THE CREATIVE EAR

The ABC`s The Listening Room and the nurturing of Sound Art in Australia

A dissertation presented by
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in fulfilment of the requirements for the
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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s sound art program *The Listening Room* has been, both through broadcasting and related activities, a major factor in the life and growth of sound art in Australia. The thesis also argues that, internationally, *The Listening Room* is accepted as a leading member of the world sound art community by its contribution to the artistic development and wider recognition of the genre.

The thesis is broken into five major sections. Firstly, a definition of radio sound art is presented through sound examples of a range of compositions with a text commentary on each. Next is a detailed analysis of a particular composition, including composer objectives, studio production, sound generation, text involvement and observation of outcomes.

This is followed by an historical review of the formation of the Australian Broadcasting Commission up to the time it was formed into a corporation, which is followed by an examination of the sound art programs that preceded *The Listening Room*, the reasons for their being formed, their style of presentation and the people involved.

Building on this, a study is presented of *The Listening Room* from its inception up to the time of writing, including people responsible for producing the program, program style and presentation, characteristic sound, contributing composers and sources of material, matters external to broadcasting, working conditions, international activity, management and interviews with ABC producers and other staff members.

In order to examine the influence of *The Listening Room*, interviews and case studies with Australian composers and overseas producers and observers are recounted and analysed.
Finally, pertinent data from historical summaries, interviews and case studies are conflated to demonstrate the depth and significance of *The Listening Room*. 
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have assisted me in my work on this thesis, but I would like to give my thanks to these in particular:

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My friends Graham Bird and Professor Emeritus Brian Hardaker.

My daughter Elizabeth Broadhurst who transcribed all my interview tapes and my son Jeffrey for rescuing me from numerous self-inflicted computer crises.

And my partner Virginia Bird for her help and patience.
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Copyright Guidelines of the University of Western Sydney applying from 4 March, 2001, have been observed in the preparation of this thesis.

CERTIFICATION

I, Donald F Richards, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Western Sydney, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Signed: Sgd D F Richards Date:
ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations that follow are used in my own text throughout this document. Abbreviations are not used when quoting from documents, interviews or conversations.

ABC  Australian Broadcasting Commission or Corporation
ACTU  Australian Council of Trade Unions
AM  Amplitude modulation
BBC  British Broadcasting Corporation
CD  Compact Disc
CSIRO  Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.
DAT  Digital Audio Tape
EBU  European Broadcasting Union
FM  Frequency modulation
IFC  International Features Conference
IRCAM  Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique
JJJ  Radio Triple J
NMA  New Music Australia
NSW  New South Wales
R1  Previously 2BL, 702 BL, Radio 1
R2  Previously 2FC, Radio National, Radio 2
RT&D  Radio Talks and Documentaries
RTD  Radio Talks and Documentaries
SA  Sound art
ST  Surface Tension
TLR  The Listening Room
UWS  University of Western Sydney
WDR  West German Radio
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LIST OF AUDIO CDs

5EP (5 Easy Pieces) Appendix 1

Track 1. Duration: 17mt. 45sec. This piece of Sound Art (SA) was composed by Ion Pearce in 1997 and is presented in full. Text in Chapter 2 contains a history of its composition, its methods of production and an analysis of its construction and content.

Track 2. Duration: 17mt. 45sec. The composition 5EP is given as above, together with a ‘voice-over’ commentary describing the intuitive reactions of the author to the passing sounds of the piece. Text of the ‘voice-over’ is at Appendix 1.

Compilation broadcast by WDR Appendix 2

Duration: 54min. 36sec.
A compilation of Australian SA compositions was made for broadcast by WDR. This is a CD of the complete broadcast, including presenters’ voices in German, with a translation at Appendix 9. Chapter 5 contains the details of the project.

The pieces in order of playing are as follows:

Children like birds by Gareth Vanderhope
Swim Swim Swan Song, by Jane Ulman
Freetime, by Kerry Fletcher
The calling to come, by Paul Carter
Mungo, by Ros Bandt
Rivers: Swan and Avon, by Carl Edwards, Karl Akers and Chris White
Containers, by Sherre Delys and Russell Stapleton
Vanishing Point by Ion Pearce
In the mist of an arcane pop, by Damien Castaldi

Exemplars of SA Appendix 3

Tracks 1-7 contain short samples of a range of SA pieces by composers in various countries, including Australia. All compositions have been broadcast by TLR and are exemplars of the compass of the genre of SA. There is a brief description of each piece at Chapter 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track No</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Duration Min:Sec</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Paul Carter</td>
<td>2:59</td>
<td>The Calling to Come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gerhard Rühm</td>
<td>3:38</td>
<td>Ophelia and the Words</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Moya Henderson</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Arenje Javonvic</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Jim McKee and Barney Jones</td>
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<td>Wake for Tom</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Damien Castaldi</td>
<td>4:17</td>
<td>In the mist of an arcane pop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rik Rue</td>
<td>4:25</td>
<td>The Domain</td>
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Chapter 1
Chapter 1
The Thesis
Methodology - Data - Review

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In early 1998 I discussed with executive producer Robyn Ravlich a proposal for making the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) program *The Listening Room* (TLR) the topic of a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Western Sydney. She supported my proposal and made arrangements for me to conduct my research at the ABC offices in Harris Street, Ultimo, NSW. I was given working space, a desk, a computer and a telephone. During my work at the ABC I was able to talk to staff in any department, I had access to files, tapes, CDs and the ABC library. I was to spend many days there over the next few years.

The outcome of my work is to prove the thesis:

that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s radio program *The Listening Room* has been a major factor in the life and growth of sound art in Australia and has contributed to both its depth and recognition on an international scale.

In producing evidence of the elements of this thesis in the pages that follow, I define sound art (SA) by example in order to provide a context for the discussion of TLR’s work. I then give a short history of the ABC and show how the conception of adventurous and innovative programming came into ABC corporate planning. I trace the history of programs that preceded TLR and the movement of program style from journalistic to poetic, a style that firmed with the formation of TLR in 1988 and is still in evolutionary process, and I examine the relationship between TLR,
Australian composers and peers in overseas countries. Throughout, I draw attention to the recognition given by the ABC, through management policies and specifically through TLR, to Australian composers and their compositions, and I present samples of their work.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

1.2.1 Introduction

I have chosen case study, as defined in The Shorter Oxford Dictionary, 1993, supported by current and archival research, as the most suitable method by which to gather my evidence. The rationale for this choice is:

1. My study would resemble aural history, as very little published data was likely to be available on key points of the topic; research data would necessarily be highly specific and would most probably be found in the recollections of people concerned;

2. Verification and qualification of the assertion(s) were most likely to come from the identification and extraction of relevant facts contained in information gathered from individual cases;

3. Although quantitative analysis would often be a necessary element of the research process, a qualitative approach would be likely to identify the major influences at work. Case studies should be a suitable method of revealing these influences;

4. Most people who were involved in the early development of SA programs both at the ABC and in the SA community were retired or approaching retirement. By observing an interview/case study approach this source of history would be tapped and the outcome would be compatible with the historical tone of this presentation.
1.2.2 Gathering Data

1.2.2.1 Gathering program data

To arrange historical program data in a formal way I designed a data matrix as shown in the statistical data sheets at Appendix 10. The function of the matrix was to show, through the data entered, certain information about each separate piece put to air in TLR programs during 1988-1997. Spreadsheets of the matrix carrying the information were set up in the Microsoft computer program Excel (version 4) and these sheets became my database. As I did not have a clear idea of what the relevance of a particular analytical outcome might be to my thesis, I tended to gather information in more categories than I eventually used. In an opposite way, I found, as my writings developed, that I wanted data in a category that was not part of the analytical matrix. This meant extracting it from sources that I had already examined.

Whilst the main purpose of building a database was to provide a source from which statistical information could be extracted, entering data in the matrix also made me familiar with the names of composers and individual program pieces.

In the main, sources of data were ABC program records known as ‘run-downs’, and studio scripts, from which could be obtained the following information:

- program name and identification number;
- producer;
- cast;
- composer;
- duration;
- text;
- identification of CDs and tapes played;
- studio instructions necessary for putting a program to air.
These files were generally complete but sometimes information on programs for the early years of TLR was not easy to find and I had to devote time going through old program scripts or back copies of the ABC program magazine 24 Hours.¹

To minimise demands on their time I asked production staff for information only as a last resort.

Whilst I was engaged in developing my database, ABC staff were building a more comprehensive program database for all arts areas, covering both AM and FM bands. This was incomplete during the period of my study but I believe that at the time of writing it is almost up to date. It does not include several of the categories present in the database I developed for my own purposes.

I did not remove any original documents or tapes from ABC offices but I had full use of the ABC copying machines to copy documents. I also found a laptop computer useful for direct entry of data in the analytical matrix. In the early stages of working on the database I was spending two to three days a week at the ABC offices, but as it neared completion I was able to do more work at home, which was welcome as travelling time from my home to the ABC and back was about four hours.

1.2.2.2 Gathering sound data
From the programs of each year I asked different TLR producers to identify 10 or so individual pieces that they believed were of significance. From these I selected five or six for close study, and wrote a short analytical essay on each. The reason for doing this was to see whether I could discern

¹ Program entries in 24 Hours often gave information, either explicitly or implicitly, on such things as program subject matter, nationality and gender of composer or performers, duration of a composition, etc., which could not always be found elsewhere. At the time of writing TLR staff have advised me that the role of 24 Hours is under review by management.
a particular long term pattern in program management. I also listened to many other items to which I was referred or which were part of a theme I was following. As with written data, I did not remove any ABC tapes or CDs from their offices, but made copies as necessary for close listening at home. ABC technicians copied the CDs and DATs for me owing to a high demand for sound-room facilities where copying equipment was installed, as this was quicker than doing it myself. But I used my own high-speed dubber for copying cassette tapes.

Before commencing doctoral research I had been building a library of SA compositions, mainly on tape cassette, either by recording pieces being put to air or by purchasing tapes in response to advertisements in music magazines. When I commenced writing the thesis, I talked with SA composers who sometimes would give or sell me tapes of their compositions that had not gone to air through TLR. So my listening experience is not limited to compositions that have been broadcast in TLR programs.

The originals of sound examples on the CDs submitted with this thesis were burnt for me either by the ABC or by the School of Contemporary Arts of the UWS, from CD or DAT. The CD copies of these necessary for thesis presentation were made by me using my own equipment.

1.2.2.3 Gathering data by interview
A large part of the data used in my work came from interview. I tape-recorded interviews with Australian composers, ABC producers, retired program makers, announcers, ABC administrative staff and overseas composers and producers. Most of the interviews with overseas composers and producers were made during a visit to Scandinavia and Europe in late

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2 I was not successful in finding a long term pattern, but ‘clustering’ programs around a theme or idea is a programming technique frequently used. I comment on this in the following chapters.
1999.\(^3\) Tapes of all interviews, 30 in number, were transcribed verbatim and printed.

When gathering data by interview I tried to retain information by taking notes, as I thought the microphone of a tape recorder would hinder free exchange with the person being interviewed. However, I soon found note-taking to be impractical so I started, with permission, recording interviews. No person with whom I spoke objected to this, but I was at times asked to turn off the recorder while a subject of some delicacy was negotiated. The result was that I was given information that I could, if I wanted (and if I remembered it), use discreetly as background. What I did perceive was that the voice tone of a reply or comment, captured on tape, sometimes revealed an emotion that meant more than the words themselves. On one occasion the voice tone of the comment, ‘Thank you, Martin’, indicated sarcasm and as such, meant the opposite of the words. Sometimes also I noted that the body language of the speaker added to the meaning of what was being said.

Interviews were not formally structured, but I tried to guide the conversation to gather the information I wanted.\(^4\) For instance, when talking with Australian composers I tried to find their attitude to the ABC and to TLR, the difference that contact with TLR had made to their career and the ways, if any, that they had been helped. When talking with ABC staff I was interested in revealing historical information that was unavailable from other sources. Most people interviewed, both those in the arts area and those in other departments, were pleased to talk about themselves, and discussion was usually wide-ranging. I was grateful for the data that came to me through the recollections of people I interviewed and conversed with. Sometimes there were gaps, errors, contradictions and varied interpretations, but these could usually be sorted out. Appointments

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\(^3\) The University of Western Sydney gave me $500 towards meeting travel costs for visiting Scandinavia and Europe.

with busy people who also had deadlines to meet were not always easy to make, but interviews and discussions were courteous, friendly and thoughtful.

1.2.2.4 Gathering Historical and Supporting Data

Data of an historical nature emerged throughout my research, particularly during interviews and conversations with ABC staff members. An important source of historical material of a more formal kind was the ABC library at Harris Street, which I was able to call on for items such as the ABC Corporate Plan, Annual Reports, Special Reports and so on. These were particularly useful when I was writing about the early days of the ABC in Chapter 3.

There is a centralised system of filing in the Arts area, and also most producers keep files that they have originated for themselves in their office. All General files in the Arts area were freely available to me and frequently producers would give me a copy of an item on their own file that had to do with the subject we were discussing.

I used the libraries of the University of Western Sydney for books and journal articles and also the Hawkesbury City Council libraries from time to time.

1.3 DATA ANALYSIS

To extract appropriate information from the mass acquired by interview I used the qualitative analysis computer program *Atlas/it*. The Music Department at the UWS has a copy of this program for use by students. Its features are rather similar to the program *Nudist*, available elsewhere in the university to staff. I found it easy to use, although I did not use some of the more complex operations, such as creating links. As mentioned earlier, all my interviews were transcribed as computer files, and *Atlas* accepted these. *Atlas* was very satisfactory for identifying and printing out selected
passages from the 12 files (500 pages) of interviews that I loaded, under 17 codes. With hindsight, I could have saved my time had I extended the use of Atlas by coding more interview files; I tended to confine its use to long interview files, extracting information manually from the shorter interviews.

For producing program statistics I used, as mentioned, Microsoft EXCEL (version 4).

Most close, or analytical, listening to sound art was done at my home, using both CD and tape cassette recordings, both commercial and copies from my ABC sources. I found this type of listening was best done using headphones as the voice can be coloured by speakers and room acoustics, and lose clarity. Headphones, in my case, assisted concentration by creating their own listening space. I refer to headphones again in Chapter 2, section 1.

1.4 RESEARCH TIME FRAME

Although my research looks to the program TLR to demonstrate the contribution that the ABC has made to SA in Australia and worldwide, that program is a product of various programs that preceded it. To arrive at a portrait of the present-day program and an appreciation of the elements that have been preserved in its evolution, my detailed research started at the period of about the early 1970s, which is also the period that TLR producer Andrew McLennan identifies as the beginning of the development of the art of sound in Australia.

In the journal Continuum, McLennan writes about composer David Ahern and that period as follows:

As a promising young composer Ahern studied in the sixties with Stockhausen and later with Cornelius Cardew in England. In the early seventies he was at the centre of a group of artists and musicians
introducing radical ideas in sound to the Sydney public. His free classes at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, which he called The Laboratory of the Creative Ear, provided a theoretical and practical background for many artists practising sound-art today.\textsuperscript{5}

Therefore, although I write about the early years of the ABC, my detailed research dates from about the early seventies and moves to the present day. By using a linear approach and by selecting from data that I have amassed I have been able to identify points at which decisions were made or some event occurred that significantly affected subsequent happenings in the areas of our interest. I have tried to discover, using the facilities of document search and interview, the various circumstances and forces around these points, even though they may have occurred in years prior to the formation of TLR.

The time frame for the gathering of TLR program data and its subsequent statistical analysis (see Appendix 10) is the first 10 years of its existence, i.e. from the beginning of 1988 to the end of 1997. Sufficient statistical information is available from that period, together with the pre-history of TLR and data from interviews etc. up to the time of writing, to establish the truth of my thesis.

\section*{1.5 OVERVIEW OF THESIS}

Chapter 1

In this chapter I give an account of the numerous routes I followed in gathering and analysing my data and presenting them in an appropriate sequence. I also give a summary of some of the principal references I used

\textsuperscript{5} McLennan, Andrew. (1994) \textit{A brief topography of Australian sound art and experimental broadcasting}, in \textit{Continuum}, Vol.8, No 1, p.306.
in helping to develop insights in my research. The chapter contains the following sections:

- Introduction and statement of thesis
- Methodology
- Gathering Data
- Data Analysis
- Research Time Frame
- Overview of Thesis
- Review of Relevant Literature

Chapter 2  Sound Art and TLR

The objective of the chapter is to introduce SA as a viable and active genre of music that is capable of communicating in a coherent and engaging manner. The chapter contains observations on the qualities and characteristics of SA, and an accompanying CD carries excerpts from a variety of pieces that have been broadcast by TLR, with a brief non-analytical description of each. At section 2.3 I review Ion Pearce’s Fellowship composition *5 Easy Pieces* (5EP) and give a detailed, ‘first hand’ description of the compositional processes involved in its production. The chapter concludes with reference to the text of a ‘stream-of-consciousness’ listening, a form of analysis and appreciation of the finished piece that is given at Appendix 1. There are two CD tracks, one of 5EP alone and the other of 5EP with the ‘stream-of-consciousness’ text as a voice-over.

Chapter 3  The ABC and the pre-history of TLR

The first part of this chapter deals with the early history of the ABC. My aim is to depict the ABC in the course of its development, so that there is some understanding of the elements that have gone to make up its present form. These subjects are covered:

- The Dix report and corporatisation;
- Corporate planning;
- Geoffrey Whitehead and industrial matters.
In the second part I focus on the programming area of the ABC, in particular the arts area, where programs of the kind in which we are interested originated. My aim here is to show how a sequence of events, influenced both by management and production staff, culminated in the formation of TLR. Below are the subjects covered in this part:

- The Whitlam years;
- The formation of an Arts Unit;
- The programs *Surface Tension* (ST) and *Images*;
- Formation of TLR.

**Chapter 4  TLR - Its character and essential elements**

This chapter contains a close examination of some of the important components of TLR. These comprise the time slots and network that carry the program and the continuing internal debate about them, program content, the ‘voice’ of TLR and speculations about it, and a trend to minimise voice intervention. I review the production staff of TLR and examine some statistics derived from the database dealing with producers and composers. I give an account of Australian and international awards won by TLR up to the time of writing, and comment on program sales promotion, office accommodation and working conditions.

These factors outlined above, I believe, combine to give an appreciation in historical terms of the environment in which TLR presently operates.

**Chapter 5  Presentation of data in the form of case studies, interviews and history**

The data from which conclusions are drawn that support the truth of my thesis appear in this chapter. The form of presentation is principally that of case study and the method is, in the main, by interview. The cases studied are those of Australian composers, representatives of overseas broadcasters, and observers of the SA scene world-wide. Observations are made on the subjects of overseas visitors and overseas visits, festivals and conferences, and the Australian audience.
Chapter 6 Conclusions

This chapter summarises the case studies, interviews, examples and facts contained in Chapters 4 and 5 that is the data which, I argue, confirms the assertions made at Chapter 1. These summaries will make it clear, I believe, that the ABC’s radio program TLR has been a major factor in the development of SA in Australia and has contributed both to its depth and recognition on an international scale.

1.6 REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

1.6.1 Introduction

Section 1.6 is in four parts, namely 1.6.2, which deals with literature specific to the ABC, 1.6.3 which deals with Australian composers and SA, 1.6.4 dealing with corporate and artistic culture and 1.6.5 dealing with composers and the culture of SA.

1.6.2 Literature Specific to the ABC

1.6.2.1 K.S. Inglis. (1983) This is the ABC. Melbourne University Press: Carlton, Victoria.

Inglis has covered the first 50 years of the life of the ABC in detail in this well-indexed book; in 520 pages he has written about senior and prominent people at the ABC, their interaction in running the organisation and their contact with politicians of the day. The names of early radio programs, and later both radio and television programs, are mentioned in their historical context, particularly in regard to news and news commentary programs.

In the initial part of my writing I referred to the book frequently as a source of information on people and events leading to corporatisation of the ABC in 1983, when the 50 years of the book’s coverage ends. Programs of specific interest to me did not go to air until the mid-1970s and it so happened that from about that time until 1983, Inglis’s attention was occupied by political, structural and staff ructions. Data for my research on programs and creative people of that period therefore had to be found in
other material. In the main I found This is the ABC an excellent chronicle of major events and the people involved in them during the first 50 years of the life of the ABC.


The name Richard Connolly appears frequently in this thesis, particularly in Chapter 3 where I quote him to demonstrate his positive influence on the style and presentation of early SA pieces. In this paper Connolly writes about the changing role of the spoken word in ABC programs during the period from the early 1930s to the early 1980s. In the course of this review his comments help to create a picture of ABC arts production of the time.

When the ABC was formed in 1932 it was made as an image of the BBC, despite significant differences in conditions of the day. Connolly writes:

...the big difference was that Reith’s Corporation [the BBC] from 1924 until 1954 (indeed much longer in radio) would enjoy a complete broadcasting monopoly in the UK. Our Commission began life in the capital cities of Australia as a minority of two national stations among a majority of commercial ones...From the start it was restricted to a largely middle-class appeal, and with some notable exceptions that has continued to be so.6

Connolly goes on to write that ‘the BBC has always had a tradition of intellectual strength in its management...that have been matched only rarely and partly by the ABC’.

In much of what follows Connolly traces a gradual descent of intellectual strength and confidence within the ABC to the perceived need to compete in both radio and television with commercial stations.

6 pp 22,23.
However, while acknowledging that a loss of intellectual strength and confidence has been present in the ABC’s ethos, Connolly points to consistently fine efforts in program production. Within his brief of the spoken word, he describes productions of radio plays, book reviews, talks, and poetry and book readings of high quality, and he comments positively on news and news review programs. But he deplores the invasion of topicality into a wide range of programs, particularly interview programs, where a ‘top-of-the-head’ kind of response takes over from programs that allow more reflective consideration. He also writes of his visit to Italy, Germany, France and Britain in 1971 on a Churchill Fellowship (p31), which I refer to in Chapter 4, in which he describes a form of program-making as being ‘a technique-based approach, founded in the media itself’ which I refer to in the same chapter.

Connolly does not write about music or SA programs but in his discussion he includes ‘radio features’, which are broadcast by TLR from time to time. As he makes a broad sweep of ABC art programs and their history, much of what he writes about is relevant to this thesis.

1.6.3 Australian Composers and SA
1.6.3.1 Andrew McLennan. A brief topology of Australian sound art and experimental broadcasting, in Continuum Vol 8, No 1, 1994, p. 302-317.
Andrew McLennan, whose name appears frequently throughout this thesis, was a founding member and executive producer of TLR in 1988. He has had extensive experience in the production of SA in radio and other media, which has brought him in contact with a wide range of composers, artists and performers. My statistics show that during the ten-year period commencing 1988 McLennan produced approximately 25% of all pieces put to air by TLR producers. More details of his career with the ABC, which commenced in 1971 and continues at the time of writing, are given below at 3.2.3.
McLennan’s survey of SA and experimental broadcasting in Australia is largely based on his work at the ABC in TLR and the earlier program *Surface Tension* (ST) and the resultant personal contact with the people involved. My records show that all the composers and performers named by McLennan in his article (with the exception of Percy Grainger) have had contact with the SA area of the ABC, usually with McLennan as the producer of one of their compositions. From that contact, I believe, flows his knowledge of their compositions in general and also his knowledge of a particular composition or an event.

As a result, the topology described by McLennan (which would include also his experience in associated areas, e.g. theatre and performance) embraces a wide field. For example, he identifies sound produced by naïve components assembled to make complex contraptions (such as those of Percy Grainger and Ernie Althoff), by interaction between dancer and machine (e.g. the compositions of Greg Schiemer), by the action of wind on telegraph wires and fences (Allan Lamb’s work is an example of this); he calls attention to the work of groups, such as the *Machine for Making Sense*, and to the sound sculptures of Les Gilbert; McLennan writes about sound collages and installations, giving the names of composers who work in these fields. The article points out many aspects of SA in Australia, always associated with the names of the composers and performers involved. However, it is a topography and McLennan does not

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7 Percy Grainger (1896-1960) Australian composer with a wide range of interests, including building instruments and collecting English folk-songs.
8 Ernie Althoff (b. 1950) a Melbourne based sound artist and instrument builder.
9 Greg Schiemer (b. 1949) Australian composer and electronic instrument designer and builder.
10 Allan Lamb (b. 1944) is an environmental sound artist.
11 *The Machine for Making Sense* is a group of composers and performers based in Sydney.
12 Les Gilbert (1946) specialises in sound installations and multi-media design. He owns the Melbourne company *Sound Design Studio* and has worked in overseas countries including Japan and the USA.
13 There is more about ‘installations’ at Chapter 2, section 1 below.
go below the surface by way of, for example, value judgements or aesthetic appraisals; McLennan’s writing about Australian SA composers and their compositions is descriptive in nature rather than critical. In this way it contrasts with my own writing in which I have taken both a descriptive and critical viewpoint.

The history of SA in Australia is piecemeal, being contained in journals, proceedings of meetings, conferences, books and so on, and in the compositions themselves. There is no single volume in which this data has been filtered, selected and presented as history. McLennan, writing from the position of a major producer in the broadcasting of SA in Australia and with the ability to view his experience in SA broadcasting from an historical perspective (which, I find, is also demonstrated in his internal reports) has documented a part of that history.

I read McLennan’s article within a year or two of its publication at a time when I was trying to relate various theoretical aspects of music, including SA, to particular Australian compositions or composers. As part of this effort I had, for some time, been categorising Australian composers and their works under subjects such as ‘Australian countryside’, ‘Social issues’, ‘Country towns’ etc. I was able to use the reference points of McLennan’s topology as a guide in identifying likely candidates for categorisation. However, in an important way, it also acted as an incentive, perhaps by its own brevity, for me to go further in the study of the SA of Australia. In this thesis I have therefore commented on and given examples of works by Australian composers, carried out detailed analyses of composition structure, examined the conditions of composers working in Australia and their relationship with major broadcasters in Australia and overseas, and what I believe to be other important aspects of their work. In the process of doing this I think that I have demonstrated the shortcomings of existing literature on Australian SA and perhaps provided motivation for others to continue research in the area.
I was present at the function marking the release of *Noise, Water, Meat* and read it soon afterwards. Although I do not call directly on the book in the course of writing this thesis, I believe it to be an important publication and that Kahn has added significantly to the history of sound. I do not know of any other book that deals with the subject of sound across the arts during the early to mid-Twentieth Century in developed countries in the northern hemisphere. Furthermore, Kahn is a well-respected academic in his field and probably wrote a good part of the book during his time in Australia; many of his acknowledgments go to people with whom he worked in Sydney and Melbourne and about whom I write in the course of this thesis. Therefore I have included it in this section of my work.

In the book Kahn charts the history of sound in the arts from about the end of the Nineteenth Century until the 1950s, with a few strands running into the 1960s. He focuses geographically on the arts of Europe and the USA.

In the opening chapters of the book Kahn traces the course of sound in European arts until about the mid-1940s. Initially he deals with the history of sound in cabaret and theatre, starting before the war of 1914-18 with reference to the Futurists and Dadaists, and Marinetti and Huelsenbaeck and the influences of the war itself. In describing the growing interest by composers in natural sounds as music, Kahn introduces the concept of ‘the line’ which seems to be many things, starting by representing a boundary between non-musical noise, i.e. sound of no particular pitch or continuity, and musical noise such as used by Pierre Schaeffer in *musique concrète*. The line’ is also traced by a stylus on a rotating smoked cylinder, showing a waveform of sound, or the path of the needle as it follows or makes a track on the rotating disc, as in both reproducing and recording sound. Thus technology is introduced and its effects followed until the time of John Cage, when Kahn moves the scene to the USA.
In regard to the centre sections of the book, an unnamed reviewer writes:

...the artistic hero of the book is John Cage, whose monumental works with water provide the theme for the central portion of the book. Kahn devotes considerable energy to arguing that Cage’s Water Music of 1952 was at least as revolutionary as his silent pieces.\textsuperscript{14}

In the USA it was a time for water in the arts, with Jackson Pollock dripping paint, the birth of the group \textit{Fluxus}, variations on the theme of urination, including a cry for urine in a variety of colours, and so on. Kahn writes in this vein on pages 279 ff.

In the third part of the book, ‘Meat’, Kahn forms a construct of ‘body’, and, through reference and metaphor, links the writings of William Burrows, Michael McClure and Antonin Artaud (including Burrows’s audiotape experiments, which he does not elaborate). He writes about the ‘body’ being infected by viruses and develops similes and metaphors to explore links between writers Burrows, Ginsberg and Hubbard. He draws heavily on Burrows’s concept of the sound of ‘schlupping’, as could be caused by the drawing of innards out of the human body, to develop a relationship between body and sound.

The final chapter of the book is concerned with a close examination of the writings of Artaud, particularly those about theatre, or those in which implications relating to theatre can be found, including his madness and the help he experienced from Chinese acupuncture to treat his numerous complaints. Kahn alludes frequently to sounds made by various parts of the body and relates them to Artaud’s disabilities and writings. He also asserts that the points in his body nominated by Artaud for treatment by his acupuncturist were also those related to human behaviour, such as screaming, and in this way creates links between Artaud’s body and his art.

\textsuperscript{14} Publisher’s Weekly, Sept 6, 1999. v246 i36, p89. Full Text, Copyright 1999 Cahners Business Information.
In my view Noise, Water, Meat is not ‘A History of Sound in the Arts’ as the second part of its title claims. It is a detailed and highly-researched account of aspects of sound in the arts in Europe and North America. Under the heading ‘Explanations and Qualifications’, on page 14, Kahn acknowledges the fact that there are gaps in his work when he writes: ‘In fact, there is still much work to be done on all the activities that fall squarely within the focus of the book’.

If one were to consider qualifying the second part of the title, the fact, for example, that Kahn does not deal with Afro-American art would have to be noted. Perhaps, as Kahn recognises such absences, criticism of the book’s claim to be a ‘history’ is not justified.

As mentioned above John Cage is the hero of the book, particularly in the section named ‘Water’, and I would add Antonin Artaud, who never visited the USA, to be the hero of Chapter 12 through the influence of his writings. Kahn quotes from Artaud’s To have done with the judgment of God, Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society, The Tiger’s Eye, The Theater and its double and Seven Short Poems, to name a few.

Noise, Water, Meat is not an easy book to read but I find in the last two sections some of Kahn’s clearest and most incisive writings. He is writing of detailed research into art, writing and music, of a period in American history that was active and fertile. Reactions between composers, artists and writers are linked by Kahn in a way that discloses cause and effect; the characters involved are presented as an experimental and productive community.

Several reviewers refer to Kahn’s difficult style of presentation: ‘Kahn’s research is impressive and his presentation thorough and precise. Although
certainly not for the casual reader, this volume will be an asset to scholarly and academic collections.\textsuperscript{15}

And, a little less kindly:

As for the ‘meat’ part of the title, it comes from another source of theoretical inspiration to Kahn, William Burroughs’s idea of ‘schlupping’, defined as the sound of ‘soft innards being sucked out of a body’, which is how the reader may feel attempting to get through this incisive but difficult book.\textsuperscript{16}

For my own part I found Kahn’s imagery and extended metaphors confusing at times. For example, he draws heavily on the metaphor of ‘the line’, as mentioned above, which can be several, and at times unrelated, things.

There is a wealth of references throughout \textit{Noise, Meat, Water} which gives it significant value as a research document. However the ‘footnoting’ system employed by Kahn is neither the traditional style nor the Harvard style, but one in which a number in the text refers to Notes at the back of the book. This, together with the absence of a bibliography, can make it difficult to locate references.

\textit{Noise, Meat, Water} is, I believe, a well-researched and penetrating book on the recent history of sound in the arts, but it is not easy to read.

\textbf{1.6.3.3} Bandt, Ros. (2001) \textit{Sound Sculpture, Intersections in Sound and Sculpture In Australian Artworks}. Fine Arts Press: Sydney. \textit{Sound Sculpture} is a beautifully presented book, with text, diagrams and many full-page colour photographs. An audio CD of 1 hour 12 minutes duration is located inside the back cover.

\textsuperscript{15} Binkowski, Carol J, \textit{Library Journal}, 1 October, 1999 v124i16 p96. Full Text, Copyright 1999 Cahners Business Information.

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Publisher’s Weekly}, op. cit.
The Preface opens with these words:

Sound sculpture has been as ubiquitous as it is varied and ephemeral. It has always defined its own context and sought out appropriate venues. What tradition there has been since the 1950s is based on exploration and experiment, and for that reason this book is deliberately descriptive rather than evaluative...it aims to inform the reader about the nature of the genre by analysing the intersecting streams of aural and visual perception in the particular artworks.

In both the Preface and the Introduction Bandt writes about sound sculpture in a practical and discursive way that would inform and interest a perceiver/listener new to the art form.

The sections that follow are titled:

I PLACE AS ACOUSTIC SPACE
II SONIC OBJECTS
III TIME AND MOTION
IV HUMAN ENGAGEMENT
V INSTALLATIONS
VI SPATIAL SOUND DESIGN AND SPATIAL MUSIC

Of these chapters, the first is of greatest relevance to this thesis, as a number of the SA composers discussed here incorporate environmental or found sound recordings, with their contingent relatedness to the spaces in which the recordings were made, as elements of their works.

It can be difficult to find one’s way around this book: the print is small and the labelling of photos and diagrams is not always clear. However the recorded sounds are presented excellently on the audio CD that accompanies the book. The tracks were chosen to illustrate the material of each chapter and they are presented in the Track List on page 160 sequentially under each chapter heading.
In the process of creating some of her sound sculptures Ros Bandt has discovered, created and captured sounds that do not need the presence of visual information to appeal to a listener. The sounds of some of her sculptures, and also those of other sculptors described in this book, have been part of TLR programs from time to time during my 10-year listing of the programs as shown at Appendix 10. One piece in particular, titled *Mungo*, including the way it came about being created, is described in this thesis.


Broadstock took on a huge task in the preparation of this book. It is made up of short biographies of over 100 composers and a short essay by 35 of them under the heading of ‘Why composers Compose’. In terms of the period of composer activity reviewed, Broadstock nominates the period of 1972 to 1992 in his introduction to Part A, Section One, titled ‘Rites of Passage - 1972-1992’.

In his Preface Professor Warren Bebbington of Melbourne University refers to the lack of basic Australian music reference works, and continues with these words: ‘...while proposed Australian music dictionaries or histories are bravely announced from time to time, few have yet come to fruition...’ Professor Bebbington also bemoans the fact that many of Australia’s best scholarly minds have ‘...buried themselves in the remote past or the European present, rather than offer insights to the music on their own doorstep’.

Under the heading of ‘Rites of Passage – 1972-1992’ referred to above, Broadstock writes an Introduction of some 18 pages which is effectively a brief review of the effects of the policies of the Whitlam Government on the development of music in Australia. These policies took effect during the review period and are an important feature in this book.
'Sound Ideas' is designed as a reference book of Australian composers of a particular period. It could be a helpful starting point for a student or researcher wishing to study a specific period or subject within the period.

For biographical material, Broadstock drew on the archives of the Australian music Centre and personal correspondence with the composers themselves.

While the book presents a broad survey of Australian composers, its relevance in this thesis is limited by the fact that few of the composers discussed have focused on SA in their work.


In the Author’s Preface to this book, Jenkins writes:

The 22 composers represented in this book, while in no sense constituting a school or movement, belong to a generation which has emerged since the 1960s and, collectively, they have been connected with most of the major breakthroughs in New Music that have taken place in this country for the last two decades.

Jenkins goes on to write:

Their sources range all the way from non-western and Early Music, to music theatre and electronic and computer music. Some composers have embraced a vigorous ad-hocism, exploring the possibilities of low-tech tape recorders, found sounds, collage and surreptitious quotations. Many have incorporated environmental sounds into the composition of both urban and non-urban soundscapes, or have employed everyday objects, toy instruments and inexpensive mechanical and electronic devices as sound sources.

These descriptions of compositional style, written by Jenkins in 1988, resonate clearly with those of compositions broadcast by TLR, so it is not
unexpected that works by 18 of the 22 composers in the book have been broadcast by TLR in the 10 year period from 1988 to 1997.\footnote{See Appendix 10. The missing composers are Colin Offord, Philip Brophy, Caroline Wilkins and Chris Knowles.}

The book consists of the presentation of a biography of each composer, and these are revealing in their depth; throughout the book they are sharp and detailed, usually running to 7 or 8 pages, including a photo portrait and other visual material. Amongst other things, Jenkins points out that ‘...[the] cultural/critical focus is ...the main concern of some work presented here’ and comments that, interestingly, four of the composers gained their first experience of Australia at Bonegille migrant camp and that a significant proportion were connected with either La Trobe university or Melbourne’s Clifton hill Community Music Centre.

Jenkins’ research has principally been of composers in NSW and Victoria during the period up to 1988; through biographies of selected composers he has made a vital contribution to the history of the development of experimental and innovative music in Australia. It is of particular relevance to this thesis for those reasons.

A book in similar vein dealing with the period from 1988 to the present time would help fill a gap in the history of music in Australia.
1.6.4 Corporate and Artistic Culture


*Rationalizing Culture* became important to me as an examplar at a time when I was seeking a way to present a research thesis of TLR as an element within the institution of the ABC. As one aspect of my thesis I was interested in researching the world culture of SA, using TLR as a point of focus; I found it intriguing that a relatively esoteric genre of music could develop into a worldwide community. I believed that my research could be structured as a piece of cultural anthropology and so involve a study of TLR as a member of the culture of SA along with a study of SA as the phenomenon (or object) of that culture.

This, I believe, is what Georgina Born has achieved with *Rationalizing Culture*; she has written an anthropological study of IRCAM in the context of that institution’s place in the culture of the musical avant-garde. Her work also displays an informed attitude to, and broad understanding of, modernism and postmodernism both in music and visual arts. Her focus is on the ‘musical avant-garde’ enterprise of IRCAM (particularly with reference to technical developments in electronic sound) set within the context of the culture.

In the opening paragraph of the opening chapter of the book Born writes:

> Although the basic analytical approach and ethnographic method of this study are drawn from anthropology, its object is unusual for anthropology, which has been little concerned with studying the powerful intellectual groups or specialist institutions of western culture. In general, there is an absence of empirical social research on contemporary high culture and cultural institutions, on cultural production, and, specifically, on these in regard to serious music.

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18 The letters IRCAM stand for ‘Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique’. It is located in Paris and funded by the French Government. Pierre Boulez was head of the organisation at the time Born wrote her book.
In his review of the book, George E Marcus writes:

Georgina Born’s study of Pierre Boulez’s institution devoted to avant-garde music in Paris, IRCAM...is an extraordinarily energetic and fascinating exemplar of an ethnography, focussed on institutional life, that takes up the challenge of engaging fully with a broad range of issues and debates that define its contexts of significance.¹⁹

The ‘broad range of issues and debates’ includes matters of aesthetic judgements and technical developments, but as is to be expected in a review for an anthropological journal, Marcus’s focus is on ‘methodological strategies’ employed by Born, and the gradual development in anthropological study of institutional life and associated sciences. It was in the field of ‘methodological strategies’ where I identified elements that were relevant to my work, in particular what Born calls ‘IRCAM’S condition of existence’, the sub-title to Chapter III.

For example, in that chapter Born traces the growth of the structure of IRCAM from the mid-1970s (i.e. before its opening in 1977) with particular reference to its computer music facility and the part played by Max Mathews, who had been director of Bell Telephone Laboratories’ Acoustic Research department and became IRCAM’s first Scientific Director. Born describes both the positive and negative aspects of the growth in IRCAM’s computing capacity under Mathews, illustrating it by reference to people, specific items of equipment, conversations and anecdotes, in the process building a layered account of its structure, growth and function in an interesting and coherent manner. There are similar examples throughout the book: Born reporting conversations and illustrative episodes, quoting detail from her diary notes and reaching conclusions. It was a style that I believed could be useful when examining the institution of the ABC and an approach that is evident in the example that I summarise here from my writing and in the chapters that follow. The example is taken from Chapter

3 below, commencing at section 3.2 ‘The Arts Unit and its programs’, relating to the factors surrounding the formation of a new production group, known as the Arts Unit:

In the introduction to 3.2, I write about what I perceive to be the then positive attitude of ABC arts management to production development, including possible internal re-organisation, evidenced by management’s funding approval of visits from overseas producers and overseas visits by ABC arts production staff. Added to this was the acceptance by high levels of management of a ‘program-led’ policy of development, as recognition of specific cultural communication skills resident in production staff.

In the following section, 3.2.2, I write about encouragement given to the wide arts culture both by government rhetoric and substantially increased funding of arts institutions based on my research into ‘the Whitlam years’, and in 3.2.3 I write about the factors that gave rise to personal motivation of the four producers directly involved in the formation of a new production unit, which is information derived from interviews. The main factors I identified here were career development and confidence engendered by the internal and external arts environment.

These factors, which I put forward as the impetus for proposing and forming the Arts Unit, were brought to light by the culturally informed research strategy that I adopted in selecting, developing and analysing the appropriate material.

Born’s book helped in defining the methodology of my approach to this thesis. I concluded that my research would be informed by cultural considerations wherever I found them relevant to the particular topic but my methods, as outlined at 1.4 above, would not necessarily be led by such considerations. I was particularly aware of the importance of observing the tenets of cultural study, as much of my data would emerge from interviews and conversations with the people who constitute the culture of SA. However, I was concerned to ensure that SA, the object of the culture, was
adequately dealt with by explication and presentation, and that the history of the ABC and TLR was researched in the detail that would be necessary to prove my thesis; I wanted to observe cultural considerations whilst pursuing that proof.

In this way I modified my original thought of researching TLR largely as a study of the culture of SA as outlined in the first paragraph of this section.

1.6.4.2 Schedvin, C.B. ‘The Culture of CSIRO’, in *Australian Cultural History*, No.2, 1982/83, (S.L.Goldberg & F.B.Smith (eds)).

Under the general heading of ‘Institutions and culture in Australia’ this paper deals with the culture of the CSIRO from the time of its foundation as the Institute of Science and Industry in 1920. I found it an absorbing paper, with a strong historical and cultural emphasis.

Schedvin writes about the formation of the Institute of Science and Industry, the precursor of the CSIRO, in 1920. Progress under an initial structure was impeded by each state’s involvement in research through its universities, but, prompted in part by Germany’s success during the 1930s in linking research and industrial development, a new structure was sought for the national research institution. A structure was finally decided for the institution that gave its control to scientists, whose decisions would be subject to ministerial approval but not control. The history of these structural developments was of particular interest to me as I was looking for parallels with the ABC, which then had not long been formed and was to go through its own reorganisation at a later date.

The nature of the culture of the organisation, according to Schedvin, was broadly determined by two factors: the classical norms of science, and the professional experience and personality of its chief executive officer. The predominant classical norms of science are ascribed by Schedvin to autonomy and rationality. Whilst I believe that the culture of an organisation is strongly linked to the chief executive, I searched in vain, in an attempt to find similarities with the ABC, for any classical norms of
broadcasting. In the course of my searching it seemed likely to me that the commercialisation of radio had destroyed the possible development of any norms of broadcasting, but perhaps that was being unfair to broadcasting, an infant compared to science. Considering that organised scientific investigation could be said to exist from the time of the Alexandrian school, around 300 BC, perhaps norms of broadcasting will develop with the passage of time; perhaps a culture of broadcasting will emerge with its internal communications and critique, and a common understanding of meanings. Later in this thesis I draw together some of the threads that connect world-wide broadcasters of SA; likewise, essences of commonality may exist worldwide between broadcasters of other radio genres. Eventually ‘classical norms’ of broadcasting may emerge; perhaps they are there now and I cannot see them.

Schedvin also gives examples of the extent to which government has intervened in the running of the CSIRO, a subject that is of significance in the development of the ABC and is mentioned in Chapter 3 below.

The two organisations, the CSIRO and the ABC, have similarities in their structure, but I reached the conclusion that the ABC operates in such public view, with such attendant political implications, that whatever the internal structure, problems would continually emerge in its operations. This is due, I believe, to the method of choosing ABC Board members, which is now done by the government in power, and should be changed so as to be as remote from political influence as feasible, a matter, I think, that is outside the scope of our present discussion.


In a review of this book, John Frith, of the John Logie Baird Centre at the University of Strathclyde, writes:

> What makes his [John Shepherd’s] work so original is that he approaches the social study of music as a musicologist. His concern is
music as an organization of sounds, and in writing a sociology of sound Shepherd places music firmly on the agenda of cultural studies themselves.  

Of particular interest to me when I read this comment in the mid-1990s were the words ‘music as an organization of sounds’, implying the absence of distinction between SA and music in the conventional sense. Another distinction, this time of a cultural nature, is removed by Shepherd when, on pages 216 and 217, he quotes Catherine Ellis:

(music) can bridge various thought processes; it is concerned with the education of the whole person; it can stimulate inter-cultural understanding at a deeply personal level, with the result that a person is no longer solely a member of one culture.  

Shepherd goes on to write:

To summarise Ellis’ argument, such cross-cultural learning can occur because music is capable of transcending individual cultures, not by constituting some kind of culture-free, universal language, as is often claimed in the West, but by constituting, informing and reflecting culture-specific realities in a way that escapes the prison of denotative and referential modes of signification...Music, as sound, cannot help but stress the integrative and relational in human life, that is, the way in which we are all in constant and dynamic touch with the world.

