Educational Institutions, Reed Music, and Barry Cockcroft: Cultural Production of the Concert Saxophone Community in Melbourne, Australia

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, REED MUSIC, AND BARRY COCKCROFT: CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF THE CONCERT SAXOPHONE COMMUNITY IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

By

Nessyah Adelaide Buder

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Musicology

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the requirements for the degree of
Master of Musicology

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, REED MUSIC, AND BARRY COCKCROFT:
cultural production of the concert saxophone community
in Melbourne, Australia

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This thesis explores the specific constellations of shared habits, thoughts, and educational practices that connect the saxophone community in Melbourne, Australia.

Thomas Turino’s explanation of the formation of cultural cohorts, combined with Benedict Anderson’s concept of imagined communities and Bruno Nettl’s research on educational institutions from *Heartland Excursions* provide relevant theoretical background for this paper. The Melbourne saxophone community consists of music educators, students, composers, and performers who have lived in Melbourne for a significant portion of their musical studies. The three main educational institutions that impact the Melbourne saxophone community are the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (MCM).

Specific social actors also play a significant role in influencing this community. In particular, the composer, educator, performer, and entrepreneur Barry Cockcroft (b. 1972) has molded the thoughts, values, and knowledge of these saxophonists. Cockcroft’s involvement in all three aforementioned educational institutions has not only shaped his conceptions of how the saxophone should be played, but it has also influenced the way he teaches the instrument. The need for more contemporary Australian music on the AMEB
and VCE syllabi allowed for Cockcroft’s publishing company, Reed Music, to fill a niche and flourish. This complex interplay of music institutions and social actors provides a strong and effective network for young saxophonists.

This thesis explores the interconnections between these educational organizations, Reed Music, and Cockcroft, as well as other prominent social actors. Cockcroft’s performances, recordings, compositions, publishing company, commissions, teaching, and his roles within the AMEB, VCE, and MCM have influenced the repertoire, technical abilities, and knowledge of the Melbourne concert saxophone community. At the same time, his teachers and colleagues, as well as these institutions, have shaped Cockcroft’s playing, composing, and teaching, as well as his beliefs, values, habits, and mindset.

The interactions between these organizations and social actors have produced several significant outcomes. Melbourne saxophonists now feel more comfortable performing contemporary Australian music and extended techniques. Due to Cockcroft’s promotional activities—coupled with the work of Reed Music, and the syllabi of educational organizations—over 1,000 pieces have been composed, many of which have become popular, and an Australian style of saxophone music is developing. Furthermore, Cockcroft’s goal for musicians to perform and compose music that audiences can relate to is now shared by many Melbourne saxophone students and teachers. Although this unique saxophone culture will change over time, the repertoire, knowledge, and values instilled within these countless saxophonists will shape the future of the Melbourne concert saxophone community.
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The KHASM Saxophone Quartet

I had just arrived in Melbourne and was barely beginning to get over the jetlag when I was invited to attend a concert performed by the KHASM saxophone quartet. This quartet is comprised of students and graduates of the University of Melbourne saxophone program. It took me a while to find the performance hall in the Victorian College of the Arts in Southbank, Victoria. The hall was dark with large cushioned chairs and a raised stage. I was early, and as people began entering the hall, at first I could not tell who the performers were. Everyone entered from the same door, and they all began speaking with one another in front of the stage. Many carried instruments with them. It was not until the quartet had taken out their saxophones that I knew who would be performing.

The group performed saxophone arrangements of Ligeti’s Bagatelles and a Shostakovich piece. The performance was lively and entertaining; this was a group that was fun to watch. They moved with the music, looking at one another for frequent communication. It was obvious that these four musicians were having fun. The audience applauded loudly and even cheered at the end of each piece, clearly having enjoyed the performance. I was impressed by how well this group pulled off these pieces, considering the number of technical errors that occurred. Surprisingly, among an audience clearly consisting primarily of musicians, no one seemed the slightest bit bothered by these imperfections. The fact that the group had managed to connect with the audience was clearly more important.
In addition to the performance portion of the program, the KHASM quartet members took turns explaining a recent countrywide trip they had taken with the support of a grant. The purpose of this endowment was to foster artistic connections among communities across Australia, and it seemed these musicians had done just that. While in each city, the quartet worked and performed with musicians from local schools. In performing pieces together, they shared in a unique experience and became friends. The members of KHASM expressed the value of these interpersonal connections within the Australian musical community. They described how meeting saxophonists in other cities and learning about their musical activities gave them a sense of camaraderie and solidarity. These connections had significance not only for practical reasons, but also because they made them feel like they were part of something larger than their own saxophone studio at the University of Melbourne.

At the end of the concert, I introduced myself to the quartet members, who knew I was coming to Melbourne. The group seemed as intrigued with what I was studying as I was with their musical activities. My Melbourne adventure had begun.

The Melbourne Saxophone Workshop

On the morning of July 9, 2012, I was riding a tram to Barkly Street in North Fitzroy, Victoria. It was nearing the end of my first month in Melbourne, and by this time I was familiar enough to get around on the trams, but I had never been to North Fitzroy before. As I exited the tram and began to walk towards J-Studios Art Space, I wondered what the Melbourne Saxophone Workshop would be like. I had been to many saxophone workshops and masterclasses in the US, but this was my first workshop in another country. As I approached the building that was formerly St. Joseph’s College, a Roman
Catholic boys’ high school, I wondered whether I was in the right place. This residential neighborhood seemed entirely deserted, and the charred brick building surrounded by twisted wire fences loomed ominously under the chilly, cloudy sky.

I approached the heavy metal door and knocked cautiously. A tall, friendly-looking man greeted me. Seeing the saxophone case slung over my shoulder and the inquisitive look in my eyes, he said: “Yes, you’re in the right place!” He introduced himself as Joseph Lallo, the leader of the workshop. I knew nothing about Lallo aside from the few details I had learned from Barry Cockcroft several weeks earlier: namely, that he had studied saxophone with Cockcroft at the University of Melbourne and later traveled to France to learn with Marie-Bernadette Charrier. He was a fine player and a saxophonist not much older than myself.

I put my saxophone together and waited for the workshop to begin. Lallo had everyone introduce themselves and state what year they were in school. I was surprised to learn that not only were the attendees a mix of high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, but that Lallo seemed excited rather than worried by the prospect of teaching and coaching such a diverse age group and range of skills. This was the first of many surprises I had that day.

After a few short minutes of warm-ups played together by all, Lallo had the attendees playing long tones one at a time in front of the whole class. Before we knew it, we were performing solo for one another as if we had been in the same class for years. The high school students seemed completely comfortable in this setting. Lallo had effortlessly created such a comfortable and safe space that they were not the least bit nervous to play for graduate students and professional musicians. I could not help but
think back to past masterclasses in high school, where my friends and I became so nervous to play in front of a college graduate student that we could barely make a sound on our instruments. Even as a student teacher I noticed that high school students seemed more nervous to play for a new instructor. All of those masterclasses had been formal. Everyone generally dressed up in business-casual clothes and the classes were taught lecture-style, with the teacher at the head of the class.

The Melbourne Saxophone Workshop was entirely different. We began by playing warm ups while standing in a circle—an environment of equals. When these activities concluded, the masterclasses were taught like private lessons, with the instructor assisting an individual student on a specific piece of music. The big difference was that, unlike any lesson I was ever accustomed to, where the teachers largely expected the observers to remain silent, in this case they often asked the observing students questions and encouraged them to participate in the exercises they were teaching during the lesson.

The strangest part of all to me was what the students had chosen to perform in their masterclass lessons. Every single student had brought with them at least one contemporary work by an Australian composer. Of course, I had brought a piece by Cockcroft, but that was because he was the focus of my study while I was in Melbourne. I certainly did not expect all of the students to be familiar with contemporary Australian music. American saxophone students in high school and during their early undergraduate years rarely perform contemporary compositions, particularly in workshop settings. This was certainly the start of a new chapter in my exploration of the saxophone in Melbourne.
Two Contemporary Music Concerts

By far, two of my most shocking experiences in Melbourne were attending contemporary music concerts that were not only well-attended; the musicians were playing to packed houses! The first was a saxophone concert by Melbourne saxophonist Joseph Lallo and Spanish saxophonist Sara Zaso. The second was a free improvisation gig performed by a mixture of university students and professional musicians.

The Lallo and Zaso concert was held at the Arts Project Australia gallery building in Northcote, Victoria. Arts Project Australia is an organization that promotes artists with intellectual disabilities. Surrounded by immensely emotional paintings, Lallo and Zaso performed in the first room of the gallery: an acoustically live space. They played works by Ryo Noda, Luciano Berio, François Rossé, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Robert Lemay, Toru Takemitsu, and Mauricio Sotelo.

When I walked into the building, accompanied by two of my new friends from the Graduate House where I was residing while in Melbourne, I realized the concert had already begun. I thought there would have been a foyer of some kind before entering the room of the concert, but I was mistaken. I literally opened the front door of the gallery into what was essentially the concert hall. Chairs had been lined up all the way to the back of the room, crammed together so closely that one could barely squeeze by to get to the front of the room. Every seat was taken except for some room on a bench at the very back of the hall. It appeared they were not expecting such a large crowd, and had pulled out the bench when they ran out of chairs.

Lallo was in the middle of the first piece, and during the tumultuous applause that followed, my friends and I quickly made our way to the bench. I was awed by the sheer
number of people in the audience. Never had I seen a saxophone concert consisting entirely of new music so packed. I was even more surprised at the end of this event, when my two friends from the Graduate House, neither of whom was a musician, both said how much they loved the music. When I offered to introduce them to the performers, their faces lit up in excitement. It took nearly fifteen minutes to make our way to the stage; there were so many people congratulating the performers.

I had a similar experience when I went to Bennetts Lane Jazz Club in the heart of Melbourne. I was invited by the composer, educator, and performer Lachlan Davidson, whom I had met and interviewed during the first few weeks of my stay. I arrived very early and Davidson got me a free ticket and a great seat, right in front of the bandstand. It turned out that he was not the only saxophonist in the group. Tony Hicks, another composer, educator, and woodwind doubler I had previously interviewed, also performed that night. Since all of the free improvisation sessions I had performed in or attended in the US were poorly attended, I expected the same for this performance. I could not have been more wrong. By the time the band started, the club was packed to the brim.

I looked around and thought that after hearing the first set, most of these people would leave. Many of the audience members were elderly adults, some were college students, and some looked like they were in high school. To my surprise, not a single audience member left. In fact, the second set was more packed than the first, and at the end, the audience seemed like it would never stop cheering. Perhaps it was because these musicians were exceptional free improvisers and engaging performers. The bassist in particular, who was also a vocalist, captured the audience’s attention with whoops, cries, guttural noises, and more extended techniques than I could name. Maybe the audience
was so large because there were several professional musicians among the performers. Maybe the music was familiar enough because of the jazz combo instrumentation. Or maybe these people were simply accustomed to hearing free improvisation. When I returned to the States and recounted these tales, most people found it hard to believe that contemporary music could have such overwhelming support.

These adventures from my fieldwork led me to realize that although there are many similarities between saxophonists in the US and those in Melbourne, the Melbourne saxophone community has developed its own distinct identity. These musicians have their own ways of playing, teaching, and thinking about music. They also have a particular set of goals and values. These three vignettes represent important issues regarding musical identity. The rest of this work will examine in greater detail the ways many factors have come together to shape this community.
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Introduction

How Culture is Made

What Makes a “Community”? 

In *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, the ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino suggests that “any general theories about artistic processes and expressive cultural practices would do well to begin with a conception of the self and individual identity, because it is in living, breathing individuals that “culture” and musical meaning ultimately reside.”¹ Turino further proposes that culture is formed by “habits of thought and practice that are shared among individuals.”² By “habits,” Turino means “any particular behavior, thought, or reaction in similar circumstances or in reaction to similar stimuli in the present and future based on such repetitions in the past.”³ People shape the ways that they present themselves and their individual musical identities based on the habits they have formed and on the particular situation, people, and surroundings that encompass them at the time. Thus, the study of individual identity, musical meaning, and group identity is intertwined.

Individual musical identities combine to form group, or community identities. Turino and Benedict Anderson explain community identity in different ways. Anderson proposes that large communities are imagined “because the members … will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
lives the image of their communion.” By contrast, Turino asserts that cultural cohorts are “social groupings that form along the lines of specific constellations of shared habit based in similarities of parts of the self.” In the case of the saxophone community, it is important to consider the points of both Turino and Anderson. In Melbourne, many members of the saxophone community do know one another. However, those who have not met share habits and thoughts, including an image of community.

What are the specific constellations of shared habits, thoughts, and educational practices that connect a saxophone community? All saxophonists are connected by the sheer fact that they have something physical in common: they have formed the basic habits and muscle memories involved in playing the saxophone. However, saxophonists are also connected by their mental image of relationship with other saxophonists. When two saxophonists meet, they assume not only that they have certain fine motor skills in common, but also that they in some way understand one another, based on a mutual sharing of certain experiences. These connections between people within communities both shape, and are shaped by, human experiences. Thus, the formation of both identity and culture is a fluid, dynamic, and ever-changing process that cannot be adequately addressed or described in static terms. In order to gain an insightful understanding of saxophonists’ musical identity, one must understand their background, their experiences, their mentors and peers, and everything they have learned about music.

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5 Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 111.

6 In this paper, I use the more overarching term “community,” rather than Turino’s concrete term “cultural cohort” to emphasize the fact that various groups of people can overlap, integrate, and interconnect with one another.
Just as the political identities of human actors are shaped by their experiences with governing bodies, the musical identities of human actors are shaped by their experiences with musical organizations and institutions. The theoretical ideas of Bruno Nettl in *Heartland Excursions* shed light on the ways in which the impact of these institutions can be studied. In *Heartland Excursions*, Nettl proposes that “relationships that are evident in the society of people in the Music Building, and in art music generally, play an important role in determining ways in which they conceive of the musical materials themselves.”\(^7\) This theory holds true for the Melbourne saxophone community. To study the habits, knowledge, values, perceptions, and beliefs of the concert saxophone community\(^8\) in Melbourne, one must examine the ways in which the instrument is taught.

In general, only a certain percentage of any given country, state, county, city, or township will be involved in musical activities. Because the musical population is smaller than the overall population, the musical community is by nature more tight-knit than the community at large. Australia is one of the least densely populated countries in the world, and so Australian musical organizations are all the more interconnected with specific human actors, who are socially connected to these organizations and engage with them in different ways.

The Melbourne saxophone community is particularly tight-knit. Within this community, human actors perform, record, teach, compose, and commission music, as

\(^7\) Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music* (Chicago, IL: Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, 1995), 121.

\(^8\) “Concert saxophone” refers to all music played by saxophonists in concert settings, where the saxophone is the primary instrument. The term “classical saxophone” is more commonly used to refer to this music. However, the term “classical” connotes a certain era in Western music. “Classical saxophone” in practice includes music in a wide variety of genres and time periods, from all over the world. To avoid this confusion, the more accurate term “concert saxophone” will be used throughout this paper.
well as participate to varying degrees in multiple musical organizations. Most of these saxophonists know one another personally, have met in passing, or have heard of one another and are familiar with each other’s work. The Melbourne saxophone community consists of music educators who teach various level(s) of saxophone in private lessons or in public or private schools. The students they teach include those ranging from just barely big enough to hold the instrument through university students and beyond. Those who compose or commission music for the saxophone are also included within this community, as well as saxophone performers who play in public or for leisurely purposes. This community embraces those born outside of Melbourne but who spent a significant amount of time studying saxophone in the city, as well as those saxophonists who were born in Melbourne but who have studied or are currently studying the instrument abroad.

*Saxophone Culture in Melbourne*

This paper is based on ethnomusicological research I conducted in Melbourne, Australia between the months of June and August in 2012. During this time, I was a participant-observer and had the opportunity to speak on both formal and informal levels with many of the best-known, active, and most-respected saxophonists in Melbourne. In my interactions with these saxophonists, I noticed a different set of values, beliefs, and practices from those I was familiar with based on my experiences in the United States. Although the purpose of this study is not to compare Melbourne saxophone culture to that of the US or any other culture explicitly, some implicit comparison is inevitable.

In observing a concert by the KHASM saxophone quartet, a group consisting of current students and recent graduates of the University of Melbourne, I noticed that the
ensemble seemed more concerned with creating positive connections with their audience than with rendering a technically flawless performance. For example, in observing KHAM, I noticed that their selection of repertoire included a Shostakovich transcription and Ligeti bagatelles, which suggested the importance of performing music that the average concert-goer could grasp.

At a workshop I attended later during my stay, I was surprised by how many saxophone students in Melbourne were performing contemporary music, and how early these students were learning and utilizing extended saxophone techniques, such as altissimo, multiphonics, and slap-tongue, despite their seemingly ambivalent feelings towards technical perfection. High school, university, and graduate students attended this workshop. I was one of only two non-Australians in attendance. Every single one of the Australian saxophonists, even the high school students, had performed at least one work by a living Australian composer. Several performed contemporary Australian music during the workshop, effectively utilizing extended techniques within these pieces.

