STUDY GROUP ON MUSIC AND DANCE OF OCEANIA

Newsletter, May 2025

From the Chair…

January this year saw the very exciting ICTMD World Conference held in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. The location in Oceania meant that it was a well-attended conference by many members of our Study Group, and also more broadly across local connected regions into Asia. It is nice to reflect on how many of you I was able to see there (in person and online) from across the Pacific – Papua New Guinea, Hawai'i, Samoa, Aotearoa, Solomon Islands – and across various regions of Australia.

It was a particularly special time for me, being able to share this conference experience with my Australian collaborators, and especially to have a strong Indigenous Australian presence with my Southern Ngaliya friends and family, female yawulyu-wardingki (ceremony women) from Warlpiri Country in Central Australia, as well as the Mawng Inyjalarrku ceremony group from western Arnhem Land and Mayi guthingan from New South Wales. All these groups have reflected on how much they enjoyed connecting with all of you from across Oceania and the world.

Alongside, a report on this recent world conference, this newsletter includes an early announcement about the next ICTMD World Conference to be held in Santiago, Chile in January 2027. I hope that many of you are starting to consider ideas for proposals.

I'd also like to announce that at the end of this year, my 4-year term as Chair for the ICTMD Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania will come to an end. If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else for this position please be in touch. Our group will vote for a new Chair towards the end of this year. I can certainly vouch for this being an incredible opportunity to connect broadly with people across the Oceania region.

Enjoy reading this newsletter!

Georgia Curran
(Sydney, Australia)

In Memorium: Mr O. Jungarrayi Sims, 1960-2025

By Georgia Curran

I am saddened to inform you all of the recent passing of my good friend and research collaborator and contributor to the SGMDO Symposium held online in April 2021 (convened by Brian Diettrich). O. Jungarrayi Sims* passed away peacefully on 13th April in his community of Yuendumu surrounded by his loving family. He was an immensely proud Warlpiri man, passionate culture bearer and an advocate for Indigenous Australian and global Indigenous rights. As a senior Warlpiri singer, he drove many major ceremonies and proudly taught young Warlpiri men their own dances. Jungarrayi was also an esteemed international artist, following in the footsteps of his parents who were both founding members of Warlukurlangu Artists. Jungarrayi taught me patiently and attentively to love his Country and to honour and respect the Jukurrpa ancestors. Until his last moments he was a big dreamer with a passion for adventure, who loved more than anything to share a good story. He will be missed by many. His funeral will be held in Alice Springs in September 2025.

*Jungarrayi's first name has not been written in respect and as is custom following his recent passing.

Jungarrayi following his performance of *purlapa* at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, featured as an Opening Performance at the SGMDO Symposium in 2021. Photo: Georgia Curran

Publication:

Curran, G. and O.J. Sims (2021) Performing purlapa: Projecting Warlpiri Identity in a Globalised World. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 22(2-3): 203–219.

Report on the 48th World Conference of the ICTMD, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand

By Georgia Curran

The 48th World Conference of the ICTMD in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand was the first world conference in the Oceania region in 30 years! It was so wonderful to have such strong representation for the region and participation from so many of our Study Group members. The incredible leadership for this conference came from our prior Study Group Chairs Kirsty Gillespie (Programme Co-Chair with Marcia Ostashewski) and Brian Diettrich (as Local Area Coordinator). We had a strong Pacific Island and Indigenous Australian presence at this conference with members participating as part of focused panels, individual papers, workshops and performances. The conference Opening Ceremony included a whakatau and a number of performances from across the Australasia region including Kapa Haka led by Ginny Maxwell, Siva Samoa from the Victoria University of Wellington's student organisation, and Central Australian yawulyu women's songs and dances from the Warlpiri Southern Ngaliya dancers. Jerome Kavanagh Poutama and Ruiha Turner presented the conference keynote address 'Oro Atua Wānanga Rongoā – Reviving Sound Practices in Modern Times'. A number of Study Group members were also involved in the two Indigenous plenary sessions representing various regions across the Pacific and Australia. Speakers were Jesse Hodgetts and Enid Nangala Gallagher (Indigenous Australia), Emmanuel Daniel (Papua New Guinea), Irene Karongo Hundleby (Solomon Islands), Rita Seumanutafa-Palala (Samoa) and Rāwiri Tinirau (Aotearoa).

