. I found myself content with this for a long time, until I turned more and more towards poetry that is not emotional or romantic."82 Poet Alistair Campbell contended that Glover fought against this romantic impulse, to the detriment of his writing, and that his attempts at social realism are at best pale parodies of Auden and Day Lewis. Explaining what he perceived as bathetic lapses in some of Glover's verse, Campbell commented that Glover was embarrassed by his romantic tendencies, and "betrayed his talent" by "[refusing] to accept [it] for what it was."83 According to Campbell, Glover tended to self-sabotage when sincerity threatened. He argued that Glover's vehement rejection of contemporary manifestations of New Zealand Georgianism was an attempt to disown a sentimental impulse in his own writing.84

82 Denis Glover, "Poetry, Music", *Bedside Book* 90.
84 Alistair Campbell, "Glover and Georgianism."
In the "Sings Harry" poems, Glover selected Romantic models, and the model of the lyric provided by Yeats. He had discovered Yeats, especially the later poetry, after leaving university. There are obvious parallels are between "Sings Harry" and Yeats's "Crazy Jane" poems, which were published in The Winding Stair and Other Poems (1933). The "Crazy Jane" lyrics are the first seven of the twenty five "Words For Music Perhaps" poems. The title "Words for Music" invokes music in much the same way as Glover's "Sings Harry". Jane and Harry are both loners and outsiders, who share a resigned acceptance of time and change.

That lover of a night
   came when he would,
Went in the dawning light
Whether I would or no;
Men come, men go:
All things remain in God....

I had wild Jack for a lover;
   Though like a road
That men pass over
My body makes no moan
But sings on:
All things remain in God.87

Both poets offer as a refrain or commentary the italicised the voice of an anonymous interlocutor:

"Love is all
   Unsatisfied
That cannot take the whole
Body and soul"
And that is what Jane said.88

As with Yeat's "Crazy Jane" poems, Glover has assumed a fictional persona in the "Sings Harry" sequence. While "hiding" the poet, Harry speaks for him: Harry can be romantic, introspective and nostalgic without dangerously compromising the poet's masculinity. Harry, unlike the poet, is allowed to "[take] the game seriously."89 He comes perilously close to self-

85 Thomson, Denis Glover 32.
87 "Words for Music Perhaps" (Poem V: Crazy Jane on God.) The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats.
88 "Words for Music Perhaps" (Poem III: Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgement) The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats
revelation, where Glover's usual narrative mode is one of wry or ironic understatement: he cultivated an autobiographical rhetoric which turned war into game and game into war.

Coda

Folk-music writer Christine Dann called the Sings Harry settings an "embarrassing gaffe"—she finds the setting inadequate as an example of a "genuine [New Zealand] tradition". Frederick Page, on the other hand, Page described the songs as "Lilburn's finest achievement." In 1989 I played the Page/Finnigan recording of Sings Harry to some first-year English university students, who laughed at the image of the tenor "doing opera." The contrast between rural subject matter and the "high-cultural" resonances of the art song appears to have struck those listeners as incongruous.

This range of responses may be accounted for by the habits and agendas of different listening communities. These habits and agendas will always vary between communities, hence, the hybrid of codes of which every piece is composed will shift in and out of focus, rendering the work variously opaque and transparent. An audience familiar with the art song tradition will regard Sings Harry as fairly transparent: it fits the expectations of the genre. However it may seem incongruous if one is listening with a preconceived programme for a folk tradition in mind, as Dann was. This complication of readings helps to make the heterogeneity of the work visible—to expose or foreground its seams.

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89 Denis Glover, Bedside Book 109.
91 Dann 11
92 Frederick Page, "Elusive Lilburn".
FIVE: "THE MAGPIES"
"The Magpies"

Unlike "Sings Harry", a poem that has been set to music by few composers other than Lilburn, Glover's poem "The Magpies" continues to accumulate responses by artists working in other media. Their responses show how some New Zealand artists have defined positions for themselves by engaging in various ways with a local literary icon and with the history of re-readings it has accumulated: this poem has come to occupy such a central position in its tradition that many see it as an ancestor they must come to terms with.

This chapter is itself a magpie compilation. The organising principle of selection is the poem "The Magpies" itself, reworked in a range of media. The examples cover a wide chronological range. Each artist, magpie-like, has gathered a different array of shiny trinkets from which to construct a particular artifact. Applied to these magpie-artists themselves, the poem's chorus, and its shift from past to present tense, can be read as an indicator of this constant and ongoing process of selection and rejection:

And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies say.¹

Glover's Poem

"The Magpies" was first published in 1945, in Glover's collection The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1934-44.² Later the same year Allen Curnow anthologised the poem in A Book of New Zealand Verse 1923-45.³ For this anthology, Glover added a new fourth stanza to "The Magpies":

But soon the beautiful crops all went
To the mortgage man instead,
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

¹The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1934-44 (Christchurch: Caxton, 1945). See Appendix IV for the complete text of "The Magpies."
³(Christchurch: Caxton, 1945).
"The Magpies" has appeared in at least ten anthologies since Curnow's 1945 collection, with the six-stanza version being the most frequently anthologised.\(^4\) The following list gives an indication of the poem's importance in the New Zealand literary canon. (Incidentally, all the following anthologies also contain selections from Glover's "Sings Harry" sequence). "The Magpies" is collected in Walter Murdoch and Alan Mulgan's collection *A Book of Australian and New Zealand Verse* (1950);\(^5\) Robert Chapman and Jonathan Bennett's *An Anthology of New Zealand Verse* (Five stanza version) (1956);\(^6\) Allen Curnow's *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1960);\(^7\) Vincent O'Sullivan's *An Anthology of Twentieth Century New Zealand Poetry* (1970);\(^8\) Helen M. Hogan's *Nowhere Far From the Sea: an Anthology of New Zealand Poems for Secondary School Students* (1971);\(^9\) John Bolton's *Timber, Tussock and Rushing Rivers: Poems for Children by Writers in New Zealand* (1973);\(^10\) the 1974 LP recording *New Zealand Poets Read Their Work for Children*;\(^11\) Dorothy Butler's 1980 children's anthology *The Magpies Said: Stories and Poems from New Zealand*;\(^12\) Harvey McQueen's selection *A Cage of Words* (1980);\(^13\) and Ian Wedde and Harvey McQueen's collection *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* (1985).\(^14\) The poem appears in a large number of collections for children, perhaps because of its ingenuous rhyme-scheme and cheerful chortling chorus. However, the poem's light tone belies its less than frivolous subject. It describes the history of a farming couple, whose youthful optimism turns to disillusionment and decay, despite their hard work. In terms of its topic, "The Magpies" makes a

\(^{4}\) Denis Glover's *Selected Poems* (Auckland: Penguin, 1981) also contains the six stanza version. Of the settings discussed in the remainder of this chapter, all but two use the six stanza versions. Douglas Lilburn and Neil Colquhoun both chose to set the five stanza version.

\(^{5}\) (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1950).

\(^{6}\) (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1956).

\(^{7}\) (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960).


\(^{9}\) (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1971).

\(^{10}\) (Dunedin: Dunedin Teachers' College, 1973).

\(^{11}\) (Auckland: Waiata Recordings, 1974).

\(^{12}\) (Harmondsworth: Kestrel Books, 1980).

\(^{13}\) (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1980).

pair with Allen Curnow’s contemporaneous poem "House and Land", which also tells a tale of rural decay. Both poems are narrated in retrospect. However, where Glover is concerned about the fate of the rural working class in harsh economic times, Curnow is occupied with the squatter's failure to come to terms with life in New Zealand: "a land of settlers/With never a soul at home."

Curnow and Glover both have stories about the circumstances surrounding the writing of "The Magpies", written at the same time as Curnow’s poem "Wild Iron." Their accounts coincide to a significant degree (down to the choice of the tag "just like that"), and reveal the close and supportive relationship between the poets. Both writers place emphasis on the spontaneity of the writing of the verses. Curnow recalled how Glover had driven up to Leithfield, north of Christchurch, to join him at a holiday bach. On his way up,

Glover ... got out of his little tin baby Austin in the middle of a wild nor'wester to have a pee by the roadside. There were magpies squawking everywhere. And when Denis arrived and came to the door of the bach he didn't say anything at all except 'quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle' — just like that.

Curnow added that both "The Magpies" and "Wild Iron" "came just immediately out of the weather and out of the place. We had no theory about the subject — it was simply the kind of verse we wanted to do."

Interviewed in the late 1970s, Glover remembered that

I [Glover] sat down and wrote a piece of verse, and just like that. 'You blasted magpies.' See? That's all. And then when we'd finished, Curnow read his 'Wild Iron' to me, and I said 'My God, Allen, I'm wasting my time, trying to scribble verse. This is a brilliant, curious piece of Gothic verse.' And then I said 'I'll read you mine.' I read that, and he said 'What?'

15 *Island and Time* (Christchurch: Caxton, 1941).
16 First collected in *Island and Time*, Curnow's short lyric "Wild Iron" is almost as widely anthologised as "The Magpies".
17 Adrian Blackburn, "Long View Over the Literary Scene". *New Zealand Herald* (July 29 1987).
18 Adrian Blackburn "Long View Over the Literary Scene."
I wish I could have written that. So that is how the world wags on. Good fun. Better to be alive than dead, that's all I can say. Every day out of the grave's a holiday.19

The story of the poem's spontaneous origin says nothing about Glover's formal choices for "The Magpies". His selection of ballad form means that Glover's poem can be read in the light of two related genres. The first of these is the ballad of oral folk literature. "A short definition of the popular, folk, or traditional ballad, is that it is a song, transmitted orally, which tells a story. Ballads are thus the narrative variety of folk songs, which originate among illiterate, or only partly literate, people."20 As shown in the previous chapter, Glover wrote on behalf of, or in place of, a rural popular culture, out of the perceived need for such an indigenous pakeha folk tradition. In contrast, the literary ballad is one "written by a learned poet in deliberate imitation of the form and spirit of the popular ballad."21 Like the ballads of his admired Wordsworth, who also identified with the rural poor, Glover's poem is literary rather than truly "popular" in origin.

"The Magpies" uses the four-line ballad stanza, and has either three of four stresses per line. (The poem is unusual in that the last line of each stanza has only two stresses.) As with both traditional and literary ballads, only the second and fourth lines of each stanza rhyme. "The Magpies" contains two rhymes: the second and fourth lines follow the bed/said, red/said pattern of the first five stanzas, and the final stanza brings the narrative into the present tense with its away/say rhyme. The refrain "And quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle/ The magpies said" takes up the third and fourth line of every stanza. (This musical refrain is a device frequently found in the folk ballad, rather than in the literary ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge.)

Glover described Tom and Elizabeth as a generic rather than a specific farming couple. They are a generalisation of collective experience.... I've seen this kind of thing, but collectively, not separately or individually. So you make a generalisation of it you see. And I'm only interested — now you people think to might be somebody I knew, now — all I'm concerned about 'is it a good piece of

19 Interview with Denis Glover, transcribed from The Magpies (An Alistair Taylor Film, New Zealand Ripoff Productions, 1974).
21 Abrams 12.
Their story is told as an anecdote or yarn of the remote past. The first three stanzas set the scene: a young couple starts work on a farm under rough conditions. However, despite their hard work and productivity, economic downturn means that lending institutions have first claim on the farm's produce, and in the end, the farm itself. Time takes its inevitable toll: Elizabeth dies, and Tom becomes demented. The narrative progression from optimism to decay is condensed into six stanzas, with the unchanging chorus of the magpies indicating the passage of time, with the final refrain bringing the poem into the narrative present; the farm is still there as the story is told and the magpies, who have witnessed all, continue their chorus, perhaps reminding the reader of the indifference of nature: "And quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle/ The magpies say."

The tone of the poem is conversational and matter-of-fact, as though the narrator has the ear of a silent interlocutor. This is true of the last two stanzas in particular, in which the narrator offers a parenthetical aside "(it's years ago)", and finally makes the offhand and idiomatic observation that the farm "couldn't [even be given] away." Glover's "crowing" of the refrain in his reading of the poem emphasizes the way the tone of the chorus seems to change in the course of the poem. To start with, the refrain appears to match the couple's happiness. By the end of the poem, an ironic gap has opened between the cheerful tone of the chorus and the bleak subject-matter of this "cross between a ballad and a grim nursery rhyme."

"The Magpies" is a tale of lives spent in hard manual labour. In its five-stanza form, the poem is a chronicle of time, change and inevitable decay. The added stanza ("But soon the beautiful crops all went/ To the mortgage man instead" ...) adds weight to the political undercurrent of the last verse: Glover obviously intended to emphasise the deadly effect of the anonymous usurer's grasp. Tom and Elizabeth come to represent all those oppressed by financial institutions. They are powerless in the face of the anonymous forces of capitalism — we learn Tom and Elizabeth's

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22 The Magpies An Alistair Taylor Film, 1974.
names, but "the mortgage man" and "mortgage corporations" are unnamed.

In "The Magpies", Glover speaks on behalf of the rural worker. *The Wind and the Sand*, (the collection in which "The Magpies" first appeared) contains other paeans to workers, ("The Roadbuilders", "All of These", "Scab-Loaded"), and other expressions of resentment at the functioning of capitalism and empire. The spectre of the loss of productivity to "the mortgage man" hangs over the whole country in "Root, and Crop and Stone", where the hardship inflicted on Tom and Elizabeth is seen as part of a whole economic system, which is ultimately international — New Zealand itself is as insecure as their farm:

Our little world stands servile; from the curving bay
Back to the black ravine it stands in thrall,
Mortgaged to markets, men beyond the sea,
Chained to a system hungering like death
For root, and crop, and stone, and leaf on tree.

Glover was not alone in expressing his resentment of New Zealand's client economic status. Allen Curnow, A.R.D. Fairburn, R.A.K. Mason and Frank Sargeson, among others, shared his feelings.25

By the early 1950s, "The Magpies" had already grabbed the imaginations of a younger generation of writers. Louis Johnson alludes to the lyric in "Magpie and Pines", first published in 1952.26 Where Glover's magpies are impartial witnesses to passing time, Johnson's magpies are malevolent, spying on the daily activities of children and attacking at random. The particoloured magpies laugh at the black-and-white mores and assumptions of the puritan ethic,

25Allen Curnow expressed similar sentiments in "New Zealand City" in *Enemies* (Christchurch: Caxton, 1937): "Serf to them all/ for pleasure or pain;/ betrayed to the world's / garret and gutter/ sold for the export /price of butter." In *Dominion* (Christchurch: Caxton, 1938), A.R.D. Fairburn protested: "We are Empire's Junior Partner /and we have no gold: /what shall we do in the day when we shall be asked for? /Nothing. We shall not be asked. We shall be told." Unlike Fairburn, however, Glover did not seek solutions in political movements such as Douglas Social Credit, which had contacts with Fascist movements overseas. Glover's "In Fascist Countries" is a clear statement of opposition to Fascism: "And liberty, a cigarette flung down./smoulders a while, and then goes quietly out." *The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1934-44* (Christchurch: Caxton, 1945).

perhaps represented by the hardworking Tom and Elizabeth:

That dandy black-and-white gentleman doodling notes
on fragrant pinetops over the breakfast morning,
has been known to drop through mists of bacon-fat,
with a gleaming eye, to the road where a child stood, screaming...

