The Transformative Effects of CDs on the Australian Folk Festival Scene

Karl Neuenfeldt

Transformations, No. 1 (September 2000)

http://www.cqu.edu.au/transformations ISSN 1444-3775

Abstract

This article explores the transformative effects of the compact disk (CD) on the Australian folk festival scene using the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival as a case study. Edited interviews and analysis highlight how CDs circulate along with musicians and music genres in a global cultural economy and musical technoculture. The CD is characterised as a marketing and musical product; a kind of cultural and symbolic capital; and, a pivotal part of the musicality, sociality, and commerciality of the folk festival scene, while it simultaneously helps transform musical and performative genres.

Key Terms: compact disk, folk music, folk festivals in Australia, cultural production

Introduction

Contemporary sound recording and reproduction technologies such as the compact disc (henceforth CD) are global but their function and use may vary in different regional contexts and within different genres of music. The CD has become the preferred technological medium for music recordings, supplanting cassette tapes which in turn had competed with vinyl records. For example, in 1998 CD sales rose to nearly one billion units while cassette sales dropped to 259 million units and vinyl LPs to 7 million units (International Federation of the Phonographic Industry 1998). The CD is small and durable with excellent sound reproduction and can contain up to seventy-four minutes of music. Its emergence and success as a technology has had transformative effects on the cultural production of music.[1]

The main focus of this article is on how the CD as a technology is transforming musical and performative genres in the contexts of Australian "folk music" (Smith and Brett 1998, Davey and Seal 1993, Stubington 1993, Smith 1985) and "folk music festivals" (Smith and Brett 1998, Stubington 1998, Cameron 1995). A subsidiary focus is the regionality of the folk festival "scene".[2] The CD is helping performers access cultural and symbolic capital, and helping audiences/consumers experience, and re-experience, particular performers and performances with a high level of sonic fidelity and durability. These interrelated facets operate within the large-scale cultural production which provides a case study of this phenomenon: the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival.[3] I argue that in this instance CD technology is helping transform musical and performative practices as musicians circulate along with their musical creations in the global cultural economy (Appadurai 1990)[4] of the international folk festival scene.

In the context of regionality, it is useful to envisage the folk festival scene as a performative space which deals with *notions* of regionality in two particularly germane ways. Firstly, Australia is arguably one of the national regions in the transnational folk festival scene. It is a destination for overseas performers who can perform both in Australia and New Zealand during the southern hemisphere summer, which is of course the northern hemisphere winter, a time when there are very few folk festivals. Consequently, the Australia-New Zealand region is an increasingly common destination for performers wishing to work year-round. Conversely, some Australian performers market themselves as "Australian" to overseas festivals (regardless of their actual "regional" origins in Australia), and it is also common in European folk festivals for organisers to seek out representation from the various, albeit loosely defined, quasi-marketing based regions of the contemporary musical world (e.g. North America, Asia, Balkans).

Secondly, folk festivals in Australia, such as the National Folk Festival, may feature a region of Australia usually defined by state. The year this research was done, Queensland was its focus. There is also some sense of regionality in performance repertoire at Australian folk festivals in the context of songs. Particular occupations, tropes or themes (e.g. shearing, conquering the land, bush rangers, etc) can figure prominently in the repertoire of performers from regions where they occurred historically. Vague but nonetheless commonly understood notions of regionality are thus implicit in the folk festival scene. These are increasingly more explicit as transnational "world beat" performers are integrated into folk festivals' offerings, such as having an "African", a "South American' or even an "Australian" act to draw audiences interested specifically in geographically diverse and thus potentially eclectic music.

In order to survey the role of CDs in the Australian folk festival scene, edited interviews with informed participants in the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival are used to explore the crucial interface of technology and social relationships in folk music as practice, process and end-product. The interviewees are from Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Those quoted here are: Jo Cresswell (Assistant Director of the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival); Michael Watts (volunteer and retailer); and, John Skelton (member of The House Band). Also interviewed were: Mark Campbell and Alison Cone (Tursacan, voice/percussion and guitar/didjeridu duo); Terry McGee (Arts Sounds Radio-FM 103.1 Canberra); Kristina Olsen (singer-songwriter); Margret RoadKnight (singer-songwriter); Donna Simpson (The Waifs); and, Pip Thompson and Tim Meyen (Closet Klezma). Interviews took place at the 1998 National Folk Festival at Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory except for one conducted by email and one conducted by telephone. It needs to be emphasised there is no suggestion the informants, as a sample, are statistically representative. However, they are analytically representative because the focus of my analysis is their engagement with CDs within the context of the Australian folk music and folk festival scenes and within the musical and performative transformations on which they comment.