At the conclusion of the workshop, students volunteered to complete a questionnaire that I had devised on their opinion of the contemporary music that was performed. Multiple student responses revealed an affinity for this modern Australian music. Students liked the “jazzy feel,” “catchy main motif[s],” “entertainment value,” and “intensity” of this music. One student remarked about a contemporary Australian piece called *Black and Blue*: “I like the extended technique side of it … the multiphonics, yet how it is incorporated into the piece as a kind of ornament.”\(^9\) These responses indicated a different set of values and knowledge about the saxophone than my

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\(^9\) These questionnaires were filled out on July 9, 2012. All questionnaires were anonymous.
experiences with American, Canadian, South American, French, Spanish, Scottish, Norwegian, and Japanese saxophonists in the past. I noticed that these saxophonists knew virtually nothing of Australian saxophone music and that they tended to gravitate towards either the standard saxophone repertoire or avant-garde contemporary music. The Australian saxophone community’s goals, knowledge, and aesthetic sensibilities seemed to fill a unique niche within the global saxophone community.

Biographical Sketch of Barry Cockcroft

One of the most important human actors in the Australian saxophone music scene is Barry Cockcroft (b. 1972), whose role in educational institutions is integral to the development of the saxophone community in Melbourne. Like any social actor, Cockcroft’s habits of thought and practice have been shaped by his background. A well-rounded perspective on Cockcroft’s past experiences and the important people in his life sheds light on how his career has taken shape and how he has become such a significant figure in the Melbourne saxophone community. His wife, Sam Seabrook, has played an important role in Cockcroft’s career. A musician herself, Seabrook plays saxophone, flute, and other woodwinds professionally and also teaches music in Melbourne. Seabrook is also a composer and behind-the-scenes supporter of Cockcroft’s publishing company, Reed Music. Her efforts as a composer and educator have bolstered those of

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10 To learn more about the concert saxophone canon, visit the website of a major concert saxophone studio, such as that of Frederick L. Hemke at http://www.fredericklhemke.com/syllabus.htm. This website contains a list of all the most commonly performed works for the concert saxophone. This canon consists largely of works written for French saxophonist Jean Marie Londeix or German saxophonist Sigurd Rascher. Both Hemke and Londeix were students of Marcel Mule at the Paris Conservatory. Marcel Mule was the second teacher of saxophone at the Paris Conservatory. He reestablished the saxophone class in 1942. This class had not been taught since Adolphe Sax, inventor of the saxophone, left the Paris Conservatory in 1871. Rascher taught saxophone at Juilliard, the Manhattan School of Music, and at the Eastman School of Music. Over 208 works were dedicated to him during his lifetime.
Cockcroft in developing the Melbourne saxophone community. For example, she has written and coauthored with Cockcroft some of Australia’s most popular music method books. Her band method books, *My Favourite Method* and *Band Class*, are used by thousands of Australian students every year.

In addition to Seabrook, other social actors have influenced Cockcroft’s involvement in the Australian saxophone scene. Cockcroft studied saxophone in Melbourne with the world-renowned saxophonist Dr. Peter Clinch for five years. He then studied for two years in Bordeaux, France with Jacques Net, Marie-Bernadette Charrier, and Jean-Marie Londeix, where he received the Medaille d'Or for saxophone performance. A strong French education highlighted certain aesthetic values for Cockcroft, such as the beauty of flawless, effortless sounding technique and the significance of contemporary music. The combination of his education and marrying a music educator help explain why Cockcroft is such a staunch supporter for new music and for developing musicians. As Cockcroft says: “I think contemporary music needs a public audience, not a private audience.”\(^\text{11}\) In the past 16 years, Cockcroft has worked with over 100 composers leading to the publication of more than 1,000 new works. Additionally, he has encouraged many composers who write highly advanced concert music for the saxophone also to compose stimulating and original repertoire for developing players.

Cockcroft also composes repertoire and creates pedagogical books for beginning and intermediate musicians himself. These books and repertoire guide the development of thousands of young Australian performers each year. Overall, he has written over 140 works and published them all through his web-based company, Reed Music.

\(^{11}\) Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
Furthermore, Cockcroft has acted as a repertoire consultant on Australian music for various organizations, and he is an active member of the International Saxophone Committee. This committee supports the triennial World Saxophone Congress, and two of its primary goals are to establish methods of communication among young saxophonists, and to commission and perform new saxophone repertoire.

Cockcroft’s reputation and his influence have become globally widespread for multiple reasons. Both Cockcroft and Seabrook enjoy travelling and have visited more than 60 countries. Cockcroft has performed and networked with musicians on many of these travels. It is partially due to these connections that today Cockcroft is regarded as one of Australia’s finest saxophonists, and his compositions have become part of the mainstream saxophone repertoire across the globe. Cockcroft is also highly involved in musical activities in Australia and nearby countries. He currently teaches saxophone at both the University of Melbourne and the Victorian College of the Arts. In addition to teaching, he continues to perform. For 10 years, Cockcroft has been a regular guest saxophonist with the Malaysian Philharmonic, and he has formed a duo called Rompduo with Perth pianist Adam Pinto. Rompduo has recorded multiple CDs and toured both nationally and internationally.

Furthermore, Cockcroft regularly performs at major music festivals and events. For example, in January 2011, he was a recitalist, guest clinician, and concerto soloist with the United States Navy Band at the 35th International Saxophone Symposium in Washington, D.C. Later that year, he premiered multiple pieces at the Australian Clarinet & Saxophone Festival and also performed at the Tutti Festival in Beijing. In July of 2012, he premiered Matthew Orlovich’s *Concerto for Soprano Saxophone and Orchestra* with
the Scottish Chamber Orchestra at the 16th World Saxophone Congress in St. Andrews, Scotland. He also has given masterclasses and performed at major universities and music schools across Australia. This high level of involvement in so many musical activities helps to explain how Cockcroft has become such a significant figure in the Melbourne music scene.

Cockcroft is an active performer, teacher, composer, and new music advocate. He not only asks composers to create music for the saxophone, but also premieres this new repertoire. He encourages saxophonists to perform these pieces through his work at multiple educational institutions, through his website, and through his publishing company Reed Music. This paper explores the various structures and values of several of these Melbourne organizations, examines the ways in which they interconnect with the local saxophone community, and identifies the ways in which Cockcroft has shaped this cultural cohort.

The thesis is organized to first provide the reader with a strong understanding of the main institutions involved in educating Melbourne saxophonists, and then to discuss Cockcroft’s involvement with these organizations in detail. Chapter 1 will explain the three main educational institutions that affect education about the concert saxophone in Melbourne: the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. This chapter will highlight the histories of these organizations, how they have developed, how Cockcroft is involved in shaping them, and how they impact the concert saxophone community in

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Melbourne. Chapter 2 will describe the origins of the publishing company Reed Music, its use among performers and music educators, and its influence on saxophone students and teachers. Chapter 3 will discuss Cockcroft and his relation to the total context of saxophone music creation, education, performance, and reception in Melbourne, Australia. This chapter will illuminate his involvement with saxophone education in Australia, and it will conclude with an analysis of his influence on the Melbourne saxophone community. In the final chapter, I will synthesize the ways that the interplay between Cockcroft and all these institutions has shaped the formation of a unique musical identity among saxophonists in Melbourne. I will show how Cockcroft has encouraged this community to value contemporary and Australian music, the early acquisition of extended techniques, and audience support.
Chapter 1
Melbourne Educational Institutions

Saxophone Education in Melbourne

This chapter will focus on the three main educational institutions that affect the formation of the concert saxophone community in Melbourne, Australia: the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB), the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. The AMEB is the most widely recognized Australian national organization that provides a program of graded assessments in music, speech, and drama. These examinations cover an extensive range of skill levels, from young beginners in grade school through university students seeking to become music teachers and performers. The AMEB and VCE are similar in that they both play a role in regulating music teaching and syllabi. However, the AMEB focuses exclusively on the arts, whereas the VCE is a general education curriculum that includes programs for music students. The VCE also differs from the AMEB in that it is only for high school students in the state of Victoria. The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music is the oldest and one of the largest music schools in Australia.

In Australia, as in the US, saxophonists can take private lessons, learn to play in public or private schools, or both. As in the US, beginners often participate in an elementary school music program in grades 4-6, between the ages of 9 and 12. In the case of the saxophone, students’ starting age is limited by their physical ability to hold and carry a fairly heavy instrument. However, unlike in the US, in Australia both state and national organizations foster the regulation and standardization of music teaching and learning through examinations and assessments. Specifically, these organizations impact
the technical abilities, tone production, expressive interpretation, and repertoire of the students. Elementary, high school, and college music students are not required to participate in these organizations in order to learn a musical instrument, but most music teachers are strongly encouraged to utilize the programs that these organizations provide.\textsuperscript{14}

The vast majority of these teachers have degrees in performing or teaching music from a college, university, or through a music organization like the AMEB. The membership criteria differ from organization to organization, but in general require a high professional standard. Music teachers who are not involved in groups such as the AMEB do not necessarily have a music diploma or a university degree, and their students might not be required to reach certain benchmarks. A saxophone teacher who teaches only pre-collegiate musicians in private lessons outside of school may decide that some of his or her students would benefit from following one of these programs. However, for other students, the same teacher might choose simply to teach weekly lessons without getting the student involved in such a program.

Music students who do not become involved in these organizations may feel like they are “missing out” on the experience, quality of education, and access to musical materials. In addition, such students might be perceived as being in some ways musically disadvantaged. In my fieldwork in Melbourne, conversations with music teachers and parents of music students who were involved in these organizations revealed that success in these institutions was considered socially prestigious. Parents took pride in their

\textsuperscript{14} In the state of Victoria, high school music teachers must have their students utilize the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) music program in order for their students to receive their high school Certificate of Education, which is similar to a high school diploma. For more information on the VCE, see Chapter 1 Section 2, \textit{The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)}. 
children’s accomplishments in these programs, and they frequently enjoyed boasting about their child’s progress and comparing it to that of other families.

Many elementary school music teachers utilize these programs for the practical and musical advantages that they bring. Such programs provide repertoire lists for students. These programs also make published music materials, such as music scores and theory workbooks, more readily available by logically organizing these works in packages and booklets and distributing them at discounted prices. Another advantage provided by these organizations is performance opportunities in front of adjudicators who are experienced professional musicians and music educators. The adjudication scores and the diplomas that these students receive are publically recognized even at the university level. Beyond that, these scores and diplomas are internationally acknowledged. Music teachers in public and private high schools in the state of Victoria are required to utilize the statewide music program if their students are to receive marks for their high school diploma in music.

These organizations are thus a fundamental component of music education in Melbourne, and the ways these organizations function affect the knowledge and beliefs of the music students who form part of them. As the saxophone became an instrument studied in schools in the latter half of the 20th century, the instrument became integrated into these state and national programs. Melbourne-based saxophonist, composer, and music educator Barry Cockcroft is part of the legacy of those involved in embedding the saxophone into these programs, and will doubtless retain a continuing influence on their development in the future. Currently, Cockcroft teaches at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and is constantly contacting composers to write new music for
the saxophone. He performs this music all over the world and posts video recordings online. Cockcroft also composes for the saxophone and distributes this music through his own publishing company. Furthermore, he is a consultant for the writing and revision of national and statewide saxophone syllabi. Through his involvement in these organizations, Cockcroft has shaped the repertoire, technical abilities, and knowledge of the Melbourne saxophone community.

In order to understand how Cockcroft has shaped the Melbourne saxophone community through these organizations, we must first unravel these institutions and comprehend how they form part of the interconnected system of music education in Melbourne. The following sections in this chapter will discuss each of these educational institutions in detail, specifically regarding their relation to the study of the concert saxophone in Melbourne.

*The Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB)*

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, when Australian universities and their music schools were in their infancy, most of the musicians who founded and taught at these schools either came from Europe, particularly Great Britain, or had studied in Europe. Europe was considered the pinnacle of music, and for many years (and to a degree, even to this day), it was widely believed that European musicians were the best in the world. Australians thought that in order to become a professional musician of consequence, one had to spend time studying in Europe.¹⁵ During this time, the Royal Academy of Music

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and the Royal College of Music in England were in the process of creating the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM, established in 1889) in order “to combat [the] effect of numerous spurious examining bodies.” Many Australians believed that the only way for young Australian musicians to compete with European musicians was for Australian music schools to emulate the British, German, or Italian schools of music. Thus, as Australian music schools emerged, an emphasis was placed on the creation of examining bodies to follow the British model.

The idea for the Australian Music Examinations Board germinated from a program of public music examinations, initiated in 1887 by the University of Adelaide and in 1902 by the University of Melbourne. In 1906, the two universities adopted a joint scheme of public examinations in music. It took over 30 years for educational authorities in all the states of Australia to reach an agreement. In 1918, these authorities created a national organization to provide graded assessments of the achievements of music students.

This organization not only grew out of a need to emulate the ABRSM, but also out of an interpersonal controversy and a financial need. In 1891, the London-born composer, conductor, organist, and violinist George William Louis Marshall-Hall (1862-1915) was appointed chair and director of the music school at the University of Melbourne. Marshall-Hall was responsible for the assessment of the music students as

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well as the financial success of the school. He was unpopular because of his untraditional approach to music education, centered on emotional interpretation rather than an emphasis on pure technique. Moreover, Marshall-Hall “abhorred examination systems and at various times tried to have those existing for music abolished.”¹⁹ In 1898, the university council indicted Marshall-Hall for his radical ideas and asked him not to teach in Victoria. However, since he was the one leasing the conservatorium building, Marshall-Hall was able to continue teaching in East Melbourne, aided by his loyal staff and students. The University of Melbourne had to abandon Marshall-Hall’s teaching curriculum and essentially start over in creating its own conservatory program.²⁰

The organist, choirmaster, and music educator Franklin Sievright Peterson (1861-1914), who was born in Edinburgh, Scotland and studied music at the University of Oxford in England, played a prominent role in bringing about the AMEB. In 1900, Peterson was appointed to direct the University of Melbourne. Unlike Marshall-Hall, Peterson’s approach was more conservative and financially practical. In order to improve the conservatorium’s financial position, in 1902, Peterson established the University Conservatorium Music Examinations Board. The UCMEB replaced “several overseas examining bodies [and] offered examinations at all levels to students throughout the State, with bursaries and scholarships to the conservatorium.”²¹ Students paid the


²⁰ Ibid.

UCMEB for their examinations and, in return, received marks that would still be recognized when they reached the university level. All Australian universities were affiliated with the UCMEB by 1915, and in 1923 this national organization became known as the Australian Music Examinations Board.

The AMEB currently provides syllabi across a wide range of musical instruments as well as for voice, music theory, musicianship, speech, and drama. Today, the AMEB is directed by a Federal Board, which consists of representatives from all the educational institutions that are signatories to the AMEB constitution, including the Universities of Melbourne, Adelaide, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, and Tasmania. Separate committees, composed of music teachers, determine the content of new or revised syllabi for their respective instruments every several years. These committees circulate questionnaires to the teachers who have had students take AMEB exams within the past several years. The AMEB is organized in this manner to allow for a collaborative approach that gives a wide range of views and input from many different teachers across the country.

In addition to fostering a collaborative, multifaceted approach to music education, one of the goals of the AMEB is “to offer all students access to some of the best repertoire for study purposes, whether they subsequently sit for the examinations or not. Through its publications, the Board … [also provides] advice on interpretation [of musical works] from some of the leading practitioners in the country.”22 Furthermore, the AMEB seeks to quell the myth that European music and musicians are “better” than their Australian counterparts. “The Board has a commitment to including compositions by

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Australian and regional composers in its publications and syllabuses.” The AMEB has become the most widely-used system of music assessment in Australia.

The world-renowned saxophonist and music educator Peter Clinch (1930-1995) instigated the AMEB syllabus for saxophone. Initially, the saxophone syllabus began at Grade 3, because it was assumed that saxophonists had already learned clarinet, making a “beginning saxophone” syllabus unnecessary. Music educator and AMEB examiner Neville Shade worked with Clinch in adding Grade 1 and Grade 2 saxophone syllabi so that students could begin learning saxophone as their first instrument. The addition of these syllabi helped change people’s conception of the saxophone: instead of being a fun doubling instrument for clarinetists to play during their leisure time, the saxophone could now be viewed as an academic instrument, on equal footing with others in the Western classical tradition. According to Shade, Clinch “was always pushing for good saxophone playing, good saxophone repertoire.”

Neville Shade and Barry Cockcroft, both of whom studied saxophone with Peter Clinch at the Melbourne State College, helped create a further addition to the AMEB syllabus for saxophone, the Saxophone for Leisure syllabus. The Saxophone for Leisure

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23 Ibid.

24 Neville Shade, the Deputy Director of Music at the Methodist Ladies College in Kew, Victoria, Australia, is a Senior AMEB examiner and a VCAA Assessor. He is involved in developing new syllabi for the AMEB, and he is a professional woodwind player and doubler.

