

Glocal Dialects in the Sydney Jazz Scene: Indigenisation Through the Influence of Oz Rock and Asian Musics

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There has been a growing interest in the indigenisation of jazz music around the world through a process known as ‘glocalisation’—the push and pull of both local and global music forces.¹ This phenomenon has been witnessed in nationalist interpretations of jazz music outside of the USA, where artists seek to authenticate their music through adopting local traditional instruments and folk melodic material into jazz music contexts.² Distinct national jazz identities have been audible in Brazilian, Nordic, and Japanese jazz scenes, to name a few. Musicians from these countries have conveyed their national character through jazz by borrowing from local traditional cultures, often creating unique musical statements that have added to the global discussion of diasporic jazz music identities. This article, which presents the findings of eleven interviews with Sydney jazz musicians, discusses how and why Sydney musicians are observed to be favouring some of the same sources as their Asian counterparts and enacting a process of indigenisation by drawing on a distinct form of popular music native to Australian soil: Oz rock.

¹ Stuart Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead? (Or Has it Moved to a New Address)* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 167. See also Stuart Nicholson, *Jazz and Culture in a Global Age* (Massachusetts: Northeastern University Press, 2014).

² See E. Taylor Atkins, *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Gwen Ansell, *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music, and Politics in South Africa* (New York: Continuum, 2005); Bruce Johnson, *The Inaudible Music – Jazz, Gender and Australian Modernity* (Sydney: Currency Press, 2000); Haftor Medbøe, *Culture Identity and Transnational Heritage in Contemporary Jazz: A Practice-based Study of Composition and Collaboration* (PhD thesis, Edinburgh Napier University, 2013); Andrew Mark Connell, *Jazz Brasileiro? Musica Instrumental Brasileira and the Representation of Identity in Rio de Janeiro* (PhD thesis, University of California, 2002).

These interviews were conducted during my doctoral studies in composition, informed by ethnographic research, at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.³ This study is important to the ongoing discussion of global jazz diasporas, and in particular, to questions surrounding Sydney jazz music because it highlights an important feature of Australian national identity; while nationalist indigenisation of foreign musical styles often occurs through musical borrowings from a country's native or other deeply rooted musical cultures, in Sydney (and perhaps Australia more generally) the influences on the jazz scene have deviated from this tendency, and instead reflect recent developments within the predominantly Anglo-Celtic settler culture.⁴ This article first examines some similar studies on diasporic jazz identities undertaken in Japan, Norway and Brazil to observe how the use of folk music and local traditions allowed musicians to distinguish themselves as non-American. The focus then shifts towards the Sydney jazz scene, and through a number of case studies, reveals its unique influences. Oz rock is examined in closer detail, showing how its embodiment of Australian cultural tropes and an alliance with working class values has allowed musicians to authenticate their jazz music with both personal and national significance, distinct from North-American jazz derivations. Additionally, engagement with musical forms from Asia will be discussed, including examples of how such collaborations have influenced the practice of several Sydney musicians. I will also suggest reasons for why Asian countries, as opposed to other global neighbours, have played such an important role in the indigenisation of the Sydney jazz scene.

A successful case study of the Japanese jazz scene was undertaken by E. Taylor Atkins and published in his 2001 book *Blue Nippon: Authenticating Jazz in Japan*. The history of jazz practice in Japan stands as a particularly poignant example of how a desire to assert an independent voice has occasionally resulted in the incorporation of traditional instruments and aesthetics. Atkins suggests that the Japanese were inspired to distil 'Japanese-ness' in their music by newly formed Afrocentric models of authenticity, as articulated by Amira Baraka in his 1961 essay "Jazz and the White Critic": "The music is the result of the attitude, the stance. Just as Negroes made blues and other people did not because of the Negro's peculiar way of looking at the world."⁵ Japanese jazz critics similarly sought to define a 'Japanese sympathy,' a unique sense of space, as evoked by classical composer Toru Takemitsu. These critics suggested that

³ Jeremy Rose, *A Deeper Shade of Blue: A Case Study of Five Compositions Informed by Ethnographic Research into the Sydney Jazz Scene* (PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 2016).