Background to the Event and Its Music Performances

The Australian National Folk Festival is a yearly event and one of many examples of how the nation is imaged and imagined via a popular culture form (Turner 1996), not always unproblematically.[5] As Smith and Brett observe on the linkages between different musical genres and the nation: "it is in the ideas and practices which shape notions of a musical community that we find idealised notions of the imagined national community" (1998: 3). They also observe: "... in a way each musical genre enacts a distinctive desired relationship between individual, community, state, and nation" (Smith and Brett 1998: 3). Analogous connections

between the ideas and practices of folk music festivals and notions of imagined national and regional communities could also be argued.

In 1998 the Australian National Folk Festival took place at Exhibition Park in Canberra for five days over the Easter weekend (April 9-13). It was made possible by the efforts of more than seven hundred volunteers under the direction of three paid employees. Major sponsorship was provided by the Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation and other sponsors. Prior to 1992 the Australian National Folk Festival rotated between major cities around Australia, but it was permanently moved to Canberra in 1992 because of financial uncertainties and the need for a large pool of skilled volunteers. Attendance in 1998 was more than 42,000 people, a substantial increase from the 8,000 who attended in 1992. Ticket prices (all in Australian dollars) ranged from an adult season ticket for $85-$105 to a child season ticket for $16-$20. Single day or evening tickets were also available. On-site camping for five nights ranged from $25-$30 for an adult to $5-$6 for a child.

An Internet site (http://www.spirit.net.au/~natfolk/site.htm) provided in-depth information on the festival and links to other related sites such as Folk Alliance Australia (http://www.folkalliance.org.au/).The Internet site demonstrates how the festival presented, and imaged and imagined, itself. Some of the main features of the festival listed on the web site included: venue ("Most of the programmed concerts and dances are held indoors and so cold and wet weather are no problem" and "EFTPOS [Electronic Fund Transfer Point of Sale] facilities are available in the Festival shop which will be selling CDs, cassettes, books, etc."); atmosphere ("Our idea is that the Festival creates a community, a village atmosphere where we can celebrate the traditions that have created Australia."); craft market ("The Festival will have a wide variety of stalls selling and demonstrating crafts of all types."); instrument makers ("A separate area has been set aside for the makers of handmade musical instruments."); and, childcare facilities ("A childcare centre will be operating on site everyday during the afternoon and evening at reasonable rates. So bring the kids and we'll look after them for you."). Spiritual matters were also catered for with morning meditations ("Revitalise the brain cells you killed last night in the bar with Sahaja Yoga Meditation.") and an Ecumenical Service especially for Christian celebrants of the festivities and rituals of Easter.

It is note worthy how the Australian National Folk Festival articulated its connection to a national imaginary through music. Its web site answered its own question "What's a folk festival?: "A Celebration of Australia's Diversity ... the only answer is that it's a lot of different things and the best way to find out is to come ... and experience it yourself! To describe [it] as four days of music, song, dance, craft and all-round good fun is only touching the surface. It's a time to enjoy a concert with the world's best, watch a dance group or join in a dance class, learn to play a tin whistle or just sit and enjoy a coffee or a glass of Guinness [beer] as the buskers and street performers entertain". It also notes the music concert programme: "... offers the best folk and acoustic musicians and singers from all over Australia, and around the world, the chance to perform at their best, on big concert stages and in comfortable intimate surroundings. Folk music today encompasses an incredible variety of music and song, and you are liable to hear just about anything in the five concert venues." And finally, it characterises participation as "a key word at the Festival. Apart from the dance classes there are several places around the festival set aside for singing and instrumental workshops. No experience is necessary, just the desire to join in and have a good time".[6]

