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Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre (QCRC)

Championing music research that is
artistically innovative and socially engaged

Our Focus Areas

Music and Creativities

At QCRC we are practising musicians. We seek to understand, enhance, and share the creative processes within our music making and beyond. We explore performance practices across a range of cultural and historical contexts, compositional approaches and their interpretation, and technological innovations including audio recording, multimedia performance, and instrument building. Artistic research activities include disciplinary and cross-disciplinary collaborations and curatorial practice.

Within this focus area, we provide a creative space for leading performers and artistic researchers to work on projects that critically consider the role of music making and the performing arts in our world, and what it may become. Projects in this area currently comprise collaborative performances and festivals, interdisciplinary explorations in music and science, and initiatives relating to ecoacoustics, handmade electronic instruments, interactive music systems, and environmental soundings.

Our recent projects include Hidden Sounds (seven new sound sculptures funded by the Australia Council and presented at the Listening Museum, Tyalgum Festival and National Science Week), **The Sound of 84 Pianos** in the Australian Piano Duo Festival, presentations by members at the EcoAcoustics International Conference, and a stimulating research symposium with internationally renowned artistic researcher Professor Darla Crispin.

Music and Livelihoods

At QCRC we are educators and lifelong learners. We seek to explore holistic and creative ways of supporting emerging musicians, and those seeking to sustain themselves as musicians and performing artists over time. We explore lifelong learning processes, creative and professional development pathways, and pedagogical and curriculum approaches to fostering livelihoods, wellbeing, and artistic citizenship in a portfolio career reality.

Within this focus area, we provide a learning space for educators and researchers to work on initiatives that assist emerging and established musicians to sustain their livelihoods. Our focus extends beyond employability to factors informed by human rights, equity, and mental and emotional health. Our research in this area takes an ecosystems approach, and places value on the importance of facilitating greater access to study opportunities and career pathways for students from diverse backgrounds.

Our current projects in this area include explorations of the nature of one-to-one pedagogy, professional practice and professional development, the healthy musician, higher degree pedagogy, popular music and musical theatre pedagogy, as well as an Australian Research Council Linkage Project, Making Music Work, which explores ways to sustain portfolio careers in music.

Images Below: Left to Right

Taylor, V., Tedeschi, S. (2018). *Chromatic Flight*. Move.

Tomlinson, V. (2018). *The Space Inside*. Room40.

Wild Silk Strings Project. (2018). *Colours of Your Love*.

Wolfe, B., Wolfe, J., Griswold, E., & Tomlinson, V. (2018). *The Piano Mill*. Uro.

Sunderland, N., Bendrups, D., Lewandowski, N., & Bartleet, B. L. (Eds.) (2018). *Music, health and wellbeing: Exploring music for health equity and social justice*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Grant, C., Faulkner, H., & So, P. (2018). *Living heritage: The artists of Cambodian Chapei*. Kampu Mera Press.

Denson Baartz Quartet. (2019). *Dark Sky*. Pinnacles Music.

Dean, P. & Hall, R. (2018). *Dry River Run* [Opera].

Australian Art Orchestra & Griswold, E. (2017). *Water Pushes Sand*. Jazzhead.

Balfour, M., Bartleet, B. L., Davey, L., Rynne, J., & Schippers, H. (Eds.) (2019). *Performing arts in prisons*. Intellect.

Bartleet, B. L. & Higgins, L. (Eds.) (2018). *The Oxford handbook of community music*. Oxford University Press.

Bloom Collective (Griswold, E., Tomlinson, V., Buziak, R., Kelleher, V., & Baker-Finch, J.). (2018). *Piano Bloom*.

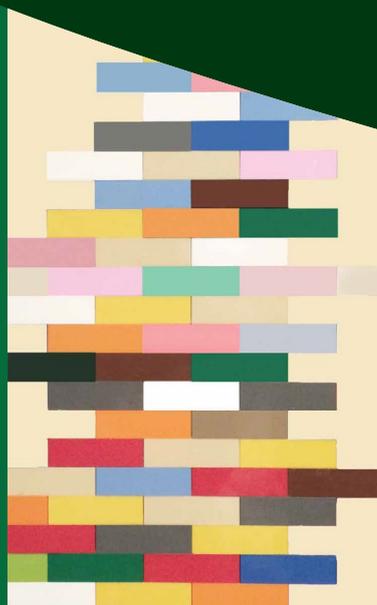
Bartleet, B. L., Cain, M., Tolmie, D., Power, A., Shiobara, M. (Eds.) (2018). *Community music in Oceania: Many voices, one horizon*. University of Hawaii Press.

Music and Communities

At QCRC we are engaged community members. We seek to explore how music both reflects and shapes the lives of individuals and communities in our contemporary world. We explore the role of music in cultural and environmental sustainability, individual and collective health and wellbeing, and positive social change. We work closely with communities, seeking to explore in deep and productive ways the complex interactions between music, people, and the world.