Jerome Kavanach Poutama and Ruiha Turner, thanked by Graeme Marshall and other Mi'kmaw artists and researchers for their presentation of the conference keynote address.

Kapa Haka at the Opening Ceremony

Siva Samoa at the Opening Ceremony.

Southern Ngaliya Warlpiri dancers at the Opening Ceremony

Emmanuel Daniel presents as part of the plenary session on 'Learning and Sharing Indigenous Music, Language and Arts'

Rita Seumanutafa-Palala presents at the conference plenary session on 'Healing, Health and Wellbeing'

Our members were involved in many conference panels focused on music and dance of the Oceania region including: ‘Musical Responses to Cultural Disruption’ (Keola Donaghy, Stephen Fox, Jessica Shwarz and Kevin Fellezs), Pacific Music Practices Geoffroy Colson, Chun Chia Tai, Rāwiri Tinirau, Manaaki Hogg, Ata Rangi Pehi, Inglis Tinirau-Williams and Tumanako Pehi, Michael Norris and Jerome Kavanagh), Indigenous Music and Dance Research in Australia and Timor-Leste (Joe Williams, Jose Trindade, Jessie Lloyd, Samuel Curkpatrick and Aaron Corn), Music and Dance Research in Papua New Guinea (Don Niles, Bruno Tenakanai, Gedisa Jacob, and Emmanuel Daniel),

Meri Haami convenes a panel on ‘He Whiringa Rangahau: Indigenous Maori Creative Expressions and Legacies’ with Jade Gifford, Hana Burgess and Haylee Koroi.

Georgia Curran, Enid Gallagher, Nancy Collins and Samantha Watson present on ‘Reclaiming and sustaining song – connections across land and seas’ panel.

Bruno Tenakani presents as roundtable participants, Emmanuel Daniel, Don Niles and Gedisa Jacob look on.

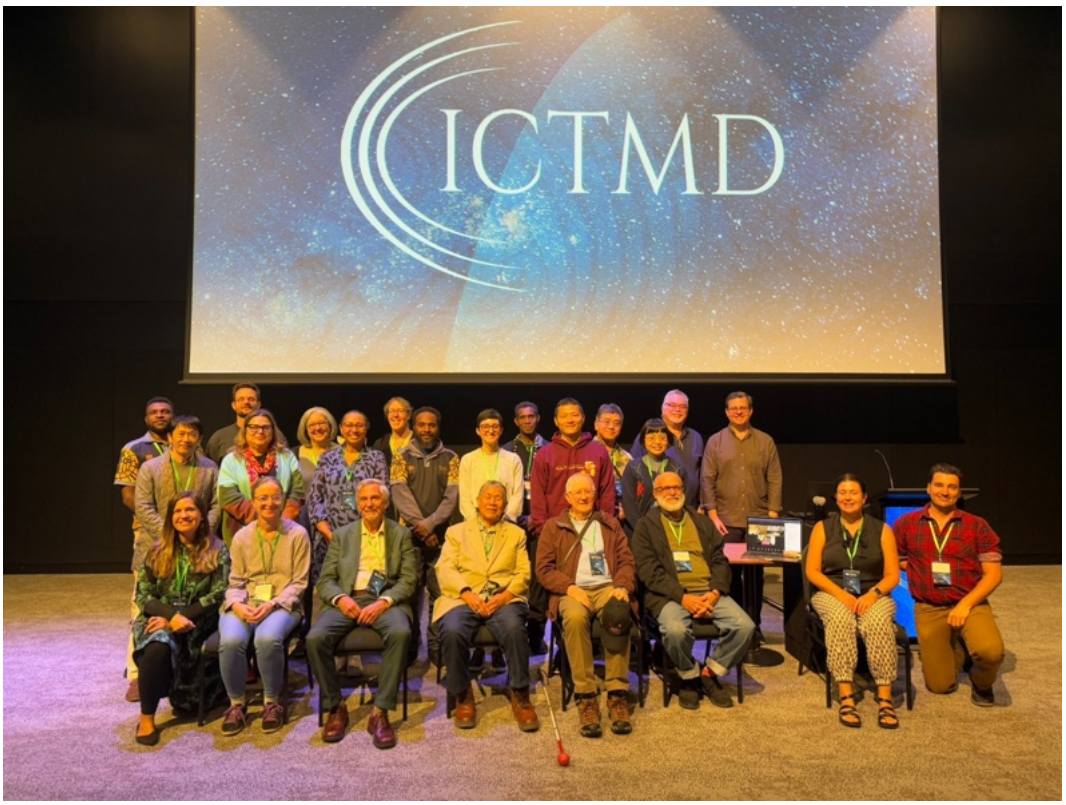
‘Reclaiming and sustaining song and dance – connections across land and seas (Reuben Brown, Georgia Curran and Jesse Hodgetts), and ‘He Whiringa Rangahau: Indigenous Māori Creative Expressions and Legacies’ (Meri Haami, Jade Gifford, Hana Burgess and Haylee Koroi). There were also many other individual papers presented from our Study Group members as part of other panels during the conference programme and a number of film screenings.