...The guardian is aloof
on his roof of the small world, composing against morning
a new, ironic ballad.

In 1961 younger poet David Mitchell chose magpies as the subject of a short, expressionistic lyric, "The Magpie Song." Although the rhyme-scheme and metre are those of a nursery-rhyme, Mitchell too shows the malevolent side of the bird:

We are the bitter birds,
our claws scar the skies,
sly sharp and savage birds
and we seek eyes...

Watch for our coming
from brown forest floors,
— Mother, the baby
is playing outdoors.

Take the child in now,
pick up his toys,
he knows the pine tree
is big with our noise...

Actor-playwright Mervyn Thomson concluded his one-person play *Coaltown Blues* with a violent, surreal image of the town in which he grew up. By the end of the play, the mining town at the play's centre has become a demonic, tormented beast: part Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, part Glover's magpies, part Maori. No matter how far the narrator travels, the repulsion and fascination he feels for his home town — its violence, its "confusion of ancestry", the whites of eyes in faces black with coal dust, its "horror and glory" holds him in thrall.

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27 *New Zealand Listener* (10 November 1961).
But Blacktown will not leave me. It holds me with its black and glittering eye, condemning me for the rest of my life to tell its tale. It rises out of the dark pit and, silent and huge, raises its pick to the night sky. It sings its mad magpie song, sparks flying out of its tormented head: "Quardle oodle ardle: mate mai te rangi, haere ki ti po!"

Writing for a varied local audience, Thomson assumes an ability to encompass local literary references and imagery derived from a canonic English text. The suggestive force of Thomson's image derives in large part from this 'confusion of ancestry.'

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to three musical settings of Glover's text. The first dates from the 1950s, the second from the folk-song revival of the 1960s, and the third from the late 1980s. The chapter concludes with a discussion of a version of the poem as an illustrated book for children.

**Douglas Lilburn's Setting**

Lisa Futschek recently rediscovered a manuscript of Lilburn's setting of Denis Glover's poem "The Magpies". (See Fig. 18) The work came to light among the papers of the Otago University Extension and A. Don McKenzie subsequently deposited it in the Alexander Turnbull Library. It is a small-scale work. The provenance of the manuscript reflects its community-based, function-oriented origins, and the potential ephemerality of such undertakings.

In 1954, McKenzie had been appointed music tutor in Otago University's Department of Adult Education. One of his responsibilities in that position was the fostering of choral groups throughout the Otago region.

29 Mervyn Thompson 44.
30 Mervyn Thompson 44. My thanks to Dr. Mark Houlanah for drawing my attention to Thompson's play.
32 IMS Papers 4796 Folder, Alexander Turnbull Library Douglas Lilburn Papers.
Towards the end of 1954, during a conversation with Douglas Lilburn, [McKenzie] expressed his frustration with the scarcity of choral music suitable for the odd combination of voices that he encountered when conducting country choirs. A particular case in point was the choir at Hyde, which at the time consisted of something like three male and twelve female voices. In response, Lilburn offered to compose a piece especially for this choir.33

Lilburn was again keen to seize the opportunity for composition. He chose to set the five-stanza version of the poem, omitting the stanza about the crops going to the mortgage man. There are several possible reasons for this decision. The five-stanza version has been stuck on the front of the composer's manuscript: this may have been the version given to him by Glover. Also, Lilburn may have decided to omit the verse out of a sense of tact, being aware of the problems besetting rural communities at the time. (In 1991 he commented to Futschek: "I was possibly tactless in reminding the country choirs of problems they might rather forget."34) A further possibility is that Lilburn may have transcribed his text from *The Wind and the Sand: Poems 1933-44*, where the poem appears in its five-stanza form.

The metronome marking is a lively 152 crochet beats per minute, but there are no dynamic markings. In relation to this, Lilburn commented that

I imagined something very simple, in ballad-style, for amateur country choirs. Given this, I added no dynamic markings, though I'd now imagine the men's voices objectively mezzo, and the women's voices of the magpie chorus gradually increasing their intensity, though not dramatically.35

Lilburn's strophic, sixteen-bar setting consists of a piano part, a unison vocal line for male chorus, two soprano parts and an alto part. The large number of parts for female voices, and the unison writing for the males, was no doubt a practical consideration, bearing in mind the relative strength of numbers in the Hyde choir, for which the setting was conceived. Other practical

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33Futschek 56.

34Douglas Lilburn in correspondence with Lisa Futschek. Qtd in Futschek 56.

35Douglas Lilburn in correspondence with Lisa Futschek. Qtd in Futschek 56.
Fig. 18. Douglas Lilburn, "The Magpies". Composer's holograph. (Alexander Turnbull Library)
considerations, facilitating amateur performance, include the undemanding piano accompaniment, which sets up a crochet "vamp" pattern, alternating left and right hand chords. In general, the vocal lines bear in mind the limitations of amateur performers. The parts are rhythmically undemanding and narrow in range. The first soprano part covers a minor 6th (G#-E), the second soprano part only a fourth (F#-B), and the alto part also minor 6th (C#-A). The range of the line for unison male voices is the widest of the four parts, and covers an octave (B-B).

The setting follows the stanzaic form of the poem. The song begins with a two-bar piano introduction, followed by ten bars of singing. Each stanza ends with four bars of piano before a repeat, which returns to bar three, picking up after the two-bar piano introduction. A sprightly triplet figure characterises the vocal parts. The men sing each of the seven-bar verses, and the women follow these with a three-bar chorus echoing the men's "quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle". The female entries are staggered but with the parts so close as to occasionally overlap. The writing is mildly dissonant, with the tonality of the setting oscillating between D major and B minor, settling at the end of each verse on a modal B/F# open fifth. (The chorus resolves onto an F# minor tonic triad over the implied B minor of the piano.) Futschek likens this chorus to "musical onomatopoeia" -- a musical evocation of the cacophonous magpie.

Lilburn's work is frequently read by listeners as containing 'literal' representations of the sounds of the New Zealand environment. The way in which Lilburn's setting of "The Magpies" seems onomatopoeic is reminiscent of a number of his other works. Commentators have found bird, bush and sea effects in his piano writing and in his later electro-acoustic works. In her discussion of Lilburn's Sonatina No. Two (1962), composer Gillian Bibby read into the work's "curiously evocative figurations the sounds of bellbird and bush. Just such fast fluttering figures could well have been written by Messiaen for his Catalogue d'oiseaux." Jack Body found the "peculiarly New Zealand" in Lilburn's electroacoustic compositions The Return (1965) and Soundscape with Lake and River (1979). Both works use natural sound combined with electronically generated sound. "Another subtle but distinctively New Zealand work is Lilburn's

36Futschek 57.
Summer Voices (1969), which suggests the oppressive buzzing and clicking of summer cicadas.\(^{38}\)

Collaborations and adaptations such as Lilburn’s setting of "The Magpies" were a logical and natural outgrowth of a small, close-knit artistic community. Physical proximity was a significant factor: Curnow and Lilburn both lived in Christchurch and were in frequent contact at the time of the composition of Landfall in Unknown Seas.\(^{39}\) Glover and Curnow were friends, as evidenced by the Leithfield episode; at the Caxton Press, Glover published Curnow’s work, plus Lilburn’s and his own. By the later 1940s, however, the Christchurch artistic community had begun to dissipate. Frederick Page was appointed to the Department of Music at Victoria University College in Wellington in 1946, and Lilburn joined him there in 1947. Curnow left for London in 1949 and Glover moved to Wellington in 1954. Lilburn made only two settings of poems by Glover: "Sings Harry" in 1953, and "The Magpies" in 1954, composed within a year of each other while both Lilburn and Glover were living in Wellington.

Even more determinative than physical closeness was confluence of aims. At this time, writers Glover and Curnow (among others) and composer Lilburn were all engaged in the same task, but in different media: the search for an indigenous artistic language, or a New Zealand vernacular.\(^{40}\) Along with their literal local content,\(^{41}\) "Sings Harry" and "The Magpies" explored the idea of finding a New Zealand poetic voice. New Zealand subject-matter was set in an everyday language and in a familiar landscape: local topics, local details and generic local characters were all employed in the search for a poetic language that was to be "peculiarly New Zealand’s."\(^{42}\)


\(^{39}\) For more detailed discussion of the arts in Christchurch in the late 1930s and early 1940s, see Chapter Three: Landfall in Unknown Seas.

\(^{40}\) Douglas Lilburn entitled his lecture to the University of Otago, given on 12 March 1969, "The Search for a Language" (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1985).

\(^{41}\) The plant names (rimu, kauri, cabbage tree) signpost "New Zealand" in "Sings Harry", while in "The Magpies", this is signified by the characteristic combination of birds, bracken and pines.

What is perhaps most striking about all these examples is the way these various allusions to Glover’s poem provide an example of the New Zealand tradition starting to function in a self-sufficient way. The nationalist orthodoxy established by magpies such as Glover, Curnow and Lilburn, and represented by poems such as "The Magpies", is now being redefined and recycled by a range of artists working in different media. Glover, Curnow, Lilburn and their contemporaries have become ancestor figures for a younger generation of magpies.

Neil Colquhoun’s setting

Just as Glover’s "The Mapies" is connected to the Romantic literary ballad, it is also connected to a local variant of the folk lyric: that of the newly-composed poem or song in folk idiom.

Written at a time of renewed interest in folk music, Neil Colquhoun's setting of "The Magpies" was a conscious addition to what was sometimes seen as a small local folk-music repertoire. The song was composed specifically for Rona Bailey and Herbert Roth's "selection of New Zealand popular songs and ballads" Shanties By The Way. Singer and songwriter Colquhoun maintained a high profile during the folk revival of the 1960s. He formed and directed two folk groups, recorded extensively, contributed to Shanties by the Way and published his own collections of New Zealand folksongs. He formed and led the folk group "The Song Spinners" who made several recordings and led the folk group the "Threepenny Singers", who were primarily a radio broadcasting ensemble.

Until the resurgence of interest in folk music in the 1960s, the commonly-held view was that in comparison with Australia’s rich tradition of folk poetry and song, New Zealand’s folk tradition was somewhat impoverished. In 1941, Alan Mulgan had held up Banjo Patterson’s "Waltzing Matilda" as an example of Australia’s richer folk repertoire. In comparison, he found New Zealand’s folk repertoire to be "somewhat impoverished."

43 Rona Bailey and Herbert Roth, Shanties by the Way: A Selection of New Zealand Popular Songs and Ballads.


45 New Zealand Folksongs: Songs of a Young Country (LP. Kiwi SLC 101-2); Songs of the Whalers (EP. Kiwi M31-1); Songs of the Gold Diggers (EP. Kiwi M31-2); Songs of the Gundiggers (EP. Kiwi EAA 58); Songs of Cazna Gyp (EP. Kiwi EA 33); Folk Songs (EP. Kiwi SEA 163).

46 Biographical information from New Zealand Folk Songs (Auckland: WEA, 1965).
The Magpies

Denis Glover

(Music by Neil Colquhoun)

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed.
The bracken made their bed.
The bracken made their bed.
And *quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
Elizabeth's lips were red. (3)
And *quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Year in year out they worked
While the pines grew overhead. (3)
And *quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

Elizabeth is dead now (it's years ago)
Old Tom went light in the head; (3)
And *quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies said.

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
Couldn't give it away. (3)
And *quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle*
The magpies say.


Zealand’s repertoire wanting: "we haven’t produced, so far as I know, one really popular song about drovers, shepherds, swagmen or indeed country life." This belief no doubt influenced Lilburn’s sense of his options when he was thinking about possible sources for a local musical vernacular.

Christine Dann has suggested several historic and geographical reasons for the comparative richness of the Australian folk music tradition. Most of the songs in Neil Colquhoun’s *New Zealand Folk Songs* and Bailey and Roth’s *Shanties by the Way* were written by working men living in isolated circumstances. Firstly, the pattern of colonisation accounted for early songs of working life. "First [came] sealers, then whalers, shearers, farm labourers, gold miners, gum diggers. Then come a few songs by men working in rough jobs where there is close comradeship." Australian society added to this mixture convicts and bushrangers, who inspired nearly a quarter of the songs in *The Penguin Australian Song Book*.

Secondly, Dann suggested that Australia’s size promoted the isolation of rural communities. Low-technology, highly labour-intensive farming meant that large concentrations of labouring men needed to devise their own entertainment far from the centres where readymade entertainment could be consumed. "New Zealand duplicated these preconditions of isolation and concentration only briefly, in the mid nineteenth century. This was not long enough to nurture the wealth of rural folklore which Australian conditions made possible."

Thirdly, New Zealand was settled slightly later than Australia. "Forty years’ difference may not sound like much, but it represents a whole generation of [folk] traditions.” Finally, Dann suggested that the economic and physical hardships of "The Old Country" were a prerequisite for a "real" folk culture, and that the pioneers made the journey to a new land to avoid the very conditions from which strong folk cultures emerged.

50 Dann 6-7.
51 Dann 7.
These arguments have recently been re-evaluated. Music historian Angela Annabell maintains that a "conservative view has been that New Zealand has had neither the background nor the incentive to develop a folksong tradition as is associated with older-established countries, or with Australia's more colourful past. The work of a few early collectors and enthusiasts, however, was accelerated around the nineteen-fifties, and brought to light enough evidence to show that, within the areas of economic development and pastoralism, the spontaneous proletarian reaction in song has been present in New Zealand as in other countries." In 1992 Mike Harding published a book-length bibliography of "folk and popular songs of New Zealand", When the Pakeha Sings of Home. In 1993 the group of women singers When the Cat's Been Spayed released a selection of New Zealand folksongs, entitled Down the Hall and Other Classic Kiwi Folk Tunes.

Coinciding with an international revival of interest in folksong, efforts to supplement New Zealand's folk tradition reached their most intensive in the mid 1960s. Peter Cape, Les Cleveland, Neil Colquhoun, Phil Garland, Willow Macky and others contributed to the revival with newly-composed folksongs. Texts for these compositions were either provided by the songwriters themselves, or, more rarely, were settings of pre-existing texts. Another strategy was to provide new, often topical or satirical words to well-known tunes.