⁴ There are few well-known Indigenous Australian jazz musicians, and but a handful of collaborations that attempt to engage with Australia's Indigenous music traditions. Recent examples include the Australian Art Orchestra's *Crossing Roper Bar* (see S.J. Curkpatrick, *Conversing Tradition: Wägilak manikay 'song' and the Australian Art Orchestra's Crossing Roper Bar* [PhD, Australian National University, 2013], and pianist Kevin Hunt's compositions based on 'ancient Aboriginal chants of the Sydney Region' and the annual OUR MUSIC Indigenous music program at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, established 'to encourage continued collaborations between Sydney's Indigenous and non-Indigenous musicians' (see 'About Kevin,' <kevinhunt.com.au/about-us/>), however, none were evident in the interview data. Reasons for this lack of interest or lack of opportunity to engage with Australia's Indigenous music traditions deserve wider attention, but most likely stem from Australia's historical mistreatment, displacement and near destruction of its Indigenous population. Parallels might be drawn with the musics of marginalised indigenous minorities in other nations with a European colonial past—Brazil, for example—and the minimal role these have played in the formation of 'indigenised' national jazz music styles.

⁵ Atkins, *Blue Nippon*, 250; Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones), *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (1963; New York: Quill, 1999) 155.

this Japanese expression was of similar value to that of the African American:

When Yui Shoichi posed the question “what is Japanese?” he was attempting to define the “peculiar way of looking at the world” that could be identified with his national culture ... He was seeking the expression of a separate, identifiable, and essentialised identity for Japan akin to that which Baraka heard in the blues of black Americans.⁶

For the majority in the nationalist Japanese jazz movement, such indigenisation was best pursued by turning to Japanese folk and classical music forms such as *hogaku* and *min'yo*. The incorporation of traditional instruments, textures and aesthetics helped construct what many would interpret as a Japanese national accent. Atkins uses the example of pianist Toshiko Akiyoshi to demonstrate how these nationalist trends were best remembered in the public's imagination:

Akiyoshi's compositions represent a variety of styles, textures and influences, but her 'orientalised' pieces, featuring *taiko* drums, vocal textures from the *nō* theater, and Tabackin's eerily 'oriental' flute work, have received the most attention in Japan and elsewhere.⁷

Atkins' work demonstrates the music's power to transform sociocultural milieus—to serve as an ideological force capable of breaking down the limitations of jazz *within* national borders and to work as an agent of globalisation and modernisation within Japanese culture more broadly. *Blue Nippon* pursues questions of identity and creativity as they relate to Japanese musicians' efforts to 'sound Japanese' within a musical tradition both rooted in, and running parallel to, the African-American experience. Through interviews and fieldwork, Atkins moves beyond standardised assessments of syncretic musical sonorities by looking to the production, consumption, and resultant disputes around identity, aesthetics, and social mores that result from the glocalisation process. His work presents a conceptual framework for the study of jazz in other non-American contexts and signals a broader trend in which national identity as a strictly sonic phenomenon is increasingly being questioned.

Musicians in Brazil have similarly inscribed jazz music with local meaning and significance in an effort to oppose hegemonic cultural forces from North America.⁸ The influence of jazz music in Brazil, unlike in Japan, was first seen as a form of cultural imperialism, a push and shove of North American influences against local forms of instrumental music. Acacio Tadeu de Camargo Piedade identifies this as a 'friction of musicalities' in which the influence of jazz music was viewed as a contamination from the bebop paradigm, hence musicians were motivated to seek the legitimacy of their own form of music—*musica instrumental*.⁹ The diversity of local styles of *musica instrumental*, which now encompasses 'national rock/blues, bossa nova, pagoda, sertaneja music, samba, forro, axe music, lambada, etc.,' illustrates the fusion of local and regional influences with jazz, as well as more broadly signifying the limitations of essentialising music into pure forms.¹⁰ Piedade explains how the combination of local music influences in Brazilian jazz helped to create authenticity:

⁶ Atkins, *Blue Nippon*, 249.

⁷ Atkins, *Blue Nippon*, 257.

⁸ Acacio T.C. Piedade, 'Brazilian Jazz and Friction of Musicalities,' *Jazz Planet*, ed. E. Taylor Atkins (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003) 54.

⁹ Piedade, 'Brazilian Jazz,' 53.

¹⁰ Piedade, 'Brazilian Jazz,' 42.