For me, these passages and their supporting arguments in Shepherd’s book cast light on concerns that I had at the time as regards non-trivial relationships between western European art music and SA, and the question as to whether experiential references in sound could resonate between cultures. The book helped in my study of SA as a genre of music and in my developing a deeper perception of the social relevance of SA.

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20 Frith, Simon. Outside back cover of Music as Social Text. There are no other details.
1.6.5 Composers and Artistic Culture


This book was published originally in 1872, shortly after Nietzsche’s appointment to the Chair of Philology at the University of Basle, in Switzerland. The main reasons, I believe, that Nietzsche wrote the book were these: his friendship and admiration for Richard Wagner, a desire to make his support for Wagner known in academic circles, and a desire to publish his thoughts on some fundamentals of ancient Greek Art. It is from the last of these that Nietzsche developed his theory of art, which he later applied directly to music, hence my reason for citing the book in the current context.

There are two assertions that underlie Nietzsche’s philosophy of music: that music speaks directly to the human mind, and that ‘folk-music’ is a basic form of human communication, pre-dating speech.

Nietzsche’s theory of art was developed from the confluence of the Greek gods, Apollo, the ‘patron’ of poetry and music, and Dionysus, the ‘patron’ of ecstasy. Between Apollo, the creator of images and Dionysus the forgetting-of-self, there exists a tension that leads to a fluctuating ecstasy in the presence of a work of art. From the guardianship of these gods Nietzsche develops a philosophy of music that resonates with the experience of listening and which I have found can be constructive in musical dialogue.

A fuller reading of Nietzsche’s philosophy has led me to the conclusion that it is suited to many genres of music, including SA. And I am reassured in this opinion as I can well believe that an early form of ‘folk-music’ as human communication was the imitation of sounds of nature.
1.6.5.2 James Tenney. (1992) META+HODOS and META Meta+Hodos.
Frog Peak Music: Hanover, USA.

According to the publisher’s introduction to the book, the first paper, named ‘META+HODOS’ (MH) was presented as a master’s thesis by Tenney at the University of Illinois, at Champaign-Urbana in 1961. The second paper, ‘META Meta+Hodos’ (MMH) ‘represents an attempt to organize certain ideas first presented in MH in 1961, incorporating insights and revisions that have emerged since then’. It was first published in the *Journal of Experimental Aesthetics*, Vol 1 No.1, 1977.

Again, in the introduction to the book the publisher states that the two separate papers, published initially some 16 years apart, were published by Frog Peak under the one cover as ‘an attempt to make these two seminal theoretical documents available to a larger community of artists’.

In his master’s thesis Tenney wrote about basic changes that he had perceived in the composition of much of the music of the Twentieth Century. For example, a trend in composition since the early part of that century had been a change in the function of the melodic line (i.e. the parameter of pitch variation) in that pitch need not be the parameter around which the structure of the music was formed. Tenney pointed out that in some of the music of the 1960s the parameters of rhythm, texture, volume, duration and density, for example, could all be used by the composer to identify the structure of a composition. As a result the older language of discourse on theory and concept was inadequate to handle modern practice, and terms such as ‘atonal’ and ‘athematic’ were being used in analytical and descriptive approaches to the music, thus saying what the music was *not* rather than what it was.

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22 Tenney, James, preface to *MMH*, p.100.

23 A corollary of this statement is that as all sound observes these parameters to a greater or lesser extent, all sound must be recognised as a possible component of music.
At the time of his thesis presentation Tenney had either written or was writing several tape pieces using manipulated recorded sounds and was immersed in the writings and music of John Cage. He had also studied acoustics, electronics and information theory at the University of Illinois. Tenney’s purpose in developing his theories was centred around perception and analysis. In the Preface to MMH he writes:

The writing was initially motivated by the desire to provide an outline of my ideas and terminology for use by students in a class of Formal Perception and Analysis at the California Institute of Arts.

Clearly Tenney’s theory was developed as a listening and analytical practice, but as the theory develops Tenney writes more of applying it to compositional practice, and discusses the generation of algorithms and models for that purpose. It is clear also that his thesis is applicable to all forms of organised sound.

In the introduction to Section 1 of MH, Tenney gives three quotations that are an indication of his motivations and the path he was to follow:

- A good description of a phenomenon may by itself rule out a number of theories and indicate definite features which a true theory must possess. We call this kind of observation ‘phenomenology’. a word which means...as naive (sic) and full a description of direct experience as possible.24

- ...one must be convinced of the infallibility of one’s own fantasy and one must believe in one’s own inspiration. Nevertheless, the desire for a conscious control of the new means and forms will arise in every artist’s mind, and he will know consciously the laws that govern the forms which he has conceived ‘as in a dream’. Strongly convincing as this dream may have been, the conviction that these new sounds obey the laws of nature and our manner of thinking...forces the composer along the road of exploration.25

The first step in the direction of beauty is to understand the frame and scope of the imagination, to comprehend the act itself of esthetic (sic) apprehension.

The first quotation, which is from the writings of Kurt Koffka, introduces us to phenomenology, on which Gestalt psychology draws strongly and which Tenney turns to when developing the rules for construction of the building-blocks and features of musical perception. For example, he names the smallest building-block a ‘clang’ and defines it as follows:

CLANG: A sound or sound-configuration which is perceived as a primary musical unit or aural gestalt. The clang-concept constitutes the nucleus and core-in fact, the essential ‘heart and soul’ of the entire ‘conceptual framework’ proposed in this book.

In the second quotation Schoenberg is speaking for the composer when he writes that for him to express his inspiration properly he must know the rules of the means that he chooses for that musical expression. The definition above of the term ‘clang’ is one of 38 that Tenney develops in the course of describing excerpts from the compositions of late Twentieth Century composers. These definitions and their relationships are the laws, I believe, relating to the ‘new means and forms’ that will guide composers in their ‘explorations’.

The third quotation comes in the early part of quite a long dissertation by James Joyce on beauty. He is saying that the first step in the appreciation of beauty is to understand the nature of imagination, thus coming to a perception of the aesthetic experience itself. In my view of this book I see that it is logical, and both pragmatic and inventive, but I do not find much, if any, reference to aesthetic concerns or ‘the act...of esthetic apprehension’. It seems possible to me that, in quoting the passage, Tenney is referring indirectly to Gestalt psychology, the backbone of his theory, which may itself offer theories as to how combinations of sounds could creatively affect the imagination.

My principal interest in Tenney’s two papers that constitute the book lies in his development of a vocabulary that could be used in the discussion and possible formal analysis of SA. The present lack of such a vocabulary leads to a dependence on the vocabulary of conventional music with consequent inaccuracies and confusing descriptions, or a clumsy, circumlocutory style of writing. In 2.4.2 below there are examples of how the composer Ion Pearce could not avoid the use of conventional musical terms when writing of his own music, despite his expressed intention of doing so. When writing about the sounds of Pearce’s composition 5EP at 2.5 below I adopted a 'stream-of-consciousness' approach, and related images that formed in my imagination to the sounds that were occurring at the time. This process resulted in a CD synchronising text, sound and ‘voice-over’. In this way I carried out a form of analysis by linking the contribution of my own imagination to cause and effect without recourse to technical or descriptive musical terms.

Within the context of my research at the ABC I observed instances where a vocabulary for SA could be helpful, one such being the ‘on air’ presentation of TLR program items. Scriptwriters would probably benefit from being able to use terms descriptive of, and specific to, acoustic compositions. In the same way, for example, TLR executive producer Robyn Ravlich could find it easier to put proposals to management.

It appears that there are no subsequent publications by Tenney on the subject of a vocabulary of music although I understand\textsuperscript{27} that his theories are taught at a number of universities in the USA. His publisher, Frog Peak, regularly receives orders in class quantities from college bookstores for this book and has made numerous reprints. James Tenney now occupies the Roy E. Disney Family Chair of Musical Composition at Calarts\textsuperscript{28}.

\textsuperscript{27} Information by email from agent Music Matrix, Ca, to the author dated March 14, 2003.

\textsuperscript{28}California Institute of the Arts inc. 1961, Santa Clarita, California. 
http://www.calarts.edu/schools/music/faculty/tenney.html
It is arguable, I think, that one of the reasons why there is a dearth of critical writing about SA is that there is no vocabulary suitable for its presentation.

1.6.5.3 Gaston Bachelade. (1988) *The right to dream*. The Bachelade Translations, tr. J.A. Underwood, The Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture: USA.

I read this book some years ago and noted the section *Reverie and Radio* for later reading. Initially, I found Bachelard’s metaphorical style of expression bewildering and some of his terms ambiguous, e.g. ‘psyche’ and ‘the unconscious’. However, although its initial publication was in 1970, I see *Reverie and Radio* as a poignant comment on the qualities of radio, broadcast program content and listening experience, that applies to the broadcasting world of today.

Bachelard proposes\(^{29}\) *logosphere* as the name of the universe we inhabit with radio; his proposals, suppositions and discourse take place in this universe. Radio, he says, is not merely a function for transmitting news: ‘it must seek principles of originality in the depths of human nature’, i.e. it must engage the listener’s imagination. Then he avers that radio must find a way of bringing the ‘unconscioueses’ of listeners into communication so that ‘a certain universality’ can be found. The central problem is posed in a question:

> is it possible to set aside radio time and develop subjects for radio aimed at the unconscious, which can then find the principle of reverie on every wavelength? \(^{30}\)

This sounds very practical until one wonders what he means by ‘reverie’ and what are the implications of ‘every wavelength’. When Bachelard writes of ‘reverie’ I think he means opening the mind, a banishment of every-day thoughts, the prelude to a dream, perhaps the dream itself. He writes

\(^{29}\) p.167  
\(^{30}\) p.168
He believes reverie, imagination and reason combine to be the creative forces of knowledge, but by 'knowledge' he probably means many things. When he writes 'on every wavelength' I think he is sustaining the metaphor of radio and means 'throughout the universe'.

This process of deriving my own interpretation of Bachelard's meanings brings to light aspects of SA and radio of today. For instance he writes, 'Some call signs are a pain and torment to the ear; they grind their way into the unconscious...' A good description of some of the radio of today, I am sure.

Two sentences later he writes:

It is through the unconscious, then, that this solidarity among the citizens of the logosphere sharing the same values, the same will to gentleness and the same will to dream, can find its realization.

This could be a description of the world culture of SA in which there is a sharing of meanings by the citizens. When Bachelade writes of 'will to gentleness' I think that he is referring to the desire to escape from the clamour that is a 'torment to the ear', or perhaps just every-day life; 'the same will to dream' I think means listeners with the same aesthetic interest.

Bachelard writes about putting listeners 'in a house, a corner of a house, in some nook...' so that they may be taught and reached by reverie. Here, I believe he is thinking about the private space that can be created for the listener by radio, a subject that arises in this thesis at the Introduction to Chapter 2. He does not use the term 'sound space' or 'listening room'; he quotes from Henri Bachelin's book Le vieux serviteur where Bachelin writes of how he would imagine entering a coalman's hut, where he had everything he needed for security, happiness and shelter.
There he would dream and imagine things far removed from his day-to-day life. In Bachelard’s logosphere he asks the listener to ‘dream of a home, an interior’:

We can recall him to his memories of childhood. But it is not a question of regressing, of returning to buried and forgotten joys. It is a question of showing the listener little by little the essence of inward reverie.31

There are many statements by Bachelard that at first sight seem fanciful, but with an interpretation that comes from a growing acquaintance with his mind and metaphorical style of expression, the reader may grasp their inner message.

At the conclusion of Reverie and Radio Bachelard refers in these terms to the ‘psychic radio engineer’, whom he has working in the logosphere alongside the radio engineer:

And if our psychic radio engineers are poets concerned for the welfare of mankind, tenderness of heart, the joy of loving and love’s voluptuous trust, then they will lay on splendid nights for their listeners.32

A direct call, surely, for all SA composers, radio producers and sound engineers.

1.7 SUMMARY
As will be seen in Chapter 2, in which I define SA, and Chapter 3 and beyond, discussing the ABC and TLR, my thesis topic and the way that I have gone about proving it have resulted in my writing taking on an historical character and becoming part of the history of the ABC; what I

32 p.172
have written is also part of the history of the development of sound art in Australia and the World, with the ABC and TLR located within it.
Chapter 2
Chapter 2

Sound Art and TLR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Radio sound art, and particularly compositions that have been broadcast by TLR, are the main focus of this thesis. However, there is a broad, worldwide base of sound art that constitutes the culture of which TLR is a member, and understands and is informed by its meanings.

There are obviously many composers worldwide, past and present, who are part of this culture. They must be recognised on the wide stage, and some are briefly acknowledged here as figures in the background of my topic. Within the group are some whose works are either composed for, or can be realised through the medium of radio and others whose works are not specifically composed for radiophonic presentation. As examples, some key works and their composers who belong in the first group are *Imaginary Landscapes No. 4 for 12 radios and 24 performers* by John Cage (1951), *Visage* by Luciano Berio (1957), *Hymnen* (1960) and *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1955-56) by Karlheinz Stockhausen and *Public Supply I* by Max Neuhaus (1966). Also within the group is French experimenter and teacher Pierre Schaeffer who, in 1949, made a significant contribution to the development of SA through his *musique concrète*, a compositional style in which he tape-recorded and manipulated natural sounds. Examples in the second group are the live performance work *Imaginary Landscapes No. 4 for 12 radios and 24 performers* by John Cage (1951), *Vibrespace* by Henri Chopin (1963), *She was a visitor* by Robert Ashley (1964), *Danger Music No. 14* by Dick Higgins (1962) and *I am sitting in a room* by Alvin Lucier (1970).
In relation to terms specific to my thesis, ‘sound art’ is used throughout to describe a certain kind of radio presentation. Other descriptive terms could be used, such as ‘radiophonics’, ‘acoustic art’, ‘sound feature’, ‘ars acoustica’, and titles such as ‘radio documentary’, ‘installation’, ‘radio drama’ to make classifications within some umbrella description. However, as my thesis topic is the radio program TLR, I am taking the position that every program item broadcast by TLR from its first program in January 1988 to the present time is a piece of sound art. In the course of writing I also use terms such as ‘documentary’ or ‘narrative’, but I do so to describe a form within the constructed genre of TLR’s sound art. As TLR is a radio broadcast, neither do I think it necessary, for our purposes, to describe its programs as constituting ‘Radio’ Sound Art unless it is to distinguish them from other forms of sound art, for example, installations. (see below in this section) The term ‘Radio’ sound art implies that a finished form of the work exists in a recorded format and that the aim of the recording is to produce the realisation of that composition.

Whilst the stance that I take, in defining all TLR programs as examples of this ‘radio’ form of SA, could be viewed as avoiding the perhaps hazardous task of developing a definition, I do not believe that it is an unreasonable one. TLR has, of course, no monopoly on SA in Australia or the world, however I believe there is a common understanding among composers and producers as to whether a particular composition is or is not a piece of sound art. One approach in Australia to such an understanding may be brought about by the question ‘Would TLR broadcast the piece?’ So perhaps the matter of definition is governed by the practice of those who pay for and expose the piece to their public. As I shall show in the following chapters, TLR is the only national series broadcaster of its kind in Australia. It commissions works for broadcast and also provides technical facilities and skilled producers to work with composers. I therefore believe that TLR is a major figure in the culture of SA and its programs must have a significant influence on defining it. In any case, I am not asserting that sound art does not exist outside TLR broadcasts, what I am saying is that sound art exists within all TLR program pieces.
Having described SA in terms of compositions that TLR broadcasts, it may be useful to consider the styles of composition that TLR does not broadcast.

In a broad sense it is possible to argue that everything broadcast by radio is ‘sound art’, in that, whatever processes may be navigated before transmission, the end result is what comes out of the listener’s radio, that is, sound. If we narrow the focus by excluding such items as news and sports broadcasts and include only those productions that fall within the gamut of an ‘artefact’, then we enter the more manageable spectrum of artistic endeavours (that are relevant to radio broadcasting) e.g. music, literature, poetry, talks, theatre, documentary and so on: the type of broadcast that would normally be produced by the various arts sectors of the ABC. Now the matter is more one of self-regulation in that the specialist groups set up to produce in the arts area usually protect their domain; the work ethic forbids poaching. Therefore the most that we can say is that TLR does not broadcast works that, by consensus, fall unambiguously into the domain of another production centre.

There are further observations on this subject in Chapter 5, section 2.2.5 ‘Critical Comments’, dealing with the sometimes blurred boundaries between TLR and New Music Australia (NMA).

A defining element of broadcast sound art resides in the very medium of its communication and I perceive that the quality called on by the SA

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33 Even the exclusion of sports broadcasts is problematic. Andrew McLennan writes: ‘One almost serendipitous precursor to Australian acoustic art can still be heard in the famous test cricket broadcasts transmitted by the ABC in the early days of radio in 1934, 36 and 38. ...these amusing but remarkable broadcasts featured an Australian cricket commentator, not in England observing the match, but in a radio studio in Sydney. His description of the game was based on a sequence of cablegrams sent from England...[t]he sounds of the game were created ball by ball in the studio by the commentator and a sound effects operator.’ McLennan, Andrew. ‘A brief topography of Australian sound art and experimental broadcasting’, in Continuum, Vol.8, No.1, 1994. pp. 302 & 303.
composer in writing for radio is the ability of radio to create its own space, a space which listeners inhabit with their imagination, and leave reality and its bounds outside the door. René Farabet of Radio France wrote about this space:

Is radiophonic space utopian? No. I would suggest that we revive an old neologism of Michel Foucault’s - it is a ‘heterotopic’ space, which is not a space that is nowhere, but a ‘different’ space, a place carved out of reality which is something like a ‘reservation’, apart, whose internal structure is absolutely distinctive, a possible place of impossible meetings, such as...\(^\text{34}\)

Farabet goes on to give illustrations of places and meetings, from which I have selected these:

...a place where one can stitch and unstitch the fabric of reality at will;
...a factory for knitting sound and sense;
...a fringe place, marginal, tangential to my world, situated on the edge of my being, familiar, yet foreign;

Tony MacGregor, executive producer of the ABC program Poetica, is more specific when writing of the ability of sound art to visit people and locales, to visit people in radio space. He writes that ‘...we experience these people and places in our imagination - we enter the world of the subject.’\(^\text{35}\)

The quality described here in several ways is an essential and defining characteristic of radio sound art and is present in the examples that follow. A listener can move into the radio space created by these sounds and can enter, you might say, a listening room.

Moreover, radio has the power to transport a listener virtually, for instance, to a symphony concert. Instead of going to the concert the listener may stay at home and listen to the broadcast, enjoying the music in the aural

\(^{34}\) Farabet, René, Essay The Skins of the Onion, unpublished, in possession of the author.

ambience of the concert hall from the equivalent of the best seat in the house. All that is missing is the sense of occasion that many people appreciate when they actually go to an event.

There are other qualities inherent in radio broadcast and reception that are part of the enhancement of radio sound over recent years. Frequency modulation of the broadcast radio wave provides sound reproduction in the home that is superior to the earlier amplitude modulation. Not only does FM extend the sound frequency range, it also provides stereo sound reception and reduces external electrical interference. The quality of headphones has also been improved with the result that listeners can enjoy the intimate effect of sound ‘in the head’ that headphones create, with no worry about room acoustics or disturbing others.

Thoughts about specific qualities of radio are expressed at various times in the chapters that follow, for example works in which the composer calls upon the unique qualities of radio in the creative process. In this regard I quote Richard Connolly in Chapter 3, section 2.6.1 when he writes about ‘...works that are essentially of the medium’, and an approach ‘...founded in the medium itself’. The quality that Connolly is describing is evasive, but its recognition by the listener evokes a deeper appreciation of the composition in which it occurs.

A form of SA that should be mentioned at this point is the ‘installation’, a piece of SA that is created as a component of an exhibition. The exhibition can take many forms and may contain movement but is usually static itself. As an exhibition is meant to be viewed, the duration of the SA is usually about the length of time taken by a viewer to pass through the exhibition. Sometimes the installation piece is quite long and so specific to the exhibition that it cannot be played out of that context. At other times the composition may be suitable for radio broadcast as it stands or can be modified, perhaps by shortening, to make it suitable for radio broadcast. There are several examples of compositions in the chapters below that were composed for installation and modified for broadcast. A rather reversed
example is *The calling to come* (1995) which was written by Paul Carter for installation at the Museum of Sydney but initially broadcast by TLR, co-commissioner with the Museum of Sydney. It was written purely as text but suitable sound signatures and sound effects were added to the text to make it more interesting for radio. These were preserved in the later sound installation³⁶.

Another example is *Mungo* (1992) which was premiered over West German Radio (WDR) before a studio audience who viewed the composer, Ros Bandt, sitting in a glass-walled room letting desert sand run through her fingers. The composition was shortened for subsequent broadcast. Both *Mungo* and *The calling to come* are included on the compilation CD (see Appendix 2).

The sections that follow in this chapter consist of excerpts on CD from seven pieces of SA, the text below giving a short history and appreciation of each piece. These descriptions are presented to serve the purpose of illuminating the spectrum of SA and are not to be understood as detailed analyses. An element in this spectrum is the role that SA can play in communicating at several levels. An example of this quality is *Wake for Tom* (1994) which tells in a graphic and memorable way the stories of homeless ‘vags’ on the streets of a part of San Francisco, but at another level it is a socio/political record of the conditions of a certain community of that city. A SA composition thus becomes the equivalent, for example, of Charles Dickens’ novel, *Oliver Twist*, which, while being eminently readable, at a different level reveals the conditions under which homeless boys on the streets of London were drawn into crime. I remark on this in more detail below at *Wake for Tom*.

One piece of SA, *5 Easy Pieces* (1996), is given in full on CD. In the text is a description of the processes used in its production and an analysis of it that is an example of an analytical approach to SA. Included also is a track

³⁶ Information from producer Andrew McLennan by email to the author dated 31 March, 2003.
of 5 Easy Pieces with a voice-over giving a ‘stream of consciousness’ narration of feelings that flow through my mind as I listen to the sounds of that composition. With the exception of the last-mentioned track all the pieces have been played in TLR programs.

2.2 SOME DEFINING COMPOSITIONS

In selecting pieces with the intention of showing both the depth and breadth of the experience that can be communicated by radio sound art, certain criteria were observed which together form a classification system applicable to a large body of radio SA compositions.

When applied to a particular composition, this system calls for the identification of certain critical source sound material present in that composition: a recognition of its important ‘building blocks’, you might say. The categories for identification and the path followed begin with a classification of the predominant sound sources.

• A first subdivision is made as being either ‘Natural’ or ‘Artificial’.
• Natural material can be sub-divided into the groups of ‘Animate’ and ‘Inanimate’.
• Artificial can be sub-divided into ‘Linguistic’ and ‘Non-linguistic’.
• Linguistic can be divided again into ‘Semantic’ and ‘Non-semantic’.

By this process a form of classification can be produced that is applicable to many pieces of radio SA. In the case, for instance, of a composition that contains both natural and synthetic sounds, both categories can be identified in whatever kind of presentation is chosen. Ophelia and the Words is a case in point, in that it is built from words used as sound-poetry and also contains the sound of musical instruments, so that it is classified as both Artificial, Linguistic, Non-semantic and Artificial, Inanimate.
Below is a table showing source material classification for the pieces chosen as defining compositions. These pieces, as a group of defining compositions, exemplify all the source materials outlined above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Composition</th>
<th>Source Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Calling to Come</td>
<td>Artificial, Linguistic, Non-semantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial &amp; Natural-Inanimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ophelia and the Words</td>
<td>Artificial, Linguistic, Non-semantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial, Inanimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currawong</td>
<td>Natural, Animate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resava Cave</td>
<td>Natural, Inanimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake for Tom</td>
<td>Artificial, Linguistic, Non-semantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial, Non-Linguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Mist of an Arcane Pop</td>
<td>Artificial, Non-linguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Domain</td>
<td>Artificial, Linguistic, Semantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial, Non-linguistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Calling to come**

Track No: 1  
Prog. No: 16/95  
Date: 22 May, 1995  
Composer: Paul Carter  
Producer: Andrew McLennan  
Duration: 14:40

*The Calling to come* was co-commissioned by TLR and the Museum of Sydney for the Museum’s opening in May 1995, and was produced for radio by Andrew McLennan. The Museum is on the site of the first Government House, a few metres up the slope from the wharves of what is now Circular Quay. Carter has written widely on the early history of
Australia \textsuperscript{37} and the ‘communicational environment’ of its early settlement. He was invited by the Museum ‘to help develop a historical and design philosophy for the site that would counteract an ideology that confused piety with amnesia\textsuperscript{38}. Carter writes:

I recommended that the site should be reconceptualised as a still-contested place of meeting, of unfinished dialogue across difference. In this way the Museum would not only commemorate the inception of colonial rule, it would ponder the persistence of colonialisat attitudes and, more positively, indicate how, within the interstices of colonialism, other modes of communication, other kinds of remembering, remained possible.

With this as foreground, and arising from Carter’s desire to illustrate history as theatre and present a dramatisation that would itself be history, \textit{The Calling to Come} came into being. Its historical base was two language books kept by Lieutenant William Dawes, a Royal Navy officer who arrived with the First Fleet in 1788. Dawes seems to have been both a very capable officer and, at least for those times, a very humane person. As examples of both these qualities, he had been recommended by the Astronomer Royal, Dr. Maskelyne, to make observations of a comet due to appear in the skies over Sydney and, in addition, was in charge of the design and building of harbour defence installations. In regard to his compassion, he refused to take part in punitive expeditions against natives thus causing a falling-out with Governor Phillip\textsuperscript{39}.

\textsuperscript{37} Compositions by Paul Carter based on events in the South Pacific and Australian history broadcast by TLR include \textit{Light}, 1996: \textit{Memory as Desire}, 1993: \textit{The 7,448}, 1993: \textit{Toward a sound photography}, 1990.


Dawes kept notes in his language books of conversations with a young woman, whose native name he shortened to ‘Budgera’, as she taught Dawes her language and he taught her to speak and read English. Carter’s selections from Dawes’ notebooks reveal conversations between friendly equals, not as one might expect, between invader and invaded, with play on words, emphasis on language similarities and misunderstandings.

Carter called for a sound mix to go with the spoken word and described his intentions with the use of sound:

The sound mix for *The Calling to Come* used apparently conventional sound effects - environmental recordings of waves breaking, of wind, and of a door closing. These were, in fact, directly suggested by the script: east-breaking waves and west originating breezes served to denominate that narrow clearing between ocean and forest where most of the conversations between Dawes and Budgera occurred. Winds were invoked in a spiritual as well as environmental sense, as they were imagined as the natural desire to speak: flowing over windowsills, they whispered like human breath passing across human lips...In mixing these sounds to the voices, the object was not to use them as auditory images, as signifiers representing aspects of a theatrical environment: rather, it was to suggest a common grammar linking words and sounds...\(^{40}\)

Carter suggests that the relationship between Dawes and Budgera was a pragmatic one, although intimately familiar, if not physical. He quotes a passage from one of Dawes’ language books as an indicator of this:

[Budgera] was standing before the fire naked, and I desired her to put on her cloaths, on which she said *Goredyu tagarin*, the full meaning of which is “I will or do remain longer naked in order to get warmer sooner, as the fire is felt better without cloaths than if it had to penetrate thro’ them".\(^{41}\)

\(^{40}\) Carter, op.cit. p.97.

As the dialogue progresses it takes on a personal tone with laughter, jokes and punning as Dawes and Budgera move from words to sentences, a conversation between friendly equals, manifest in Dawes’ books as mentioned earlier. There is a growing atmosphere of sensuality, intimacy and of sexuality, and the impression grows more strongly that you are listening, not to a lesson in languages, but to a close personal conversation. Passages such as ‘...put your hand in mine’ and ‘...here is a blanket; go to sleep’ confuse these two possible scenarios.

Despite passages expressive of intimacy, the text as spoken by the two actors could be perceived by listeners as sounding theatrical, at times almost stilted. It has an air of formal detachment in that it tends towards a declamatory style, with short sentences; there is no attempt to achieve naturalness. This was Carter’s intention as he considered the installation should echo or be compatible with the theatrical nature of the museum itself as a display centre.42

When creating sound works of events in the history of Australia, some of which are referred to in Fn 35, Carter’s research has lead him to, or perhaps started from, sources of reliable data. An example of this is his composition Light where his main information sources were the last diaries of Col. William Light, the subject of that work; in this case, as mentioned earlier, the language books of Lieutenant Dawes formed the base of Carter’s composition. Carter has called on these documents to enable the achievement of his intent as stated in our first paragraph ‘to help develop a philosophy that will counteract an ideology that confused piety with amnesia’. Text selected by Carter from his source and the mixture of poetry and theatre in their presentation form the vehicle that carries his intent. A corollary to what Carter calls this ‘revisionist’ intent was this: ‘...a critical attention to the media of historical representation, and a wish to

42 Carter, op.cit. p.97.
communicate to the public the sense in which social memory is technologically shaped and produced.\textsuperscript{43}

When Carter writes of the technological shaping and producing of social memory I believe he is referring to the means by which information or ideas are brought into the mind. The Museum of Sydney is itself a technological instrument by which social memory can be shaped and produced, and the content of the installation \textit{The Calling to Come} is what is to be communicated. In the same way, radio is a medium of representation and the content of the radio version of \textit{The Calling to Come} is what is to be communicated. TLR is the technological instrument which is shaping and producing social memory.

\textit{Ophelia and the Words}

Track No: 2  
Program No: 12/89  
Broadcast: 24 April, 1989  
Composer: Gerhard Rühm  
Producer: Klaus Schöning, West German Radio  
Duration: 23:00

Gerhard Rühm is an Austrian composer, performer, multi-media artist, sound poet and writer. According to Klaus Schöning\textsuperscript{44}, past Director of \textit{Studio Akustische Kunst}, WDR Cologne, Rühm has worked with poetry, visual arts, photo montage, documentary melodramas and other forms of art. From 1972 to 1996 he was professor at the Academy of Fine Arts at Hamburg and has made fundamental theoretical contributions to acoustic art. He has had a long association with Klaus Schöning, particularly in the

\hspace*{1cm}\textsuperscript{43} Carter, \textit{op.cit.} p.95.  
development of a type of SA known as the *Neues Hörspiel*\(^{45}\) (NH). Schöning and others have written quite fully about NH\(^{46}\).

Much of the ‘sound poetry’ written today bears a resemblance in style and delivery to *Ophelia and the words* which is written in NH as a radio play in the form of a dialogue. It is one example of more than 20 compositions that Rühm has created for *Studio Akustische Kunst* of West German Radio. In 1970 he wrote about his approach to the radio play:

> Every radio play is the realization of a unique formal concept. The new radio play no longer represents itself primarily as a literary genre, in which the dominant role is that of the plot which is then embellished acoustically. Rather, it is to be understood in the most general sense, as an auditory experience in which all of the sound phenomena, whether sounds, words or noises, are in principle equal: part of the available material.\(^{47}\)

Here, Rühm is distinguishing between two types of radio play, one in which meaning is carried by the spoken word (semantics) supported by sound effects, and the other in which the communication that the composer wants to establish is carried by sound in any form and is not dependent upon semantics. The latter is what has become known as NH.

The radio play is not the only genre in which Rühm has followed a non-semantic approach. He and others have adopted this means of expression in a variety of literary forms, including poetry, when writing for radio.

\(^{45}\) The German, Neues Hörspiel, translates into English as ‘new radio play’ or ‘New Radio’.

\(^{46}\) Further references to the New Hörspiel are given in the Bibliography under Breitsameter, Sabine, Cory, Mark E, Schöning, Klaus.

\(^{47}\) Rühm, Gerhard, quoted by Klaus Schöning in notes to CD *Gerhard Rühm*, Ars Acustica, WER 6306-2.
In Germany during the 1960s and 1970s there was wide debate about the blurred boundaries between music and literature, specifically about the boundary between avant-garde music and NH. The following is a quote from a monograph written in 1981 by Cory and Haggh:

In a single decade a thoroughly literary form heretofore committed to a poetics of the spoken word had been drawn so entirely into the sphere of contemporary music that composers became its authors, and the works were published as scores rather than as texts.\textsuperscript{48}

The debate referred to above could have been about whether \textit{Ophelia and the words} was music or literature.

The contemporary composer Mauricio Kagel, as a practitioner of both art forms, was involved in discussions on the subject. Cory and Haggh summarise Kagel’s opinion on the subject based on his writings of 1970, as follows: ‘Kagel sees the experimental radio plays which he writes...as neither literary nor musical art forms, but as acoustical art without specific content.’\textsuperscript{49}

Gerhard Rühm may not agree that \textit{Ophelia and the words} is without specific content but I think he would agree with its being considered as SA. Although I wrote at the beginning of this chapter that, for our purposes, a composition broadcast by TLR was \textit{ipso facto} a piece of SA, it is encouraging to note that such an authority as Mauricio Kagel made that decision for the NH style presented here, over 30 years ago.

As described by Rühm \textit{Ophelia and the words} was constructed as follows:

The piece is based on the complete text of Ophelia in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. All nouns and verbs were extracted from this text and lined up in their root form. The word chain thus obtained is inserted into


\textsuperscript{49} ibid.
the original text in place of the passages spoken by Ophelia’s dialogue partners. Added to this is a layer of noise, its acoustic material derived from terms of the original text which describe audible things. The role of Ophelia thus appears to be self-contained-her surroundings are composed of the elements of her language, [and] are in a certain sense the mirror of her own words, a hermetic conceptual world in which she gets increasingly entangled until she ends in delusion, until her talk becomes confused.50

The piece opens with a short quote from Act 2, Scene 2 of Shakespeare’s Hamlet. Hamlet, asked by Polonius what he is reading, replies: ‘words, words, words.’ That is what Ophelia and the words consists of, all words, except for some percussion-like sounds that provide a rhythmic beat.

The effect created by the word-chain described above and its repetition as echoes, moving and swirling, create a closely contained world, inhabited by Ophelia, a mechanical doll, speaking clearly and unemotionally, like the Doll in Tales of Hoffman.51 Rühm writes that Ophelia becomes ‘trapped in her own text [and] she becomes entangled in the kaleidoscope of her own words and ideas, until her speech becomes obviously confused, ending in madness’.52

Gerhard Rhüm believes the English version of his work, as prepared by Schöning has an advantage over the German version, also prepared by Schöning, due to the directness of Shakespeare’s prose and the resulting succinctness of acoustic manipulation.53

53 ibid.
Australian composer Moya Henderson\textsuperscript{54} was commissioned by Klaus Schöning of West German Radio to write a piece for co-production with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation for broadcast by Schöning’s \textit{Studio Akustische Kunst}. Originally named \textit{Currawongs - a symphony of birds}, the sounds were recorded by ABC sound engineer Phillip Ulman at Barrington Tops, a wilderness area a few hours drive north of Sydney, at dawn as the birds were feeding at the garbage containers of the local guest house. Later, Ulman recorded the calls of Bellbirds and other varieties in nearby trees, thus presenting the composer with a range of bird song and sound environments from which to make her creative selection. Henderson writes:

\begin{quote}
My intent as a composer was to highlight the drama and humour of these early morning feeding frenzies, and to enhance the listener’s awareness of the extraordinary polyphony that fills the dawn skies over the Barrington Tops Guest House.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

In a letter on ABC files (undated) Moya Henderson writes that broad symphonic form inspired the way in which the sounds were assembled, and this aspect was examined further by Sally Macarthur\textsuperscript{56}. In advancing an

\textsuperscript{54} Henderson had an early association with Germany, as a scholar in the German Academic Exchange Service. She studied with Maurice Kagel at the Musikhochschule of Cologne from 1974 to 1976.

\textsuperscript{55} Henderson, Moya, quoted by Klaus Schöning (1996) in \textit{Acustica International Lydrejse}. Pages un-numbered. Section in English. Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde, Denmark.

argument supporting this statement Macarthur refers to her aural analysis of the piece (there is no score) and derives from that analysis four sound groups - Introduction, Exposition, Development and Recapitulation, each with its own internal elements, capable of being identified in broad classical musical terminology, i.e. first subject, second subject and so on. Macarthur proposes that in selecting from the recorded material presented to her by the sound engineer, Henderson followed a path suggested by her training in Classical form.

Another viewpoint on the matter of compositional structure is that in setting out to ‘highlight the drama and humour of these early morning feeding frenzies and to enhance the listener’s awareness of the extraordinary polyphony that fills the dawn skies’, Henderson was concerned with communication. Her selection of the sounds presented to her and the sequence of their ‘appearance’ springs from her creative objectives. Whatever form there is flows from that.

Although Henderson believes that, in its broadest sense, the symphony inspired the way in which all the sounds were put together, she writes in the letter, referred to above that ‘In the end though, the content dictates the form’.

*Currawong* is the sounds of birds and of their activities: the teaching of their young - claiming of territory - early morning awakening - in human terms, what sounds like gossiping, and feeding from garbage containers. All sounds speak of the open air, and the sounds accompanying the feeding, such as the metallic resonance of garbage tins and lids and the scraping of talons on corrugated iron, invoke a powerful immediacy. The distant calling of birds in the forest behind the feeding area marks out the depth of the sound-stage and is an element in defining the total space.

But as much as our understanding and appreciation of Currawong may be based on reflections of human behaviour, the listener is not lured into the anthropomorphic trap. Several times during the piece, songs and calls fade
and we hear, and almost feel, the powerful beating of wings and the rush of air as a bird lands near a microphone. This, I believe, is an unmistakable message that these birds live in an element that we cannot enter and it would not be proper to think of these sounds, while the birds feed on our scraps, as being produced by some sort of sub-human circus.

*Currawong* is an example of SA in which the sounds that form the composition are taken from a natural setting and used without manipulation, that is, their sound structure has not been changed. The creative skill is in the choice of segments from the array provided by the sound engineer and in the detailed sequence in which they are arranged. In this way the naturalness, the authenticity of the event is preserved; the appeal lies in this, in the inherent beauty of the sounds and in their coherent presentation.

**Resava Cave**

Track No: 4  
Program No: 4/90  
Date: 29 February, 1993  
Composer: Arenje Jovanovic  
Producer: Arenje Jovanovic  
Duration: 12:00

Sounds for *Resava Cave* were recorded in a cave of that name in Serbia by Arenje Jovanovic and a group of his students and 2 musicians. It won the Prix Italia at the International Radio Festival of 1989, an award that Jovanovic had then already won several times. It has been put to air by TLR 3 times during the 10 year period under my review.

The Cave is 15 m. deep into the cliff face below a Fifteenth Century Monastery just outside Belgrade and contains the stalagmites and stalactites that form the instruments played by Jovanovic and his students.
Using sticks and stones and hands the players generate a great variety of sounds, sounds that in most cases express their character across a range of frequencies, depending on how and where the formations are struck. Selected and edited by the composer, and combined with the human voice, these are the ‘orchestral sounds’ of the composition. In his introduction to the feature Jovanovic describes it as one of the most important experiments in the development of his composition of sound art.

Many of the ‘instruments’ produce tones of great beauty and character. The sound that is created when a stalagmite or stalactite in the cave is struck is a truly musical note with a clear fundamental, and harmonics that express the nature of the material struck: we know that it is stone. The sound expresses characteristics that we associate with stone, namely, strength and stability. One of the results of working with sounds from the natural world is that in the minds of listeners there is likely to exist already a perception of characteristics associated with a particular sound. Stone is a strong substance and therefore the sound it makes when struck becomes a musical metaphor for strength. When stroked rather than struck a different sound results, but the essence of its nature remains.

In structure, the piece contains basic elements of conventional musical form, with crescendo and decrescendo, approach and retire, movements across a soundscape, climaxes and silences. Sometimes the quiet episodes are filled with the soft throbbing of insects or sounds like the beating of a heart or the gentle breathing of sleep. At times the haunting voices of women float through the air, contrasting with the percussive sounds of sticks hitting solid, resonant rock. As the piece progresses the simple lines of the beginning change slowly to complex layering with increasing sound levels. There is confusion as sounds whirl and intertwine. Then simplicity returns and the music comes to a placid ending. The listener has been in an ancient cave, lit by candles, resonating to the sounds of an orchestra playing on instruments of great antiquity.
Jovanovic has formed an orchestra of sounds generated by man from natural material in a chamber of natural resonance. From his selection of sounds he has composed a piece, I believe, of beauty and strong imaginative appeal.

**Wake for Tom**

Track No: 5  
Prog. No: 11/94  
Date: 18 April, 1994  
Composers: Jim McKee and Barney Jones  
Producer: Jim McKee  
Duration: 28:00

At the time of composition Jim McKee and Barney Jones together ran the business *Earwax Productions* in San Francisco where they made their living by creating sound material for commercial purposes, their customers being mainly small independent media outlets. They were well paid for their work but mostly they had to deal with current matters in the way of a cartoonist, and meet short deadlines. *Wake for Tom* was different; it was funded by a small grant, well below their hourly commercial rate, its composition stretching over a period of about 12 months. Their subject matter was just outside the door, on the street, the homeless alcoholics in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco.

In 1993 Jones and McKee won an Oscar for their sound editing of Coppola’s film *Dracula*. They had also made in 1987 what they call an ‘Audiograph’ titled *Pop songs from the Tenderloin; Wake for Tom*; it was their second Audiograph and was an entry in the 1993 Berlin Prix Futura.

To find out more about the history of *Wake for Tom*, TLR producer Robyn Ravlich talked with the composers by phone from Sydney and this conversation became part of the broadcast introduction of the piece. The
composers recount how, by edited conversations with men and women of the street people, the story of living and dying on the street and in particular the death of Tom, is told by the people themselves. Their disembodied voices are the only voices heard, set over a running theme of music.

With no payment attached to the outcome and no deadline for its completion, *Wake for Tom* developed within a lengthy time-frame, with McKee and Jones being able to consider the results of their own compositional research. Although the composers had no real idea of what would happen as they worked on the recorded material, they had the object of turning Interview into Theatre, of making music from spoken words. In the phone conversation with Ravlich one of the composers says: ‘There is so much music in what people say, there are tunes and rhythms to be turned into music - you may as well be poetical, make it flow as music’. They go on to describe ‘throwing the voice about to where the music is’, and in another part of the conversation they talk about laying the music into the speech structure.

What the composers set about doing was to find, in the mass of recorded material, voices that expressed in both sound and meaning what they wanted to communicate, and ‘throw’ these into the music of the piano. ‘Throwing’ was helped significantly by the use of digital mixing technique, which was apparently new to them at the time and took the place of bringing analogue tape tracks together. It was quicker and more accurate; there was no ‘that’ll be good enough’, it could all be done so as to satisfy exactly the composer’s creative intent.

There are no actors, no interviewers, no narrators in this feature; the story is told by the street people. Through their words their world is described in little musical poems, each one telling about some part of it; waking, sleeping, begging, dying.
The poetry of words comes through in expressions such as:

Spare a little change?

Let’s see, Howard died in August.
Carol died in September.
Steve died in November.
We’re waiting for December.

You got some place where you can store these ashes for a while?

You can’t panhandle here.

Spare a little change
So I can stay drunk and unemployed.
A dime for a bottle of wine?
At least I’m honest.

Melded with sounds of the piano and other instruments, the story emerges as a musical event, its own rhythm and melody so subtle as to be unremarkable, but with a tempo and shape consistent with the story.

The composers believe that in this piece, written in what they describe as song structure, and through their choice of the words spoken they may have helped reveal some kind of essence in the existence of these people. They believe that perhaps in an accidental way their work communicates with ‘truth’ or at least expresses with ‘objectivity’, the life of the street people. The composers are suggesting that by adding their insight and skill to sounds that are part of a culture they reveal or communicate an essence or spirit in the culture that is not perceptible in other ways; they have been instrumental in discovering and imparting a truth. If this is so then SA has been the vehicle for analysing the culture of a community and giving it expression to those who will listen.
In the mist of an arcane pop

Track No: 6
Prog. No: 45/97
Broadcast: 8 December, 1997
Producer: Damien Castaldi
Composer: Damien Castaldi
Duration: 30:00

In the mist of an arcane pop was composed and produced by Damien Castaldi during 1997 when he was holder of the New Media Arts ABC Radio Fellowship. In the terms of the Fellowship Castaldi could have used ABC equipment and the services of a sound engineer to produce the piece, but he chose to do so using his own facilities.

The composition consists of synthesized sounds and sounds from real life, the ‘found’ sounds sometimes being so heavily manipulated that it is not easy to differentiate between the two. He uses insect sounds, bird calls, the human voice, trains moving on rails and ringing bells, bushfires, road traffic, aircraft, rocket take-off; a great miscellany of sounds. Within the continually changing sound-scape are snippets of news broadcasts that identify some of the subjects. For example, a voice is faded in and then out declaring: ‘...travel in the fourth dimension’ in the midst of weird sounds that could be imagined as signifying that kind of travel, against a background of train wheels clacking over the rails, which could be perceived as adding a sarcastic comment. Rhythmic percussion sounds move the piece along at the frenzied pace of a modern city.

The sounds are brought together to make a pleasant and entertaining piece, with comments on what many people would consider to be unfortunate features of today’s life in our society. It does not attempt to be analytical or critical, but rather it presents parts of contemporary life as the

57 See section 3.1 in this chapter for details of the Fellowship.
composer perceives it. As well as time travel Castaldi illuminates information overload, satellite development, environmental degradation, climate change and others, some of which need help from the listener’s imagination, rather than the news-reader, to be revealed. I find the composition entertaining and almost light-hearted, whereas the subject matter could lead towards cynicism and negativity.