In a general sense the festival site itself and the scheduled (and unscheduled) performances and participatory activities such as workshops provided a social and sonic enclave. They reproduced aspects of the broader mainstream society, albeit

with a strong sense of a distinctive "folk" ethos and ambience on offer to festival-goers in a consciously holistic (and physically bounded) environment. Even though the festival was a large-scale cultural production, there was a conscious attempt to promote and privilege an ethos of simplicity, sincerity, and egalitarianism and to foster an ambience of "sharing and caring" mediated by music, dance and spoken word performances. Music was an integral element in and expression of both the idealised ethos and ambience of the festival and its sometimes conflicting commercial realities.

The following edited and paraphrased interviews detail the attitudes, beliefs, and values of some key participants. The emphasis is on how they engage with the CD as an integral aspect of cultural production with not only musical and performative consequences but also commercial and aesthetic ones. They document the transformative effects of CDs on contemporary music practice in Australia (and elsewhere).

Interviews

Jo Cresswell

Jo Cresswell was the Assistant Director of the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival, with responsibility for the program and performers, and input into policy and management. As a performer and radio broadcaster, she is well aware of the specific roles of the CD and the more general opportunities and limitations of the Australian folk festival scene, including the increase and variety of musicians producing good quality recordings. Cresswell (1998) feels almost a sense of obligation to help musicians market their CDs because: "For many folk festivals, ours included, we don’t have the budget to pay the performers truly what they're worth". Consequently, the Australian National Folk Festival tries to provide performers: "as many opportunities as possible to sell their products and support them while they're at the festival". One policy noted by Cresswell is: "if a performer has a new CD out that will influence our decision to take them as an act and we will give them a CD launch during the festival".[7]

Cresswell identifies several on-site locations for marketing CDs. One is "from the stage" after performances. Another is the Australian National Folk Festival's own on-site shop: "so that other people can get acts' CDs at any time during the festival". To help cover operation costs, a 15% fee is charged. Logistically, using CDs as a resource to choose festival performers is not without its challenges. A major one is dealing with the sheer volume of CDs and demo [demonstration] tapes which need to be reviewed. For Cresswell, a positive aspect of having a CD to review is: "It tells me that the act is capable of a high level of performance and they’ve had to put the work in to get to studio quality. A band that doesn’t have a CD may not really have listened to what they're putting out and you might be getting a product which doesn’t hang together quite so well". For Australian folk festival organisers such as Cresswell there are also predicaments which arise when trying to judge an act's suitability for live performance based solely on a CD. An interesting development Cresswell notes is: "At the Vancouver Folk Festival [in Canada] they will only take live demos now. They won’t use produced material to assess [an act]. I only heard about that recently and I am very curious about following that up here [in Australia]". Importantly, although there were no sales figures available when Cresswell was interviewed, she acknowledges sales of an act's CDs, (and tapes and videos) can sometimes influence decisions on re-hiring them: good sales are a clear, quantifiable indicator audiences like the performers and their music.

Although Cresswell feels there are limitations dealing with the volume, validity and representivity of CDs, she also feels producing and marketing a CD can

create opportunities for musicians in the folk festival scene. She maintains the CD will remain an integral element in how folk music and folk festivals themselves are produced and marketed. Overall, the Australian National Folk Festival tries to provide opportunities and serve: "as a springboard for musicians which then facilitates their CD sales and their touring". However, she cautions the impact the CD needs to be viewed in the context of the commercial reality of a national market of only 18 million people: "the opportunities in Australia to perform and tour are still quite limited for many acts". Nonetheless, Jo Cresswell concludes as to the long term effects of technological changes such as the CD: "because it's getting cheaper and easier to record we are hearing from a lot more people and a much wider range of musicians, so I think in all that's a good thing".

Michael Watts

Michael Watts was a volunteer at the Australian National Folk Festival's shop. He is also an independent retailer based in Tasmania specialising in Celtic music via his company Celtic Southern Cross (http://www.tassie.net.au/~Celtic/index.html). As a musician and teacher he has extensive experience in various aspects of the Australian folk festival scene.