25 Neville Shade, Transcription of conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 6 August 2012.

26 Later this college became the University of Melbourne. For more information on the history of the Melbourne State College, see http://home.pacific.net.au/~robinsont/tim/msc.html.
In an interview with the author, Shade explained the content, purpose, and origins of this syllabus:

We also started up a new syllabus which is called Saxophone for Leisure, which was very different because it has a little bit more jazz and contemporary flavors [and] certainly Australian works. ... It also had the opportunity of using background CDs [as accompaniment to the saxophone], which was good … and to possibly lend itself more to what the students were actually doing within schools, where the traditional syllabus was very much practically oriented.

[In creating the new saxophone syllabus] we were changing it dramatically. There was, I won’t say disagreement, but there was more discussion about what was important. … We had discussed it with [the] clarinet [syllabus], but we all agreed. With saxophone we knew that we were going different directions so … that brought more discussion … especially when it came to contemporary works. And with the Saxophone for Leisure syllabus, that was such a new syllabus. [There] was a smaller body of people … involved …. A lot of that [syllabus’s content] was based on what people were already doing. And of course … there was a questionnaire which was online. There were focus meetings with the public, the clientele if you like, and they got their opportunity to put in their input before we did the syllabus. So we discussed what they’d put in as input, what they wanted in it, what they didn’t want in it.

Shade’s explanation of the creation of this syllabus demonstrates how the AMEB has supported strong beliefs in collaboration between saxophone teachers. This explanation also shows how the AMEB values the input of many saxophone students and teachers across the country. Shade highlights the importance of both contemporary and Australian music among Australian saxophonists. This is the music that saxophonists are “already doing.”

A sampling of the AMEB Saxophone and AMEB Saxophone for Leisure syllabi further demonstrates the importance of contemporary Australian music. Overall, they

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28 Shade was also involved in revising the AMEB clarinet syllabus.

29 Neville Shade, Transcription of conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 6 August 2012.
include more than 100 works by contemporary Australian composers. For example, Cockcroft has three of his own arrangements and 11 of his original compositions listed on the Saxophone Syllabus and three of his original compositions listed on the Saxophone for Leisure Syllabus. Melbourne composers Lachlan Davidson, Stuart Greenbaum, Katy Abbott, and Brenton Broadstock have a composite of 44 pieces on the two syllabi. All of these pieces are available through Reed Music—an internet-based company committed to the publication of new music.30

The AMEB saxophone syllabi place a much larger emphasis on contemporary works than their American counterparts.31 For example, the New England Music Festival Association has fewer than 40 works by contemporary composers on its saxophone repertoire lists, and none by Australian composers.32 The AMEB Saxophone Syllabus does, however, include works by contemporary American composers, including the Lawson Lunde Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano and various pieces by the Californian-born jazz saxophonist and composer Jim Snidero.33

These AMEB repertoire lists do not limit or restrict the music that Melbourne saxophonists can access, but the lists do guide and influence what the students are most

30 Barry Cockcroft created and currently runs Reed Music. For more information on Reed Music see Chapter 2.

31 One must, of course, consider that no saxophone syllabus comparable in scope and reputation to the AMEB saxophone syllabus exists in the US. In the US, such syllabi are organized regionally or state-wide by a variety of organizations. For example, the largest and most successful state unit of the National Association for Music Education is the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA). NYSSMA provides adjudication festivals, workshops, and All-State performing groups. NYSSMA also provides a fairly extensive list of solo and ensemble repertoire for the saxophone. However, even the highest adjudication rating from a NYSSMA festival will not mean anything significant for the student once s/he reaches the university.


likely to study and perform. Shade explains how the likelihood of a student studying a work is directly linked to the availability of that piece of music:

I think [the AMEB Saxophone Syllabus] gives [saxophone teachers and students] a structure and gives them opportunities because, theoretically, all the works that are on the syllabus should be available. That doesn’t necessarily happen. We tend to have issues sometimes with European works. ... They come in and out of publication. ... All the Australian works on the list ... [are] readily available.34

Melbourne saxophonists are more likely to play contemporary music than their American counterparts because this music is made accessible to them through Cockcroft’s advocacy and Reed Music. Most of the pieces available through Reed Music cost under $30 and have a downloadable PDF version available for a lower cost. For example, Strange Times by Lachlan Davidson costs $29.95, or only $24.95 for the eScore.35 This music is more cost-effective than that of other publishers of saxophone music, such as Alphonse Leduc, which charges $40 or more for many different saxophone works. Moreover, the ability to download a PDF version of a score means that a student can have access to this music literally at the touch of a button. They do not have to wait for this music to arrive in the mail or even travel to a store to make the purchase. As one of the main architects of the AMEB saxophone syllabus, Shade discusses how Cockcroft and Reed Music have played into the development of the AMEB syllabi:

It’s very hard to take [Cockcroft] out of Reed Music, but I think there are two things there…. It’s a very clever business operation … and one has obviously been linked to the other in the sense that Barry’s main want has been publishing works, and clearly his works are all twentieth century and they’re mainly Australian so therefore there’s a link there.

But, we knocked back a number of Barry’s Reed Music works because they either didn’t offer something different—significantly different—or we didn’t think they

34 Neville Shade, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 6 August 2012.

were as valuable. But there’s a lot of his merchandise on the syllabus because it’s good music, and if it hadn’t been for him, we wouldn’t be sitting here. … Others were concerned about [a conflict of interest]. I wasn’t, because we were choosing the works on their [own] merit, not through a publishing company. But if it hadn’t been for Barry and his preoccupation and stubbornness … to present new music, we wouldn’t have it, so I mean he’s done a fantastic job.\textsuperscript{36}

The conflict of interest that Shade mentions stems from a variety of factors, mainly the profit that Cockcroft would gain from selling music he has recommended to the board. In addition, there is also the possibility for conflict because he is a composer and a performer. Naturally Cockcroft attains personal gain from the students who purchase and perform his works. Also when students play his music, their familiarity with this repertoire and their desire to learn it makes them more eager to hear Cockcroft perform. One cannot deny the personal benefits of Cockcroft’s involvement in the AMEB. Yet, according to Shade, this apparent conflict has not become a serious problem. In reality Cockcroft’s involvement has benefitted composers, performers, and students alike. In many cases, Cockcroft personally has asked composers to write music for the saxophone, and he has encouraged the inclusion of these pieces in the AMEB saxophone syllabi. Without his efforts, much of this educational and engaging music would never exist or be available to students.

A greater familiarity with contemporary music of one’s own country, or even of one’s home city, can lead to a more ingrained connection between the performer and the music. Melbourne saxophonists have the potential to develop personal connections with the composers whose works they are performing. As Shade states: "The opportunity of meeting the composers is available to them, so … that’s a great benefit."\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36} Shade, Conversation with the author.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
Students who take advantage of this opportunity may feel more connected, involved, or engaged in the music they are studying. Such students are able to ask questions about the music and receive insightful answers that lead to a better understanding of the music and the thought process that informs it. Such connections can lead to a deeper interest and stronger investment in playing the saxophone. According to Katy Abbott, a Melbourne composer who believes in the significance of this connection:

I think it’s great. I always answer. I make a point [to answer], even if [different students ask] the same thing over and over and over. I think it’s great that they can have a live composer to contact [and] take their own interpretation of the piece. And I think it’s great to have Australian music out there … once they’ve done one [piece by a contemporary Australian composer] they can go: “Oh, what else has this person written?” I think it’s nice to get a flavor of what’s in your own country. So really it’s thanks to Reed Music and the AMEB.38

Musicians who only perform works by deceased composers lack this personal link to the music that is readily made available to Melbourne saxophonists through the AMEB and Reed Music.

However, the AMEB did not always include this repertoire, which according to Abbott dates from the mid to late-1990s. As she stated:

In Australia … educational works were [once] considered less valid … than professional works. … A lot of composers [were] not writing educational pieces because it was considered “beneath them,” which therefore meant that composers who weren’t as skilled or experienced were writing the educational pieces and they weren’t as good. So, there’s been a perception about this for a very long time, and it’s probably based on truth from a long time ago. But I really think it’s changing now. I think composers are way more amenable to writing pieces for education. … As a teacher I’m not writing pieces for education because I’ve got this passion for education …. I want to write really good pieces: not just throw-away pieces for education [but rather I want to write a piece] because I think there’s a really good essence in the piece that the students have something really

38 Katy Abbott, Conversation with the author, University of Melbourne, Carlton, Victoria, 29 July 2012.
musical to grasp hold of, rather than just have technical notes to play. They should be playing real *music*.

… It’s about a shifting perception about the value of writing … less professional level pieces. And … as that changes, the quality is increasing, which means that the AMEB will want to include them … [and] the teachers will want to include them in their students’ repertoire.\(^{39}\)

It is largely due to Cockcroft that this change in perception and repertoire has occurred.

Beyond serving on the board in charge of changing the AMEB Saxophone Syllabus in 2005, Cockcroft’s involvement runs even deeper. Shade astutely points out Cockcroft’s integral participation:

> I think the aim of changing the syllabus was to [have] more Australian works enter the syllabus, because … for the last twenty years … and in particular the last ten years, the wealth of works which is now available, were just not known to the general public. So therefore, this was a way of bringing those works in. And there were certain people, like Barry Cockcroft, who … through his connections had his finger on the pulse, so he actually called [in] a lot of those works.\(^{40}\)

Since the 1990’s, Cockcroft has asked composers to create works for the saxophone at various levels of performance ability.

Many composers have accepted Cockcroft’s commissions because of his strong connections, excellent performance skills, and entrepreneurship. For example, the composer and composition professor at the University of Melbourne Stuart Greenbaum recounts meeting Cockcroft and writing a piece for him:

> I had worked with some saxophone players … who went through Uni [the University of Melbourne] at the same time … and perhaps when I had come back to do [a] Ph.D. [at the University of Melbourne] I met Barry, who I think was doing a master’s in saxophone at that time. And he played a piece of mine terrifically, one that was already existing, particularly well, and that was the start of a long collaboration of a lot of pieces that I wrote for Barry, because he was such a great player. And also he, at the same time, was developing his own

\(^{39}\) Ibid.

\(^{40}\) Shade, Conversation with the author, 6 August 2012.
publishing house, Reed Music, and so it was also an avenue to publish the music as well as to work with Barry in developing the pieces. Most notably, my Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano, which was written for Barry and also Adam Pinto, they have a duo together, Romp, and they’re fabulous players and it was great to write a really big piece for them. As to the AMEB, certainly I think that students should have inspiring music to play, not just so-called “educational” music. I’ve never really written what I would call an educational piece.

So, I think that students need inspiring music …. In the first instance, it should be not just teaching a skill in some kind of rote way. There’s got to be some level of: “Wow, I really want to play this! I would totally love to play that.” And so … I have written a lot of educational music at all levels, partly with the philosophy that composers should not only write for professionals, they should also write for people who are starting out.41

Valuing music that students would like to play parallels the belief among Melbourne saxophonists that they should perform music that an audience would like to hear.

Cockcroft’s own compositions that were added to the AMEB syllabi have affected students’ technical abilities. For example, the piece Sagittarius from his Zodiac collection is on the AMEB Saxophone Syllabus under Grade 6, which would generally be performed by students around the age of 15.42 In measures 21-22, this piece includes tremolos that require alternate fingerings, which the average American saxophone student would not learn until undergraduate level study.43 Cockcroft’s Foreign and Black and Blue are both on the AMEB Grade 8 Saxophone Syllabus, and Black and Blue is also on the Saxophone for Leisure Syllabus in Grade 8. Because these pieces are in the AMEB Grade 8 syllabi, high school students aged 15 to 17 are likely to learn them. Foreign contains both quarter tones and multiphonics, and Black and Blue utilizes multiphonics as

41 Stuart Greenbaum, Transcription of conversation with the author, Stuart Greenbaum’s Office, Conservatorium Building, University of Melbourne, Carlton, Victoria, 29 June 2012: 3-4.

42 N.B. The grades in the AMEB syllabi do not refer to grade in school. Students who begin learning an instrument in their 4th grade of elementary school will start the AMEB syllabus at Grade 1. Assuming that most saxophonists begin in 4th or 5th grade, students would most likely learn the AMEB Grade 6 syllabus some time during the beginning of high school.

well as enharmonics, circular breathing, and beating the keys to simulate drums (Figures 1 and 2). All of these extended techniques are generally learned at the university level. However, since these pieces are on the AMEB syllabi, saxophone students in Melbourne more frequently learn these extended techniques while they are still in high school.

Figure 1. *Black and Blue* by Barry Cockcroft, Performance Notes

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Cockcroft attributes his use of extended techniques embedded within his compositions to part of his aesthetic philosophy:

I try to give people something they can relate to, and something new. Always. So that when you present them with something new, they understand it already because it’s piggybacking on something …. And I think, as a principle, that it’s effective because new music is often alienating, because people can’t understand [it] … It’s like giving someone a new language to learn. … They don’t know any of the words, they don’t know the grammar, so they switch off, and they don’t come back …. So I’ve always tried to include elements in my music … which is why you’ll hear there’s always some blues or there’s something rhythmic …
something funny that piques people’s curiosity, as opposed to alienating them. And so on the first listening, people will probably understand the music, and on subsequent listenings, they’ll discover more and more of the new …. And that’s, for me, a much more effective way to get people interested in new music than just throwing them in the deep end.\textsuperscript{35}

The result of Cockcroft’s philosophy is that overall the Melbourne saxophone community is more familiar with both listening to and performing extended techniques at a younger age. When they arrive at the university, they are accustomed to such techniques and to performing and listening to contemporary music. Kay Zhang, a fourth-year Honors student of the University of Melbourne who has lived in Melbourne her whole life and went through the AMEB mentioned that Cockcroft’s practice of “introducing an element of extended techniques on the saxophone… makes the learning process of extended techniques easier to come by and understand when [one has already seen these techniques] incorporated here and there in his pieces.” She continued to state that because of Cockcroft’s gradual inclusion of these techniques within familiar contexts, students are less likely to “freak out when it’s their first time trying to learn ‘extended techniques.’”\textsuperscript{46}

When Melbourne saxophonists first hear more avant-garde contemporary music for saxophone, this music is not quite so alienating, because they have already performed the extended techniques in a familiar setting.

\textit{The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)}

Australian states and territories largely fund and regulate public education. In general, education is divided into three stages: 1) primary education (elementary school); 2) secondary education (middle and high school); and 3) tertiary education.


\textsuperscript{46} Kay Zhang, questionnaire by the author, Melbourne, Australia, September 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2012.
(universities). In the state of Victoria — the most populous in Australia encompassing the city of Melbourne — the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) determines and regulates the curriculum, assessment, and reporting for all Victorian students through age 18. The VCAA is an independent statutory body responsible to the Victorian Minister for Education, and it encompasses the VCE.

In Years 11 and 12 of their education, students commence a series of studies in order to receive their Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). Like a high school diploma, this certificate indicates satisfactory completion of a secondary education. However, this document also designates subjects in which students have specialized. Tertiary institutions look at VCE classes and scores similarly to the ways they would look at a high school transcript. Because obtaining a VCE involves a certain degree of specialization, students who study music for their certificate often choose to pursue music degrees at the university.

There are 129 VCE subjects that students may study, including topics in mathematics, languages, humanities, sciences, the arts, and vocational studies. Nonetheless, each school offers different combinations of these studies. VCE subjects are organized into units, each of which covers one semester of study. In order to earn a VCE at a caliber high enough to attend a university, students must satisfactorily complete at

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47 In Australia, the term “university” refers to tertiary education, whereas the term “college” generally refers to a constituent part of a university. High schools and training institutions in Australia may also be called “colleges.”

48 The term “VCE” can also refer in general to the program of study that students go through in order to receive the VCE certificate.

49 Most students in Victoria who study music in high school for their VCE have been participating in the AMEB since they began learning their instrument in primary school. These students can choose to continue to take AMEB examinations through high school and university in order to receive an AMEB teaching certificate. However, they may also choose to conclude their participation in the AMEB by the time they reach 11th grade. AMEB is largely viewed as a program for primary school students.
least three English units, as well as 16 units in any of the other subjects. During Year 11, units can be mixed and matched, but in Year 12, specialization becomes solidified and units within a student’s specialty must be studied sequentially. A student’s final certificate lists the subjects they have completed.

The VCE Music Study Design consists of ten units in the topics of performance, investigation, style, and composition. Students may enroll in all units, or they can choose to select specific combinations of units that cater to their interests and intended career paths. The VCE music program aims to develop students’ knowledge of stylistic, aesthetic, and expressive qualities of music as well as their ability to communicate this understanding through music performance. The advanced levels of music performance place an emphasis on learning about works and performances by Australian musicians, focusing particularly on those pieces that have been created since 1910. The purpose of the VCE Music Study Design is to offer students “opportunities for personal development and to make an ongoing contribution to the culture of their community through participation in life-long music making.”

In the course of achieving these goals, students studying instrumental music for their VCE must perform an adjudicated recital at the end of their final year of high school. In the case of those studying saxophone, the recital must consist of at least four

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works, one of which is unaccompanied, two of which have piano accompaniment, and two of which were composed since 1910. This focus on learning and performing contemporary Australian music both fosters and is fostered by Cockcroft’s compositional, performance, teaching, and publishing efforts. The VCAA provides a list of acceptable works to perform on each instrument for final student recitals. Students may also choose unlisted works, but such works must be approved as alternatives.