As well as its intellectual and aesthetic appeal, *In the mist of an arcane pop* demonstrates how a modern SA composer can use sound with suitable equipment in a home environment to produce a piece that communicates with the listener in an imaginative and effective way.

*The Domain*

Track No: 7  
Prog. No: 19/88  
Date: 23 May, 1988  
Composer: Rik Rue  
Producer: Rik Rue  
Duration: 23:40

Rue is a Sydney sound artist, sound sculptor and performer. He is active in recording and exchanging SA compositions and also conducts a session twice a month on Sydney radio station 2MBS FM.

The Sydney Domain is an area in the Botanical Gardens that for some years, up until about the mid-1980s, was a Sunday gathering place for speakers to deliver their views on all sorts of subjects, from politics to religion, from sex to sport, from education to immigration. It was the Australian equivalent of London’s Hyde Park Corner. As the structure of the city population changed from working-class families to younger business
men and women, so did its popularity as a forum and today it is a quiet place on Sundays with people strolling through and a few families having picnics; speakers and their audience, in the main, have forsaken it.

Rue made the recordings from which this piece is built, selected his material and made the final composition in 1987. To gather the sounds of the park he moved through the crowds who were listening to the speakers. He sometimes engaged with them or just walked through the park, recording on a portable tape-recorder as he went. The bells of nearby St Marys Cathedral rang for service and became part of the finished piece (one of the sounds of the park as they are today). The impression conveyed is that of a happy, sunny Sunday.

In *The Domain* several of the speakers are serious and express their views aggressively, but most, no matter whether their subject is a serious one or not, have a touch of humour, sometimes bawdy and expressed in colourful language. Rue told me that this thread of humour was an element that he found attractive and interesting in the speakers, and one that he tried to bring out when he was selecting material for the finished piece. Rue’s skill as an artist shows in the choice of voices and their placement in the sound space; a clear tone of music in the solo voice in the mix of agreeable and varied sounds of others who both listen and contribute.

Subjects propounded by speakers cover rights of aborigines compared to those of immigrants, religion or the absence of it, links with England, the continuing rage of the Irish against the British Royal family, views of rationalists, humanists and many more. As subjects of discussion they would be common to many forums, but in *The Domain* they create an open-air performance where oratory and interchange come together. Rik Rue has added to the aural social history of the 1980s and 90s.

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58 Rik Rue, personal communication, 10 September, 2002.
59 Personal communication, 10 September, 2002.
2.2.1 Summary

The compositions I have chosen towards defining SA do so as exemplars of, amongst other things, different compositional approaches, from text-based, such as The Domain, The Calling to come and Wake for Tom, to the pieces based more on sound alone as the avenue of communication, Currawong, Resava Cave and In the mist of an arcane pop, with Ophelia and the words straddling the two groups.

When considering content as a significant element of the compositional approach exemplified in the pieces chosen, one is struck by the effectiveness of SA in communicating matters of social history, a subject that is also conveyed well by the radio documentary. In The Domain Rik Rue fashioned a social statement using sounds of the time, telling of matters concerning people of the 1980s, such as treatment of indigenous people, immigration, the ‘Irish problem’ and religion, to mention a few; the bells of St. Marys Cathedral mark the church on an eminence close to the heart of the city (reminiscent of the church on a hill near the village), and the accents of the voices are of those people who, more than likely, then lived in inner-city locations.

As I commented in the introduction, Wake for Tom tells the story, in somewhat similar form, of homeless people on the streets of a district of San Francisco, thus producing an account of social conditions of a particular place in a particular period. In The Calling to Come Paul Carter has created from detailed original material, possible conversations of 200 years ago in a social situation of historical significance. Common to these three pieces is that in the act of creating a piece of SA, which in itself is a work of art, each composer has communicated a facet of social history.
2.3 5 EASY PIECES

2.3.1 Introduction\(^{60}\)

In 1994 the Head of the radio arts area at the ABC, Roz Cheney, suggested to ABC management that the possibility of a Fellowship to operate within TLR be explored with the Australia Council. The awarding of the Fellowship that Cheney envisaged would provide both a stipend for the Fellow and also access to ABC technical equipment. The availability of such equipment was a critical issue in the field of SA as composers were expressing a need for quick-acting and complex equipment in the composition process. A Fellowship would function as a direct line for two-way communication between composer and TLR staff, and so strengthen the link between the creative thought and its realisation as a radio presentation. In all, the suggestion was in harmony with TLR’s aim of being a creative program.

By a happy coincidence, administrators of the Hybrid Arts Strategy of the Australia Council had been giving consideration to a similar scheme, specifically one that would accommodate and encourage the growing trend for creative artists, e.g. composers, writers, choreographers, to move between art forms. The concept of this scheme went beyond the commissioning of a work for performance in that it provided for a period of almost dedicated creativity, as well as establishing a direct link between the originator of a work and TLR.

The result was that in 1994 the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council set up two Fellowships to be awarded annually, to be known as Hybrid Arts Fellowships, each with a stipend of $20,000 for a period of 6 months. One was set up with the Faculty of Design and Construction at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, the other with TLR.\(^{61}\)

\(^{60}\) A CD of 5EP is at Appendix 1, Track 1 and photographs of episodes in its production are at Appendix 4.

\(^{61}\) More details of the award are given below at section 3 and in Chapter 4, section 9.
The 1996 Fellowship was awarded to Ion Pearce\textsuperscript{62}, a Sydney SA composer, performer and musical instrument builder.

One of the principal considerations when judging the award was, and still is at the time of writing, the applicant’s outline of a SA piece that would be composed during the period of the Fellowship. What follows is an account of Pearce’s Fellowship composition \textit{5 Easy Pieces}, the composer’s history, the aims he wished to achieve, his ways of operating, people and equipment of the compositional process, setbacks and outcomes, structure of 5EP, the finished piece and a listener’s reaction to it.

Pearce’s intention\textsuperscript{63} in applying for the Fellowship was to write a piece for radio that would give expression to the ebb and flow of relationships between events and their effects on human perception. Material would be drawn from experiences (by way of dialogue, in a wide sense) with four people with whom Pearce had close artistic and personal association. The result was \textit{5 Easy Pieces}.

Trained as a cellist and composer in the classical mould, Pearce moved abruptly out of that field in the early 1990s and started writing SA for radio. He has composed pieces for TLR and provided an installation for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

\textsuperscript{62} A photographic portrait of Pearce is at Appendix 4.

\textsuperscript{63} Information in this and the following paragraph came to me through numerous conversations I had with Ion Pearce during the term of his Fellowship at the ABC.
His broadcast works at the time of his application for the Fellowship were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>1st Broadcast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Vanishing Point</em></td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>15 November, 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Parole</em></td>
<td>19:58</td>
<td>3 April, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Practice</em></td>
<td>22:40</td>
<td>17 June, 1996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These pieces of SA had been composed as commissions for TLR, Pearce having access to ABC equipment and other facilities in the compositional process. He therefore had experience in working within the ABC structure, he knew the capabilities of the technical equipment and could generally move around comfortably within the ABC studios at Harris Street, Sydney.

2.3.2 Compositions and content

Below is a brief summary of compositions by Pearce listed above in 2.3.1.

*The Strange Machine* was composed as a response to the cacophony of modern city living, prominent among the sounds being noises of buildings in the process of being demolished. The sounds themselves are not reproduced, but Pearce’s impressions and conception of them are conveyed by a variety of instruments, several of which were made by Pearce from the detritus of building sites, shards which contain in their resonances the history of their own birth, life and death in the refuse bin.
The first broadcast on TLR was introduced by Robyn Ravlich with these words:

The beads on a two metre wooden abacus\(^{64}\) are rotated, squeaks of life appear, a handmade drum comes into play like a machine, a voice sustains an endless note: this is *The Strange Machine* by Ion Pearce.

The ‘squeaks of life’ appear and are moved along by an inevitable rhythm, an all-consuming time-laden movement to some undefined but boring, pointless conclusion. The sounds of a violin sawing away at mechanical exercises are part of the landscape of a city recreating itself, an endless repetition of structural disfigurement.

*Vanishing Point* had its genesis in memories of early train journeys as Pearce moved from place to place with his father and mother, brothers and sisters. Ravlich addressed her radio audience with these words:

For his own personal ‘Vanishing Point’ Ion Pearce draws on memories of childhood train journeys around Australia with his musical family, journeys that helped accumulate a vast array of musical instruments, starting with his own collection of sound sources, railway bells and Indonesian sounds, along with original instruments built by himself out of the refuse of demolition sites...

Bearing what I perceive to be traces of an orchestral arrangement\(^{65}\) *Vanishing Point* carries within itself the rhythm of the train travel of yesterday: The clatter of wheels on rails as drum speaks to drum. Scenes flash past the window, not as visual presentations of scenes of everyday

\(^{64}\) Pearce constructed from heavy plywood what he called an ‘abacus’, consisting of two sound boxes almost 2 m high joined acoustically at the lower end. They are connected by wooden rods which form axles for wide wooden-composition wheels. When turned, the wheels generate a wide range of sounds that varies depending on speed of rotation, position on the axle, axial movement etc. The sound boxes resonate with these sounds. See illustrations at Appendix 4.

\(^{65}\) I believe that Pearce’s compositional style as described in this paragraph could be compared to the style of some Twentieth Century conventional art music compositions. As further comment on style, Pearce has told me in conversation that whenever he attempts to compose for conventional orchestral instruments ‘it comes out like Shostakovich’. I believe his mode of SA composition could be influenced by his academic training as a cellist. See 2.3.3 below ‘Why the name 5 Easy Pieces?’ and the discussion on European influences that follows.
life, nothing so prosaic as a farmyard with ducks and cows, but musical
scenes of changing timbres and tones, sequences of fascinating sounds,
linear and fleeting. The ever-present rhythm of hurrying movement passes
from instrument to instrument, sometimes dominating, sometimes distant,
but always there. The constant note of a human voice is heard, unexpected,
amongst the instruments and reminds us that others are there as well.

*Practice* was composed originally as a performance piece and later re-
written as a work for radio. It is a collaborative piece, with text by Sabrina
Achilles; it calls for five performers. The piece starts with domestic
practices, such as getting up in the morning, and moves instrument by
instrument to the collaborative practice of music making, incidentally
acknowledging voice as an instrument. Sounds are dense. There is depth in
the texture, and the complexity of its rhythms emphasises the need for
close collaboration between performers. As a performance piece the visual
interaction between performers would add to its appeal.

*Parole* is an experimental piece in which Ion Pearce aims at an audible
demonstration of how certain states of body and mind make their presence
heard in speech through speech inflection, rhythm and other
characteristics of the individual voice; word meaning may or may not play a
part in this process of communication. There are five contributors to the
piece plus a section of archival tape. Pearce manipulates the spoken words
as he adds rhythmic accompaniment, and so keeps what I think is a
successful demonstration squarely within the sphere of sound art.

These descriptions give an idea of Pearce’s compositional style and also
disclose some common elements that appear from time to time. For
example, in both *The Strange Machine* and *Vanishing Point* he uses
instruments built from rubbish he found on building sites and in *The
Strange Machine* and *5 Easy Pieces* he uses the ‘abacus’, an instrument
described at 2.3.2, Fn 62. There are also passages in each of these pieces
where Pearce calls on heavily marked rhythm to symbolise, I believe, the
boredom of useless repetition. Further examples of this are in 5EP. In both
The Strange Machine and Vanishing Point there is the sound of a human voice singing a single sustained note. As I mention when writing above about Vanishing Point, this has a rather surprising effect in that it reminds the listener that a human being is amongst the various ‘instrumental’ sounds. I mention again the effect of the introduction of this ‘third person’ in 5EP at 2.5 below.

An intellectual connection running through the group is that of experimentation; of Pearce setting himself a set of objectives and trying to achieve them. I believe that this characteristic of Pearce as a composer is also present in 5EP.

2.3.3 Why the name 5 Easy Pieces?

In 1970 a film was released in the USA named Five Easy Pieces. The producer was Bob Rafelson and it starred Jack Nicholson. Nicholson played the part of a cultural misfit who rejected his middle-class, classical-music upbringing and found work on an oil rig and love with an uneducated waitress, whom he constantly derided. The name of the film was possibly taken from the title of music books for children learning to play the piano, such as Ten easy pieces for little fingers.

There is a parallel here with that time in the life of Ion Pearce when he rejected his playing of the classical cello and most of his early music education, and moved into the practice and composition of SA. There, I believe the parallel ends, but as a listener I surmise that there was sufficient similarity between the story of the film and what was a significant turning point in his life, for Pearce to borrow the title of the film, together with fact that in its final form the piece fell into five sections.
In Ion Pearce’s ABC Radio Fellowship proposal\textsuperscript{66} he writes about the piece of sound art that he wishes to compose and he describes the various threads, which are principally inter-personal, structural, cultural and political, that will be woven together to form the finished composition.

Although, as can be seen in section 2.3.2 above, several pieces that Pearce has composed for radio draw on recollections of his childhood, there are others which have as their essence an account of present-time, in which there is a bringing to realisation of currently perceived influences. In his aspirations for his Fellowship piece Pearce is acknowledging and building on his personal relationship with 4 people, who are practitioners of other art-forms or genres. They are:

- Helen Clark-Lapin, a choreographer and movement artist
- Russell Dumas, a choreographer
- Jeffar Hon Gaol, an Indonesian musician and composer
- Sabrina Achilles, a writer and textual theorist

Pearce’s plan of operation was to establish and maintain a close association, by dialogue and ‘workshopping’, with each of these artists during the period of the Fellowship and the composition of the piece. Pearce would concentrate on the preparation of a radiophonic piece and he would, either purposely or unconsciously, carry into it expressions of the artistic influences of the person with whom he was working. He would, by his skill as a sound artist, build a work that expressed the aesthetic (or at least some of the elements) of a different art-form or culture or genre\textsuperscript{67}.

It is not clarified in the proposal, but Pearce’s intention, as he told it to me, was to compose the piece in three sections, three ‘radiophonic events’, with

\textsuperscript{66} Copy of the proposal given by Pearce to the author on 16 October, 1996 and now held by the author.
\textsuperscript{67} ibid.
one of each responsive to the constructive themes of movement, Indonesian sound installation, and writing practices.68

Pearce’s choice of artists and their practices also confirms comments that he has made to me in conversation. He has a particular interest in body movement and finds creative stimulus in dance (particularly Indonesian dance), in Indonesian music he finds a haven from Western European Art music, and in Indonesian music and culture he sees and wonders at the stamp that is set upon both, by their inheritance and the conditions in which they currently exist.

In the last paragraph of his proposal Pearce writes:

This project involves a continuation of a practice that I have been in the process of developing for several years, a practice that involves the design and construction of radiophonic works, sound objects and machines, and an exploration of the movement (carriage) of sound between these works, instruments/machines, the human body and their environs. The continuing development of this technique has for me particular relevance in that it provides a new and original connection with the very different temporal and spacial (sic) concerns of our local environment as opposed to the inherited concerns of European practice.

These words emphasise Pearce’s interest in the transfer of concepts, perceptions and body movement into sound with relevance to present time and state, involving a break with our European musical ancestry. The Australian inheritance of European musical practice (i.e. of Western European Art music), with its society, physical environment and its own inheritance embedded in it, is of great concern to Pearce; it is of concern to him that such influences do not find their way into his art. He is aiming in his sound art to achieve an expression that is not influenced by what has been carried here by our European ancestry. He is interested in composing sound art that contains within it, compositional practices developed from

68 The finished piece did not follow this form. See Section 2.3.7.
reacting with an Australian experience, an internal experience or an external one with our global neighbours.

2.3.4 The text

The sound of the human voice is heard in four out of five of the *Easy Pieces*, sometimes as an instrument, when words cannot be distinguished, other times as an instrument clearly enunciating words. The text was written by Sabrina Achilles, one of the four people mentioned above (2.3.3) whose influence Pearce wished to embody in the composition.

Pearce’s artistic aspirations for 5EP were known to Achilles and as a professional writer she makes these comments about her own aspirations and practices in composing the texts:

> The text was written in three parts that were to be layered one over the other. This was in order to bring about a block of writing. Writing as something ‘physical’ with dimensions. This physical shape, which isn’t an exact shape but rather ‘n’ dimensions, I also think of as a certain intensity belonging to writing. I am therefore interested in the space writing occupies and forms rather than, as it is usually thought of, in terms of temporality and contiguity. To think of writing as a block, a dimension, takes it away from a symbolic function and makes it event specific, a performance and thereby immanent and singular. Which means writing can have an historical rather than a transcendental function. 69

And again, in the same context, Achilles writes:

> The text for Five Easy Pieces explores desire as production. Desire as that which is able to flow between parts. The desire between the man and the woman does not pre-exist its own production. The gun is an instrument in this production. The gun is also inseparable from the text in which it is imbedded [sic], such as detective fiction, a genre invoked in the piece. In this respect the text traces the connections between parts; ‘audience and text’, as a mode of the production of desire, until there is no distinction between the text and life - all is affect (sensation).

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69 From notes given by Achilles to TLR production unit for use in preparation of on-air introduction.
Although Achilles was present during some of the composition sessions, she gave her text to the composer with no strings attached; he could do with it as he chose. The voice delivering the text is treated as an instrument and it appears as solo accompanied, solo unaccompanied, it is layered, sometimes declamatory, sometimes a subdued background with only the occasional word coming through. But it is there and there for a good part of the time; it has timbre and amplitude, it creates texture, intensity and rhythm.

2.3.5 The Sound Engineer and equipment

As pointed out above (2.1) radio sound art relies on recording processes to produce completed works and therefore is reliant on means of manipulating recorded sound. While the following does not attempt to be a detailed technical description, it overviews the technical aspects and developments of the procedure.

When recorded sound moved from vinyl disc to magnetic tape it was a major development for the art of sound. Tapes could be cut and spliced, as had been done for years in cinema film editing, and layering of sound could be carried out by channel-mixing. Initially, the recording of sound on magnetic tape was in analogue mode.

Parallel to the development of analogue recording, there was application of the increasingly powerful computing and digital technology to sound. A key point was the development, firstly, of general purpose computer music programs, initially running on mainframes, such as Max Matthews’ *Music V*, Barry Vercoe’s *Csound* and similar software. Secondly, in the late 1970s and 1980s, dedicated digital audio workstations, such as the instruments created by Fairlight\(^\text{70}\), were developed. These workstations were primarily studio tools and thus their cost was beyond normal private means.

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70 Fairlight Inc. is an Australian company, founded in 1975. Initial manufacture was sound-playing and recording equipment, but with active R & D the company moved into the manufacture of sound-editing equipment for radio, television, film and advertising. Fairlight now also makes turnkey systems for radio broadcasting and video editing for film and television studios. ABC sound engineers
Amongst other institutions, the ABC invested in this technology, eventually developing a sound recording and editing methodology based on the Fairlight MFX sound editing workstation, with specialist operators. The inception of TLR took place at the time when this methodology was developing at the ABC and led to a production model of composer working in association with specialist sound editor and engineer.

As digital technology has become more powerful and cheaper, domestic computers have become capable of delivering a similar level of facility of manipulation of digitised sound at broadcast quality. This has led, particularly since the 1990s, to an alternative, parallel (and equally valid) methodology of production of material to completed, broadcastable standard in home or project studios. This form of production is exemplified within TLR as the Earclips repertoire of short, composer-produced, pieces, which is discussed in more detail at 4.11. TLR broadcasts works generated within both methodologies: studio/sound engineer based, and domestic, composer-produced.

Since the introduction of digital sound-editing, composers of SA have had sensitive, accurate and flexible means to help them achieve their aesthetic aims; compositions can now be made that would previously have been impossible. In section 2.2 of this chapter, when writing about the composition Wake for Tom I quote one of the composers describing how digital editing enabled them to: ‘throw... the voice about to where the music is’ and in the next paragraph I write, quoting one of the composers: ‘there was no “that’ll be good enough”, it could all be done so as to satisfy exactly
the composer’s creative intent’. Another example of the new capability in composer’s hands is *Swim swim swan song*, by Jane and Philip Ulman. An excerpt from this is on the CD of the compilation of TLR pieces prepared for WDR, see Chapter 5, section 3.2.1. Sound engineer Russell Stapleton commented to me on 29 October, 2002 that composition of this piece would not have been possible prior to the availability of digital editing equipment. Stapleton gave as an example one of the technical features of the Fairlight editor used in producing *Swim swim swan song* known as ‘variable-time loop’. Looping is possible on tape-editing units, but it is clumsy, and once the loop is made, the timing is fixed. This exemplifies how digital editing, in general, places another compositional tool, possibly mediated by the skill of the specialist sound engineer, in the hands of the composer.

Pearce’s composition reviewed here is radiophonic and as such must be presented with excellent technical workmanship; it will be recorded for ever, it could be broadcast to the world and it will be judged by its peers; this calls for the skilled operation of complex equipment. The methodology employed was one prevalent within TLR whereby Pearce worked together with a specialist engineer within an ABC studio in order to achieve the desired results, rather than working in a home or project studio.

As the holder of the 1996 Fellowship, Ion Pearce had the use of equipment in the Harris Street studios of the ABC. Of special importance was a Fairlight MFX sound editor (as referred to earlier in this section), which can generate and manipulate sounds, and perform other intricate electronic operations in fractions of a second. This allows the composer to determine the character of a sound and fix its place and duration in a composition. Through the Fairlight, Pearce could do what a composer does in a conventional musical composition when he places on the stave the symbol of a note of a certain duration, to be played at a certain time point in the composition, by a certain instrument. Pearce was also able to arrange and rearrange the sequence of sounds, shorten, lengthen, amplify, reduce, transpose, reverse them etc., and immediately hear the result.
The Fairlight is a sophisticated and sensitive piece of equipment and responds best in the hands of a trained and experienced person; in fact only a qualified sound engineer is permitted to operate the Fairlight equipment in the ABC studios. In this case Russell Stapleton was Ion Pearce’s sound engineer\(^71\).

Digitisation of sound processing revealed new avenues to be explored by the creative composer, but the engineering of sound, to put to good account the features of digital editing equipment, needed new skills of a high order. In one of the working paradigms, the sound engineer joined the creative team in the ABC’s studios.

### 2.3.6 A Matter of Composition

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians defines composition as follows:

> Composition...suggests ‘putting together’, and in many societies this is regarded as a vocation requiring expertise, talent and an observance of implicit or explicit rules to ensure that the music will serve the function of its genre\(^72\).

In this section I describe the technique of ‘putting together’ sounds from various sources in such a way as to satisfy the composer’s requirements. If there is any doubt about whether this process is ‘composing’, John Cage wrote as follows when describing a similar but earlier process he encountered in the recording industry:

> I can distinguish three ways of composing music nowadays. The first is well known, that of writing music, as I do. It continues. A new way has developed through electronic music and the construction of new sound sources for making music and performing it, rather than writing it. And a third way has developed in recording studios, which

\(^{71}\) Illustrations of Ion Pearce and Russell Stapleton composing and producing 5EP in ABC studio P363 are at Appendix 4.

is similar to the way artists work in their studios to make paintings. Music can be built layer by layer on recording tape, not to give a performance or to write music, but to appear on a record.73

For the achievement, or ‘realisation’, of 5EP, previously recorded sounds were drawn from a library of digital tapes, many of which had been made with the idea of their being used in this particular piece. Below are some of the sounds that were used:

- Short music compositions played by piano, violin, cello and drums, and text performed by female and male voices.
- Sounds generated by wooden wheels rolling over a floor, sounds generated within a resonant wooden chamber, sounds of bells and gongs.
- Sounds made by assembling a wooden structure.

These, together with other sounds from the ABC sound library, were the chosen instruments of Pearce’s orchestra; to bring them together and have them perform in accordance with the composer’s wishes, the following equipment is typically required:

- a sound input source; e.g. a digital tape or CD player or output from a computer or a microphone from a live studio.
- a sound editor; e.g. a computer and editing program, which would normally also include mixing equipment that would bring individual tracks together (layer) and provide two-channel stereo output.
- recording equipment for the finished piece; e.g. a digital tape recorder or CD burner.

In the case of 5 Easy Pieces, there is Pearce the composer, with a range of instruments to hand, the structure of a piece of SA in his head (or perhaps in his notebook) and the equipment to bring the two together; the next operation is that of composition, the technical part of which process is in the hands of Russell Stapleton. He will be following Pearce’s detailed directions, blending, modifying, suggesting, patiently trying to understand what the composer is looking for and so help achieve his intentions.

Russell Stapleton has worked with Pearce on several of his previous compositions and thus has some understanding of his style and methods of operation. He was involved with 5EP from the early time of recording material that was used later in its composition, and from then on was the only sound engineer working with Pearce. He believes that early and continued involvement lead to the best result. As is not uncommon among sound engineers whom I have met at the ABC, Stapleton is a SA composer in his own right and has had several compositions put to air by TLR.74

Before starting the process of composition Stapleton has an overall appreciation of what Pearce is striving to achieve. In detail, Pearce is looking for precise timing, particularly in sound entry and layering, and therefore a section may be played and changed, played and changed again, many times over before the composer is satisfied. Without Stapleton’s patience and skill the composer may settle for less and the composition thus fall short of his intent.

A simple analogy to the close and sensitive collaboration called for is that of a composer (Pearce) describing to a conductor (Stapleton) how he wants his piece of music to be played and what instruments are to be used, for there is no score for the conductor to read. To be successful the composer and the conductor must be ‘in tune’ with one another; their harmonies must embrace patience and understanding and an appreciation of limitations;

74Stapleton was co-winner of the Radio Mix Award in the Phonurgia Nova Awards, France, in 1997 and is named several times in 4.6 below in the listing of awards won by TLR.
this is a critical stage of composition, the composer is in creative mode, but he is not alone; the ‘conductor’ now becomes the conduit for the birth; 5 EP could live or die in this process.

During the course of composition Pearce may describe what he wants by way of sound manipulation and Stapleton would set about trying to achieve the effect. He may end up saying: ‘Look, what you are trying to do just won’t work. What about doing it this way...’ and thus solve the problem for Pearce. In this way, it is interesting to note, Stapleton’s input becomes part of the final piece.

The dynamic between composer and sound engineer in these moments of realisation is one of skilled artistry; a companionable episode from which can emerge a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

To reach this stage of the composition of 5 EP (playing time about 18 mts.) required about 2 week’s work.

Lastly comes ‘mixing-down’, in which more creative processes, such as reverberation and delay, are added by the sound engineer as required by the composer, and the volume levels of the various segments, now allocated to channels, are set to achieve an appropriate volume level throughout the piece. The channel outputs are fed into the mixer, the output of which is in stereo sound, and recorded for later broadcasting. For 5EP, 20 of the mixer’s 48 channels were used.

Now 5EP is finished, ‘in the can’, to borrow an expression from the film industry. It went to air on December 16, 1996 and was presented by Robyn Ravlich of TLR.

In her description of the piece Ravlich said:

> The compositional structures within the work were developed from an involvement with dance, sound installation and writing practices. The
compositional models used are more attuned to differences in physicality and technique rather than a marked relationship to time. 5 Easy Pieces began in Jakarta, Indonesia, where Ion was recording and studying the working methods of contemporary Indonesian performance and installation artists in July of this year. This experience was further developed using ensemble experimentation and recordings made in the ABC’s Eugene Goossens Hall in Sydney. Working with sound, movement ideas, vocalisations and writing, Ion has taken these elements and re-configured them within the plane of radiophonic composition.75

2.3.7 The Finished Piece

In the event a change had to be made to the planned structure of the piece. Instead of consisting of three sections as outlined in section 2.3.3, it became one almost continuous piece in five parts. The art-form influences were absorbed throughout the work and not confined to a particular section as had been originally planned. There were several reasons given to me in conversations with Pearce for the change, which are itemised below:

- The ABC’s Fairlight MFX Sound Editor was in high demand at the time and availability was limited.
- ‘Workshopping’ that was to be held during the period of composition did not take place as planned due to practical difficulties in getting together with the various people concerned.
- Pearce contracted a tropical illness whilst in Indonesia and the time necessary for his recovery upset the planned time schedule.
- Difficulty of using certain material that had been recorded earlier in Indonesia.

Pearce was diffident about elaborating the last point about use of recorded material, and I think it may have had to do with the possibility of offending Indonesian authorities.

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75From program details for 1996 on ABC file. Copy held by author. Illustrations showing recording session in Goossens Hall are at Appendix 4.
Pearce’s comments in a final report to the Australia Council give an idea of how he views the finished piece. He writes:

> The compositional structures within *5 Easy Pieces* were developed from an involvement with dance, sound installation and writing practices.

To take these elements and re-configure them within the plane of radiophonic composition was to be the most ambitious aspect of my proposal. The compositional models I derived from these collaborations involved concepts of weight, inertia and momentum, the incorporation of an ‘ad libitum’ canonic structure and the use of multiple ensemble structures. Text was also instrumental in carrying these compositional ideas and in performing transformations from one state or structure to another. Text as state or intensity, rather than being representative or symbolic.\(^76\)

Here Pearce is talking about identifying elements that go to make up, or make recognisable, an art-form or artistic practice. He is helped in this process by close collaboration with several people, each of whom is skilled in a particular art-form. His own skill as a sound artist, brought to bear on the concept of the identified element that he has formed through the collaboration, transforms that concept into sound.

He says later in the report that the opportunity given by the composition of 5EP enabled him to research and develop successfully his compositional models and techniques (as outlined above), to bring about the transformation of concept to sound. So from his viewpoint, 5EP is a successful piece of SA in that it fulfilled at least some of, or to some degree, the aims of its creator.

We should be aware that Pearce’s account of what is happening as he crosses art-form boundaries in the process of achieving transformation may sound simplistic, but he is talking as a practising composer about what he is trying to do and how he is going about doing it. He presents the act of composition as a practical thing, one without transcendental or mystical

\(^76\) Report (undated) by Ion Pearce to the Australia Council and the ABC. Copy held by the author.
intuitions; a matter of the composer knowing what he is trying to achieve and developing a practice that is judged to achieve it.

In the passage quoted above from the report to the Australia Council Pearce mentions both concept and technique. There is mention of concepts of weight, inertia and momentum and also an ‘ab libitum’ canonic structure, which is a compositional technique. The ‘ab libitum’ canonic structure is a loose form of rhythmic canon in which a rhythm expressed by one instrument is then loosely mimicked by another; it occurs at times throughout 5EP. Pearce has explained to me that this is an example of an element in dance practice (in which one dancer mimics the movement of another) being transformed to sound. Examples of this structure can be identified from the tabulated score at section 2.4 below. They occur towards the conclusion of EP1 at about the 5 minute mark, at about the 7 minute mark in EP2 and again at about the 9 minute mark in EP3.

Concepts of weight, inertia and momentum also, of course, have their place in the art of dance and movement and their sounds are present throughout almost the entire piece. Rotational (angular) momentum is suggested by sinusoidal variation of the sound level of a waveform, a good example of which is the use of the abacus waveform, particularly in the last few minutes of the piece.

Another example of movement/momentum occurs in EP3 at around the 8 minute mark where the sounds are suggestive of centrifugal movement, such as a weight at the end of a string being swung round at gradually increasing speed. Pearce achieves this effect by varying the level and frequency of a chosen waveform at an increasing rate. The conversion of this centrifugal movement into curvilinia r, as would occur on the release of

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77 The fact that Pearce made this explanation by way of reference to dance rather than by reference to its equivalent form in traditional music (the ‘canon’ or ‘round’, with which he would undoubtedly be familiar), suggests to me that he did not wish to refer to his composition in terms of European music practice.
the string, is suggested by the waveform, at a climax of level and frequency, gradually decreasing in both parameters until it is no longer heard. The picture painted in my imagination by a good example of this is described at 2.5 below in the sentence beginning with the words: ‘Slowly the sling of David is swung around, round and round it goes, gathering momentum...’

2.4 5 EP STRUCTURE

The basic structure of the piece as shown below consists of five episodic sections, melding one into the other, which are labelled EP1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, with duration given for each one.

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Instruments

Voice
Pitch pipe
Cello
Piano
Speaker
Tuned metal ‘Water’ gong
Rail bell
Flexitons (Hi and Lo), Cymbals (Hi and Lo), Snare Drum
Abacus

Sequence of events

EP1  Duration: 5:19
Start: Abacus, pitch pipe, fade in and out, incr. vol., slow
1:29  Solo piano, c flat, e flat, g flat, a flat, b flat
2:02  Violin, cello, pizz., drum, deep cello solo, v.close solo cello pizz.
3:56  Rail bell (soft), pizz. cello, drum, soft
5:15  Cymbal, gong, misc. shimmering sounds

EP2  Duration:  3:53
5:16  Voice: ‘It’s high noon…’
5:27  Metallic sounds, Flexitones, shimmering sounds
5:50  Voice: ‘Behind the poet’s eyes…’
6:06  Voice: ‘The silver gun…’
6:24  Voice: ‘I walk to the edge of the pool…’
6:40  Voice: ‘I am…’
6:49  Strings, pitch bend, slow rhythm, deep drum, piano
7:15  Misc. sounds, gongs
7:40  Snare, drum rim, etc.
8:00  Strings glisso., cello, cymbal
8:15  Train-like drum sounds, rail bell
8:40  Tuned metal, cello, piano, strings, clink of hammer

EP3  Duration:  3:03
9:12  Piano loop
9:30  Voice: ‘The sun…’
9:44  Piano, voice: ‘I wait and wait…’
9:53  Piano
10:10 Misc. instruments, gong, drum, piano loop, loud cymbal, deep drum
10:46 Crash, voice with cello and other voices, male, female
11:44 Cymbals, crash, fast rhythm, misc. instruments
12:10 Voice: ‘The gun in my grasp…’

EP4  Duration:  2:10
12:15 Solo voice with other voices: ‘A smile passes between us…’
12:36 Abacus
13:04 Voices, piano (arpeg.), abacus
13:32 Tuned metal loop, rail bell, fast tempo, strong rhythm
EP5       Duration:  3:20
14:25     Voices in harmony, rail bell, gong, many sounds at high vol.
14:35     Sounds like morse code, voices, fast tempo and loud, abacus, long
          chord-like sounds, drum, piano loop, deep, slow drum, voices, percussive
          sounds, much layered sound, cello, drum rims, gong, strings, slowly dying
          away.
17:45     Ends

Text   For solo voice:

It’s high noon
I blink in order to correct my vision
Behind the poet’s eyes is an image we don’t see, but feel

The silver gun lies smoothly in my hand
A plot oozing beyond its limits
I walk to the edge of the pool
A place with no outside

I am waiting for you
I am waiting for you

The sun has opened the day like a wound
The world is that of the old men of Europe
The water a cool tomb

I wait and wait

The gun in my grasp
An image behind my eyes
My heart full
Like I have just orgasmed

You arrive
A smile passes between us. You walk to the other side of the pool
A hand brings the gun from your jacket pocket

Text  For voices:

Behind the poet’s eyes
Is an image we don’t see
The plot oozing beyond its limits

My skin screams

A young woman
A screen
There is no place outside
The world is that of the old men of Europe

The water is like a tomb, she says, and smiles

With these words worlds are joined
Mine and hers

The plot oozing beyond its limits
The old men of Europe
Capture her
She is an actress
An American
She is alone and young

She waits on my demands
She is not there
There is an image we don’t see

Behind the poet’s eyes

Outside the cinema
I look around
For an outside of this outside
One answer would be to run headlong into her

I look around
The place deserts me but her image is everywhere

2.4.1 Comments on the text

In section 2.3.4 I quote Sabrina Achilles. She says that the text was prepared in three parts to be layered one over the other. This was to create a block of writing, and she describes how she perceives the consequences of such a construction. It is apparent that this is not the way the text is heard in the finished piece. There is in fact very little voice-layering, the first instance not occurring until about 11 minutes from the start, that is, six or seven minutes from the end. I believe that this discrepancy is due to the fact that Pearce had to change the planned construction of the piece, as outlined in section 2.3.3, to that outlined in 2.3.7, that is from three parts to five.

If I am correct in my assumptions the effect Achilles was seeking was to produce three blocks of text in which voices were intertwined, with no particular voice having more than momentary prominence. The three blocks so created would contribute, each in its place, as an event within the total composition. When it became apparent to Pearce that the planned structure had to be changed, he then modified the text to suit.

In section 2.5 below I comment on the tendency I have when listening to 5EP to seek meaning in the text, even though the composer and the text-writer both state that the text is meant as a ‘state or intensity’ and is not ‘symbolic or representative’, which I take to mean it is not intended to be semantic. The very prominence given the solo voice presenting the text in the composition makes it difficult, I believe, for the listener to refrain from seeking meaning in the words, but were the text to be heard as a ‘block’ of layered voices as described in the paragraph above, there would be more likelihood of its being appreciated as an ‘event’, as initially intended.
2.4.2 Aims and their achievement

In this section I review the aims that Pearce has set himself in the composition of 5EP and speculate on their achievement.

Early in my association with Ion Pearce I asked him whether he had ever composed music along the lines of Western European Art music. He replied that he had done so, but always ‘it came out like Shostakovich’. Pearce would not have been trying to mimic Shostakovich; on the contrary, he was probably consciously trying to sound original. In his broadcast pieces *The Strange Machine, Vanishing Point, Parole, Practice* and 5EP Pearce would have been working to escape from the influences of his past.

Pearce`s strategies to help himself isolate a past that he believed was created by his musical education and experience, were these:

- To negotiate the hurdle of similarity to European art music Pearce moved into a quite different genre of music, namely SA, with the aim of developing artistry as a composer of SA.

- To leave the conventional orchestra behind him Pearce started to design and manufacture his own instruments.

- In 5EP, in the context of directing his concerns to the local environment through his association with people, Pearce`s original plan (see 2.3.3) was to workshop, during the period of composition, with four close friends.

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78 See Fn 54 at 2.3.2 in the comments on Vanishing Point.

79 In section 2.3.2 it is mentioned that Pearce built instruments from rubbish he found on building sites and used them in the composition of *Vanishing Point* and *The Strange Machine*. Additionally, in both *The Strange Machine* and 5EP he used the abacus he built described at section 2.3.2 Fn 28.

80 We know that this did not happen as fully as Pearce had planned. The art form influences were spread throughout the work and not confined to particular sections. (see 2.3.7)
These moves are implied by Pearce in the proposal quoted at 2.3.3 above where he writes about ‘the construction of radiophonic works, sound objects and machines’. He is referring also, I believe, to his instruments and his development as a composer of SA as he goes on to write about the provision of a new and original connection with the time and space of our local environment.

The above statements and comments about Pearce’s aims for 5EP raise the questions: Do the sounds of 5EP suggest influences from Pearce’s education and experience in Western European art music? and do the sounds of 5EP suggest concerns with the local environment?

In the search for answers to these questions I am aware that my opinions and judgements are intuitions.

When discussing Pearce’s composition *Vanishing Point* above I remarked that at times it was reminiscent to me of some early Twentieth Century conventional European music compositions; I do not detect any such pasages in 5EP, but of course this is a subjective opinion, as is also my observation about *Vanishing Point*. The listener may or may not perceive an influence of this nature in 5EP and may or may not consider it to be important. What could be important is whether the composer believes he has achieved one of his objectives.

For me 5EP is suggestive of several environments; at 2.5 below I describe how in some passages I perceive that I am in south-east Asia or some foreign land while in other passages the sounds are ‘environment neutral’, you might say. However, although Sabrina Achilles advises that her text be not heard literally, I cannot avoiding doing so, and am continually drawn to American films (for example the words ‘High Noon’, a famous cowboy film, occur in the text) and detective novels of my youth, with gunfights in the

\[81\] See Fn 63 at 2.3.2 in the comments on *Vanishing Point*.  

93
desert, wagons rolling across the prairie, and silver pistols and meetings around the swimming pool. There is even mention of ‘the old men of Europe’ and I wonder whether these could be the composers that Pearce is trying to leave behind. These events also are described in section 2.5.

I am drawn to the conclusion that the musical sounds of 5EP create for me a local (world) environment, that is, not Australian, but not far away. The strength of the words of the text, however, at numerous times directs my mental images to North America, despite my knowing that the text-writer intended that the text not be symbolic, but to develop a feeling of intensity. Nevertheless, if I cannot dissociate words from meanings in this context, the same could apply to other listeners, so perhaps a less specific text would reduce unwanted or irrelevant mental images while still performing its structural functions.

Although Pearce may or may not have been concerned with escaping from an art form associated strongly with North America, a problem did arise for him in avoiding reference to European art music when describing a compositional feature of 5EP. I have already alluded to his use of the music term ‘canonic structure’ in his report to the Australia Council at 2.3.7 above. In the same report he referred to ‘the use of multiple ensemble structures’, a term that carries with it, to my mind, a resonance of classical music teaching, which of course Pearce was trying to eschew. But there are several related factors that make it difficult to do so and I outline these below:

Firstly, it is a general descriptive term for a structure that occurs in many types of sound/music compositions and is generally, if not exactly, understood; so although the phrase could be an example of Pearce revisiting his past, there is no real reason why this should be so as the phrase can be used in many different contexts.
Secondly, if Pearce does not use these words, what words does he use for the description he wishes to convey? According to James Tenney\textsuperscript{82} the vocabulary of music has not been extended to cover changes that occurred in the early Twentieth Century in Western art music, in view of which he has proposed a new theory of music to accommodate these changes, together with suggestions for a vocabulary. Similarly, Tenney suggests that SA lacks a vocabulary of its own so descriptive writings call on, where necessary, ‘standard’ musical terminology.

Purging European art music influences and classical music training was important to Ion Pearce at the time he was composing 5EP; I do not know what his feelings are on the matter at this stage of his career. But in discussion with Pearce at an ABC function in February 1998, I got the impression that he was pleased in 5EP with the results of his experiment to convey by sound the qualities of weight, inertia and momentum, but he was disappointed that his original plan to work closely with his friends did not eventuate. This is in accord with my observation at 2.3.7 above that Pearce considered 5EP to be a successful piece in that it fulfilled at least some of, or to some degree, the aims of its creator.

### 2.5 THE LISTENER

The preceding sections outline the structure and organisation of 5EP as a sound object, the ‘nuts and bolts’, as it were, of its invention. In this section I give an account of an experimental approach to 5EP in which I made an investigation of the site of its reception and explored a listener’s response (my own) to the sounds of the composition. In this way I hoped to gain a deeper knowledge of the art-work by considering the relationship between it and the listener, and in doing so to reveal a structure in its

\textsuperscript{82} Tenney, James. References throughout Meta+Hodus and META Meta + Hodos, both from Frog Peak Music, Box 9911, Oakland, California, USA. A review of these publications is offered in Chapter 1, section 6.2.3.
assembly that empowered the piece as a form of communication rather than merely a gallery of sounds.

It is clear from the previous sections that Ion Pearce had certain intentions in composing the piece and he would be striving to communicate these intentions through text and sound in an imagistic mode. An assumption of my research was that the sounds and text of the composition could induce in the listener an intuitive response that would bring to light an ordering of the composition that was communicative in nature and may not be perceived by analysis of musical materials. This perception would stand alongside the ‘nuts and bolts’ description to give a more complete account of the piece.

As an experiment, I listened to 5EP in undisturbed silence and as I listened a host of images and thoughts, interpretations and questions passed through my mind. My imagination actively constructed images from the sounds of the piece and my mind sought meanings in words of the text and images of the imagination. In a ‘stream of consciousness’ approach I noted the images and thoughts that came into my mind as the sound flowed. To articulate my response to the passage of the sound I had heard, I made a CD of 5EP combined with the voice of an actor\textsuperscript{83} delivering the text I prepared based on the record of my stream of consciousness. The intention here was to create a new sound work which used sound (the medium of Pearce’s original work), to comment on that work. The resulting work is at Appendix 1, CD Track 2. The text also is given at Appendix 1.

With regard to the text, I wish to make this observation: It is evident, I believe, that a new aural artefact arose from this experiment. During the experiment, as the sounds of 5EP pass into the imagination of the listener, there is an outcome and that outcome is preserved. While related to the original composition, it is something separate from it; it is a new artefact

\textsuperscript{83} The actor was Sonja Brozice, then a student at the School of Contemporary Arts, UWS.
that is the result of creative listening, a construct of the listener’s imagination. In this way a work of art has been created.
Chapter 3
Chapter 3

The ABC and the pre-history of TLR

3.1 THE ABC

3.1.1 Introduction

In the first part of this chapter I briefly trace the beginning and early development of the ABC leading to the Dix Report\textsuperscript{84} of 1981, some of the results of that report, including corporatisation and the appointment of the first Managing Director, the first Corporate Plan, some Industrial matters and finally program objectives.

The history of the ABC is covered in much more detail in several books\textsuperscript{85}, but it is appropriate to repeat it here in brief as during the period reviewed there are events that exemplify ABC policy and planning that directly influenced the development of radio SA within the ABC and therefore the consequent SA programs.

A significant feature is that the structure of the Corporate Plan outlined in the first part of the chapter clearly indicates a declaration by ABC management of their intention to prevent government intervention in their policy implementation, including that of program policies.

\textsuperscript{84} Report by a Committee set up by the Australian Government to review the ABC.