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52 Dann 7-8.
55 (SLC 231, 1993) Apart from an arrangement of Alfred Hill's "Waiata Poi" (see Chapter One) the recording contains arrangements of "The Day the Pub Burned Down", "Tamaki Moonlight", "Dark as a Dungeon", "Love in a Fowl-house"; Joe Charles's "Black Billy Tea"; Tony Nolan's "The Ragwort Song" and "Me Old Mate"; Ken Avery's "Paekakariki" and "Tea at Te Kuiti"; Ruru Karatiana's "Blue Smoke", Peter Cape's songs "Down the Hall on Saturday Night", "Taumarunui On the Main Trunk Line" and "Coffee Bar Blues", and the widely-recorded "Bright Fine Gold."
56 See Les Cleveland's settings of Glover's "Sings Harry" and "Arawata Bill", A.R.D. Fairburn's "Walking on My Feet" and "Tea-Tree" in The Great New Zealand Songbook (Auckland: Godwit, 1991); Neil Colquhoun's setting of A.R.D. Fairburn's "Down on my Luck", Baxter's "Lament for Barney Flanagan" and R.A.K Mason's "On the Swag" (Bailey and Roth); James McNeish's setting of "By the Dry Cardrona" (Bailey and Roth); Kevin Ikin's setting of Tremanysme Curnow's "Otira Gorge" (Harding).
Neil Colquhoun's settings for Shanties by The Way are all examples of new settings of pre-existing texts. As Colquhoun's setting of "The Magpies" was called into being for a specific publication, its status as an "authentic" or traditional folksong becomes arguable under the distinction made by Christine Dann. For her, "genuine" folk music is written out of necessity, because no other musical avenue is available. In contrast, "folk genre" music is made by "musicians who prefer to work within the folk genre rather than jazz, classical, pop, rock or any of the other genres open to them."\textsuperscript{57}

These distinctions seem romantic and unworkable. "Serious" folk composers such as Garland, Colquhoun, Cape or Macky elect to work in the folk idiom while not necessarily fitting Dann's socio-economic profile. Their newly-composed folk-genre songs are not the anonymous results of lives of hardship and oppression, and yet Dann has no difficulty absorbing them into her "real" folk culture. In the economy of the magpie, where every text can be seen as the result of inventions or improvisations of one kind or another, distinctions between "the real thing"\textsuperscript{58} and the newly-invented become less clear.

For "The Magpies" Colquhoun has provided a standard-length eight-bar, one-line melody, with suggested chords for guitar accompaniment. The setting is strophic and syllabic. The first lines of each verse are set to the same rhythm, approximately following the metre of the text. On repetition, the melody is transposed down a tone, then down a fourth. There is little in the way of rhythmic interest. The tonal centre is ill-defined: starting in E major, the melody concludes in F\# major. There is scant attempt to give a musical sense of the tone of the poem. (Colquhoun rejected one formal possibility: that of a 'blues'-type setting. This form would have suited both the theme and the tone of the poem.)

Colquhoun's setting appears to have had little appeal for other performers, which is not surprising in view of its plodding metre, ungainly harmonies and awkward melody line. Errors in the score seem to indicate that little care was taken in its production. (Three mistakes in as many lines of music include two rhythmic inaccuracies and one key signature error.) The

\textsuperscript{57} Dann 10.
\textsuperscript{58} Dann 6.
accompanying text is also confusing. Colquhoun's melody appears to call for three repetitions of the first two lines of each stanza. As the poem appears below the music, the second line only of each stanza has been written out three times. (See Fig. 19).

The fact that *Shanties by the Way*, the authors' self-conscious attempt to amplify the local folk repertoire, has had only limited success, reflects the fact that folksingers tend to select their repertoire for musical rather than historical criteria. Charlotte Yates observed that *When the Cat's Been Spayed* chose "Waiata Poi" because of its melodic interest. Although the song displays an outdated attitude to its subject, it has musical qualities which have ensured its position in New Zealand's popular music history.

**Six Volts setting**

The Six Volts, an acoustic jazz ensemble, styles itself indigenously New Zealand: the cover of their 1990 album *The Hills Are Alive* foregrounds the country's geography. However, their image of the country is whimsical: the performers themselves, rather than the landscape, occupy the central spaces. Their selection of "The Magpies" fits this self-consciously "New Zealand" image. (See Fig. 20).

The Six Volts' "The Magpies" exists in two versions. The earlier version was not released commercially, but was part of the repertoire of the fore-runner ensemble the four-piece "free jazz" ensemble the Four Volts. (The Four Volts recorded eight albums before reassembling as the six-piece ensemble the Six Volts in late 1987.) The song also appears on the Six Volts' CD *The Hills Are Alive*. This album is an expanded re-release of an earlier cassette tape by the same name. "The Magpies" has been added to the CD, in part to utilise the extra playing time available on the disc. Although the song too has undergone change, it remains a significant part

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59 Charlotte Yates, ("When the Cat's Been Spayed"), Correspondence with author. 14 August 1992.
Fig. 20. Six Volts, *The Hills Are Alive*. (CD Brail 9) (Collection of the author).
of the group's repertoire, having survived their expansion from the Four Volts to the Six Volts.

Like the members of From Scratch, the members of the Six Volts come from diverse musical backgrounds, and are connected with several musical genres.

The Donaldson brothers and Duncan did their 'degree in free jazz' with the now disbanded Primitive Art Group. 'We started out totally experimental. We all wanted to come up with our own sounds and have fun,' says David Donaldson. Long, as self-proclaimed ex-rock musician, and Roche, from jazz leanings ('and yachting'), were both from another band, the Novelty Four.

Janet Roddick is the only classically trained member of the group. She also has an operatic repertoire and has sung in aria competitions in New Zealand and Australia.

The disc's title clearly signposts the group's penchant for the tongue-in-cheek recycling of others' musical material, throwing a sideways, teasing glance in the direction of Northern hemisphere middle-brow culture. Although the illustration on the cover of the CD also foregrounds New Zealand as a geographic entity, the image is inflected with the group's characteristic whimsy. It depicts the six members of the group, dressed in bathing costumes, lying contorted so that they fill the outline of a map of New Zealand. The map is placed in a ground which suggests swirling weather patterns, the whole surrounded by a border of paua shells, icons of a particular kind of tourist kitsch.

Like magpies, the Six Volts take up and rework other artists' material. Although there is no "cover" version of "The Hills are Alive" on the CD, the group covers several popular jazz and rock standards. (Only six of the thirteen numbers on the CD are of entirely their own composition.) They put their own stamp on numbers as diverse as the Frank and Nancy Sinatra

63 See Chapter Six following.
64 Galloway 26.
65 Galloway 26.
66 *The Hills are Alive* alludes to the title song of Roger and Hammerstein's musical *The Sound of Music*: "The Hills are alive (with the sound of music)".
standard "Something Stupid", Brecht/Weill's "Surabaya Johnny" and Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog." They add their own words to Duke Ellington's "Caravan".

If the group's range of primary source material is eclectic, their musical vocabulary is equally heterogeneous. This is particularly clear in the first version of "The Magpies." In this recording there is a neat parallel between the subject of the poem and the setting. Like musical magpies, the group has incorporated a wide range of "shiny trinkets" into the texture. The inclusions are various. At one point the song turns into a rhumba, and concludes resonating with steel band tonalities. The recording has a "busked", "live" or improvised quality. "Watching the recording of a live radio show in Jakarta, where mistakes were greeted with on-air laughter and yelling, also showed them different attitudes to group work."67

The home-made, "ad hoc" quality of this earlier recording is particularly obvious in the percussion part, where the instruments sound like roofing iron, or pots. In grabbing what is to hand and "making do", the Four Volts parallel the habits of the magpies about whom they sing, and the poem's human protagonists. Tom and Elizabeth also "make do."

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed...

The slightly flat sax playing and the angular string bass lines add to the "garage band" quality. Janet Roddick's classically-trained vocals are in striking contrast to these grainy instrumentals. There is an edge of parody here. In characteristic playful mode, the Four Volts may be questioning the high-cultural, canonic aura which has come to surround the poem. However, this reading against the grain of the poem's nostalgia68 may have lead them into textual inaccuracy. The Four Volts' version of the song concludes

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
Couldn't give it away.
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

67Galloway 26.
68Although the chorus of "The Magpies" is cheerful, and its metre rustic, Tom and Elizabeth's futile struggle against economic odds underlies the off-hand tone of the poem.
Misreading "said" for "say" destroys the poignance of the narrative's conclusion in the present tense, and disrupts the rhyme-scheme of the final stanza. By the time the song appeared on the CD, however, the misreading had been corrected.

The Four Volts' version of "The Magpies" heaps together a cheerful musical collage, poking fun at the serious side of the poem. This is particularly evident in the chorus, where the increasingly elaborate din is at some distance from the sounds magpies make (or from Denis Glover's — and Douglas Lilburn's — approximations of the same). Just as Glover and his literary and musical contemporaries can be regarded as 'magpies', assembling texts from available resources, The Four Volts can be seen collecting magpies who now have a tradition of 'New Zealand literature' to play with.

By the time the song appeared on *The Hills Are Alive*, it had undergone a radical transformation. Extended from under 4 minutes to 6 minutes 48 seconds, both settings are magpie-like collages of musical forms. However, the constituents in the two mixes vary. The first version quoted rhumba rhythms, and made a feature of improvised vocal work. The second setting uses a different range of collage materials. It is a mixture of blues, blue-grass, country and western, and agricultural sound effects, having a pronounced rustic 'blues' flavour, with the banjo and 'blues harp' replacing the saxophone as primary melody instruments. Two extra musicians mean a fuller musical texture: the six members share between them twelve kinds of acoustic instrument.69 (A strong bias towards acoustic sound-sources extends to a reluctance to use multi-track recording techniques, giving a "low-tech" sound quality.)

The first four verses of the song are in the style of a slow blues, with harmonica and banjo riffs accompanying the female solo vocal line. The chorus is not as prominent in this version as it is in the Four Volts version, where it is the vehicle for elaborate improvisations. In the later version, Roddick improvises a brief ascending figure at the end of the "quardle oodle ardle wardle

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69 According to the album credits, Anthony Duncan was responsible for "fun percussion", whistles, balloon, sheep baas, and the Farmer. David Donaldson played Double Bass and David Long Banjo, while Janet Roddick provided vocals. Neill Duncan played Soprano saxophone and harmonica and Steven Roche played Bass drum and cymbal. (*The Hills Are Alive* (BRAI 9))
doodle" line. This presumably represents the magpie's song. A long section of improvised farm sound-effects follows the fourth verse, with the harmonica in the background. The string bass imitates the moo of a cow, and "fun percussion" instruments suggest bird calls, cicadas, frogs and the drone of flies. This section of obviously instrumental sounds gives way to a more illusionistic' section of farm noises. What appears to be a live recording of a sheep muster includes a farmer abusing his dog, sheep complaining, geese and ducks cackling, the farmer's wife calling the cat, the sheepdog panting. As Anthony Donaldson is credited with the production of both the farmer and the "sheep baas", the section is rather a "trompe d'oreille" effect.

Towards the end of this section, a sotto voce muttering of the "quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle" chorus creeps into the texture. This is in unison, with male and female voices, and is repeated over and over again, as though on a tape loop. Verse five is sung over this chant, which dovetails with the verse at the appropriate moment. A slow 'blue' banjo riff follows, and the sixth and final verse is in the same slow tempo. The song concludes with a lively up-tempo section, which suggests a knees-up at the local hall on a Saturday night.

The first version is tighter and more concise than the later version, and has the immediacy and enthusiasm of children let loose in a sound effects studio. While the second version is more polished technically, the necessity of spinning out "The Magpies" to fill the longer format CD has possibly led to some musical padding. At points it seems to require visual images to subsidise the literalism of the long "farm noises" section.

Changes made between the first and second version throw into relief different aspects of the poem. While in part contrary to the tone of the poem, the first version's cheerful mood and incongruous musical inclusions inadvertently point to the underlying poignance of Tom and Elizabeth's plight. The second version's country ambience locates the narrative in a rural environment, and at the same time plays with conventions of representation of rural New Zealand. Although the two versions are very different, the organising principle is the same: musical fragments are borrowed from other contexts, and synthesised in a way which casts new light on a familiar literary totem.
Fig. 21. Dick Frizzell, from *The Magpies* by Denis Glover. (Auckland: Century Hutchinson, 1987)
Dick Frizzell's illustrations to "The Magpies"

Artist Dick Frizzell\(^{70}\) has provided a series of six full-page, full-colour illustrations to Glover's poem.\(^{71}\) The poem and accompanying illustrations take up the entire book, entitled *The Magpies*. It has been designed with children in mind. The large printing, hard cover, brightly-coloured illustrations and the element of surprise or discovery incorporated into the design are all suited to a young readership. Although thematically somewhat grim, the poem's strong narrative line and concise descriptions, combined with its colourful magpie characters and their noisy chorus, may have been contributing factors in its selection as the subject of a children's picture-book. In addition, "The Magpies" has obvious status as a famous New Zealand poem, known to the adults who would buy a local book for their child.

In his illustrations Frizzell has chosen to elaborate the ingenuous qualities of the poem and its chorus. Each stanza is given a separate opening. The accompanying illustration covers both adjacent pages, with the verse appearing on the verso. (Frizzell has handlettered the poem itself in large, uneven block capitals. The lettering compliments the childlike quality of the illustrations, with their clumsy drawing, heavy outlines and artless brushstrokes.) Inserted in the middle of each opening is a page half the width of the book. The illustration on the recto of the half-page exactly matches the full page illustration directly underneath it. The verso of the half-page adds to the image two intrusive and watchful birds, and their chorus. The birds are hidden until the "flap" is turned, adding an element of surprise or discovery to the reading process. (See Figs. 21 and 22) Although at times his magpies jeer, Frizzell has also given the birds a cheeky, good-humoured demeanour. The consistency of the characterisation of the magpies creates the illusion that it is the same pair of birds which has kept up its noisy vigil throughout the lives of the human protagonists.

**Conclusion**

These last two examples seem to show as shift to a new kind of self-conscious nationalism,

\(^{70}\) Born in Auckland in 1943, Dick Frizzell held his first solo exhibition in 1976. Since 1981, he has lectured in painting at Auckland University's Elam School of Fine Art.

Fig. 22. Dick Frizzell, from *The Magpies* by Denis Glover.
Based on New Zealand culture (in this case, Glover's poem "The Magpies") rather than on the landscape or nature which was Glover's own primary material. (Even more than in "The Magpies", Harry is defined in terms of nature and landscape: "Once my strength was an avalanche/ Now it follows the fold of the hill"). If nature does appear, as it does in the Six Volts version of "The Magpies", it is as nature screened through culture. In that sense, nationalism still lives and thrives, but it as a second generation nationalism, or a self-aware nationalism.

Both first generation (Glover, Lilburn and Curnow) and second generation (The Six Volts, Dick Frizzell) magpies aimed to avoid jingoism. The younger generation, however, faced a special problem. By the 1970s, the "national" of Curnow and Glover been taken up by advertising agencies and sporting bodies, and turned into something it neither wanted nor claimed to be: official, jingoistic and essentialist. So, the second generation must treat the first generation with a healthy disrespect if it is to get back to the original questioning and challenging spirit of Glover, Lilburn or Curnow. This was frequently critical of "official versions" of New Zealand. (Curnow's scepticism is clearly evident in "Landfall in Unknown Seas." It is ironic, then, that this work should have been singled out for neo-nationalist treatment at Expo, and in the New Zealand Chamber Orchestra/Sir Edmund Hillary project.)