Jesse Hodgetts presents as part of the ‘Reclaiming and sustaining song – connections across land and seas’ panel.

Two new books on Indigenous Australian ceremonial songs were launched: ‘The Gift of Song: Performing Exchange in Western Arnhem Land’ by Reuben Brown and ‘Vitality and Change in Warlpiri Songs’ edited by Georgia Curran, Linda Barwick, Valerie Napaljarri Martin, Simon Japangardi Fisher and Nicolas Peterson. Our esteemed senior colleague Stephen Wild launched these two books, followed by short speeches from Jenny Manmurulu, Reuben Brown, Enid Nangala Gallagher and Georgia Curran and a performance of two verses of the Warlpiri women’s Minamina yawulyu ‘travelling women songs’. An evening concert was held with performance from three Indigenous Australia groups - Inyjalarrku ‘mermaid’ ceremony group from Warruwi Western Arnhem land, Warlpiri Southern Ngaliya dancers from Central Australia and Mayi and Gurri singers and dancers from New South Wales. We also had a well-attended Study Group welcome meeting during the conference.

Stephen Wild launches the two new books on Indigenous Australian songs.

Alice Granites and Enid Gallagher dance Minamina yawulyu ‘travelling women’s songs’ for the book launches



Members of the Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania at our welcome meeting

Mayi dancers from New South Wales.

Inyjalarrku 'mermaid' ceremonies from Warruwi, northern Australia

Brian Diettrich, Richard Moyle and Don Niles

Emmanuel Daniel, Don Niles and Kirsty Gillespie.

Reports on the Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award

The Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award (MDOTA) was established from a generous donation from by Barbara B. Smith. This award is intended to support Indigenous scholars from across the Pacific and Indigenous Australia to attend Study Group Symposiums and World Conferences. Please see reports below from recipients of the MDOTAs who were supported for their travel to Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand for the ICTMD's 48th World Conference.

From Emmanuel Daniel, Gedisa Jacob, Don Niles, and Bruno Tenakanai

Assistance from the Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award enabled us to participate in the World Conference of the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance. We also feel it appropriate to acknowledge the wonderful contribution of Barbara Smith to the establishment of award. Without her vision and this generous assistance, it almost certain that we would have been unable for us to attend. Our primary focus was our roundtable devoted to music and dance research at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies (IPNGS). The location of the world conference presented a perfect opportunity to share aspects of this research, archival facilities, and the history of IPNGS.

But we also engaged in many other activities offered at world conferences, such as attending the Welcome Meetings of various study groups (especially, SGMDO, ethnochoreology, and archives); displaying IPNGS publications which were later donated to Victoria University of Wellington; meeting or renewing acquaintances with researchers who have worked in PNG and other parts of the Pacific; and meeting participants from all over the world to share with them and learn from their

experiences. Emmanuel also presented at a plenary session called “Learning and Sharing Indigenous Knowledge: Music, Language, and Arts.” This was a wonderful opportunity for him that grew out of his presentation at the SGMDO symposium held in Honolulu in 2024.

Don has often talked about his participation in ICTMD activities, but this was the first world conference for everyone else. We were very happy to be present to see him receive his Honorary Membership and to meet some of the colleagues and friends he has known over the years through ICTMD.