\textsuperscript{85} Three books that I have found useful references are these: Inglis K.S. (1983) \textit{This is the ABC}. Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.
3.1.2 Beginnings of the ABC

The Australian Broadcasting Commission, as it was originally known, commenced broadcasting on July 1, 1932 when the Prime Minister Joseph Lyons, having been introduced by the announcer Conrad Charlton, pronounced the Commission inaugurated. There were then 12 wireless (radio) transmitting stations operated by the Commission: two each in Melbourne and Sydney, one in each of the other capital cities, and relay stations at Corowa and Newcastle in NSW, one at Rockhampton in Queensland and one at Crystal Brook, near Port Pirie in South Australia.\(^{86}\)

By July 1979 the ABC was operating 89 AM stations, four FM stations serving domestic listeners, and six short wave stations, including Radio Australia, serving country and overseas listeners.\(^{87}\) In November of that year a Committee of Review was appointed by the Australian Government to examine and report on all aspects of the ABC’s activities.

3.1.2.1 The ABC in Review - 1979

At its inception the ABC was deliberately and unashamedly modelled on the BBC in London, but over time social and aesthetic pressures made it necessary and desirable that the organization develop within an Australian context.

Changing also was the perception of successive governments of the role and relationship to Government of the ABC, and during 1976 the

\(^{86}\) Inglis op. cit.,p.6.
\(^{87}\) The ABC Annual Report for Year Ending June 30, 1979, The Australian Broadcasting Commission.

(undated) p.8.
Commissioners (later termed ‘Directors’), became so concerned about this that they took action.

Ken Inglis writes:

Rumblings from Canberra had made them fear that [Prime Minister] Fraser was about to impose unwanted changes on the ABC. The Commissioners urged an investigation of the whole system, not just the ABC...

Whereas there had been previous investigations, they had been specific to the ABC and there had been no examination of the whole system of broadcasting.

The job was given to F.J. Green, secretary of the Postal and Communications Department who was to be assisted in his project by drawing on departmental resources. He finished the job in 5 months.

Green recommended in his report of 1976, that policies and performance of the ABC be reviewed every seven years, beginning in 1980. Following this recommendation a proposal that gave rise to a Committee of Review was made in Parliament. K.S. Inglis writes as follows about the circumstances surrounding this:

When Senator Susan Ryan, Labor’s ‘spokesperson’ for the media, called for an inquiry in mid-1978, Staley surprised both his opponents and his seniors by saying on PM that he too wanted one...[He] had encouraged the pressure for a review, and in thus responding to a Labor initiative he had helped to make the inquiry, when it came, bipartisan in character.

Staley was Minister for Posts and Telegraph and responsible for the ABC, and PM was an ABC evening news review program.

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88 Inglis, op.cit. p.392.
89 Inglis, op.cit p.393.
The Review Committee of 1979 consisted of:

Alex Dix, Company Director, Sydney, Chairman.
Alex Castles, Professor of Law, University of Adelaide.
Patricia Lovell, MBE, Film Producer, Sydney.
Brian Sweeney, Businessman, Brisbane, Chairman of the Theatre Board, Australia Council.90

The report of the Committee of Review was presented to the Minister for Communications on May 29, 1981 and became known as the Dix Report. The ABC’s response to the Dix Report was prompt, as was that of the Minister.

Later documentation of the ABC’s response, in its Annual Report for the financial year 1982/83,91 contains an entry to the effect that a Committee of Review had been established within the ABC, at the Minister’s request, to report at quarterly intervals on the progress of its consideration of those recommendations in the Dix Report that the ABC could implement. This internal committee reported in 1985:

The Committee of Review of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (known as the Dix Committee after its Chairman, Mr Alex Dix) reported to Parliament in May 1981 after a major enquiry into the ABC.

The Committee made 273 specific recommendations about the ABC. Most of those requiring legislative action were embodied in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act of 1983. The balance - some 226 recommendations - were passed to the ABC Board and management for implementation.

On 1 July 1983, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation was created and its new Board proceeded with the implementation of the majority of the Dix recommendations. Of the 226 within the power of the ABC to effect, it was decided not to proceed with only nine.


91 *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Annual Report, 1-7-82 to 30-6-83*. Corporate Relations Department, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. 1983, p.6.
Of the remaining 217, by May 1985, 175 had been implemented and 42 were in the process of implementation. Four years after Dix reported and two years after the creation of the Corporation, the reorganisation of the ABC was in full swing.

The pages that follow record in summary form the substantial progress that had been made in implementing the Dix recommendations and, where necessary, in taking them further and going beyond them to create a new ABC.92

3.1.2.2 Corporatisation

The report by the Committee of Review refers to the new Australian Broadcasting Corporation, now no longer a Commission, but named and structured as a business, as recommended by the Dix Report. The organization became a Corporate body on 1 July, 1983.

With corporatisation came the requirement for a new Board for the ABC, the appointment of which became the responsibility of the new (March, 1983) Labor Government. The sole Executive Member was the Managing Director, who was then yet to be appointed. Other Board members were:

Ken Myer, Chairman and manager of a multi-million dollar retail business.
Wendy McCarthy, Deputy chair and former teacher. She was an executive with the Federation of Australian Family Planning Associations.
Richard Boyer, an economic policy consultant from Canberra.
Bob Raymond, a film and television producer.
Sister Veronica Brady, a Loreto nun, educationist and author.
Neville Bonner, an ex-Liberal senator.
Jan Marsh, an ACTU Industrial advocate.
Tony Bond, interim staff-elected member, replaced later by Tom Molomby.93

This was the Board that had been selected to help the Managing Director introduce dozens of changes in a creative, conservative, bureaucratic organization and operate it as a multi-million dollar business enterprise.

The new chief executive selected by the Board was Geoffrey Whitehead, from Radio New Zealand. He was appointed with a three-year contract from 31 October, 1983, although he did not move into the job until 23 January, 1984. Whitehead had the job of overseeing the introduction of the recommendations of the Dix Report.

It should be noted that during the four year period from May 1981 to May 1985 a new Broadcasting Act had been drawn up and passed by Parliament, the ABC had become a Corporation (with a new Board and a new Chief Executive Officer), and all but 9 recommendations of 217 in the Dix Report either in and working or in process of being implemented. This seems an extraordinarily short period of time for such major changes to be put into place and the dispatch of the sequence of events may have contributed to some of the problems outlined in sections below.

Corporatisation led to the ABC producing its first real unified plan for radio. It is contained in the *ABC Corporate Plan 1985 - 1988* and covers both radio and television. In the Preface the Managing Director, Geoffrey Whitehead writes:

> For the first time the ABC has a plan which takes a strategic view of its activities for the next three years. It looks at likely changes in the broadcasting environment, and sets priorities to guide the ABC’s response to these changes.  

The procedure for arriving at a Plan for the areas in which we are interested was this. At the programming level the various departments formed their own committees which were responsible for drawing up statements of

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objectives. These objectives were submitted to senior management and eventually found their way into the statement of Corporate Objectives. The objectives therefore expressed the policy framework within which the programmers were to work during the coming three year period and from which programming policies and instructions were derived. In this way the plan was ‘program-led’ and is so mentioned by Whitehead in his preface to the published document. Although Whitehead implicitly takes credit for this method of approach, I am told anonymously by others that planning by this means was a common practice in the ABC and had been for many years, although related documentation does not appear to exist.

3.1.2.3 Results of the Dix Report
Corporatisation, with resulting procedural and organizational change, had both positive and negative consequences from the aspect of staff. Firstly the negative:

On the negative side, the time following the Dix Report and corporatisation was a time of great internal upset and conflict for the ABC. Both internally and externally, most sources lay the blame for this at the door of Geoffrey Whitehead and his management style. Others believe it very likely that the constitution of board members, that is the mix and experience of board members with which Whitehead was faced would have had something to do with the internal conflicts that developed and the way in which they were handled. Senior ABC managers of the time, now retired, have pointed out to me the distinct lack of Board member experience both in radio and television senior management, and in experience in large company management. The Board also represented a collection of special interests.

\[95\] ibid.
\[96\] Comments made to me in Sept/October 2002.
The Melbourne Age newspaper of 6 May 1986 commented similarly, as quoted by Whitehead, in an editorial urging the Government to choose a new board:

...next time it [the Government] should ensure that the new board members are mostly people with a management background, and preferably with a knowledge of the industry as well. Whether the corporation will continue to be racked with dissension will depend to a large extent on the calibre of the new board appointees. It will also depend on the person chosen to succeed Mr Myer.97

However, as an indicator of the confusion and contradictions of the time, Tom Molomby, the staff-elected Board member, did not see the board in that light:

The Board in its first six months or so had laboured under enormous difficulties. The members had come to the task with energy, enthusiasm and a strong commitment to the ABC. In my view, then and still, they were a very good combination, on the whole well-chosen.98

Yet another viewpoint on the Board composition is expressed by Allan Ashbolt in his essay The ABC in Civil Society. He is writing about the entrenched ethos that can be brought to an organization when board members represent ruling institutions, such as big business:

As one would expect to find under a Labor government, most of the other directors [that is excluding Myer] are reformist in outlook. On the whole it is not a board with umbilical ties to the power centres of civil society, where there seems to be a gathering fear that the ABC can no longer be relied upon to support the ruling ideologies.99

On the positive side, the corporate planning process and the published plan itself had a salutary effect on some staff members. From it were derived responsibilities and boundaries which, together with the fact that

97 Whitehead, op.cit, pp. 144,145.
staff had participated in the planning process, gave some employees the feeling for the first time that they were recognised by management and were not just public servants. Furthermore specific programming objectives were stated (a recommendation in the Dix Report), thus providing a powerful tool in the rebuttal of possible future cuts. For example, let us take a Plan objective to support the development of Aboriginal and Islander production houses. This stated objective could become a platform later from which to defend a specific program (and staff) against being dropped during a time of cost reduction. It would become a matter of a senior producer defending the program by referring to the specific objective in the Plan, thus forcing management to look elsewhere for cost reductions. The Plan was held to be sacrosanct; if it was in the Plan it was safe. No manager would run the risk of offending the Plan. Neither would any government, for that matter, once the plan had been accepted by Parliament.

Lastly, on the negative side again, some present employees who lived through these times of change do not feel that the Corporate Plan bestowed security, either of program or job. The attitude of these people, as expressed to me by one of them\textsuperscript{100}, so far as senior management was concerned is: ‘There’s no change, we still had the same lot of stupid old b...s upstairs who still don’t know anything about what we are doing.’

3.1.2.4 Industrial Matters

In pursuing the matter of industrial and organizational upset within the ABC during the early days of corporatisation I initially had two purposes in mind. One was to investigate the possibility of there being a relationship between industrial disputation and program making, either in content or timeliness or in some other form that may emerge. The other purpose was to establish the atmosphere and intellectual environment in which creative staff was working during the period.

\textsuperscript{100} Personal communication, April 17, 2001.
From my early interviews with creative staff it became apparent that individual reaction to disputation varied from ignoring it to experiencing some dilution of energy. In the light of such comments I decided not to proceed with that investigation, but that my second purpose was valid from an historical viewpoint in the context referred to in the Introduction to this chapter. Detailed documentation of industrial events are given in both Whitehead’s book and that by Tom Molomby.\textsuperscript{101}

In the Managing Director’s Preface to the Corporate Plan for 1985-1988 is this statement:

\begin{quote}
This plan was developed with the intention that the ABC would not require a real increase in Government funds for its ongoing activities. However, with the Government’s announcement that our budget will be held to $395 million, we are faced with a real decrease in funds. Taking into account expenditure commitments for new initiatives in 1985/86, such as satellite transmission, the shortfall amounts to some $20 million.
\end{quote}

So operating costs had to be reduced during this period of reorganization and modification of established systems. The combination of change to improve effectiveness of the ABC and change to reduce costs, at a time of a new Managing Director with a new Board, imposed strains on the whole organisation that it was unable to cope with. The way to cost reduction was through the dangerous territory of staff reduction and by forcing the ABC to follow both lines of action the Government had set the stage for industrial disruption. The ABC Staff Union called for a series of work stoppages.

The culture of the ABC at that time has been described to me by a then senior program executive as ‘a constantly fermenting thing’\textsuperscript{102}. There was dissension within the new Board mainly due to differing views on the degree to which the Board should be involved in the management function,

\begin{flushright}

102 Personal comment October 20, 2000.
\end{flushright}
and an increasing lack of confidence in Geoffrey Whitehead. This led to legal action being taken by Board member Tom Molomby against the Managing Director over his refusal to make certain documents available to him. There was also well-publicised criticism of both Whitehead and the Board Chairman, Ken Myer, by Molomby. Knowledge of this conflict was public property and all employees, nationwide, would have had access to the media’s interpretation of these events. Adding to the upheaval were job losses. During this period staff numbers were being reduced, (200 jobs went in 1985 and a further 650 in 1986)\textsuperscript{103} with consequent re-organization of departments, and this was all happening in the spotlight of press publicity. Staff were living and working in an atmosphere of conflict, change and job insecurity. One retired employee, who held a senior position in program-making, told me he was sorry he had not been offered the ‘long white envelope’ that contained the severance notification and conditions. He would rather have left under those conditions than go through the Whitehead upheavals of the time.\textsuperscript{104}

At the centre of the storm was the Managing Director, Geoffrey Whitehead, who continued with his brief in a business-like way, trying to keep the peace while still achieving his objectives. He lasted three active and confounded years, when he was eased out of his position by David Hill, who had replaced Ken Myer as Board Chairman and who became the next Managing Director.

### 3.1.3 Program Objectives and Adventurous Programs

In his Preface to the first Corporate Plan, that for the years 1985 to 1988, on page 2, Managing Director Whitehead refers to program objectives:

\[\text{...[the Plan] is based on plans developed within work units, in which program matters have the central place. Programming objectives have also been established as the first of three priority areas for the ABC as a whole.}\]

\textsuperscript{103} Whitehead, \textit{op.cit.}, p.171.

\textsuperscript{104} Personal comment October 20, 2000.
On page 16 of the plan, in the section dealing with Radio broadcasting and under the heading of ‘Program Plans’ with the sub-heading ‘Program Objectives’ is the following:

(3) Encourage the development of more experimental and adventurous programs, especially on the two national networks.

The fulfilment of program objectives was thus the top priority of ABC management at that time and the class of program in which our present interest lies was spelt out. For staff members in the Arts Unit referred to below in 3.2.3, this entry must have given particular satisfaction as the planning for ST (see sections below) would have begun already. It would also have lent hope to the acceptance of Richard Connolly’s suggestion of that time for a new, shorter program to be presented each month, referred to in section 3.2.6 below as Images. It is also a broad description of several programs that belong in our field of interest and were being broadcast at about that time, one such being Radio Helicon on National AM radio.

3.2 THE ARTS UNIT AND ITS PROGRAMS

3.2.1 Introduction

This section deals with the formation of an Arts Unit within the arts programming and production area, the programs that stemmed from this unit and their combination that led to the formation of TLR. I believe that these formative programs were critical to the emerging character of TLR and are part of the history that supports the necessarily qualitative verification of my thesis.

Also in this section events are recounted that show, amongst other things, the ABC’s concern in maintaining the relevance of their SA programs.
Specifically, the events demonstrate:

Willingness to send or allow time off for producers to visit overseas.
Willingness to invite overseas producers and composers to Australia as guests of the ABC.
Pursuit of a ‘program-led’ policy as evidenced by senior management accepting program proposals made by producers and senior program managers.

Entwined in these events is the continuing influence of a phenomenon that had begun some years before. The phenomenon is now referred to as ‘the Whitlam years’ and is credited with starting at the election of a Federal Labor government lead by Gough Whitlam in late 1972. This subject forms the first part of the following section.

3.2.2 The Whitlam years

There has been discussion by art historians and writers over the years as to what part Gough Whitlam played in a resurgence of activity across the arts spectrum. My research suggests that there is agreement amongst arts/political writers that the phenomenon did occur and that many creative people were affected by it, but disagreement as to its cause.105 Bernice Murphy in 1983 wrote as follows:

Although a Commonwealth Arts Advisory Board had existed in the preceding era of federal Liberal (conservative) government, the revision of the national arts funding structure at the hands of Gough Whitlam was far-reaching, immediate and dramatic in its impact. In contrast to the general tenor of rampant philistinism with which Australian politicians had treated the arts previously, Gough Whitlam took the (then astonishing) step of elevating the minor arts portfolio to a key position within the Prime Minister’s Department, and Australians were treated to the novel spectacle and impact of the national leader of government as a fervently supportive Minister for the Arts.106

In the context of literature James Tulip writes of the period:

The long Menzies era in Australian politics had come to an end and an alternative force was emerging under Gough Whitlam which promised a new perspective for Australian culture and society. It was as if a myth was enacting itself at a deep level of the Australian tradition, a myth of transformation, of a coming-to-power. Energies were flowing which were new, young, independent, vernacular, and at times republican.\(^{107}\)

Some of the effects of administrative and funding changes introduced by Whitlam are described by H.C. Coombs, Whitlam’s personal adviser and Chairman of the Arts Council, as follows:

Among those involved in the Arts, the situation after December 1972 had all the hallmarks of a cargo cult whose ship had actually arrived. Expectations, personal and corporate, ran riot. Every needy artist hoped for, and expected, support; every group and organisation was sure its project would blossom; those interested in administration looked confidently for the elimination of the Old Guard and for the establishment of their own personal role and influence.\(^ {108}\)

Despite the rather tetchy tone of one who was trying to administer for a Prime Minister who wanted prompt action, Coombs does give some idea of the ferment that Whitlam’s stand for the arts brought about.

In radio there were two generations of artists caught up in the magic of the times: those who were already engaged in creative program-making, and those younger ones who were still gaining their education and planning a career. Many future ABC program makers were drawn from the latter group, and belonging to the former group were two people who feature elsewhere in this thesis: Kirsten Garrett at the ABC and Ros Bandt, sound sculptor.

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Garrett was head of Talks and Documentaries during the Whitlam years and spoke to me about that period:

It was a time of incredible ferment with about seven layers of things going on at once, including Whitlam, including feminism, free education, including journals coming in from all over the world, things that I never previously had access to, and there was a feeling I think, all over Australia of Australia changing and breaking away from a Euro-centric view of the world.109

Ros Bandt also talked to me about the Whitlam years and their effects on her and her work:

You could do anything you wanted. You could dream, and so I did. I am a total product of that era where ‘follow your dream, go for it., think of the impossible.’ Like Gertrude Stein, if something can be done, why do it? We were at this next level of impossibility. And I guess that’s why I was positive enough to establish a whole art practice that I didn’t know what it was until I’d already done it.110

Those comments were by artists who were already engaged with their career. Students who were later to work in the Arts area of the ABC were also caught up in the spirit of the time. Robyn Ravlich, as a recent graduate in Arts, was then tutoring in the Architecture Department at Sydney University before she had joined the ABC. When talking to me about the Whitlam period she described her experience of the Sydney University Arts Workshop, otherwise known as ‘The Tin Sheds’, which was ‘heating up’, as a result of increased funding, after a decline. Ravlich said:

Now this was a hot house. People lived physically there, there were passionate political silk screening campaigns - the poster collective, women’s needlework collective - that was seen as a radical thing that I belonged to.111

Also apparent during the Whitlam years was an emphasis on the production of Australian works by Australian artists. Increased art funding was accompanied by rhetoric aimed at both encouraging the creation of ‘Australian’ works and reducing the practice of Australian creative artists to move overseas. Looking back in 1987 Jim Davidson quotes a statement by H.C. Coombs (see above) that appeared in *The Age* newspaper on 13 November 1972:

> The arts in Australia have too long continued to arise out of and reflect the Western European tradition from which they derived and have been too little influenced by the environment, dreams, prejudices, interests and values which are peculiarly Australian.\(^{112}\)

Davidson goes on to write:

> ...it was undoubtedly the case in 1972 that the fundamental problem in the arts was essentially a national one. People, both art-workers and audience, had to be educated in the notion that art could be produced here, on a regular basis. In the popular mind, culture meant England.\(^{113}\)

The attitude within the management of the ABC was fundamentally BBC, as mentioned in section 3.1.2.1. In my interview with Kirsten Garrett on 20/10/98 referred to above she said this, in referring to an encouraging observation by Allan Ashbolt, a senior producer in the Arts Department at the ABC:

> Allan Ashbolt encouraged us, all young program makers to feel OK about being Australian. I remember him standing at the door of a program meeting one day and saying ‘there is a big push in Broadcast House [referring to ABC Head Office] to not have so many people with Australian accents on air. Don't you pay any attention because it's just a way of making everyone sound like the BBC. We're not the BBC we are the ABC.’ It was just a simple sort of ordinary thing but it was quite revolutionary because before that I too had thought that the

\(^{112}\) Davidson, Jim. ‘Mr Whitlam’s cultural revolution’. in *Journal of Australian Studies*, No 20, May 1987, p85.

\(^{113}\) Op.cit., p.86.
Australian accent was just something that you just simply did not put to air and we had to learn that it was just fine.

Whilst I am creating a link between the Whitlam years (1970s) and the mid-1980s which may seem tenuous, I think evidence points to the probability that enthusiasm generated during the Whitlam years carried on and suffused the cultural community of that time. Martin Harrison, who worked at the ABC from 1980 to 1984 as a freelance producing *Books and Writing*, believed that to be the case and made this comment to me when talking about the period discussed in the sections that follow:

How did the ABC have this [creative energy]? I actually think it was quite extraordinary. I suppose it’s the post-Whitlam moment, a wonderful little moment, there was a general sense of confidence even after Whitlam had gone and I think that that carried its momentum for some time.\(^{114}\)

There is ample evidence that there was such a phenomenon as ‘the Whitlam years’, but the question is ‘how long did it last’? So far as the ABC was concerned, the answer was ‘not long’. Inglis describes the circumstances surrounding ABC funding after the demise of the Whitlam government as follows:

...within a month of winning the election the Liberal-National Country Party government was ready to take a slice off the ABC. Normally the Commissioners [of the ABC] could expect a supplementary grant in January to cover increases beyond their control in wages and other expenses. This year Duckmanton [the ABC General Manager] told them on 12 January [1976], such increases amounted to about $7.3 million. As the grant for 1975-76, in the Whitlam Government’s last budget, was $132.1 million, a total of $139.4 million might have been expected if Labor had won the election. The new men agreed to no supplementation at all, and proposed actually to reduce the sum voted at budget time by $7.1 million, to $125 million.\(^{115}\)

The reduced funding called for immediate action and the ABC Commissioners selected, from the General Manager’s list, radio programs

\(^{114}\) Interview with Harrison 13 August , 1998. Tape in possession of the Author.

\(^{115}\) Inglis, K.S. *op.cit* p.389.
to be abolished, overseas offices to be closed, TV news services that were to go, work on some TV plays that was to stop, and so on. For the ABC as an organisation, the Whitlam days were over.\textsuperscript{116}

There were other bodies that were not adversely affected and they have continued along a path on which they were set by legislation of the Whitlam government: one such is the Community Arts and Development Committee.

In 1989 Gay Hawkins wrote as follows:

\begin{quote}
The community Arts and Development Committee was established in the Australian Council for the Arts in July 1973. Its creation formed a part of the Whitlam Government’s restructuring of this organisation...As a committee...it funded an immense variety of cultural activity, from local festivals to after-school arts workshops to song-writing competitions for trade unionists.\textsuperscript{117}
\end{quote}

The Arts and Development Committee continued after Whitlam and operates to this day, having moved through the name of ‘Community Arts’ to ‘Cultural Planning’. The practice of cultural planning is now actively carried out by some City and Municipal Councils throughout Australia as part of a total planning policy.\textsuperscript{118}

The experiences of Kirsten Garrett, Ros Bandt and Robyn Ravlich outlined earlier in this section would be typical, I believe, of other individuals in the creative arts community when Whitlam was Prime Minister. For Garrett, she was given inspiration in her work, for Bandt, she was inspired in her career aspirations and Ravlich was inspired in the selection of a certain career path. In respect of where these women are today, the Whitlam years

\textsuperscript{116} Inglis, K.S. op.cit p. 390.
\textsuperscript{117} Hawkins, Gay. ‘Reading Community Arts Policy: From Nimbin to the Gay Mardi Gras’, in Media Information Australia No 53, August 1989, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{118} Personal comment to the author by Prue Charlton, Arts and Events Co-ordinator, Hawkesbury City Council. September 2002.
have never finished; in another respect, the stimulation of the time would have passed.

3.2.3 Formation of an Arts Unit

In 1984-85 an Arts Unit was formed within the Talks and Documentaries department, consisting of producers Tony MacGregor, Robyn Ravlich, Andrew McLennan and Martin Harrison. They had been drawn together by similar ambitions for program-making and although their common intent was to develop a new style of program, they had each arrived at this resolve from their own particular direction. One does have a sense of the inevitability of this group coming together considering both the external and internal forces and influences at play. Some of the external influences I have summarised in 3.2.2 above; the internal forces I deal with here.

Roz Cheney, who was later to be Arts Editor for radio, was not directly involved in forming the Arts Unit, but in a letter to me she made the observation which I quote below. She referred to the feeling of some producers that the area in which they worked was running out of steam, as it were, that the enthusiastic spirit that had existed in the early 1970s had waned and development of their production style had ceased. This feeling is also apparent in comments by producers Tony MacGregor and Jane Ulman quoted below. Cheney wrote:

The creative energies there, that went into the establishment of SUNDAY NIGHT RADIO TWO in 1972 (and indeed IMAGES at a later date) were of the highest order. However the impulse had atrophied.\(^{119}\)

The people who were then involved give various accounts of how the Arts Unit came into being. Head of Talks and Documentaries at the time was

\(^{119}\) Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July, 1999. In the possession of the author.
Kirsten Garrett who had just taken over from Allan Ashbolt. Garrett takes the view that it ‘just bubbled up’:

I was head of the department at the time but it was not a hierarchal structure so it wouldn’t have been me imposing it or necessarily me even leading it...\textsuperscript{120}

In the letter to me referred to above Roz Cheney wrote:

The ideas [for the unit] were largely argued by Andrew McLennan and Martin Harrison, with Kirsten Garrett as the acting departmental head providing the invaluable organisational clout and support.\textsuperscript{121}

As Andrew McLennan said to me\textsuperscript{122} that he ‘was offered the opportunity to work for the Talks Department...they decided to create an Arts Unit within the department...I was invited to become Executive Producer’, it is most likely that Kirsten Garrett, Acting Department Head, did the nurturing and encouraging, as suggested above by Roz Cheney, and also she would have been the most likely person to do any ‘offering’ or ‘inviting’.

The fact that there are various views as to the genesis of the Arts Unit I think reinforces the general feeling that it was a consensus event; that is, that it was an aspect of the ‘Zeitgeist’, ‘the spirit of the times’.

In writing below about the producers who came together to form the Arts Unit I am drawing on recorded conversations that I had with each of them. Therefore there are some repetitions and some differences in recollection.

Tony MacGregor\textsuperscript{123}, who had only recently joined the ABC (1984), had been drawn in by his deep interest in theatre and performance. He was keen to make creative programs, programs that did not follow the traditional lines

\textsuperscript{120} Interview with Kirsten Garrett 20 October, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.

\textsuperscript{121} Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July 1999. In the possession of the author.

\textsuperscript{122} Interview with Andrew McLennan 22 October, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.

\textsuperscript{123} Interview with MacGregor 18 August, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.
that were then being followed by some production units within the Arts
area. He had not observed the innovative spirit he had hoped for in work
being produced by either the Talks and Documentaries unit or, more
particularly in Drama and Features, where his main interest dwelt. He
perceived that in these areas program content was consistent, and formats
applicable to that consistency had been developed and remained static;
innovation and experimentation were not part of their agenda. He was
already producing several programs for Radio 2\textsuperscript{124} at the time the Arts Unit
was formed, including \textit{Point Taken} and \textit{The Artful Dodger}, working with
Robyn Ravlich. He was keen to get moving; in his own words ‘hot to trot’.
He was open to suggestions that could lead to change in the work he was
doing and point to a stimulating path for the future. In our interview he
said:

First off all I began to hear about new kinds of approaches to feature-
making...ways of thinking about representation in the media and
representation in literature and the visual arts... new forms of literary
criticism...you get a bit infected by that feverish idea that
representation’s got to change...How things are presented, the forms of
presentation, those things are as important as the content. And there
were people like Andrew [McLennan] who exposed me and many of our
colleagues to what was happening with interesting forms of acoustic
art.

He found a spirit within the Arts Unit that would lead down that path.

Robyn Ravlich\textsuperscript{125} was a producer in Talks and Documentaries, a unit that
was going through some changes. The long-time head, Allan Ashbolt had
retired and following a period of some upset, the group had settled down
under its new head, Kirsten Garrett. The department, which at an earlier
time had been called ‘Special Projects’ had a leaning towards analytical and
interpretative programs, but Robyn was anxious to move in a direction
towards arts and features. She and another producer, Cathy Gollan, were
encouraged by Kirsten Garrett to develop an Arts Unit within the

\textsuperscript{124} The main national AM carrier of the ABC.

\textsuperscript{125} Interview with Robyn Ravlich 7 October, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.
department and also to develop an awareness of considerations and happenings in other units. Ravlich describes it as being an exciting time, with visitors from overseas bringing in new ideas, with sound tapes, and particularly stereo sound, being recorded in unusual situations, with film soundtracks being available and resultant contact with film-makers. The potential of stereo sound was beginning to be realised by producers and Robyn Ravlich was enthralled by the effects that it could give.

In her words:

Andrew [McLennan] had been to a features conference and had brought back some wonderful tapes. Peter Morton [head of special talks and features] invited him to play them to us and that was an exciting moment. I remember that for me being a pivotal moment about stereo, listening to a recording that Andrew had made up to his armpits in water, and it seemed wonderful.

So Ravlich was recognising the capability of sound to be integral with the compositional process, and various influences were coming together to reinforce this realisation.

During our conversation she said that in some of her early work she had tried to use sound but had not done so consistently:

I had myself tried to use sound from starting out in the ABC but it was sort of in bits and pieces. I found myself interviewing film makers so I’d want to use film soundtracks. I interviewed a lot of film-makers, like Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog and Nicholas Roeg, people like that, and... once I’d started using soundtrack material to go with the interviews that they’d done, I was very interested in the way soundtracks were made and how they worked to create a drama in sound all of their own...they were much more interesting separated from film.

Here Robyn Ravlich was talking about two aspects of her initial experience in using a discrete sound source as part of a textual production. In some of her early work she had used appropriate film soundtracks as an adjunct

126 Ravlich remembers some visitors of that time being Peter Leonard Braun, Head of Features, Sender Freis, Berlin, and Film makers Werner Hertzog, Nicholas Roeg and Wim Wenders.
to, for instance, an interview, not as realistic sound effects, but either as supportive comment or direct participant. Then, with the development of high quality, stereo sound recording, she realised that ‘found sound’ could perform the same function and be part of the creative process.

Ravlich was also the first person from the Talks and Documentaries Unit to be selected by management to go to the International Features Conference (IFC), held that year, 1984, in Finland. This conference had a significant influence on the work of units within the ABC and delegates had previously been selected from those groups directly concerned with making feature programs, as distinct from talks and documentaries, so Ravlich’s inclusion was encouragement by recognising her work, her interests and her prospects.

The year 1984 was important for Ravlich; encouragement and opportunity came from many quarters. Some key people with whom she had contact at the Features Conference were Peter Leonard Braun from German Radio, René Farabet from Radio France and Ake Blomstrom from Swedish Radio, who has since died, leaving a legacy to young feature program-makers in his name. She recalls Leonard Braun who earlier that year had visited Australia as follows:

...so that year we had a visit from Peter Leonard Braun who was seen as the father of the feature-making community...and he led some very interesting workshops here so I had even more exposure to the kind of stereo radio documentary that was being made that was very innovative, that wasn't constructed of interview/narration/interview.

In the same conversation Ravlich refers to Peter Leonard Braun as ‘the interesting, stimulating German radio-maker coming and drumming up action in Australia.’ She describes, simply, the period at the ABC where that action was going to happen as ‘Andrew [McLennan] being receptive and ready for a change, myself being ready for a change because our department had been reconstructed.’
In 1975 Andrew McLennan had made an overseas visit partly funded by what is now The Australia Council. He visited England, Europe and Scandinavia where he viewed broadcasting and production studios and spoke with his opposite numbers in those countries. He developed a growing concern about lack of progress and development in the ABC in several areas. For example, during his visit he became aware that the type of ABC studios currently under construction had already been superseded in those countries. Without offering technical details, McLennan expressed the opinion that the ABC was at least one generation behind in design and equipment; other countries were dismantling studios of the kind that were then being built for the ABC. In France and Germany he had met program producers who were doing work that was far ahead of anything being done in Australia in the way of originality, innovation and imaginative use of dedicated technologies. Adding to his irritation with the ABC was the knowledge that these matters had previously been reported by a senior ABC broadcaster, Richard Connolly, following an overseas visit he had made during May-November 1971. These happenings did not add joy to his work and in a positive way added to his resolve to seek change.

McLennan had spent the years 1976 to 1980 at the first ABC FM stereo broadcasting station based in Adelaide, South Australia, where he was a Senior Presenter/Producer in Drama and Features. The then Director of ABC FM, Chris Symonds was interested in McLennan`s ideas and

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127 Interview with McLennan October 22, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.

128 When the author asked Connolly why he thought ABC management had not acted on his report during the intervening 3 year period and upgraded studios, he named two probable reasons: in 1971 they were already committed to a building upgrade in the main offices in Forbes Street, and the ABC, as a large, ponderous bureaucracy, was slow to react. Balgowlah, Sydney, 30 October, 2002.

129 In a personal comment to the author Connolly said that both he and Malcolm Long encouraged McLennan to move to Adelaide for experience in FM broadcasting because there was the possibility of McLennan losing interest unless he was given opportunities that were not present in Sydney studios at the time. Balgowlah, NSW, 30 October, 2002.
supported him and his co-producer, Jaroslav Kovaricek\textsuperscript{130} in founding the program 360° Shift, which was, I believe, the first regular experimental audio and music program on ABC FM Radio.

The program 360° Shift went to air once every two weeks and ran from 6.00pm until midnight, so 6 hours of programming were required from Andrew. In our discussion he described the program this way:

[We] had 6 hours every fortnight available to us to play a whole range of material which was sound-based but which hadn't got much of a guernsey previously. We went back through the catalogues of electronic music and we started a research to uncover histories of sound production...we broadcast all kinds of music that was really on the cusp of new music...We put on everything from soundscapes, sound poetry; we put on all kinds of material, sound documentaries, everything that we thought was new and good for FM radio.

Of course material had to be selected as appropriate for the particular time of its presentation during the six-hour period.

The program ran for about one year and then the Director, Chris Symonds, resigned and the time allocated to 360° Shift was reduced to one hour each fortnight. The new program, aptly named Scratching the Surface, (one hour when there had been six) still allowed a different kind of radio art to be presented, but on a much reduced scale. It went to air on the ABC FM stations in the eastern states of Australia.

The demise of 360° Shift was discouraging but McLennan persisted in his drive to present a new kind of program with original and innovative content, but neither the money nor the will of Adelaide station management was there to support his ambitions. In 1981 he asked to be transferred to

\textsuperscript{130}Kovaricek later produced his program Acustica Nova and became something of a cult figure. e-mail from McLennan to the author dated 3 October, 2002. Confirmed by Richard Connolly in personal comment to the author at Balgowlah, NSW on 30 October, 2002. Connolly also commented that Kovaricek ‘had the sexiest voice in radio’.
Sydney where he worked in Drama and Features, still unable to break the mould of tradition.

The opportunity to move in the direction he wanted came in 1984 when the Arts Unit was formed in Talks and Documentaries. As mentioned earlier, Kirsten Garrett was head of that Department and Andrew McLennan was invited to join the Arts Unit as Executive Producer. They were keen to create a new kind of ethos within the Talks Department’ McLennan told me, and he accepted the invitation.

Martin Harrison remembers with enthusiasm how he felt about working there and he talks about his early impressions of the ABC in these words:

One of the things about the ABC across the literate, intelligent, interested members of the community was that it was seen as one of the key places. I lived and worked in radio in NZ and when I first came here I met a whole stack of people like Kaye Mortley131 and Jane Ulman [see 3.2.6.2 below] who were at the ABC and this was a most extraordinary moment in any place...working out there they were a bunch of public, creative, highly intellectual, highly intelligent people that were able, for some extraordinary reason, able to work in a highly privileged position; they had facilities, they could commission, they could pay to some degree, they could work with musicians with ease and they were in touch. They were a genuine intellectual driving force in this city and beyond... How did the ABC have this... this wonderful group? I actually think it was quite extraordinary. I suppose it’s the post-Whitlam moment, a wonderful little moment; there was a general sense of confidence even after Whitlam had gone.132

Harrison recalls that he and Andrew McLennan started talking about the possibility of forming an Arts Unit and had ideas of how it should work.

In Martin’s words in the same interview:

...we didn’t want to form an enclave, but there was a feeling, a convergence, an awareness that there were a variety of aspects of radio making...There were people working in music who were using radio in different ways, as were people working in text and sound, and

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131 Kaye Mortley is a freelance composer and producer, now resident in France.
people who came in from drama...what would be called these days ‘new media’...a mix of various people who wanted to re-think the art of writing for radio.

During the interview Harrison talked about the founding members of the Arts Unit:

...we came into the arts unit from two different bureaucratic sources: people like Andrew and myself came from the Drama and Features...Robyn and Tony came from Talks, that is, the documentary unit. Tony and Robyn wanted to do things that were not possible in terms of the documentary and we wanted to do things that were not possible in terms of drama and features.

In the same conversation he specifically mentions his own main interests of ‘writing radio and some areas of new music.’ He also states that he perceived it to be the wish of each of the members of the newly formed Arts Unit to escape from the stylistic bonds of their current positions.

At this time radio sound fidelity was gaining quality. FM broadcasting had passed the experimental stage and was now in daily use, providing high quality stereo sound reception. In speaking about the members of the Arts Unit Harrison says this:

We were all interested, genuinely fascinated by the development of very fine sound... we were really intrigued by the area of fine sound and speech and the use of speech and sound in a way that did not prioritise the spoken word. We were all really intrigued by all of that area and it was a common aesthetic alliance between us. It is true that we were surrounded by the effects of the hi-fidelity movement, including stereo sound, which [effect] I now think has come and gone. We are now no longer interested in intuitive listening in acoustically privileged space, in the beauty of the bird’s wing across the air. We [then] were all incredibly earnest about the quality of sound.

The above is an account of how the Arts Unit came into being. In the following section I deal with the formation of the program Surface Tension, (ST) a move almost certainly instigated by the Arts Unit.
3.2.4 Formation of ST

3.2.4.1 Introduction

Initially The Arts Unit had the task of making several programs including *The Artful Dodger* and *Point Taken*, but it was only a short time after its formation that the producers took the first step in achieving their principal aim. They offered a proposal to management for a new program, one that incorporated their joint ambitions. As part of the submission it was suggested that Martin Harrison, who, as mentioned above, was working as a freelance producing Books and Writing, make up one of a group of four producers.

In considering a recommendation to management for a new program, Harrison was diffident about making a proposal for change at a time when the ABC was being pressed to reduce costs. He was also unsure as to whether it was wise to commit himself at that stage of his career to what would be a major project and probably run for some time. However, Harrison respected McLennan’s judgement, as shown in a general comment he made to me in conversation: ‘...in an immaculate way he [McLennan] dropped the information in the right place and at the right time’. Others believed that as the ABC was being pressed politically and societally, the time could be appropriate for introducing a new and innovative program.

There can be little doubt that a proposal for a new program came from the Arts Unit, despite there being no hard proof; this is generally acknowledged by producers in the arts production area. What is not known is how the project was presented for consideration. In the section that follows I examine the way that this was most probably done.

Before describing the instrument that I believe carried the proposal, some comments on the relevant office administration system are appropriate.

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3.2.4.2 The Proposal - Background

I am assured by those concerned that the way Central Filing operated in the area of Arts production in the 1980s has not changed significantly to this day. At the time of writing, for example, TLR program records containing scripts (commonly called ‘run-downs’), are filed in chronological order. Separate files are kept for each feature which include correspondence covering copyright, payment negotiations etc. Apart from actual material broadcast, which is kept in sound archives, duplicate cassette tapes, DATs and CDs are held for easy reference in the department, going back to the late 1970’s. Inter-departmental memos are mainly filed under subject, although that is not a hard and fast rule. But when it comes to finding correspondence or records dealing with a sequence of events, such as events leading up to the formation of ST, material, if it exists, will be scattered. The instrument that I believe formed

the proposal consists of eight type-written sheets of paper headed ‘Corporate Planning-Arts Unit’ and carries a pencil note ‘1986 Setting up Surface Tension’. There is no other notation on the sheets of paper, there is no addressee and no originators are shown. Material of this nature is frequently retained in their own office files by the producers involved, and this is the source through which it came to me, for which I am grateful, as no other records of how ST came into being appear to exist; neither related nor supportive documents to the text that I quote from can be found on ABC files.

It is my belief that the text reviewed below was submitted in some form to management and brought about the formation of ST, and the following are my reasons for believing so. At the time the proposal headed ‘CORPORATE PLANNING - ARTS UNIT’ was probably originated all units of the ABC would be well experienced in preparing material for the Corporate Plan, particularly the program units, on whose aims and objectives the final plan was said to be based. I remark in the review below on the feeling that one particular comment in the text was probably ‘a nod to the Corporate Plan’ and when the structure and contents of the proposal are examined it can be seen to follow a path that dovetails with the Corporate Plan. There is a
statement of goals and objectives, frequent mention of a planning process, and accent on innovation, diversity and appeal to a younger audience, all of which features are contained in the Corporate Plan. There is something of an appreciation of the new facts of corporate life in the proposal and this I believe supports its authenticity as a proposal and not, for example, a series of notes.

I make this explanation as there is no firm indication that the ‘memo’ (if that is what it ended up as) headed ‘CORPORATE PLANNING - ARTS UNIT’ was ever presented to anyone. By the beginning of 1986, the year pencilled on the top of the first page, ST had been on air for at least 3 months. So it would have to have been originated about mid-1985 for ST to have made the airways by its opening month of September 1985. However, despite this anachronism, it has an air of authenticity about it; its content is in line with talks I have had with the people concerned; it reflects attitudes of the time and it is in accord with what happened, presumably as a result. The ‘memo’ looks like being a final draft. Pages have been inserted and consecutively numbered to make up the whole and there are few typographical errors and few corrections. In my view it is a genuine and important document; genuine for the reasons that I have just given and important for these two reasons:

- ST was the original of an evolving program structure and genre that the ABC has been broadcasting since that day.

- Within the document is a wealth of detail that describes the status quo of the radio arts area of the ABC, commercial broadcasting and attitudes and perceptions of the people concerned, in the mid-1980s.

3.2.4.3 The Proposal - Analysis and Comments

The proposal is shown in full at Appendix 5. In the analysis that follows, page and line number of the section quoted from the original document are shown in brackets.
The proposal was submitted under the heading of:

CORPORATE PLANNING - ARTS UNIT

and contained these section headings:

Goals and Objectives
Audience analysis
Strengths and weaknesses
Outside influences
Unit strategy

I examine below each of these sections.

In ‘Goals and Objectives’ the writers outlined the present (1984) position in which many programs dealing with art subjects went to air each week on both Radio 1 (mainly state directed) and Radio 2 (the national carrier). These programs were produced in many different departments, e.g. Education, Theatre, Film, and were principally of the review/preview, comment and report style. Such programs were not subject to any overall guiding criteria. The proposal reads: ‘A proper planning process should make it clear to us all [producers] at what levels we should pitch our material and what the domain of that material is.’ (p. 2, line 1)

This section needs some explanation. In a conversation with Andrew McLennan in late 2001 he suggested that the above reference to a ‘proper planning process’ was probably ‘a nod towards the Corporate Plan’ (see 3.1.2.2), from which I infer authenticity for the document. In the present context it points to a perceived existing unfocussed approach to program production and domain allocation.
The nub of the proposal follows:

We believe there needs to be a central program, preferably on R[adio]2, that transmits a sense of cultural diversity on a national scale. Debate, analysis, comment, criticism and discourse are all grist for the mill at this level, as well as is the need to examine international cultural issues in the broadest sense, as they seem relevant to, or are perceived as being part of, the national discourse.’ (p. 2, line 8)

The proposal goes on to say that audience’s taste is more robust than given credit for and that the audience should be drawn into and become part of the creative cultural process. ABC programs, it says, tip-toe around misconceived bounds of audience tolerance and imagination.

These comments and aspirations were all logical within the context of the presentation but the question must be asked: ‘why nominate R2 as the carrier?’ R2 was certainly national and it did then (and still does at the time of writing) carry the bulk of reflective and arts-driven programs. But R2 is in mono AM sound, and one would think that FM would have presented itself as the conduit to the future for fine sound.

As support for the argument for using FM I quote again (see 3.2.2 above) from a conversation with Martin Harrison in which he stressed to me the particular interest among producers at that time for the fine sound that went with FM:

We were all interested, genuinely fascinated by the development of very fine sound and we were really intrigued by the area of fine sound and speech in a way that did not prioritise the spoken word.134

Several reasons have been suggested to me by the Arts Unit people as to why R2 [AM] was the preferred carrier. These are:

- Although the number of FM stations was growing, AM still had the better coverage nationally with 97 stations on AM (excluding 8 shortwave) compared to 38 stations broadcasting in FM.

