From the Chair…

It has been wonderful to see a number of our study group members in Ghana in July for another incredible ICTM World Conference. Those of us who travelled for the conference have returned home buzzing from the vibrant musical scene, rich culture and meetings with colleagues from across the world, on the lush campus of the University of Ghana, within the bustling city of Accra. Our study group members have shared in the excitement of the announcement of the next ICTMD World Conference to be held in Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand in January 2025 – marking 30 years since a world conference has been held in the Oceania region!

This newsletter includes news and announcements from various members, as well as reports on study group activities and upcoming events. Also included is a review written by Brian Diettrich on the new Micronesian album Island Micronesia: Electronic Melodies, sung by the Lamo Serai Boyz from Lamotrek Island in the central Caroline atolls of Micronesia. I would like to encourage you all to consider submitting reviews for future newsletters as a way of further sharing about the musical activities across the Oceania region without the formalised editing and restrictions to access of traditional academic publications.

Please also note the Call for Papers for the next, and 11th Symposium of the ICTMD’s Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania planned for 4–5 June 2024. Thanks to Amanda Harris, Kirk Sullivan, Reuben Brown, Meri Haami, and Andrew Gumataotao, for teaming up to organise this symposium, as well as to Ricardo Trimillos and Brian Diettrich for their overseeing and advising on planning. We are looking forward to receiving proposals by 31st October and to meeting with many of you in Honolulu next year.

Big thanks also to Keola Donaghy for his extensive behind-the-scenes efforts managing the Study Group website and email list, such that we can share the recordings of our monthly Study Group seminars and other announcements and information. Special thanks for efforts to keep this up during the recent wildfire crisis in Maui.

Thoughts have been and are still with all colleagues, friends and families in Maui who have been displaced and are coping with losses as they rebuild their lives.

Georgia Curran
(Sydney, Australia)
**Special appreciation to Don Niles**  
*By Brian Diettrich*

The Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania offers a special thanks and appreciation to Don Niles on the completion of his terms on the Executive Board. Don has been a long-serving member of the board, and in his leadership roles he has continued to advocate for the Oceania region within the leadership of ICTMD. Don was elected as Ordinary Member of the board, serving from 2007–2013 and elected again, serving from 2017–2019. Don was also elected as Vice President and served two terms, from 2013–2017 and most recently from 2019–2023, finishing his term at the Ghana conference. Previously, Don served as General Editor of the *Yearbook for Traditional Music* from 2006–2013. On behalf of the Oceania Study Group, we offer our sincere thanks to Don for his long-serving commitment to the workings and success of the council.

*By Georgia Curran*

The 47th ICTM World Conference in Ghana was a momentous conference for a number of reasons. The official name change to the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD) has been a long awaited and debated over recent years and the conference marks the vote for only the second name change in the organisation’s 75-year old history.

During the conference, we also saw Don Niles step down from his long-term role on the Executive Board and Ricardo Trimillos honoured with a life-time ICTMD membership. At the closing ceremony Brian Diettrich and Meri Haami announced that the 48th ICTMD World Conference location in in the Oceania region at Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington). See further report in this newsletter.

At the conference our Study Group held a Welcome Meeting attended by a number of new members as well as long-standing ones. We reflected on activities of the past year since our last meeting in Lisbon, Portugal during the 46th ICTM World Conference. During this meeting we also discussed plans for the upcoming 11th Symposium in 2024 to be held in Honolulu alongside the long awaited 13th Festival for the Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPac) which was cancelled in 2020 due to the global pandemic. See the further information and link to the Call for Papers in this newsletter.
The Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award, bequeathed by the late Barbara B. Smith, was awarded to Meri Haami to assist with her travel to Ghana. Meri presented a paper ‘He Whiringa Hīnaki: A Kaupapa Māori Ecomusicological Framework Using Te Awa Tupua’ (see also her report). Other papers across the conference representing the Oceania region included Kirk Sullivan’s ‘Sounding the Diaspora: The Homeland Imaginary in Popular Cook Islands Song’, as well as 5 papers from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand as part of the panel ‘Ecomusicologies through Performance’ convened by Georgia Curran and Myfany Turpin. These included Clint Bracknell on ‘Performing Noongar Song on Country’, Sudipta Dowsett on ‘Milpirri Eco-Somatics: Hip-Hop and Warlpiri Embodied Senses of Place’, Georgia Curran on ‘Warlpiri Women’s Ceremonies About Fire and Rain’, Myfany Turpin on ‘The Potency of Vocal Production in Central Australian Aboriginal Society’ and Sebastian Lowe on ‘Breathing with a River’.
Tony Lewis and Don Niles in the foyer of the Cedi Conference Centre (photo from Don Niles)