Watts says the sales of CDs varied considerably at the Australian National Folk Festival shop: "[The big sellers] were Roy Bailey, The Transylvaniacs, Martin Pearson, and Kristina Olsen. The Waifs were excellent [sellers], and I think they expected to sell a lot. I hadn't known of them before but [they were] very popular ... And Alasdair Fraser sold everything he put into the place. Those musicians would have sold well over 200 CDs each at the festival". At the other end of the sales spectrum: "I think most you'd find a range of about 20 CDs, but not from many. The huge majority might move 1,2,3, maybe 5". While Watts' estimated sales figures are for the Australian National Folk Festival shop, after concert sales by musicians are also important: "Most people would have bought off the musicians, so you could at least double that number of sales ... I know that if I was attending [a show] I would probably go to see the person and buy [the CD] directly from them after the show rather than buying it from the shop". This is part of the ambience of a folk festival because: "it gives you a chance to meet the person you admire so much you want to spend money on [them], and that's important. With these sorts of venues it's nice to be able to get your CD signed. That all becomes part of the culture". Having seen, heard and sold many CDs, Watts suggests: "Maybe the first CD people ought to do is something that looks at minimal costs. Maybe a production run of 500, and unit costs of about $3-4 by keeping the studio and the artwork costs down". He also suggests: "Any sort of market research that you do is really important ... You need to be able to realistically look at what your potential sales are. The better known acts have done their market research, and one of the [best kinds of] market research is if you had a previous CD".

According to Watts, the advent of ever cheaper and easier CD production and reproduction will impact further on the folk festival scene: "If the production of CDs comes down to being able to produce 15 units on your home computer, well then that would be the way to go for many [musicians], and that could change things altogether ... We used to require something like 40,000 LPs to be sold to break even, where now we're down to less than 500 CDs. And this figure is dropping. If it reaches 15 or 20 you've got people who won't be taking big risks".[8] What Watts would like to see ideally is: "some sort of recording service available for musicians. I think if [the government, or the folk federations] did that [and] then made reasonable studios available, you're encouraging people to do more with their music without taking a risk that's beyond many of them".

When it comes to the CD *per se* in the folk festival scene, Michael Watts concludes: "a lot of the CDs are being produced because people get big applause at the end of their act and their ego comes into play and they want to go big time ... I was amused at the number of CDs that different individuals or groups have put into the shop. And they're really proud of them. It's like they've made it. They're something, they're above the average performer because they have a CD. I think that's nice, if they don't lose money on it. The benefits of the local folk music scene are immeasurable. We should now have a solid record of what is happening with our music".

John Skelton

John Skelton (1998) is a member of one of the popular folk music groups at the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival, The House Band. They originated in the United Kingdom but several members now live in the North America, where they have toured extensively, as well as in Europe and Oceania.

The House Band has produced 7 CDs and Skelton readily acknowledges the central role of the CD in the transnational and Australian folk festival scenes. According to him a common commercial strategy is to release a CD to coincide with a tour: "We tour in the United States and Canada a lot and that's the way it works. Every 18 months or so we release a CD and it coincides with the tour". This strategy is useful because: "The CD both works as publicity in itself and it's also an event with [it] coming out ... Newspapers and the press like to have new things to write about ... Radio shows are exactly the same, they like to be first to play [the CD]". Skelton attributes the ascendancy of CDs to several factors: "the sound quality on a CD is so much better, it's not that much more expensive, it looks better. And it lasts longer, or so we think, because the technology isn't that old. So cassettes are almost an afterthought, you have to have them for those that need them, but to be honest with you [they're not worth worrying about too much]".