While the poem "The Magpies" does not illustrate all these shifts, in recent decades, and for certain artists, the poem has come to stand for a certain historically-specific attitude to New Zealand. At the time this attitude questioned some deeply held beliefs about the country. This kind of questioning nationalism has since been subverted and solidified into the "New Zealand" of some advertising copywriters and sporting bodies. Ironic, disrespectful or playful treatment of this attitude questions and undermines current rhetorics of nationalism.
SIX: PACIFIC 3, 2, 1, ZERO
Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero (Part One)

The percussion ensemble From Scratch gave the first performances of their work Pacific 3, 2, 1 Zero (Part One) in 1982. Although an "occasional" composition combining music and text, the work is unlike the subjects of previous chapters where the works have lives independent from their composers and authors. It is not possible to separate From Scratch's work from its producers. Commentary on specific works necessitates discussion of the group, and vice versa.

The following chapter focusses on the first part of the two-part work Pacific 3, 2, 1 Zero, and incorporates discussion of the group itself. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first outlines From Scratch's history, and offers a close reading of Pacific 3, 2, 1 Zero (Part One). The second section places the group's work alongside some aspects of Oceanic music, beside some parallel developments in Western composition and instrument design. The third final section has as its theme issues of peripherality and centrality in relation to From Scratch's work and performance.

From Scratch devised a hybrid, location-specific musical language drawn from a variety of sources. Their instruments are generally percussive and are employed in a mixed performance medium which straddles the genres of theatre, music and dance. Their instruments also are brids, covering a range from traditional Western instruments, ubiquitous Western non-musical and-sources, traditional non-Western instruments, new instruments based on non-Western sources, and inventions of their own.

Though From Scratch's origins are peripheral in terms of traditional musical organisations, lining, instrumentation and compositional techniques, in the course of their history the group wed from the avant-garde periphery the early 1970s to a prominent position in New Zealand's musical high culture. An indication of this high profile is the appearance of the group on the ver of the recent Biographical Dictionary of New Zealand Composers.¹ The illustration is a

Ian Mansfield Thomson, Biographical Dictionary of New Zealand Composers (Wellington: Victoria

From Scratch evolved out of the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra, which in turn stemmed from founding member Philip Dadson's involvement with the initial group of the London Scratch Orchestra. Born in Napier in 1946, Dadson became involved with the University Jazz workshop while studying at Elam School of Fine Art at Auckland University.

By the time I left Napier to study art in Auckland, I was a piano player and a jazz fanatic. During the art school years I broke my course to go to the UK for a year or so [1968-9]. The experiences there, of experimental performance activities, served more than any others to pull together my interests in art and music.²

Dadson's decision to go to London was made initially for family reasons. Once in London, "[he] went hunting for a course of some kind that would satisfy [his] budding interest in wanting to mix media."³ Performers such as Nam June Paik and the Sonic Arts Group stimulated his interest in cross-media work.⁴ Dadson located the "Experimental Music Course" at Morley College for Working Men and Women⁵ — "it cost about five shillings to enroll."⁶ The course was co-ordinated by Cornelius Cardew,⁷ whose presence attracted a variety of composers, performers, musicians and artists. This course developed into the foundation group of the Scratch Orchestra.

For the time, Dadson's choice of Cornelius Cardew mentor was unusual in two ways. Firstly,

² Entry under From Scratch in Thomson, Dictionary 66.
⁷ After study of cello and composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London, Cornelius Cardew (b. 1936) spent two years working as assistant to Karlheinz Stockhausen, and also worked with John Cage and David Tudor in Europe. In 1967 he was appointed Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music. Cornelius Cardew, Stockhausen Serves Imperilism (London: Latimer, 1974).
young New Zealand composers were generally drawn to be the classes of Messiaen and Stockhausen in Paris and Cologne, rather than the "experimental" line which connected Londoner Cardew to Americans John Cage, Morton Feldman, La Monte Young and Christian Wolff. (The London Scratch Orchestra's repertoire included Young's Poem, Cage's Variations IV and Wolff's Play.8) Secondly, in selecting Cardew's London, Dadson chose to pursue a line of musical enquiry at a geographical periphery: the vital centres of experimental music at the time were the University of California at Davis where both Cage and David Tudor had positions as artists in residence (in 1967 and 1969 respectively) and the Harvard of Christian Wolff.

By and large unreceptive to American alternatives to European modernism, Dadson's contemporaries gravitated towards Europe.9 Of these, Jenny McLeod (b1941) first studied with Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire, then with Stockhausen in Cologne. Robin Maconie (b1942) studied with Messiaen, then in Cologne with Zimmerman, Stockhausen and Pousseur. Lyell Cresswell studied in Toronto, and in 1974 gained a Ph.D. in composition from Aberdeen University. Jack Body (b1944) spent time in Cologne and Utrecht in 1969. Gillian Bibby (b1945) studied in Cologne with Stockhausen, Kagel and Poussuer. Denis Smalley (b1946) was another New Zealand pupil of Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire. Christopher Blake (b1949) studied with Eric Grabner and Johnathan Harvey at Southampton. Here he was given "a comprehensive knowledge of serial technique (particularly through Babbitt) and a close knowledge of Stockhausen."10 (Of Dadson's contemporaries currently working as composers, the only musicians not to have undertaken extended periods of overseas study are John Cousins (b1943), Ross Harris (b1945) and Dorothy Buchanan (b1945).

If Jenny McLeod's initial orientation towards France and Germany was paradigmatic for most of her New Zealand contemporaries, Dadson's removal to London was as unconventional: patterns of physical movement have long reflected changing orientations and sense of position among composers working within the Western musical system in New Zealand. For Douglas Lilburn's generation, the move away was initially a practical necessity, and the destination inevitably a London college.

8 Wystan Curnow, "[From Scratch]" Essay, coll. Wystan Curnow.
9 See Wystan Curnow, "[From Scratch]" n.p.
10 Thomson, Dictionary "Christopher Blake".
Dadson's travel to London can be contrasted with Jenny McLeod's travel to France and Germany but can be compared with the travels of the first generation of New Zealand composers. Douglas Lilburn undertook his composition training at the Royal College of Music in London under Ralph Vaughan Williams, as previously noted. Ron Tremain (b1923) also studied at the Royal College. Ashley Heenan (b1925) attended the Royal College of Music, studying with Gordon Jacob, Herbert Howells and William Lloyd-Webber. Larry Pruden (1925-1982) studied at the London Guildhall with Benjamin Frankel and Alfred Nieman. Edwin Carr (b1926) and David Farquhar (b1928) also studied at the Guildhall.

Dadson initiated the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra in 1970, and based this peripheral "antipodean twig of the London root" on Cardew's Draft Constitution for co-operative music-making: the co-operative aspect of the London organisation had appealed to Dadson "right from the start." The constitution welcomed the involvement of "a large number of enthusiasts pooling resources and assembling for purposes of music-making, performances, events, edification and pleasure." The New Zealand group maintained links with the English organisation until the mid-1970s, with "the occasional exchange of work and a synchronised link-up."

Philosophically opposed to the idea of an orchestra as a group of trained executants with privileged access to musical production, the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra's early works were, after Cardew, "large scale and... guided by political ideas of open access and mutual respect. Anyone was welcome to participate regardless of training." The aim of the London Scratch

15From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79" [n.p.].
16For example To Angelsey, North Wales by Air 1971, From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79" [n.p.].
Orchestra had been
to break the monopoly of a highly-trained elite over the avant-garde, so we
made a music in which 'anyone' could participate regardless of their musical
education. We wanted to abolish the useless intellectual complexity of the
earlier avant-garde, and make music which was quite concretely 'simple' in
its assault on the senses.18

Most of the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra projects were rhythm-based, because rhythm
represented "common territory" for many, "regardless of what discipline they came from."19
Events involved large numbers of performers — both musicians and non-musicians — and
generally took place in visual art venues rather than concert halls, for example the Barry Lett
Galleries, the School of Fine Arts and the Auckland City Gallery in Auckland, and the Govett-
Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth.20 Open-air sites were also favoured.

From its inception, organisational principles were co-operative and experimental: "in its
narrowest sense the orchestra was rediscovering and making its own music and in its broadest
was investigating the nature of things, and serving as a testing ground for anyone's experimental
ideas."21 Sounds were generated "conventionally or otherwise on found, bought, or
homemade instruments."22 Founder-member Tony Green described a performance on 13
April 1970 in which "David Brown ate an apple poured water from a jug, struck matches and
extinguished them in a glass of water, played with a musical box and a mechanical bird in a cage
and blew bubbles."23

The New Zealand Scratch Orchestra went into recess after working on Cardew's large-scale
*Great Digest* (1972). "We'd had an ear's full by this stage of the large-scale activities that often
degenerated into therapeutic free for alls."24 From Scratch emerged after the recess. A smaller,

18 Cardew 100.
19 Philip Dadson. Qt in Wystan Curnow [Interview with Members of From Scratch] ts. (24pp.) coll. Wystan
Curnow.
20 Green 86-91.
21 From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
22 From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
23 Green 86-91.
more tightly-structured group, their first performances were of a series of works called Variable Occasion Music (VOM). VOM proposed "a flexible framework for rhythm, procedure and instrumentation, the variables for which are suggested by influences from the context or occasion in which the music is to be played."\textsuperscript{25} VOM's first public performance, and the group's first appearance as From Scratch, took place at the Wellington Sonic Circus of 1974. Members at this point were Bruce Barber, Geoff Chapple, Philip Dadson and Gray Nicol. (The composition of the group still fluctuates. Philip Dadson's role as initiator, composer and performer is most consistent, and dates from the group's inception in 1970.)

VOM set the trajectory for the major rhythm works which followed. These were "centred around cyclic patterns and slowly shifting layers of rhythmic and tonal textures."\textsuperscript{26} The first of these major works, \textit{Out-In} (1978), and \textit{Drumwheel} (1979), used pitched percussion instruments installed in diagrammatic layouts which reflect the "inner structure of the music... rituals of a kind where the extra-musical ideas are as prominent as the music."\textsuperscript{27} Cyclic, shifting patterns were built up from short rhythmic units of varying lengths, over a constant pulse. In the later works, the rhythm cohered around a shared pulse, which was maintained physically by the players' side-to-side foot shuffle.

Taking place on the spot, (stamp right, step left, stamp left, step right, stamp right etc.), the step "[sets] up a simple and reliable body pulse which keeps the group together but leaves everyone's hands and minds free for other things."\textsuperscript{28} The step was developed specifically for \textit{Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part Two)}, which involved a choreographed floorplan. The step also kept the large number of participants physically and musically co-ordinated. Small metric subdivisions fitted into these longer, dance-like, almost inaudible pulses.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{24}From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
\textsuperscript{25}From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
\textsuperscript{26}From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
\textsuperscript{27}From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
\textsuperscript{29}Philip Dadson, interview with author, 22 September 1992.
Fig. 24. The 'hocket' effect. From Scratch, Out-In ("Gathering #1: Rhythm Works". Collection of Wystan Curnow).
All the major works explore the potential of the 'hocket' effect, in which a rhythmic or melodic unit is shared between or among players. (See Fig. 24). The idea is very old and can be found in many cultures: interlocking, shared fragments make up a complete rhythm or melody. (For example, the voice sections of Drum/Sing build up continuous tunes when the three separate rhythmic parts mesh.) The adoption of the technique of hocketing is a musical literalisation of the philosophical premise of role-sharing and co-operation on which the group is based. Egalitarian principles also underly the group's equal sharing of parts, the uniformity of the instruments collected in the sound-source stations — although for Drum/Sing stations are designated high, medium and low — the arrangement of stations "in the round," and the sense of "leaderless performance": "evenness of role — each action, in principle, equally important — each player sometimes to lead, all players sometimes to follow."

Drumwheel was followed in 1980 by Gung Ho 1, 2, 3D. Unnamed until the group learned of the workers' co-operative movement established in China by New Zealander Rewi Alley, "Gung Ho", or "Work Together" was the catch-cry of Alley's movement. Visually, the structure of Gung Ho 1, 2, 3D is based on an equilateral triangle within a circle, "a ancient symbol of unity and strength" and the emblem of Alley's movement. The rhythmic units around which the work is structured derive from the triangle, and its potential for organic replication. ("1, 2, 3D" refers to the physical layout of a Gung Ho performance, with three percussion stations, and a fourth droning role.) Triadic harmony, introduced for the first time in Gung Ho 1, 2, 3D, also relates to the structuring triangular geometry. The work is dedicated to Alley.

The group's next major work was Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One). Although devised specifically for performances at the Paris Biennale of 1982 the work was first performed at the Rotorua Art

32 From Scratch, "Gathering #2: Documents Gung Ho 1,2,3D of 1979", ts. and ms. (6pp), coll Wystan Curnow.
33 From Scratch, "Gathering #2: Gung Ho 1,2,3D."
34 Sleeve notes From Scratch, Three Pieces from Gung Ho 1,2,3D(45 rpm) HITM 004 (RCA); re-released as From Scratch Gung Ho 1,2,3D FN 085.
35 From Scratch, "Gathering #2: Gung Ho 1,2,3D."
Gallery in September of that year, programmed with *Gung Ho* 1,2,3D. In October, Geoff Chapple, Philip Dadson, Wayne Laird and Don McGlashan took *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* and *Gung Ho 1,2,3D* to the 12th Paris Biennale (Musée d'Art Moderne). After short-notice modification for three performers — Chapple was forced to return to New Zealand for family reasons — Dadson, Laird and McGlashan performed both at the Composers' Forum and Experimental Intermedia Foundation in New York in November 1982. From November 1982 until the group went into temporary recess after performances of the completed work (*Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Parts One and Two)*) in 1986, Dadson, Laird and McGlashan formed the From Scratch nucleus.

Paired with *Drum/Sing* (1984), *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* was performed at the 1984 Edinburgh International Festival of the Arts. The following year From Scratch collaborated with film-maker Gregor Nicholas to produce a 16mm film, also entitled *Drum/Sing*. The film won for Nicholas First Prize in the 28th American Film Festival's Film as Art Category (1986). In 1985, *Drum/Sing* and *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* and *Drum Sing* were recorded by Flying Nun records.

The second part of *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero*, written immediately on Dadson's return from Paris in the summer of 1982-3, was not performed in its entirety until 1986. In performance, *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part Two)* follows *Part One*. For *Part Two*, *Part One*’s three-person ensemble is expanded into a twelve-person group of six men and six women. The second part is scored for percussion and vocals, with the addition of trombones and saxophones. Unlike *Part One*, "which has the sense of nuclear holocaust", *Part Two* is more "celebratory" and "optimistic." It "expresses hope and is dedicated to the emerging force of solidarity amongst

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38 From Scratch, *Drum/Sing* [16mm and 34 mm film] edited, directed and produced by Gregor Nicholas, QEII Arts Council, NZ Film Commission.
39 Terry Snow, "Geometry of Oceania", *NZ Listener* (June 7 1986): 34.
42 I have chosen to focus on the first part of *Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero* because of the richer documentation available for this section of the work.
the peoples of the Pacific." The entire work was performed at the 6th Sydney Biennale in 1986. In 1990, after a recess of several years, From Scratch reformed. Members Neville Hall, James McCarthy, Walter Muller and Dadson devised *Songs for Heroes* and *Fax to Paris* in 1990. *Eye/Drum* followed in 1992. Projects for 1993 included a national tour, a film by Gregor Nicholas of *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* and a recording of *Fax To Paris*.