Georgia Curran and Meri Haami at the excursion to the Cape Coast Castle (photo from Georgia Curran).

Brian Diettrich, Georgia Curran, Myfany Turpin and Don Niles at the excursion to Unity Eco Village (photo from Brian Diettrich)
From Meri Haami

Tēnā kautau, tēnā kautau, tēnā kautau katoa!
Ka nui te mihi ki te haukāinga ki Ghana, kei te mihi

Ngā mihi nui ki te SGMDO me te ICTM
Nau mai haere mai hoki mai ki Aotearoa
Tēnā kautau, tēnā kautau, tēnā kautau katoa!

Kia ora! My name is Meri Haami and I’m from Aotearoa, New Zealand working as a Kairangahau (researcher) with a Kaupapa Māori organisation called, Tū Tama Wāhine o Taranaki. I was honoured to receive the Music and Dance of Oceania Travel Award to help with my travel towards the 47th ICTM International Council for Traditional Music being held at the University of Ghana, Legon.

I was given the privilege to present a paper presentation from my hapū (sub-tribal) community and from my doctoral thesis called, *He Whiringa Hīnaki: A Kaupapa Māori Ecomusicological Framework Using Te Awa Tupua*. I was also given the opportunity to speak at the closing ceremony along with Brian Diettrich about the next World Conference being held in Aotearoa, specifically Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) in January 2025. Both Brian and I opened with a video given by Rob Thorne of him playing the pūtātara (couch shell trumpet), which mimicked the karanga (ceremonial calls of encounter) to welcome ICTM members to Aotearoa. Brian began with a karakia (prayer), gave a presentation about the next conference location in Wellington and I closed with a kōrero (speech) and waiata (song) that my grandmother, Angel Haami and I composed from my doctoral thesis (see photo above).

The conference was transformative and connective. One of the conference highlights included a performance workshop where I saw my local guide and now friend, Andy Adoteey perform with the workshop called “Adenkum: All-Women Gourd Ensemble led by Grace Takyi”. This performance provoked connections of the gourd in Aotearoa, which is called a *hue* and is a part of our taonga pūoro (instruments). A plenary I enjoyed included the *Contemporary Dialogues across the Blackatlantic: Examining African & Diasporic Connections in Education, Religion & Popular Music* presented by Birgitta J. Johnson, Loneka Wilkinson Battiste, and Fredara M. Hadley. This dovetailed nicely into the conference dialogue about the name change of the organisation that not only included ‘dance’ but also shifted music as an on-going activity of tradition that is not static, which is pertinent to Indigenous peoples, including Māori in viewing our music. Further, I will always carry the kōrero from Ghanaian performers talking about how they “eat dance” in their languages in that it is embedded within them and describes the embodied experience of being engrossed in music and dance. This was a profound reminder that our Māori music and dance shares a similar connection in that it is continuously living and is a part of all Māori life ways.

Thank you again to the ICTM Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania for the opportunity to experience a wonderful conference.

Ngā mihi nui ki a kautau, Meri.
Report on Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania online seminar series
Each month, members of our Study Group participate in an online seminar. These seminars are recorded and available with the presenters’ consent on the ICTMD’s Study Group for Music and Dance of Oceania website. Thank you to everyone who has presented as part of this series.