Don Niles receiving his lifetime honorary membership from Svanibor Pettan

Participation also emphasized the importance of IPNGS staff to continue to engage with ICTMD and to maintain and strengthen contacts between individuals and institutions involved in similar work from around the world. ICTMD is absolutely essential to maintaining IPNGS’s international involvement.

Gedisa said that this is his first time to attend such a huge world conference. He has learnt and gained so much from all the international scholars’ presentations he attended. Bruno noted that as a new member of ICTMD it was a privilege to present on the IPNGS Audiovisual Archive and also to participate in such an international event. Much was gained from the conference itself and from the contacts made. Emmanuel said it was an incredible experience for him as a young researcher, particularly being able to participate in the plenary session, connect with new researchers, and learn about
their work. He was also involved in the True Echoes project in 2022 with the British Library, concerning some of the earliest recordings from parts of the Pacific, and in Wellington he had the opportunity to meet others involved in it as well. Linking up again with colleagues he met at the 2024 symposium was another pleasure. It was particularly fascinating for him to learn how study groups function under the umbrella of ICTMD. Don was thrilled to be able to share with his colleagues the wonderful, varied experiences of a world conference hosted by the Council, an organisation that has played such an important role in his professional life.

Emmanuel, Irene Karongo Hundleby, Kira Hundleby, Courtney Savali Andrews, Bruno

All of us are very grateful for the support received from MDOTA and the Papua New Guinea National Cultural Commission for a very memorable experience that has enriched our lives considerably. We look forward to the next opportunity!

(left) Paul Wolffram, Don, Irene Karongo Hundleby, Gedisa

From Rupert Manmurulu, Renfred Manmurulu, Alfred Gawaraidji, Jenny Manmurulu and Tami Fejo

In January, the Inyjalarrku 'mermaid' ceremony group travelled over two days and three flights one way from Goulburn Island in Arnhem Land to Aotearoa New Zealand with Dr Reuben Brown to present and perform at the 48th International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance World Conference. For senior knowledge holder and dancer Jenny Manmurulu, senior arawirr (didjeridu) player Alfred Gawaraidji, and lead dancer Tamia Fejo, this was their first international conference. For songmen Rupert Manmurulu and Renfred Manmurulu who have previously attended ICTMD world conferences with Reuben Brown in Bangkok and Lisbon, it was also a chance to reconnect with networks from Oceania and continue a musical collaboration with the Shimauta group led by Marin Naruse from Amami Island, Japan.

Alfred Gawaraidji, Rupert Manmurulu, Marin Naruse, Suekatsu Kyono and Miharu Tamukai rehearse a shimuata-manyardi collaboration for the ICTMD world conference in Wellington.

The group overcame some unplanned challenges including losing their didjeridu in transit en route from Darwin to Wellington (they found another on Facebook marketplace in Wellington which originated from Australia and played well!) to attend and contribute to a busy program. This included a double book launch for Reuben Brown's monograph The gift of song: performing exchange in western Arnhem Land (Routledge's SOAS Studies in Music, 2024) and Georgia Curran et al.'s edited volume Vitality and Change in Warlpiri Songs (Sydney University Press Indigenous Music of Australia Series, 2024) at which Jenny Manmurulu spoke of her long term collaboration and mentorship of Reuben Brown dating back to 2010; a co-authored presentation with Reuben Brown on continuity and innovation in Inyjalarrku ceremony as part of a panel with Mayi guthingan (songman) and scholar Jesse Hodgetts and Southern Ngaliya Warlpiri groups led by collaborator Georgia Curran titled *Reclaiming and sustaining song and dance – connections across land and seas,* and a public performance involving ceremony from Arnhem Land, Yuendumu, New South Wales and Amami Island, Japan.