II

*Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* was devised specifically for performances at the 1982 Paris Biennale, as a protest against nuclear testing in Oceania, and French Polynesia in particular. "The [1982] tour happened because at the Sydney Biennale of 1979, the Paris Biennale's director heard/saw us and sent an invitation to come in 1980. Our attempts to raise finance were unsuccessful, but we had another chance in 1982." Unlike earlier From Scratch works, which tended to be abstract and conceptual, the musical structure of *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* is programmatic or illustrative: episodes of tightly-structured percussive activity emerge through sustained drones or hums. These "isolated islands of activity connected by common waters, waters whose currents now innocently carry nuclear contamination" represent the contaminated Pacific islands and the ocean which surrounds them. The thematic significance of the transition sections is also peculiar to *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero*. Dadson later commented that "it was the first piece where the transitions [between sections] became as important as the next major block."

43 Philip Dadson qtd in Snow 34.
45 Snow 34.
49 From Scratch, sleeve notes to *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero / DrumSing* FN-041.
51 From Scratch, sleeve notes to *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero / Drum Sing* FN-041.
52 Dadson qtd in Wystan Carnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
Fig. 25. From Scratch, Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero (Parts One and Two). Poster. (Collection of the author).
The work begins in almost complete darkness with a pianissimo drone, generated by the players humming into voice pipes. These lengths of transparent PVC tubing, about three feet long, amplify the sound. The musicians' use of circular breathing means that the drone is uninterrupted. One at a time the players drop out of the droning role, and begin chanting isolated syllables at the same pitch as the drone, while striking the voice pipes against their thighs, generating a resonant thump at the same pitch as the initial drone.

The syllables are extracted from the names of islands in Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, with each player having chosen his own combination of syllables. Documentation for the piece shows the names of eighty six islands broken down into their component phonetic units, collected in groups according to whether the names have two, three or four syllables.53 Chosen for their "specific phonic and acoustic properties"54 and "rhythmic bite"55, the syllables intermesh closely with the percussion texture.

With the increasing rhythmic complexity of the voice-pipe rhythm comes increasing melodic complexity: a fourth and a fifth are added above the opening pitch. By the end of the first section, the syllables join to form the complete word "Moruroa." As the aural texture thickens, blue light increases in intensity. The voices are gradually phased out and their place in the rhythmic texture taken by large pitched PVC pipes, mounted on two-tiered racks of seven pipes each. Once this pattern is established, chime bars are slowly added to the texture, and the PVC tubes are phased out. The structural principle is one of gradual evolution: "Each pattern either devolves from a full pattern to an abstracted one by substituting rests for beats, or conversely evolves from [an abstracted one] to a full pattern of beats."56 The chime bars build to a crescendo, at the top of which the performing space is plunged into darkness and silence.

From this darkness emerges another drone. The light is brought up on one player humming into a length of flexible tubing which he spins slowly around his head. The other players quietly chant the names of islands contaminated by nuclear testing: Christmas Island, Johnson Island,

54Philip Dadson, interview with author, 1 October 1992.
55Wayne Laird qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
56From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
Enewetak, Bikini, Fangata'ufa, Moruroa. *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* also refers to islands outside French Polynesia contaminated by nuclear testing. Moruroa and Fangata'ufa are sites used by the French, while Johnston Island, Enewetak and Bikini have been used for nuclear testing by the United States, and Christmas Island had been used by both Britain and the United States.\(^{57}\)

The next section is highly percussive and characterised by additive rhythms of increasing complexity, and intense red light. One performer maintains this litany of island names while the names of the four atolls are shouted antiphonally between the two other performers who sit on their haunches facing each other, wearing megaphones strapped to their heads; each is in his own red spot-light. Each call is followed by a violent burst of drumming on kerosene tins. The names are repeated several times, with the bursts of drumming becoming increasingly violent. The third player then dons a "rattle jacket" and sets up another drone on the PVC pipes: rapid re-articulation of low-pitched pipes suggests the oppressive thudding of helicopter rotors. While acknowledging that he has no control over the process, Dadson is at pains to emphasise that there is no programmatic intention in From Scratch compositions, and that such readings are always imposed.\(^{58}\)

In the concluding section of the work, the players resume their positions at the percussion stations. All three players wear "rattle jackets" made of lengths of narrow-gauge metal tubing, which sound as they move. (These "rattle jackets" have been described as diversely as "Maori piu-piu" and "bandoliers."\(^{59}\)) This final section clearly illustrates the structural process by which one type of sound gradually transforms into another. Once the PVC pipe texture is well established, players begin to substitute one pipe note with a crash on a cymbal. Gradually cymbal crashes replace more and more of the PVC rhythmic pattern. The work finishes when the cymbal texture has entirely replaced the PVC texture. *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* is 23 minutes long.

The text of *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)* is based on names of Micronesian, Polynesian and Melanesian islands contaminated by nuclear testing. The specificity of the place-names, and the

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\(^{57}\) From Scratch, sleeve notes to *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero / Drum/Sing* FN-041.

\(^{58}\) Philip Dadson, interview with author, 1 October 1992.

\(^{59}\) Philip Dadson, interview with author, 1 October 1992.
title, makes explicit the political point and geographical location. The title of the work turns the Pacific Ocean into a target, the site of a countdown to detonation. In the performance, "3,2,1" also acts as a co-ordinating call-sign. For the performance at the Paris Biennale, the group reinforced the political point by writing on nearby pillars the names of Pacific islands contaminated by nuclear testing.60

These names aurally 'map' the Pacific in two ways. The names are specific to the region (e.g. Tana, Omba, Tahiti, Savai'i, Aitutaki, Viti Levu) and secondly the fragmentation of the syllables programmatically suggests isolated islands. (The initial conception for the work was further reinforced by laying out the performance space so that each musical episode occurred at a separate, isolated area, defined by lighting.) The names in this first part of the work are not specifically those contaminated by nuclear testing. Rather, they set the geographic scene for the violence and anger of the central section of the work, where the names of contaminated islands are articulated clearly.

The protest content of the work relies to a large extent on a programmatic concept and a specific physical layout: the groundplan used for the piece is a series of interlocking circles, within which is inscribed the triangular symbol for nuclear disarmament. (McGlashan pointed out that the symbol related to the aural aspect of the work thematically rather than structurally.)62 These encoded protest elements are independent of, but enhanced by the presence of text. Pacific 3,2,1 Zero is one of only two From Scratch works which use text (as opposed to the syllabic chanting of Drum/Sing), and which have overt political content.

Although From Scratch's constitution is political in that it is built on co-operative and egalitarian principles, Pacific 3,2,1 Zero is one of only two works with a specifically political agenda. Fax to Paris (1990) also uses text, and also has a political agenda. Like Pacific 3,2,1 Zero, Fax to Paris was devised as a piece protesting against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Use of a denotative text in this arc-shaped work means that its protest element is much more explicit than in Pacific 3,2,1 Zero. After establishing a rhythmic texture by clapping, then

60 Snow 34.
61 From Scratch, "Gathering #3:Documents Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part 1) of 1982 [Part 1]."
Fig. 26. From Scratch, floor-plan for *Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero (Part One)* (Collection of Wystan Curnow).
adding stamping and percussion, the four performers start shouting the syllables "Ha" and "Hey", as though to call attention to what follows. Gradually one-syllable words and two-syllable word-groups replace "Ha" and "Hey": "of/the, through/the, sun's/rays, sea's/waves, through/pace, air/ways." This section describes naturally-occurring radiation and power. At the work's structural centre the words change to combinations of "Pro/out no/test out/French." From this high point the texture thins out again, with layers dropping away one at a time until only the clapping is left.63

For From Scratch, using text was a concise method of conveying political content, although its use posed formal problems.

We talked a lot about whether the political content should be more overt, and one way of doing it is to actually add words which are, you know, up front. But even though we've tried to do that quite explicitly, it's always been bloody hard, I mean it's never worked. It's dominated the actual form.64

Dadson identified the problem of including language as one of "keeping the specificity of words 'down' so that it doesn't interfere with the music."65

Balancing the problematic tendency of text to dominate form, Wayne Laird noted the rhythmic potential of Polynesian languages. "Polynesian syllables actually brilliantly lend themselves to rhythm... they're the ones which have rhythmic bite. So it's the voice as a rhythmic instrument there."66 Stripped of its semantic aspect by breaking words into fragments, language can also function as texture rather than a text: "an attempt to get an atmosphere of those languages into the sound."67 The use of the voice also brings with it a valued emotive quality.68

64-Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
65-Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
67-Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
68-Don McGlashan qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
How did *Pacific 3.2.1 Zero (Part One)* take shape within the larger political context?

In 1972 Labour Governments in both New Zealand and Australia began proceedings at the World Court, which after several weeks of deliberations issued France with an interim injunction to stop the atmospheric nuclear testing in the Pacific. Paris chose to ignore the injunction and de Gaulle's successor Georges Pompidou "informed the New Zealand Government that the tests would continue regardless of the expressed concerns of Pacific nations or the world community."69 Although New Zealand's geographically and politically remote position meant that protest was of little moment to France, the issue of nuclear testing in the South Pacific was of central importance to many New Zealanders.

Until 1984, when an anti-nuclear Labour government came to power,70 New Zealand's defence policy had hinged on the ANZUS defence pact of 1951, drawn up between the United States of America, New Zealand and Australia. Symbolising the United States' new role in the South West Pacific, the alliance involved New Zealand in the United States' nuclear planning in the Pacific, and by default, the planning of the U.S.'s NATO allies.71 (Under the terms of the ANZUS agreement, United States ships and submarines could berth in New Zealand ports without having to either "confirm or deny" if they had nuclear capabilities.)

The ineffectuality of the World Court injunction ordering France to stop atmospheric testing in the South Pacific led the New Zealand Government to take direct action. In 1972, Norman Kirk's Labour Government dispatched the frigates *Otago* and *Canterbury* into the Moruroa test zone. The success of this gesture was limited. France ceased atmospheric testing in 1974, but began underground testing. The World Court took the view that this was a sufficient response to New Zealand and Australian concerns and refused to consider the case further.72

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71 Hoadley 18.

A change of New Zealand government in 1975 meant the solidification of defence links with the United States and her NATO allies. (The incoming National Government dropped Labour's nuclear-free zone proposal and invited U.S. nuclear-powered warships to visit Auckland and Wellington.\textsuperscript{73}) At the time of the composition of \textit{Pacific 3.2.1 Zero (Part One)} in 1982, protest against French nuclear testing and visits by United States warships and submarines was largely in the hands of private organisations such as Greenpeace and CND. These groups bore the brunt of anti-nuclear protest until Labour returned to power in 1984, partly on the strength of its nuclear-free policy. When the new government declared New Zealand a nuclear-free zone, the United States Secretary of State George Schultz declared the ANZUS defense arrangement "inoperative" and threatened taking protectionist measures against the importation of New Zealand goods by the United States.\textsuperscript{74} With the dissolution of the ANZUS pact, visits from United States vessels ceased. However, French nuclear testing in the South Pacific continued.

Many of the submissions reviewing New Zealand's defense policy in 1985 and 1986 expressed a new kind of South Pacific identity for New Zealand.\textsuperscript{75} So too was \textit{Pacific 3.2.1 Zero} informed by a sense of "growing Oceanic identity" and "being prepared to stand up against imperialism in the area from the larger Western military nations."\textsuperscript{76}

Just as Allen Curnow read the celebratory occasion of the Tasman tercentennial against the grain of predominant national self-congratulation, \textit{From Scratch} took the opportunity of the invitation to the Paris Biennale to register protest at French colonialism — in effect endorsed by the New Zealand Government — in the South Pacific. Both works question the imperialist view of Pacific history, even though both were occasional commissions for national celebrations. The Paris Biennale to which \textit{From Scratch} had been invited was a showcase for France's promotion of the international avant-garde. The organisers placed great emphasis on international public relations:

\textsuperscript{73}Hoadley 19.
\textsuperscript{74}Laffey 84.
\textsuperscript{76}Dadson qtd in Smow.
The image of the Biennale is up-front, up-market, but behind the scenes the organisation was shoddy. Of course, they produce a nice catalogue. This seems to be the first priority: the catalogue gets circulated to all the other venues and keeps up the kudos of this particular outfit... The publicity side was virtually nil in terms of getting people in...\textsuperscript{77}

From Scratch took the Biennale as an "opportunity to express something of the way the Pacific feels."\textsuperscript{78} Although "the impact on 60 or 70 people [may have seemed] small",\textsuperscript{79} taking to the very centre a protest piece about French nuclear testing in the Pacific was a theatrical and political gesture tantamount to bearding the lion in its den. Although the protest content was missed in the reviews (the broadcast was delayed some days, and it was this which was reviewed), there was a "considerable reaction"\textsuperscript{80} from those who were at the performance. The late reviews of the From Scratch performance, and the failure of the French to acknowledge the protest content may indicate that the slightly subversive use of the Biennale venue did in fact strike a nerve of some kind. One French reviewer went as far as describing the performance as "a little frightening."\textsuperscript{81}

From Scratch: Instruments

Despite a tendency for audiences to perceive them as somehow 'primitive' — the same French critic described the group as "deepfreeze Africa"\textsuperscript{82} — From Scratch presents itself as "new and urban modern."\textsuperscript{83} While the group denies borrowing non-Western musical principles, it brings urban technology to bear on instruments derived from Pacific and Asian sources, developing new instruments based on these. New instruments include the visually and musically dominant pitched lengths of plastic tubing mounted in double banks, "inspired by the panpipe and bamboo bands of the Solomon Islands."\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{77}Philip Dadson qtd in Crowe "From Scratch Visits the North" 17.
\textsuperscript{78} Philip Dadson qtd in Crowe "From Scratch Visits the North" 18.
\textsuperscript{79} Philip Dadson qtd in Crowe "From Scratch Visits the North" 18.
\textsuperscript{80} philip Dadson qtd in Crowe "From Scratch Visits the North" 18.
\textsuperscript{81} Liberation (31 October 1982), Qtd in Crowe "From Scratch visits the North" 17.
\textsuperscript{82} Liberation (31 October 1982), Qtd in Crowe, "From Scratch visits the North" 17.
\textsuperscript{83} Wayne Laird qtd in Wystan Cumow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
\textsuperscript{84} From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79".
As a sound-source the pipe is one of the oldest instruments, and is still widely used throughout Melanesia. The common Pacific material is bamboo, and in various lengths and bundles they are used for blowing, 'stamping' and drumming, from tiny pan pipes to large percussion instruments often used for boogie-bass accompaniment to popular songs.... [From Scratch uses the pipes] in two ways — open and closed. Played open, they are hit with flat rubber bats across their mouth to produce a resonant thump. Played closed the pipes are fitted with lexan plastic caps or 'quackers.' The caps, acting as a diaphragm at the mouth of the pipes, alter the tone but not the pitch.85

Peter Crowe commented that "the use of banks of big tuned PVC plastic drainpipes by From Scratch could have arisen directly from the 1972 South Pacific Arts Festival in Suva, inspired by John Gina's Solomon Islands bamboo bands. (In turn traceable to boogie woogie records brought by GIs to Guadalcanal in 1942, in the war against Japan.)"86 The first mallets for the PVC tubes were improvised from jandal soles. These were later modified to flat rubbercoated mallets.

