

Behind the Text, Beyond the Sound:
**Investigations into processes of creative musical
interpretation**

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Statement of Authorship

This work has never been submitted for a degree or diploma in any University, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it contains no material previously published or written by any other person except where due reference is made.

Similarly, to the best of my knowledge and belief, my role in collaborative undertakings or jointly authored publications cited or submitted here has been fully and accurately described.

Acknowledgement

The author acknowledges the assistance of his academic supervisors, Prof. Peter Roennfeldt and Prof. Huib Schippers, of Griffith University. A special thanks to Julie Craven for her counsel and encouragement.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations will be found in the text.

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
RCM	Royal College of Music, London
QPAC	Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Brisbane
QPAT	Queensland Performing Arts Trust
QSO	Queensland Symphony Orchestra

Gender and Language

In writing, I was aware of the issue of gender parity. I have avoided reiterations of “he or she” and “his or hers” in the interest of clarity and ease of reading. The resultant use of the masculine pronoun and possessive is intended to be gender-inclusive.

List of Approved Publications

- 1 The Australian Premiere performance of Lutoslawski's *Piano Concerto*, (June 24th, 1989)
- 2 The Commonwealth Bank Tippett Festival, Brisbane, (March 24th - 31st, 1990)
- 3 The Griffith University Ensemble, (1992-3)
- 4 The Kawai Keyboard Series, (1998-)
- 5 Published recordings
 - i Tippett: Piano Sonatas Nos. 1 and 3. (1984)
 - ii Beethoven: Piano Sonatas, Opp. 109, 110, 111. (1995)
 - iii Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition/ Liszt: Two Legends/ Debussy: Masques, ...d'un cahier d'esquisses..., L'isle joyeuse. (2004)

Abstract

These writings offer a view of performance practice from the perspective of a musician with over forty years in the profession. Although instrumental teaching of piano at tertiary level in leading music schools in the UK and Australia has been a continuing activity, the papers will focus on issues arising from the author's consideration of his experience as a performing pianist and conductor.

Part 1, *A Musician at Work in his Community*, offers autoethnographic material relating to the author's early development, training, and subsequent career. Accounts of particular activities as pianist, conductor, and as instigator and director or curator of events are presented, together with assessments of their contribution to creating new knowledge through their content as research and their contemporary significance.

Part 2, *A Musician Considers his View*, explores the closely woven network of knowledge, belief, attitudes and values which inform my work as a performer. Consideration of the nature of music and its communicable properties are followed by an assessment of the role of music in today's consumer society. Then follows an extensive investigation of the interdependent yet commonly discrete functions of composer, performer and listener which combine to bring musical expression to vibrant life.

General Introduction

In accordance with Griffith University regulations, this submission “will take the form of a collection of original published works and an introductory statement.”

The listed works were submitted for consideration in my application of November 30th, 2005, and subsequently approved upon my admission as a higher degree candidate, on January 30th, 2006.

Copies of the three commercially published recordings in the list are attached. A further CD of my Australian first performance of the Lutoslawski *Piano Concerto* is also included.

Part 1 of the supporting statement, *A Musician at Work in his Community*, begins with an autoethnographic survey in which I discuss my background and history as a musician, with an emphasis on demonstrating how my training reflected the principal trends in the development of piano playing in Europe, and the particular influence on me of Cyril Smith and his teaching methodology. This survey concludes with an account of the conditions and opportunities I found in Australia following my early career in England.

I then proceed to give a detailed account of the circumstances and scope of each of the five approved publications and their critical reception. The account will demonstrate that these works have developed in response to skills acquired and opportunities offered and taken and further, that their quality and significance have been

acknowledged by expert judges. The “contemporary relevance of each publication and its original scholarly contribution to research” will then be addressed.

Regarding the requirement to provide “a thematic overview which converts the publications into an integrated work,” Part 1 furnishes evidence that my public activity as a musician and *animateur* has constituted such a unity. Part 2, *A Musician Considers his View*, further explores this issue, by identifying and reflecting on the skills, knowledge, values and beliefs that inform and sustain my work.

Part 2 comprises two papers. *Player and Instrument* is a personal view of the acquired techniques that contribute to the development of a pianist. *Experiencing Music* is a wide-ranging paper which first addresses the nature of music, its uses and status in society and the way its emotional aspect is understood. Then follows a consideration of the relationship between composer and performer. This starts with sections that deal with ways of interpreting musical texts and acquiring a sure sense of style, before moving on to investigate the functions of composer, listener and performer and their mutual dependency. The final section of the paper describes what a performer can do in the act of performance to convey the content of a work. Then, in a General Conclusion, I look back on my thesis in the context of a consideration of music and its practice in the early twenty-first century.

The development of my thoughts and values has arisen directly from my work as a musician. Consequently, the reader may take it that the ideas and opinions expressed here derive from my experience and practice.