I am attempting to show that the musicality of Brazilian jazz is comprised of an amalgam of regional musicalities—North-eastern, *chorinho*, *samba*, Afro-Bahian, free (urban atonalism, outside scales)—that is placed in a relationship with North American jazz musicality that is both tense and synthesizing, near coming and distance-taking, and that this relationship is charged with native discourses regarding cultural imperialism, national identity, globalization, and regionalism.¹¹

In Scandinavia, and in particular in Norway, efforts to conveniently categorise local jazz identities within geographic borders have allowed artists to be successfully promoted as part of a critically recognized collective of musicians of similar national heritage. Musicians such as Jan Gabarek, Karin Krog, Arild Andersen, and Jon Christensen successfully adapted the jazz tradition from its American roots by drawing from Norway's traditional musical culture and combined these influences with a distinctive studio recording process developed by the producer and founder of the German record label ECM, Manfred Eicher. Nicholson asserts that the 'Nordic Tone' of musicians such as Garbarek brought about an idea of a Norwegian musical sensibility that was rooted as much in Nordic folk forms as it was in the experience of having grown up in a solitary culture and a scenic land of dramatically shifting seasons.¹² Haftor Medbøe's PhD thesis highlights how the borrowings from local music cultures in Norway were best explained as a way for the musicians to authenticate their sense of place:

Nordic Tone has come to symbolize the sonic representation of national culture, physical environment, and musical design aesthetic. Liberated, to a large extent, from the historically informed constraints of the American model, it has provided a vehicle for expression that might be argued to more meaningfully reflect the cultural make-up of the Nordic countries and their geographic placements on the globe.¹³

Medbøe, Atkins and Piedade's findings illustrate the process whereby communities of non-American jazz musicians turn inwards to find sources of inspiration, displaying a conscious engagement with their surroundings by drawing from their nations' local music cultures.

Efforts to identify a discrete sonic identity in Australian jazz have not been particularly successful. *Sydney Morning Herald* jazz critic John Shand published his book *Jazz: The Australian Accent* in 2009, in which he examines a possible Australian sound in jazz but struggles to find any common threads or aesthetic values in the music of the artists he profiles.¹⁴ Shand explains that, 'no pattern emerges in quantifiable sonic terms.'¹⁵ Sandy Evans's case study of three Sydney saxophonists' recorded compositions similarly highlights the challenges in investigating identity among diverse artists within the Sydney scene: 'It is imperative to consider Australian jazz identity as multiply-constituted, and to undertake critical enquiry to understand and document the musical practices of the individuals and groups who create and inhabit Australia's richly nuanced musical spaces.'¹⁶ John Whiteoak's book *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836–1970* in turn rejects the idea of an Australian sound but points to what might be considered an Australian jazz ethos—the general eclecticism of

¹¹ Piedade, 'Brazilian Jazz,' 54.

¹² Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead?* 207.

¹³ Medbøe, *Culture Identity and Transnational Heritage*, 56.

¹⁴ John Shand, *Jazz: The Australian Accent* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009).

¹⁵ Shand, *Jazz*, 1.

¹⁶ Sandy Evans, 'Expressive Identity in the Voices of Three Australian Saxophonists: McGann, Sanders and Gorman,' *Jazz Research Journal* 8.1–2 (2014): 257–76 at 274.

Australian jazz that results from transplanted musical cultures and relative 'out-of-sync waves of decontextualised musical influence.'¹⁷ Whiteoak views improvisation as the key mediator of this eclecticism, suggesting that there exists the 'potential [for improvisation to serve] as musical Esperanto, or perhaps, pidgin, enabling expressive cross-generational, cross-gender, cross-aesthetic, creative, harmless, educational, and joyful human play.'¹⁸

Whiteoak suggests that through the involvement with 'new music' cooperatives during the 1960s, Australian jazz musicians became exposed to a number of important influences that resulted in an eclecticism of style. These included the adoption of electronics, the influence of experimental theatre and experimental art, non-Western influences, and crossovers with contemporary rock. These hubs of activity furthered the observations of Graeme Bell's 'eclectic' performance in Europe in the 1950s and served as a catalyst for certain Australian jazz musicians to embrace style eclecticism.¹⁹