Skelton believes there are negatives and positives with the CD, both physically and aesthetically as product and process. On the negative side: "I don't like the packaging of CDs. It's a plastic shell and it's horrible". He has also noticed a change in the length of CD recordings. Technologically, CDs can hold up to 75 minutes of music. However, aesthetically, in some instances less can be more: "When the CD started hitting the streets 10 years ago, people thought that they needed to fill it up. And so there were a lot of CDs that came out with 67-68 minutes [of music] on them". This was problematic because: "Quite honestly, I'm a great believer that people don't have that kind of attention span". He notes some other musicians feel the same: "Where [once] we made early CDs of 60 minutes or so, you look at a CD now in the folk world [and it tends to be] 47-48 minutes. It's because people just don't have that [longer] attention span. Plus, I actually do believe if you make a 47 minute CD with say 12 or 13 tracks on it then those are going to be good tracks without the extra three, dare I say it, as padding". As a working musician, an aspect of the CD in the folk festival scene which strikes Skelton at least as curious if not negative is: "You meet people who have had CDs out [but] who don't actually do gigs, which is kind of bizarre to me. To me it should be the other way around. You should be a working musician first, then [a CD] is something else you do".

On the positive side, Skelton feels the CD is responsible for "the incredible availability of good music". When he was beginning to perform 25 years ago, access to recordings was limited both in numbers and styles. Travelling around the world performing, he has observed: "Now, even in the smallest town, through the Internet, you can get any CD in the world, any kind of music you can dream about. That's got to have a positive effect because people are hearing great

musicians from an early age. [25 years ago] there was an element of `everyone was kind of in it all together' and learning as we went along. But now there's [many good musicians available on CD] and I think that has to be positive".

Skelton concludes CD technology *per se* has been a boon not only to The House Band and how they operate within a global folk festival scene in Australia and elsewhere but also for "folk music" in general: "I think CDs by their very nature have been so portable, easy to understand, and easy to use they have helped spread the music much faster. So I think that must help all musicians". Although the House Band has "brand name recognition" within the transnational folk festival circuit, John Skelton feels the CD is now essential: "If you want to go on the road and get a tour booked or a festival appearance, you need to put a CD out. It's a sad fact but I'm afraid in this day and age you won't get anywhere without a CD".

Discussion and Conclusion

The edited and paraphrased interviews reveal some of the transformative effects of the CD on a particular kind of music practice and music genre at a particular site of cultural production. The interviewees highlight, both explicitly and implicitly, how a genre and site-specific cultural economy of production, representation, identity, consumption, and regulation (du Guy 1997) is circulating within a transnational folk festival scene which includes Australia and Australian performers. The CD, as a technology and medium, is significant and is also at times a signifier of particular kinds of social and economic relationships.

As Stubington (1998 and 1993) points out, in the Australian context of the "folk" scene there is a much debated and somewhat equivocal relationship between aesthetics, technology, and commercialism. More so than in some other music genres, the music, whether termed folk, folk club, or folk festival music, is relatively "technologically neutral" because it can be performatively and aesthetically successful with or without the use of "high" technology. An unamplified violin or accordion can be played and appreciated the same as an amplified one. What is different is how it needs to be presented within the context of a large-scale cultural production where the ideals of simplicity, sincerity, and egalitarianism are inherently more technologically mediated than in a small-scale, face-to-face cultural production. The CD is but another link in the technological chain connecting musicians, organisers, retailers and audiences/consumers within a vibrant music technoculture.

There are three useful insights from Stubington's (1998) analysis of the role of CD technology in the folk festival scene and I will now discuss them briefly in light of the insights provided by Jo Cresswell, Michael Watts, and John Skelton. They are: 1) the CD as a promotional tool as much as musical product; 2) the CD as a kind of cultural (and symbolic) capital; and, 3) the CD as a vicarious but nonetheless legitimate means of experiencing folk music.

The interviewees' observations reinforce the notion of the CD as a marketing as much as musical product. Promoting a festival, group, or a genre of music using a CD is an efficient way of letting the broader community know not only the music exists but also a folk festival is a chance to experience it in a consciously holistic, affirming environment. Musicians themselves use the CD to promote themselves: firstly to get hired; secondly to get hired for other performances based on appearing at a major festival; and, thirdly to help establish or maintain a presence in the folk festival scene. Previously, vinyl and cassette technology served the same purpose, but the CD is now the primary format for recording, broadcasting and retailing.