Within this focus area, our projects often cross disciplinary boundaries, and reflect a wide range of approaches to music and performing arts research. Research topics include the role and relationship of music and the performing arts to climate change, social justice, environmental sustainability, health equity, desistance from crime, community wellbeing, poverty alleviation, and cultural sustainability.

Our projects feature ongoing collaborations with a wide range of community organisations and groups. Current projects emphasise working with diverse cultural communities, refugee and migrant communities, First Nations peoples of Australia and elsewhere, and older people experiencing chronic conditions such as Parkinson's Disease.



Highlights from our Focus Areas

Hidden Sounds / Listening Museum

Listening is perhaps the most important task of the musician—listening to our sound, listening to the space, listening to the environment, listening to each other. **The Hidden Sounds | Sounds in Motion** project developed seven discrete sound sculptures in order to explore our relationship to sound through interactive and kinetic approaches, challenging technological boundaries, and pushing conceptual innovation to encourage deep listening.

Our work has included hypnotic pulsations emanating from giant elevated rotors as they scattered soundwaves through the air (Scatter, John Ferguson, Erik Griswold & Sulja Nezovic). We transformed retrofitted library catalogues into individual sounding spaces from the local environment (Listening Boxes, Vanessa Tomlinson & John Ferguson). We converted sand-covered vibrating bass drums and water covered gongs into sonic visualisers (Amber Waves, Erik Griswold & Sulja Nezovic), and our hands submerged into water to trigger physically immersive soundworlds (Sonic Portals, Leah Barclay).

Presented to thousands of people through National Science Week, Tyalgum Music Festival, and the Ecoacoustics International Conference (co-hosted by QCRC), these works also became the focal point of The Listening Museum (Erik Griswold & Vanessa Tomlinson). Presented at UAP—a working factory in the north of Brisbane—The Listening Museum saw the site of the factory become a playground for creativity. This artistic research was funded by Australia Council for the Arts, the Australia Cultural Fund, and Clocked Out.

Listening to Country

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are overrepresented in Australian prisons. The majority are mothers, experiencing the trauma associated with separation from family, community, and country. The **Listening to Country** project represented an innovative and creative approach to promoting cultural maintenance and wellbeing among mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, and grandmothers in prison.

The research used principles and processes from acoustic ecology, Indigenous story work, *dadirri* (deep active listening), and arts-led inquiry to explore notions of cultural connection and maintenance for the participants, and the effects of the project on their wellbeing. This project responded to a direct request from a group of Aboriginal women at Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre to create a culturally appropriate sound recording for the purpose of reducing stress and connecting to natural environments and to country.

It was built on a strong foundation of previous creative engagement and consultation with women incarcerated in Queensland. The research team included QCRC Members Sarah Woodland and Leah Barclay, Bianca Beetson (Queensland College of Art), and Vicki Saunders (QCRC Adjunct), with support from Aunty Melita Orcher and Aunty Estelle Sandow from the Brisbane Council of Elders. The project was funded by the Lowitja Institute, and has been supported by Queensland Corrective Services.

Making Music Work

To sustain successful musical lives at the beginning of the 21st century, most musicians have portfolio careers combining aspects of performance, recording, creation, musical direction, teaching, community activities, health, retail and a presence in online environments. This phenomenon is widespread but not well understood. The ARC Linkage Project **Making Music Work** has explored the conditions and strategies needed for musicians to sustain successful portfolio careers over the past three years.

This research explored the push (financial) and pull (creative) factors influencing the ways in which musicians navigate their careers. This includes musicians' educational attainment and engagement, paid and unpaid work commitments, the ways in which they engage across a range of music, music-related and non-music roles, as well as career satisfaction, commitment and professional development needs. In line with current debates and initiatives across the classical and contemporary sectors, our research also examined issues relating to gender, sexual harassment and bullying and mental and physical wellbeing.

This project culminates in 2019 with a suite of industry-focused outputs that feature insights from a national survey of 600 Australian musicians as well as eleven case study profiles of musicians from around the country. The project has been led by QCRC in partnership with the Australia Council for the Arts, Create NSW, Creative Victoria, the Department of Culture and Arts (WA), Music Trust, and Curtin University. The research team includes QCRC Director Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Dawn Bennett (Curtin University, QCRC Adjunct), and QCRC Members Ruth Bridgstock, Scott Harrison, Paul Draper, Vanessa Tomlinson and Christina Ballico.



Our commitment to interdisciplinary collaborations on pressing social issues

Our research is underpinned by a firm belief that music and the performing arts have a unique role to play in addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time. Based on a conviction that music and the arts matter, and with core values of cultural, social and environmental responsibility, we seek to understand and amplify the role of music in contemporary issues, and interrogate contemporary issues through music.