Bruce Johnson's significant contribution to the discourse, *The Inaudible Music*, in turn pursues an argument for Australian jazz's uniqueness outside the sonic realm, describing the effects of the cultural practices of 'pragmatism' and 'mateship' on Australian jazz compositions.²⁰ Nicholson also postulates that local cultural practices, such as those identified by Johnson, might form a better platform for discerning how Australians negotiate and construct their own jazz identity. Nicholson points out that '[c]ulture, national attitudes and habits, and even climate can all play a part in forming a glocal dialect.' He then goes on to quote from pianist Paul Grabowsky, who views the cultural climate of Australia as rude and irreverent, yet at its core, deeply pragmatic due to its limited access to resources. Grabowsky points to parallels between Australia's historic founding as an outpost of European civilisation on the edge of Asia (removed from the centres of hegemonic social and technological infrastructure), and the experience of younger jazz musicians coming to terms with their artistic displacement from America, paving the way for an environment that allows the fostering of individual interpretations.²¹ Like Johnson, Nicholson's motive in relaying Grabowsky's thoughts seems to be to shift the focus from sonorities themselves to how sonorities are negotiated within a specific cultural frame.

In view of the lack of agreement regarding an Australian jazz identity, this study aimed to investigate a representative group of Sydney's jazz musicians' views on their influences and creative processes through one-to-one interviews. Interview participants in this study were all highly regarded for having produced acclaimed original jazz projects and were targeted to allow for a range in terms of age and experience (early to late career artists). Tim Rapley argues that interviews are the most common method of gaining 'special insight' into a subject's contemporary cultural experience, and that we live in a society dominated by interviews.²²

¹⁷ John Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib: Improvisatory Music in Australia 1836–1970* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1990) xiv.

¹⁸ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, xxii.

¹⁹ Whiteoak, *Playing Ad Lib*, 277.

²⁰ Bruce Johnson, *Inaudible Music*, 162. Other examples of Australian jazz discourse include: Bill Boldiston, *Sydney's Jazz: And Other Joys of its Vintage Years* (Leura, NSW: Bold'Or Publishing, 2007); John Clare, *Bodgie Dada & the Cult of Cool* (Kensington: UNSW Press, 1995); Peter Rechniewski, *The Permanent Underground: Australian Contemporary Jazz in the New Millennium* (Strawberry Hills, NSW: Currency House, 2008); John Sharpe, *I Wanted to Be a Jazz Musician* (Torrens, ACT: John Sharpe, 2008).

²¹ Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead?* 188.

²² Tim Rapley, 'Analysing Conversation,' *Researching Society and Culture* 2 (2004): 383–96.

Used in a wide variety of contexts, including news, documentaries, research and entertainment, interviewing 'pervades and produces our contemporary cultural experiences and knowledge of authentic personal, private selves.'²³ Such comments support my use of interviews as a methodological tool for unlocking cultural meanings and ideologies that inform the creation and interpretation of jazz music in Australia. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and two hours and were semi-structured along guidelines presented by Dawson and Gobo.²⁴ The interviews I conducted provide a snapshot of the musicians' thoughts on creative practice in Sydney whilst also acting as an important historical document.

The most original finding to surface from the interviews was the influence of Oz rock on musicians. Oz rock (also commonly known as pub rock) is, as the name suggests, an Australian form of rock music that was popular in Australia from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s and predominantly performed in crowded pubs.²⁵ The term was first coined by James Cockington, who claimed Oz rock to be a 'distinctly Australian phenomenon' that gained a strong sense of melodic and lyrical clarity inherited from an English folk music sensibility, and carried lyrics with themes of alienation and struggle against working class oppression.²⁶ Cockington outlines the cultural climate of an Oz rock performance:

At its peak ... pub rock was a style of music found nowhere else. Bands from the UK and America were astonished when they saw these huge brick sheds with all the charm of a bus shelter, filled to the rafters with screaming shit-faced masses. Most were frightened.²⁷

Cockington describes how the social consumption of Oz rock was dependent on the interpretation of the music, allowing Australian cultural tropes to become infused in the public understanding of Oz rock. This formative period in Australian popular music has been little acknowledged as an influence on Sydney jazz musicians and helps to identify a point of distinction for Sydney jazz amongst the ongoing discussion of diasporic jazz identities.

