

Preface

Brian Diettrich

Over the past decade, ethnomusicologists have continued to offer new insights into the music and dance of Oceania, a region of profound cultural and musical diversity. Yet ethnomusicology publications about Oceania are generally dispersed according to specific research issues in music and dance, or following particular international publishers and locations. This book presents an opportunity to bring together current research by leading scholars of the region while in celebration of a distinguished ethnomusicologist and former Secretary General of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM).

The influence of Stephen Wild is widely acknowledged internationally. Through his research and publications, his teaching and mentorship, and his leadership within ICTM as past Secretary General and Vice President, Stephen has contributed locally to the study of Indigenous musics in Australasia and Oceania, but also globally to the advancement of ethnomusicology. His influence includes a long-standing advocacy for Indigenous music and musicians, and his past work within the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), for example, demonstrated a model of support for Indigenous communities and their musical heritage. Stephen's contributions to ethnomusicology therefore address the importance of responsibility in scholarship and the significance of our relationships with whom we work. In addition to these influences Stephen also held the position of Chair of the Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania (formerly the Study Group on the Musics of Oceania) from 2001 to 2005, and under which the Study Group undertook a number of significant initiatives, including a symposium at AIATSIS in Canberra, Australia, in 2001. As current chair of the Study Group, I am delighted to preface this book in celebration of Stephen's contributions to ethnomusicology and to the region. The chapters and

tributes in this volume demonstrate that Stephen's influence continues to offer many critical themes for scholarly reflection, just as members of the Study Group continue to follow his example of an ethnomusicology in close dialogue with and in support of our surrounding communities.

The Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania is an informal association of scholars within the ICTM, a non-governmental organisation in formal consultative relations with UNESCO and widely represented internationally. The Study Group was first proposed in 1977, and across subsequent decades it has held a leadership role in music and dance scholarship about the region. The term 'Oceania' in the Study Group is inclusive of Australia, and Stephen's research specialty in Indigenous Central Australian musics and Arnhem Land musics has made a significant impact on the group and the discipline. This book marks the fourth publication of the Study Group, and I commend the excellent work of authors and editors for their commitment to the project from its inception. As Chair, I welcome this volume's new contributions to ethnomusicology, as well as its consideration of one of the field's transformational figures.

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Chair

Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania

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