The VCE alto saxophone syllabus contains 39 works. Most of these pieces are generally considered part of the standard saxophone repertoire, such as *Improvisation I* for solo saxophone by Ryo Noda, *Suite* by Paul Bonneau, *Divertimento* by Roger Boutry, *Sonata* for alto saxophone and piano, op. 19 by Paul Creston, and *Scaramouche* by Darius Milhaud. However, out of these 39 works, living Australian composers contributed 12, or slightly more than 30%. Only one of these compositions, *Black and Blue*, was written by Cockcroft himself, but all 12 are available through Reed Music. Around 30% of pieces on the tenor and baritone VCE saxophone syllabi are also contemporary Australian works. Most of the contemporary works that are on the VCE saxophone syllabi are also present on the AMEB saxophone syllabi. Neville Shade explains that this occurrence is no coincidence:

I think the AMEB and the VCE are linked, historically. They have two totally different … syllabi. But I think there’s a connection … because again there’s been a push in the VCE to have Australian works. Not surprisingly, it’s from exactly the same people. … [T]here’s no [explicit connection], not in writing, but obviously one has influenced the other … and recently the AMEB influenced VCE, but I think also the VCE has now influenced AMEB to an extent. … [The similarities between the AMEB and VCE have occurred] because we’re talking

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51 Thirteen out of the 43 pieces on the tenor saxophone list are contemporary Australian works, and 10 out of the 34 pieces of music on the baritone saxophone list are by living Australian composers.
about, in many cases, the same teachers. … Similar teachers [are] involved, and in some cases the same examiners [are involved as well].

Since many of the same teachers are involved in choosing works for both the AMEB and the VCE saxophone syllabi, the two organizations are closely linked and have ended up influencing one another. Favorite works on one syllabus are thus likely to appear on the other. As in the AMEB repertoire lists, the VCE saxophone lists contain many examples of contemporary Australian works that utilize extended saxophone techniques that 11th and 12th grade saxophone students would not ordinarily encounter. Cockcroft’s *Black and Blue*, *Foreign*, and selections from *Zodiac* are all on the VCE saxophone lists. In particular, *Foreign* is listed on the VCE tenor list, but not the alto or baritone lists. Playing *Foreign* on tenor saxophone is particularly difficult because of the tendencies of the instrument. The extended techniques in *Foreign* already pose a significant challenge on alto saxophone, which is often considered the least temperamental of all the saxophone family. On tenor saxophone, the enharmonics, quarter tones, multiphonics, and especially the altissimo up to a high F# are particularly demanding and unusual to come across prior to tertiary education. One can assume that the VCE board included this piece on the tenor saxophone syllabus in order to provide Victorian high school tenor players a rare and challenging stepping-stone to prepare them for more difficult music at the university level.

The VCE also emphasizes the study of performances of contemporary Australian works. Cockcroft is the most widely-recorded performer of contemporary Australian music. His recordings are available on CDs, which can be ordered for around $20 to $30 through Reed Music, but many are also available in part or in their entirety for free.

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52 Shade, Conversation with the author, 6 August 2012.
through the Reed Music website. High school students are likely to listen to Cockcroft’s recordings because they are so easily accessible and affordable. “One for Mum” and “The Autumn Cannonball” by Lachlan Davidson, “Autumn Song” by Katy Abbott, and “The Lake and the Hinterland” by Stuart Greenbaum are examples of pieces from the VCE saxophone lists which are all on Cockcroft’s album Hinterland. Stuart Greenbaum’s Octennial Song, which is on the VCE alto saxophone syllabus, was also recorded by Cockcroft on Greenbaum’s album Mercurial. An example of a piece from the VCE syllabus that is recorded by Cockcroft and partially available on the Reed Music website is Flight of Fancy by Matthew Orlovich.

In conversations with Cockcroft during my fieldwork, he expressed the desire for students to have access to good performances of the pieces on the Reed Music website. Many have an easier time selecting music if they have an idea of how it sounds. Since Cockcroft is the one performing virtually all of the samples of saxophone works on Reed Music, his version of a piece is frequently the first—and often the only—version of the piece a student hears. There is a strong pedagogical controversy among saxophone instructors over the practice of listening to a piece before learning to perform it. Some teachers highly recommend listening to and emulating certain performances. Others entirely disagree. Professor Emeritus of Saxophone at Northwestern University Dr. Frederick L. Hemke frequently requested his students not to listen to pieces they were studying in order to prevent the musical ideas of other artists from influencing their own natural creative capabilities. If students insisted on listening to recordings, Dr. Hemke

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53 This piece contains pitch bends and growls, both of which are additional examples of extended techniques Victorian high school students are exposed to as a result of the VCE saxophone syllabi.

advised listening to as many recordings as possible so that the student would not merely copy a single version of the piece. Although his viewpoint is certainly not universally shared, it demonstrates the power listening to a single version of a piece can have on a learning musician. Unlike older pieces on the VCE list, most of these contemporary Australian works have not been around long enough for multiple professional saxophonists to produce recordings of them.

Since Cockcroft’s recordings of many of these pieces are available online for free, there is the potential that this easy access will make it too comfortable and inhibit students’ motivation to access multiple interpretations of contemporary Australian music. High school students who have private music instructors might receive advice from their teachers on other recordings. However, the average high school student, even one who does receive such advice, is unlikely to spend money purchasing recordings when a free version, particularly one of high quality, is provided.

Although Cockcroft’s seeming online monopoly has the potential to create tensions with other saxophone teachers, this subject did not come up in conversations and interviews during my two-month stay in Melbourne. Individual teachers largely seemed content with the quality of Cockcroft’s playing while at the same time they felt free to expose their students to alternate recordings. Among the musicians I spoke to, there seemed to be a strong sense of community, collegiality, and support. Pri Victor, a young saxophone teacher in Melbourne whom I met through her former teacher Lachlan Davidson remarked: “I think it’s great that they have recordings that Barry’s done himself … because you can hear the song, which helps with sax music when you have no idea what it sounds like. I think it’s very tailored to teaching, just because of the difficulty
level, you can hear [these contemporary works].” She was satisfied with Cockcroft’s recordings and appreciated the help they provided to teachers and students.

Overall, the VCE and Cockcroft’s involvement in it have had a profound impact on the modern saxophone culture of Melbourne, Australia. The repertoire provided by the VCE has a similar effect as that of the AMEB saxophone syllabi. Both lists of music include comparably large numbers of contemporary Australian saxophone works that include extended techniques. These syllabi encourage Melbourne saxophone students to learn contemporary Australian music and extended techniques at an earlier age than many of their foreign counterparts. Melbourne saxophone students tend to be familiar with contemporary Australian composers, either through face to face or e-mail contact, or simply by playing their works.

Cockcroft’s involvement and influence extend beyond his compositions on the VCE syllabi. Most Victorian saxophone students learn about Cockcroft through his music and recordings on the Reed Music website. Some students learn about Cockcroft through the contemporary Australian pieces on the VCE syllabi that he commissioned. Other students learn about him through the pieces that are dedicated to him, such as Stuart Greenbaum’s *The Lake and the Hinterland*. Practically speaking, saxophone students and teachers are easily, affordably, and efficiently able to purchase much of this music, both scores and recordings, through Cockcroft’s publishing company Reed Music and its corresponding website. Perhaps most importantly, many Victorian students learn to enjoy contemporary music because of Cockcroft’s compositions. As Shade points out: “Barry’s works, generally, present something very different … and often the kids absolutely love it

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55 Pri Victor, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 19 July 2012.
once they get into it.” These students generally arrive at The University of Melbourne excited to meet Cockcroft and work with him.

The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music

The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, founded in 1895, is the oldest and one of the largest music schools in Australia. The Conservatorium has a complicated history that bequeaths a unique structure of saxophone education. The University of Melbourne awarded the first music degree in Australia in 1879, sixteen years before the official establishment of the conservatory. Sir George Grove, the founding editor of *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, recommended George William Louis Marshall-Hall as the first Ormond Professor of Music at the University of Melbourne in 1891. Marshall-Hall established the University of Melbourne Conservatorium in 1895 so that students could have practical music lessons in addition to attending music lectures. In 1900, when Marshall-Hall was not reappointed by the University of Melbourne due to his radical viewpoints, he renamed the institution the “Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne.” This institution was later known as the “Albert Street Conservatorium,” and still later as the “Melba Conservatorium.” The Melba Conservatorium continued to teach students until the end of 2008. Meanwhile, the University of Melbourne sought a leader with more conservative views.  

In 1901 Franklin Sievright Peterson became the second Ormond Professor. Peterson recommended that music courses be taught in a new building, the

56 Shade, Conversation with the author, 6 August 2012.

Conservatorium Building on Royal Parade in Parkville, Victoria. He also facilitated the creation of the grand concert hall housed within this building, later named Melba Hall after Dame Nellie Melba, who presented a concert in order to raise funds for the proposed facility. The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music utilizes these buildings to this day. Peterson further contributed to the conservatorium by introducing the option of a bachelor’s degree in music performance. He ensured the financial future of the conservatorium by creating an Australian music examination system, which later became known as the AMEB.\textsuperscript{58}

The Victorian College of the Arts (VCA), located on St. Kilda Road in Southbank, Victoria, has become integrated within the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. The VCA School of Music, founded by the state government as a training institution for the arts, began in 1974. In 1988, the Federal Minister for Employment, Education, and Training proposed a unified, national system of higher education. According to this new system, institutions were required to be a certain size, and the VCA was not large enough to participate in the program on its own. In order to be able to participate in the national system, the VCA became affiliated with the University of Melbourne on November 16, 1988.

In 1991, the VCA amended its relationship with the University of Melbourne so that their enrolled students would become students of the University. This amendment also gave the university responsibility over the VCA’s academic programs. This trend of amalgamation continued after 2003, when the federal government’s Higher Education Support Act resulted in the removal of 35% of the VCA’s government funding. In November 2005, the VCA became a Faculty of the University of Melbourne, and the

\textsuperscript{58} See section on the Australian Music Examinations Board for more details.
University in turn agreed to help the VCA bridge its funding gap. Then in January of 2007, the VCA was officially integrated within the University of Melbourne. Naturally this resulted in confusion as a result of the two distinct, existing curricula: one at the VCA and one at the Melbourne Conservatorium. Between 2007 and 2010 the two music programs underwent a lengthy review process. In July of 2010 the program was reformatted back into two distinct faculties. “The restructure has enabled the VCA to maintain its defining characteristics of intensive studio-based and practice-led teaching in the disciplines of art, contemporary music, dance, film and television, music theatre, production and theatre. Classical music is offered through the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.”

The University of Melbourne is currently ranked as the top university in Australia by the Australian Education Network, and it is placed among the top 30 universities in the world by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in instrumental performance. More generally, the conservatorium currently offers degrees in the areas of composition, early music, ethnomusicology, music therapy, musicology, and performance.

All of this complicated restructuring has made it difficult, and perhaps undesirable, for faculty to maintain permanent positions. One could argue that all of this focus on bureaucratic restructuring of the music schools was another factor that hindered musical development within the realm of music education, particularly of the saxophone, which has a shorter history than most other band and orchestral instruments. The history

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of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music helps to explain why there are so few, if any, “Fred Hemkes,” “Sigurd Rashers” and “Jean-Marie Londeixes” in Australia. A full time, permanent, or tenure track position for saxophone professor at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music never developed. In fact, according to saxophone professor Ian Godfrey, the only full time, permanent saxophone professor in Australia is Michael Duke at the University of Sydney. At the University of Melbourne, saxophone professors renew their contract yearly or by semester. The saxophone teachers on the faculty at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music with whom I spoke were Ian Godfrey and Barry Cockcroft.

Godfrey described the broad curriculum taught to concert saxophone students at the University of Melbourne and the reasons for it in the following way:

In Australia, there’s no jobs for classical saxophone players. Virtually everybody is a bit commercial, in that we play theater or can play big band, or just do whatever’s needed. And nobody thinks that’s a strange thing to do. And our very best classical players are our very best jazz players. … That is the typical thing here. … That’s just an expectation that you play both kinds of music, and contemporary music. You just do the lot. … But that’s quite different to Europe or America, where the courses are quite often separated.

Saxophone students at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music take lessons in concert saxophone music, which largely consists of the standard repertoire. They also participate in a master class, where they work on technique and receive comments on their playing. However, they also are required and encouraged to learn contemporary music. These

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60 Ian Godfrey, Conversation with the author, Conservatorium Building, University of Melbourne, Carlton, Victoria, 2 July 2012.

61 Ibid.
students participate in jazz big bands, saxophone quartets, musical theatre, and other ensembles. Many of them also learn to double on other woodwind instruments.\textsuperscript{62}

This extensive curriculum is accompanied by a broad mix of saxophone teachers at the Conservatorium. Godfrey expressed the difference in teaching styles between himself and Cockcroft, and he explained how private saxophone instruction works at the Conservatorium:

Barry’s a character. He’s got some quite different ideas about teaching to me. They’re not contradictory to me, and so I’m very comfortable with my students learning from him. Students also move here. Rarely would a student stay with the one teacher [for] their whole undergraduate [degree]. Virtually all students would learn from at least two teachers. And this, I think, is part of that flexibility thing. They’re flexible learners, they’re flexible players. … They’re [a] flexible kind of people. … So the students move, and often we shove them, too. I’ll say: “I’ve taught you enough. You go over there and learn.” And we see that as important.\textsuperscript{63}

I asked Godfrey whether students ever asked to have a lesson or two with another teacher to work on a specific piece, and he replied that this practice was fairly common.

I take the saxophone class, and most of the students are learning from other teachers. But then I’ll comment on all their work … and we’ll do group work together on articulation or style. And nobody finds that strange—having a lesson here, and saxophone class here, and then maybe going and having some lessons with that person as well.\textsuperscript{64}

Unlike in the US, where ferocious competition between teachers and studios often exists, this flexibility both in the curriculum as well as in the students’ ability to move between teachers seems to create a strong sense of community among the Melbourne saxophonists who have gone through tertiary education. As Godfrey says, “I think because it all comes from the one underlying school [of playing, started by Peter Clinch],

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.
is why it makes reasonable sense to the students. So whenever anybody’s around, like Joe Lallo, who’s coming over … he’s giving workshops … you know, half my students are going to those.”

I attended the workshops held on July 9 and 10 by Joseph Lallo that Godfrey mentioned in our conversation. As predicted, several of the students in attendance were studying with Godfrey. All of them knew Lallo through previous studies, or from hearing about him through the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Also, all of the students at the workshop were learning contemporary works, such as Stuart Greenbaum’s Cloud Eight for alto saxophone and guitar and Cockcroft’s Black and Blue. Although the two-day workshop was nonstop with informative activities and masterclasses all day long, the atmosphere was extremely casual.

Students were encouraged to ask questions at any time and participate in masterclasses by providing comments about the performances and learning techniques together with the performer. In the workshop warm ups, these students—even the one high school student in attendance—seemed comfortable trying new exercises and techniques, and even playing them alone in front of the entire class. Furthermore, when Lallo and Sara Zaso, the other leader of the masterclass, presented performances of some interesting contemporary works at the end, including Stockhausen’s In Freundschaft, the students all responded positively and asked insightful questions about the pieces. Every student who went to the workshop attended the concert of contemporary music that was held the following Saturday, featuring Lallo and Zaso. The environment Lallo created and values he taught at the workshop paralleled those of the saxophone program at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. The atmosphere was friendly and casual; students

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65 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
were familiar with contemporary works and extended techniques; and even the youngest of the saxophonists were fearless and had flexible attitudes towards learning the instrument.

The ways that these saxophone students conceive of the music they play in this case seemed to be directly linked with the ideals and “relationships that are evident in the society of people in the Music Building” at the conservatorium. Godfrey’s assertions that saxophone students at the conservatorium are accustomed to switching between teachers and styles of music held true at this particular workshop. The students seemed comfortable switching back and forth between masterclasses with Lallo and Zaso. They were not perturbed by the seemingly contradictory advice given by the two teachers. For example, when a discussion arose about where to place the tongue on the reed during articulation exercises, Zaso and Lallo gave different instructions. Zaso, who is Spanish and studied saxophone in Spain and France, advised using a spot on the tongue slightly back from the tip in articulating. By contrast, Lallo who is Australian and studied saxophone in Melbourne and France, explained that Melbourne saxophonists are taught to use the very tip of the tongue. Rather than breaking out in an argument over which method was superior, the students listened to the teachers explain both methods, nodded their heads, and moved on with the lesson. This calm response reflected the cooperative interactions that are fostered by the saxophone teachers at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

Cockcroft did not attend this workshop, yet his teaching and compositional philosophy permeated the event through the pieces performed. At the conclusion of the workshop, I asked the students to fill out a questionnaire I had devised on the

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66 Nettl, 121.
performances of Cockcroft’s music they had heard. The student responses revealed that they enjoyed and appreciated the extended techniques present in Cockcroft’s compositions. Of Cockcroft’s *Black and Blue*, one student remarked, “People would like this music for its entertainment value and the different sounds associated with it. It pushes the saxophone to its full potential, beyond the expectations of the audience.” Another commented: “I liked the energy of *Black and Blue*.“ Still another student wrote that “the incorporation of extended techniques, as well as alternate fingerings of notes” made this piece unique. These students not only responded with enthusiasm to *Black and Blue*, but they also recognized the value that this piece had for performers and audience members alike. In other words, these student views maintained the tenets of appreciating contemporary music and extended techniques taught to them through the saxophone instructors, including Cockcroft, at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. The beliefs and values of these teachers have extended beyond the conservatory walls to the broader Melbourne saxophone community.
Chapter 2
The Role of Reed Music

Origins and Purpose

Reed Music was established in 1995 as a company that published new music.