Jenny Manmurulu reflected on the trip: 'it was wonderful to see the people from here [Aotearoa New Zealand] performing the opening of the ceremony. It's really beautiful

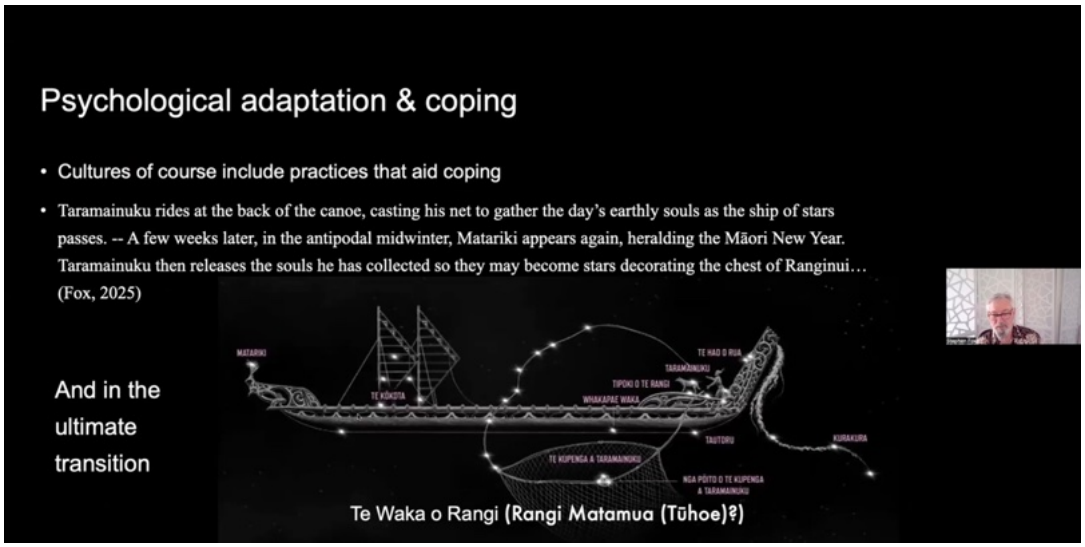
how we learned about how they still carry it on, like we do. We [Inyjalarrku group] did enjoy it [performing in Aotearoa]. It was beautiful because, you know, we were all coming from different countries and shared what we've learned from our ancestors, passing it on'. The group wish to thank the ICTMD, SGMDO and Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award which assisted with their travel to Wellington. Together with Brown and collaborators they plan a co-authored article about this unique and memorable collaborative performance. Our group wishes to thank those who assisted the group with the collaboration particularly Brian Diettrich, Georgia Curran and especially to Stephen Wild for launching our book.

Rupert Manmurulu (centre) leads a performance of Inyjalarrku with Alfred Gawaraidji playing didjeridu, Tamia Fejo (behind Rupert) leading the audience participation in the women's dancing and Reuben Brown providing backing vocals.

Report on the Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania online seminar series

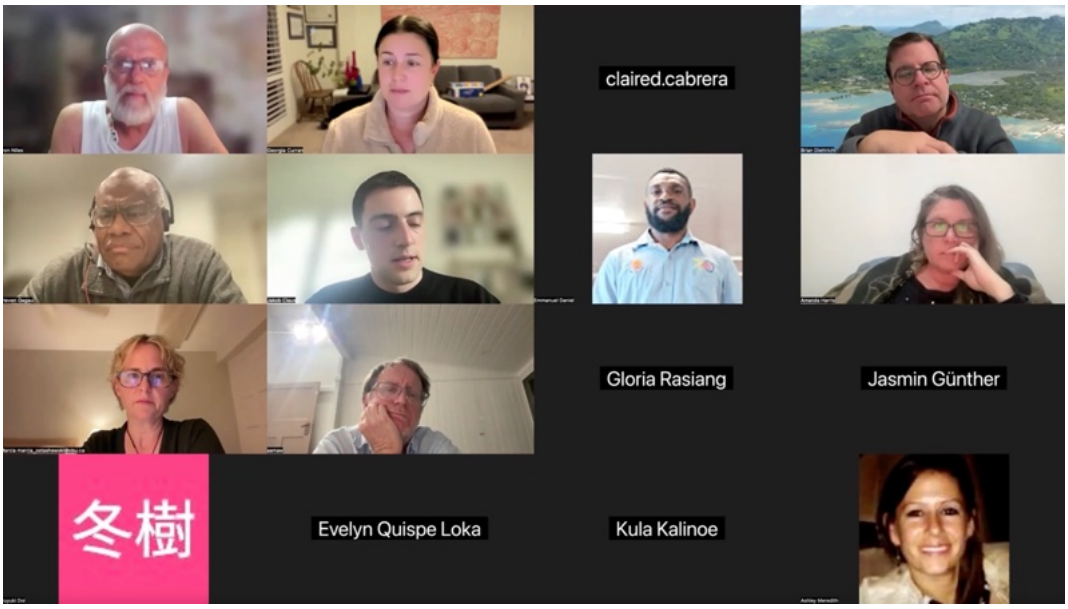
Our Study Group holds an online seminar series in which we hear from members of our group about various aspects of research on music and dance across the Oceania region. Recordings of these seminars are available on our Study Group of Music and Dance of Oceania website (https://www.ictmusic.org/studygroup/oceania) with presenters' details should you wish to follow up with any questions or comments.