- The quality of construction of FM receivers was suspect compared to that of AM receivers.

- Andrew McLennan had seen his program on FM, 360° Shift effectively stifled in Adelaide; could that happen again?

Also, it should be noted that the proposal refers more to program content of the new program than it does to sound presentation.

However perhaps Roz Cheney had the final word on the subject in a letter to me dated 5 July, 1999, which could also explain why a weekly replay on FM was not sought. She writes:

The reason for the new group choosing R2 is ...simply put, it was possible to get the airtime. Successive managers were closing off airtime at what is now ABC Classic FM, a process that continues to this day.

At page 2, line 33, an appeal to younger audiences is contained in the proposal:

We intend to merge the streams of fine art and popular culture in a non-hierarchical way, so that a younger audience, not so firmly imprinted on these culture wars, can relate to this material more readily.

This objective, the merging of fine art and popular culture so as to attract a younger audience was ambitious, but management would certainly have been sympathetic towards a program that at least in part set out to find a
younger audience outside the popular music field where initially the ABC ‘Rock’ stations 2JJ and later 2JJJ-FM were so successful. Blurring of the distinction between SA and the popular material characteristic of 2JJ and 2JJJ reflect technical developments subsequent to the inception of TLR.

Expressed also in the proposal, (page 3, line 10) was the intention:

to explore the area between reportage and performance (between journalism and the radio object) where the documentary is found side by side with studio debate or radio text, sound spot, mini drama...

In personal comment to the author on the above, Andrew McLennan explained that it is easy when making arts programs to move into the mode of arts journalism, or reportage, tempted by the amount of publicity material hopefully sent into the department by arts providers. The other extreme is to describe the ‘mechanics’ of the radio object: for example, the method of producing the sounds. The area between these two is the one that can be explored by movement along all sorts of imaginative threads. The same injunction is repeated (page 4, line 1) but slanted towards originators:

What is desperately needed in the mass media at the moment is a place where arts discussion is not simply promotional information, but is seen to provide an appropriate context for the creating of new works. At the moment only the small journals (and, it must be said, the developing public radio stations) are providing anything like this analysis.

The second sentence above, in which ‘public radio’ is mentioned, was a probable reference to Community radio stations like 2SER FM at the University of Technology Sydney, which was then broadcasting, and (at the time of writing) still is, a range of lively arts programs. They were being used as a stick to beat the ABC about the head.

135 Inglis, op.cit., pp 377, 411, for history of youth-oriented stations.
Under ‘Audience Analysis’ (page 5, line 1) the writer(s) again used the stick of competition:

Already other public broadcasters with limited resources have begun versions of the sort of proposal we have outlined. If we do not catch up with them now, then we might as well quit the field, and just continue with a rearrangement of the status quo.

The writers also made the point that the program proposed was unique and therefore comparisons with current programs made in the Arts Unit were not relevant, least of all by way of current audience statistics.

Among ‘Strengths and Weaknesses’ (page 6, line 1) ‘strengths’ were given as a wide area of expertise, good contacts (presumably with potential contributors to the program), and the ability to enunciate goals and plan for their achievement. Also within ‘strengths’ was a commitment to national broadcasting aims. ‘Weaknesses’ were a lack of clearly defined goals, compromises reached on program space and style, small budget, inability to link with like-minded program makers (presumably including overseas), no knowledge of the networks taking their program and (that stick again) a sense of lagging behind other public broadcasters of similar programs.

It is clear from this, that in the opinion of the originators, all strengths resided at the level of the program makers and all weaknesses could be sheeted home to management strata above. At the operational level good contacts existed with potential sources of program material and so on, with a conclusion implying that the new program should be broadcast nationally. Weaknesses were all the result of poor management: no goals defined, lack of provision of space and funds, interference with program style, information lacking on where programs were to be broadcast, no linkages because of no suitable program to establish them, and being overtaken and passed by other broadcasters. Certainly the group had taken the opportunity to air some grievances with their management.
‘Outside Influences’ (page 6, line 15) was a warning to management, a softening-up message, that the proposed program was going to need funding adequate to commission works from outside sources, employ freelance contributors and meet costs of production. The purpose of the program was to create art works, not to follow the trend in ABC programming simply to report on arts events. Again, attention was drawn to an arts program style that other public broadcasters were adopting that was of a higher order than that of the ABC.

‘Unit Strategy’ (page 7) suggested for the program the tentative title of *Surface Tension* and a single program per week of up to two hours duration. Also called for (page 7, line 13) was the addition of an extra person to the program-maker group, that person to be Martin Harrison who, as mentioned, had been presenting Books and Writing for the previous three years. The proposal reads: ‘His interests now point to a broader brief such as we have outlined, and to which he has already contributed many ideas.’

Below I comment further on the influence of Martin’s intellect and interests.

A suggested time for the program to go to air was Sunday afternoons, with second and third choices of mid or late-evening weekday, or Sunday evening. As an extra guard against the unit falling into an arts-reportage role it was also suggested that the then current program *Point Taken* be replaced by a 45-60 minute program to be broadcast about once per month. This would deal with cultural matters of general interest and would provide a vehicle to develop specialised skills in that area.

The proposal concludes with three more recommendations (page 7, line 34 to end):

1. Joint (or solo) sponsoring of events such as symposia, seminars, expositions etc. in conjunction with, for example, an Art Gallery or Fine Arts Institute.
2. Creation of a tape workshop where the Producers would provide the necessary expertise to develop programs from tape material supplied by listeners.

3. The sponsoring of an ‘artist in residence’ to experiment with the notion and facility of radio as a medium of communication.

Recommendations 1 and 2 appear to be aimed at developing a closer relationship between the Arts Unit (or ABC) and the listening public, or at least that part of it with an interest in SA. The third proposal is aimed at locating a person within the ABC for a limited time to research the subject of radio as a means of communication, with access to airtime as a part of that research.

There is no evidence that any one of the three proposals was adopted at the time. Concerning recommendation 1, TLR has been invited to carry out outdoor installations from time to time. One of these was for the Adelaide Festival of Light, but that did not come about until 1996 and was instigated by the organizers of that function, not the ABC.

However, Roz Cheney has pointed out to me that joint sponsoring of events is now an important part of TLR program policy:

...the joint sponsoring of events with external cultural organisations has been a big success (as resources allow). It has been and is something taken on by THE LISTENING ROOM in several ways...\footnote{Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July, 1999. In the possession of the author.}

Producers to whom I have spoken agree that such events are important but expensive, supporting Cheney’s comment ‘as resources allow’.

I think that the function of a ‘tape workshop’ as suggested in recommendation 2 has been part of every-day work in the arts area of the ABC for some years, to a greater or lesser extent. There are letters on file from composers who have sent in tapes of their compositions for evaluation
and possible broadcast. The reply has been courteous and sometimes encouraging, such as ‘we can’t use this now, but keep sending material you think we could be interested in.’ Anything accepted would almost certainly need the expertise of a producer to prepare it for air within the context of a complete program. It seems that the suggestion amounts to a definite effort to attract ‘tape material supplied by listeners’, perhaps by an announcement during the course of a program, and have suitable compositions developed for broadcast in a workshop. So talent could be discovered and given workshop training, with results favourable to both the ABC and the genre. Its application would come, I think, into the category of recommendation 1: ‘as resources allow.’

So far as recommendation 3. is concerned, in 1995 a form of residency was created in conjunction with the Australia Council137 but this was so far in the future that any link with a suggestion made in the mid-1980’s would be unlikely. One of the ideas behind the residency created with the Australia Council was that of the resident composing a piece for broadcast; the purpose of the suggestion here seems to be experimental and could be an endeavour to generate a ‘laboratory’, as well as a ‘gallery’, ethos within the ABC.

Perhaps something like recommendation 3. may yet come into being in the light of this recent comment by ABC Managing Director Russell Balding:

> We’ve sort of, over the last few years, gone back into our shell a little bit on the creative/innovation point of view...I’d like our program makers to come out of that shell a little bit, be a bit more innovative...There will be some failures, but I think there will be a lot of successes as well.138

In Balding’s last sentence there is an echo of Richard Connolly’s words, quoted in 3.2.6.1 below, of over 30 years before when writing about the

137 See Chapter 2, section 3.1.

approach of some program makers to their art: ‘...boldly experimental, with an appreciable failure rate but some stunning successes to compensate’.

3.2.4.4 Acceptance

Martin Harrison, as mentioned earlier (3.2.4), had some misgivings about the timing of the submission of the proposal which other producers did not share. In the event, the proposal was accepted. Management approval was granted to prepare and put to air a new program called Surface Tension. It is not clear who the person or persons were who actually gave final approval for this; no one clearly remembers. But the proposal seems to have gone through department heads in Programming without hindrance and then probably to Malcolm Long, who was head of Radio and so probably had the necessary authority. The evidence that the proposal had been accepted is that it did, in fact, go to air. There does not appear to be anything on file about its approval.

At this time there was protection and security for the production group formed to make ST; the project they had proposed had been accepted and, being innovative was enshrined, at least generically, in the Corporate Plan. It was acknowledged, I am told by producers, that the budget set was ample, and the future shone brightly ahead.

3.2.5 Surface Tension: a brief life

3.2.5.1 Introduction

This section outlines the events that took place from the birth of ST, through its brief life to its demise just over 2 years later. ST is important to this discussion as it was another step along the path of evolution of SA broadcasting at the ABC and it continues today in TLR. As such ST contained some elements that were gradually minimised and others that grew to shape the genre.
3.2.5.2 Going on air

The first program went to air on September 7th 1985, and the series ran until November 14th 1987. It occupied a 90 minute time slot weekly on Saturday afternoons, from 3.30 to 5.00 and was part of an Arts program that ran up to the 7.00pm news, and included *The Coming out Show*, a program focussed on material dealing mainly with the interests of women, and *Singers of Renown*, a popular program of long standing presented by John Cargher. It was broadcast over the national AM network of 2FC, 2NA (Newcastle) and 2CY (Canberra) in NSW, 3AR in Victoria, 4QG in Queensland, 5CL in South Australia, 6WN in Western Australia and 7ZL in Tasmania. It was prepared in stereo but broadcast in mono sound over the network; the reasons for stereo production for broadcast over an AM network were explained in a letter to me by Roz Cheney:

...the ABC re-commenced FM broadcasting in stereo in 1975. By 1984 it was well and truly taken for granted (I think even Triple J was stereo by then). Radio Drama and Features producers had been accustomed to producing in this medium then for nearly 10 years before SURFACE TENSION started.

A news release dated 11 July, 1985, which was mailed to composers, artists and others who had participated in Arts Unit programs in the past or who were doing so at the time, gives an idea of the broad range of activities proposed. The signatories of the release are Andrew McLennan, Robyn Ravlich, Martin Harrison and Tony MacGregor, who are presumably the producers who submitted the proposal for the program to management as outlined in 3.2.4 above. The release is reproduced at Appendix 7.

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140 Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July, 1999. In the possession of the author.
In brief, these were the functions that the producers of ST took upon themselves:

Talking about the arts: painting, literature, film...etc. including art funding, art politics, art creation, theory and criticism, and institutions.

Producing radio art by providing a venue for performance, including drama, poetry and environmental tape works, particularly those by Australian Sound Artists and composers.

Constructing and Presenting programmes [sic] in such a way as to utilise the specific qualities of radio as a medium relevant to communicating the program content.

Encouraging the crossing of genres and media.

Encouraging artistic experimentation.

Focussing on local and Australian art and artists.

Media writer Jacques Delaruelle was later to write in a magazine (whose reference is now lost, but a page of which I found in ABC files) these words:

Although Andrew McLennan, Robin [sic] Ravlich and Martin Harrison would probably admit that their program is not remarkable for the modesty of its ambitions, and that there exists a well known gap between intention and realisation, Surface Tension is one of the very few experimental radio programs that can be heard in Australia which could restore some optimism about the future of what used to be an art form and which the brutality of commercialism has reduced to quasi-nothing.
3.2.5.3 Program Preparation

The program objectives for ST had been drawn up by the team of producers and they worked hard and for long hours to accomplish them.

The way that programs were prepared generally followed these lines:
The group of Surface Tension producers would decide on a theme for a particular program and two producers would be nominated to be responsible for that program. These producers would set about assembling material that would constitute the elements of the finished work. This could mean using tapes that were already on file, or getting hold of new material from outside sources or creating something new, or a mixture of all. As bookings for production studios within the ABC were very heavy and studios were not dedicated to any one group or section of program-makers, it was necessary to book studio time early. Studios equipped with more modern technical facilities were particularly sought after. Robyn Ravlich remembers the pressure, frustration and pleasure of the time:

...the success of any program is also about what resources you can garner and we could only get access to certain studios that were now required for us, at night. We used to have a big Wednesday night booking. Now, I recall frequently working until midnight on that night-booking, because it gave us access to a multi-track facility. We were not digital, of course, in those days, but multi-track was a pretty exciting discovery for me...we often worked with probably younger sound engineers who were more prepared to go our way.141

Wednesday night or Thursday and Friday would be occupied with producing material in the studios, often until late hours. On the morning of the day of the broadcast a bleary-eyed group would meet for final script writing. Ravlich remembers:

...arriving at about 10 o'clock and trying to work on making the material cohere...some people trying to make a mix of the opening moments of sound elements, you know, little bits of the programs, blending them in with our sound logo. And maybe one or two others writing a script for two voices.

The elements of the program were taped but the introductory presentation and any commentary between elements were live-to-air, with the taped pieces being brought in and out in the studio as required by the overall structure; this went on for a 90 minute program.

Ravlich says:

Mind you, sometimes it was touch and go...it really was very close to the limit...By the end of Saturday afternoon you’d either be simultaneously completely hyped-up from having been on air going ooooh or your adrenaline was all gone.

All producers involved agree that the methods they used were exciting, creative and exhausting. Tony MacGregor says:

[I remember] how programs were put to air...ad lib, phone calls...not just a matter of presenting different pieces so much as assembling a collection of units that welded and cohered, that were often ad lib, a ‘whole’ program. Creative effort was apparent throughout the program.\(^{142}\)

3.2.5.4 Staff

Original production staff as shown in the News Release, were joined by Departmental Assistant Donna MacLachlan, and stayed intact until December 1986, when Martin Harrison left to take up a position at the University of Technology, Sydney. He was replaced by Virginia Madsen, a sound artist/composer who had already worked for the Arts Unit as a freelance.

3.2.5.5 Program content

As some indicator of performance against objectives, the table below shows content, or subject, of individual segments within all programs that were put to air by ST from the time the program started in September 1985 until

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\(^{142}\) Interview with MacGregor 18 August, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.
the end of that calendar year. It is worth noting, in the light of program structures to be discussed later, the proportion of text-based features:

Total number of programs: 17
Total number of individual features: 72
Text-based or spoken word features: 34

Subjects consisting of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastronomy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed media</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soundworks</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics of art</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA in Australia had now gained a focus. From what had been radio features within art programs about writing, painting, theatre, etc. ST had become a productive hub. ST now was an individual presence, a centre capable of communication, of receiving and transmitting, of being recognised and of recognising others. As a unit it had been brought into the culture of SA.

3.2.5.6 Going off air

ST continued on its way. Programs were conceived, made and broadcast. Overseas contacts were made and extended. Works were commissioned and composers encouraged. But there were undercurrents. Letters from listeners of the time are on file that express dislike of some of the material in certain ST programs and there are memos from senior staff that point to phone calls from listeners with adverse comments. There are also on file individual adverse comments from senior administrative staff about program content. For example, a program that contained interviews with
some residents of Kings Cross, an area bordering the centre of Sydney, contained strong language and drew listener letters and adverse internal comment because of that. Such complaints were strongly rebuffed in house by the ST producers on grounds of authenticity, while placating letters were written to complaining listeners giving reasons for the inclusion of the material that caused the objections. Conventional wisdom also has it that some of the ‘top knobs’ in ABC Administration didn’t like ST either.

Amongst the likely causes of such unwanted listener attention was to do with the Saturday afternoon time slot occupied by ST. Listener profiles are not available, but from passing comments that have been made to me in the department I gather that it was considered that many listeners at that time were fugitives from sports broadcasting and were seeking a bland program, probably light music or similar, that would allow them to relax, safe from noisy broadcasting of sporting events. A high proportion of these people, it was thought, would be conservative, not interested in the content of programs such as ST and ready to make adverse criticism.

Martin Harrison, with the benefit perhaps of a later view of ST from his position at the University of Technology, Sydney, expressed a view that will come up again in Chapter 4, section 2, TLR-Networks and time slots. During a conversation we had in 1998 he commented that the sounds of ST were so different from the sounds of ABC AM radio that ST was unacceptable on that band and a move to ABC FM was inevitable…

What I think Harrison meant was that a program of the form and content of ST was so incompatible with other programs carried by ABC AM radio, e.g. reflective programs such as Books and Writing, which Harrison himself had produced and presented, that ST would eventually be moved off the AM band.

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143 Interview with Harrison 13 August, 1998. Tape in possession of the author
Malcolm Long, Head of Radio, is variously reported as saying at the time: ‘We can’t dump *Surface Tension* but we have to move it’. When considering the fate of ST, due regard would have had to be paid to the Corporate Plan in which the ABC was (and at the time of writing, still is) required to broadcast programs of an innovative nature; ST could not be dumped, but a name change and a change of time-slot would relieve the pressure and the innovative qualities of the program could be retained.

You could imagine a proposal like this being put to the group of producers:

> Here is an opportunity to form a new program, to be 90 minutes long, broadcast weekly in both FM and AM; it will mean closing both ST and *Images* and it can start in the New Year.

Whatever way was used to present the idea it was successful, and probably welcome; the plan was agreed and work started on preparations for the new program.

### 3.2.5.7 Comments and Summary

Behind the moves that resulted in the formation of ST can be seen, in the outline I have given in this section and at 3.2.3, what I believe to be a strong influence of Andrew McLennan, which I summarise here:

In 1975 McLennan had asked to be moved to the ABC studios in Adelaide because at the time that was the sole location where programs were being made for, and transmitted in, FM. Initially, in the Adelaide studios, he had free rein with his program *360° Shift*, in which he worked for a sympathetic manager and with a willing colleague. When the manager moved on, Andrew’s airtime was reduced from hours to minutes (and the program renamed *Scratching the surface*). He then asked to be moved back to Sydney (in his own words) ‘where the action was’. In the Sydney studios there was a growing awareness that, in Roz Cheney’s words quoted in 3.2.3 ‘...the impulse had atrophied’, and an Arts Unit was formed, in which Andrew McLennan played a leading role, to rejuvenate creative spirit. Following the formation of that group, and at the appropriate time, he obtained approval
for the formation of a new program, *Surface Tension*. His recommendation was supported by keen new producers Ravlich and MacGregor, part of the recommendation being that freelance Martin Harrison, who had established himself as an intellectual leader, be added to the staff. So there was McLennan, executive producer of a 90 minute program, with keen producers, solid intellectual backing and his own considerable artistic talent, all ready to go. He was well on the way to achieving his aims.

However, experience informed management that the time slot chosen for ST was inappropriate, and for that and other reasons outlined above, the program was taken off air.

### 3.2.6 Images

#### 3.2.6.1 Introduction

This section deals with the formation of the acoustic art program *Images* which went to air on ABC FM in September 1985. The program is important for several reasons, amongst them being that it continued a development in style of presentation of ABC acoustic arts programs and that it was combined in 1988 with ST to form TLR bringing with it some valuable attributes.

At this stage it is appropriate to give consideration to the part that Richard Connolly played in the changes that took place in the 1970s and the program *Sunday Night Radio Two*, later named *Radio Helicon*.

Inglis traces Connolly’s early career path with the ABC as follows:

He had studied in Rome for the Catholic priesthood but stopped short of ordination, and joined the ABC in 1956, when he was twenty-eight, working first in Religious Broadcasts, then Education, and from 1967 in Radio Drama and Features. *Sunday Night Radio Two*...came out of discussions between Connolly, Rodney Wetherell and Julie Anne Ford of his own department, and Arthur Wyndham, Director of Radio 2 and
3, after Connolly had studied new uses of radio in France, Italy and Germany on a Churchill Fellowship in 1971.144

Mention has already been made of Connolly’s overseas Fellowship Tour in 3.2.3, when discussing the tour made later by Andrew McLennan. The Fellowship had been awarded for Connolly to study spoken-word radio in Italy, Germany, France and England, with particular reference to stereophonic radio, and to study techniques in soundtrack music for film and television.145

In Connolly’s report of his visits to English and Continental broadcasters the two following quotations are significant in the present context. When referring to Dr. Franco Malatini, Director of Radio Drama at RAI (Italy) Connolly writes:

His ideal is ‘radiophonic’ radio, i.e. works that are, in conception and execution, essentially of the medium. His operational method is to free editors, writers, producers, from the restraints of formally delineated areas of operation.146

Later in the report Connolly writes:

As a last word, in the field of Radio Drama, I should summarise the difference I observed between the Continentals and the BBC (which the ABC tends to follow). Simplifying, for the sake of brevity, the Continental program-makers favour a technique-based approach, founded in the medium itself: boldly experimental, with an appreciable failure rate but some stunning successes to compensate. At the BBC the approach is more word-based.147

Although Connolly here is writing about radio drama, he has advised the author that he wanted to put his words into actions and bring the

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144 Inglis op.cit., p360
146 ibid., p.1
147 ibid., p.32
Continental approach to *Sunday Night Radio Two*, then *Radio Helicon* and later again, *Images*,\(^\text{148}\) as discussed next.

### 3.2.6.2 The formation of *Images*

In an ABC file there is a record of a notice of proposal made by Richard Connolly in November 1984 to form a program to be known as *Images*. It is contained in a memo dated 30/11/84 addressed to the Controller of Radio Programs. The memo comments on a number of programs and plans for the future, and starts as follows:

**RADIO DRAMA & FEATURES**

**THE PLANNING STATE OF THINGS**

I am sorry that recreation leave arranged some time ago, and very difficult to defer, will stop me from taking a personal part in the pilot arts and cultural affairs planning process. On the other hand I am glad that David Chandler will be taking my place and know that he will contribute valuably to the planning.

Connolly refers to the pilot planning process, so it seems likely, as the memo was written about the time of corporatisation, that this was the first occasion that planning was to be carried out in a formal way, or at least as part of a total plan.

On page 3 of the memo, under the heading **NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL** Connolly writes:

> For the financial year 1985-6 we shall be proposing two 13-week sessions of a new one-hour program which we provisionally entitle ‘Images’. It would be a kind of radiophonic FM counterpart to *Radio Helicon*, featuring high-quality writing both of old and new integrated with music and other sound-symbols. It would incidentally provide an outlet for some short pieces of new Australian writing as well as musical composition and improvisation. It would be poetic and non-discursive - treating themes by association rather than logical methods. Hence the title.

\(^{148}\) Personal comment to the author at Balgowlah, NSW, 30 October, 2002.
The program *Radio Helicon* mentioned above went to air each Sunday for a period of 3 hours on Radio Two (now Radio National). It had started in 1978 and finished in January 1993. It was dedicated to arts presentation and leaned strongly towards literature. People in production have told me that there has probably been nothing quite like it on air in Australia since and that at its height it was a 'jewel in the crown of arts'.

The proposal was apparently accepted and *Images* started on September 12, 1985 broadcast on the FM band and finished two years later.

3.2.6.3 People of *Images*

Jane Ulman was involved with *Images* from its inception. What follows is a brief biography covering her early days at the ABC.

Jane Ulman started working for the ABC in 1974, that is, during a period in which I have already traced a burgeoning of creative forces in culture in Australia (see section 2.2 above). She had graduated from Sydney University with Honours in Arts and a deep interest in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. She had worked on productions with the Sydney University Dramatic Society (SUDS) and retained her contact with that part of university life during her early years with the ABC. At that time the ABC was putting to air a program called *Sunday Night Radio* (which was to be re-named *Radio Helicon* in 1978, see 3.2.6.1) that contained innovative material in both radio drama and features, and Richard Connolly, the then Director of Drama and Features, suggested to Jane that she work as an assistant on that program. This was a very productive move as Jane’s interest in drama became focussed on its production for radio, and she also gained experience in making radio features.

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149 Numerous people in the production area, particularly long-term employees, have made comments of this sort to me. Probably several used the expression ‘jewel in the crown’ in the course of casual conversation.
Changes were being brought about in studio production styles and equipment and Ulman was able take part in these developments. In 1985 the new program, *Images*, was proposed by Richard Connolly (see 3.2.6.1 above) and later nurtured by Roz Cheney. Jane Ulman was asked to join in the production of *Images* with Martin Harrison, who had moved into the Arts department from Books and Writing and was also a member of the production team for ST, as mentioned earlier. Ulman spent 18 months or so with *Images* and then left the department to work as a play editor.

3.2.6.4 Problems for *Images*

Although *Images* was a small program (planned for two 13 week 1-hour sessions per annum) it was well funded, according to comments made to me by production staff (see also comments by Jane Ulman below). It continued the practice of grouping features around a theme and it was ‘poetic and non-discursive’ as proposed by Connolly (see 3.2.6.1), that is, journalistic format was minimal. The program was produced and broadcast in FM, another advantage as we shall see. Jane Ulman made these comments to me about *Images*:

*Images* seemed to me, I have to say, the rich cousin of Surface Tension, where there was much more excitement and much more adrenaline because they had a weekly program which they got to air live. And they were trying all kinds of different things. *Images* was also producing work that hadn’t been produced in that way before but with a more secure budget, or certainly a more generous budget for the air time to be filled, and a much longer lead time. So not nearly so much pressure. You might have eight programs in a season and then several months off and then another season.

It was planned that way for financial reasons, partly, and also to make it easier to secure the airtime on FM. And it gave the opportunity to program makers to spend a greater amount of time in planning and producing works specifically.\footnote{Interview with Ulman 15 June, 1998. Tape in possession of the author.}

Although there seems a general feeling that *Images* had been well-funded, within two years Roz Cheney, who had taken over as organiser of *Images*,
was sounding a warning. In a memo dated 28 September, 1987\textsuperscript{151} she wrote to the Executive producer of Features drawing his attention to the difficulties that she faced in planning for the coming calendar year. Firstly she wrote about the lack of production staff, naming the various producers who were no longer available to produce for *Images*. They included Robert Peach, Dick Connolly, Jane Howard, Gwen McGregor and Amanda Stewart, all of whom had spent time on productions for *Images* during the previous two years, some more than others. Their absence would require the hiring of outside producers and the purchase of overseas programs. Added to this difficulty Cheney wrote that funding had not been increased from the initial figure, which had been set two years previously, and program costs had increased significantly. Already she had been forced to make adjustments to program schedules, cancelling the second series of broadcasts planned for 1987.

Planning was in place for the third series of *Images*, to be broadcast in 1988, but Cheney was pointing to the difficulties that stood in the way of her achieving an effective program. I can find no response on file to her memo of September 28 which I summarise above.

At the end of 1987 *Images* was taken off air. Again, I can find nothing on ABC files documenting the decision to make this move, no confirmation of a meeting held and no advices to other departments. It is most likely, I think, that this decision was made by Roz Cheney with concurrence, either verbal or implicit, from the Executive Producer of Features.

3.2.6.5 Conclusions

At times, when in conversation with present producers of TLR, I formed the opinion that the program *Images* was not held in high regard. This, I think, was due mainly to its being a ‘small’ program, *viz.* two 13-week sessions per year. However, when considered from an historical perspective I believe

\textsuperscript{151} Memo held on ABC files.
that Images holds a position of some importance in the evolution of the ABC’s SA programs for these reasons:

1. Images gave SA a place in the broadcasting schedule of FM. Prior to the inception of Images there had not been a program focussed on innovative or exploratory features dealing with the use of sound on the FM band since the late 1970s/early 1980s when Andrew McLennan was broadcasting from Adelaide. That Images, in performing that function, occupied a time slot on FM was a factor, I believe, in TLR later being allocated time on that band.

2. The annual funding that had been set for Images and carried with it when TLR was formed made a significant contribution to that program.

3. Images contributed to the form and content of SA features by continuing the practice of thematic ‘clustering’ as expressed by Richard Connolly at 3.2.6.1 above and also by presenting features in a less discursive and more imaginative style, as expressed by Connolly and implied by Ulman at 3.2.6.3.

Images was taken off air and merged with the program ST, as advised at the end of section 3.2.5. So came about the birth of TLR.

3.2.7 Summary
The early part of Chapter 3 dealt with the beginnings of the ABC, its corporatisation and the first Corporate Plan. In the plan was the objective to encourage the production of ‘experimental’ and ‘adventurous’ programs.

From that time, the mid-1980s, can be traced the energy and intellectual effort committed by program management in the arts area to pursue that objective. For example, program makers were given opportunities to visit and consult with overseas producers of programs of the experimental and
adventurous kind. Overseas producers of programs in that category were invited to visit ABC studios and spend time with appropriate ABC producers. Young, well-educated staff was engaged, trained and given opportunities, both in production and decision-making. Program content and broadcast times were adjusted as far as possible to suit audience needs, and there was close management overview of creative results; all within the usual business constraints of budgets and space.

The formation of ST following a proposal by the Arts Unit, I deal with at some length as it is one of the few programming developments for which I can find documentation. The proposal itself is historically valuable as it covers subjects such as program style and content, objectives and suggestions for the future, and supporting arguments that give indications of the environment of the time.

Richard Connolly’s notification of the formation of *Images* is also valuable, despite the short life of the program, because of his description of a compositional style (the move from journalistic to poetic) that continues to be developed in works of this day.

Of these two programs, *Images* in particular just seemed to disappear from the airways without bother or internal comment. The accent, rightly enough, was on the program to come.

Behind the merging of these two programs and the inception of TLR I sense the emerging leadership of Roz Cheney.
Chapter 4

TLR

Its character and essential elements

4.1 INTRODUCTION

TLR was formed by a combination of ST and Images: both programs were taken off the air after their last programs of 1987. Production staff were brought together and program slots were reviewed and amended.

The listening expectations of that part of the Saturday audience seeking relief from sport broadcasts were deemed by program management to be incompatible with an innovative program such as ST. There had been listener complaints about content of some ST features. There was a perception by staff in the Arts Unit, mentioned to me in anonymous conversation, that senior executives in the administration area were hostile to the program and would like to see it closed. Perhaps a change of name would relieve the situation.

When considering the matter of naming the new program, it is clear that irrespective of program content, the name Surface Tension had to go. But as Images was, you might say, already ‘up and running’, why not continue using that name? I put the question to Richard Connolly in conversation and he suggested a number of possible reasons. He said he felt that Roz Cheney, head of Radio Arts, wanted to introduce a new name on which to build a new program. The name The Listening Room had various connotations that could be called on in program structure, content and promotion, and it lent itself to visual presentation, as described by Robyn Ravlich in this section below. Connolly was not enthusiastic about the name as he tended to associate it with audition rooms, as mentioned by Ravlich, but he believed that as a program developed, its name became a
symbol of the listener’s perception of the program; if it was enjoyed by listeners, they liked the name.\footnote{152}

With regard to the program Images, I write in Chapter 3 that there does not appear to be any material on ABC files that deals with its closure at the end of 1987 and its merging with ST. What ‘merging’ means in financial terms is that any funds allocated for Images and ST as separate entities would come together as a result of ‘merging’ and thus be the budget for the new program, TLR. Allocation of funds for the following periods would be subject to conditions applying at the time. In any case closing Images would solve the two problems that Cheney wrote about in her memo quoted in 3.2.6.4 above, namely, shortage of staff and shortage of funds.

The result of bringing the two programs together was a SA program on both the AM and FM bands, adequately funded and adequately staffed.

The ABC, through TLR, is the only national radio broadcaster in Australia of compositions that qualify for the term ‘sound art’ as defined in Chapter 2. The program has embraced various kinds of presentation and content. In an internal ABC report Andrew McLennan wrote:

TLR is a venue for the exploration, the cross-pollination of radio forms. In The Listening Room you can hear new radio plays, audio essays, acoustic features, sound documentaries, new music, sound-scapes and sculptures, audio installations, acoustic art forms - a whole range of radiophonic means, used to develop a kind of dialogue between radio producers, artists and the audience with the medium, and with ideas...ideas about radio, about performance, about culture.\footnote{153}

Other ABC programs, \textit{Radio Eye} for example, which may be expected to cover the same territory as TLR have a different program brief\footnote{154}.
TLR has been bringing these styles of radio presentation to an Australian audience since 1988. During the 10 years from 1988 to 1997 almost 550 hours of broadcast time were devoted to compositions falling within this gamut.

A logo was designed for the new program by members of the production team to be shown on promotional material and stationery. A copy is at Appendix 7. Robyn Ravlich explained its significance to me:

The original painting by surrealist [sic] painter Rene Magritte shows a room filled with a giant apple and the painting is called The Listening Room. Our adaptation shows an ear (smaller than the apple) in its place and a microphone. There are various layers of meaning and allusion. Audition rooms at radio stations (and conservatoria etc) are generally called listening rooms, so this is a perfect name for us - an imaginary room or a space for listening in that perfect way made possible by an acoustically designed and treated environment. And there is the other interpretation - that the room itself is listening, i.e., a subversion of what you first think.

And then there are no walls in our room - only columns - so we are inside and outside without barriers looking in and listening out. And the whole is an exercise in imagination, to which there are no barriers.

In the following sections I bring together what I believe are the major components that constitute the program with the intention of describing the program and of showing the care and attention that have been given at various levels of the ABC in striving for its success.

The first program from the newly constituted Listening Room went to air on January 18, 1988, the opening piece being *The Listening Room*, composed and presented by Roz Cheney.

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155 The logo shows the roof of the listening room being supported by widely spaced arched columns.

156 e-mail to the author dated 5 August, 2002 in the possession of the author.
4.2 TLR - NETWORKS AND TIME SLOTS

The new program, 90 minutes long, was broadcast on FM on Monday nights and repeated on AM on Sunday nights. I have not been able to find any reasons for repeating the program on AM on Sunday nights, but there may have been a perception that some of the audience that had listened to ST on AM may not have been prepared to move to the FM band. In a way, perhaps, it also demonstrates the attitude of ABC program managers to the mix of music and voice that still exists today in relation to TLR. Below I relate the background to this dichotomy as I have heard it from several anonymous sources within the ABC.

In comparison to AM broadcasting stations, FM stations are cheaper to set up and inherently have a number of attractive features, such as superior audio, stereo capability and greater freedom from electrical interference. As the ABC’s FM coverage was expanding during the 1970s, ABC radio management began to develop an FM network of ‘fine music’ stations, together with a national AM network presenting a wide variety of programs of a reflective character. The former network is now known as ABC Classic FM, over which is broadcast an almost continuous stream of classical music with minimum interruption. The latter network is now RN2 (Radio National) which presents contemplative programs mainly in speech, e.g. dramas, talks, book readings and documentaries, in AM.

TLR is not seen now, and apparently has not been seen for some years, by some senior ABC program managers, to fit the classical music mould, and consequently Roz Cheney, who was Arts Editor for radio before her dismissal in 2001, had been under pressure to agree to have TLR moved to RN2 which broadcasts in AM. Cheney’s argument against the move was that TLR’s programs were composed and produced to be broadcast in high quality, stereo sound; thus an expectation of sound reproduction with such characteristics was part of the creative process and these characteristics were only available on FM.
So perhaps TLR’s being allocated space on both FM and AM was with the idea of being able to make a move to either band in the future with minimum upset. However, when considering the comment made to me by Martin Harrison in 3.2.5.6 above, in which he presents the argument that ST had to get off AM because ST’s sound was so different from that associated with AM, it appears that TLR would end up solely on FM. As it happened, TLR certainly started in favourable circumstances with time on both FM and AM and national coverage.

The conflict between program managers who want to follow a certain programming policy and producers who want certain programs to be broadcast in the mode for which they were composed, according to Cheney, continues, with its resultant frustration, to this day.¹⁵⁷

Within a few years, Dr. Norman Swan, who was acting then in a senior program management position, removed the TLR repeat program from the AM band. There appear to be no documents on file relating to this move and Dr. Swan was non-committal on the subject when I interviewed him on 18 March, 1999. I refer to this matter and that in the preceding paragraph at the Conclusion of this chapter.

### 4.3 TLR STYLE AND SOUND

#### 4.3.1 Introduction

This section is about what the listener hears in TLR programs: the style of their presentation, the sound, or ‘voice’ of TLR and some comments on the grouping of program items. To bring these subjects together I repeat some observations made in preceding chapters.

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¹⁵⁷ Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July, 1999. In the possession of the author. Also quoted in 3.2.4.3.
4.3.2 Program Style

As there is not a formal statement of the aims of the new program, it is reasonable to assume that the aims as stated for ST and Images would continue to apply. Andrew McLennan was the founding executive producer of TLR; to him would have fallen the task of continuing the aims of both programs, perhaps with some modifications as perceived desirable following ST's demise, as suggested below:

In 3.2.5.2 I summarise the aims of ST and below I quote from a part dealing with the spoken word (the italics are mine):

Talking about the arts: painting, literature, film...etc. including art funding, art politics, art creation, theory and criticism, and institutions.

In 4.1 above I quote from a report by Andrew McLennan in which he describes the program TLR. I quote again as follows (the italics are mine):

TLR is a venue for the exploration, the cross-pollination of radio forms. In The Listening Room you can hear new radio plays, audio essays, acoustic features, sound documentaries, new music, sound-scapes and sculptures, audio installations, acoustic art forms - a whole range of radiophonic means, used to develop a kind of dialogue between radio producers, artists and the audience with the medium, and with ideas...ideas about radio, about performance, about culture.

It is clear that the spoken content of ST of ‘talking about the arts: painting, literature, films...’ has been amended for TLR to ‘a kind of dialogue’, which, of course, can take many forms. Implied also is a reduction in verbal intervention probably by the presenter. This had apparently been planned for ST, although I cannot find a reference to such an objective, and was remarked on as follows by Delaruelle (see 3.2.5.2) in September 1985:

...already a clear distrust of the written word is perceptible [in their programs]. Robin [sic] Ravlich confirms this impression, ‘... at this
stage every program has seen a progressive reduction of sentences down to words and sounds'.

This reduction of spoken content which was perceptible in the programs of ST and continued, I believe, through TLR programs, could reflect both the desire of producers to shape programs more closely to the ABC mould for FM (maximum amount of musical sound and minimum amount of voice) and also to satisfy a creative desire to move away from any suggestion of a journalistic approach.

This same desire is reflected in the difference in topics proposed for TLR and those of ST; there is the move from ‘art funding, art politics...institutions’ to ‘...new musics, sound-scapes and sculptures...’, a move from the practical to the poetic.

The changes implied in the comparison between ST and TLR I believe have been evolutionary and have continued as one program followed the other; in the TLR programs of today the listener will hear no reference to arts funding, politics or institutions or similar topics and will hear minimal commentary by the presenter. (The subject of presentation is covered in 4.3.4.2 below)

In terms of number of programs broadcast, the short-lived program *Images* was the junior partner to ST in the formation of TLR. However, in introducing *Images* Richard Connolly’s foresight is shown in his memo, quoted above, to the controller of radio programs in November 1984.

When advising of the proposed new program he wrote:

...[the program] will feature....high quality writing integrated with music and other sound-symbols... It would be poetic and non-discursive - treating themes by association rather than logical methods'.

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158 Detailed reference not available.
159 See Chapter 3, section 2.6.1, Introduction to *Images*.
This is a description of the program style that was yet to emerge and is now exemplified by TLR. Connolly had a clear view of the way ahead, the way that was opening for sound symbols to be a firm part of the compositional process.

4.3.3 The sound of TLR

During the time that I have been researching TLR I have been told in conversations that there is a Listening Room sound; that features composed or produced within TLR have a characteristic sound, an ambience, that is indefinable but identifiable. This was mentioned to me at Radio Kunst in Vienna by Elizabeth Zimmermann\textsuperscript{160} during a visit I write about below at 5.3.2.2 and by several overseas producers\textsuperscript{161} at the International Features Conference held at the ABC, Sydney in April/May 2001. Producers and sound engineers at TLR are aware of this perception among their peers and have sought reasons for it. A consensus has emerged that it may have to do with a relationship between sound engineer and producer or composer; that an empathy exists brought about by a production method developed within the ABC and described below.

From the early 1970s the production of a radiophonic feature at the ABC could involve the composer or producer working with up to three different sound engineers. Firstly there was the engineer who obtained the sounds requested by the composer either from a central sound bank or by recording them. Then another sound engineer might work with the composer to make the piece and finally a third engineer could be used to fit the resultant piece into a program.

\textsuperscript{160} Comment made by Zimmermann in Vienna on 21 September, 1999. Tape in possession of the author.

\textsuperscript{161} These producers include Harri Huhtamaki of Radio Finland and Julie Shapiro of WBEZ, USA.
Changes to this procedure were brought about by producer initiatives and internal pressure, which Jane Ulman vividly described to me in interview, from her viewpoint of both producer and composer:

...and one thing I’d have to say is that people like Andrew [McLennan] and Kaye [Mortley] and later Martin [Harrison], developed working relationships with sound engineers that I think began to make our work distinctive...it was partly this enthusiasm to stop radio sounding so formal, so proscenian [sic], so performed from a distance. It was to make radio a more immediate performance medium; a more intimate performance medium and to use its power to evoke images and so on by using sound for all its delicacy as well as its strength. I think that was happening and what allowed that to happen...was the development of the relationship between the sound engineers and the producers so that you worked as a very close team. You get together with a sound engineer and say ‘look this is what the piece is about and we need to go out on location to record this or that sound. Or we’ll record this scene on location or let’s try and record the whole piece on location’. This didn’t come without fighting...Andrew [McLennan], I can remember, fought long and hard...[he] would insist on having the same sound engineer to record and then to post-produce. And he would insist on having that sound engineer for long enough to do decent post-production and quite intricate work.162

Perhaps the close relationship gave rise to one of the ingredients of the ‘Listening Room sound’ described by Jane Ulman when she said: ‘It was to make radio a more immediate performance medium; a more intimate performance medium and to use its powers to evoke images...’.

On a more practical note, in a personal comment to me (May, 2001) sound engineer Russell Stapleton suggested that another function often carried out by the sound engineer was that of providing a second opinion as requested by the composer. Stapleton also commented that it is not unreasonable that SA compositions produced at the ABC should carry a recognisably common sound: they were made on the same equipment (Fairlight), with the same library of available sounds, in the same studios by engineers who had been trained in the same school and had been

working together for some years. Perhaps this provides more ingredients of the distinctive sound.

Whilst TLR is not the only SA broadcaster in the world to work by the method described above, a great deal of material broadcast in England, Europe and the USA emanates from private or commercial studios where conditions may or may not allow the sort of liaison described here to develop.

If we accept that there is a distinctive sound associated with all, or some of, the compositions broadcast by TLR, the speculations that follow could throw some light on the subject.

As mentioned above, comments about ‘TLR sound’ were made to me by several producers from overseas broadcasters and confirmed by TLR producers to whom the same comment had been made by the same people. Although TLR producers have sought possible explanations for this ‘sound’, the idea that it exists originated elsewhere.

The question that arises next is ‘on what compositions are the people who recognise the sound basing their perceptions?’ The probable answer to this is that the compositions they are most likely to hear are those sent to them by TLR for interest and possible use in their own programs, or entered in a competition, or compositions submitted by TLR to Ars Acustica for inclusion on a CD, or played at a conference, such as the IFC, or some other international meeting. These pieces would most likely be compositions by TLR producers or compositions by other Australian composers produced by TLR producers in ABC studios; they would tend to fall into the category of ‘all my own work’. So by accepting that there could be a discernible TLR sound, a probable well-spring would be a network of aesthetic standpoints within TLR itself, a binding thread woven by a broad aesthetic consensus.

In assessing this possibility there are these facts to be considered: two current producers, Robyn Ravlich and Andrew McLennan have been
working together since before TLR was formed, some 14 years prior to the
time of writing. Tony MacGregor was one of that original group until 2001,
and current producer Jane Ulman joined the group in 1990. (See also 4.4
below) For a creative group of individuals to have worked closely together for
so long one would expect that they have an understanding of a common
goal, which could manifest itself in the form (or sound) of a hallmark on the
work produced, which is what this discussion is about.

The thought suggested here also raises other considerations. For instance,
could this mean that only works from other sources that fit the ‘sound
mould’ are accepted for broadcast? Could there develop a uniformity of
program style that hinders innovation? Even allowing for new staff
appointments to bring in ‘new blood’, selection and training may or may not
be guided by continuity of ethos.

From another viewpoint the practice of holding to a certain program style,
or keeping parameters of style within a perceived range (if this is what is
happening) might stem from an attitude of caution. In the opinion of some
producers in countries around the world\textsuperscript{163}, including Australia, SA
represents a threatened species. TLR may or may not be on what has
become known within the ABC as ‘the hit list’ and under the threat of
funding reduction or removal, so perhaps risks should not be taken by
widening the parameters, perhaps there should be no ‘rocking of the boat’.
But again the current Managing Director, Russell Balding commented, as
noted in Chapter 3,\textsuperscript{164} that he would like to see ABC program-makers come
out of their shell and be ‘a bit more innovative’.