Barry Cockcroft recounts the story of how and why the company was founded:

It simply started because [I wanted] one of the first pieces I wrote, *Black and Blue* … to be included on a syllabus for classical students. And they wouldn’t include it unless it was published, because they … didn’t want music that had questionable availability …. Music shops generally avoid music that’s not published …. Commercial entities have the need for reliable sources so they can always publish [a piece] over. I started with that in mind: to publish my own music. And Lachlan [Davidson] happened to also be in the same situation, so we each had two pieces. … Four pieces … and that’s what started it. And then gradually more people jumped on board … just, organically I guess—not aggressively.67

Ian Godfrey recounted the beginning of Reed Music slightly differently.

Godfrey’s recollection adds two more people into the equation: Cockcroft’s teacher, Peter Clinch, and Cockcroft’s wife, Sam Seabrook. According to Godfrey, Clinch was instrumental in Cockcroft’s decision to start a publishing company for saxophone music, and Seabrook played a significant role in helping Cockcroft to organize the company and set it in motion. Godfrey explains the origins of Reed Music:

People filled in … niches and gaps where we needed stuff to be written. And so this sort of healthy relationship [emerged] with the composers who would basically write for nothing. The next part … was Barry’s decision to set up a publishing business. Peter [Clinch] had wanted somebody to do it and thought that we should do it through [our saxophone] quartet. … But Barry kind of took it on … and he got a noticeable amount of music out there.

But a key thing was him meeting Sam Seabrook, his wife, who … is a dynamo of a person. And she got him organized, and got the publishing business *seriously*

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67 Barry Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
organized. That allowed for a vast amount of stuff to gradually get into publication ... and through the AMEB and ... VCE there’s a constant moving of the pieces into the syllabuses. And so it’s very noticeable in Australia that the broadest range and the most Australian music exists in saxophone.68

Lachlan Davidson, whom I interviewed prior to Godfrey, also hinted at Seabrook’s involvement when he said: “I think ... [Cockcroft has] done so much for ... Australian music ... he and his partner Sam, you know with Reed Music. And I think her influence is equal to his, in what they’re doing with the publishing side.”69 Seabrook clearly plays a significant role in the background of Reed Music.70

The company, which is web-based, grew alongside the AMEB and VCE saxophone syllabi. As Cockcroft found and composed new works, he would publish them with Reed Music and then suggest them to the committees in charge of editing the syllabi. Because the VCE syllabi are edited every two or three years, many of these new works could be quickly integrated.71 One can easily see the impact of this collaboration by looking on the Reed Music website. One of the eight link buttons along the top of the webpage is labeled “Exam Music.” This link leads to a page with information on the AMEB and VCE, as well as four other music examining bodies from around the world. On the left-hand side of the page, there is a column of pull-down menus to assist customers in finding music for their specific instrument. Clicking on “VCE” particularly highlights the emphasis that Reed Music places on saxophone music. Instead of

68 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.

69 Lachlan Davidson, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 28 June 2012.

70 Unfortunately, I was unable to speak with Seabrook about her involvement with Reed Music during this trip. The social dynamics between Cockcroft and Seabrook and how their partnership has impacted Cockcroft’s musical efforts are certainly relevant to the ways the saxophone community has developed in Melbourne. Seabrook has written some of Australia’s most popular education books including two band methods series. Although she is listed among the composers on the Reed Music website, her role in the publication side of Reed Music is not mentioned.

71 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
classifying the music under one heading, “saxophone,” there are three categories: 1) saxophone, alto; 2) saxophone, baritone; and 3) saxophone, tenor.” On the other hand, the other instruments only have one label. For example, there are no separate labels for B♭, E♭, and bass clarinets; the heading is simply listed as “clarinet.”

Today Reed Music is international, with over 13,000 works by more than 120 composers from Australia, Chile, England, Germany, Greece, Iran, Ireland, New Zealand, the United States, and Wales. The company prides itself on its role in developing the repertoire of the saxophone. As stated on the Reed Music website:

Synonymous with saxophone, Reed Music has played an important role in the development of a significant repertoire for the instrument. Reed Music’s saxophone publications are used for performances by students, undergraduate and graduate university candidates, as well as active professionals. Reed Music scores have a high profile throughout the world with regular performances at international events such as the World Saxophone Congress, the International Saxophone Symposium and NASA [North American Saxophone Alliance] conferences and the British Saxophone Congress.72

The way the company promotes itself highlights the image that Reed Music has created as a saxophone-oriented publisher. Saxophonists’ conception of Reed Music as “theirs” has undoubtedly contributed to its success. However, these statements on the website are far from exaggerations. Because many works published through Reed Music are pieces of quality that saxophonists enjoy performing and audiences enjoy hearing, regular performances at international saxophone events have embedded these works into the saxophone canon. Reed Music’s repertoire development thus plays a critical role in

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uniting and defining the Melbourne saxophone community as well as the international saxophone community.\textsuperscript{73}

In addition to supporting new saxophone repertoire, Cockcroft created Reed Music to promote contemporary composers. The company claims to offer the highest royalty rate in the industry. Reed Music encourages students to purchase music by offering free recorded excerpts of many of the pieces. Also, Reed Music markets recordings. Anytime someone looks up a piece of music on the website, all of the CDs sold by Reed Music that contain a recording of the piece will appear next to the score, so one can purchase both the CD and the score from the same webpage. Cockcroft personally spreads the word about many of these compositions by performing them live at concerts and conferences all over the world. Furthermore, one of the main tabs on the Reed Music website is labeled “Composers.” This link leads to a page that showcases each composer whose works appear on the website. Most of the composers are featured with a large, attractive-looking headshot. And each composer gets his or her own page with a short biographical segment, highlighting his or her achievements. Overall, Cockcroft tries to make Reed Music as attractive as possible as a venue for composers to publish their work.\textsuperscript{74}

As the “largest publisher of music by Australian composers,”\textsuperscript{75} Reed Music is well-known among Australian musicians. The company is also known worldwide as a

\textsuperscript{73} This connection will be further explained in the third section of this chapter labeled, “Influence on the Melbourne Saxophone Community.”

\textsuperscript{74} More information on how Cockcroft makes publication through Reed Music easy for composers can be found in the second section of this chapter, labeled “Recruitment, Publication, and Promotion of Musicians.”

\textsuperscript{75} Reed Music, “About Reed Music,” \url{http://www.reedmusic.com} (accessed March 11, 2013).
distributor of Australian music. Reed Music is the first place where most people look for contemporary Australian pieces. Because the site contains so many works, particularly for saxophone, it is a convenient resource. In many cases, the only way to get this music aside from contacting the composer directly is through this website. In order to purchase music composed by Cockcroft, one must use the Reed Music site. The company is by no means exclusively Australian, but it is based in Australia, run by Australians, and represents and supports many Australian composers. These links may foster connections between Australian musicians and contribute to a sense of national solidarity among the music community.

Another way the company impacts the Melbourne saxophone community, as well as the Australian musical community more generally, is through its role in education. In addition to providing numerous pieces for students to select for their AMEB and VCE exams, the company claims that, in 2005: “Reed Music began to produce educational books and has published titles including the My Favourite Tutor Book series, My Favourite Duets, My Favourite Band, Band Class 1, 2 & 3, Ultimate Saxophone, [and] A Score of Ideas and Tunes.” According to the website: “These publications provide teachers with excellent material for use in the classroom, lessons, and school concerts.”

Cockcroft explains why he decided to produce these method books:

> Although I enjoy teaching [private lessons] … I thought a much more efficient and effective way was to create resources that other teachers could use. And then they can take my philosophy, and if they’re happy with it, they can share it with their students. And doing it that way means that you’re able to teach thousands of students, instead of just a handful. It’s a different kind of teaching, but I thought that I could get … my educational beliefs into the hands of those students. And

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76 Ibid.
that ties [into the] bigger picture of … hoping for them to adopt contemporary music and play Australian music.\textsuperscript{77}

Writing these books was a conscious effort to affect change within the saxophone community. Cockcroft has spread his belief in the importance of both contemporary music and Australian music through these efforts. He asserts: “I really think now that my students would think it would be strange not to play Australian music.”\textsuperscript{78}

Many teachers find these resources helpful. Since numerous Melbourne saxophone instructors are already familiar navigating and purchasing from Reed Music, they are likely to utilize these teaching methods, many of which were written by Cockcroft or Seabrook. When teachers use these books with their young students, Cockcroft influences not only the music that beginning saxophonists are learning, but also the ways in which they learn the instrument and how they conceptualize saxophone playing. Melbourne saxophone teacher Pri Victor uses these series in her teaching. Victor comments on her experience discovering and implementing Cockcroft’s saxophone method books:

I’ve used his tutor books … in all my teaching with beginner students …. I knew of Reed Music … and I was there one day and I was just looking through … and I was like, “Hey, this is quite cool!” … It’s a very strategic way for the kids to learn notes, and rhythms as well, and time signatures, and key signatures, it’s all very drawn out. It gives you time. [There is] lots of music from which you can pick and choose, and it has some diagrams of finger positions and all that. … I used it for my first private student, and then I started getting more private students, and so I was giving them the same book. It’s cheap. They deliver it with no extra charge within … two days. … For beginners, it’s worked really well.\textsuperscript{79}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{77} Barry Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
  \item \textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{79} Pri Victor, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 19 July 2012.
\end{itemize}
Saxophonist Joseph Lallo has also used these method books and remarked on an additional advantage:

I used Barry’s … *My Favourite Tutor* books when I started teaching, and I like them. I think they’re good. I like his idea about the teacher getting … a 25% cut of the buying price in order to try and curb the amount of photocopying that’s done in the schools. … Even in the [Melbourne Saxophone] Workshop I saw all the VCE students very rarely bought music. They thought it was too expensive. … Even at the very good schools, where the students have a lot of money and they’ll buy good saxophones, once you tell them to buy a piece of music, they’re almost like: “What?! Another thirty dollars?”

By providing teachers with an incentive to purchase or have their students purchase individual copies of their own music, Cockcroft encourages musicians to comply with current copyright laws. This practice inspires Melbourne saxophonists to value both the music they are working on and the composers who wrote it. Cockcroft’s example is particularly significant for young musicians in this age of rampant copyright infringement in the music industry.

Other Australian teachers such as Neville Shade choose not to use Cockcroft’s educational books. However, those whose students participate in AMEB or VCE are almost certain to have their students utilize Reed Music. They do this because it is easiest to obtain most of the contemporary pieces on the AMEB and VCE syllabi through the website. Shade, for example, does encourage his students to choose pieces from Reed Music for their AMEB exams.

Cockcroft consciously puts in effort to make the Reed Music website as visually attractive and user-friendly as possible. Perhaps one of the most subtle ways that Cockcroft encourages people to utilize Reed Music is through the appearance of the website itself. Each of the webpages is clean-looking and easy to navigate. On this

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80 Joseph Lallo, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 4 August 2012.
website, one will not find superfluous images, irrelevant text, or a single advertisement to distract the viewer. The color scheme is a simple yet eye-catching combination of two thick stripes across the top of each page: the upper one in blue, and the lower in orange. One will notice a similar color scheme on the covers of most pieces that can be ordered from the site. The font is large, rounded, and easy to read. The simple elegance of the site complements how easy it is to use (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Reed Music Website Banner


From publishing four pieces in 1995 to 13,000 pieces 18 years later, Reed Music has emerged as an immense resource for saxophonists all over the world. It is largely through this company that Cockcroft effectively globalized Australian saxophone music. Both the 2011 34th Annual International Saxophone Symposium in Washington, D.C. and the 2012 World Saxophone Congress in St. Andrews, Scotland featured numerous performances of works exclusively made available through Reed Music. Countless recitals and performances by saxophonists from many different countries have been posted to YouTube. Without Reed Music, it is highly unlikely that musicians in Hong Kong or Utrecht would ever have come across this music.
Cockcroft has multiple methods of identifying new composers whose works he can publish through Reed Music. In some cases, he simply knows of people who want to make their music known. Lachlan Davidson’s compositions were published by Reed Music because, when Cockcroft wanted to start the company, he was already aware that Davidson had created two pieces. After publishing Davidson’s music, Cockcroft describes the process of locating additional composers to add to his list: “Gradually more people jumped on board … just, organically.”81 Instead of targeting people aggressively, he found the composers who “felt [the] time was right for their music to be published … and when we found success through that [method,] then more people came on board.82

This organic process seems to continue today. In my conversations with Davidson, he mentioned: “I [composed for] a saxophone group at PLC [Presbyterian Ladies College] for a long time, and there’s a whole series of that music that I’d like to publish. … I just need to get around to putting it forward to Sam and Barry.”83 Composers who know Cockcroft can simply submit their works to him.

In other cases, Cockcroft learns of composers by word of mouth and then gets in touch with them through third parties, or through musical events or projects. For example, he recounts how he first came to know and work with Matthew Orlovich:

I didn’t know Matthew, but Stuart Greenbaum, myself, and Damian Barbeler put this project together to write twenty piano pieces. And Stuart chose the people. He chose twenty hip, young Australian composers. Then Adam [Pinto] played the piece … I didn’t meet Matthew for ages …. I think [Matthew Orlovich] asked

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81 Barry Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
82 Ibid.
83 Lachlan Davidson, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 28 June 2012.
Katy Abbott [to whom] he should give his saxophone music … and Katy, who[m] I had been working with, suggested me. His first piece, *Air Traffic Control*, came to me and started our relationship.84

According to Cockcroft, Orlovich did not come to the premiere of *Air Traffic Control*, and it was not until much later that the two actually met in person. Cockcroft firmly believes in finding high quality music that performers will want to learn and that audiences will want to hear. Cockcroft expresses his philosophy this way:

You don’t ask your *friends* for good music. You ask *good composers* for good music. And perhaps through the process you end up becoming friends, and sometimes your friends *are* good composers, but it’s good not to mix it up.85

Through this philosophy, Cockcroft maintains a high level of professionalism that prevents potential conflicts of interest.

Another way that he learns about potentially good compositions is through the Reed Music website. A link that is labeled “Reed Music welcomes submissions from new composers” leads the viewer to a page entitled, “Getting Music Published with Reed Music.” As one might expect, this page provides detailed information on how to publish through Reed Music and what that process entails. The option of electronic contracts further facilitates the publication process.

Reed Music does not publish works until they go through a lengthy, professional editing process. As Cockcroft says, “for someone to play it, it has to … be presentable.”86

He elaborates on why he initiated this through editing process:

From my own perspective as a composer, the first thing was that the music … had to be presented in a way that people are familiar with, in that it’s comfortable. … So, you had to [make the piece] look like published music that people [could

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84 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
85 Ibid.
86 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
read easily and play. You [had] to consider page turns and layout and readability … even the cover—all those things. It had to be comparable to every other existing product on the market. And if it stood out, great, but generally it just needed to look like the other ones. … So that’s one of the first things: to make sure that the music [would] be looked at fairly by the eyes. … So, that’s an early stage thing, but something that I really think is important.\textsuperscript{87}

Reed Music editors go through every note and phrase to make sure that the music is both easy to read and easy to rehearse. They check for consistency of phrasing, practical page turns, and the simplification of accidentals for efficient sight reading. They also consider where cues may be needed and where to place rehearsal letters and bar numbers to help speed the rehearsal process. The Reed Music website states: “Regardless of the level of difficulty, music that is hard to read is played less than well-edited music.”\textsuperscript{88}

One can see how this philosophy plays out by looking at any Reed Music score. The fonts and sizes of the staff and notes are noticeably larger than those used by most other music publishers. Everything is printed in the music; nothing is handwritten. Extended technique markings are frequently explained in a footnote, and in many cases accidental markings that carry through a measure are placed in parentheses next to subsequent occurrences of the note as a reminder to the reader. Regardless of how difficult the piece actually is, the overall layout and appearance make it look accessible and easy. According to the website: “Reed Music scores have a consistent look across our catalogue and players have come to expect a high standard when reading from our publications.”\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{88} Reed Music, “Getting Music Published with Reed Music,” \url{http://www.reedmusic.com} (accessed March 13, 2013).

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
The Melbourne saxophone community reaps the benefits of this local company. However, because virtually all Melbourne saxophonists are comfortable using Reed Music publications, there is the potential for these young musicians to develop an aversion to other compositions that are less visually appealing. These students may become easily frustrated by a piece like the Edison Denisov saxophone Sonata (1970), which was rewritten to look more “contemporary.” This work is extremely complicated to read because the published version contains a metric change in almost every measure, using virtually every time signature imaginable. There are no fingering charts to show performers how to play the quarter tones, and the page turns are not user-friendly. The high expectations that Cockcroft has created for Melbourne saxophonists may impact their reception of outside publications. Certainly, this intensive editing process has contributed to the company’s success.