In our research we have collaborated with colleagues from fields as diverse as health, criminology, law, education, biology, earth science, environmental science, architecture, visual arts, and interactive media, to explore the distinct ways in which music and the performing arts can play a key role in addressing climate justice, health equity, social justice, desistance from crime, poverty alleviation, biodiversity, and human rights, to mention a few. As such, our research is well known for its commitment to interdisciplinarity.

Recent examples include the award-winning, critically acclaimed **100 Ways to Listen** project that explored the art and science of sound through innovative performances, interactive installations, immersive sonic environments and augmented reality sound walks during World Science Week; the **Sing to Beat Parkinsons** project that explored the experience of singing in a group and its effect on participants' quality of life, voice, communication and psycho-social wellbeing in Brisbane, Canterbury (UK), Beijing, and Seoul; and the Australia-Indonesia Institute project, **Shadow Puppets and Neglected Diseases**, which worked with Javanese shadow puppetry as a vehicle in village communities for disseminating important health education.

Recently we collaborated with the Griffith Law Futures Centre on a **Music and Human Rights** community performance that explored the intersection of music and human rights in light of Queensland's new Human Rights Act. We also worked on the internationally award-winning **Piano Mill**, a unique architectural feature nestled in the forest at Willson's Downfall (near Stanthorpe, Queensland) that brings together a focus on architecture, music, and the environment

to pay homage to the musical history of outback Australia; and the Biosphere Soundscapes International Workshop Symposium **Perspectives on Listening**, which brought together researchers from anthropology, science and the arts to explore the role of sound in understanding place and environmental change, featuring Dr Monica Gagliano and Professor Steven Feld.

The front cover of our brochure features video footage from our recent project, **Scatter**. This was a solar-powered installation, sonic composition, and artistic research project led by QCRC members John Ferguson and Erik Griswold and Queensland College of Art's Paul Bardini, and Daniel Della-Bosca. In 2019 Scatter was commissioned by Curiosity Brisbane for a three week install in the heart of Brisbane's Cultural Precinct.

This interdisciplinary research has been underpinned by a succession of six ARC Linkage grants as well as by Artist-in-Residence programs, including the EcoScience Precinct (QLD), and recent grants from the Lowitja Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Queensland Department of Health, UNESCO, Australia Council for the Arts, and the Brisbane Powerhouse.

AUSTRALIAN ART ORCHESTRA
WATER PUSHES SAND
COMPOSER ERIC GRISWOLD AND MASTER MUSICIANS OF SICHUAN PROVINCE
澳大利亚水艺术推荐乐团沙四川音乐家

PERFORMING ARTS
IN PRISONS
Creative Perspectives



The Oxford Handbook of
COMMUNITY
MUSIC



Many Voices, One Horizon
Community Music
in Oceania



EDITED BY
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Anne Power, and Mari Shobara



Our Research Approach

We are a research centre committed to exploring the boundaries of music and the performing arts and how they contribute to our global society. As such, we are known worldwide for our creative research approaches and progressive thinking.

Our position in the heart of a leading Conservatorium and our connection to a University with a strong social agenda allows us to combine cutting-edge creativity and artistry with innovative approaches to social, environmental, and community-focused engagement and change. As such, we are known for tackling complex projects that explore and unpack the multifaceted roles that music, and the performing arts, play in contemporary society.

We use a wide suite of innovative research methods (including artistic research), and design our projects to produce significant artistic outcomes, cultural benefits, and social dividends.

Our centre's research environment is deeply collaborative and collegial. Our researchers are dedicated to working in interdisciplinary teams alongside communities, industry and partners, and committed to harnessing new technologies and engaging the public to play a role in our projects, events, installations, and performances.

Our three Focus Areas offer diverse yet complementary lenses to explore music and the performing arts across a wide range of contexts. These areas draw on our distinctive research strengths as practising artists, engaged community members and lifelong learners, and align with our flagship projects, HDR candidates, partners, and collaborators.

We have remained committed to being key players in our national and international practice and research. In 2019/2020 we continue to engage across the world through delivering keynotes, performing at national and international festivals and events, and disseminating our creative and text-based scholarship across multiple platforms. In 2019, the quality of this work was recognised with a rating of '4 – Above World Standard' in the Australian Government's Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) in the field of Performing Arts and Creative Writing.

We look forward to engaging with you through our series of performances, conferences, specialist research gatherings, lectures, and visiting scholars in our home base in Brisbane, Australia. For further information, please visit: www.griffith.edu.au/queensland-conservatorium-research-centre

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Queensland College of Art, Griffith University

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which QCRC works, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and leaders in our communities and at Griffith University.

Q C A R

Download the QCAAR app and scan the cover to view a recent project led by QCRC members called *Scatter*.



160 MB



48 MB

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