The interviewees' observations also imply the notion of the CD as a form of "cultural capital" can be usefully extended to it also being a form of "symbolic capital". For example, the CD is connected to musicians' and audiences' cultural capital in the multiple senses of the arts as an opportunity for artistic expression, education as access to technology, and travel as movement within the folk festival circuit. The idealised ethos of the Australian folk festival scene is one of privileging (even if not always strictly providing) simplicity, sincerity, and egalitarianism. Thus the trajectory of the Australian National Folk Festival is to sustain the ideal that the music and its cultural production and presentation is open to all sectors of society and is not the sole domain of an elite. The interviewees also imply it is connected to symbolic capital in the sense of the potential honour or status gained by producing a CD; even if it loses money, the act breaks up, or the recording bears little resemblance to live performance. In a subjective sense musicians have "made it" by making a CD and making the folk festival "scene". The two in tandem are part of transformations musicians undergo when moving from amateur to professional status, and from avocational to occupational commitment. As well, there is obviously cultural and symbolic capital to be gained by being associated with a large and successful festival, especially for the seven hundred volunteers and those who perform unpaid or attend workshops. In a real sense the folk festival provides a yearly opportunity for Australians to experience the arts, education and travel in the passionate (although perhaps unexamined) pursuit of musically mediated cultural and symbolic capital. Simultaneously they may also unconsciously negotiate social relationships and broader (and often ephemeral) issues such as notions of the nation and how it should be celebrated through public performance.

And finally, the informants' observations suggest the CD is a legitimate means of re-experiencing at least certain aspects of a festival. Although they all note how a CD performance can be quite different from a live performance, nonetheless each listener has individual associations which can be triggered by re-hearing the music. For example, while writing this article I listened extensively to CDs of musicians I had heard at the festival to try to re-situate myself, at least sonically, within the festival's ambience. It was certainly a vicarious re-engagement; however, it was not qualitatively different than viewing photographs or a video or listening to research interviews. After a while I could not accurately recall what music I had heard live and what on a CD. The two different but not dissimilar aural encounters blended together, as I suspect they do for most people. Just hearing the musicians' music without the attendant sights, sounds and smells was neither better nor worse, just different. I was still able to conjure up pleasant memories.

In conclusion, in Australia and elsewhere the CD is a way to reach diverse aesthetic, technological, and commercial goals. A crucial part of successfully producing and marketing a folk festival or a genre of music is to formulate an holistic ambience so people will want to re-experience not only the music but also the social relationships of its reception. Although the Australian folk music scene is not dependent on it, the CD contributes to wider dissemination and thus to the availability and viability of events such as a national folk festival. It also contributes to the livelihood of Australian musicians, producers, manufacturers, and recordings studios. The CD also has helped further conflate notions of what constitutes regionality when the local, national and transnational all converge within the folk festival scene. The observations of the interviewees highlight how the process of creating a musical product (whether a folk festival or a CD) is an unpredictable yet potentially useful engagement with technology and how technology can help transform musical and performative genres.

Endnotes

1 Cultural production is defined by Bourdieu (1993:115) as: "the system of objective relations ... in the division of labour of production, reproduction and diffusion of symbolic goods".

2 Straw (1991:373) defines a music scene as: "that cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with each other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilization ... The manner in which musical practices within a scene tie themselves to processes of historical change occurring within a larger international musical culture will also be a significant basis of the way in which such forms are positioned within that scene at the local level".

3 Along with smaller regional festivals the major national folk festivals in Australia are the Woodford Folk Festival in Queensland (http://bayweb.com.au/woodford/97/cover.html) and the Port Fairy Folk Festival in Victoria (http://ozemail.com.au/~pfff/about.html). WOMAD (World of Music and Dance) also presents a large music festival in Adelaide (http://www.womadelaide.on.net/index2.html).

4 Appadurai (1990) uses five "scapes" to help understand the complexity of the transnational movements of technology (technoscape), media (mediascape), ideas (ideascape), ethnicity (ethnoscape), and finances (finanscape).

5 For example, Stubington (1998), Cuthbert and Grossman (1997) and Grossman and Cuthbert (1998) examine folk festivals as sites where the multi-faceted and sometimes contentious relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are musically, performatively, and socio-culturally mediated.

6 Frith suggests: "The folk festival seeks to solve the problem of musical `authenticity'; it offers the experience of the folk ideal, the experience of collective, participatory music making, the chance to judge music by its direct contribution to sociability" (1996:41).