In June, Jessica Shwartz presented on ‘Radiation Songs & Remembering Justice’ drawing on her research with ri-Majel/Marshallese in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and in the United States diaspora. In July there was no seminar as our Study Group members were busy with the 47th ICTM World Conference.

In August, we heard from Jodie Kell and Tara Rostron from Ripple Effect Band, an all-women’s band from Maningrida in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia on ‘Njárra-djorrrka wiba: we carry our country with us’. Jodie and Tara also shared an early preview of their new single ‘Loving and Caring’ – see Ripple Effect website for details.

In September, Rona Charles, Pete O’Connor and Sally Treloyn present on “Dirna arrun (we hold it): Archival collections and living knowledge of Junba in the Kimberley, northwest Australia”. Upcoming seminars this year will also be presented by Reuben Brown, Rupert Manmurulu and Renfred Manmurulu in October, Rita Seumanutafa in November, and Steven Gagau and Jodie Kell in December. Information will be circulated via the email list. If you are interested in presenting a seminar as part of this series in 2024 please contact Georgia Curran georgia.curran@sydney.edu.au.
Upcoming: 11th Symposium of the ICTMD’s Study Group on Music and Dance of Oceania, Honolulu, 4–5 June 2024

A Call for Proposals is now circulating for our next Study Group Symposium with the theme *Oceanic Networks of Music and Dance: Performing Continuities, Regeneration and Resonances Across Cultures* to be held in Honolulu, 4–5 June 2024. The Symposium will be in person at the East-West Center in cooperation with the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. This 2-day symposium will coincide with the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture and is closely aligned with its theme: *Ho’oulu Lāhui – Regenerating Oceania*. We invite scholars and performers alike to submit proposals for presentations that might be spoken, sung, danced, woven, chanted or some combination of these modes. The symposium themes will reflect on the history and present of networks of interconnection and difference in Oceania and the roles of music and dance in regenerative practices of intra- and inter-cultural exchange. Some questions that might prompt contributions include: How is cultural practice translated and transformed for public display?; How do we tell histories attentive to oral as well as written accounts?; How does the interconnected Oceanic region shape local cultural practices?; What is music, dance and performance for and what do songs do?

Key themes include:
- The role of Festivals of the Pacific and other international events as a forum for exchange of culture in the past and present
- Relationships between place and cultural practice in public performance
- The role of music and dance in shaping cross-cultural encounters
- The relationship between music and language diversity and cultural exchange at festivals
- Archival returns and their role in regenerating performance and exchange
- Indigenous/ Oceanic methodologies in local and extra-local contexts
- Diasporic connections and practices
- Responses to climate change and regeneration of the environment through song
- Other themes related to research on music and dance in the Oceania region

**DEADLINE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS:** 31st October 2023.

To submit a proposal for a presentation (spoken/performed/demonstrated), please fill in the form [https://forms.gle/L1XuvWJeNYHMSFeo8](https://forms.gle/L1XuvWJeNYHMSFeo8). Accepted papers will be notified by 15th December 2023. See the full Call for Papers on our [Study Group website](https://studygroup.ictmd.org/).

Upcoming: 13th FestPac, Honolulu, 6–16 June 2024

The 13th Festival for the Pacific Arts and Culture will take place in Honolulu from 6–16 June 2024 with the theme *Ho'oulu Lāhui: Regenerating Oceania*. Aaron Salā is the festival director.
Upcoming: ICTMD 2025 in Wellington, New Zealand: A World Conference
Return to Oceania
by Brian Diettrich

At the closing ceremony of the 47th ICTMD World Conference in Legon, Ghana, Brian Diettrich and Meri Haami announced the 48th ICTMD World Conference to be held in Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand in January 2025.