The SGMDO online seminar series for 2025 began with a seminar by Stephen Fox on 'Mortality and mourning: A Pasifika conversation' and a recent presentation by Jakob Claus on 'Encountering fragments: Historical recordings from Papua New Guinea in German colonial archives'. There are also presentations scheduled for this year from Reuben Brown, Keola Donaghy & Stephen Fox, Michelle Ladwig Williams, Jesse Hodgetts and Susan Jacob. See our website for more information and recordings of previous seminar sessions: https://www.ictmusic.org/studygroup/oceania. Please email Georgia Curran for further information (Georgia.curran@sydney.edu.au) or if you would like to present a seminar later in the year.



Stephen Fox presenting on 'Mortality and mourning'

Jakob Claus presenting on Encountering fragments: Historical recordings from Papua New Guinea in German colonial archives'



Study Group members in discussion with Jakob Claus

Call for Papers: Music and Minorities Research Centre Symposium, 12-14 February 2026

The Music and Minorities Research Center (MMRC) at the mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna is pleased to invite researchers to submit proposals for the international symposium **Between Research and Activism: Futures of Music and Minority Studies**, which will take place on-site in Vienna from **12 to 14 February 2026**.

Marking a new phase for the MMRC, this symposium seeks to reflect on recent developments and future directions in music and minority studies. It aims to explore the intersections of scholarship, activism, politics, artistic practice, and social engagement, emphasizing critical and dialogic approaches. We invite contributions from a range of fields, including ethnomusicology, migration studies, post- and decolonial studies, gender and queer studies, and disability studies.

Proposals may address but are not limited to the following questions:

- What constitutes the theoretical foundation of music and minority studies, and how might it benefit through engagement with intersecting paradigms such as postcolonial theory, queer theory, intersectional feminism, Indigenous epistemologies, and disability studies in order to foster meaningful cross-disciplinary dialogue?
- What roles do power, privilege, and positionality play in the production of musical knowledge about and with minoritized individuals or communities?
- How can music and minority studies strengthen their societal relevance by further exploring the interconnection between music, politics, and activism?
- How do recent global political developments—such as the rise of authoritarianism, nationalism, and fascism—challenge or reshape the musical practices of minoritized communities, and how do these dynamics affect different research fields?

For details on participation, submission guidelines, and organization, please see the attached document. Submission deadline: 15 July 2025. For any questions or inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us: lell@mdw.ac.at

Call for Papers: 2025 Association of Social Anthropologists Aotearoa New Zealand Conference, 9-12 December 2025

A Call for Papers is now out for 2025 ASAA/NZ Conference to be held later this year from 9–12 December at Whāingaroa (Raglan), Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand. The conference theme is 'Edges, Borders, Margins and Peripheries'.

In addition to standard paper presentation panels and sessions, the call for papers encourages a range of innovative modalities such as:

- Music, film, and multimedia
- Talanoa, tok stori
- Dialogic, conversational, or interview sessions
- Poetry, ethnographic fiction
- Games and role-playing
- Multisensory, embodied, and practical engagements
- Art and sculpture

Abstract deadline: 31st August

Early Notice: ICTMD 49th World Conference in Santiago, Chile, 14-20 January 2027

The 49th ICTMD World Conference will be held at Universidad Alberton Hurtado, Santiago, Chile from 14th – 20th January 2027. Please start considering ideas for papers, panels, performances and workshops. Deadline for submission of proposals is 31st December 2025.