7 At the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival there were several CD launches including: "*Green Ban* - Sonia Bennett, Denis Kevans and friends present the songs that flowed from the famous `Green Ban' struggles to preserve our [natural] heritage"; "Launch of *Never the Twain* [CD]. Silliness and seriousness from John Thompson and Martin Pearson"; and, "Kristina Olsen and Peter Grayling have just recorded a new CD. Come show your support for this incomparable duo" (http://www.spirit.net.au/~natfolk/1998NFF/index.htm). Two other unique features of the 1998 Australian National Folk Festival noted were the Peoples' Forest, a project looking at the lives of the many Australians who have lived and worked in the forests, and the highlighting of performers from the state of Queensland.

8 In 1998 most CDs at the festival retailed for $25-$30 (Australian).

Bibliography

Appadurai, Arjun 1990 "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy" *Public Culture* 2(2):1-24

Bourdieu, Pierre 1993 *Field of Cultural Production* R Johnson, ed London: Polity Press

Cameron, Neil 1995 *The Maleny Folk Festival: The Art of Celebration* Maleny, Queensland: Mimburi Press

Cuthbert, Denise and Grossman, Michelle 1997 "Crossing Cultures: An Interview with Helena Gulash", *Hecate* 23(2):48-66

Davey, Gwenda Bead and Seal, Graham 1993 "Introduction" in Davey, G and Seal, G (eds) *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* Melbourne: Oxford University Press ix-xvii

Du Guy, Paul 1997 "Introduction" in *Productions of Culture/Cultures of Production* Paul Du Guy, ed London: Sage/Open Learning, 1-10

Frith, Simon 1996 *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press

Grossman, Michelle and Cuthbert, Denise 1998 "Forgetting Redfern: Aboriginality in the New Age" *Meanjin* 4:770-788

International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, 1998 Reuters Wire Service/Variety 12 October

National Folk Festival 1998 Canberra Australia <http://wwwspiritnetau/~natfolk/1998NFF/index.htm>

Smith, Graeme 1985 "Making Folk Music" *Meanjin* 44:477-505

Smith, Graeme and Brett, Judith 1998 "Nation, Authenticity and Social Difference in Australian Popular Music: Folk, Country, Multicultural" in Niles, R and Evans, R (eds) *Everyday Wonders*, A Special Issue of Journal of Australian Studies 58:3-17

Straw, Will 1991 "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music", *Cultural Studies* 5(3):368-388

Stubington, Jill 1998 "Port Fairy Spirits: The Politics of Aboriginal Reconciliation in an Australian Folk Festival Recording" *Perfect Beat* 4(1):84-105

Stubington, Jill 1993 "Folk Music in Australia: the Debate" in Davey, G and Seal, G (eds) *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* Melbourne: Oxford University Press 132-143

Turner, Graeme 1996 *Making It National* Sydney: Allen and Unwin

Note: Interviews all took place in Canberra, Australian Capital Territory except Kristina Olsen (singer-songwriter) by email on 22 May 1998 at: <TAKE_A_BREAK@compuserve.com> and Mike Heaney (volunteer working with the National Folk Festival's data-base) by telephone on 22 October 1998. Those interviewed in person are: Alison Cone and Mark Campbell (Tursacan) 13 April 1998; Jo Cresswell 15 April 1998; Gill Cosgrove or Pip Thompson and Tim Meyen (Closet Klezma) 12 April 1998; Mike Heaney 22 October 1998; Denis Kevans 13 April 1998; Terry McGee 17 April 1998; Kristina Olsen 22 May 1998; Martin Pearson 13 April 1998; Margaret RoadKnight 13 April 1998; Donna Simpson (The Waifs) 12 April 1998; John Skelton (The House Band) 13 April 1998; Michael Watts 14 April 1998.

Note on the author: Karl Neuenfeldt trained in Anthropology in Canada and Cultural Studies in Australia. He has written extensively on popular music, including Indigenous peoples' use of music in ethnogenesis and the cultural production of music festivals. He also is an active music producer and is co-editor of *Perfect Beat* (The Pacific Journal of Contemporary Music and Popular Culture).