Sydney jazz drummer Simon Barker suggests that Oz rock in fact plays a more important role than we suspect, claiming that jazz musicians, particularly from his generation, grew up listening to 'the rock *thing*'. He explains his attraction to the genre as stemming from the 'meat and potatoes' simplicity in the music. He continues:

Like that ACDC, raw blues-rock, played in such a simple way but it's so strong. And because of them there were so many bands that came later like The Angels, Rose Tattoo, that were definitely responding to ACDC. And their producers, these two guys called Vanda and Young, who helped create that sound. When I was a kid I did work experience with those guys. I spent a week with them. It was amazing, they were like rocket scientists making rock music. It was really inspiring to see how deep you can get into it.²⁸

David Theak, lecturer in jazz at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, agreed, suggesting that Oz rock music was embedded in the cultural imagination of everyday life in his formative years:

²³ Rapley, 'Analysing Conversation,' 15.

²⁴ Catherine Dawson, *Introduction to Research Methods: A Practical Guide For Anyone Undertaking a Research Project* (London: Hachette, 2009) 67–88; and Giampietro Gobo, *Doing Ethnography* (London: Sage, 2008) 196.

²⁵ Jon Stratton, 'Pub Rock and the Australian Ballad Tradition,' *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture* 6.4 (2004): 28.

²⁶ Stratton, 'Pub Rock,' 28.

²⁷ James Cockington, *Long Way to the Top: Stories of Australian Rock and Roll* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2001) 184.

²⁸ Simon Barker reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 32.

I always found in my generation, that there was always an element of Rock. We all grew up in the '70s, particularly with me on the Northern Beaches, with a dozen large rock and roll music venues, the Hoodoo Gurus, Midnight Oil, and to a certain extent, just classic Aussie rock.²⁹

The Oz rock aesthetic, as described by Theak, includes notions of robustness, loudness and an 'aggressive' time feel³⁰:

There has always been that underlying thing that even though we are all interested in jazz, there was a culture that was much more hard hitting, [an] aggressive style of music. And I think that reflects a lot in Australian jazz. And the Alcoholticks are a prime example if you ask me.'

Theak's comments echo Cockington's notions of Oz rock, in which elements of roughness play an important part in forming the music's connections with Australian culture, whilst suggesting that the underlying aesthetic of Oz rock has played a role in the musical development of jazz musicians of his generation.

The Alcoholticks (who changed their name to Danaïdes in 2013) are a jazz-rock fusion trio consisting of two guitarists, Aaron Flower and Ben Hauptmann, with drummer Evan Manell. Their album *You, You* (2008, Jazzgroove Records) is an amalgam of rock guitar riffs, rock drum feels, and extreme shifts in texture and dynamics, mixed with virtuosic improvisations stemming from a simplified jazz vocabulary. Composition titles reference the 'meat and potatoes' simplicity suggested by Barker, such as 'Hot in Hell,' 'Buddy Ol' Pal,' and 'Hey Man, Yeah Man.' Barker explains further:

There is a group called the Alcoholticks that has a pretty amazing thing that they do, an amazing edge to their sound. They have this feeling that is reminiscent of lots of great Australian rock music that they have found a way to get into. There's a real feeling of jazz and real rock that has been melded together.³¹

Sean Wayland, a renowned jazz pianist, suggested that Oz rock grew in popularity in Australia at the time several of the interviewees were forming ideas about Australian music identity. Wayland recalls memories of absorbing the music through the popular TV show *Countdown*. He goes further to suggest that this show represented a 'coming of age' in Australian popular music and helped (in his mind) to forge a concept of Australian identity. He describes the shared appreciation of this show among fellow musicians as a 'connection,' which facilitates collegial kinship and understanding of the aesthetic of Oz rock:

Australian rock from 1978–1983, I think that is Australian. That's the text I think. I mean there are some jazz compositions too but really that's when people wrote music and it infiltrated people's minds. It's the only time that Australian music really infiltrated Australian people in a really large way that connects people. It connects me and 'Gordo' (drummer Gordon Rytmeister).³²

²⁹ David Theak, reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 33.

³⁰ 'Time feel' is a term used by jazz musicians to refer to the unique quality of 'groove' resulting from personal and stylistic characteristics of microtiming in performance. Musicians often discuss this in terms of playing deliberately 'behind' or 'ahead of' the beat without influencing the underlying tempo. See Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 56.

³¹ Simon Barker reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 33.

³² Sean Wayland reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 34.