Other instruments of non-Western origin include wooden slit gongs from Polynesia, metal chimes and variable pitched drums — developments from South East Asia — and the "growler." This sound-source, devised from a Chinese toy 87, is one of the many drone instruments employed by the group. Sounding as they are spun around the heads of the performers, drones have both an acoustic and a visual effect. They describe circles which stress the circular and repetitive shapes of the music and the circular geometry of the groundplans, and the sustained sound produced counterbalances the percussive effect of struck instruments.

Dadson emphasises that the group's instruments must be both aesthetic and functional, and likes to describe the ranks of PVC pipes as industrial-looking sound-sculptures.88

85From Scratch, "Gathering #2: Documents Gang Ho 1,2,3D of 1979."
87From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-'79."
instrument design, sound sculpture and non-electronic amplification are not unique to From Scratch. Dadson found major sources of reinforcement and inspiration in the work of instrument designers François and Bernard Baschet and Harry Partch. On the 1982 trip to Paris, From Scratch made contact with the Baschet brothers, and although were given access to unpublished design material, they chose not to emulate their designs. Dadson commented that From Scratch "didn't want clone-ish looking instruments."

New Zealand-born composer Annea Lockwood (b1939) also followed a path which, like Dadson's, took her off the beaten track to Paris and Cologne; Lockwood too has been involved in the development of new instruments. Studies with Douglas Lilburn in Wellington were followed by studies at the Royal College of Music in London. By 1965 Lockwood had been exposed to the music and ideas of Cage, Feldman, La Monte Young and Christian Wolff, with Cage's influence being a "final catalyst" in her move away from conventional sound-sources.

In an effort to 'clear her ears', Lockwood devised a series of events, each of which was designed to explore the acoustic complexity of one non-traditional sound-source. The first of these were the "glass concerts" of 1968, which explored the acoustic properties of glass. These were followed by the Piano Garden, Piano Drowning and Piano Burning installations of 1970-72. Lockwood's experiments with instrument design include a "sound hat": "a brim surrounded by all sorts of very delicate little sonorous objects which brush against your face and ears. You have this totally private little concert when you put it on", and a sound-sculpture consisting of "a gross of ping-pong balls all suspended from a hoop. That one looks wonderful, like a funny little cloud of ping-pong balls. You walk right into the middle of it so again it's a very private experience and you get a sound which is just gorgeous."

Musical Materials

The basic units of From Scratch compositions derive from the shared rhythmic language which

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had been evolving since the first VOM compositions. Rhythmic structures are built up of polyrhythmic units making up subdividable envelopes. Although their favoured polyrhythmic ideas may be akin to some ethnic systems, such as Indonesian or African, where there is an overall envelope shape and microdivisions of beats within that, From Scratch's attention to polyrhythms is based on the properties of natural cycles and rhythms, rather than any "ethnic" associations they may have: "if we have three cycles of different sizes we end up with polyrhythms." The principle of subdivision is common to many cultures, for example, Indian tala.

The group displaced the structuring principle of tonality with organisation based on large geometric structures, defined by these small-scale rhythmic units. Member Wayne Laird described this compositional technique as a kind of "serialism" in which every musical parameter was fitted into a preordained geometric pattern. Changing metric ratios and small-scale rhythmic units bring about a sense of the constant displacement and shifting of the beat. Gung Ho 1,2,3D (3 beats played against 4 against 5, shifting to 4 against 5 against 6, 5 against 6 against 7, etc) and Out-In (5/8 against 6/8 against 7/8) illustrate these shifting metric relationships.

As each of the major works of the late 1970s and early 1980s posed their own learning hurdle, specific rhythmic exercises were developed to promote ensemble playing and facilitate the learning of complex and large-scale structures. (These exercises were later collected into a teaching aid, The From Scratch Rhythm Workbook.) The shared compositional language facilitated collaborative composition, and the composition and learning of works took place simultaneously, with members bringing musical fragments and ideas for discussion and elaboration. "[The composition process] has always been a case of submitting sketches rather than faits accomplis particularly."
The rhythmic envelope has also been used for its geometric potential. Its divisibility was used to make a thematic point in the final section of Pacific 3, 2, 1 Zero (Part Two), where a long polyrhythmic envelope contained proportional smaller units: the 48 beat cycle had some players working in 16 beat cycles, others in 12, or 8 or 6 or 4. Pairs of musicians took separate rhythmic paths through the 48-beat final cycle. All eventually arrived at the rhythmic common denominator, singing long extended phrases which lead to the work’s resolution. Whereas Pacific 3, 2, 1 Zero (Part One) had "a sense of the nuclear holocaust" Part Two felt more "celebratory", with a sense of "collective solidarity emerging among the peoples of the Pacific." 

From Scratch and Steve Reich

Although in name claiming 'original' or 'home-grown' status, From Scratch can be seen as a descendant of the fluxorchestra and other fluxus groups of the mid-1960s. The randomised instrumentation and structure of VOM compositions also show the group's experimental line of descent. The From Scratch compositions of the 1970s run in step with international trends in new music. "As with [Steve] Reich and [Philip] Glass, From Scratch from VOM on is composed of repeated patterns which keep changing to patterns which are similar to them." 

Lucy Lippard visited New Zealand in 1976, and after hearing From Scratch, suggested they should contact Reich, because of perceived similarities in aims. At Lippard's suggestion, Dadson sent Reich a tape, who later replied with some discs. They maintained contact and the possibility of Reich visiting New Zealand was discussed. This visit eventuated in March 1990. However, although Dadson acknowledged a reinforcing "shared reaction" with Reich,
he did not listen to much of his music for fear of being diverted from his own path.105

Some said [the work of From Scratch] could be too closely related to the Reich-Glass idioms, which are strongly established. We take that for granted, but we did develop our stuff out of a totally different context, and it does have a distinctive sound, look and character. [Unlike Reich's] it is very integrative visually-musically.106

As with Dadson, Steve Reich had turned back to acoustic sound-sources. Reich visited Ghana in 1970, studied Balinese Gamelan with I Nyoman Sumandhi at the University of Washington in Seattle, and discussed Indian music with Indian musicians and students at Wesleyan University.107 His experience in Africa reconfirmed his faith in live performance by acoustic instruments, which could be used to produce music that was "genuinely richer in sound than that produced by electronic instruments, as well as confirming [his] natural inclination towards percussion."108 For From Scratch, the proximity and stimulus of Polynesian and Melanesian cultures reinforce both co-operative ideals and "their own faith in acoustic instruments."109

Both groups also recognise a submersion of individual identity in performance. Ideally, Reich's performances are ones in which "all the musicians, including [himself], attempt to set aside [their] individual thoughts and feelings of the moment, and try to focus [their] minds and bodies clearly on the realisation of one continuous musical process."110 For Dadson, From Scratch performances can contain "a quality that's absence of ego",111 with the egalitarian musical partnership offering a demonstration of an ideal social model. (This egalitarianism is expressed in the musicians' choice of concert attire. Dadson, Laird and McGlashan are physically somewhat alike, and their choice of dress emphasised these similarities. For the large works of the mid-80s they all wore drill pants, white tee-shirts and tennis shoes.)

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105 Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
106 Crowe, "From Scratch Visits the North" 21.
108 Reich 58.
109 From Scratch, sleeve notes to recording From Scratch Perform Rhythm Works PRA 905 1979.
110 Reich 44.
111 Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
For both Reich and Dadson, it is important that the process of composition be audible. This can be achieved through the insistent repetition of musical fragments, either rhythmic or melodic. The small size of the fragments, the frequency of repetition, and the gradual rate of change means that any changes are clearly audible. Reich was "interested in perceptible processes. I want to be able to hear the process happening throughout the sounding music." Dadson's programme for VOM also emphasised the audibility of the transformation process: "VOM exploits layers of changing and evolving rhythms that utilise the full range of sound sources, synchronising and contrasting to make slowly transforming textures, sometimes dense, sometimes thin."

Despite these similarities, the two ensembles differ in many ways. From Scratch is basically co-operative. This sets them apart from the hierarchised Reich ensemble, which in 1971 was named Steve Reich and the Musicians—Reich describes himself as "a composer with a repertory ensemble." Wayne Laird acknowledged From Scratch's co-operative composition process: "I actually tend to forget afterwards what my bits are."

Notwithstanding the emphasis on the equality of every performer's contribution, From Scratch's organisational and compositional impetus derives in large part from Dadson. Although he downplays his role, Dadson's involvement with the group has always been integral. Tony Green noted that

Phil's presence was more central to the Orchestra's activity than he would acknowledge. I recall trying to organise a performance on Milford Beach, but this was one of the least successful afternoon sessions, with few participants and very little eagerness to perform. I think that the chilly wind blowing off the sea was not the only reason. We didn't stay down there long and went back to my house and opened up a few beers.

112 Reich 9.
114 Reich 46.
115 Wayne Laird qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
116 Green 86-91.
Although From Scratch and their minimalist counterparts are both concerned to display the processes of musical production, there is a significant difference in their chosen media. Unlike Reich, who has used a range of acoustic and electronic techniques alone and in combination, From Scratch have never used tape technology or electronically synthesised, manipulated or amplified sound sources. American and English minimalists have also written extensively for traditional melodic instruments. While From Scratch include conventional instruments in their percussion stations, starting from scratch in Oceania also means making do with what is to hand, discarding the technological hardware which, taken to its absurd conclusion, is also the hardware of war.

While generally peripheral to Western instrumentation, the principle of the magpie incorporation of found objects into a musical context is an ordinary one in Oceania. Ethnomusicologist Richard Moyle notes that "in the fautasi canoe races held annually in both American and Western Samoa a man sits in the bow facing the stern and beats on an empty tin can to coordinate and regulate the rowers' strokes, as well as to communicate instructions from the captain." Elsewhere he observes that "Lali [slit drums] no longer exist in the Manu'a archipelago; all have been replaced by empty gas cylinders suspended from trees" and "in some areas, the pate [small bamboo slit drum] has been replace by an empty kerosene tin." Dadson has also noted that tini (most frequently, empty biscuit tins) are now a standard part of Eastern Polynesian drum ensembles.

From Scratch too diverts non-traditional sound-sources, developing instruments from urban and

117 Reich's tape works include It's Gonna Rain (1965) and tape loop works Piano Phase (1967) and Violin Phase (1967).
118 See Steve Reich's Different Trains (1988), written for and recorded by the Kronos Quartet (Electra Nonesuch 79176-2), Philip Glass's Company (1983) for string quartet (Kronos Quartet: Electra Nonesuch 79111-2) and Michael Nyman's minimalist-influenced Saxophone Concerto Where the Bee Dances (1991) (Argo 433847-2).
120 Moyle 31.
121 Moyle 40.
122 Philip Dadson, interview with author, 1 October 1992
industrial cast-offs. In making do with what is to hand, From Scratch is opportunistic and inventive, using a range of non-musical technological detritus, recontextualising it in a musical environment. Unlike the African bells taken back to America by Reich, where the instruments are "musical" in both original and new contexts, many From Scratch instruments are essentially non-musical in their original contexts. The kerosene tins used in *Pacific 3,2,1 Zero (Part One)*, the car hub caps used in *Songs for Heroes* (1990), the gold pans and marbles used the *Eye/Drum*, the jandal soles used as mallets for end-struck PVC pipes appropriated from building sites — are ubiquitous and non-musical. Dadson, however, would resist this closed definition of "musical", contending that anything capable of resonating can be put to a musical purpose.

III

In 1974, From Scratch emerged from the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra. The name chosen for the pared-down group did several things. It announced a new beginning for the ensemble while acknowledging its Scratch Orchestra antecedents, and drew attention to a perceived void in the place of a local avant-garde. The name also applied to the group's compositional process, and to the invention and construction of many of their instruments. "Like effacing everything and restarting", to begin "from scratch" was to begin afresh, reviewing expectations of musical structures and performance media.

Disruptions

I think the rules for From Scratch pieces are different from the rules for plays or symphonies of similar lengths. I think the group has developed its own.

123 This drone source, in which a marble is spun slowly around the bowl of a tin gold-panning dish, is an adaptation of a technique originating in Switzerland. In its original context, the drone is used to accompany singing: coins are spun around in large ceramic bowls. The technique was adapted and adopted in recognition of Walter Muller's Swiss background. Philip Dadson, interview with author, 22 September 1992.


126 Don McGlashan qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
In their ethos, compositional technique and performance style From Scratch disrupts the discourse and ritual of purely aural music — music without an integral visual component. It renegotiates conventional polarities, hierarchies and boundaries, restructuring practically every performance parameter. The relation between the conductor and the soloist, the performer and the composer, and the performer and the audience are all called into question. From Scratch also disrupts genre boundaries. It operates between music, theatre and dance. The performers themselves are both instrumentalists and singers; they are also instrument designers and manufacturers. (From Scratch performances tend to also disrupt critical discourse: Peter Crowe has pointed out "a lack in the critical vocabulary or meta-language to discuss From Scratch's sculpture-like sound assemblies."

The number of tasks performed by each musician disrupts preconceptions of the discrete "area of expertise" usually associated with musical performance: From Scratch musicians drum, move, sing and clap, and are seen assembling their instruments in a way that implies intimate knowledge of their construction.

The careful blending of vocal timbres and the close voicing of parts eliminates any hierarchy of soloists, as does the rotation of players around the three percussion stations. From Scratch accesses co-operative, non-hierarchical attitudes to performance and composition frequently displayed in the performance of Pacific musics. In his postgraduate ethnomusicology thesis, Wayne Laird noted co-operative principles at work in Cook Island drum ensembles:

> No one instrument is deliberately presented soloistically except for brief introductory motifs.... As with the dance group there will be a leader, but this player will not stand out as in any way more important musically than the others.128

This co-operative performance model extends to the group's approach to composition, where works are devised collectively and issued by a collective rather than by an individual. Peter Crowe has also commented on the co-operative working method of From Scratch in relation to

127 Crowe, "From Scratch Visits the North," 29.
128 Wayne Laird, "Drums and Drumming in the Cook Islands", M.Mus Diss. (University of Auckland, 1982) 71.
non-Western composition techniques.

In more complex societies — that is, on the technological count only,... we sometimes find the phenomenon of "collective" composition. This seems to exist among Balinese gamelans, although observers (and members) can probably point to individuals who contribute more inventive energy than others to the collective work. In New Zealand there have been hints by From Scratch that some of their works were also collective compositions, but it may be truer to say they were compositions issued by a Collective (a group) in which several individual inputs to the creative process remained private.129

The presence of the audience prior to the aural part of the performance, watching as performers set up the instruments and chalk out floorplans, disrupts traditional parameters for the audience-performer relationship. This traditional relationship is one in which "the performance takes place on an elevated stage facing the audience, which in turn sits in rows facing the stage",130 and where the visual is an important but not integral aspect of the performance. A desire to narrow the gap between performers and audience, and to make the performance space "more intimate and casual"131 leads to the placement of the audience around the performing group. At any point in the performance, the audience is aware of both the performers, and the audience seated on the other side of the performance space.

