

Editorial

The Malaysian Music Journal highlights music scholarship from, and of relevance to, Malaysia and the ASEAN region. As the country is undertaking exponential development, and our own music faculty student numbers at the Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris surge ahead, the musical discourse within Malaysia, defining of multi-layered artistic practices, the living heritages and the unique cross cultural mix of the country is both enthralling and critical. Added to this, an emergent interculturality and connection to interdisciplinary artistic context is facilitating a transformative artistic power on individuals, music education and cultural understandings. These circumstances can be articulated as an unfolding of ‘knowing from the inside’ of artistic and educational practice, a correspondence through music, and an appreciation of divergent ways of thinking – elucidated through scholarly reflection and critique. In university settings here, new understanding of divergent multi-disciplinary approaches, and the rich contributions artists and scholars can make, is strengthening. The Malaysian Music Journal aims to support and sustain this development through knowledge exchange, creative stimulation, and cultural inclusivity. This issue presents an eclectic group of articles, ranging from gamelan pedagogy to music industry to traditional and current performance practice and issues, and composition analysis and process – truly interdisciplinary and intercultural.

In the first article, *Teaching Balinese Gamelan outside Bali: A discussion of pedagogic issues*, Peter Dunbar-Hall discusses the uses of a *gamelan semara dana* in the teaching program of an Australian university. The paper discusses a variety of music and performance modes, and how experiential understanding of the nature of Balinese *gamelan* music can enhance musical cognition of students. The importance of new and hybridised music, the interweaving of contemporary and traditional practices, of maintaining music cultures in states of flux, and the ability of gamelan learning to immerse students in experimentation and metacognition is discussed. The work of Malaysian composer, Tazul Izan Tajuddin is contextualised and analysed by Peck Jin Gan in the second article. *Tenunan II by Tazul Izan TAJUDDIN (b. 1969): A Case Study of Cultural Confluence in Malaysian Contemporary Music* introduces the works of this composer and explains their distinctive connections to both Western art music traditions and cultural approaches of Malaysia and other Southeast Asian locations. The paper briefly explains the development of Malaysian contemporary music since the 1950s and investigates the ways that Tajuddin mediates multiple cultural elements through compositional strategies such as structure, time signature, pitch and rhythmic organisation, and instrumentation.

From compositional praxis in Malaysia, we move further afield to the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, with Dave Carter’s exploration of the music industry in that

neighbouring country. This paper, *Sketching the Lao Music Industries*, examines factors driving economic growth and innovation in the music industries, the law and regulations in relation to the popular music industries, popular music industries structure, organisational structures, careers, and the market for popular music.

Malaysia has a long history of musical influence from the Middle East, seen in part in local manifestations of instruments such as the oud/gambus. In our fourth article, *Iranian Classical Ney: Pedagogy and performance*, Arya BastaniNezhad provides an interesting discussion of the Iranian *ney* – the chief wind instrument of Iranian classical music. An exploration of structural and pedagogical elements of *ney* playing, such as timbre, tone production, posture, inner hearing and expressive fingering, is undertaken through an autoethnographical approach. Further performance and flute teaching issues are presented in the fifth article, *Preventing Flute Playing-related Musculoskeletal Disorders: Applying Ergonomic Principles in Individual and Ensemble Settings*. The problem of musicians' injury prevention has developed through recent decades from a slow recognition of the issue in professional orchestras in the 1980s to the rise of health professional specialists and broader awareness across the community. In this paper, Karen Lonsdale and Liisa Laakso discuss this issue from the perspective of flute playing and teaching, giving suggestions for injury prevention in this sector.

The previous MMJ issue published proceedings from the International Conference John Cage 101, held here at UPSI. The final article in this issue comes from our eminent keynote speaker for that conference, Dr Warren Burt. Burt writes of John Cage's understanding of randomness, and his use of it, and process as seen in his use of the *Mesostic* and the *I Ching* – giving us a glimpse of the craft and compositional mind of John Cage.

Many thanks are due to our Editorial Board for continued support and contributions. In addition, I thank Heather Burrell for editing assistance given for this issue. I give thanks to our team of external reviewers and express my heartfelt appreciation of their expertise and time commitment to this journal. Lastly, I thank our authors for their contributions, and you, our readers, for accompanying us on this publication journey. This issue represents a broad spectrum of topics situated in, around and close to the core of our creative and scholarly work here in Malaysia.

Jean Penny
Chief Editor