This ethos is applied to music making in jazz contexts, as is evident in Wayland's recordings *Australian Rhythm Changes* (2005), *Expensive Habit* (2007), and *Surf Music, Chiko Roll* (2013), which exhibit jazz-based improvisations with heavy influences of rock rhythms, rock guitar-based riffs, and evocative titles such as 'ARC (Australian Rhythm Changes)' and 'Tasty Cold Chisel (Chiko Roll)'—references to the Aussie rock band Cold Chisel and deep fried fast food common in Australian culture. The phenomenon of Sydney jazz musicians' openness towards Oz rock, and its rich embodiment of Australian cultural tropes, demonstrates these musicians' efforts to instil local influences into their jazz music in order to forge a sense of national expression.

While the Sydney jazz musicians interviewed for this study did not report Indigenous Australian musical traditions as a significant influence on the way they play jazz, a number of musicians have made a conscious turn to engage with particular Asian cultures in an effort (as Barker suggests) to *become* non-Western.³³ Barker has made significant contributions to intercultural music, and his compelling journey into Korean traditional music is powerfully captured in the Emma Franz documentary *Intangible Asset #82* (2008), and the adaptation of his PhD thesis into the book *Korea and the Western Drumset: Scattering Rhythms*.³⁴ Barker expresses how the study of Korean traditional music enhanced his own musical processes through examining their use of bodily movement in performance, as well as the spiritual and aesthetic values underlying the music, facilitating a new approach to his instrument: "This feeling of balance all the time ... the way Koreans use their bodies ... Using this idea and the aesthetic ideas as a way of playing my own music ... I have a deeper understanding of the intangible elements of music that I am really searching for."³⁵

Barker's ensembles highlight the multiplicity of individual voices in an effort to explore the force and effect of each individual, both within the group and on each other. The resultant collection of idiosyncratic sonic combinations, use of extended instrumental techniques, and the portrayal of traditional Korean song via his long-time collaborator, *Pan' Sori* singer Bae Il Dong, create a collage of perspectives that weave together into a rich tapestry of individual and collective uncompromised expressions. Barker's collaboration with Bae Il Dong and trumpeter Phillip Slater, pianist Matt McMahon, and guitarist Carl Dewhurst on the album *Daorum* (Kimnara Records, 2009) takes impetus from the free improvisations typical of ECM recordings juxtaposed against sections of intercultural improvised dialogue with Il Dong's voice. The marriage of cultures becomes even more intimate in the trio setting found on the album *Chiri* (Kimnara Records, 2010), featuring Barker and Il Dong with Melbourne trumpeter Scott Tinkler. The textures and orchestrations shift throughout the album, such as the solo exploration of timbre and pitch bending by Tinkler in 'Chirisan Sinawi, Pt. 1' and 'Echo.' The moments of repose are contrasted against the highly interactive rhythmic duos of Barker and Tinkler, who have developed a distinctive improvised musical language that takes impetus from

³³ The concept of *becoming* a non-Western practitioner is based on Barker's efforts to not only learn the surface elements of a musical style, but the spiritual and aesthetic components of a musical tradition, that is, to attempt to understand the music within its own cultural context.

³⁴ Simon Barker, *Korea and the Western Drumset: Scattering Rhythms* (Farnham, UK/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015). Sandy Evans, Phillip Slater and Matt Keegan also discussed their Asian influences during the interviews, including Japanese Court music, Balinese Gamelan and South Indian Carnatic music.

³⁵ Barker, quoted in *Intangible Asset #82*, dir. Emma Franz (Melbourne: In The Sprocket Productions, 2008), DVD.

rhythmic ideas developed by Australian musicians Mark Simmons and Greg Sheehan.³⁶ The presentation of Il Dong's traditional *Pan' Sori* songs amongst the diverse array of improvised textures created by Tinkler and Barker results in a unique meeting of musical cultures that allows both to co-exist and inform one another, an achievement facilitated through Barker's depth of learning within the Korean drumming tradition.

