



Association internationale des bibliothèques, archives et centres de documentation musicaux (AIBM)

International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML)

Internationale Vereinigung der Musikbibliotheken, Musikarchive und Musikdokumentationszentren (IVMB)

## Australia, report 2011

IAML Australia has had a mixed year of achievements: lots of thinking and analysing but not always observable public outcomes. Many of the issues we are grappling with mirror the range of international discussions in IAML – sustainability, relevance, timeliness, membership, print or electronic publications, subscription models, and new modes of communication and networking.

Typically in Australia, many institutions are under pressure from financial constraints and structural change, resulting in members' need to often focus on their own context more than on a national IAML agenda. The Australian branch currently has 35 subscribed individual members and 32 institutional members (5 from overseas), and we are aiming to retain 19 current non-renewals. As institutional membership is tied to journal subscriptions, the business decisions we want to take, i.e., to move to a free electronic journal and continuous newsfeeds, blogs, and a knowledge bank, rather than printed publications, remain complex. We have also maintained our initiative of two years of free membership for young professionals entering the field, even though this means subsidising their international fees.

We have a vibrant committee, with generational change represented by Vice-presidents, Julia Mitford and Sarah Evans, and some state representatives. However, we have found it difficult to successfully replace our long-standing Treasurer, Bligh Glass, who has kindly kept us afloat while the new Treasurer struggled with ill-health. However, some other younger members are assisting with our technology change: the website is in the process of an overhaul and we have created a timely blog and archive *Intermezzo*, in lieu of a newsletter, on the IAML Australia website, managed by Julia Mitford and the National Library's Lisa Mackie. We have also been working with the Musicological Society of Australia to identify a more strategic and effective pathway and process for RILM in Australia. Effective representation on the Music Council of Australia has widened our sphere of influence and professional recognition.

Our annual conference and AGM in September 2010 was highly successful. Held 2-3 September 2010 at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University, in tropical Brisbane, the conference was attended by fifty colleagues from around Australia attended, with outstanding organisation by the Queensland chapter. The theme *Challenges for Music Libraries and Archives of the Future: Linking and Serving Musical Communities* was ambitious but highly topical and pervasive for those working in music libraries and archives across the globe. Roger Flury from New Zealand gave the opening address, his first as IAML President, challenging us to consider the future through the past. In an exciting new initiative, the excellent papers from our several guest speakers, as well as member presentations and discussions, were podcast on our IAML website after the Conference. Robyn Holmes and staff from the National Library also led an important consultation session with delegates, as a means of collaboratively developing the strategy for the transition of Music Australia into the Library's new search engine Trove.

This year's conference will be held at the National Library of Australia in Canberra in late November and is a joint conference, on the theme of *Performance*, to be held with the



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Australasian Sound Recording Association (affiliated with IASA) and the Performing Arts special interest group of Museums Australia. This conference will coincide with the opening of the Library's new Gallery spaces and an exhibition *Handwritten, Ten Centuries of Manuscripts Treasures* from the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin that includes 16 of the world's great musical manuscripts. A wonderful international gesture from our German colleagues and a treat for music librarians and the public.

There have been some significant achievements in most of our institutions this year. Notably, the State Library of NSW has completed its cataloguing and digitisation program of its nineteenth-century Australian music; Monash University has mounted a wonderful exhibition of its rare sheet music in *Stardust Melodies*; the Australian Music Centre has released its innovative digital library lending scheme; the University of Melbourne has launched its new Grainger Studies interdisciplinary journal online and in print, and the National Library has acquired some wonderful new collections, including several following the death of the great Australian singer Dame Joan Sutherland. Dr Graeme Skinner has assisted our libraries to more accurately date early Australian published music as a result of his PhD research on Australian musical composition 1788-1860. The National Library's integration of Music Australia into Trove is in development and Trove just won Australia's eGovernment award for excellence amidst competition from the whole government sector.

Long-serving IAML members continue, sadly, to retire, most notably Gordon Abbott who retired from the University of Adelaide in March after a distinguished career as music librarian and scholar since the 1970s. But we also welcomed a IAML baby with Erin May Child, daughter of Julia Mitford, born on 20th February 2011. A gift to Australia from the UK's IAML group! Finally, we are delighted that IAML Australia will be well represented through papers and attendance in Dublin, despite the distance and cost, and we wish the Conference well from 'downunder'.

*Robyn Holmes*

*President, IAML (Australia)*