Once a composer becomes part of Reed Music, the company promotes his or her work in a variety of ways. As a web-based company, the compositions published by Reed Music are available worldwide. The company will send music anywhere in the world, and offers free shipping with the purchase of two or more items. Reed Music composers get their own webpage with a bio and headshot. Those composers who have personal websites may include a link at the bottom of the profile page. Such a link encourages potential customers to learn more about the composer, and may also provide students with an easy way to contact those who wrote the music.

Reed Music also supports composers through its Members Affiliate Program, which can be used in conjunction with social media sites or personal music websites. The Members Affiliate Program is a way for composers both to promote their music and earn
an extra 25% commission on all referred sales. Becoming a member is a free and simple process. Each member is provided with a unique link to the Reed Music website containing their own affiliate identification code. Members can then copy and paste their link to their own website or to a social media site such as Facebook. Any time someone makes a purchase through a member’s coded link, 25% of the purchase price drops automatically into the member’s account. Every month, balances over $50 are paid directly to the member’s PayPal account, while balances under $50 continue to accrue. This method is particularly effective through the Facebook network. Any time someone “Likes” a member’s coded link, all of their Facebook friends will be able to see it. In other words, the Members Affiliate Program provides composers with the opportunity to “go viral,” while also making an extra commission.

Reed Music promotes new music by staying technologically connected. One can download most pieces digitally through eScores. After paying for the music, the shopper receives an e-mail with a link to a printable PDF. The company is currently moving toward having all of its music available via eScore. This PDF option is fast, easy, efficient, and convenient. This capability is particularly significant for people living in countries such as the US, where packages can take a long time to arrive and even get lost in the mail. Students can now pick a new piece and begin to study it almost instantaneously. Cockcroft explains why Reed Music is switching to digital downloads:

People from countries such as America want their music now …. People don’t want to wait for anything …. And also with tablets and things, people are travelling with their music on digital devices, not a bunch of scores …. Some people are traditional and they want a hard copy, but as we see, digital is gradually marking over each field …. [R]eading books is quick to go, fifty percent in the last year. Amazon is selling more digital books than print books.

… [U]ltimately the consumer will want music in whatever format is convenient for them at the time, whether that’s having them print it out, and now having it on
several devices: print, phone, tablet, [and] computer. All of that is sort of expected as well. And we didn’t want something that was too restrictive. We wanted people to be able to use it in a way that was appropriate for them … [and] that they would enjoy. So, even if they do get a new device [like an iPad], they can [still access their PDF music] on their new device. Some people are always changing their devices …. [T]raditional music’s been, you buy it once, and if you lose it, or you [damage] it, well, you buy it again. But that, it’s gone. … Everything is digitizing. 

In the past, many other companies have used a system of digital downloads. These older systems, however, tend to mimic the old system of purchasing printed scores in a digital manner: a single payment allows the customer access to a single copy of the score. Cockcroft wanted the convenience of eScores to extend further:

We adopted a model … that was sympathetic with our goals [of] returning as much money as possible to the composer [and of ensuring that] one consistently didn’t have to pay [a] commission …. For example, [if you use] Sibelius music[’s] system … where you buy a digital download, you don’t own the file. You can print it once, but once you’ve printed it, that’s it. You have to pay for it again if you want to print it again. The problem with that is they take a commission from everyone who is doing this …. It’s a really old model, and regurgitating the old model in a digital format is old school. And I didn’t want anything to do with it. So we moved to a system that was absolute[ly] of good moral, one that was less restrictive …. It makes use [as] simple as possible. 

This new version of digital downloads appeals to the younger generation. Once purchased, a saxophonist can save a PDF of the music to a laptop, phone, or even a flash drive and print it out whenever necessary. Melbourne musicians have quickly become accustomed to this new capability, which encourages them to buy contemporary music.

Making music so accessible could make composers worry about musicians who share and copy their music instead of purchasing it. Cockcroft expressed nonchalance about trying to catch these people. He has encouraged musicians to send him videos of their performances, and they often submit videos they have posted to YouTube. 

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90 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.

91 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
Technically, they should have obtained his permission first or purchased the rights to perform his works in public. However, Cockcroft believes that the publicity is its own reward. By embracing these videos and posting them to his own personal website, he advertises his music and encourages future performances of his works. Cockcroft explains:

There are things we can do on that journey to help get [new music] into people’s hands. But … essentially it’s word of mouth … in a modern way. Maybe it’s “word of YouTube” or “word of Like buttons,” but it’s word of mouth in the traditional sense.\textsuperscript{92}

Instead of trying to catch copyright infringers, Cockcroft makes people want to buy, perform, and listen to the Reed Music repertoire. He encourages composers to work in conjunction with the best available performers to get their recordings online. On the website, he gives the following advice: “Have a good live recording of your music—many people now use YouTube as their primary source of exploring music.”\textsuperscript{93}

Cockcroft recognizes that the internet makes it easy for people to both find and steal music. Because young musicians are rarely taught music copyright laws, they frequently see no reason to purchase the pieces they are studying. Lallo mentions how Melbourne VCE saxophone students tend to borrow music from their schools rather than purchase their own copies.\textsuperscript{94} The fact that Melbourne high schools allow this practice teaches the students that music is not worth purchasing, and that people will just give them music to play. In order to combat this perspective, the following advice to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{92} Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
\item \textsuperscript{93} Reed Music, “Getting Music Published with Reed Music,” http://www.reedmusic.com (accessed March 13, 2013).
\item \textsuperscript{94} Joseph Lallo, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 4 August 2012.
\end{itemize}
composers also appears on the Reed Music website: “Don’t give away your music for free—value is a perception.”

Influence on the Melbourne Saxophone Community

Through the development and promotion of contemporary saxophone repertoire, Reed Music helps create a sense of ownership among Melbourne saxophonists over a distinct body of music. However, describing the musical characteristics that separate these compositions from other saxophone works is no easy task. In asking Melbourne saxophonists and composers whether they thought there was an Australian musical style, and if so, what factors contributed to it, I received a wide variety of responses. Some tried to avoid the question, answering that they suspected there was an “Australian sound,” but they were unclear as to what constituted that sound. Others responded that globalization and the internet prevented an Australian style from emerging, or that the Australian sound was in fact an international sound. Pri Victor describes it as a “big coalescence of all these different musical styles. … Combined into one we’ll say: ‘Ok, this is Australian.’”

As Ian Godfrey says, “this is really tricky to pin down.” However, many of those interviewed were, in fact, able to attribute certain traits to this repertoire. Joseph Lallo astutely noted:

I find very much that there’s a Reed Music style of music [emphasis his]. You can almost tell when a piece comes from Reed Music. It’s often got a jazz influence, or else it’s geared toward being a bit more popular but whilst using some contemporary saxophone techniques … It’s usually tonal [and] often has sort of a

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96 Pri Victor, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 19 July 2012.

97 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
blues scale influence in it. I feel they’re geared towards the … general public liking it.\textsuperscript{98}

The consensus is that this music tends to utilize elements of jazz and pop culture. It frequently places a heavy emphasis on rhythm, and generally contains some humorous aspects. With the caveat “these are \textit{such} generalizations,” Ian Godfrey offers the following:

It’s extraordinarily tricky to pin down Australians in music. In a lot of the saxophone repertoire, it’s … elements from popular culture or jazz that get fused into the music …. The music doesn’t take itself too seriously …. Australian composers … are prepared to be a little bit tongue-in-cheek, or prepared to be a little bit lighthearted, or prepared for nobody to listen to it!\textsuperscript{99}

The saxophonist, arranger, and big band leader, Robert Simone, whose thesis examines whether the Australian Art Orchestra promotes an Australian sound, agrees that “there’s definitely a humor[ous] element to the way we [Australians] play. … It’s a bit rough around the edges, but that kind of makes us us.”\textsuperscript{100} The Australian Art Orchestra is a contemporary improvisation ensemble “committed to the development and exploration specifically of improvised/jazz music and music as an art form in general.”\textsuperscript{101} In explaining how the ensemble formed, the Founding Artistic Director Paul Grabowski asserts that “Australian improvisers have a natural tendency towards the unexpected, the irreverent, the passionate, the adventurous.”\textsuperscript{102} It seems that perhaps all of these

\textsuperscript{98} Joseph Lallo, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 4 August 2012.

\textsuperscript{99} Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.

\textsuperscript{100} Robert Simone, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 12 July 2012.


characteristics are present in Australian music. Lachlan Davidson offers an explanation of how these traits have become part of the Australian sound:

One of the things that I think comes out in our music, as a general rule, is the things that come out in our character: what we’re known for as people. My understanding is that we’re known for being, I guess “larrikin” is a word that goes with Australian, that maybe other people don’t understand. A bit unruly, you know, we’re a convict colony, and I think we’ve carried that through, even if just in name, we’re still all, we don’t like rules terribly much. … I think our sense of humor which is fairly unique also comes out in our music, inevitably, whether we want it to or not.103

The University of Melbourne composition professor, Elliott Gyger and the saxophonist and music educator, Tony Hicks both mentioned this idea of nonconformity in their interviews. Although Gyger has not written much saxophone music, he has extensive knowledge of Australian works and composers, having studied with both Peter Sculthorpe and Ross Edwards. According to Gyger, Australian nonconformity in music stems from the continent’s geographical distance from other countries:

In Australia … we’re … a long way away, geographically, so we can observe things with a bit of distance. We don’t have to be swallowed up. It must be really difficult, for example I would imagine, to be a composer in Belgium, or in Denmark, or in Switzerland. When there are colossal musical cultures with really rich musical traditions on your boarders, how can you be distinctively Belgian … when probably your first instinct is “oh I should go and study in Paris, or in Berlin,” whatever direction you choose to go.

So, I think … that [this geographic distance] results in … a kind of a freshness in Australian music, a sense that you can try something out and if it doesn’t entirely succeed, then that’s ok, because you’re not being measured against Brahms or for that matter against Lachenmann, or, in the American context, you’re not being measured against Copland or against Elliott Carter or John Adams or whoever you pick as your contemporary composer guru of choice.104

103 Lachlan Davidson, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 28 June 2012. Davidson defines “larrikins” as “people who are a bit outrageous and like to live outside the rules.”

104 Elliott Gyger, Conversation with the author, University of Melbourne, Carlton, Victoria, 21 June 2012.
Tony Hicks studied in Melbourne with Peter Clinch as well as with Joe Allard and Carmine Caruso in New York. He currently teaches in several Melbourne high schools and tutors at the Victorian College of the Arts and the University of Melbourne. Hicks is also a member of the Australian Art Orchestra. He suggests that the geographical distance has had a similar effect on saxophone improvisation in Melbourne:

I think in terms of jazz and improvised music … there’s a quality that happens here because of the distance, and because there’s not this frantic competition to be … universally [accomplished] across the whole jazz canon and a total master of all the years. … So maybe when it comes to some kind of Australian way of doing it, there is an element of not needing to conform so stringently to the requirements that the culture imposes upon you: “In order to be regarded as a jazz saxophone player, you have to be able to do this, this, this, this, this.” That doesn’t exist here, so it means there’s more latitude to do whatever you want.\(^\text{105}\)

Thus, many Melbourne musicians agree that Australian saxophone music tends to have certain qualities, features, and tendencies that reflect the Australian character.

Although Reed Music did not *create* this style, the company’s support of performer-friendly and audience-pleasing contemporary music has encouraged this “Australian sound” to flourish.

It is also possible that Reed Music has bolstered the “Australian saxophone sound.” Neville Shade believes that Peter Clinch’s students could be distinguished from other saxophonists because they “usually had much bigger tone, much fuller tones.”\(^\text{106}\)

This comparison is partly due to the fact that the majority of Australian saxophonists in the mid to late-1900s were taught by clarinetists. The embouchure and breath support geared towards playing the clarinet is different from that required for saxophone.

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\(^{105}\) Tony Hicks, Conversation with the author, Fitzroy, Victoria, 10 July 2012.

\(^{106}\) Neville Shade, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 6 August 2012.
Therefore, it is natural for saxophonists taught by clarinetists to produce a clarinet-like tone on the saxophone, one that uses fewer overtones in the harmonic series.

However, the Australian tone quality that Peter Clinch taught and that Shade describes was at the same time emerging among jazz saxophonists in both Melbourne and Sydney. According to music critic John Shand, author of *Jazz: The Australian Accent*:

> When the likes of Bob Bertles … [and] Bernie McGann … were first playing post-bebop jazz in Sydney in the late 1950s, and Brian Brown … and [others] were doing the same thing in Melbourne, there were few people to teach them how to do it; the main teachers were a smattering of records and their own ears. This resulted in some curious solutions to the technical problems of playing instruments within the idiom, which, in turn, led to unique approaches to making the music, itself.¹⁰⁷

Like the Australian compositional style, this saxophone sound emerged in part due to the physical and geographical distance of the country. Being so far away from America at that time meant that there were few teachers to explain jazz to Australians. Shand also suggests that the Australian landscape helped shape this tone:

> We live on the second driest continent on earth …. The only country that could have engendered a saxophone sound to conjure those dry creek beds, oven-like winds, and the crackle of those leaves. It is a sound that squeaks and rasps like the native birds. It is also a sound of immeasurable beauty.¹⁰⁸

Shand describes the enormous tone quality of Bernie McGann (b. 1937) as the prime example of the Australian saxophone sound. McGann used to practice in a national park near Bundeena, a coastal village south of Sydney, where no one limited his volume and his sound grew. Another factor impacting his sound is that “McGann’s embouchure is technically wrong (with more of the mouthpiece inside his mouth than is conventional),

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which probably obliged him to find his own solutions to the problems of playing, [which] in turn help[ed] him to find his own voice.”

Shand provides the following description of McGann’s tone:

Imagine an alto saxophone that has spent a lifetime smoking: most notes seem to have been sand-blasted before leaving the bell, and come buzzing in your ears, gruff, gritty and coarse-grained, but also warm. … Melodic lines of leaping intervals end almost tersely, emphasizing McGann’s non-adherence to accepted aesthetics of beauty.

As discussed earlier, the Australian compositional style for saxophone music frequently involves the intertwining of jazz into contemporary works. The tone quality of Australian saxophonists, whether taught by Clinch or mostly self-taught like many of the jazz saxophonists, seems to have worked its way into many contemporary saxophone compositions. Many pieces by Cockcroft and other Reed Music composers are written in a way that promotes this bigger, fuller, perhaps even edgy or “raw” tone.

Cockcroft’s compositions Beat Me for solo tenor saxophone and Slap Me for two saxophones both inspire a certain gruffness to the tone quality. Cockcroft writes of Beat Me:

This work … makes use of different kinds of slap tonguing to simulate bass guitar; multiphonics to simulate the I, IV, V progression from “Wild Thing” made famous by Jimi Hendrix; more distortion to emulate the electric guitar; an extended circular breathing passage that is reminiscent of didgeridoo playing and of course an extended drum solo overlaid with a bass guitar riff. This was my first composition to explore the idea of getting the saxophonist to do more than one thing at time—sing and play, play notes while beating the keys and play notes and harmonics simultaneously.

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Beat Me repeats the note B♭, the lowest note on the instrument, literally hundreds of times in this short, six-minute-long work. This pitch tends to be tricky to play gracefully, and usually comes out as a honking, foghorn-like sound when played by beginners and many intermediate students. This piece includes the low B♭ so frequently that it would be exceedingly difficult to avoid splatting one. Moreover, many of the occurrences of this pitch are slap-tongued, which purposefully adds a percussive sound to the beginning of the note, as if one snapped a rubber band just before sounding the pitch. Slapped low notes on the saxophone are simply abrasive. Other extended techniques in Beat Me include beating the keys to produce a drumset-like sound in mm. 139-194 and 221-238, and glissed harmonics sounded over a fast, repeated 16th-note pattern from mm. 255-284 (Figures 4 and 5). Together, these effects create the raw, reckless impression of rock music. It would not only be technically and physically difficult to perform this piece reservedly, in a French classical tone, for example, but it would also be completely unfitting to the piece itself.112

Figure 4. Beat Me for solo tenor saxophone by Barry Cockcroft mm. 139-146, Beating Keys

Source: Barry Cockcroft, Beat Me for Solo Tenor Saxophone (1996), (Melbourne: Reed Music, 2007).