Gung Ho 1,2,3D was the first work in which the structuring diagram was chalked on the floor prior to, and as a part of, the performance.

In Gung Ho, where the drawing was done in front of the audience, it augmented the notion of working together because we were careful about the sequence of doing things and about who went where, and we created that impression from the stage, without playing a note.132

The physical activity of chalking the floor-plan in front of the assembling audience reinforced the

130 Philip Dadson, From Scratch, "Gathering #1 Rhythmworks." n.p.
131 Philip Dadson, From Scratch, "Gathering #1 Rhythmworks." n.p.
132 Wayne Laird qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
co-operative aim of the group, and of Gung Ho in particular. The plan is a triangle inscribed within a pattern of interlocking circles. Percussion stations are deployed according to this pattern. Conceptually, the musical modules on which the piece is based echo the interlocking and replication of the floor-plan circles, and the series of three rhythmic ratios on which each module is based relates to the inscribed triangle.¹³³

From Scratch also disrupts rituals surrounding performance. Traditionally, performers assemble in a more or less orderly fashion, on a lit stage. The audience claps when a soloist, leader or conductor arrives on stage. At the conclusion of the performance, the audience claps again, and performers and audience file out together. The From Scratch ritual begins with the chalking of circles on the floor while the audience assembles. The concentration performers bring to this activity is as focused as their concentration in "performance": the ritual surrounding the percussive part of the performance is as important as that performance itself, disrupting another formal boundary, that between time allocated to preparation and time allocated to performance.

**Visuality and the event**

What does a classical concert hall look like? Performers become as blank as they possibly can. Nobody wears anything funny except soloists. Nobody does anything with the lights. They try to utterly neutralise vision so that the music can take priority over that dominant sense of sight.¹³⁴

Visuality underscores From Scratch’s disruption of ‘pure’, aurally autonomous music. Rather than neutralising vision, From Scratch capitalises on the visual and sculptural qualities of their percussion stations, with performances taking place in theatrically-darkened auditoriums. The circular patterns created by spot-lighting emphasise the central placing of the group within the audience, the circular shapes in the ground plan and the cyclic or circular aural patterns. Lighting also explores the sculptural potential of the percussion stations, and in Pacific 3,2,1 Zero, emphasises the programmatic and theatrical elements of the work.

¹³³See From Scratch, "Gathering #2, Gung Ho 1,2,3D".
Although scores exist, From Scratch rely on memory for all performances. Scores are documentation rather than conventional blueprints for subsequent performance. Notation represents only one aspect — the aural — of a From Scratch performance. The difficulty of reconstructing a performance on the basis of scores alone would render reproduction by other ensembles highly problematic, thereby increasing the occasional force of From Scratch performances. The group has traditionally depended on word of mouth for their audiences, rather than on advertising or promotional material such as recordings, videos or radio broadcasts. Despite the existence of sound recordings, the From Scratch oeuvre exists in occasion and performance: the important spatial dimension of shared rhythm and melody is flattened out in recording. Film and video provide a more accurate form of documentation.

The fluctuating makeup of the group also endows performances with an ephemeral quality, as the form and execution of each work is intimately bound up with the personnel involved. The group inevitably takes on different characteristics with changing membership, as players add various executant skills. Philip Dadson's background is in the visual arts, and he teaches time-based arts at the School of Fine Arts (Elam) at the University of Auckland. Wayne Laird and Don McGlashan share backgrounds as classically-trained orchestral musicians. Dadson and Chapple were "untrained musicians [who] developed a lot of [their] skills through contact with Don and Wayne." 135 "Chapple's interest in the event possibilities of a group like From Scratch was a consistent part of his contribution. It altered when he left, things tended to move towards the rarified concert atmosphere and away from the event"... 136

The move from the avant-garde fringe to a prominent position in the high culture coincided with this move away from the "event", and with the technical "upskilling" of performers. What had started in the late 1960s as "therapeutic free-for-alls" 137 were now tightly-structured and technically polished performances, dependant for at least part of their effect on feats of memory and the faultless execution of complex rhythmic patterns. This executant skill of the performers marks the degree of change the group had undergone since the New Zealand Scratch Orchestra, which, after Cardew's London orchestra, had aimed to "break the monopoly of a highly-trained

135 Philip Dadson qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
136 Don McGlashan qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.
137 From Scratch, "From Scratch: 10 Years '69-79". [n.p.]
elite over the avant-garde, so we made a music in which 'anyone' could participate regardless of their musical education.\textsuperscript{138}

The performers themselves, however, attribute this change to audience response, rather than in the altered nature of the performance itself. "The group had done this strange thing. It had moved into the centre of the culture but it hadn't changed. It was more or less as weird as it had been in '76. But the difference was in the people coming to the show and being really knocked out by it and in a very fresh way."\textsuperscript{139}

Hybridity

One of From Scratch's earliest and ongoing outdoor projects is the annual winter drumming celebration \textit{Solar Plexus}. First held in June 1970, the event takes place around the crater of Auckland's Maungawhau (Mt Eden). Although coinciding with the winter solstice, \textit{Solar Plexus} was not initially a solstice celebration, rather, an endurance ritual which saw participants "undergoing changes with the sun."\textsuperscript{140} Assembling before sunrise, participants brought found, home-made or ready-made percussive sound-sources, and drummed for as many of the hours of daylight as physically possible. (The winter solstice takes place on or around 21 June. The sun rises at about 7.30 a.m. and sets at about 5.15 p.m)

Member Geoff Chapple later recalled that

the activity is intense as the sun rises... later, the pulse fluctuates. Sometimes the event is loosely structured, with ropes drawn across the crater, or by someone flagging the beat with a fifteen foot bamboo baton. Any number of people are welcome.... People find their own rhythm during the day — in solos, or beating a call-and-response to other drummers ensconced on the far side of the crater. Throughout the day the solstice shadow moves steadily across the crater, and drummers often follow that before falling back onto a more static position. Alternation of movement, stasis, drumming, silence is the pattern.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{138} Cardew 100.

\textsuperscript{139} Don McGlashan qtd in Wystan Curnow [Interview with members of From Scratch] n.p.

\textsuperscript{140} Philip Dadson, interview with author, 1 October 1992.
From 1983 to 1985, Solar Plexus was joined to the International Radio Solstice Celebration, transmitted live to New York, and mixed there with signals from ten other sites around the world.\textsuperscript{142}

\textit{Solar Plexus} disrupted the local/global polarity by being both at once. Joined by radio to centres in the Northern Hemisphere, the performance was part of an international solstice ritual, as well as being a local endurance test to mark the passage of the shortest day. This shortest day is itself one half of an opposition, inconceivable without its other term: somewhere there must be a shortest night.

Mixedness or hybridity — of genres, of the aural and the visual, of the leader and the group, of the local and the global — undermines the oppositions on which these categories are based, by undermining the binary force which keeps them in opposition. The crossing of boundaries entails accessing both sides of an opposition. From Scratch's resulting hybrid exists outside the arena of "pure" — purely aural — music. The group's visuality is an indicator of this hybridity, bringing in sight and movement, plus spatial and sculptural dimensions: dimensions which are traditionally of small account in music performance.

Despite their chosen title, the claims made for originality by "From Scratch" are "as old as modernism and... fixtures in the rhetoric of the avant-garde."\textsuperscript{143} While peripheral to the musical mainstream, the group has affiliations with the experimental musical avant-garde. Peter Crowe also qualified the claim for musical originality implicit in the group's choice of title:

Musical traditions infuse the musical ecosystem, and by extension all other parts of it. Thus, no text can exist within a musical ecosystem without it also belonging in some way to all other parts of the overlapping envelopes.... The propositions may seem to imply that 'complete originality' of a new musical work is an impossibility. All new musical compositions will partake of envelopes, or else be rejected as alien.\textsuperscript{144}

\textsuperscript{142} Chapple, "Solar Plexus."
\textsuperscript{143} Wystan Curnow, ["From Scratch"] n.p..
Although this proposition may seem to attack the capacity for "originality" of a composer, Crowe concluded that an "original" composer is one who "establishes new relations in the contextual network", citing From Scratch as an important example of this kind of "originality."\(^\text{145}\)

One of Dadson's aims in recycling technological off-casts as musical instruments is to renew and refresh aural perception. What also emerges under From Scratch's expanded definition of music and instrumentation is an entirely indigenous music, which, while being "peculiarly New Zealand", also has far-reaching ramifications in terms of inventive local responses to global cultural centralisation.


CONCLUSION
Conclusion

The end-point of a history which relies on the piling up of data is inevitably arbitrary. One could go on 'thickening description' endlessly. As this is a practical impossibility, conclusions must at some point be drawn.

I

When I began my research, I was looking for a concrete answer to the question "What constitutes the 'New Zealandness' of New Zealand music, or poetry, or painting?" My initial enquiries revealed a history of landscape- and 'national characteristic'-based analyses. New Zealand pakeha artistic production has previously been defined in terms of essences; for example "the distinctive qualities of the New Zealand light" have been invoked to account for the "New Zealandness" of New Zealand landscape painting. Looking elsewhere for that elusive quality, composer Jack Body has offered an ironically condensed paraphrase of an essentialist, ethnocentric stereotype of the National Character:

It is rather to the nature of the animal himself, the New Zealander, than to the landscape that we must look for the key to the characteristics of New Zealand music.... What then are the stereotypical characteristics of that typical New Zealander? He belongs to a 'passionless society', where people are reticent, where sensuality is suspect, where men do not cry.... Much of New Zealand music is characterised by an emotional restraint that borders on inhibition.

Douglas Lilburn looked to the landscape as the potential site of a 'New Zealand voice':

The patterns of our landscape and seacoasts, the changing of our seasons and the flow of light and colour about us — all these things show patterns and movement or characteristic rhythms. And these things in a subtle way affect our manner of listening and I believe they impress themselves on our minds in a way that will ultimately give rise to forms of

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musical expression.³

Critics have sometimes written in ways which seem to illustrate Lilburn's convictions:

To hear the opening bars of Allegro [for strings] is like opening your eyes for the first time on some challenging valley in the ranges; as the work goes on you may, if you wish, remember that the mysterious hollows of the New Zealand bush or the glimpses of wild beauty that appear unexpectedly through clearings in the beech forest have made you feel like this before.⁴

Philip Norman 'has it both ways', conceding that "the formation of a national style, is, to a significant degree, arbitrarily developed. The only essential factor is that the country it purportedly represents accepts it as such."⁵ Music sociologist John Shepherd has also noted that the way musical signs assume a symbolic function must be consensus-based: "Any significance assigned to music must be ultimately and necessarily located in the commonly agreed meanings of the group or society in which the particular music is created."⁶

If one way of reading New Zealand music is an essentialist 'features of the landscape' or 'national personality' mode, another is the very absence of "New Zealandness." Ironically, such an approach can lead to a situation in which the validity of a specific idiom depends on the degree to which "New Zealand" is either "submerged", or almost completely effaced from the music. Music writer Christine Dann lamented the fact that the closer Country and Western music produced in New Zealand sounded to its American progenitors, the more likely it is to receive a good reception among afficionados in this country.⁷ Sociologist Bill Willmott recorded a specific instance of a "boots and all" adoption of a transplanted musical idiom in a review of an annual Country Festival in Gore. The woman,

³Norman, "Origins and Development" 622.
⁴"Marsyas", "Music by a New Zealander: If he can do this already, what may he not do in time?"”, New Zealand Listener, 15 October 1943: 13.
⁵Norman, "Origins and Development" 627-8.
⁷Christine Dann, "Whoever Heard of a Singing Kiwi?" 6-13.
dressed in a yellow-tassled cowboy jacket, jeans and boots [who] sang sincerely of unrequited love in a twangy Tennessee accent.... [m]oved the Australian judge ... to remark that in a similar context in Australia genuinely Australian songs from the outback are sung in outbackish accents.8

There are dangers inherent in this seeking after essentials. Edward Said is highly dubious about the essentialism implicit in the identification of discrete cultural or national identities.

To focus... upon what is purely European, or German, or French, or Jewish, or Indian, Black, Muslim, etc. is then to accept the very principle of a separate essentialisation — the separation of the Jewish essence from the German, or the black from the white, etc. — and along with that to purify the types and turn them into universals. Such universals stand today as the legacy of the imperialising process by which a dominant culture eliminated the impurities and hybrids that actually make up all cultures.9

'New Zealandness' is a homogenising yet vague description, almost useless in its lack of specificity, but which tellingly foregrounds the national, overriding both history and genre. Inevitably, the search for "New Zealandness" raises more questions than it does answers. What, if anything, is typical of the music written in New Zealand? What characteristic intervals? What rhythmic patterns?

The obvious redutivism of such questions led me to suspect that the decoding of local musical and literary practices must take into account a much wider arena: the enquiry must be rephrased in a way which produces a more flexible model. If the direction of the enquiry is shifted from the taxonomic to a different kind of social or cultural analysis, the dynamic nature of that elusive quality becomes patent. "Collective identity is a hybrid, and the result of an often discontinuous process of invention."10 It is the inclusions and exclusions — which elements each magpie-artist regards as significant in his or her collection — which makes plain that process of invention.

I want to replace the search for a monolithic, if self-conscious and highly elusive notion of “New Zealandness” with an assumption of plurality. People have made and continue to compose music and poems here, and each is characterised by specific kinds of mixture. These hybrids have constituted pakeha New Zealand music and poetry since the colony was first settled, but the essential heterogeneity of the artistic process and product has not always been made explicit. Discussion needs to explore the flux of the stylistic, the social, the geographical, the historical, the political and the technological which constitutes the complex ‘New Zealandness’ of New Zealand poetry and music.

II

Against searching for an "essential" New Zealand identity in painting or poetry or music I have chosen to concentrate on generically mixed, or hybrid texts: they are all combinations of music and words. Asserting the hybridity of identity as a counter to models which assert the "purity" or "essence" of identity or form, I illustrate this heterogeneity with forms which are themselves generic mixtures.

In a study which straddles two artforms, it is possible to step back from genre- or discipline-bound criticism to take a wider look at the map, or, as Clifford Geertz might have it, the "web", of culture. An interdisciplinary, contextual approach offers just such a wide view. In the process of writing this thesis, the initial insight was to note the large number of works involving both poetry and music in New Zealand. The second was to note that the addition of words offered the possibility of a referentiality which music alone does not have. Thirdly, it appeared that these conjunctions helped in a useful way to complicate readings of either art form, taken separately.

Each of my chosen examples represents a different negotiation of the music-word relationship. Alfred Hill wrote both the words and the music for his song “Waiata Poi.” Hill’s Hinemoa, with a libretto by Arthur H. Adams, is a large-scale work for choir, soloists and symphony orchestra. Originally conceived for solo voice and piano, Hill later arranged the song for various forces. The poem “Landfall in Unknown Seas” (1942) was the result of a government commission to poet Allen Curnow. On his own initiative, composer Douglas Lilburn provided incidental music for small string orchestra, to be played between the poem’s three sections. In
performance, music and text remain separate yet interact strongly in the experience of the listener.