Perhaps the line of supposition developed here has led to a confusion
between innovation and program style (or ‘sound mould’), and there are no

\textsuperscript{163} At the IFC, April/May 2001, at the ABC, Harris St., Sydney, the German writer Peter Leonard
Braun spoke strongly against what he saw as a growing resistance of some broadcasters to SA
programs.

\textsuperscript{164} Chapter 3, section 2.4.3, Fn 53.
reasons why parameters cannot be widened (if that is to happen) and the TLR hallmark retained.

When considering the sound of TLR, there has been evolution in the role of the sound engineer. In the gradual move in TLR program style from ‘journalistic’ to ‘poetic’, as described initially in Chapter 3, section 2.6.2 and developed and emphasised in this section, the sound engineer has assumed greater importance as a member of the producer/composer team.

By comparison, in the production of a program consisting mainly of voice/text in journalistic mode, the creative role of the engineer is minimal: recording levels have to be set, microphones may have to be placed and so on, and in many productions, such as talks and book reviews, the engineer’s duties may not go beyond these. However, in the production of a composition in a poetic style the engineer can be called on for a great range of skills and deep involvement; skills may be needed in sound-generation, fine timing, multi-track production and mixing etc., and the engineer may be enlisted by the producer for advice on sound material and composition.

This burgeoning participation has been recognised by TLR producers, with the result that the name of the sound engineer has been frequently given alongside that of the composer/producer when a composition is identified on air or its details appear in text. This is very rarely, if at all, practised in other areas of ABC production, I think for the reasons that I have given above. In TLR productions since early 2002 the sound engineer is not always identified as being responsible only for the sound; often his/her name is shown with that of the composer/producer more as a partner in the production. For instance, the winner of an award in 2002 in which Russell Stapleton was the sound engineer was referred to and described on the award itself as follows:

*On the Raft, All at Sea* by Robyn Ravlich and Russell Stapleton, Human Rights Radio Award, Human rights medal and Awards 2002
In Chapter 2, section 3.6 I write about the significance I attach to the role of the sound engineer and describe the composition of 5EP as a 'companionable episode'. Recognition of the contribution of the sound engineer as shown above in the wording of the award, I think is an equitable way to share the credits.

The heightening of the role of the sound engineer discussed above could also influence, in a profound way, the aesthetic of the work; the sound engineer could play a part in both the form and content of the composition\textsuperscript{165}. The liaison of the sound engineer with the composer/producer has moved to the plane of the poetic, resulting in a blurring of roles. The ‘blurring’ can be seen as constituting an area of creative interchange, a form of discourse in which the outcome is greater than the sum of its parts. In this compatible relationship, formed in the course of creating a work, there is energy present that flows back and forth between composer, sound engineer and producer; this could result in the composer finding an enhanced self-expression, something beyond that which he, singly, may not have achieved.

4.3.4 Program Structure and Presentation

4.3.4.1 Program Structure

In the report by McLennan referred to in 4.1, he wrote, in regard to structuring TLR programs in the years 1988 and 1989, as follows:

> Each program aims at a kind of internal cohesion, or there is a loose thematic association across a block of programs. e.g. ‘Mind, Body, Spirit’ was a block of programs built around a critique of the body...’ ‘City Limits’ canvassed current critical theory about ‘the city’... ‘Word of Mouth’, a series of five programs that follow the oral tradition, from West Africa to western urban myth making.

\textsuperscript{165} In the context of this argument it should be noted that some sound engineers at the ABC are composers (and performers) in their own right. For instance, during 2002 Stapleton composed a number of short ‘earclips’ for TLR.
This grouping of pieces or programs around a subject is still a policy of TLR’s program structure. It produces a structure within which compositions can comment on the one theme in a variety of styles, and it encourages the drawing of attention to a phenomenon, or subject, along a number of routes. It also creates, in the words of Robyn Ravlich ‘a marketable thematic appeal’. What Ravlich is saying is that it is more effective to promote a theme by way of, for instance, a small promotional leaflet, or flyer, for mailing or a brief notice on the internet, than it is to promote a specific item or program by the same means. See ‘TLR Awards and Promotion’ at 4.6 below.

4.3.4.2 Presentation
The material in this section is drawn from a discussion between Robyn Ravlich and the author at the ABC, Harris St. on 15 May, 1999.

How a program will be presented is an important element in the process of constructing an evening program or series of programs, so consideration to presentation is given at the early stages of planning.

The first sound the listener hears from TLR on Monday nights at 9.00 is the audio signature of the program; this is the equivalent of opening the door of a listening room. Over the years the sound of the creaky hinges of a door being opened can be heard in the program’s introductory sound clip.

The presenter then makes the introduction and describes the program that is to follow. Responsibility for writing the script that describes the program for the night is shared by everybody in the program group, with the idea that each member of the team should be able to write for the voice.

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166 Conversation with the author at the ABC, Harris Street, Sydney on 30 July, 2002.
Who will write a particular script is not a random choice; Ravlich explains it as follows:

...we pick the person in the group who might have the best connection to the material; they might have worked on it, they might have a special interest in the subject.

When it comes to the content of the introductory script, my own approach would be towards writing in an explanatory and historical way, which would obviously require more than a few minutes airtime. This approach, Ravlich believes, would not be appropriate for TLR, but ‘should happen outside of our program’. In our discussion she went on to say:

I keep using these words ‘poetic and ‘performative’; we don’t want to wear our people out by having to listen to an essay...we try and write for performance in a way so this is not me [the presenter] just explaining, but trying to set images that might spark-off the imagination...in a sense we’re asking people to relax and enjoy and experience.

The care that is given to writing the presenter’s script for radio performance is quite apparent when reading the studio script or listening to the program; it is equivalent to writing copy for a visual advertisement, such as appears on television. It is valuable airtime that must be used to the best advantage. Ravlich says, ‘What we’re doing is not only constructing a listening experience, we’re trying to construct an audience for our material’.

There is, I think, a parallel between the on-air presentation of a program and the entry for that program that appears in the magazine 24 Hours. The program entry that appear in the magazine is prepared within TLR and is the print equivalent of the on-air introduction. In my observation it is given as much care in its preparation as its on-air equivalent; it is trying both to inform regular listeners and to attract new ones.

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167 See also section 6.2.2 in this chapter. See also Chapter1, Fn 1.
The aim of attracting new listeners is mentioned again at section 6.2.4 of this chapter; it goes without saying that the aim encompasses not losing present listeners. Attracting new listeners without losing old ones is not an easy path to follow. It can be done perhaps by spending more money on promotion or using current funds more effectively, if a way to do that can be found. The most usual method that I have encountered is by modifying program content and this is where the risk lies in that the present audience may not be interested in the changes made and move away from the program. TLR’s audience is a ‘dedicated’ one (see 4.7 below) and any modifications to program material would have to be made slowly. Being ‘dedicated’, TLR’s audience, I would expect, would be slow to react, but once started, a downward trend in numbers would be difficult to stem. The approach outlined in this section and at section 6.2.4 referred to above is that of attracting new listeners by on-air voice on the evening of the program. By the same token, any trend resulting from this approach would be apparent only in the long term.

As well as TLR, I have listened to the program introduction of three other SA broadcasters, Harri Huhtamaki at Finnish Radio, and Klaus Schöning and Marcus Heuger of West German Radio (WDR). In each case the introductory style tends to be a reflection of the person.

Huhtamaki does not waste words at any time. His program is opened by a sound logo, then come the words in Finnish: ‘Radio Atelier presents...’ and then the composition is played. At the conclusion of the work there are the usual credits and perhaps a few comments, but that is all. Huhtamaki’s precept is ‘Let the music speak for itself’.

Klaus Schöning, who retired in 2001, has been involved in the development and broadcasting of SA in Germany for many years. (see Chapter 5, section 3.2.1) In his introductions he tended to speak of the historical background of the piece and, if appropriate, his involvement in it.
We can listen to Marcus Heuger, who, at the time of writing, directs the SA program on WDR, introducing a program. This was the occasion of the broadcast of a compilation, prepared by Dr. Jim Franklin and myself and referred to at Chapter 5, section 3.2.1 with sound on audio CD at Appendix 2 and a translation at Appendix 9. From this example I get the impression that Heuger speaks directly to his listeners in an amiable fashion and describes the work to come shortly and factually.

By comparison is the style of TLR outlined above, which is informed by poetry but bears the device of individual writers.

### 4.4 TLR PRODUCERS

When TLR first went to air in 1988 the producers were Tony MacGregor, Andrew McLennan, Robyn Ravlich and Roz Cheney, with freelances Virginia Madsen and Kay Mortley. Diane Dean was production assistant and Jane Ulman joined the group in 1990. Other ABC producers have done work for TLR from time to time and other producers have had TLR as their focus, working temporarily within the production group; some producers have moved to other sections within radio arts and some have left the ABC. For example, at the time of writing Kaye Mortley is working as a freelance in France, Tony MacGregor is executive producer of Radio Eye at the ABC and Diane Dean holds the position of studio director. At this time TLR’s core production group consists of Robyn Ravlich, Andrew McLennan, Jane Ulman, Tony Barrell and Sherre De Lys, who is on leave with an external scholarship and has been temporarily replaced by Cathy Peters.

In addition to producing for broadcast the works of other composers, all TLR producer are active participants in the creative world of SA and produce works of their own for the program. Over the years 1995, 1996 and 1997 compositions by TLR producers made up about 20% of the total number broadcast.
Producers in the core TLR group produce features that go to air in other ABC arts programs, e.g. *Radio Eye* or *Poetica* but generally their energies are directed to TLR.

During the 10 year period beginning 1988 to the end of 1997, about 950 items, including repeats, were put to air by TLR of which about 400 had either been created by, or put into a form suitable for broadcasting, by TLR producers.\textsuperscript{168} Of the balance of programs produced during the review period, some were brought in from overseas in finished form, some were produced by their composers using ABC studios and ABC sound engineers, and others were produced by composers using their own equipment.

### 4.5 INTERNATIONAL COMPOSERS

During the period 1988 to 1997 statistics\textsuperscript{169} show that TLR drew on works by composers of 28 different nationalities for presentation in its programs. Features were drawn not only from composers in Europe, for example, Germany and France, where TLR relationships were, and still are, strong and consistent, but also from countries such as Greece, Croatia, Poland and Tibet, where contact, to say the least, was not so regular.

Below is a list, unranked, of all countries whose composers contributed to TLR’s programs during the period 1988 to 1997 inclusive:

\textsuperscript{168} See statistics, Appendix10.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
The same statistics also indicate a trend in availability of suitable material from certain world sources of which the producers of TLR have to be aware when planning future programs. An example of movement of program source comes from the USA. In the 10 year period 1988 to 1997, between 1988 and 1992, 96 pieces came from USA-based composers compared to 58 between 1993 and 1997. As reasons for this decrease I suggest these factors: firstly, the downward value of the Australian dollar vis-a-vis the US dollar, thus making commissioning or purchase of a piece more expensive, and secondly, the decreasing visibility of American SA. Over the years SA in the USA has been moving away from national radio networks, where it would be visible to producers at TLR through various contacts, to community radio, where its presence would be less visible. SA exists in the USA but it is fostered in groups of composers both by exchange of tapes and CDs and in years later than the statistical review period, by Internet posting¹⁷⁰.

Compensating for the decrease in features from the USA, the years 1993 to 1997 show an increase in numbers of programs from composers in countries that had not appeared previously or from which only a smaller number of programs had been broadcast. These include Canada, Portugal, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland. At the time of writing the feeling

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¹⁷⁰ Conversations with Ravlich and delegates at the IFC, ABC, Harris St. Sydney, April/May, 2001.
of TLR’s executive producer, Robyn Ravlich is that more programs will be drawn from such sources in the future.\textsuperscript{171}

There was, however, a sign of a possible resurgence of radio SA in the USA at the IFC held at the ABC in April/May 2001.\textsuperscript{172} Julie Shapiro, a delegate from radio station WBEZ, Third Coast Public Radio, Chicago, drew attention to the Third Coast International Audio Festival to be held in late October of that year.

Shapiro spoke about the international audio festival and competition that was then being organised by station WBEZ, and the plans she had for the future. TLR entered the composition \textit{If...} by Sherre DeLys and John Jacobs in the competition and won the Silver Award for Documentary. Since then Ravlich has worked with Shapiro to strengthen the bonds between TLR and Third Coast Radio. Through links that TLR has established over the years, Ravlich has helped Shapiro widen the international knowledge of WBEZ’s activities and future projects, and so gain more support for their festivals, competitions, etc.; from time to time also she acts as a ‘sounding board’ for Shapiro’s ideas.\textsuperscript{173}

The Third Coast Radio website evinces a very busy radio station with a strong feeling for community participation. The station presents itself both as a broadcaster and as a cultural institution. There is a magazine, festivals of several kinds, a Writing Project for radio, partnerships, commissioning of features and documentaries and many more such events. I noted that within a wide range of activities there appears a common thread directed towards emphasising the beauties and benefits of audio presentation. The relationship with TLR is manifest in the use of its name

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{171} Conversation with the author at the ABC, Harris Street, Sydney on 30 July, 2002.
\textsuperscript{172} The Conference is covered in more detail in Chapter 5, section 3.4.4.
\textsuperscript{173} Conversations with Ravlich at the ABC on 15 April, 2003.
\end{flushright}
for a Listening Room event for special listenings each month held by WBEZ at the ‘3 Arts Club’ in Chicago.

The audio festival and competition that Shapiro spoke about at the IFC in Sydney in 2001 resulted in many entries, some of which appear in WBEZ’s current program listings; thus the competition is still providing material for the station.

4.6 TLR AWARDS, PROMOTION AND COMPACT DISCS

4.6.1 Awards

The world of art is rich in awards; TLR productions, contributors and staff have won awards from about 20 different sources between 1988 and 2002. In addition, TLR itself has on occasion contributed as a joint awarding body. Full details of awards that have been won by TLR and TLR producers are given at Appendix 8.

At the ABC, and I suppose also in the view of most recipients, the winning of an award is an important event, and the more esteemed an award is, the more significant is the event. I believe that in radio broadcasting in particular, awards have an important place in establishing the effectiveness of a program or individual composition in the estimation of independent judges, who implicitly represent peers and colleagues.

In theatre or any form of public performance an audience is present, watching and listening, reacting to what is seen and heard in some way that is probably apparent to the performers, but in radio no such close interchange exists, except perhaps in talk-back radio. TLR certainly does receive letters, phone calls and e-mails from listeners, but the number is very small and in the main, critical comment comes from individuals within

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174 Name used by permission of the ABC.
175 Links from www.thirdcoastfestival.org
the organisation. Therefore recognition of quality by an outside entity in a position of evaluative authority is more than welcome.

As mentioned above, TLR has won awards from about 20 different sources between the beginning of 1988 and the end of 2002. Two of the most highly regarded sources are European: the Prix Futura, with headquarters in Germany and the Prix Italia whose headquarters are in Italy. The Prix Futura has now been renamed the Prix Europa and is open only to members of the European Community.

The Prix Italia is probably the most eminent of the competitions, covering a wide range of art activities, including broadcasting, with numerous subdivisions within each. Below I quote from an introduction, written by Wendy Reid of CBC Radio Music, Canada, to the announcement of an award to one of their entries:

By way of explanation, the Prix Italia is the most important broadcasting competition in the world. It was established by RAI, the Italian national broadcasting system, for the recognition of the highest achievement for music, drama, and documentary broadcasts in both radio and television.

The competition is held every year and attracts entries from all the developed countries of the world. The delegates and juries review the programmes over a two-week time span. Besides the awards, which are among the largest and most prestigious in the broadcast community, the greater impact of the event lies in the showcasing of the programmes which result in world-wide broadcast of the winners.176

Reid goes on to write: ‘...the [winning] work has been broadcast dozens of times in the participating countries...listeners in this country and around the world have responded by asking for the work on CD...’

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176 From internet site //www.chass.utoronto.ca/~chatzis/awards.htm.
TLR has won four awards in the Prix Italia, the most recent to the time of writing being in 1992, and three in the Prix Futura, the most recent being in 1995.

TLR’s first international awards came in 1989 with a Prix Futura Special Commendation in Radio Drama for ‘Paganini’s Last Testimony’ and two Prix Italia awards, one for ‘Collaborations’ for Music and one for ‘Beyond Settled Districts’ for Radio Documentary.

In the years 2000, 2001 and 2002, eight awards were won, five of them in international events and three in Australia. The five international awards came from the Netherlands, Croatia, Germany, France and the USA.

The Australian awards were won by two works: On the Raft, All at Sea and If…. One award was the Human Rights Radio Award 2002, one was the United Nations Association of Australia, Media Peace Award for Radio and the third was an award from the Australian Music Centre for Distinguished Presentation of Australian Compositions by an Organization. As well as the recognition of the particular merit of each winning work, an important point emerges, namely that never previously has any one of these awards been conferred on a SA composition. In particular, the Australian Music Centre award is significant in that it recognises SA as belonging to the genre of music. The Human Rights Award and the Media Peace Award are noteworthy for a somewhat similar reason. In referring to them executive producer Ravlich writes: The two Australian [awards] last year did jump a barrier - where the radio art qualities were recognized in conveying the strong ‘issues’.177

The steadfast presence of TLR as a broadcaster has brought about, I believe, the recognition by these organisations of SA as a significant element in community communication.

177 email to the author dated 22 April, 2003.
I do not believe that TLR sets out to win awards; the responsibility of its producers lies principally towards its listeners and the content creators who supply program material. If, in the process of fulfilling those responsibilities, a composition or the program itself wins an award, such an event must be a most welcome confirmation of the relevance and quality of its work.

4.6.2 Promotion

4.6.2.1 Introduction
There are the various channels used by the ABC to promote TLR; these, I think, are the most important and are described below:

- 24 Hours program magazine
- Website link
- On-air announcement of programs
- Flyers and Mailing Lists

4.6.2.2 Program Magazine
The magazine 24 Hours\textsuperscript{178} contains detailed program information for ABC Classic FM and Radio National. It is published monthly and is sold through newsagents and by subscription. Program information is given for each day and is quite detailed for ABC Classic FM. The magazine also contains articles about current and coming programs, visiting celebrities and so on. Special events on TLR may get mentioned, such as an anniversary or a public installation, but in general, exposure is given to matters relating to Western European Art music.

4.6.2.3 Internet Promotion
The website leading to TLR is \textit{www.abc.net.au/classic/}. At the site, Andrew McLennan is introduced as Presenter, the programs are described and there is an invitation to have your name added to a mailing list for

\textsuperscript{178} See also Chapter 1, Fn1.
continuing information. Programs are listed with details of composer etc. two months in advance and *Earclips*, which are short, self-contained pieces of three minutes duration, can be played (see 4.11). Some selected compositions from past programs are described in about one paragraph each and these also are available in sound for their full duration. It is, in my view, an adequate, well presented site, with some text to draw in the new listener and program details for the regular listener.

4.6.2.4 On-Air Promotion
At the time of writing there is broadcast on ABC Classic FM, at eight o’clock on Monday nights, i.e. one hour before TLR’s program, a conversation between Andrew McLennan and the evening presenter, currently Bob Maynard. For a few minutes they talk about the coming TLR program in a natural and spontaneous way, almost as though they do not know the listener is there. Ravlich has told me these conversations are, in fact, improvised and their purpose is ‘to try to both connect with an audience that will depart from the network and [be] a transition point where we might both keep some of those people and attract new listeners’.

To me, these are warm and intimate little interludes that communicate very effectively with the listener.

4.6.2.5 Printed Material
Promotional Flyers are printed for many TLR programs that are grouped around a central theme. (See Structure above at 4.3.4.1) They are printed with a standard presentation in colour on one side and a clear space on the other side to take whatever text is required for the particular occasion. An example is given at Appendix 7. They are mailed out in accordance with lists prepared to cover addressees appropriate to the subject.

Flyers of this nature are also used as inserts in correspondence and as hand-outs at gatherings. If a particular occasion is regarded as sufficiently

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important a promotional piece will be printed for it. An example is ‘The Garden Path’ at Appendix 7.

4.6.3 Compact Discs for Retail Sale

The availability of TLR productions on compact disc for retail sale has been achieved through two channels:

- by the ABC producing CDs of selected compositions in a form suitable for retail sale (i.e. labelling, packaging, etc.) and arranging its marketing
- by a record company incorporating TLR compositions in CDs and marketing it under their own label.

In the first case, the ABC, through ABC Enterprises, released four CDs of TLR productions in 1994, the discs being named Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. Due to distribution difficulties there were insufficient discs to meet consumer demand and the discs are now considered to be a collector’s item. On the occasion of TLR’s 10th birthday in 1998, two discs of TLR productions were released by the ABC as Double Exposure, one being named Epsilon and the other Theta. The ABC also released Garth Vanderhope’s TLR commission Human-Nature on a CD named Elemental Sound Journeys.

In the second case, the following are instances of independent CD studios publishing works, commissioned by TLR, under their own label: Ros Bandt’s Mungo and Sarah Hopkins’ From Dreams and Visions were excerpted for inclusion in the Riverrun set published by WERGO 6307-2 and Robert Iolini’s and Phillip Ma’s work Hong Kong; City in Between, a TLR commission and a winner in the Soundscapes Before 2000 competition, was released on Soundscapes Before 2000 set Secd 002A-B. TLR productions have also been used on two discs in the CSM-ANU-AMC-

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180 By e-mail from Robyn Ravlich to the author dated 10/3/2004.
181 This does not imply dishonesty. An arrangement to publish the work would be made with the owner of the copyright.
Screensound series *The Anthology of Australian music on CD*[^182], one titled *Radiophonics-10 Years of The Listening Room* and the other titled *My World, This Time*. The numbers are CSM33 and CSM37 respectively.

The fact that CDs of TLR productions are on the shelves of music shops allows a listener to keep a ‘record’ of a composition he/she heard broadcast and wants to hear again, and is also an adjunct to the TLR practice outlined in 4.3.4.2 above of attracting new listeners to the program. However, comments made anonymously to me by TLR staff criticise the way the distribution of their CDs was handled by the ABC, in that music retailers were unable to get adequate stocks and even ABC shops were frequently out of stock. It seems that the production and sale by the ABC of CDs containing TLR broadcast SA was not as successful as it could have been.

### 4.7 THE AUSTRALIAN AUDIENCE

An obvious requirement of TLR is to deliver by radio SA programs that attract and satisfy listeners by their quality, innovation and relevance. The end result should be a satisfied and, by implication, growing audience. Data on the audience of TLR is appropriate, I believe, in considering the effectiveness of its programs.

In the context usually of television programs, senior management of the ABC makes statements from time to time that the ABC is not ‘ratings-driven’, but certain statistics relating to audience are gathered regularly and distributed to program-makers in television and radio.

The gathering of audience statistics for the ABC is carried out by a commercial organisation, the results being circulated monthly to the various program production centres. I have been given information relating to TLR programs to view in the department but not to retain. The data is in terms of ‘average audience’ and ‘audience reach’. Average audience is the

average number of listeners to a program as measured at predetermined intervals throughout the program. Audience reach expresses the total number of individual listeners who tune to the program for at least 15 minutes. Average audience as a percentage of audience reach is indicative of the ‘retention rate’ of a program; if the figure is, say, 80%, then either 80% of people who tune in stay to listen to the whole program or all people who tune in listen to 80% of the program; the closer the ‘reach’ and ‘average’ figures are together, the higher is the percentage figure and the better is a program’s ‘retention’ rate, i.e. how it ‘holds’ its audience, whereas a low percentage figure means that a high proportion of listeners tune in and out of a program.

TLR has an average audience of about 15,000, having remained at about that figure for some years. The audience qualifies as a ‘dedicated’ audience as the reach figure for TLR is consistently high, sometimes running above 80% and seldom below 65% per month; in the industry this is regarded as a high figure.

Producers in TLR do not consider that the method of survey used by the commercial statistician is suitable for a niche radio program such as TLR, being designed more as an indicator of ratings for commercial stations. A disadvantage is that areas surveyed for data are major population centres only, and lower population areas which may contain a higher percentage of listeners to a certain program are excluded from the survey. TLR producers can point to letters on file from country listeners that outweigh in number letters from city listeners, despite the difference in populations. These factors militate against TLR producers regarding audience statistics as being a basis for anything except possibly program guidance by comparisons, preferring to rely more on internal peer comment and letters, e-mail and phone calls from listeners for critical comment. I get the impression that listener numbers at the ABC are used more to gauge
popularity of a program segment, such as Wednesday afternoons or Friday nights\textsuperscript{183}.

When considering the aggregate of SA broadcast in Australia it should be borne in mind that there are SA broadcasters other than the ABC in most states, even though these are not national. In NSW, for example, at the time of writing there is the FM broadcaster 2SER operated by the University of Technology, Sydney which has a student-presented session each week, and there is the volunteer-operated station 2MBS FM which has been running a session every second week for some years. These and others of which I may not be aware are important in the dissemination of SA. However no broadcaster other than the ABC has national coverage on either the FM or AM band; TLR sound is brought to Australian audiences nationally by the ABC\textsuperscript{184}.

### 4.8 OFFICES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

TLR moved as a unit into the Harris Street premises from William Street during 1991. The William Street buildings were old, overcrowded, poorly ventilated and generally run-down; Harris Street is by comparison, well lit, well ventilated and spacious. The area presently occupied by TLR staff consists of five offices (one for each producer) and a small storeroom, laid out roughly in the shape of the letter ‘U’. The centre of the ‘U’, which has no dividing walls, contains dedicated desk space, filing shelves, computers

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\textsuperscript{183} This approach, which I suggest is the current one, does not meet with the approval of Richard Connolly, who wrote in 1982: “All radio programming is now determined much more by reference to audience-research data, with considerable benefits. But I would agree with a fellow department head who remarked that our programming deliberations in recent times seem more and more to deal with questions like ‘Saturday afternoons don’t seem to be going so well. What sort of programme should we put there?’ , whereas formerly it would more likely have been ‘Yes, this is a good idea for a programme. Where should we put it?’ ” Connolly, Richard. ‘ABC Radio: Culture & the spoken word’ in Australian Cultural History, No.2, 1982/3, pp. 22-37.

\textsuperscript{184} For the purposes of this discussion I am not including SA that is presented over the internet.
and telephones, and a small lounge area used for meetings, visitors etc. The curve of the ‘U’ is located at the intersection of two corridors, one of which contains the main production studios.

No doubt TLR staff would like to see some changes made, but small improvements are being made from time to time, such as modification of fixtures and so on. In general, the working area seems comparable in layout and fittings to other parts of the building I have visited.

The move from William Street to Harris Street undoubtedly resulted in an improvement in office conditions for TLR staff but some staff have expressed to me the view that the move brought about changes to the social aspects of their work.

I talked with Robyn Ravlich on this subject and what follows is a summary of our conversation:185

On the matter of lunch-time meals, Ravlich said that there was some sort of a communal dining area at William St when she joined the ABC but it was unattractive, as was most of the building, and not conducive to pleasant communication.

However, the William Street area was then surrounded by good eating places, friendly hotels and pleasant surroundings. Two or three of the eating places were favoured and you could always find compatible company there; the same with the hotels. Ravlich believes that meeting at these places was both pleasant and useful. There was an interchange of information that could be helpful, in that one part of the creative group got to know what was being done by another and to have an understanding of the problems and difficulties being experienced in other departments or sections. There was a feeling of being a close-knit community. There were

sometimes long lunch hours or early knock-off on Fridays; there was much more social interaction than at Harris Street.

At Harris Street the local restaurant in the building is not a particularly pleasant place, but there are many good eating places about, so people are dispersed. There are no decent hotels, or not like there were at William St. (Incidentally, William Street has changed and at the time of writing is nothing like it was when the ABC was there). So, socialising between groups is definitely not as common as it used to be.

However, Ravlich is not sure whether this is solely to do with the change in locale. She believes that the difference lies mainly in increasing work pressure. No longer is there the time for much other than work and that extends, as often as not, beyond normal working hours. This results in people remaining within their working groups most of the time and not really knowing what was going on in other areas. It can, for instance, result in two similar pieces going to air at almost the same time in different programs.

The way that the above conversation moved is interesting. It started about meals at the lunch-break, as an influence on social interaction, but ended as nominating increased work pressure as the possible major influence on social interaction.

Over the years the Australian Bureau of Statistics has released figures showing that hours of overtime worked are increasing in certain sections of the work force. If this has been happening at the ABC, as I believe it has, then it supports Ravlich’s opinion about increasing work pressure. However, it does not answer the question as to what part social interaction plays in the effective running of the ABC. For example, if ABC management is concerned about the duplication of program content that I mention above, then liaison between sections could be formalised to minimise this possibility, although time would have to be allowed for that or work pressures would increase.
One of the other matters suggesting itself to me, and hence my comment above, is that of critical dialogue. Is critical dialogue a part of social interaction? For instance, was program content discussed in the hotel or over the lunch table in the days of less pressure? If the answer is ‘yes’ then you could consider that something is now missing from the ABC community. If the answer is ‘no’, then you could consider that social interaction was more a time perhaps for the release of work tensions, no doubt a useful function in itself, but one that could be handled in other ways and not necessarily during working hours.

The matter of increased work pressure and longer working hours is, I believe, a social problem in Australia and could be a cause of family breakdown, the need for stress-leave, and so on. I have always had the belief that work pressure can lead to errors of all kinds in the workplace, but in the case of creative people, it leads not only to errors, but, I believe, to a restriction of imaginative power.

ABC management is faced with the task of maintaining program quality in an environment of greater staff workload, which is related in turn to reductions in funding.

4.9 THE NEW MEDIA ARTS ABC-AUSTRALIA COUNCIL RESIDENCY

In Chapter 2, section 3.1, I give an account of the origin of the Hybrid Arts Fellowship in the introduction to my analysis of Ion Pearce’s SA composition 5EP. The name of the Fellowship has been changed and at the time of writing is ‘The New Media Arts ABC/Australia Council Residency’.
Pearce was the second winner of the award and since then there have been 7 others. The full list is as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Composer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Margaret Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Ion Pearce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Damien Castaldi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Sophea Lerner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Gretchen Miller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Rainer Linz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Jon Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Colin Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Robert Iolini</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have met each of these composers and have listened to their works. Damien Castaldi`s composition *In the mist of an arcane pop* is one that I selected as an exemplar of SA and appears in Chapter 2 at section 2. It is heard again in the compilation made for WDR at Chapter 5 section 3.2.1. Pearce`s composition ‘5 Easy Pieces’ is dealt with in some detail at Chapter 2.3.

The main stated objectives of the Residency remain unaltered over the nine-year period of its existence and in conversations with Robyn Ravlich at the ABC on 7/3/03 and again on 14/4/03 she spoke enthusiastically of positive outcomes both from the enhanced and continuing contact that has eventuated with award winners, and their career advancement which can be credited to winning the award.

Two examples are given below:

- With a further grant from the Australia Council, Sophea Lerner has prepared an installation version of her piece *Glass Bells* for exhibition in Finland, New Zealand and Australia.

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186 Details of Residency award entry conditions and the accompanying promotion etc. are held at the Australia Council library.
Gretchen Miller received funding from the New Media Arts Board of Australia for the public performance of her piece *Inland* at the Sydney Opera House Studio in the year 2000, and in 2002 she received further funding from the Literature Board to devise and stage a performance of *4 by 4*, which involves four musicians and four writers reading live.

I believe that each of these cases illustrates a significant benefit that comes to a composer through association with TLR and which I write about again in Chapters 5 and 6. Both Lerner and Miller had contact with TLR early in their careers and, I believe, experienced a gradual gaining of confidence as a result of compositions being put to air and their individual talent being recognised. In each case further funding has been forthcoming for the creation of new works.

So through this early nurturing, two new composers have emerged on the Australian soundstage, new compositions are being created and disseminated, and TLR is actively safeguarding its source of Australian compositions to ensure local program content for the future.

Damien Castaldi and his participating partner, Solange Kershaw, moved to France in the year 2002 but have maintained their contact with TLR. Ravlich anticipates that compositions will come forward from this, as it were, ‘Australian/French’ base in the future.

Jon Rose’s work in Australia has continued with a Creative Partnership grant from the Music Board of the Australia Council to extend and develop his *Ad Lib* project, documenting Australian amateur improvisation. At the time of writing he is being hosted by TLR and will be composing two related pieces for radio.

In conjunction with Jon Rose, Rainer Linz and three others under the group name of *Blister*, are producing, at the time of writing, a piece called
The Grainger Tapes commissioned by TLR to be broadcast in coming months.

And lastly, Ion Pearce has completed a composition for TLR to be broadcast in mid-year programs of 2003 named Body, Space, Void.

These last four composers have had associations with TLR for quite a few years and the Residency has helped to maintain and cement that relationship. Of the four cases quoted, two have achieved new commissions, one has received a grant and through the fourth case quoted, TLR has extended its links in Europe to the possible eventual betterment of both the composers and TLR. The progressions that I have outlined are typical results, in my experience, of the efforts of TLR in encouraging and developing Australian composers.

4.10 PROGRAM BRIEF

The Program Brief is the conduit through which ABC management distributes the requirements of the Corporate Plan to appropriate staff at the operative level. The following is an example of how it operates:

In Chapter 3, section 3.1.3 under the heading of ‘Program Objectives and Adventurous Programs’ I write about the first Corporate Plan as follows:

On page 16 of the plan, in the section dealing with Radio broadcasting and under the heading of `Program Plans’ with the sub-heading ‘Program Objectives’ is the following:

(3) Encourage the development of more experimental and adventurous programs, especially on the two national networks.

The objective stated under (3) above has appeared in successive corporate plans, sometimes in slightly changed wording, since the first plan, which covered the period 1985-1988. The broad objective stated is carried through to the operative level by the Program Brief, copies of which are shown at Appendix 6 for TLR for the years 1993 and 2003. Under the 2003
ABC organisational structure the brief is to be reviewed annually at the executive producer level and submitted to senior management as the operating framework for the coming year.

Each of the program briefs at Appendix 6 is self-explanatory, and there are some differences between them. Generally speaking the language of the earlier brief is discursive and verges on the technical, whereas the later brief tends to be more specific and almost businesslike in its statements. As an example, in 1993 the brief refers to ‘the close international ties we have with other program makers...’ while the 2003 brief reads as part of its mission ‘To engage with international networks of radiophonic composers and producers, and acoustic art programs...' The early brief states objectives in a broad sense; the later brief tends to state objectives more in the way by which they are to be achieved. I see the differences in language and presentation between the two briefs as indicating a perceived need in the later brief to communicate more clearly with senior staff who may not be familiar with the language of the production studios.

In each brief there is a strong statement on one particular aspect of their work, namely the aim for innovation. The words ‘innovative’, ‘adventurous’, ‘pushing the boundaries' convey this quite clearly and echo the words of the ABC Managing Director, Russell Balding when he says, as noted in Chapter 3 and also at 4.3.3 above, that he would like to see ABC program-makers come out of their shell and be ‘a bit more innovative’.

I see the Program Brief as an effective way of communicating the aims of the ABC from what is virtually the ministerial level to the program production level, and at the same time defining the limits of the program’s sphere of operation.

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187 This type of layout also lends itself to the use of ‘performance indicators’ as are used in the Corporate Plan.
188 Chapter 3, Fn 53.
4.11 EARCLIPS

Early in 2002, as one of the moves celebrating the ABC’s 70th birthday, a form of commissioning that had been used in previous years was re-introduced by TLR. This initiative was named EarClips and was publicised both by broadcast and on the ABC web pages. In the passage below from the ABC web page there is reference to this being the third collection. Earlier collections were in 1995 and 1997, under the respective titles of Audio Clip and Earshott. The following is on the ABC web page at the time of writing:

**July 2002**

EarClips

As part of The Listening Room’s ongoing commitment to fostering practising and emerging sound artists, a third collection of short audio works – EarClips, was commissioned earlier this year through a special Radio National initiative and the ABC’s Regional Production Fund. EarClips are a collection of new radiophonic pieces by some 18 sound workers from regional and metropolitan areas throughout Australia. Their brief was to create a 3 minute work that reflected on the theme, “My World, This Time”. What has emerged from these diverse sound artists is an extraordinary range of work which is captivating, original and evocative. EarClips will be premiered this month on The Listening Room and across other ABC networks and on the web, as part of the ABC’s 70th birthday celebrations.

The Art of Radio : Celebrating the ABC’s 70th anniversary

Robyn Ravlich has elaborated the above from her perspective as Executive Producer of TLR as follows:

Earclips

The reason or the emphasis on self-production is not economy, but diversity and freshness, and an even-handed approach allowing artists scattered around the country, away from metropolitan ABC production facilities, to be included in the mix. Also the three minute form allows artists to try their hand on their own home systems, usually digital editing/mixing on their computers, or in music schools, educational facilities, wherever. Occasional assistance has

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190 e-mail to the writer from Robyn Ravlich dated 10/3/004.
been provided where it has been necessary to ensure the appropriate quality is achieved. An Acoustic Art Unit producer supervises and the EP as well, with re-mixes required from some artists...Radio Eye would broadcast these earclips from time to time, as have many programs, but Radio Eye would not run sound art/ acoustic art work (f)or any longer duration. (l)It does not fit their brief.

Ravlich’s remark about the emphasis on self-production was to forestall any thought that the ABC was trying to lower costs by having composers do their own production. As she states in a later sentence, both an Acoustic Art Unit producer and an Executive Producer could be involved in final production, sometimes asking for a re-mix by the composer; so cost-saving was not a consideration. Obviously the intention was to provide both experience and guidance.

The formation of *EarClips* and the comments by Ravlich to the writer, address a number of matters that have arisen at various times throughout this dissertation. These are:

- The matter of production by a composer of broadcast quality work on his/her own computer (see 2.3.6).

  The importance of ‘home-production’ is recognised by TLR (as evidenced by the introduction of *EarClips*), which gives both opportunity and assistance ‘to ensure the appropriate quality is achieved’.

- The complaint that composers in Sydney have more opportunities to have works accepted by TLR for broadcast (see 5.2.2.5).

  *EarClips* attempt to improve this situation by making an appeal to ‘sound workers from regional and metropolitan areas throughout Australia’.

- The broadcasting of SA compositions by other units within the ABC, such as *Radio Eye*. (see 4.1)

  TLR does not jealously guard the broadcasting of SA, but each production unit in the ABC has a specific sphere of operation. In the e-mail referred to above Ravlich writes: ‘...but Radio Eye would not
run sound art/ acoustic art work for any longer duration [than three minutes]. (It does not fit their brief'.

In conversation with Russell Stapleton on 28/3/04, he told me that for this third series of short compositions, TLR felt that more emphasis could be put on home-production due to improvements in computing equipment and programs since the previous series in 1997. Stapleton also said that response to the appeal for compositions was wide throughout Australia, with some works finally being accepted from Adelaide and Melbourne. A Melbourne composer, Boo Chappell, was later commissioned for other works. The general feeling in TLR was that the project was successful, particularly in that it demonstrated to young composers that there existed a specialised outlet for SA pieces.

4.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have considered TLR's principal components, looking at some details of their history and operation. In the above commentary are examples of management planning and management reaction to various situations; in these can be seen the elements of ABC management style. In the main I perceive that management within the arts area is by 'guided consensus'; as Kirsten Garrett says, 'it is not a hierarchal structure'.\(^\text{191}\) In my observation creative people work without serious complaint in this environment, whilst observing the overarching requirements of the ABC Corporate Plan and departmental budgets, and meeting program schedules.

However I perceive two negative factors that have emerged in the attitude of senior management to TLR: one relates to the conflicting views as to whether TLR should be on the AM or FM band (or on both)\(^\text{192}\) and the other is what appears to have been a unilateral decision to cancel the replay slot

\(^{191}\) Section 3.2.3 and Fn.36.

\(^{192}\) During the time I was at the ABC several staff members made the comment that there are good reasons for putting TLR on both the AM and FM bands. One may be that not all areas receive FM.
for TLR on the AM band (see 4.2). In the first case, the conflict is causing frustration to this day and in the second case the perceived pre-emptory nature of the decision has left a feeling of bitterness in some of the people concerned. This would be, I think a typical reaction, not only in the arts area but in any other part of the organisation, to a decision considered to be uni-lateral. Other phases of management, with few exceptions, demonstrate, I believe, a positive and imaginative style.
Chapter 5
Chapter 5

Presentation of data in the form of case studies, interviews and history

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In previous chapters I have written about SA and given definitive examples, I have written a brief history of the ABC since its inception and shown how the ABC directs attention to innovative programming, and I have traced the formation of TLR, commented on its staff, organisation and components of its structure.

In this chapter I present findings about the relationship between TLR and other members of the community of SA. These findings have been gathered from interviews, conversations and correspondence with members of the staff of the ABC, Australian composers of SA and with participants in the world culture of SA. Some critical comments from various sources are also presented.

My aim is to build a wide picture of the world of SA, to give an outline of connections between TLR and the people and institutions involved and thus illustrate TLR’s participation in the community of SA. This is the data on which arguments presented in Chapter 6 will be based, data in the various sections being brought together to prove the veracity of my thesis.
The data evaluation is under these headings:

5.2 Australian composers
5.3 International presence

5.2 AUSTRALIAN COMPOSERS
5.2.1 Introduction
During the period 1988 to 1997 TLR broadcast 600 pieces of which 215 were by Australian composers. Excluding time taken up by introductions, fades and other presentational material, the Australian component represents about 75% of total broadcast time devoted by TLR to compositions.

I interviewed 15 Australian composers of SA who have had contact with TLR in some way. From these interviews I developed a list (unranked), of their perceived benefits from this contact:

1. Income support by payment for work commissioned.
2. Suggestions and collaborative development of themes and forms of works.
3. Provision of studio facilities, sound engineers and sound samples, archival material and administrative facilities.
4. By putting a piece to air TLR can open the way for a composer to receive Australian or overseas commissions.
5. Cross-media production, i.e. access to producers who can help a writer, for instance, to re-produce a poem or a play as a piece for radio.
Following are case studies that illustrate some of the ways in which TLR is perceived by five creative Australians, i.e. four composer/performers and a poet, as having been of benefit to them in their careers. They are:

Shaun Rigney, a composer engaged in developing a career and striving to maintain it.

Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart, composers who are engaged in their careers and are expanding their work overseas.

Ros Bandt, a sound sculptor who is established and is actively engaged in production and design.

Kate Jennings, a poet engaged in a literary career—a piece of her work has been re-produced and broadcast by TLR as a sound feature.

The information that follows, if not specifically referenced, came from recorded or unrecorded conversations between me and the composer, sometimes supplemented by electronic mail, telephone conversations or ABC records. In conversation composer’s comments were mostly laudatory in nature, but sometimes composers were critical of TLR or other ABC music programs, such as NMA or of the ABC in general. I have gathered such comments, together with some from ABC staff members, under 5.2.2.5 Critical Comments, below.

5.2.2 Case Studies

5.2.2.1 Shaun Rigney

Shaun Rigney of Melbourne, is one of the younger generation of composers. He has been helped along his career path in several different ways by his association with TLR. He has been following a career as a composer for the past 10 years or so, his income source being entirely within Australia. He has written music for conventional musical instruments; he has used
‘found’ sound, manipulated sound, the human voice, synthesized sound; altogether a wide range of compositional tools. His works have been broadcast by the ABC over several programs, including of course TLR, and he has also carried out private commissions.

He says of both TLR and the ABC program NMA:

I don’t think my CV [curriculum vitae] would be half as long if it were not for the both of them and in particular Robyn [Ravlich] and Andrew [McLennan] [who] have provided me with opportunities when opportunities have been so thin on the ground. In fact the opportunities for regular commissions in Australia are so few that without TLR in the last 8 or so years I doubt that I would have continued to think that it were possible to be a professional composer. Not that the sort of income that TLR offers is enough to live on193 but it’s enough to give one hope that one might, one day…they’ve been an invaluable help.194

And later in the same conversation Rigney says: ...without them [TLR] I think even the idea of a career path for a composer in Australia would look very different.

On-air exposure generates confidence in other areas. Rigney considers that ‘...their commissions help to give other potential commissioners confidence that one can prosecute a commission successfully’.

Rigney believes that in Australia the ABC (and TLR in particular) is his best, if not only, hope of having his compositions heard by a wider audience and being able to continue his career from a stable base. Europe is where the money is but he does not have enough money to travel out of Australia seeking commissions or other work, and his only chance of getting his name known by possible local and overseas sources of income is by building a reputation through exposure by the ABC. He is being given

193 This comment may be directly critical of TLR commission rates, but I believe that it is also a criticism of reduced funding level of the ABC by the Australian Government, which must be known generally in the artistic community. See also 5.2.2.5 Critical Comments.

194 Interview with the author in Melbourne on 18 March, 2000. Tape held by author.
encouragement by TLR and commissions have extended through the year 2001.

5.2.2.2 Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart
Jim Denley is a composer based in Sydney. His works have been broadcast by TLR since 1990. He has established a career in SA and improvisation and has found a niche in which to develop style and reputation. He and his partner Stevie Wishart work together both in Australia and Europe.

Denley began playing in a (small) band and his initial contact with the ABC was with the Music Department in the early 1980s. From this he developed an interest in radio (vis-a-vis stage) and was encouraged by ABC Producer Cathy Peters. Over recent years he has worked closely with TLR producer Sherre De Lys who encouraged him to compose the trilogy *It’s, First contact,* and *A guy in the middle,* which was broadcast by TLR in its *Afternoon Tea* series.