The success of this collaboration is not simply due to Barker's efforts to *become* non-western, but also due to Barker and colleagues bringing something uniquely Australian in their approach to jazz, a musical and cultural expression in part influenced by Oz rock:

I think the kind of approaches Australians take to playing jazz music combined with the Korean side of the project has really resonated with people in Korea. The way jazz is made in Korea and in Japan is very different to here. So in that respect, the kind of music Daorum makes, or Chiri, is not going to be made up there, it's just not going to happen. Completely different ways of putting jazz together and performing it.³⁷

Barker's attempt to *become* a non-Western practitioner has also shifted his performance style within the mainstream jazz idiom as his immersion in Korean music has dramatically broadened his thinking and approach to playing jazz. Korean music provided depth of meaning, spirituality, and connection with bodily movement and breathing that was previously lacking in his practice as an Australian jazz drummer:

What I realised was that if you spend a lot of time really getting into Korean music and really letting it shape the way you play, it has affected me in such a way that the more traditional jazz part of my playing is definitely changed a lot in ways that I would never have expected in the past. So it felt like it's great to do that, celebrate being here, and really explore what's available, but the flipside is you will change, and it has been a real positive change.³⁸

This conscious response to geographic and cultural contexts reflects jazz music's ongoing global narrative and developing aesthetic. The interview findings here demonstrate these musicians' efforts to expand their ways of thinking, creating and collaborating in music through a utilisation of their cultural, historical, temporal and geographical frames.

Oz rock contributed significantly to the formation of an Australian popular music identity in the 1970s and 1980s, as Wayland puts it, a 'coming of age' that left an indelible mark on a generation of jazz musicians, including Wayland and others in the interview cohort. Oz rock personifies many ideas about what 'being Australian' is all about—the battle of the underdog, concepts of masculinity, larrickinism, black humour, skepticism, loneliness, and mateship, ideas that also align with a working class mentality, as pointed out by Cockington, and could also be drawn back to concepts of the Australian battler on the frontier. The adoption of Oz rock influences by Sydney jazz musicians can be understood as an expression of their culture within jazz music.³⁹ The attempt to integrate elements of Oz rock with jazz music can be interpreted as an indigenising impulse—a way of imbuing the music with a sense of being Australian, an

³⁶ Barker, *Korea and the Western Drumset*, 13–19, 63–5.

³⁷ Simon Barker reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 35.

³⁸ Simon Barker reported in Rose, *Deeper Shade of Blue*, 35.

³⁹ The examples of Oz rock-influenced jazz music from Sydney musicians illustrate a connection and association with Australian cultural tropes, both in the composition titles and the aesthetic formations of the music itself.

expression of national culture, and an Australian way of making music born out of pragmatic design. Whilst the Nordic Tone was said to encapsulate Nordic folk forms just as much as the idea of growing up in scenic landscapes, the Oz rock influence allows musicians to forge an identity of Australian nationhood and a music that meaningfully reflects the culture and geographic climate of Australia.⁴⁰

The turn towards Asia by a number of Sydney jazz musicians might partly be understood within the broader national context of a growing awareness and acceptance of Australia's place within the Asia-Pacific region, reflecting an increasingly multicultural society characterised by large communities of Asian-Australians and economic opportunities created by government policies supporting Asian-Australian collaborations. As shown in Barker's case, through learning and actively engaging with Korean aesthetic and compositional methods, Australian musicians have also sought to change their approach to jazz music and open up new processes of generating improvised music that are born out of a hybrid mix of transnational influences, including Australian, Asian, North American, and many other approaches.

This article highlights how the Oz rock that influenced the interview participants in their youth helped to shape ideas about Australian identity, embodying cultural tropes within the sound, lyrics and consumption of the music. Imbuing the received forms of jazz music with aesthetic elements from Oz rock allowed the musicians to not only forge musical kinship with colleagues of a similar generation, but to express a form of jazz that was unique to themselves. The more recent Asian collaborations demonstrate a greater openness and increased opportunities to engage directly with neighbouring cultures that have historically been viewed as a distant 'other' by most Australians, despite their proximity. These phenomena correspond well with periods of immigration within Australian history that have run parallel with changes in Australia's economic and political relationships with various Asian nations. The formation of concepts of Australian identity through Oz rock took place at a time before large-scale non-European immigration, while these recent examples of musical engagements with Asia followed subsequent higher influxes of Asian immigrants leading to increased opportunities to collaborate culturally with Australia's geographic neighbours. Thus, it is Australia's unique history that has led to these two distinct indigenising influences forming a 'glocal' dialect in Australian jazz music.

About the Author

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⁴⁰ The opposition to cultural hegemonic forces from North America, although significant in the Brazilian study, were not discussed in the interviews and could be examined further.