In 1953 Lilburn set six of Denis Glover's "Sings Harry" poems for tenor and piano, and shortly after set Glover's poem "The Magpies" for choir and piano. Again, this setting was conceived some years after the poem, and is only one of a number of subsequent engagements with this poem by later artists. From Scratch use words sparingly in their compositions for percussion ensemble. In Pacific 3.2.1 Zero they broke down into syllabic units the names of Pacific Islands used for nuclear weapons testing. Here verbal language has two roles. To start with, it loses its referential quality and assumes a primarily, percussive and structural function as 'sound poetry.' When the names of the islands are completed, at the dramatic centre of the work, they can be heard as accusations made on behalf of local peoples and specific places.

III

This thesis can be read as an episodic history of nearly one hundred years of pakeha occupation of New Zealand. Several thematic strands connect the chapters. For example, all these pakeha performers have dealt in various ways with a Pacific location, and the question of appropriation of indigenous materials. Alfred Hill used Maori motifs as a veneer over traditional forms, taking pleasure in what he saw as exotic and romantic attributes. Hill's distinctiveness lies in the unusual mix of elements in his works. His characteristic contribution is in his slight modification of the Victorian tradition to accommodate some details of the local culture in which he found himself. Hill did not see himself as divided: he still felt himself to be basically a British subject.

Hill's respectful mimicry of British and German cultural forms did not leave any sense of a purely local pakeha high culture. Curnow and Lilburn sought to go a stage further in the creation of such a culture, by taking to task some previously unquestioned assumptions about the pakeha occupation of New Zealand.

Lilburn's Sings Harry sequence represents another engagement with the local: a stereotypical rural male 'loner' is romanticised as the subject of a Schubert-style set of songs. However, Sings Harry is not German art song. The language, the setting and protagonist are all local:
again, the form is exotic, the details indigenous. If Harry has musical relatives, they are not New Zealanders: they are the wanderers of Vaughan Williams and Schubert.

Emerging from the British avant-garde of the 1960s, and contemporaneous with American minimalism, From Scratch too have synthesised a local musical identity. They explicitly locate themselves in the Pacific, attempting to construct it not as an exotic or romantic invention, but a political reality, and the site for a new synthesis of local identities.

A second connecting theme ties Hinemoa, Landfall in Unknown Seas and Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero. In their initial contexts, each of these works answered the demands of occasion, having had as a precondition an event of national or international significance. Landfall in Unknown Seas commemorated the tercentennial of Abel Tasman’s landfall in New Zealand, and continues to be performed when statements of national high-cultural identity are called for. Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero was a reply to an invitation from the French government: From Scratch used the international venue to question France’s role in the South Pacific. Although Hinemoa was not commemorative in its initial conception, its first performance was given on occasion which required a display of the colony’s achievements. The Wellington Industrial Exhibition of 1896 was not merely a technological fair: it also provided a venue for the display of artistic prowess. Since its first performances, Hinemoa has received only intermittent airings, but most of these performances have marked a commemoration or celebration of some kind.

A third strand of connection relates to the way in which some of the works negotiate positions between the public and the private. Although Landfall in Unknown Seas was a public commission, in it Allen Curnow and Douglas Lilburn voiced their own anxieties about New Zealand’s compromised history, and about the country’s unstable present and uncertain future. The addition of music to Denis Glover’s "Sings Harry" poems turns the experience of private consumption (reading a poem) into a public performance. However, I have shown that the "Sings Harry" narrative travels in step with Lilburn’s own personal history. In performance, the public and the private are inextricably linked.

From Scratch also negotiate boundaries between the public and the private. In this case, the ritual aspect of From Scratch performances are outside the parameters of conventional performance:
that which is usually hidden (the construction of instruments and the definition of the performance space) is incorporated into the From Scratch performance. Making public that which is more usually private also applies to the group's composition techniques. Musical structures generally hide their process. From Scratch, however, make the process of composition audible and publicly perceptible.

These are of course not the only linking threads; indeed, it is in the nature of the method used here that the more intensively it is applied, the more threads spin out. The result, in any case, is a piece of history whose weave, while particular, also suggests how a non-essentialist history of the arts in New Zealand might look.

IV

I began work on this thesis with the idea of establishing what was characteristically "New Zealand" about the range of texts I had chosen. By the end of the project the essentialism implicit in this task had been replaced with a sense of the hybridity of both text and identity: the only thing "essentially New Zealand" about the selected half-dozen texts is their particular hybridity, and a specific mix of geography, history and personal (or group) interests.

Along with the displacement of the idea of an essential "New Zealandness" went the reconceptualisation of notions of centre and periphery — "central" suggests an essence, just as "peripheral" implies marginality. Merely to replace one term with the other is to remain within the confines of the same binary. It is also useful to remember that the relationship between centre and periphery is always complex — each implies the other and each can be seen in reverse.

Old definitions of centre and periphery no longer apply to the dynamic between Europe and the Pacific. Where once pakeha New Zealand art defined itself in relation to distant centres, a gradual renegotiation of this relation has meant that a relatively autonomous artistic centre replaces one which only existed on the periphery of empire. The products of both economies are hybrids, but hybrids of radically different natures.
Instead of the positive and negative poles of centre and periphery, I’d like to expand the model to include separately-constituted and interconnecting centres, which, while being historically specific, are not fixed in finite relation. Each of these centres has a history which it brings forward with it. The centre called "local musical context" operates in the present, but also has in tow its whole history, and the histories of the fragments from which it is constituted. My aim has been to reconstruct these contexts, to give a sense of the difference, remoteness and complexity of the past, and to bring that past to bear on the present.

Under the terms of this thesis, every text in any and every genre can usefully be seen as a hybrid or negotiation. In examining six examples of a conspicuously mixed genre, I sought to expose seams and juxtapositions, rather than maintain the essentialist illusion of a the authentic texts of a unified national culture. As James Clifford has it, the synthesis of contemporary identities "no longer [presupposes] continuous cultures or traditions. Everywhere individuals and groups improvise local performances... drawing on foreign media, symbols and languages..."\(^{11}\)

Magpie identities and texts are neither central nor peripheral, but both, dismantling or transcending this polarity and in the process making idiosyncratic new mixtures. The debate between centre and periphery (here-there; empire-colony; local-international; now-then) is replaced by a sensitivity to the specific mixture each text represents, and its various historical, political and artistic contexts.

The texts I have chose to illustrate my thesis are generic mixtures, and I have applied a magpie method to these magpie texts. My aim has been to expose complexities rather than to join a search for essences or essentials. An attempt to reduce this discourse of multiplicity to a finite conclusion militates against the nature of both the primary material and my theoretical approach, and thus to some extent undermines the validity of the project itself. I would like to finish my thesis with a sense of expansion, of work yet to be done, rather than with a sense of closure.

\(^{11}\) Clifford, *Predicament* 14.
APPENDICES
WAIATA POI (Poi Song)
Words and music: Alfred Hill

Mara, Maori maiden brown,
Famed for poi play;
Far on winds her name is blown,
Dusky, lithesome fay.

Kiarite, Kiarite,
Poi porotit tapara patua,
Hei! ha! hei! Hei! ha!
Hei! ha! hei! Hei! ha!

Refrain:
Watch her supple wrist,
And the poi twirl and twist;
Hear the gentle tapping
'Gainst the raupo wrapping
Of this fascinating thing,
Tiny ball on end of string.

Mark the sound her piu-piu makes
As her body moves;
That it is enchanted flax
Such sweet music proves.

Kiarite, Kiarite, etc., etc.

Hill glosses the Maori as follows:

Maori (pronounced Mow-ri): A native of New Zealand.
Poi (pronounced paw-ee) play: A rhythmical twisting, swaying and striking of a small ball, which is held by a string. Sometimes two balls are used — one in each hand. The graceful wrist movements, together with the sound of the balls striking some part of the body, to the accompaniment of a crooning song, make a very novel and pleasing effect.
Piupiu (pronounced Pew-pew): A kind of mat made of dried flax and used by poi-dancers as a skirt. It gives a peculiar rustle with every movement of the body.
Raupo (pronounced row-po): a reed used to cover poi balls with on account of the pleasing sound it gives when struck by the hand.
II

LANDFALL IN UNKNOWN SEAS.
Allen Curnow.

I
Simply by sailing in a new direction
You could enlarge the world.

You picked your captain,
Keen on discoveries, tough enough to make them,
Whatever vessels could be spared from other
More urgent service for a year's adventure;
Took stock of the more probable conjectures
About the Unknown to be traversed, all
Guesses at golden coasts and tales of monsters
To be digested into plain instructions
For likely and unlikely situations.

All this resolved and done, you launched the whole
On a fine morning, the best time of year,
Skies widening and the oceanic furies
Subdued by summer illumination; time
To go and to be gazed at going
On a fine morning, in the Name of God
Into the nameless waters of the world.

O you had estimated all the chances
Of business in those waters, the world's waters
Yet unexploited.

But more than the sea-empire's
Cannon, the dogs of bronze and iron barking
From Timor to the Straits, backed up the challenge.
Between you and the South an older enmity
Lodged in the searching mind, that would not tolerate
So huge a hegemony of ignorance.
There, where your Indies had already sprinkled
Their tribes like ocean rains, you aimed your voyage;
Like them invoked your God, gave seas to history
And islands to new hazardous tomorrows.
I
Suddenly exhilaration
Went off like a gun, the whole
Horizon, the long chase done,
Hove to. There was the seascape
Crammed with coast, surprising
As new lands will, the sailor
Moving on the face of the waters,
Watching the earth take shape
Round the unearthly summits, brighter
Than its emerging colour.

Yet this, no far fool's erand,
Was less than the heart desired,
In its old Indian dream
The glittering gulfs ascending
Past palaces and mountains
Making one architecture.
Here the uplifted structure,
Peak and pillar of cloud —
O splendour of desolation — reared
Tall from the pit of the swell,
With a shadow, a finger of wind, forbade
Hopes of a lucky landing.

Always to islanders danger
Is what comes over the sea;
Over the yellow sands and the clear
Shallows, the dull filament
Flickers, the blood of strangers:
Death discovered the Sailor
O in a flash, in a flat calm
A clash of boats in the bay
And the day marred with murder.
The dead required no further
Warning to keep their distance;
The rest, noting the failure,
Pushed on with a reconnaissance
To the north; and sailed away.
III
Well, home is the Sailor, and that is a chapter
In a schoolbook, a relevant yesterday
We thought we knew all about, being much apter
To profit, sure of our ground,
No murderers mooring in our Golden Bay.

But now there are no more islands to be found
And the eye scans risky horizons of its own
In unsettled weather, and murmurs of the drowned
Haunt their familiar beaches —
Who navigates us towards what unknown

But not improbable provinces? Who reaches
A future down for us from the high shelf
Of spiritual daring? Not those speeches
Pinning on the Past like a decoration
For merit that congratulates itself,

O not the self-important celebration
Or most painstaking history, can release
The current of a discoverer's elation
And silence the voices saying,
'Here is the world's end, where wonders cease.'

Only by a more faithful memory, laying
On him the half light of a diffident glory,
The Sailor lives, and stands beside us, paying
Out into our time's wave
The stain of blood that writes an island story.
III

LETTER TO LILBURN
Denis Glover

The world was new, an untried
Venture of exploration writ
On no sure chart when we first met
Finding some affinity
Seeking each his own identity.

Lo, How! The music-making Leprechaun
Danced at us both, miracle stranger
Percy Grainger child of the Sun and Moon
Setting our young world in tune.

I was fazed, bemused, amazed,
But you with new-found capacity
Put salt to porridge tenacity.

A Romantic in corsets I once called you
Laughing admiring to your face.
(In those days to be labelled Romantic
Was a disgrace.)

Yet, damned eclectic, your turn to laugh
When heart-heaving I tried to sing
Magic-caught the Erl King.

At a much later day
My own impromptu Blackbird and the Worm
Turned your piano's white notes grey,
To my dismay made you squirm.
(Blow me down, I've since heard
Worse bird-compositions, let me say.)

Never mind, tone-poem purist,
When I was groggy on the ropes
In hospital counting myself our,
Quite unknown by me
You were stalwart in my near rout.
Friendship. I know my own.
But all men go alone.

As a coda, exercising a humour
I erect on paper
This Grecian ana-thema.

SINGS HARRY
Denis Glover

Of the fourteen poems in the sequence, Douglas Lilburn chose to set only the following six:

**Songs**

**I**

These songs will not stand —
The wind and the sand will smother.

Not I but another
Will make songs worth the bother:
   The rimu or kauri he,
   I'm but the cabbage tree,
   *Sings Harry to an old guitar.*

**III**

When I am old
   *Sings Harry*
Will my thoughts grow cold?
Will I find
   *Sings Harry*
For my sunset mind
Girls on bicycles
Turning into the wind?

Or will my old eyes feast
Upon some private movie of the past?
   *Sings Harry.*
I Remember

I remember paddocks opening green
On mountains tussock-brown,
And the rim of fire on the hills,
And the river running down;

And the smoke of the burning scrub,
And my two uncles tall,
And the smell of earth new-ploughed,
And the antlers in the hall,

Sings Harry.

Then Uncle Jim was off to the wars
With a carbine at his saddle
And was killed in the Transvaal
— I forget in just what battle.

And Uncle Simon left the farm
After some wild quarrel,
Rolled his blanket and rode off
Whistling on his sorrel.

My father held to the land
Running good cattle there,
And I grew up like a shaggy steer
And as swift as a hare
While the river ran down.

But that was long ago
When the hawk hovered over the hill
And the deer lifted their heads
And a boy lay still
By the river running down,

Sings Harry.
Once the Days

Once the days were clear
Like mountains in water,
The mountains were always there
And the mountain water;

And I was a fool leaving
Good land to moulder,
Leaving the fences sagging
And the old man older
To follow my wild thoughts
Away over the hill,
Where there is only the world
And the world's ill,

*Sings Harry.*
The Casual Man

Come, mint me up the golden gorse,
Mine me the yellow clay
— There’s no money in my purse
For a rainy day,
    Sings Harry.

My father left me his old coat,
Nothing more than that;
And will my head take hurt
In an old hat?
    Sings Harry.

They all concern themselves too much
With what the clock shows.
But does the casual man care
How the world goes?
    Sings Harry.

A little here, a little there —
Why should a man worry?
Let the world hurry by,
I’ll not hurry,
    Sings Harry.

The Flowers of the Sea

Once my strength was an avalanche
    Now it follows the fold of the hill
And my love was a flowering branch
    Now withered and still.

Once it was all fighting and folly
    And a girl who followed me;
Who plucked at me plucked holly,
    But I pluck the flowers of the sea,
    Sings Harry.

For the tide comes
And the tide goes
And the wind blows.
IV

THE MAGPIES
Denis Glover

When Tom and Elizabeth took the farm
The bracken made their bed,
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

Tom's hand was strong to the plough
And Elizabeth's lips were red,
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

Year in year out they worked
While the pines grew overhead,
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

But all the beautiful crops soon went
To the mortgage man instead,
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

Elizabeth's dead now (it's years ago);
Old Tom went light in the head;
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies said.

The farm's still there. Mortgage corporations
Couldn't give it away.
And Quardle oodle ardle wardle doodle
The magpies say.
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Errata

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