This 2025 event will mark the first world conference in New Zealand in the council’s history, and it will be only the third world conference in Oceania, after Honolulu, Hawai‘i in 1977 and Canberra, Australia in 1995. Wellington will mark the farthest south on the globe for any world conference. New Zealand scholars have a long history of engagement with ICTM extending back to early publications in the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*. Wellington is the capital of New Zealand, and it features a compact urban space in close touch with its surrounding forests and bird life, and with access to the National Museum Te Papa, and National Library and Archives, the NZ National Symphony, numerous music and dance venues, embassies from many countries, ecosanctuaries, and a diversity of musical and artistic engagements.

The host for 2025 will be Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington and Te Kōkī The New Zealand School of Music. The Venue for 2025 will be Tākina, the new Wellington Convention Centre. Tākina means to encounter or invoke and is a new space ideal for the next World Conference.

We look forward to welcoming all SGMDO members to Wellington in 2025!
Plaudits

Congratulations to Ricardo Trimillos for the very well-deserved honour of receiving a lifetime membership to the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance. The nomination was presented by Mayco Santaella and approved by the membership at the ICTM World conference at the University of Ghana in July. See also this link to a news story.

Congratulations to Keola Donaghy at University of Hawai‘i Maui College who received three Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards at the annual program put on by the Hawai‘i Academy of Recording Arts. His group A‘ea‘e (with Kenneth Makuakāne, Tarvin Makia, Jeff Dayton, and Māpuana Makia) was honored with the 2023 Hawaiian EP and Group of the Year Awards. Donaghy was also honored with Makuakāne as the co-producers of Makuakāne's Anthology of the Year release, "Huliau."

On August 1, 2023, Donaghy was appointed chair of the Humanities Department at University of Hawai‘i Maui College, where he continues to lead both Music Studies and the Institute of Hawaiian Music.
Congratulations to Patrick Savage from Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland who has been awarded a Rutherford Discovery Fellowship for research titled ‘The music-language continuum: A global analysis’. See details in this report.

General News from Members

From Kirsty Gillespie
Kirsty Gillespie was recently interviewed by Radio New Zealand about her work on the ANU project ‘Modelling Pacific Creole Languages’. You can listen to the audio here: Race on to document Melanesian tongues says researcher | RNZ News

Also free e-prints are available of Kirsty's multimedia review of ‘Ol Sing Blong Plantesen: South Sea Islander Spirituals from the Queensland Canefields and Beyond’ in The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology -

From Lynette S. Finau
Formerly taught in Anthropology Department at the University of Washington (UW), Seattle, WA a course they asked me to create: Oceanic Epistemologies and Dance was taught last Fall 2022. It was a success, classes were full and students of ALL backgrounds took it. I accepted an offer from Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, UT in their Anthropology Department this Fall 2023. They were intrigued with this course from UW and asked if I could launch it at BYU. There is definitely a need for Oceania studies, especially dance and music.

From Stephen Wild
Stephen would like to report that a textbook called “Dance Cultures Around the World” (ISBN 978-1-4925-7232-9) containing a chapter written by him entitled “Dance of Aboriginal Australia” has recently been published. Edited jointly by Lynn E. Frederiksen and Shih-Ming Li Chang, the book is published by Human Kinetics, USA, complemented by online resources in its HKPropel delivery system. The book covers 25 different cultures of dance in nine geopolitical regions. See this link for more information.

Recently completed PhD thesis of interest
Review: Atoll Lives in Song: New Album of Micronesian Popular Songs from Lamotrek
Reviewed by Brian Diettrich

People’s lives on the low-lying islands of the Pacific are challenged by social and environmental factors, but popular song offers insights into continuing ways of life for these island communities. A new album, called Island Micronesia: Electronic Melodies, sung by the Lamo Serai Boyz from Lamotrek Island in the central Caroline atolls of Micronesia and produced by Triton Films Studio (in California), provides just such a perspective. Lamotrek, part of Yap State in the Federated States of Micronesia, is well known in the Pacific for the revival of traditional practices of navigation and voyaging, but this album focuses on new music sung and played with Yamaha electronic keyboards, ubiquitous instruments across Micronesia. The resulting “electronic melodies”, as the Lamo Serai Boyz call their work, present an eclectic range of song styles, with sentimental ballads and fast-paced dance beats, and they demonstrate the continuing impact of country and reggae styles as important vehicles for community expression in Micronesia. Listeners familiar with Micronesian music will hear the enduring influence here of local Chuukese ballads, widely emulated in the region, and with characteristic wide ranges, melodic leaps, and distinctively Chuukese phrase endings. The melodies of “Yai Waires” (it’s Difficult for Me) and “Paddling Out” (Fefatulwei), for example, both suggest familiar Chuukese popular songs.