In reference to the trilogy above Denley said in conversations with me in July 2001:

...the last three or four years with this trilogy of works that I have done, I can’t really imagine any other institution that I could have done what I have done with [TLR]... Robyn’s [Ravlich] ability and the whole team being executive producers and allowing work like that to occur.\textsuperscript{195}

Denley gives credit to De Lys for her continuing support: ‘She...encouraged me to put a proposal [to TLR] quite regularly’.

As well as encouragement and creative support TLR gives technical support to a composer who submits an interesting proposal but does not have the necessary technical facilities or knowledge to produce the work at broadcast quality. The support usually takes the form of a studio with

\textsuperscript{195} Interview in Sydney July 2001. Tape held by author.
associated electronic equipment, a producer if considered necessary and the services of a sound engineer. In the same conversation Denley said this of a recent composition:

...I think it’s deeply affected my work, having the possibility and the potential [to get it broadcast] and also to work with a great [sound] engineer like John [Jacobs], to realise some of the ideas. There’s no other institution in this country [where] I would have been able to have the resources, the studios and then the engineer to help me do this. If I’d been thinking to do this privately, the works that I’ve done, privately, and fund them myself or through the Australia Council, I can’t imagine who I would have gone to, to do that. There’s an expertise there which I think is quite unique.

Then in relation to overseas recognition Denley made the comment that ‘...it is easier to get things broadcast overseas and to get people to take your work seriously overseas because TLR has already presented it’.

Denley’s comments relate directly to where he and Wishart are in their career as outlined at the beginning of this section. They enjoy a productive relationship with TLR which helps them in their plans to develop a stronger base in Europe.

5.2.2.3. Ros Bandt
Ros Bandt is a sound sculptor, sound artist, performer and composer. She has created several long, site-specific pieces or installations that have required complex or extensive equipment and/or materials to achieve her aesthetic objectives. An example is Bandt’s composition Mungo, a piece commissioned by Klaus Schöning of West German Radio (WDR), in conjunction with TLR and the Goethe Institute of Sydney. With a sound engineer, two elders from the tribe of the aboriginal landowners and Andrew McLennan of TLR, Bandt set up her equipment, including Aeolian harps, on the sand hills surrounding the dry lake bed at Mungo in central NSW. Over 6 days they recorded the sounds of the desert, during the day and night. Then Bandt, McLennan and sound engineer Steve Tilley travelled to the studios of WDR in Cologne where the piece was composed and produced. For Mungo’s World Premier at WDR a glass-walled room was set
up and filled with several tons of sand. Bandt sat inside the room and let sand trickle through her fingers as the piece was broadcast before an audience. Prior to leaving Australia she had been given some red sand from the Mungo site by the aboriginal tribal elders and had brought it to Germany for the performance. Every so often she would allow this to trickle through her fingers and mingle with the body of sand. The logistics needed to support such an effort would clearly be substantial.

A more complex piece that I describe below was recorded and produced in Australia. It concerns the building of a 15 m high exhaust chimney-stack in a Melbourne motor tunnel. Bandt wanted to get inside this stack and make sound recordings before it was put into operation, as from then on it would be closed and not reopened during its lifetime. After several frustrating weeks seeking approval to enter the stack Bandt described her experiences to me:

I had some funding from the Melbourne City Council to do the first stage, and then from TLR to make the piece and do the on-site recording because I couldn’t actually trap the sound without help, so they [TLR] came in on the second stage. They came in with their mobile man and he did eight-channel digital recording from all different microphones...they had booms right up into the top, I had transducer mics. [microphones] on the walls, I played a range of instruments...I had two sound engineers for a whole day, they were absolutely fantastic, and then I had access to them after the site-specific thing finished. I could never have done that sounding without them. How can you as an artist come in with eight-channel recording gear and 55 ft [16.8m] boom stands...they bent over backwards for me and they have always responded to the call. Anyway, that’s the stack piece. Then they gave me two whole weeks.\(^{196}\)

\(^{196}\) Interview in Sydney 13 July, 2002. Tape held by author.
Stacks has been broadcast and a commercial CD made, and Bandt has made plans for the piece she composed to be a permanent on-site installation so that people passing can sit and listen to it. But that part of the project has not yet been realised:

I've given plans to the architect [of the stacks] of these conceptual ideas, but the fact is that in this particular time and this very big work, interpretation of such an abysmal piece of urban development, TLR has come in and picked this up and come in with the tools and the strong arm that a solo artist needs.

Another feature of TLR’s activities raised by Bandt during our discussion was the provision of a forum. Bandt says: ‘The thing that TLR offered more than any other place has been a forum to take up the edge of experimental music’.

I make this observation about Bandt’s comment above. During the months that I spent working within TLR I was able to note the coming and going of many visitors, most of whom were composers and many of whom I met. These visitors spent time talking with producers and sound engineers, and working with them in studios. The atmosphere was one of friendly communication and this, I believe, is what Bandt was referring to when she spoke about a ‘forum’.

Ros Bandt concluded the same interview with these words about the part the ABC has played in her work:

Huge, seminal, totally seminal. I don’t think my career could have been half as good without it. And also because they can do things that Moove Records [a commercial CD company] can’t do. In the studio, the type of engineering is much better at the ABC than anything you can get at a private company, unless you can do it yourself and that’s not my forte. I want to work with virtuosic technicians that can code as fast as I can think...

Space is a critical component of Bandt’s creative process. She is a sound sculptor working with sound installations; she needs room to express herself. Her perception of one of the benefits stemming from her association
with TLR is being able to realise her artistic aspirations by achieving space. She also appreciates the high quality studio time and creative discussion to be had at TLR.

5.2.2.4 Kate Jennings

Kate Jennings is an Australian poet and writer whose poem *Deserta Rerum* was re-produced by Robyn Ravlich and Vineta Lagzdina (music composer and guest co-producer) from text, to a sound art piece for radio.

An explanation of the name *Deserta rerum* comes in the first few words of the on-air introduction to the piece:

After a silva rerum, forest of things, a Seventeenth Century term for a fascicle of loosely arranged notes, occasional poems, copies of letters, memorable quotations, etc.

The poem was written by Kate Jennings in about 1986 and is the remembrance of her childhood on her parent’s and grandparent’s farms in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area in the 1950s.

Jennings’s recollections touch on many sides of her early life in a small town, what she saw, what she was taught and what she heard, presented in the simple way of a child. Interwoven and implied in the words are the early disappointments of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area experiment, the collapse of marriage, the collapse of family.

The interest and significance of the re-produced feature lie in the producers’ restrained and unhurried approach to Jennings’ poetic and evocative script, an approach that strengthens and deepens a sensitive and revealing account of childhood experiences. Technical facilities are used sparingly: for instance an acoustic recording of an Old Time Waltz accompanies the description of the dances Jennings’ mother went to where she met her father, and throughout, the simple sounds of a piano express the character of earlier times when there was a piano in most homes. In
sympathy with this approach the tone of nostalgia is never allowed to
degenerate into sentimentality.

In a letter to Robyn Ravlich, Kate Jennings writes: `...what you’ve done is as
close as can be to the intention of the piece.'

Kate Jennings writes in many forms, including poetry, stories and speeches.
Here one of her poems is moved across the boundary of genre, one work of
art giving rise to another. This exposes a creative pathway to her, as it does
for creative artists in both literature and SA.

Poems have been set to music for many years in the culture of western
European art music, examples going back at least to the time of Guillaume
de Machaut in the Fourteenth Century, the practice generally being that
of a music composer setting a poem, usually a well-known one, to music.
Examples of this abound in the Victorian and Edwardian age. In this case
we have a piece of poetic text being set to a form of music, thus creating a
new work of art which, as exemplar, encourages collaboration between
writer and composer.

A painting as well as a poem can also be a source of inspiration, and again
Ravlich has provided an exemplar. Her piece The Raft of the Medusa, which
was broadcast by TLR in 1996, was inspired by an 1890 painting of that
name by Gericault. The work depicts the true event of a shipwreck in which
men and women on an overcrowded raft in a furious sea seek to keep
others, who are in the water, from boarding the raft; it is a tragic story of
man’s potential for inhumanity. Ravlich’s composition relives the event in

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197 Letter dated 11 May, probably 1987, from Jennings in New York to Robyn Ravlich. Held on ABC
files.

198 Guillaume de Machaut, c1300-1377, wrote music to various secular poetic forms. Stanley Sadie.

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sound and so creates a new work of art inspired by another in a different art form.

5.2.2.5 Critical Comments
From the case studies above and from recorded interviews with other composers to whom I spoke, I have extracted comments that are either negative or critical in themselves or contain implied criticism. These are presented below in the form of a summary.

There were three main matters for which TLR attracted criticism, the first being the perceived low level of commissioning fees paid by TLR.

In Fn 176 I remark on a comment made to me by Shaun Rigney about the fees paid by TLR for a commission. Rigney’s comment was made in the context of trying to make a living in Australia as a composer; he made no comparison with overseas rates of payment, possibly as he had no experience of them. The same comment about low level of payment has been made to me by composers who are in a position to make comparisons between payments made by the ABC and those made by broadcasters or other institutions (e.g. advertising agents) in Europe for similar works. The difference quoted by composers ranges from a factor of 4 to a factor of 10, i.e. a commission for which the ABC pays $100 could command $1000 overseas. Composers operating in this part of the market refer to it as the ‘lower end’; there is the ‘upper end’ of the market which is music for stage and screen and fetches much higher payments. According to composers’ comments the same ratio obtains.

Such remarks, which were also made about the ABC program NMA, I believe are made partly as a criticism of these two programs, and partly as a critical comment on ABC funding; in this context they are based on a
perception that the Australian Government is well behind other developed nations of the world in its interest in music, and indeed in all art forms\textsuperscript{199}.

One of the outcomes of this discrepancy is that there is a tendency for Australian composers to move to Europe, either permanently or temporarily, to earn more money and develop a career. A case in point is that of Kaye Mortley, an Australian sound artist who composed many features for TLR in the 1980s and now lives and works permanently in France. Another case is that which I quoted earlier when writing about Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart who spend a good part of their time in Europe, filling commissions in both composition and performance. Composer Rainer Linz is another example. In February 2000 he told me in personal conversation at the ABC, that in Europe he aims at that part of the market where he attracts commissions of around $A1500.00. In Australia he would be paid about $150.00 for such works.

The outcomes of this temporary or permanent exodus cannot be assessed, but the practice certainly represents a withdrawal of creative talent from the local scene and parallels the common conception that many Australian classical music performers, for instance, move overseas to concentrate on their careers from a better financial base.

Executive producer Robyn Ravlich has informed me that commissioning rates paid by TLR are good by both ABC and Australian standards and that it is not reasonable to make a comparison between Australia and countries where the listening population is many times greater. She also makes the point that should any composer tell her of an ambition to make a living in Australia by composing, she advises great caution and points to the difficulties of trying to do so.\textsuperscript{200} I have had personal experience of music

\textsuperscript{199}Commonwealth funding for the arts devolves from the Federal Government to such instrumentalities as the Australia Council for the Arts, where it is distributed at the discretion of that organisation.

\textsuperscript{200} Personal conversation in Sydney, 5 July, 2002.
teachers in tertiary training institutions, both pre- and post-World War 2, giving the same advice.

A second criticism that became apparent during my interviews with composers is this: there is a feeling that composers in NSW and in Sydney in particular have an advantage over others because of their proximity to TLR staff at the ABC’s base at Harris Street. Out-of-state composers feel that the comparative ease with which local composers can be contacted and can visit TLR studios or engage generally in close communication goes against composers in other states when selection is being made for commissions and other work, even for suggestions to submit work on a given theme. There is a feeling that if TLR could at least be actively represented in each state of Australia, there would be benefits both for composers and TLR.

Ravlich has no hesitation in acknowledging this criticism as justified. She believes that it would be a great advantage to have a TLR producer readily available in each capital city so that close communication, such as there is in NSW, could be maintained between TLR and composers. However the cost of doing so could not be met from current budgets. An alternative would be to have frequent visits by TLR staff to major centres, and Ravlich has considered how this could be managed, but again there is the problem of cost. For the present the difficulty must remain.201

A third criticism of any note is the problem some composers have in separating the roles of TLR and NMA. At the time of writing, NMA is produced by Julian Day and goes to air each week on ABC Classic FM. Day broadcasts compositions by Australian composers that fall within the category of ‘contemporary music’, but in the main excludes ‘contemporary popular’. While TLR does play music from time to time that could be considered to be in the territory of NMA, it is part of a range of TLR’s features that contains drama, documentary, poetry, narrative, biography

201 Interview in Sydney 12 July, 2002. Tape held by author.
and so on, composed in the form of SA, so there is a clear distinction between the two programs.

If there is a ‘music’ boundary between the two programs it is blurred by the fact that some composers have had works broadcast in each program (but, to my knowledge, not the same work), and some composers have had a particular work rejected by each program, with the suggestion that they ‘try NMA’ or ‘try TLR’.

Whether this apparent confusion constitutes a compositional barrier to a composer is unclear, but it was certainly raised in conversations with me. It is reasonable to believe that a composer would write a piece with a specific broadcast program in mind, and it would be disappointing to have that work rejected on the grounds of unsuitability, but in my perception such disappointment must be part of the business of being a composer, as it is part of being an author.

Within the arts area of the ABC I found very little criticism of TLR but I did come across critical comments from staff who had worked in that area and had moved out for some reason or other. There was minimum criticism of one staff member by another staff member; disapproving remarks about a colleague were very guarded. Any criticism would not be personal, but would refer to a program or, very carefully, to a composition. Comments I refer to made by people who had worked in the arts group at some time in the past were tinged, I think, with envy, usually with the perception that TLR was given special funding treatment in some way and escaped funding cuts, or was given extra money for a special occasion or had more access to freelances; that TLR was a favoured program for some reason. One very clear comment that was made to me during an interview with Dr. Norman Swan at the ABC on 13/3/99 was that he considered TLR to be over-funded. Data is not available that would allow me to comment on this matter. I am reporting what has been said to me. I have no doubt that there are and always will be undercurrents of personal and professional dislike,
of jealousy and bruising, but in my view the work of TLR moves along in a purposeful and cooperative manner.

5.3 INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

5.3.1 Introduction

In this section I show through information gained in conversations and correspondence with radio broadcasters in England, Germany, Austria, Finland and the USA, the regard in which TLR is held internationally, and I outline the various ways in which TLR plays its part as a member of the world community of SA.

5.3.2 Overseas Broadcasters and Commentators

The following is a brief recapitulation of section of 3.2.3 concerning the formation of the Arts Unit.

In the early 1970s, well before the formation of TLR, Richard Connolly, who was a senior ABC program-maker at the time, visited broadcasters in Germany, England, Italy and France. His trip was a long one, about 6 months in all, and gave him the opportunity to work closely with senior program-makers in the countries he visited and establish lasting relationships. Shortly afterwards, in 1975 Andrew McLennan spent 3 months overseas visiting the same broadcasters and making face-to-face contact with feature producers. In 1984 Robyn Ravlich was the first producer from the Talks and Documentary Unit to attend an overseas conference when she went to the Features Conference in Finland. Here she was able to extend the links between the ABC and individual broadcasters. The contacts established by Connolly, McLennan and Ravlich have continued, and today producers at TLR have close formal and informal links to their opposite numbers in countries across the world.

These personal, face-to-face contacts are the basis of a continuing interchange of information, commissioning, on-selling of programs, news and so on that go to make up the community of radio sound art within the
culture; and incidentally, I think, account for the fact that I, a virtually unknown visiting researcher, was able to have easy and relaxed conversations with senior and experienced people in radio SA, sitting in their offices and studios in countries many kilometres from Australia.

What follows are comments made to me by producers in Germany, Austria, the USA and the UK that indicate the light in which they view TLR, its programs and activities.

5.3.2.1 WDR
During a visit I made to West Germany in 1999 I spoke with Klaus Schöning\(^{202}\) who at that time was head of Studio Akustische Kunst at WDR in Cologne and had been producing radio sound art programs for that broadcaster for over 30 years. He has now retired. He is a producer who is both disciplined (his program lists are available 6 months before their broadcast date) and innovative, being credited with having made important contributions to the development of radio sound art. It is acknowledged, for instance, that he introduced to broadcasting ‘new hörspiel’, a form of poetry in speech sounds\(^{203}\). I spoke to him just prior to his retirement in 2000. He was talking about Bill Fontana, a sound artist from the USA whose earliest works were put to air by TLR in 1988, and from time to time throughout his career:

> We talked before [about] where the ABC model went with us, these things by Bill Fontana. Interesting that Bill Fontana started, let’s say, his career, his professional artistic work, in the ABC. He’s an American artist, he’s very famous now...He did one of the earliest pieces of sound sculpture. And he started at the ABC and made these

\(^{202}\) Schöning is referred to at Chapter 2, section 2 in my comments on *Ophelia and the Words*.

beautiful Kirribilli wharf\textsuperscript{204} things in Sydney and for two years he worked for the ABC collecting sounds in the outback.

Later he talked about Australian composer Moya Henderson:

Moya Henderson studied here with Maurice Kagel for one or two years and I met her there when she produced her first piece, which was called \textit{Split Seconds}, a very crazy ambitious wonderful piece, really split second! Beautiful piece, I broadcast it...I met her when I came first or second time to Australia.

\textit{Split Seconds} was broadcast by TLR in 1992. Klaus Schöning says this about Henderson:

Then we commissioned a piece [from Henderson] together with the ABC called \textit{Currawong}. That’s the one in here. [tapping a CD case] I broadcast it twice, a beautiful piece about these wonderful birds.

\textit{Currawong} was first broadcast by ST and again by TLR in 1988. Schöning continues:

But when we go on talking about this we have a lot of stories to remember about the cooperation with the ABC, with Andrew [McLennan], Roz [Cheney], Robyn [Ravlich] and with these many connections we had with Australian artists and many commissions which I did either directly or in combination with The Listening Room...

As an indication of the complete acceptance of TLR as an equal partner, in 1992 a co-production was arranged between TLR, the Goethe Institute of Sydney and Klaus Schöning for an installation piece to be made from the sounds of Lake Mungo, a dry lake in central NSW. I comment on this piece at 5.2.2.3 above and repeat here some of its features. Mungo is an area held sacred by surrounding aboriginal tribes, and many people, irrespective of race, speak of the feelings of awe and mystery they experience when they are present in the huge shallow bowl of sandhills. Agreement for the project was obtained from local aboriginal tribes and to record the sounds of

\textsuperscript{204} Fontana’s work, \textit{Kirribilli Wharf} was broadcast by TLR in June 1992.
Mungo, Aeolian harps were set up around the sand dunes. Andrew McLennan placed microphones in positions to pick up the sounds made by the wind harps and sounds of the environment, such as blown leaves and small animals and insects.

From these sounds Ros Bandt, Australian writer, composer and sound sculptor, and producer Andrew McLennan produced a 60 minute piece for installation and a shorter version for broadcast. The installation was given its world premier in the WDR studios in Cologne, with Ros Bandt herself taking part.\textsuperscript{205}

There is an easy tone of reminiscence in these conversations with Klaus Schöning. He is talking about a relationship that goes back to the 1980s, a relationship which, in my perception, he regards as being between equals, who visit, exchange features, commission one another's composers, arrange joint commissions and talk together.

When Schöning retired his position was filled by Marcus Heuger, who was instrumental in creating a new kind of link between TLR and \textit{Studio Akustische Kunst}. What follows is an account of how this came about.

During a performance tour of German cities in early 2002 my thesis supervisor, Dr.Jim Franklin, met Marcus Heuger and mentioned to him the topic of my PhD thesis. Heuger, although new to his position, had already established links with TLR and was interested in further liaison. The outcome was an agreement that Franklin, Robyn Ravlich and I would prepare a composition for radio broadcast from data that I had gathered and insights that I had developed during my research of TLR. Heuger would broadcast the composition in his program \textit{Studio Akustische Kunst} on WDR, in late 2002.

\textsuperscript{205} Interview with Klaus Schöning on 19 August, 1999 at Cologne, Germany. Tape held by author.
The result was a program of 52 minutes duration consisting of seven excerpts and one full piece selected from TLR programs. Franklin and I edited the selections into a continuous compilation in such a way that text could be inserted in final production if Heuger so wished. I made suggestions of text and theme for the completed piece, and final production was carried out in WDR studios at Cologne, Germany, with Franklin present. In selecting the items presented I did so with the intention of showing the innovation, imagery and energy of Australian compositions as broadcast by TLR, each pieces being related to the connecting theme of Australia as a land of contrasts.

The fact that Marcus Heuger made the suggestion that he did and that his suggestion was successfully achieved is a sure indicator of the feeling of mutual respect between TLR and Studio Akustische Kunst.

A CD of the compilation is at Appendix 2 and a translation of the text is at Appendix 9. It was put to air by Studio Akustische Kunst over WDR on 26 October, 2002.

5.3.2.2 Austrian Radio
At Kunst Radio, Vienna, much the same impressions as described in 5.3.2.1 were given by Elizabeth Zimmermann and Heidi Grundmann at Radio Österreich (ORF). At the time Zimmermann was Arts Administrator for the broadcaster, and Grundmann, recently retired, was Arts Consultant. These people have contact with sound artists from all over the world and draw radio artworks from them. When discussing the organization Ars Acustica International206, Heidi Grundmann made these comments:

...the ABC has been in it from the beginning, in that group, and they're always very active and one of the pillars of the centre, because they really have such a strong production in the field, and connection to many very good artists.

206 See 5.3.4.4 for information about Ars Acustica International.
In the same conversation she said:

...Australia is really strong. Also, of course, Jon Rose\textsuperscript{207} is a major figure all over the world and we are right now preparing a whole long evening, a night of violins with him. Australia is very strong in the field of sound art, very impressive.\textsuperscript{208}

The ABC can claim credit for drawing world attention to Jon Rose. In the 10 year period 1988-1997 his compositions were broadcast by TLR in the years 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994 and 1997.\textsuperscript{209} Some of his earlier works were put to air by Andrew McLennan when he was presenting a stereo program from the ABC in Adelaide in the late 1970s.\textsuperscript{210} In the year 2000 Rose won the ABC/Australia Council Residency Award referred to in Chapter 4, section 10.2.

5.3.2.3 The USA

In October/November 2000, writer, Melody Sumner Carnahan from the University of Santa Fe in New Mexico, USA, visited the ABC and the UTS as a guest. Carnahan was trained as a writer at Mills University, Oklahoma and at the time was writing text for artists to set in their chosen media, e.g. theatre, radio sound art, installations and so on. In an interview with her on 6 November, 2000 in Sydney I asked how TLR was considered among her friends and associates, and she was full of praise. She said the work put out by TLR was considered to be of a very high standard and was known quite widely in the USA. There were not many, if any, countries that had such a productive and effective session running. In the USA there was

\textsuperscript{207} Jon Rose was born in England. He is now an Australian citizen and has been working out of Australia since 1970.

\textsuperscript{208} Interview with H. Grundmann and E. Zimmermann in Vienna, Austria on 21 September, 1999. Tape in possession of the author.

\textsuperscript{209} See statistics Appendix 9.

\textsuperscript{210} From interview with Rose at the ABC in Harris St. on 27 February, 2001. Tape in the possession of the author.
less sound art on radio and more sound art going on the Web but that was nowhere so effective as radio for carrying the programs.\textsuperscript{211}

Carnahan’s comment about the Web referred to the fact that she finds very little sound art on air in the USA due to low coverage by the national broadcaster and concentration by commercial broadcasters on more popular material.

5.3.2.4 The United Kingdom
In 1995 Nicholas Zurbrugg moved from his position at Griffith University Queensland, where he had spent 17 years, to Simon De Montfort University at Leicester England. Until the time of his death in October 2001, he was Professor of English and Cultural Studies and Director of the Centre for Contemporary Arts at Leicester. He had been active in the study of arts and the electronic media in Australia\textsuperscript{212} and made these comments to me in correspondence:

It seems to me that the Listening Room is distinctive and crucial for 3 or 4 main very crucial achievements:

a) It offered opportunities for collaborations between Australian multimedia artists such as Warren Burt and his many collaborators.

b) It offered visiting artists the chance to make mass-contact with audiences in collaborations/programmes.

c) It offered a variety of critical discussions about key events in the global village outside AUS, such as events in Paris.

d) It offered a national platform for Australian intellectuals to REGULARLY discuss whatever they were interested in at the time.

All this made for a tremendous technological cultural catalyst of a kind I’ve encountered nowhere else.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{211} One factor Melody mentioned unique to radio was the ‘Chance’ effect, that is you are listening to radio as a background when suddenly you hear something that takes your fancy and then you really listen. In her opinion that cannot happen on the Web as moving from site to site is a more deliberate and complex operation than turning a radio knob or pressing a button.

\textsuperscript{212} Nicholas Zurbrugg edited \textit{Electronic Arts in Australia}, published by Continuum, Murdoch University W.A. 1994. Reference is made to this publication in Chapter1, section 6.2.1.
\end{footnotesize}
It helped cultivate a sense of an overlapping interstate/international cultural community in and beyond Australia - at the highest level of innovation and innovative thinking. This was truly remarkable.\textsuperscript{213}

Zurbrugg used the past tense in this correspondence, I think, because he was looking back on his years in Australia, rather than expressing an impression that TLR was no longer in existence.

Zurbrugg draws attention to the contribution that TLR makes to the culture of radio art in the four sections a), b), c) and d) in the paragraphs above. What he is describing is evidenced by, for example, TLR giving encouragement, radio space and, if necessary, studio space to an Australian writer to join with a composer of music to create a piece for broadcast, or composer and sculptor to make a piece for installation. An example of this kind of liaison is that between Kate Jennings, and Robyn Ravlich and Vineta Lagzdina at 5.2.2.4 above.

In his other comments Zurbrugg stresses the function of TLR as a rostrum, a platform from which composers and intellectuals can address listeners, either through compositions or through other avenues that bring the composer into ABC production studios\textsuperscript{214}. He points to the role of TLR as a unique ‘technological cultural catalyst’, creating a sense of community in the culture. This makes for the establishment of an environment of common understanding of meanings and a point of focus of intellectual activity where innovative ideas can be freely exchanged.

Also from the UK is Alan Hall, a radio producer who has recently resigned from the BBC in England and now operates as a freelance. In

\textsuperscript{213} e-mail to the author dated 11 May, 2001.

\textsuperscript{214} The same observation is made at Radio Vienna in relation to TLR’s active participation in the Ars Acoustica organization, as a member of a community extending and deepening its culture by providing a listening room for dialogue. See section 3.2.2 above.
correspondence with me he expressed his admiration for the many facets of TLR’s performance and activity, e.g. its spirit, ethos, relationship with Australian composers, with international colleagues and overseas composers. He pointed out that in the UK, radio, performance and music each operates in its own sphere, i.e. without much, if any, regard for what the others may be doing. Hall’s impression is that TLR in Australia tries to bring the three activities together. He went on to write:

How I see the Listening Room is as a unique collaboration between a public service broadcaster and the artistic community, in particular the relationship between the ‘producer’ and the ‘artist’. And as such it’s unfamiliar within the UK situation. Much of what is done by, say, Cathy Peters, Robert Iolini or Sherre De Lys blurs the division between ‘enabler’ and ‘creator’, a division that intrigues me as I’ve always striven to remain with both feet on the enabling producer side of the line in my own productions, though I would love to feel able to aspire towards that other territory and start to make ‘pieces’ rather than ‘programmes’.

In short, The Listening Room for me raises key questions about the creative potential of the medium and how it is engaged with by listeners. Here there’s an echo of Ross Kemp, in that I feel pretty certain that many listeners wish to experience more nebulous ‘knowledge’ from their wireless set and not simply the pedestrian ‘information’ which programme [sic] controllers insist upon.

As you can see, The Listening Room leads me to question all my radio ‘language!’

Overseas producers are observant of developments in production techniques of their colleagues. This is evidenced by the comment above by Alan Hall in which he refers to both the creation of a radio piece and its production for radio, being carried out by the one person. Through his contact with TLR he has realised that each member of the ABC’s Listening Room’s team, nominally a producer, can both create and produce a piece for broadcast. Hall says that this has changed his concept of the creator being one person and the producer another, and widens his perception for

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215 e-mail to the author dated 20 August, 2001.
216 This blending of activities is discussed at Chapter 4, section 3.3 and again at Chapter 6, section 4.
expansion of his own work. This practice by TLR is visible to all broadcasters and can be subject to their individual evaluation. Implied in the observation is the thought that a feature created for radio thus passes to the listener with the composer’s intention undimmed perhaps by a lack of sympathetic understanding that can occur during the production process; i.e. by combining the functions of creator and producer the piece arrives at the listening site exactly how the composer wished it to. This in no way reflects on the skills of Listening Room producers in their relationship to composers; in fact it is not uncommon for a composer to elect a certain producer to work with because they have worked together successfully in the past and a rapport has been established. For example, Paul Carter, a Melbourne writer always asks that his work be produced by Andrew McLennan. However what it does is point to a strength in TLR of having multi-skilled staff in a highly specialized role.

5.3.2.5 Finland

Harri Huhtamaki is Head of Radio Atelier at the Finnish Broadcasting Company in Helsinki. He has held this position for over 20 years. As well as producing radio programs and multi-media installations he has composed pieces that have been broadcast in other parts of the world, including on TLR. After the International Features Conference hosted by the ABC in April/May 2001 he conducted workshops at Monash University, Victoria. He made these comments to me at the International Features Conference referred to above:

If you consider radio as an acoustic art media, I think The Listening Room is one of those rare places in the world where this kind of work is still happening. Its program policy has been [a] strong one in that acoustic art context. Sometimes they've been too fond of the so-called sound art, which is just a tautology of John Cage’s thinking. And today it’s [a] postmodern word salad without meanings, but that’s a minor thing in the work of The Listening Room.217

217 Interview with Huhtamaki on 30 April, 2001. Tape in possession of the author.
The strength of Huhtamaki’s comment lies in the first two sentences and its meanings are quite clear. In the last two sentences of his statement he is probably referring to the distinction between what he terms ‘acoustic art’ (which I call ‘SA’) and what Cage calls ‘sound art’. The composition of Huhtamaki’s ‘acoustic art’ is with the intention of creating a work of art, an emotionally or aesthetically appealing piece; Cage’s compositions, in the main, are designed to make a point or illustrate a concept. Huhtamaki is saying that he sometimes detects the ‘Cage’ concept in TLR’s programs.

5.3.3 Importing SA from the world
TLR is active in bringing to Australian audiences (including composers) works produced by non-Australian composers. I mentioned early in this chapter that TLR’s program mix of composer nationalities is about 75% Australian, the balance coming from foreign composers. More detail is contained at Chapter 4.5 above. In the context of this part of my thesis the points of interest are that the percentage of time devoted to compositions by composers foreign to Australia has remained fairly constant over the 10 year period surveyed, has embraced composers in 27 countries and occupied about 25% of broadcast time. Some countries whose composers have contributed to TLR programs are: the Balkans, Canada, China, Croatia, Germany, Denmark, France, Israel, New Zealand, Palestine, Spain, Tibet, Finland and Yugoslavia.

Thus the listening experience of TLR’s audience is not confined to Australian composers but embraces compositions produced in countries outside Australia, in the time ratio of about three Australian to one overseas. Australian composers are likewise able to listen to compositions originating outside this country, which otherwise could be difficult to access.
5.3.4 Exporting Australia

5.3.4.1 Introduction
While the preceding analysis demonstrates the importation by TLR of SA from other countries, there is also exportation of SA written by Australian composers to other countries of the world, in which TLR plays a part. This comes about through these channels: by the composers going overseas to seek and work on foreign commissions, by foreign broadcasters asking TLR for, or being offered, particular compositions, and through TLR’s membership of Ars Acustica International\textsuperscript{218} and its participation in their associated activities. I comment on each of these below.

5.3.4.2 Travelling Overseas
In the course of reporting my interviews with composers in the early part of this chapter, at section 2.2.2 I mention that Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart spend some of the northern summer each year in Europe composing for European commissioning agents and seeking new work. Other Australian composers who follow a similar path in Europe are Robert Iolini and Rainer Linz, and Andrew Yencken in South America. It should not be overlooked that these composers carry abroad with them some essence of the SA of Australia that may find expression, for example, in a commercial ‘jingle’, or in a piece for radio or installation, or in the score for a film. This was brought to my attention when I was speaking to Heidi Grundmann and Elizabeth Zimmermann of Kunst Radio in Vienna in section 3.2.2 above in her comments about Jon Rose. In playing a part in the development of the careers of these composers, as I claim in 5.2 above, TLR has made a contribution to world SA by helping to bring Australian compositions before foreign audiences.

5.3.4.3 Festivals
Festivals are an avenue through which Australian SA makes its way to the international scene. Two SA festivals are outlined below.

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\textsuperscript{218} See section 3.4.4 above for information about Ars Acustica International.
Resonance 107.3 FM was a major broadcast across central London during the period 9th June to 5th July 1998. It was part of a festival called ‘john peel's meltdown 98’ and involved 24 hours per day broadcasting of what the associated publicity refers to as ‘Radio Art’ on a dedicated station ‘107.3 FM’. During the days of Wednesday 24/6 and Thursday 25/6 compositions of Australian composers that had been broadcast by TLR were presented by Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart. Composers represented were:

Roz Cheney
Jim Denley
Robyn Ravlich
Andrew Schultz
Stevie Wishart & Jim Denley

Sherre De Lys
Virginia Madsen
Jon Rose
Jo Truman
Andrew Yencken

Ways of Hearing: Australia was a listening project held at the Australian Embassy in Paris on 9th and 10th of February 1992. It was funded by the Australia Council through the Australian Embassy, with support from the ABC, the Australia France Foundation and from France Culture. The program consisted of two evening meetings devoted to listening to Australian and French sound works, the proceedings being recorded with a view to later broadcast. Poems by both French and Australian poets were also read. The persons invited were eminent in the world of sound art, including Richard Connolly (retired drama and features head, ABC), Gilbert Lascaux (Professor at the University Pantheon-Sorbonne, art critic and writer), John Tranter (poet, retired producer ABC) and Alain Trutat (program advisor, France Culture). Unfortunately Richard Connolly was unable to attend due to illness.

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219 Source: Promotional material on ABC files.

220 Source: Promotional material on ABC files and personal communication to author by Richard Connolly on 30 October, 2001.
Selections from works written by the following composers were presented as representative of Australia:

Ros Bandt  Paul Carter  
Paul Charlier  Roz Cheney  
Moya Henderson  Kate Jennings  
Donna McLaughlin  Virginia Madsen  
Robyn Ravlich  Jon Rose  
Rick Rue  Jane Ulman  
Lindy Woodward

In section 3.2.2 above I write, in a different context, about early visits to European broadcasters by producers from the ABC. The early visit made by Richard Connolly, followed by Andrew McLennan’s visit in 1975 established contacts that have been maintained and extended. As the number of conferences, festivals and similar gatherings does not seem to be decreasing, opportunities continue to present themselves for TLR producers to attend these functions, funding permitting, and meet again their counterparts throughout the world. In this way they become aware of program interests and styles of the various broadcasters, and as new Australian works emerge consideration is given to offering them to particular overseas broadcasters whose style they seem to fit. In the same way opportunities for co-production with like-minded producers may present themselves. By attending these functions TLR both develops its presence internationally and discovers opportunities for Australian works.

5.3.4.4 World Organization - The EBU

Ars Acustica International was formed in 1988 by members of the EBU, the European Broadcasting Union, which is the world’s largest professional association of national broadcasters. Its members, as stated on its website, ‘are the editors and producers responsible for radio art production in European, North American and Australian public broadcasting
organisations’. Group meetings are held once or twice each year, usually at the location of a special event it has organised, where radio art productions may be exchanged, subjects discussed such as project proposals, trends in the theory and practice of radio art and connected fields, and information about activities and events in the field of media arts in the different countries. This is one more place where connections are renewed and established that lead to the exchange of programs, which in turn may give rise to the varying mix of international pieces apparent in TLR’s broadcasts each year.

Members of Ars Acustica International are invited to submit pieces for inclusion in CDs that the group releases periodically. TLR has submitted to Ars Acustica International and the EBU these pieces:

- **Containers** (2001) by Sherre De Lys and Russell Stapleton
- **Revolutions in the sun** (1999) by Ion Pearce
- **Topology of a phantom city** (1993) by Shaun Rigney
- **Carousel of light** (1996) by Andrew Yencken
- **The long suffering of Anna Magdelena** (1997) by Jon Rose
- **Vanishing point** (1993) by Ion Pearce
- **Tracks without traces** (1994) by Mike Ladd
- **Symphony in stone** (2002) by Martin Thomas
- **Metamorphosis 1** (1993) by Andrew Yencken

Having a piece selected for inclusion in an Ars Acustica International CD exposes that piece to all members internationally which can lead to requests for permission to broadcast.

The European Broadcasting Union, in the early part of 2001, invited TLR to host their IFC in April/May of that year. This is a major event in the world of radio, as mentioned above, bringing together producers and composers from many countries. As well as representatives from Western Europe and

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221 This information is drawn from the website [http://ortkunstradio.thing.at/EBU/info.html](http://ortkunstradio.thing.at/EBU/info.html)
Scandinavia, some other countries represented were Korea, China, Poland, the USA, Romania, Croatia and Ireland. The Conference extended over a period of 5 days and was held at the ABC Sydney complex in Harris Street. During the time of the conference, visiting producers met TLR and other ABC staff, worked with them in workshops and took part in listening sessions and social functions.

To be asked to host such a major event is an example of the regard in which TLR is held internationally and is indicative of TLR’s acceptance in the international world of SA.

5.3.4.5 Visiting Producers

Over the years many producers from other countries have visited TLR as guests of the ABC or funded by the ABC in conjunction with another institution. Visits have been made by Gregory Whitehead and Kenneth Gaburo from the USA, Peter Leonard Braun and Klaus Schöning from German Radio, Arsenije Jovanovic (who works mainly in Germany), René Farabet and Kaye Mortley from France, Harry Huhtamaki from Finland, Klaus Buhlert from Berlin and Melody Sumner-Carnahan from the USA.

The visiting producer usually conducts workshops, and works and mixes with TLR production staff. Some visiting producers have taken a very active part in TLR broadcasts during their time at ABC studios; for example Gregory Whitehead produced a piece *Pressures of the Unspeakable* in which listeners were invited to phone in and have their screams put to air. As an example of another form of cross-fertilization, Harri Huhtamaki took material that had been recorded in Australia and produced pieces in Helsinki which were played later over TLR.

In funding, or making a contribution to the funding of, visits of this kind the ABC brings the experience of international SA practice to both staff and listeners.
5.4 **Summary**

This chapter marks the end of the presentation of data that has been disclosed in my research and which I have selected as relevant to my thesis. The data relates to outcomes of relationships between TLR and Australian composers, and the activities of TLR in the world community of SA.

In Chapter 6 the strands of this evidence and data from other chapters are drawn together to prove the truth of my thesis.
Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will summarise the case studies, interviews, and relevant examples and facts contained in preceding chapters. By exploring experiences of a cross-section of people who have had material and wide-ranging contact with TLR and by researching its history, compass and governance I have gathered appropriate and significant data. This data, I believe, verifies the assertions made at Chapter1: I claim that the material I summarise here supports the thesis that the ABC’s radio program TLR has made a major contribution to the development of SA in Australia and has contributed to its depth and recognition on an international scale.

The chapter is divided into further sections as follows:

6.2 Australian composers
6.3 International presence
6.4 Governance
6.5 Conclusion

Sections 6.2 and 6.3 are compatible with the order in which the thesis statement is presented; and in section 6.4, I demonstrate the competency of ABC management in the arts area. There is occasional commonality between sections 6.2 and 6.3 in that most activities by TLR at the international level do not only increase TLR’s presence there but also involve a direct benefit to an Australian composer or composers. Any betterment experienced by an Australian composer almost certainly represents a benefit to Australian SA as a whole. I draw attention in the text to such cases.
6.2 AUSTRALIAN COMPOSERS

6.2.1 Case Studies

In Chapter 5 I presented case studies of composers Shaun Rigney, Jim Denley and Stevie Wishart, Ros Bandt and Kate Jennings. Three of these studies exemplify the encouragement (in various forms) conferred on composers through their association with TLR that results in the continuing emergence of SA compositions. The study of the case of Kate Jennings involves a composition that calls on an existing artwork of a different genre and demonstrates to all creative artists the existence of an opportunity.

6.2.1.1 Shaun Rigney

Implied in Rigney’s observations (Chapter 5, section 2.2.1) on his relationship to TLR is the theme of ‘confidence’, the confidence that comes from on-air exposure, the confidence that comes with payment of money and encouragement that a career may be possible. His says that his curriculum vitae (CV) would look quite different without TLR’s support, meaning that the result of having had works broadcast by TLR has been commissions for him, and he can add these to the list on his C.V. By broadcasting a particular work TLR has given both the work and Rigney, as its composer, an extra value. Such is the influence of TLR’s imprimateur to bring new works into existence and to help a composer along a career path by the creation of these works.

6.2.1.2 Denley and Wishart

At 5.2.2.2 Denley makes the same sort of comments as Rigney, this time about his overseas experience when he says ‘...it is easier to get things broadcast overseas and to get people to take your work seriously overseas because TLR has already presented it’.

This statement says that having had TLR broadcast one of his and Wishart’s works amounts to a seal of approval and helps in overseas negotiations in several ways: firstly the fact that TLR has broadcast their
work adds to their credibility as composers and creates confidence in their ability to carry out a commission, and secondly, having a work exposed to public hearing in a foreign country (eg on radio, film or TV) may also bring their names before other potential customers.

Encouragement from two of TLR’s producers is acknowledged by Denley when he says that ‘She [Sherre De Lys]...encouraged me to put a proposal [to TLR] quite regularly.’ and that it was Sherre De Lys who encouraged him to compose the trilogy It’s, First contact, and A guy in the middle. This trilogy is obviously important to Denley as he comments not only on the encouragement he got to compose it but also on the provision of technical facilities and a sound engineer (John Jacobs) to realise it. Without these it is apparent that this piece of art would not exist. As Denley says, ‘I can’t imagine who I would have gone to, to do that’. In fact, had he not been encouraged earlier in his career by ABC Producer Cathy Peters he may never have moved into the composition of SA, as he acknowledges in the same interview.

6.2.1.3 Ros Bandt

Technical assistance was applauded also by sound sculptor Ros Bandt (5.2.2.3) as follows:

I don’t think my career could have been half as good without it. In the studio, the type of engineering is much better at the ABC than anything you can get at a private company...I want to work with virtuosic technicians that can code as fast as I can think...

The case of Bandt is an example also of massive logistic support; space is a critical component of her two compositions Mungo and Stacks described at 5.2.2.3. Neither of these compositions would exist had it not been for the significant logistic support given to her. In the case of Mungo, Bandt was free to apply her creative energies to the composition whilst TLR, in conjunction with WDR, attended to all other tasks and WDR provided the site for its world premier. Bandt could not even have realised Mungo, let alone launched it so effectively, without TLR and WDR.
The logistics provided by TLR for Bandt’s work *Stacks* were equally impressive: huge microphone booms inside a ventilation stack in Melbourne and the services of sound engineers and studios for some weeks after recording.

All facts in these cases point to the conclusion that TLR played a critical role in enabling the creation of two major works of sound sculpture and in their dissemination in Australia and Europe, thus also bringing Bandt before European audiences. (see 6.3 below)

6.2.1.4 Kate Jennings

The last case study in this bracket shows a different kind of support for SA, namely, encouragement by example. *Deserta rerum*, a work by poet Kate Jennings, was re-produced and broadcast by TLR as a sound feature for radio, and as such straddles the worlds of poetic literature and sound. This transformation, welcomed by Jennings as a sympathetic re-production of her work, demonstrates an avenue for multi-media (or cross-genre) composition. In this case, TLR has provided a paradigm for the benefit of both SA composers and poets.

Similarly TLR producer Robyn Ravlich and sound engineer Russell Stapleton have exemplified another cross-media possibility in the *Raft of the Medusa*, a sound composition inspired by the painting of that name.

6.2.1.5 Case studies - Conclusions

Rigney, Denley and Wishart, and Bandt are at different stages of their careers, and to that extent are representative of three groups of composers. Freely, in discussions with me, they have talked about the experiences they have enjoyed through their association with TLR. These experiences have been valuable and have had a positive effect on their careers. All verify that the support given to them by TLR in the ways outlined has enabled them to produce SA and to continue producing it. The support is typical, I believe of that extended to many Australian composers whose work TLR has
broadcast. TLR has made a significant contribution to SA both in Australia and on the world scene, by nurturing, encouraging and giving practical assistance to Australian composers.

In *Deserta rerum* and the *Raft of the Medusa* TLR has demonstrated that the boundaries of SA can be pushed to encompass another art form.

### 6.2.2 A Forum

During our discussion at Chapter 5, section 2.2.3, Bandt also comments on the way in which TLR provides a forum. She says ‘The thing that TLR offered more than any other place has been a forum to take up the edge of experimental music’.

A comment of this nature was made also by Nicholas Zurbrugg at Chapter 5, section 3.2.4 when he writes: ‘It offered a national platform for Australian intellectuals to REGULARLY discuss whatever they were interested in at the time’.