112 Barry Cockcroft, Beat Me for Solo Tenor Saxophone (1996), (Melbourne: Reed Music, 2007).
Figure 5. *Beat Me* by Barry Cockcroft mm. 263-270, Glissed Harmonics


*Slap Me,* also based on slap tonguing, additionally demands a certain amount of grittiness in the tone of the performers (Figure 6). Unlike *Beat Me,* *Slap Me* contains lengthy passages of slurred 8th notes, some of which are marked with soft dynamics. In these passages a soft, smooth tone may be appropriate. However, the opening, which is marked “freely,” with a glissando up to an altissimo G followed by a molto accelerando and tremolos at fortissimo dynamics, beg the performer to use a loud, open, edgy tone.
Also, the slow, fortissimo bend in mm. 170-173 up to the growl on an altissimo G in m.174 requires a somewhat wild character. The final note of the piece, a fortissimo quarter-note slap preceded by three silent measures, requires a full, open tone. Additionally, because this note occurs after a gradual decrescendo in mm. 175-188 and then a lengthy rest from mm. 189-191, the performers must look at one another in order to perform the ending together (Figure 7). The break in playing gives the saxophonists a chance to use their body language to make the final note a funny surprise.\(^{113}\)

**Figure 6.** *Slap Me* for two saxophones by Barry Cockcroft, Performance Notes

Source: Barry Cockcroft, *Slap Me* for 2 Saxophones (2005), (Melbourne: Reed Music, 2006).

Cockcroft’s music thus tends to fit the Australian sound, both in terms of compositional style and the tone quality with which the pieces are generally performed. Many other pieces published through Reed Music also bolster the Australian style of

\(^{113}\) Barry Cockcroft, *Slap Me* for 2 Saxophones (2005), (Melbourne: Reed Music, 2006).
saxophone music. For example, *Crazy Logic* by Matthew Orlovich has the initial stylistic marking “with bite.” It contains growls in mm. 111-112, 294-295, and 345-346 either rising to a forte or at a fortissimo dynamic. In mm. 157-164, the quarter-note triplets are marked, “squeak like a rusty bicycle”—an unorthodox directive to make a funny, annoying sound. Also, from mm. 168-201, the saxophonist is instructed to “explore … attacks—breathy, harder-edged, etc.”114 Certain passages in the piece, such as mm. 218-237, should be played with a sweet, mellow tone, with sensitivity and grace. However, the majority of the work, with its many accent patterns, explores the edgier side of the saxophone.115

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115 Ibid.
In promoting such pieces, Reed Music fosters the connection between the saxophone and new music in Australia, shaping the Melbourne saxophone community’s conception of what saxophonists do, and what they should be able to do, i.e. perform contemporary Australian works using extended techniques. Efficiency and ease of access of these pieces makes Melbourne saxophonists think that it is easy to get new music and to get in touch with contemporary composers. This perspective is different from that of saxophonists in many other countries, particularly those who have not yet entered a university.

In addition to affecting the overall performance style and sound of Melbourne saxophonists, Reed Music has an impact on how the instrument is studied, even from a beginner’s level. Reed Music’s AMEB and VCE pieces, as well as its method books, influence what the Melbourne saxophone students know, from the very beginner all the way through the professional level. Naturally every method book will have its own way of teaching the instrument.

However, Cockcroft’s *My Favourite Saxophone Tutor* method books are unique in several ways. First, they contain many Australian tunes. The Reed Music website explains why these pieces are included and lists a few of them: “As Australian musicians, being familiar with the heritage of our musical culture is a valuable facet of our education. Some of the familiar tunes that can be found include: ‘Advance Australia Fair,’ ‘Waltzing Matilda,’ ‘Botany Bay,’ ‘Bound for South Australia’ and the ‘Wild Colonial Boy.’”  

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Second, the scales and technical work included in the books match AMEB and other Australian exam requirements, “offering a chance for the teacher to quietly prepare the student for future exams. Included are major and minor scales, major and minor arpeggios, [and] melodic minor scales and chromatic scales.”

In the US, saxophone students might not be tested on minor scales or arpeggios until they reach the university level.

Third, unlike Bruce Pearson’s Standard of Excellence books or Hal Leonard’s Essential Elements, Cockcroft’s method books do not contain diagrams or explanations for how to set up the instrument or one’s embouchure. The explanation provided on the Reed Music website is:

My Favourite Tutor Books are designed to be taught by a teacher. Each teacher wants to explain things in their own way and each student needs to hear things in a way that they can understand. The books have been purposely designed to be uncluttered to minimize confusion for new students. This also allows teachers to teach in their own way.

This idea of allowing for variation from the “norm” in teaching saxophone is consistent with the same aesthetic philosophy in Australian saxophone compositions and tone quality.

Fourth, low notes are introduced earlier in the My Favourite Saxophone Tutor books than they are in other method books. For example, in the Standard of Excellence saxophone book, after introducing B, A, and G, instead of continuing the pattern of adding another finger and teaching the low F, the middle D is introduced. Emphasis on higher notes this early on frequently creates bad habits of biting and placing pressure.

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117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
upward onto the mouthpiece from the lower jaw and lip. However, physically speaking, it is not possible to bite this way on the mouthpiece and sound out low notes. All that would come out is a squeak or squawk. As pointed out on the Reed Music website: “If a student has a good foundation on their instrument it allows for faster development later on. This is particularly true in terms of embouchure development.”119

Finally, the *My Favourite Saxophone Tutor* books use a larger font size at the beginning. When learning how to read notation, many young students find it difficult to differentiate between the various lines and spaces.120 I have found in my own teaching that simply using a larger staff helps most students immensely. By starting the method books in a larger font, these initial hurdles are easier for beginners to overcome.

As a result of using the *My Favourite Saxophone Tutor* method books, Australian saxophone students learn their traditional folk tunes. One might expect this, as US method books include American folk tunes. However, according to Neville Shade, before these method books existed, most Australian schools were using Rubank and other American or European method books.121 Also, in part because of these books, today students are better-prepared for examinations. By placing low notes earlier and omitting instrument assembly, posture, and embouchure instructions, Melbourne saxophone students who use these books experience a learning environment that is tailored to both

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120 During my student teaching in Winnetka in 2011, a fifth grade violist was struggling greatly reading music. Both the general music teacher and the orchestra director had tried to help this student, with minimal success. I was asked to help this student, and I printed out several varying sizes of staff paper. After working for merely three sessions using the larger font, the student was able to read all of his orchestra music notes perfectly.

121 Neville Shade, Conversation with the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 6 August 2012.
saxophonists in general, and to their individual teacher. Instead of learning how to play the saxophone as a band instrument, as many children do in the US, Melbourne students learn how to play the saxophone as a solo instrument. And depending on their teacher’s personal preference, these students may vary in terms of their embouchure and posture, leaving more room for each saxophonist to develop their own personal sound.

Overall, Reed Music has influenced the Melbourne saxophone community in several significant ways. It has helped create a sense of identity within this group through its support of contemporary music in an Australian saxophone style. This style utilizes elements of jazz and pop music, a strong sense of rhythm, bits of humor and the unexpected, a roughness or rawness, and an overall attitude of nonconformity. Hand in hand with these stylistic characteristics, Reed Music compositions tend to support Melbourne saxophonists’ sense of tone quality, which is bigger, fuller, and edgier. These musicians tend to have an acceptance of and expectation to perform new music and Australian music, and they do not shy away from extended techniques because they learn them at an earlier stage in developing their skills. Finally, their perceptions of how one learns the instrument are impacted by Reed Music’s educational method books. They are more accepting of a variety of different playing styles and approaches, and both teachers and students feel freer to do the unexpected and break “the rules.”
Chapter 3

The Significance of Barry Cockcroft

Professional Activities and Aesthetic Philosophy

*It’s important to have new of anything.*
~Barry Cockcroft

As a highly active performer, composer, educator, and entrepreneur, Cockcroft’s professional activities are numerous and widespread. However, his many musical endeavors are connected in that they reflect his aesthetic and educational philosophies. The ways Cockcroft conducts himself and carries out his business demonstrate his beliefs. Cockcroft is a strong advocate of utilizing modern technology, making music knowledge easily accessible, and exploring what is new or challenging. He likes to think of himself as always evolving. Understanding how Cockcroft achieves his aesthetic and pedagogical goals helps to explain his mindset, just as his musical perspectives condition his teaching and performance objectives. This chapter aims to illuminate how and why Cockcroft has impacted the Melbourne saxophone community as well as saxophonists worldwide.

A large part of Cockcroft’s influence is due to his savvy use of technology, particularly the internet. By utilizing multiple websites in creative ways, he is able to reach wider demographics. For example, Cockcroft is both a Selmer Artist and a RICO International Artist, appearing on both websites. Although he does not have a page on Wikipedia, he does have his own website including information about his performances and compositions. On his home page, Cockcroft features information about
his upcoming performances as well as including numerous YouTube videos of people from all over the world performing his pieces. Older videos are stored and can be viewed on his “Video” page. This setup makes it convenient to view and listen to performances of Cockcroft’s music.

In addition to making his music available, Cockcroft makes himself accessible through the website. Anyone can contact him through the “Played My Music?” and “Contact” links. On the “Played My Music?” tab, many saxophonists have mentioned the location and date that they have performed or will perform Cockcroft’s music. Cockcroft’s dedication to these performers becomes obvious when one notices that he responds quickly and includes supportive comments. When students inform him of upcoming performances, he always writes back to say that he looks forward to hearing the recording. Through this active and public style of communication, Cockcroft creates personal connections with the musicians who write to him while also generating a sense of trust and comfort for those who simply read the dialogue. The knowledge that this composer is truly dedicated and grateful to those who play his music encourages more people to perform his works and learn more about him.

Cockcroft’s website also includes audio clips of many of his compositions, which anyone can listen to for free. The availability of these recordings makes it easy for students to hear multiple versions of Cockcroft’s music for educational and entertainment purposes. His site naturally contains a link to the Reed Music website, facilitating accessibility of Australian music. His website also has a link to Saxbook. Saxbook is a social encyclopedia created by Cockcroft with the goal of “collecting and documenting
the combined knowledge of the world’s saxophone community.”

This website began in 2012, inspired by Wikipedia and Jean-Marie Londeix’s lifelong research on the saxophone. In less than a year, Saxbook has gained the membership and contributions of over 800 saxophonists and 4,000 composers of saxophone music from all over the world. Saxbook has extensive annotated repertoire lists, recordings, and research relating to the instrument. Currently there are few full articles and no dissertations on the website, and ultimately the amount of information available will, like Wikipedia, depend upon the dedication and knowledge of the users. However, Cockcroft’s initiative to undertake this project demonstrates his conscious and continuing efforts to support new music and young saxophonists, as well as to bring saxophonists and their knowledge together for the benefit of the public.

In his compositions, Cockcroft strives to assist young saxophonists as well as the audience by placing new elements into familiar contexts, often for a humorous effect. He explains his compositional approach on his website:

I usually compose at an instrument [which is] why I have written predominantly for saxophone. I take my inspiration primarily from real life events often which have been humorous. As my Australian saxophone teacher Peter Clinch once told me: “If you can’t play fast—play funny!” My composition tends to be influenced by the music that I am playing at the time, and often I will include musical elements from these pieces.

I love new ideas. I like extending instruments to explore their idiomatic qualities … [but] I will never use an effect for the effect’s sake. The audience comes first in my motivation and they must leave a performance of my music fulfilled after hearing something new within the context of something they already know. I like taking an audience from the known to the unknown, without them realizing they are on a journey of discovery.

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The comments on YouTube videos of Cockcroft’s pieces highlight the appeal these compositions have for audiences. For example, the video of Rock Me performed by saxophone student Will Obst, who is a music student at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, received the comments, “very funky love it,” from gemma bee, “awesome” from turtleslippers, and “Wow! That was absolutely amazing! How do you get the saxophone to do that?” from Rick Cochrane.124 Taimur Sullivan, Professor of Saxophone at the North Carolina School of the Arts, performed Cockcroft’s Ku Ku. This YouTube video received the comments “very good performance, excellent sound, too! :)” from Marie-Hélène Bilodeau and “I love that” from matinase.125 Furthermore, as Melbourne saxophone teacher, educator, and composer Lachlan Davidson said:

I think his compositions [and] also his choices about what he plays are very musical choices. And I really applaud that, you know, much more than a lot of the contemporary music I hear with extended techniques: I just don’t think [much of that music is] very strong. A lot of the compositions I just don’t think they’re very effective. Whereas Barry chooses to play music that is effective, so he’s got a very musical ear.126

These comments support the assertion on Cockcroft’s website that his “[c]aptivating, quirkily humorous and technically demanding” music integrates “contemporary saxophone techniques into well-known genres, structures, and rhythms … [and] has allowed audiences worldwide to enjoy and understand his music.”127 Based on


126 Lachlan Davidson, Transcription of conversation with the author, 23 Royal Parade, Carlton, Victoria, 28 June 2012.

these descriptions, Cockcroft’s compositional style seems to fit well within the Australian sound described in the previous chapter. However, Cockcroft is “not really a fan of nationalism, and the idea of nations, even.” When asked about whether he thought there was an Australian musical style, Cockcroft responded:

> Australia by nature is full of people from all sorts of different backgrounds, and I think that reflects in the music. So, to narrow it down, I don’t think you could. … I’m probably the least Australian person, because I spend too much time overseas and because I’ve got English heritage.

He continued, however, to describe an Australian style similarly to Pri Victor, as a coalescence of sounds, resulting from the many different kinds of people living in the country:

> [B]ut that in itself is an extension of Australia, which is we’re all mixed up. So maybe I am quintessentially the Australian composer, all mixed up with lots of style, lots of heritage, lots of influence, all put into one thing. But I think in general, I wouldn’t generalize it. Because if you are to generalize, then you’re to exclude. I don’t want to do that.

The multiculturalism both Cockcroft and Victor describe fits within the context of the Australian sound as one that reflects the nature of the Australian people. In this sense, Cockcroft’s works do contribute to the body of Australian saxophone literature.

Regardless of whether or not we consider them to be “quintessentially Australian,” these pieces have shaped the saxophone culture of Melbourne. They have helped countless Melbourne saxophone students learn extended techniques and experience playing humorous, engaging music. Furthermore, Cockcroft’s compositions have helped define what Australian saxophone music sounds like.

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128 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
129 Ibid.
130 For more details, see Chapter 2, Part 3, *Influence on the Melbourne Saxophone Community*.
131 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
Institutional Roles and Involvement

Cockcroft’s involvement in the AMEB, VCE, and Melbourne Conservatorium of Music extends beyond merely writing and publishing works through Reed Music. Because Cockcroft studied saxophone at the University of Melbourne and now teaches there, both his past and his future are interwoven within the Melbourne saxophone community. His saxophone activities grew out of his studies, and the web of students who have learned from him—either through his educational books or through his saxophone classes—continues to nurture and develop the saxophone community in Melbourne. Aside from influencing this culture, Cockcroft himself is part of it and has responded accordingly to the stimuli of his own teachers.

One can better understand Cockcroft’s involvement in composing, commissioning, publishing, and suggesting new music for the AMEB and VCE syllabi when it is framed within the context of Melbourne saxophone history. One can trace the idea of supporting both young musicians and new Australian music for saxophone back to Peter Clinch. Although this history is not formally recorded in any book, thesis, dissertation, or other published document, the saxophone professor Ian Godfrey at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music recounts what happened from memory:

Through work at [the] University … people turn to you for things. So, there are two things [Peter Clinch was asked to produce]. One was the creation of our Year 12 certificate course in our solo performance [i.e. the Victorian Certificate of Education]. … So [Clinch] was approached to write the first syllabus. And so the first syllabus had an alto syllabus, a tenor syllabus, and a baritone syllabus, so you could do it on each of the three saxophones. And where there were holes in the syllabus, he got lots of people to start writing music to fill the syllabus with some jazzy piece, and some contemporary music, [and] extended techniques pieces. … So he encouraged people to write, and because he wrote the syllabus, that got the music onto the syllabus, which made it easier to get them published.132

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132 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
Clinch was able to distribute this music without a publishing company because of a specific Australian organization dedicated to the promotion of contemporary music that was founded in 1974, the Australian Music Centre (AMC):

And part of it was facilitated by our Australian Music Centre. So you lodged the manuscript with them, and ... a student calls the AMC and says: “I need a copy of whatever” and they photocopy it and send it to you. ... [Y]ou don’t need a formal publishing house for the music to actually go into circulation. You just need one copy written, you need it at the AMC, and then it’s accessible to anybody in Australia.\(^{133}\)

Godfrey goes on to explain how Clinch was also asked to write a saxophone syllabus for the AMEB, and how Cockcroft’s decision to start a music publishing company fit in with Clinch’s goals:

The second aspect was [that Clinch] was asked to write for ... our examination body, which in Australia is the Australian Music Examinations Board, AMEB. ... So Peter wrote the saxophone syllabus for that, which was alto and tenor, there was no baritone syllabus. ... So that got the ball rolling, and ... quite a bit of music got written at all sorts of levels. ... The next part ... was Barry’s decision to set up a publishing business. Peter had wanted somebody to do it and thought that we should do it through the quartet. ... I’m just not that kind of a person, but Barry ... took it on.\(^{134}\)

Thus, the environment for Cockcroft to set up Reed Music and become involved in the AMEB and VCE had already developed through the university, the Australian Music Centre, and the efforts of other saxophonists and musicians. In this way, Cockcroft continued Clinch’s legacy by filling a niche within the Melbourne saxophone community. Consequently, Cockcroft’s most direct and personal contributions in shaping this community come from his time at the University of Melbourne.

\(^{133}\) Ibid.