Early Notice: 14th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture, Noumea

The 14th Festival for the Pacific Arts and Culture will be held in Noumea, New Caledonia in 2028. Further details to come.

General News from Members

From Sebastian Lowe
Please see below link to access the new publication of 'Improvisations Towards a Sonorous Ethics in Aoetearoa New Zealand' by Sebastian J. Lowe (Tangata Tiriti).
Main: https://www.curatorium.au/taja-journal/reach-content/improvisations-towards-a-sonorous-ethics-in-aotearoa-new-zealand Exegesis: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/taja.12496

This multi-media and interaction publication is part of the broader Curatorium which has collaborated with The Australian Journal of Anthropology for this special hybrid issue. There are many other interesting contributions which can be accessed by the same website link.

New dissertations of interest

Waetford Williams, K.M., 2024. *AN ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY NOTIONS IN LEADERSHIP AMONG EMERGING PASIFIKA DANCERS: A leadership study within the Hip-hop community across Aotearoa, New Zealand* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Callahan, K. 2024. Music and Healing in Aotearoa New Zealand: The Harmony of The Land, Placehood, and Community in Māori and Pākehā Experiences of Healing. Honours thesis, Colby College.

New Publications

Journal articles and book chapters

Callaghan, P. and Hodgetts, J., 2024. Spaces of Australian Indigenous song and dance. In *Routledge Handbook on Spaces of Mental Health and Wellbeing* (pp. 252-263). Routledge.

Cruz Banks, O., 2025. FRAMING A BLACK PACIFIC ETHNOSPHERE Beyoncé and Indigenous Māori Dance Evolution in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Journal of Black Studies*, p.00219347241294259.

Curkpatrick, S., Case, L. and Skinner, A., 2024. Imagining Togetherness Amid Dislocation: Three scenes from Australian music making. *Performance Research*, *29*(2), pp.93-101.

Day, K., Barlo, S., McPherson, L. and Menzel, K., 2024. Aboriginal dance as pedagogy: privileging voices of Bundjalung elders. *Critical studies in education*, *65*(5), pp.476-493.

Feld, S., 2024. From Ethnomusicology To Echo-Museecology: Reading R. Murray Schafer In The Papua New Guinea Rainforest. In *Anthropology of the Arts* (pp. 151-155). Routledge.

Haami, M., 2024. Te Awa Tupua: Indigenous music analysis for waiata pedagogies. In *Decolonising and indigenising music education* (pp. 39-54). Routledge.

Haami, M., 2024. He Whiringa Wainuku: A Weaving of Māori Genealogies in Land, Water, and Memory. *Genealogy*, *8*(3), p.80.

Hodgetts, J., 2025. A Review of Indigenous Song Publications to Guide and Think About Language and Song Revitalization in New South Wales. *Musicology Australia*, pp.1-13.

Jones, A.L., 2024. Tarzan Meets Hiawatha: Musical representation in Australian indigenous films of the 1930s. In *The Routledge Companion to Global Film Music in the Early Sound Era* (pp. 589-602). Routledge.

Hundleby, I.K., 2024. Radiation Sounds: Marshallese Music and Nuclear Silences: Author: Jessica A. Schwartz. *Waka Kuaka*, *133*(1), pp.120-123.

Hundleby, I.K., 2025. Solomon Islands Song as History: Kastom, Preservation, and Transformation. *The Journal of Pacific History*, pp.1-23.

Lowe, S.J., 2024. Improvisations towards a sonorous ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand. *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, *35*(1-2), pp.135-142.

Mancini, H. 2024. We carry their voices: An Indigenous pacific archivist on preserving oral histories. Waka Kuaka, 133(1),16-36.

Mazer, S., 2025. Dancing Indigenous Worlds: Choreographies of Relation By Jacqueline Shea Murphy. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2023. *Theatre Survey*, *66*(1), pp.125-127.

Wenley, J., 2024. Bridging the Global Live Performance Marketplace: The Modern Māori Quartet. *Indigeneity on the Oceanic Stage: Intimations of the Local in a Globalised World*, *223*, p.81.