An understanding of the sung poetry on the album is assisted by helpful translations that accompany each song and an introduction by Eric Metzgar, PhD. The ten songs of the album illustrate everyday experiences and challenges that are representative of island lives in the central Carolines, including themes of love and gossip, fishing and life on the sea, Christianity, and the challenges of distance and being away from others, in the coming-and-going that is part of life on Lamotrek. A few songs highlight resources on the island, such as “Kurakak” (Noddy Terns) that describes a meal of the birds with rice “so we won’t be hungry”, while other songs give attention to preferences of tobacco and betel nut. Two very intimate and moving songs describe cross-generational wishes from women composers: “Yai Waires” (it’s Difficult for Me) presents a grandmother’s hope for her grandson to “stay a little longer”, while “Yatil Rupwaku” (Blooming Flowers) recounts a mother’s message for her children—three flowers in the song—that “my love for you will never disappear”. For listeners familiar with song poetry in the Caroline Islands, these songs are representative of how music in Micronesia reveals the intimacies of everyday life among friends, extended family, and loved ones. The songs collected here offer windows into the experiences of Lamotrek lives, of parting, loss, faith, and love, and the resulting messages bring listeners in touch with the hopes and desires on the island and in its networks across the central Caroline atolls. The album’s notes describe how Lamotrek faces increasing environmental pressures from climate change, and the resulting sale of the music will help purchase food resources for the community. This statement cautions us how the sung lives presented here are increasingly under threat. Island Micronesia presents new music for global consumption, but it also challenges us to consider the wider implications of environmental disruptions for Pacific communities. Supporters will hope that the songs of Lamotrek will find increasing listeners across the Pacific and internationally. This is an excellent album, and it will be of wide interest to individuals and institutions invested in music and culture, as well as anyone searching for a deeper hearing of Micronesia.
Some publications of interest

Books


It’s really great. It’s like they’re all here. I hear all of these voices and I sing with them, you know? — Yikliya Eustace Tipiloura, senior songman and Elder

Perhaps the most defining feature of Tiwi song is the importance placed on the creative innovation of the individual singer/composer. Tiwi songs are fundamentally new, unique and occasion specific, and yet sit within a continuum of an oral artistic tradition. Performed in ceremony, at public events, for art and for fun, songs form the core of the Tiwi knowledge system and historical archive. Held by song custodians and taught through sung and danced ritual, generations of embodied practice are still being created and accumulated as people continue to sing.

In 2009 Genevieve Campbell and eleven Tiwi colleagues travelled to Canberra to reclaim over 1300 recordings of Tiwi songs, made between 1912 and 1981, that are held in the archives at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). *The Old Songs are Always New* explores the return home of these recordings to the Tiwi Islands and describes the musical and vocal characteristics, performance context and cultural function of the twelve Tiwi song types, giving an overview of the linguistic and poetic devices used by Tiwi composers.

For the past 16 years Campbell has been working closely with Tiwi song custodians, studying contemporary Tiwi song culture in the context of the maintenance of traditions and the development of new music forms. Their musical collaboration has resulted in public performances, community projects and recordings featuring current senior singers and the voices of the repatriated recordings. For this publication, Elders have enabled the transcription of many song texts and melodies for the first time, shedding light on how generations of Tiwi singers have connected the past with the present in a continuum of knowledge transmission and arts practice.
Special journal issues


Journal articles and book chapters