\(^{134}\) Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012. Godfrey was part of the Peter Clinch Saxophone Quartet.
Cockcroft’s involvement at this university began with his studies there as an undergraduate student with Peter Clinch. Cockcroft also studied for one year with Ian Godfrey, who remarked: “Of his generation, he was one of the keenest practicers. He practiced very seriously.” Godfrey explains how Cockcroft’s lessons with Clinch and subsequently his studies abroad with Jacques Net, Marie-Bernadette Charrier, and Jean-Marie Londeix [in France] shaped his professional outlook:

Peter also encouraged us that if we were going to study overseas, that we should go to Europe. … Part of that of course is always driven by cost; it’s much cheaper for us to learn in Europe than America. And Peter didn’t hold many American saxophone players in the eighties in very high regard, where[as] he held the European players in high regard. … Also European players were promoting new music, and Americans generally weren’t. … The background of the European players was often broader. Londeix and Mule both played jazz as well as classical music. … I think largely through our education system, [Cockcroft] thought it was quite a natural idea to play contemporary music, play classical music, play in quartet, and compose, because that’s what everybody … did here. … That also follows … from many people who … learned from Londeix like Ryo Noda, who basically were learning and composing at the same time. And Londeix always encouraged that.136

In other words, Clinch encouraged Cockcroft to study in Europe, and, while he was there, his teachers supported him both as a composer and as a performer of contemporary music and jazz.

Cockcroft has promoted the idea that Australian saxophonists should study in Europe and that they should be able to compose, as well as perform contemporary music and jazz. For example, Joseph Lallo studied with Cockcroft for approximately two years at the Melbourne Conservatory of Music, where he played both jazz and concert music. Lallo also decided to go to Bordeaux to study for two years with Marie-Bernadette Charrier. Upon his return to Melbourne in July 2012, he led the Melbourne Saxophone

135 Ibid.

136 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
Workshop with the goals of promoting contemporary music and fostering networks among Melbourne saxophonists. Thus, Cockcroft is able to impart his musical values upon the next generation of saxophonists through his activities as a faculty member at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and the Victorian College of the Arts. He is able to reach many of them because, according to Godfrey, most students at the University of Melbourne study with more than one saxophone teacher. Generally, students switch teachers either by year, semester, or piece depending on what they are working on at the time.

When students at the Melbourne Conservatorium study one of Cockcroft’s compositions, they have the opportunity to take lessons with him on the piece. As both a composer and a saxophonist, Cockcroft can provide valuable insights into both stylistic and technical aspects of his compositions. On a piece like *Gorge*, verbal comments by the composer help create deeper connections with the music and enhance the information about the work that appears on the printed score and the website. On the website, he provides some basic information about his inspiration for *Gorge*. He came up with the idea while practicing on the roof of a houseboat as it floated between gorges of varying sizes. However, in certain sections of his works, verbal explanations from Cockcroft can clarify ambiguities. For example, in mm. 71-80 of *Gorge*, which feature eighth-note multiphonics, the printed score contains few indications apart from fingerings and dynamics. When I spoke with Cockcroft about this section, he explained that he wanted the performer to explore the oscillation between the upper and lower pitches of each of the multiphonics, creating a kind of double echo and continuing the primary concept of

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the piece: echoes against the sides of a gorge. Without these verbal instructions, the average saxophonist would probably not be able to decipher the composer’s notation and would miss learning one of the subtle extended techniques that this composition entails.

Cockcroft’s involvement in educational institutions inspires a more deeply engaged participation in Australian music. Cockcroft directly shapes the musical habits of the students who work with him. They learn methods for practicing and how to critically analyze the music they play. They become comfortable speaking with a composer because he is already their saxophone teacher. Instead of viewing the composer as an omniscient being beyond the reach of the mere performer, these students learn that it is easy and natural to talk to composers. Through his involvement in a variety of educational institutions, Cockcroft sends the message to students that they can also become composers and teachers and can still maintain a performance career. As Cockcroft explains: “All of [these] processes, for me are the same thing: writing, recording, finding a distribution model, it’s all the same thing, which is, [getting your] creative output to get out to the world.”

Influence on the Melbourne Saxophone Community

The Melbourne concertgoing public is starting to learn about contemporary saxophone music in Australia. Joseph Lallo’s concert at Arts Project Australia and Lachlan Davidson and Tony Hicks’ performance at Bennetts Lane Jazz Club, both of which were packed, demonstrate a certain level of support for new Australian saxophone music. The audience-friendly nature of much of the new music made available through

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138 Cockcroft, Interview by the author, Melbourne, Victoria, 25 July 2012.
the support of Cockcroft and Reed Music helps bring more people into the Melbourne saxophone community.

Overall, the response to these concerts—including enthusiastic applause, standing ovations, and a number of audience members approaching the performers to shake their hands and congratulate them—seemed to be extremely positive, reflecting a growing interest in Australian saxophone music. Joseph Lallo believes that, because of Cockcroft and Reed Music, people are learning about this community on an international level. As he stated: “I think overseas, people now have an idea of what Australian music is. … Now when they’re saying ‘it’s an Australian piece,’ … it’s probably from Reed Music.”

As might be expected, people within the Melbourne saxophone community have varying opinions of Cockcroft. Godfrey explains: “As a player, people have mixed reactions to him. Some people find him sort of cold and clinical, and other people find [him] beautiful and precise. And they’re two versions of the same thing!” Another Melbourne musician reaffirmed Godfrey’s statement: “If I had a criticism it would be that, we want to see [Cockcroft] sweat a bit! … I guess my criticism of him is that we don’t hear him when he plays, very much. I think the fact that he does work to make things sound so effortless actually leaves us a bit, I’ll use the word cold.” Cockcroft’s “clinical … and precise” playing most likely comes from his strong French background.

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139 Joseph Lallo, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 4 August 2012.

140 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.

141 Anonymous, Conversation with the author.
French saxophonists in particular are known for their technical proficiency, which they view as sublimely beautiful.

The fact that the only criticism of Cockcroft I encountered during my entire two months in Melbourne was that his playing sounds too effortless indicates a consensus that Cockcroft is a highly skilled saxophonist. However, this fact—that Cockcroft’s technical proficiency is criticized by some Melbourne musicians—highlights an Australian aesthetic view that sometimes good music should “sound difficult.” This desire to both see and hear the performer working hard to create music makes sense if we consider the “Australian sound.”  

The “grit” in this style of saxophone playing represents the difficulty of learning to play an instrument with few instructors available, as well as the unique sound that emerged from these hardships. Cockcroft’s “effortless” playing can thus be perceived as a challenge to this Australian aesthetic.

It is perhaps too soon to determine exactly how much Cockcroft has changed this aspect of the Australian saxophone sound. In private lessons, he has imparted the value of flawless technique to his students, who generally seem to appreciate his instruction. The University of Melbourne student Kay Zhang, who studied with Cockcroft for a year and a half, said: “I went into lessons feeling very motivated and leaving with a lot of things to work on in terms of technique and practice habits. It was really rewarding to study with Barry.”  

It is possible that the strong French influence on Cockcroft, and subsequently his students, will have the effect of stifling the uniqueness of the Australian sound that

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142 This sound is detailed in Chapter 2, Part 3.
143 Zhang, questionnaire by the author, Melbourne, Australia, September 30, 2012.
developed during the mid-20th century. Alternatively, this change could be viewed as an enhancement of the multicultural nature of the Australian aesthetic.

Regardless of what people may think of his playing or his aesthetic philosophy, Cockcroft has made an undeniable contribution to Melbourne saxophonists. As Lallo states:

First he got composers writing for him, but they often wrote very difficult music. Then he got composers that wrote difficult music, famous composers, to then write easy pieces for kids, so kids were playing great composers right from the beginning. … The repertoire really just exploded. When I was in school, we had a few Australian pieces, but then now when I look at ReedMusic.com, it’s huge. The amount of saxophone music written by Australians now is quite incredible.144 Godfrey supports this notion when he states that Barry Cockcroft is “very passionate about the saxophone, and about music, and about Australian music.”145 His passion and dedication have made a profound impact on saxophonists in Melbourne, and throughout the world.

Overall, Cockcroft has accomplished an incredible amount for the Melbourne saxophone community. He has provided a comprehensive repertoire of music for students through his own compositions and those he has promoted others to create. He has made this repertoire easily accessible to students through Reed Music. Additionally, Cockcroft has provided engaging repertoire for students to learn on their AMEB and VCE exams. Students tend to enjoy this repertoire greatly, which has the added advantage of teaching them how to perform extended techniques at an early age. Because students learn these techniques naturally through these pieces, they are not daunted by them when they come across them in later contexts. Today, Melbourne saxophone students grow

144 Joseph Lallo, Conversation with the author, Carlton, Victoria, 4 August 2012.

145 Godfrey, Conversation with the author, 2 July 2012.
accustomed to performing contemporary music and Australian music. In other words, unlike American saxophone students who generally tend to take one look at contemporary music and think it is “weird,” Melbourne saxophone students assume that learning contemporary music, and even contacting or working with an Australian composer, is simply part of their role as a saxophonist. The notion that this music is significant and worth playing is a huge change from the lack of respect for Australian music that existed well into the 1900s. Thus, Cockcroft has significantly shaped the changing outlook of Australian musicians.
Chapter 4

Conclusions

The theoretical frameworks of Turino, Anderson, and Nettl explain how community identities are formed and how they can be studied in relation to educational institutions as well as individual social actors. Turino’s statement that “constellations of shared habit[s]”\textsuperscript{146} form communities and Anderson’s assertion that communities are “imagined” are not mutually exclusive. Rather, the ideas of Turino and Anderson combine to show how a community can be formed by a complex combination of factors that are both physical and conceptual. Nettl’s study of music institutions in *Heartland Excursions* shows the profound role educational establishments play in forming musical identities. Since Melbourne saxophonists share musical habits, imagine themselves as part of a community, and are linked through various educational institutions, together, the works of Turino, Anderson, and Nettl can be used to demonstrate that a community has indeed formed among those who study, teach, and write music for the saxophone in Melbourne, Australia.

*The Melbourne Concert Saxophone Community*

The members of the saxophone community in Melbourne, Australia are connected not just by the fact that they play the saxophone, but also because they share in certain activities and aesthetic values. Most Melbourne saxophone students participate in the AMEB and the VCE, and if they choose to continue saxophone study at the university level, most of them attend the University of Melbourne. Because of their participation in

\textsuperscript{146} Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 111.
these educational organizations which share many of the same kinds of works on their syllabi, these students end up learning much of the same music and many of the same techniques. They tend to study compositions by contemporary Australian composers, and they generally learn extended saxophone techniques at a young age.

In part due to Melbourne’s small population and its relative isolation to the rest of the global saxophone community, many of the important social actors in Melbourne have been highly active in multiple educational organizations—whether serving as an adjudicator, helping to write syllabi, teaching saxophone, or a combination of several activities—and most of these saxophonists were taught by Peter Clinch. Those who were not taught by Clinch were generally taught by jazz saxophonists, many of whom, in the absence of formal instruction, developed unique and often raw-sounding tone qualities. These personal connections between saxophonists combined with the fact that there have been few concert saxophone teachers in Australia led to the emergence of certain aesthetic values and even an Australian style of saxophone playing. It is in part due to the absence of a strong concert saxophone presence that Australian saxophone composers tend to write music with extended techniques and strong rhythmic elements, incorporating features of jazz, blues, or popular music. This aesthetic tends to appeal to audiences, and Melbourne saxophonists greatly enjoy this music.

The specific history of music education in Melbourne has also played a significant part in the development of this community. Melbourne music education, from its onset, has created a unique environment that fostered the development of the saxophone. Many people and events came together. Had it not been for the educational ideological rift which brought the importance of music assessment to the foreground, or for the
University of Melbourne’s grim financial position and Franklin Sievright Peterson’s creation of the UCMEB, the AMEB might never have formed. If Peter Clinch had not taken on the task of writing the AMEB saxophone syllabi and if he had not taught so many saxophonists and included them in the syllabus-writing process, it might have taken decades longer for the saxophone to be seen as a legitimate instrument to study in its own right in Melbourne. The complex interplay between various social actors and music organizations, combined with Barry Cockcroft’s own personal efforts and motivations, has allowed for the aforementioned musical aesthetic to come to the fore within the Melbourne saxophone community.

Within this context, Cockcroft has become a leading musical and social actor. His main contributions include: creating his publishing company Reed Music; composing music for the saxophone and encouraging many composers to create music for the instrument at varying levels of difficulty; and promoting the best of these compositions by performing them all over the world, teaching them to his students, and getting them onto the AMEB and VCE syllabi. Through these works, embedded within the syllabi of Melbourne educational institutions, the Australian style and aesthetic values have emerged and become popular.

As a significant social actor, Cockcroft’s activities exemplify the theories of Turino, Anderson, and Nettl. Turino asserts that musical identity forms through habits of thought and practice that are shared among individuals. Anderson emphasizes that communities are imagined within the minds of the members. Nettl states that social actors within educational institutions play an important role in determining the ways students conceive of musical materials, thus building the community. Cockcroft has shaped the
habits, values, and ideas of Melbourne saxophonists through his involvement in educational institutions. He has helped make Melbourne saxophonists more comfortable with contemporary music and extended techniques. His own goal in performing and composing music that audiences can relate to is shared by many Melbourne saxophone students and teachers. These shared habits and views have formed both a physical community of Melbourne saxophonists between those who know one another and, as Anderson would note, also an imagined one inclusive of all Melbourne saxophone performers, composers, and educators, regardless of whether these individuals know one another personally or not.

Cockcroft’s performances, recordings, compositions, publishing company, commissions, teaching, and his roles within the AMEB, VCE, and Melbourne Conservatorium of Music have influenced the repertoire, technical development, and aesthetic orientation of the Melbourne concert saxophone community. He has built up a contemporary Australian saxophone repertoire and through it, impacted the way the saxophone is studied in Melbourne. Cockcroft’s aesthetic values have clearly shaped Melbourne saxophonists and music organizations. However, Melbourne educational institutions and musicians have themselves molded Cockcroft’s beliefs and habits throughout his career. Melbourne saxophonists, composers, and educational institutions have mutually shaped one another as this community has developed.

However, the aforementioned musical values are not the only aesthetic ideals in the Melbourne saxophone community. Not all Melbourne saxophonists like this jazzy, popular, humorous, audience-friendly music. For example, some members of the Melbourne concert saxophone community, such as composer Chris Dench who became
an Australian citizen in 1992, prefer atonal, experimental music. Dench composes exceedingly difficult avant-garde works. For example, *Burns* for Alto Saxophone lacks a regular pulse or a melody that the average concertgoer could grasp.\footnote{Chris Dench, *Burns for Alto Saxophone*, Chris Dench, 1989.} Pieces like *Burns* for Alto Saxophone are rarely performed in Melbourne, particularly in comparison with works that are more audience-friendly. However, the music that Dench writes provides a good example of just one of the numerous aesthetic ideals that exist in Melbourne.

Another way Cockcroft’s values differ from some Melbourne saxophonists is in his approach to saxophone technique. As a student of the French saxophonists Jacques Net, Marie-Bernadette Charrier, and Jean-Marie Londeix, Cockcroft strongly values technical flawlessness to the point of sounding effortless. To the French, this technical perfection is the epitome of beauty, but members of the Melbourne saxophone community can view this kind of technical perfection as cold and lifeless. Some Melbourne saxophonists are resistant towards this French aestheticism, but Cockcroft’s efforts as an educator, composer, and performer seem to moderate these sentiments.

Of course, there are those whose aesthetic values, like Cockcroft’s, overlap with various saxophone communities. Kay Zhang, for example, remarked that her perspective on technical prowess shifted after having studied with Cockcroft:

> Barry being a student of Marie-Bernadette Charrier and having that experience as a student in France—I thought it would be a good way to experience what it would be like to study with someone who has studied in a place with such precision and articulate teaching. That is when I had my first year with Barry. … I went into lessons feeling very motivated and leaving with a lot of things to work on in terms of technique and practice habits.\footnote{Zhang, questionnaire by the author, Melbourne, Australia, September 30, 2012.}
As a member of the KHASM quartet, Zhang strongly seemed to value connecting with the audience; however her experience studying with Cockcroft gave her a stronger appreciation for technical precision.

Within the Melbourne saxophone community, many people have overlapping identities. As Turino points out, habits, thoughts, values, and experiences vary from person to person. However, as Cockcroft states: “I would have a guess that if there is [an Australian] style, it’s very eclectic, so that in a sense could be a style. … Australia by nature is full of people from all sorts of different backgrounds, and I think that reflects in the music.”149 As a world traveler, Cockcroft embodies that eclecticism. It is appropriate to this culture that the one who stands out is also so cosmopolitan, and so deeply rooted within Melbourne’s musical organizations and institutions. These organizations have shaped Cockcroft as much as he has shaped them. Though the unique culture he has helped to create will change, and will in turn change Cockcroft, over time, the repertoire, knowledge, and values he has helped to instill within countless saxophonists will shape the future of the Melbourne concert saxophone community.

149 Cockcroft, Interview by the author.
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**THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS**