Here, I believe, we have two versions of a forum. Bandt could be referring to a physical meeting of composer with composer, and composer with producer and sound engineer. I comment at Chapter 5, section 2.2.3 how this happens at the TLR studios and Bandt would probably have experienced it herself. I think that Zurbrugg is referring to the various functions held by TLR at Harris Street where composers meet one another and perhaps also a visiting composer or producer. On the other hand, both Zurbrugg and Bandt may be referring in a metaphorical sense to the wide-ranging presentation of intellectual material in TLR’s programs and the part that TLR plays as a ‘cultural catalyst’, representing a benign environment where ideas may be freely exchanged.

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222 For example, TLR arranged a day-long forum at Harris Street on 25 March, 2003 where invited composers and others met and talked with visiting Canadian composers Murray Schafer and Hildergarde Westercamp.
In the two pragmatic situations suggested above composers and observers are given the opportunity to meet and talk in comfortable surroundings, something that may not occur without the initiative of TLR.

Whether it be in the practical situation of face-to-face contact or in the listening situation brought about by radio, TLR is an enabling force within the SA community.

6.2.3 Staff Composers

In addition to their contribution to Australian SA by their skill in the production process, TLR producers also make a direct contribution to the repertory of Australian SA by their own compositions. (see Chapter 4, section 4) This contribution, over the years 1995, 1996 and 1997, averaged about 20% of the total number of pieces broadcast by TLR.

6.2.4 The New Media Arts ABC/Australia Council Residency

At Chapter 4, section 9 I describe this award and the contribution that TLR makes towards it by helping in the selection process, by providing studio space, editing facilities, sound engineering and production skills, and by broadcasting the finished composition. As recounted at Chapter 4, creative energy is generated between the winners of the award and TLR with positive results. In the cases quoted, two new composers have been helped to form links in their career development that have yielded fresh works and opportunities, a project documenting Australian improvisation has been started and new compositions commissioned and broadcast. This is an example of TLR helping Australian talent to help itself.

6.3 INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

I recount in Chapter 5 interviews that I have had with producers of SA in Germany and Austria, a writer for radio from the USA, the late Nicholas
Zurbrugg (an English academic who had deep roots in Australia), a producer who has done work for the BBC in London and the head of the SA department at Finnish Radio. These interviews illustrate the high esteem in which TLR is held, its producers and its programs; there is clearly a deep awareness of TLR as a significant member of the world community.

In Germany, WDR producer Klaus Schöning’s reminiscences of working with the ABC took him back to before the formation of TLR and the numerous co-productions, visits and shared experiences that followed. He talked specifically about co-productions with TLR of the works of Moya Henderson and Ros Bandt. He commented on the support given by TLR to composer Bill Fontana and implied that TLR’s help made Fontana ‘now famous’ internationally. His knowledge of the people and activities of TLR was, to me, quite surprising and signified a long and respected friendship; the presence of TLR was well acknowledged.

The presence of TLR internationally has been acknowledged by Julie Shapiro of 3rd Coast Public Radio in Chicago, USA by naming (with permission) one of their listening functions after TLR. (see Chapter 4 section 5)

As a bonus for Australian composer Ros Bandt (see Chapter 5, section 2.2.3) and also for Australian SA composers, TLR’s co-production agreement with WDR resulted in her work reaching European audiences. TLR’s presence in that area was no doubt enhanced by this broadcast.

In 5.3.4.2 I give examples of Australian composers who regularly travel overseas. Composers travelling overseas who have been helped along their career by TLR are taking something of TLR with them and thus contributing to its international presence.

By its producers participating in SA festivals, conferences and special meetings held around the world, TLR is brought squarely into the international scene. I detail examples of such events in Chapter 5, section
3.4.3. They include meetings, conferences and festivals in various parts of the world, including London, France and other parts of Europe and Scandinavia.

A case in point is the IFC held in a different country each year. The first person to be sent from the arts area that was to become TLR, was Robyn Ravlich when she attended the conference in Finland in 1984\textsuperscript{223}, and in April/May 2001\textsuperscript{224} the conference was hosted by the ABC, through TLR, at their Harris Street offices. These two examples demonstrate both the will of the ABC to maintain a presence in the world SA milieu (with clear benefits to the art and those who practice it) and the esteem in which the organising body, the EBU, holds the ABC and TLR.

An example of a festival is *Resonance 107.3FM* which was a major broadcast across central London during the period 9\textsuperscript{th} June to 5\textsuperscript{th} July 1998. For 48 hours Australian compositions of what the associated publicity refers to as 'Radio Art' were broadcast on a dedicated station. The majority of these were produced by TLR in the studios of the ABC.

At Chapter 4, section 6.1 I deal with TLR’s submission of works for awards, both in Australia and overseas. The winning of Australian awards is encouragement for local composers and for SA in Australia. In the words of Robyn Ravlich: ‘The two Australian [awards] last year did jump a barrier - where the radio art qualities were recognized in conveying the strong “issues”’.

By submitting and winning international awards TLR clearly adds to the recognition of its presence internationally and also benefits Australian composers by increasing the exposure of Australian compositions.

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\textsuperscript{223} See Chapter 3, section 2.3.

\textsuperscript{224} See Chapter 5, section 3.4.4 and Fn 26.
6.3.1 Conclusions - International Presence
These positive comments quoted above about the ABC and TLR were not prompted; they came out in the course of correspondence and conversation with professionals in the field who are closely in touch with, and part of, the world radio SA culture. From the observations quoted in preceding chapters and summarised above it is plain that TLR takes a place among its international peers as an active and innovative broadcaster of quality SA radio programs, programs consisting of features that other world broadcasters are happy to include in their own programs. Benefits from this association clearly flow on to Australian SA composers and SA in Australia.

6.4 GOVERNANCE
In charting the course of SA at the ABC from the late 1970s to the time of writing, I make reference from time to time of ABC management policies and decisions. I have commented adversely on several decisions that appear to me as unilateral, but in the main I have presented ABC management, both at the operative and executive level, as being competent and informed. I would not pretend that all decisions were reached without argument, but, in relation to TLR and its predecessors, I believe that the program has been well-managed at all levels.

I have shown, I believe, that TLR is a successful program, but this success has been achieved by more than competancy of management; it has been achieved by what I perceive to be an imaginative and creative approach to program-making and it is a credit to management that that approach has been given the freedom, perhaps hard-won at times, to develop.

For example, as early as 1971 Richard Connolly saw the way ahead for SA, (see Chapter 3, section 2.6.1) which was to be by encouragement of a lyrical style of presentation, a movement away from the prose style of
journalism. This path is still being followed and developed at the time of writing.

Another example is that of Kirsten Garrett (see Chapter 3, section 2.2) where, in the early 1980s, she was encouraged by a senior program-maker, against the wishes of senior management, to reject a BBC practice of voice presentation in favour of an Australian one.

In a further move away from a BBC practice, TLR has not been constrained by management from changing the relationship between composer, producer and sound engineer in such a way as to allow creative energies to flow and intermingle between the three. (see Chapter 4, section 3.3) This blurring of boundaries is apparently still not an accepted practice in BBC productions. (see comments by Alan Hall at Chapter 5, section 3.2.4)

The ABC’s arts production area does not have an hierarchal structure (see Kirsten Garrett’s comments at Chapter 4, section 11) and in the same section I refer to management in the area as being by ‘guided consensus’. Although the apparent non-interventionist policy of senior management towards program-making in some cases almost amounts to *laisser-faire*, credit must be given to that management for their part in allowing an imaginative and creative practice to develop.

6.5 CONCLUSION

In aiming to prove that TLR has made a major contribution to SA in Australia I have built my arguments around TLR’s policy of developing the Australian composer. If the situation were such that TLR relied predominantly on compositions from overseas composers TLR’s contribution to SA in Australia would be significantly diminished; examples of SA may be broadcast in Australia, but there would be limited contribution to the growth of local composition.
At the beginning of this section I listed six ways in which Australian composers of SA believe they have gained benefit from their association with TLR and in the body of the section I have presented case studies that illustrate and confirm these benefits in the composer’s own words.

Coming through these comments is the theme of ‘Confidence’, the confidence that comes from on-air exposure; the confidence that comes with payment of money, encouragement that a career may be possible, confidence of a commissioner that the composer has the ability to deliver a commission and confidence that its intentions and aesthetics will be accepted and understood.

TLR takes a place among its international peers as an active and innovative broadcaster of quality sound art radio programs, programs consisting of features that other world broadcasters are happy to include in their own programs. In the course of gaining this position TLR, with the support of its management, has actively encouraged and developed the growth of SA in Australia, has developed a consistent listening public and has gained recognition in the world SA culture. By having its being within the culture of SA, TLR has developed its own culture of participants, listeners and supporters, and has done this in such a way as to contribute to and meld into a world culture.
Bibliography and References

**Books**


Davies, Shaun. (1995) *Sound Art and the annihilation of sound*. Thesis for MA (Hons) degree, University of Western Sydney: NSW.


Knowles, Julian. (1988) *Aspects of timbre and space in electronic music with reference to Ian Frederick’s “Sunrise” (1986) for computer-generated tape and multi-channel sound projection system*. Thesis for the degree of B.A. (Hons.) degree, University of Sydney: NSW.


Schöning, Klaus (1971) *Sound Journey.* West German Radio: Cologne.


Tenney, James (1992) *META+HODOS and META Meta+Hodos.* Frog Peak Music: USA.


**Journals**


**Newsprint**


**Internet List**

Ars Acustica International: [http://ortkunstradio.thing.at/EBU/info.html](http://ortkunstradio.thing.at/EBU/info.html)

CBC Radio Music Canada: [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~chatzes/awards.htm](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~chatzes/awards.htm)
Fairlight Inc.: www.fairlight.net.au

Music Matrix Ca. USA:  
www.calarts.edu/schools/music/faculty/tenney.html

The ABC: www.abc.net.au/classic

Third Coast Radio Festival Ca. USA: www.thirdcoastfestival.org

**Selected Listening**  Compact Discs

Disks listed below should be available from retail outlets or from the organizations/individuals named. Archival recordings of TLR items in ABC program material used for my own research are not listed.

**ABC Produced Compact Discs:**
A set of four discs named *Alpha, Beta, Gamma* and *Delta.* 1994.

*Chris Mann and the impediments,* Chris Mann, in *Multi Tracks,* ADD 0.0.. 1995.


Intersect, Rainer Linz, with Brigid Bourke. NMA Publications. 1997.


Sunrise, Ian Fredericks, in OSSIA, Volume 1, Australian Composers. JADCD1024. 1990.

Trace Elements 1, 2, and 3, Rik Rue, in Rik Rue 1999. 2002.


**Correspondence**

Letter from Roz Cheney to Don Richards, 5 July, 1999. In the possession of the author.
Addendum

In late 2003, after submission of this thesis, the ABC advised that the program *The Listening Room* was to be discontinued. As reported in the ABC magazine *Limelight* of December 2003, page 8, the last broadcast was on 15 December, 2003.
THE CREATIVE EAR

The ABC`s *The Listening Room* and the nurturing of Sound Art in Australia

A dissertation presented by
Donald F Richards
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Contemporary Arts,
College of Arts Education and Social Sciences,
University of Western Sydney

2003

Volume 2

Appendices
APPENDIX 1

Audio CD  5EP    (5 Easy Pieces)

Track 1. Duration 17mt. 45sec. This piece of Sound Art (SA) was composed by Ion Pearce in 1997 and is presented in full. Text in Chapter 2 contains a history of its composition, its methods of production and an analysis of its construction and content.

Track 2. Duration 17mts. 45secs. The composition 5EP is given as above, together with a ‘voice-over’ commentary which describes the intuitive reactions of the author to the passing sounds of the piece. Text of the ‘voice-over’ is as follows:

*High Noon, in film-land, a gunfight in a deserted western town between two men drawn together by hate and the desire to kill. To clear his vision one of them blinks while sighting his gun.*

*The plot has oozed beyond its limits - this is the fantasy-land of the detective novel with a silver gun, a swimming pool and a woman waiting for a man. Are they drawn together by desire to kill or desire for one another?*

*Plodding, painful, with the clink of leg-irons, imprisoned, captive, dragging along in a foreign land, sad and constrained like a prisoner in a chain gang. Miserable and far from home. Two voices twist and twine in conversation.*

*Slowly the sling of David is swung around, round and round it goes, gathering momentum. Then the sling is released and the stone flies high into the air, whistling over the trees, over the horizon and into the moon.*
Even the excitement of train travel of childhood days brings you back to the same old routines, the painful rhythm of plodding - the boring round of dissonant practice.

Could be the opening words of a novel and who are these old men of Europe? Are they the ones who sent the young men off their death in two world wars? There was no cool tomb for them but lovely words.

Moving around in a strange country is fascinating and confusing - the changing scenes, the different rhythms of life, the dance, crowded streets, voices of strange people, voices of the past.

The water in the pool is in layers, different things at different depths. The experience of the not-quite-heard voices, words we have heard before but are being said again by different people. I feel I know these voices because they are saying words I know. They must have been with us all along. We are enclosed by a space that is made up of everything that has already happened.

The voices again - the space grows. Now that you have arrived something is surely going to happen.

The wagon is moving again, the axles groan. People are around us - we are building a pyramid of people, they know the words and are part of it all, peculiar phrases that seem to make some sort of sense. The conventional chords of the piano are consoling in this strange land.

The train, a steam train, is moving, moving really quickly. Moving through a countryside peopled by all sorts of strange things. Exciting and confusing, so many different things are happening - scenes flashing past the train, bells, the rushing rhythm of the rails, birds, pieces of conversation, echoing valleys, heavy fast-moving steel.

The wagon, the old covered wagon of western films, is rolling slowly across the prairie, axles groaning, lurching from side to side. On board is all the baggage of memory, all the sounds we have heard, the things that
are part of today and part of yesterday - memories. Piano practice, cello
practice, voice after voice after voice - sad, heavy weights, life with its
happenings and changing rhythms - sounds from a distant land. All the
players in the play are on the wagon - it’s like a road film carting its own
actors around - a chorus of happenings, memories and characters moving
stolidly across the prairie.

The actor presenting the text is Sonja Brozice, at the time of writing a student at the
School of Contemporary Arts, UWS.
APPENDIX 2

Audio CD - Compilation Broadcast by WDR

Duration of broadcast: 54mt. 36sec.
A compilation of Australian SA compositions was made for broadcast by WDR. This is a CD of the complete broadcast, including the music played and the presenters’ voices in German, with a translation given at Appendix 9. Chapter 5 contains the details of the project.

The pieces in order of playing are as follows:

Children like birds by Gareth Vanderhope
Swim Swim Swan Song, by Jane Ulman
Freetime, by Kerry Fletcher
The calling to come, by Paul Carter
Mungo, by Ros Bandt
Rivers: Swan and Avon, by Carl Edwards, Karl Akers and Chris White
Containers, by Sherre Delys and Russell Stapleton
Vanishing Point by Ion Pearce
In the mist of an arcane pop, by Damien Castaldi
APPENDIX 3

Audio CD - Exemplars of SA

Tracks 1-7 contain short samples of a range of SA pieces by composers in various countries, including Australia. All compositions have been broadcast by TLR and are exemplars of the compass of the genre of SA. There is a brief description of each piece at Chapter 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track No</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Duration Min:Sec</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Paul Carter</td>
<td>2:59</td>
<td>The Calling to Come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gerhard Rühm</td>
<td>3:38</td>
<td>Ophelia and the Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moya Henderson</td>
<td>5:07</td>
<td>Currawong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Arenje Javonvic</td>
<td>5:11</td>
<td>Resava Cave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jim McKee and Barney Jones</td>
<td>5:04</td>
<td>Wake for Tom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Damien Castaldi</td>
<td>4:17</td>
<td>In the mist of an arcane pop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rik Rue</td>
<td>4:25</td>
<td>The Domain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 4

5 Easy Pieces - Composition and Production

Portrait of Ion Pearce  page 8

Production Studio 363  page 9

Recording in Goossens Hall, Harris St. Sydney  page 10

Abacus - general view  page 11

Pearce playing his abacus  page 12
(Top) Ion Pearce (left) and Russell Stapleton in Studio P363
(Lower) Stapleton (left) at the controls of the Fairlight MFX 2, since replaced by model MFX3
(Top) Goossens Hall at Harris Street with musicians ready for recording
(Lower) Sound Engineer Andrei Shabunov (Left) and Ion Pearce clearing up after recording
A view of the abacus showing the discs on their wooden axles with Ion Pearce on right. Photo by MUSICWORKS 66.
Ion Pearce is seen here playing the abacus, a musical instrument which he designed, by turning the discs on their axles.

Photo by MUSICWORKS 66.
APPENDIX 5

PROPOSAL FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW PROGRAM - ST

The document that follows is displayed in its original form and was probably written during the mid-1980s. It is historic in that it describes in detail the writers' impressions of ABC radio arts production of the day, casts some light on commercial and community radio and lays the foundations for future ABC SA programs.
CORPORATE PLANNING - ARTS UNIT

Goals and Objectives
Recently RT&D has reconstructed itself (experimentally) into 3 units. Two such units have combined to present a united corporate plan since their goals and objectives have a good deal in common. The unit, which administratively has nominated itself the Arts Unit, at present provides a small umbrella for 3 producers, with an executive producer responsible for the weekly R2 programs Point Taken, The Artful Dodger and The Week in Film. While it was never intended to become the ABC Radio's art unit, nevertheless, with the ABC identifying arts and cultural affairs as one of its significant program strands, it seems appropriate for the unit to consider its efforts in the light of other broadcasters in this strand, as well as to define more precisely its own efforts.

The unit recognises that arts/cultural material forms a large part of many media's resource material, not just on radio. On ABC Radio in particular separate state arts programs are scheduled each weekend on R2. Arts/cultural material is staple broadcast material for R1 where local and often national issues are frequently being discussed on the various weekend, morning programs and drive times and public affairs programs. Separate programs on discrete arts activities (theatre, literature, film, music) also have their own schedules and are all organised by different departments. There is the new Sunday arts/pop program on JJJ; the arts related programs produced by the education department and the wide range of feature programs on cultural matters produced by the drama and features department. And now there is CRF's proposal for a strip program of arts/cultural reportage sequencing on R2 from 3 to 5 pm on weekdays. With the burgeoning of all these arts/cultural programs on ABC Radio (as well as on Public Radio), some kind of rationale seems necessary (indeed a pilot program has just begun) in order that the various broadcasters have a clear idea of what role they should be playing at their separate times and on the various networks, both in relation to each other and their program matter. At the moment various forms of broadcasting are being practised across the board, the majority of it being the review/preview comment
and report style. A proper planning process should make it clear to us all at what level we should pitch our various material and what the domain of that material is.

The Arts Unit ex RT&D has several goals that might be achieved within the total arts/culture output, goals which might suggest to the listeners that the ABC has a confident centre for all this broadcasting, but includes some new goals. We believe there needs to be a central program, preferably on R2, that transmits a sense of cultural diversity on a national scale. Debate, analysis, comment, criticism and discourse are all grist for the mill at this level, as well as is the need to examine international cultural issues in the broadest sense, as they seem relevant to, or are perceived as being part of, the national discourse.

In general, we wish to turn towards the audience in more complex ways than is allowed for by doctrinaire policy decisions. We assume the audience has wider potential tastes than might be guessed at or deduced by market surveys, demographical studies etc., that it is in fact less faint hearted than we are, or than we often imagine them to be. We believe it is a public broadcasting task to give the entire community the sense that they are all part of the cultural process, by putting the practitioners, the creators, if you like, in touch with those who actively partake of the cultural process, in ways that attract their attention in radio terms, as well as to create new audiences for the lively range of activities, debate and discourse generated by their production.

We also wish to cut across cultural/class conditioning that is often assumed by commercially pressured organisations, as well as by the ABC with its traditional low brow/high brow, popularist/elitist polarising tendency, with all that that has implied in the past for the various networks. We intend to merge the streams of fine art and popular culture in a non-hierarchical way, so that
a younger audience, not so firmly imprinted on these culture wars, can relate to this material more readily. So we would hope to offer the audience a spread of tastes, different levels of approach, varieties of imaginative program making colour and content.

We would hope to appeal to the curious and adventurous, and this would necessitate not designing schedules in relation to calculable expectations, but to strike out on new paths as regards form and content, with no prescriptions, no fixed program items or categories, to explore the area between reportage and performance (between journalism and the radio display object,) where the documentary is found side by side with the studio debate, or radio text, sound spot, mini drama or ear plug, audio spoof, electronics, performance, satire, song, radio cabaret, sound canvas, aural hoarding. Certain border incidents should be allowed for in the search for new program territory, an audience cultivated and prepared for program oddities, occasional acts of aesthetic and political provocation - adventurous, animated broadcasting.

While this may sound like Disneyland, our intention is to suggest, as well, by careful selection and placement of items, certain notions about the nature of culture, what it is about, how it is constructed, together with an underlying relationship to critical theory as it relates to arts/culture (where it seems relevant); not to adopt sepulchral or prolix tones in these matters, but to find stylistically subtle ways to include this without intimidating sections of the audience. As well as this, any program we can devise to achieve these aims will include the intermediary between the well established art-forms, the interaction between visual and performing arts, literature and film, music and text.

In this context we wish to generate material from the arts world, especially for radio, and for the kind of program we hope to devise, so that innovative people in that community not only see the ABC as a place where there is a contemporary forum for their work,
but another place where it may be displayed. What is desperately needed in the mass media at the moment is a place where arts discussion is not simply promotional information, but is seen to provide an appropriate context for the creating of new works. At the moment only the small journals (and, it must be said, the developing public radio stations) are providing anything like this analysis. If this debate were on a national scale on ABC radio, it would serve to enrich the compost heap from which creative work grows in the community. The ABC could play a positive part in tilling the soil, rather than (or in addition to) as is mostly the case, just reflecting on, commenting on, observing, covering the event, providing information about the cultural scene. Artists are desperate for such a context; the public needs a frame of reference of this sort in order to take in unorthodox and innovative material in which deliberate, calculated risks are taken.
Audience Analysis

In our 'goals and objectives' statement we pointed out that we can see arts/cultural broadcasting becoming another form of radio wall papers. We indicated the need for a confident, animated core program which takes an active part in providing a context for artists, audience and program makers alike. Our program making goals are framed in terms of an attitude to the audience. So far these goals have not been tested, nor has any audience response to them. Our relationship to the audience is defined in terms of these goals. These are real goals, not just another program proposal. Already other public broadcasters with limited resources have begun versions of the sort of proposal we have outlined. If we do not catch up now, then we might as well quit the field, and just continue with a rearrangement of the status quo. Our present program commitments do not have the calculated community response that we hope to engender with these new proposals. They fulfill certain needs in subject areas and kinds of approaches to those areas. One is a very well established program with a long history and, we believe, a dedicated audience (The Week in Film). The other two programs are still quite new. They have been designed to fill certain schedules and are not calculated to draw the kind of response and feed back as our new proposals. The figures as collected by the present means are of no assistance in calculating a response.
Strengths and Weaknesses

Present weaknesses include less clearly defined goals than the ones stated above as regards program making and relationship to audience. Like many programs a certain time/scheduling pragmatism invades the search for transmission time and the compromises reached with managers over duration and style. The smallness of the unit, its lack of relationship with other like-stranded program makers, a particularly small budget, the present lack of definition with regards the various networks, a sense of lagging behind (not the commercial) but the public broadcasters in this area.

Some strengths include: a wide area of expertise, good contacts, an ability to articulate goals and participate in a planning process, A commitment to national public broadcasting aims.

Outside Influences

Arts/culture programs are nothing if they do not participate in outside influences. These influences need to be tapped. Where major (and minor) changes in the cultural climate are being articulated, where new practices are emerging, the ideas that inform such changes need to be incorporated into arts/culture broadcasting. To anticipate such changes may be good journalism, but to partake of them is another matter.

As has already been mentioned, public broadcasters in all states are providing arts/culture broadcasting of a kind that the ABC should as a leader in this field. The tendency in the ABC to provide a large amount of arts/culture broadcasting, could mean that producers with a preference for concerted program making, the development of program making skills, may be forced to become roving arts journalists, reporting on, covering events, and not get the chance to develop a dedicated arts program with the kind of goals outlined. A major disadvantage for this unit could be our lack of funds to realise a project as ambitious as we intend. The commissioning of material, the cost of production, the taking on of freelance contributors, could put our major program goals in jeopardy.
Unit Strategy
While our goals and objectives may sound like so much rhetoric (the less achievable the more they go on), they do represent the philosophy that informs program goals of the unit. Our major objective at the moment is to find a place on ABC Radio where these goals can be achieved, preferably in one single program per week of medium duration (up to 2 hrs) neither a set piece, nor a collective sequence program. We believe that with the present mix of personnel, plus the services of one additional freelance contributor, we have the expertise, knowledge and confidence to execute a program along the lines indicated: tentative title - Surface Tension.

The freelance contributor we have in mind is Martin Harrison, who has been producing Books and Writing for the past three years. His interests now point to program with a broader brief such as we have outlined, and to which he has already contributed many ideas. There is a spread of interests amongst us and our contacts that would make such a program feasible. We would need to rationalise our present resources, review our current expenditure and perhaps pool them with similarly minded program makers. Our preference is for a weekend afternoon (preferably Sunday) mid or late evening weekday or Sunday evening. Although if the latest proposal for weekday arts reportage takes off, it is tempting to suggest that 3 to 5 pm be the weekend time for an arts/culture program with different aims but related to the weekday one.

We are wary of being turned into roving arts reporters servicing a multitude of arts programs and having scant connection specialist program making. As a consequence, along with the above proposal, we wish to continue the craft of specialist program making in the general area of programs about subjects of cultural interest, such as Point Taken, although we feel that a program of its present length (26 mins) does not have sufficient time to develop in form and content beyond its ostensible subject matter. We propose a
series of special features (45 to 60 mins) - 13 per year to start with. Another area of interest we would like to develop is the joint (or solo) sponsoring of events (seminars, symposia, expositions) out of which program making material can be generated, but which may have a venue shared with another institution, say an Art Gallery, Fine Arts Department, Goethe Institute or its multicultural equivalents. We propose six such events each year, and these might require the services of an experienced co-ordinator, on each occasion.

Two last ideas we like to float at this time are:

1. The creation of a tape workshop where we as producers provide production expertise to develop program making out of material collected on tape by interested members of the community. This is not a new idea. It has been pursued with some success by Dutch Radio as well as more recently in Japan by NHK. We realise it would take considerable resources to do properly, but believe that if undertaken vigorously, would provoke interest and interaction with the audience.

2. The sponsoring of an 'artist in residence to experiment with the notion and facility of radio as a medium of communication.
APPENDIX 6

Program Briefs for TLR years 2003 and 1993
PROGRAM BRIEF

Title  The Listening Room
Time  Monday 9.00pm. 60 to 70 minutes, with longer durations by arrangement.

Description
ABC Classic FM’s weekly program exploring contemporary radio forms and ideas, presented in stereo for both general and specialist audiences. It is the only national program on Australian radio to regularly commission, produce and present original radiophonic composition. The program is one of the entry points for new, younger listeners to ABC Classic FM and has a complementary role with New Music Australia.

Program Mission
- To present a wide range of contemporary sound art, acoustic art, radiophonic features, documentaries, performance and musical works in stereo to a national audience via ABC Classic FM
- To contextualize and create a listening experience for the appreciation of this work by Australian audiences
- To strongly reflect the ABC’s commitment to innovative and adventurous broadcasting in the area of program making and radio performance by encouraging artists to push the boundaries of their creativities
- To foster and encourage the ideas and techniques by which creative radio is produced by commissioning original radiophonic works from composers, writers and freelance producers around Australia and overseas that fit the program brief
- To foster the ABC’s creative relationships with leading and emerging artists and major cultural organizations
• To engage with international networks of radiophonic composers and producers, and acoustic art programs, participating in such forums as the IFC and Ars Acustica.
• To maintain and extend international exposure for Australian content and ABC programs through the internet, particularly through online audio

**Target Audience**

• A national audience of diverse social and educational backgrounds
• An audience interested in imaginative aural experience and reflective listening. Audience research reveals the audience stays listening for extended durations.
• Listeners interested in exploring sound and the broadest varieties of musical expression
• An audience interested in contemporary sound design, new media art and innovative audio delivery systems
• Regional listeners and those with limited opportunities to travel to urban venues for sound performance
• Worldwide listeners coming to the program through the internet, program exchange and co-productions with international broadcasters.
• Students of contemporary sound design, music, communications, new media art, writing, film and the performing arts
• Composers, sound artists, musicians, performing artists, writers, new media artists

**Editorial Content**

• 70% Australian content, predominantly contemporary with some reference to recent classics: 30% international, both contemporary and classic
• A range of programs produced by staff and freelance producers: staff producers play a vital role in engaging and developing the talents of contributors and in realizing their work to the highest possible standards of editorial development, recording and post-production. TLR producers also work in this way to provide content for broadcast on Radio National, particularly for The Night Air.
• Strong emphasis on program ideas which exploit the creative possibilities of radio
• A range of studio and location recordings with occasional festival broadcasts: a range of radiophonic work including sound and performance features and documentaries, soundscapes, radio essays, new music including contemporary ‘radio operas’, text-music compositions, reality music compositions, cut-ups, radio mix and collages
• Thematic arrangements of programs to provide focus and enriched contexts for listening across a range of material and formal approaches
• The program is recognized by the Australian Music Centre and the Anthology of Australian Music on Disc for its unique role in commissioning, developing and realizing radiophonic composition.

Style and Sound
• A strong engagement with music and other sound elements
• An imaginative use of editing, arranging, sound layering and mixing techniques
• Performance by Australian musicians and actors
• Style is evocative, engaging, and expansive, using sonic narratives to take the listener on a journey through sound worlds real and imagined, in stereo
• A welcoming and knowledgeable presenter contextualizes and leads listeners into and through the program. This is preceded by an on-air conversation with the early evening presenter. Andrew McLennan is a respected figure as a radio maker and in the music, theatre, and Ars Acustica communities and has had a rich association with presenting similar programming on the network.
DEPARTMENT        AUDIO ARTS
NAME OF PROGRAM   THE LISTENING ROOM
PRODUCTION STAFF  EXECUTIVE PRODUCER:  Roz Cheney
                   Broadcasters:    Tony MacGregor
                                   Andrew McLennan
                                   Robyn Ravlich
                                   Jane Ulman
                                   Donna MacLachlan
                                   Christine Papangelis

TRANSMISSION      Weekly on ABC FM at 9:30 pm.
                   Indefinite length, but not exceeding 11pm, and
                   consisting one major produced program or
                   combination of shorter pieces.

OVERVIEW          A specialist program for the exploration of
                   radio forms and ideas. It's a space in which to
                   address the ABC's commitment to innovative
                   and adventurous broadcasting in the area of
                   performance and cultural affairs. To showcase
                   Australian and internationally produced stereo
                   features, documentaries and acoustic art
                   works.

TARGET AUDIENCE   The Listening Room aims to inform, entertain,
                   astound and provoke its audience; to nurture
                   and create an audience interested in the use
                   of the electronic medium of radio, to put that
                   audience in touch with current trends and
                   historical perspectives in imaginative program
                   making, both in Australia and overseas. We
                   offer the audience a spread of tastes, different
                   levels of approach, varieties of imaginative
                   program making and new aural experiences
                   that reflect on a wide variety of cultural
                   matters.

OBJECTIVES        To foster and encourage the ideas and
                   techniques by which creative radio is produced
                   both inside and outside the institution of radio,
                   and in the pursuit of excellence in the craft of
                   audio arts to facilitate the exchange of such
                   ideas between producers, artists and sound
                   engineers through the commissioning of
                   projects that fit the program's brief, or through
                   collaborations with individuals or institutions
                   on similar projects of mutual interest.

FORM/SOUND        The Listening Room employs a whole range of
                   radiophonic means to produce a variety of
                   radio genres from performances exploring new
                   narrative strategies, radiophonic essaying,
audio documentaries, acoustic features, new musics, soundscapes and sculptures, audio poetry, radio or sound art. The Listening Room will also use traditional or stereotyped radio formats in new and interesting ways. Because of the close international ties we have with other program makers with similar ideals The Listening Room regularly crosses linguistic boundaries. As such it is ideally placed to appeal to the cosmopolitan Australian audience, and can bring enjoyment and stimulation to an increasingly well informed rural and regional audience.

The presentation aims to be welcoming to the audience and supportive of the material in the program. It provides sufficient information and context for the presentation of program material, without compromising the program’s inner integrity or condescending to the audience. It is carefully considered, written and mostly pre-packaged. Informal but not chatty. It aims at an internal cohesion, without alienating the program from the stations overall flow.

**EVALUATION:**
Regular weekly discussion, three monthly formal listening sessions Yearly formal evaluation against the brief. Media Reviews. Feedback.
APPENDIX 7

ADVERTISING MATERIAL - ST and TLR

Examples of mail-out and other leaflets as part of general and specific promotion

Surface Tension
Mail-out advising the coming of a new program page 29

TLR
Program logo page 31
The Garden Path page 32
Imagination page 33
Dear Contributor,

We are starting a new radio program on September 7th. SURFACE TENSION will be broadcast at one of the peak radio listening times - 3.30 pm every Saturday afternoon. It will be 90 minutes each week from and about the arts, offering new ideas, new forms of performance, new sounds, interviews and features.

We intend Surface Tension to break new ground for ABC Radio arts programming.

We'll be talking about the arts - about painting, architecture, photography, design, decorative arts, landscape art, gastronomy, writing, dance, performance, theatre, sculpture, mixed media works, radio, soundworks, video, film and documentation.

We will be talking about the context both local and international of new art. We will be looking at the politics of contemporary art, and we'll be talking to the people who make it and enjoy it and participate in it. We will be investigating current theories of art-work, asking critics and commentators here and overseas to contribute to Surface Tension, We'll be asking questions of the institutions which foster art, and of funding-systems and art-policy.

We will not only be talking about the arts, we will be producing art. Surface Tension will be a venue for innovative forms of performance, including drama and poetry and tape-recorded environmental works. We want to present the work of Australia's sound artists and those composers working with tape and environmental recording.

As far as possible, the elements which make Surface Tension will consciously develop and reflect the radio medium in terms of their construction and presentation. In content, Surface Tension will be a program of border incidents, crossing genres and media looking for that art which is occurring at the edges of conventional forms and challenging them.

Broadcast on ABC Radio National Saturdays at 3.30pm (Adelaide 3.00pm, Perth 3.20pm)
Sydney 2FC 576, Canberra 2CY 846, Newcastle 2NA 1512, Melbourne 3AR 621,
Brisbane 4QG 792, Adelaide 5CL 729, Perth 6WN 810, Hobart 72L 603.
Producers: Andrew McLennan, Robyn Ravlich, Tony MacGregor and Martin Harrison.
The Arts Unit, Radio Tally and Documentary, CREO 0004, Sydney 2001
Our focus is on the work of art, the making of art, and the manufacture and representation of culture. Our bias is local and Australian. Our context is the context of international ideas and developments.

So, please keep us informed of your activities - your exhibitions, your writing, your performances, publishing, symposia, concerts, tape and disc making, film-making and your sense of what other people around the country and overseas are doing. If you are or have been a contributor to other ABC Radio programs (The Artful Dodger, Point Taken, Arts Illustrated, Books and Writing, radio drama writing and documentaries), you may also be interested in the ways we want to work on Surface Tension.

We want to make Surface Tension wide-ranging and provocative, accessible to as many people as possible and challenging.

There are still many plans to finalise. As these are completed, you'll receive a more extensive communique.

ANDREW MCLENNAN  ROBYN RAVLICH  MARTIN HARRISON  TONY MACGREGOR
Exec.Producer  Producer  Producer  Producer

The Garden Path
a ramble through fields, cultivated
and unkempt
A special series presented by
The Listening Room
Mondays at 9pm
on ABC Classic FM
February 28 - March 28, 2000

Gardens can be full of plots, conducive to thoughts (pensées, pansies),
devoted to cultivating specimens brought in from the wild,
places of efforts that bear fruit, flowers and dreams...

A hybrid series of radiophonic pieces taking the air along a meandering path
through an imaginary garden of ideas.

* ABC Classic FM • Adelaide • 103.9FM • Brisbane 106.1FM •
  • Canberra 102.3 • Darwin 107.9FM • Gold Coast 88.5FM •
  • Hobart 93.9FM • Melbourne 105.9FM • Newcastle 106.1FM •
  • Perth 97.7FM • Sydney 92.9FM •
  and across Australia
Radio for the Imagination

original radio compositions
sound art & music
features & performance

explorations in sound for the inner ear
the creative listening experience

‘The Listening Room’
Mondays at 9.00pm on ABC Classic FM

email:
listeningroom@your.abc.net.au
Prizes for The Listening Room, Productions, Contributors, and Staff
2002
‘On the Raft, All at Sea’ by Robyn Ravlich and Russell Stapleton,
Human Rights Radio Award, Human Rights medal and Awards 2002

‘On the Raft, All at Sea’ by Robyn Ravlich and Russell Stapleton,
Best Radio, United Nations Association of Australia Media Peace Awards

‘If...’ by Sherre DeLys and John Jacobs,
Silver Award for Documentary, Third Coast International Audio Festival

2001
The Listening Room, ABC Classic FM, Most Distinguished Contribution
to the Presentation of Australian Composition by an Organization,
Australian Music Centre Awards

'Containers' by Sherre DeLys and Russell Stapleton, Grand Prix for Art
and Sound Design, Phonurgia Nova Awards, Arles, France

2000
‘Mecanica Natura’ by Caroline Wilkins, co-produced by Studio Akustische
Kunst, WDR, and The Listening Room, winner Karl Szucka Preis for
Radio Art, SWF, Germany

‘The Siren South’ by Jane Ulman and Phillip Ulman, Bronze Award, Prix
Marulïe
(Towards Old Texts) 4th International Festival of Radio Play and
Documentary Drama, Hvar, Croatia

‘Hong Kong: City in Between’ by Robert Iolini and Phillip Mar,
Prizewinner, Soundscapes for 2000 International Festival, NPS Radio and
the Centre for Electronic Music (CEM), The Netherlands
1997
‘Radio, Alive or Dead...?’ by Russell Stapleton, co-winner inaugural Radio Mix Award, Phonurgia Nova Awards, Arles, France

1995
‘Tracks and Traces’ by Mike Ladd and Stuart Hall, Special Commendation Radio Documentary, Prix Futura Berlin

‘The History of Water’ by Noelle Janaczewska, Jane Ulman & Russell Stapleton
Commendation, Radio Drama Prix Futura Berlin

1992
‘Pressures of the Unspeakable’ by Gregory Whitehead, Roz Cheney, and John Jacobs. RAI Special Prize for Radio Documentary, Prix Italia


1990
‘Meditations & Distractions on The Theme of the Singing Nun’ by Moya Henderson, Roz Cheney & Phillip Ulman. Commendation, Radio Documentary Prix Italia

1989
‘Collaborations’ by Cathy Peters, Jim Denley and John Jacobs. Prix Italia, Music

‘Beyond Settled Districts’ by Jane Ulman and Phillip Ulman. Prix Italia, Radio Documentary

‘Beyond Settled Districts’ by Jane Ulman & Phillip Ulman, Certificate of Merit, Documentary, Australian Hi-Fi-FM awards
‘Paganini’s Last Testimony’ by Jon Rose, Roz Cheney, and John Jacobs. Special Commendation Radio Drama, Prix Futura Berlin

‘Paganini’s Last Testimony’ by Jon Rose, Roz Cheney, and John Jacobs. Certificate of Merit, Creative Use of the Medium, Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

‘When the Boat Leaves the Harbour Remains’ by Roz Cheney & Andy Henley
Best Documentary, Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

‘Remember Me’ by Paul Carter, producer Andrew McLennan. Certificate of Merit for Drama. Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

1988
‘When Forests Were Really Forests’, Andrew McLennan, co-winner Major Award for Documentary, Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

‘Australia/Japan - A Love Story’ by Keith Gallasch and Virginia Baxter, produced by Tony Macgregor, won the Major Award for Drama

‘Digging for Britain’ Virginia Madsen. Major Award for the Creative Use of the Medium

‘A Manifesto for a Cinema of the Body’ by Kaye Mortley. Certificate of Merit, Creative Use of the Medium, Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

‘A Plague Mass’ by Virginia Madsen. Certificate of Merit, Creative Use of the Medium, Australian Hi-Fi-FM Awards

Markus Heuger in the Studio, good evening.

Other people do it as well, ladies and gentlemen - you don’t have to be ashamed.

If you sit late in the evening, Saturday after Saturday, tuned to WDR3, between two loudspeakers and give yourself over to ars acustica, then you’re not only in the best company in our broadcast area. Also in Australia, there is a small but respectable group of souls that let themselves be surprised once a week by the possibilities of good old radio through soundscape adventures, music experiments and linguistic sensations. They tune in on Mondays at 9 pm to our sister program, The Listening Room, on the ABC. The jingle sounds like this:

(Play jingle)

This evening Dr. Jim Franklin, from the University of Western Sydney, introduces for us a number of important sound-art productions of the ABC. They were chosen together with his colleagues Don Richards and Robyn Ravlich, and newly collaged for this evening - a ‘best of’ sample if you like, and simultaneously a sounding portrait of this mysterious continent at the other end of the world.
‘Sounds of Contrast’ - Australia and The Listening Room, introduced by Jim Franklin.

Dr Jim Franklin:
The Listening Room is a program series of sound art from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. This program has existed for 15 years and has done a great deal to support Australian composers and sound artists.

In today's broadcast we hear excerpts from works that originated from within The Listening Room. The individual works have been collaged in such a way that they form a new total composition. In the individual pieces we encounter many contrasts, not only of differing approaches and techniques, but also of the Australian continent itself: Water and desert, city and outback, technology and nature, European settlers and aboriginal people find their voices.

We are now hearing “Children Like Birds”, by Gareth Vanderhope, an evolutionary journey from the voice of water to the voices of children.

This is followed by “Swim Swan”, by Jane Ulman, and “Free Time”, by Kerry Fletcher. Both are collages of children’s songs, one the one hand of European settlers’ children, on the other children’s songs of the original inhabitants of Australia.

Then follows ”The Calling to Come”, by Paul Carter. This composition is an imaginary exchange of languages between an officer of the first European fleet, and a young aboriginal woman.

After this, we hear ”Mungo”, by Ros Bandt, a co-production of the Listening Room and West German Radio. The piece is based on recordings of aeolian harps and natural sounds in the dry Mungo Lake in New South Wales.

The next work, ”Rivers”, by Carl Edwards, Karl Aker and Chris White, follows the course of the Avon and Swan Rivers in Western Australia, through remote regions and in the vicinity of human settlements.
The work after this, "Containers", by Sherry de Lys, combines recordings of the wharves in Sydney Harbour at different times of day.

After this, we hear "Vanishing Point", by Ion Pearce. Through the sounds of the cello and of instruments of his own construction, the composer comments on his journeys by train throughout Australia.

The last piece, "In the Mist of and Arcane Pop", by Damien Castaldi, is a commentary on modern, technologized, Australian city life.

**Play Compilation**

Dr Jim Franklin:
Thus I'm Jim Franklin with a portrait of our Australian sister program, The Listening Room.
Technical production etc..

Markus Heuger:
You have been listening to a broadcast of extracts from works that have been produced with the support of the Australian program series The Listening Room during the last 15 years.

Don Richards, doctoral candidate at the University of Western Sydney, chose the pieces for this broadcast.

Technical realisation: Hans Ulrich Werner

A production of the ABC The Listening Room and the WDR Studio for Acoustic Art, 2002.
Jim Franklin was at the microphone.

ENDS
APPENDIX 10

Data Analysis for TLR Programs during the Period 1988 to 1997 (incl)

Number of Programs by TLR Producers   Page No. 44
Composer Nationality by Year           Page No. 45
Program Details - Years 1988 1997       Page No. 46

Reading of Data
Some data was unavailable at the time of writing, as it was not recorded by the ABC in its program listings.
A blank cell means that data was either unavailable or irrelevant.
Where one date is given for several items, it indicates that those items together constituted the one program.
Two columns are given for ‘Composer’. This covers the situation where two people were involved in composition of the piece, e.g. one who recorded sounds and another who shaped the sounds into the finished piece.
If there is insufficient room for the first name of a person to be shown, initials are usually given.
### Number of Programs by TLR Producers

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<td>Don o’Kim</td>
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**Comments:**
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- Rpt. 46/93 Old sounds, new country
- Fantasies in the Museum at night time
- Silence & the old Melbourne Gaol
- Eugowra & multiple small earthquakes
- Feature on Catalan painter Joan Miro
- Rpt 49/93 Early home recordings
- Rp 124/89 Composer-built music m/c
- Part of series on sound chromosones
- Sonic analogy of radio transmission from xmr to listener
- Sounds of the Pacific, Aust, NZ, Korea
- Composer pleads for world change
- Riots in Los Angeles
- Beginning of the Wet: forest sounds
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Biserka Vukovic 3 Biserka Vukovic Cr F Croatian Proverbs
The Northern Lights Mikko Laakso 9 Mikko Laasko Yle M Spoken voice-chopped up
EAJ - 122 Javier Darias 21 Javier Darias M Spoken voice-chopped up
Mental Radio C Amirkhanian 26 C Amirkhanian US M Sound Poetry
Genom Vatten T Zwedberg 10 T Zwedberg Sw M Ship-board sounds
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