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Jenny McLeod: The emergence of a New Zealand voice

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Rice University, 1994
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JENNY MCLEOD:
THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW ZEALAND VOICE

by

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A Thesis Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment of the
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Master of Music

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JENNY MCLEOD:
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ABSTRACT

by

Richard L. Hardie

This thesis examines the question: "What does it mean to have a New Zealand voice?" as exemplified in the life and music of Jenny McLeod. The study has focused on McLeod's struggle to find a balance between three needs: the needs of the composer, and the needs of those who perform and listen to a composer's music. To balance these ideals McLeod has drawn on many sources of inspiration over the years. As a result, her career as a composer appears at first glance to be rather sporadic and incomplete. I maintain, however, that throughout her career McLeod was working constantly towards satisfying the needs outlined above. When examining the development of New Zealand music during the second half of the twentieth-century, I believe that these issues are the same as those confronting all New Zealand artists. The life and music of Jenny McLeod is, therefore, a representative example of the emergence of a distinctive "voice" in New Zealand music.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: MUSIC FROM A DISTANT SHORE

The first period...
From the conception the increase
from the increase the thought
from the thought the remembrance
from the remembrance the consciousness
from the consciousness the desire

Where does an idea come from? What is it that stimulates creative energies to produce something worthy of our attention, something to capture our interest and set new ideas in motion? These questions are almost impossible to answer -- they leave themselves open to an infinite variety of answers, none of which is completely satisfactory, posing new questions rather than offering satisfying solutions.

What happens when you are an artist and your ideas fall short of what you are trying to achieve? What happens when people place expectations and goals on you that will never be fulfilled because the inspiration you were once famous for has taken a new path or dried up completely? For whom is the work of art made: the creator, the performer (if there is one), or the audience?

Jenny McLeod, born in 1941, has had to confront such issues, in a music career characterized by a number of distinct shifts in her approach to the art form. These seemingly dramatic changes take on a unique, representative character when examined as the evolution of a distinct voice in New Zealand music since the early 1960's. To call her a "composer" is to try to squeeze her into a mold that is not appropriate; writing music is but one means of expression, the one for which she is most renowned. She is, in the broadest sense of the word, an "Artist." McLeod has gone to extreme lengths to discover the most appropriate means of creating works for diverse groups of people while trying to remain true to her own ideals and instincts.

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1These are the opening lines taken from the ancient Maori Creation poetry, in The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse, selected and introduced by Allen Curnow (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1960), 79.
This thesis will investigate the life and music of Jenny McLeod. I propose to examine her constant reinterpreting and reworking of issues that she considers important. This study will focus on McLeod's struggle to find a balance between three needs: the needs of the composer, and the needs of those who perform and listen to a composer's music. To balance these ideals McLeod has drawn on many sources of inspiration over the years. As a result, her career as a composer appears at first glance to be rather sporadic and incomplete. Throughout her career, however, McLeod was working constantly towards satisfying the needs outlined above. When examining the development of New Zealand music during the second half of the twentieth century, I believe that these issues are the same as those confronting all New Zealand artists. The life and music of Jenny McLeod are a representative example of the emergence of a distinctive "voice" in New Zealand music.

McLeod's heritage has been an important influence on her life. She has a great respect for the lives and work of her ancestors, and believes that knowledge of her family has given her a sense of belonging to a tribe -- a feeling that she could draw strength from her strong family background. This background comprises a colorful potpourri of different nationalities, including Scottish, Irish, English, and French lines of descent. Through these lines music and the arts feature prominently. The Clan McLeod, for example, were responsible for developing the tradition of Highland pipe music, while a French ancestor, Perrin, was one of the co-founders of the Royal Opera in Paris, in 1669. McLeod's more recent past, however, is firmly rooted in New Zealand -- her relatives were on the first vessels to sail into Dunedin and Wellington, over one hundred and fifty years ago. McLeod's ancestors lived alongside the native people of New Zealand, working with them, and sharing the land. The way McLeod interprets her work in the light of these peoples is a theme that will be developed throughout this study.

There are two distinct groups of people in New Zealand: the Maori and the European people. It is important to focus briefly on these two cultures, and the way they
were brought together in the early nineteenth century, as McLeod has been influenced by both groups. There will follow a discussion that explores the important changes that have taken place in the arts in New Zealand this century, what caused these changes, and how composers responded to them.

Approximately a thousand years before European pioneers arrived in New Zealand another group of sea-faring explorers, the Maori, discovered landfall in the farthest corner of the Southwest Pacific Ocean. The Maori people learned to adapt to this land they had named Aotearoa. They introduced their culture and mythology, in the form of songs and dances, to Aotearoa. Passed on by word of mouth, their legends tell of the creation and trials of ancient gods and heroes, whose deeds formed the earth as they understand it to be.

Because the language of the Maori was only transmitted orally in pre-colonial times, music became a very important part of this society. Songs were used as a medium through which to pass on ancient knowledge, tribal teaching, and stories. Women were prominent musicians in Maori society, both as composers and performers. Each tribe acknowledged their outstanding composers, holding them in high regard. The songs of the Maori are arranged according to their use or function within the society. The karanga, for example, were performed by women welcoming visitors to their marae. Other groups of songs include laments to the dead (waiata tangi), lullabies (oriori), love songs (waiata aroha), and prayers (karakia). Given the spiritually based ideology of the Maori, the karakia were the most sacred of all songs, and also the most numerous. The words embodied within the music acknowledge and respect the land, the spirits of the dead, and the Maori Gods. The poetry is powerful, often metaphorical.

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2 Aotearoa -- Land of the Long White Light -- was given in response to the long periods of twilight experienced in New Zealand. This phenomenon results from the country's low latitude in the Pacific Ocean.

3 The marae is the area of land directly in front of the sacred, carved meeting house in the center of a village.

4 Unfortunately this study does not have the time or space available to pursue a detailed account of the wonderful music of the Maori people. Excellent research on this topic is, however, available. Elsdon Best's Games and Pastimes of the Maori (Wellington: Whitecombe and Tombs Ltd., 1925), offers a lengthy account of songs and instruments used by the Maori. See also Mervyn McLeary and Margaret Orbell, Traditional Songs of the Maori (Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1975), which attempts to notate many of these songs.
The music that accompanied the poetry was centered around a droning tone. The melody usually stayed within the range of a fifth, moving mainly by steps upwards or downwards from the droning note. Sliding micro-tonal embellishments and grace notes were often included by a soloist to add interest and shape to the melody. Group singing was an important feature of Maori society; however, the songs were usually sung at the unison so as not to interfere with the text. A strong rhythmic pulse is evident in Maori music, particularly in war dances and action songs.

The arrival of European settlers in the nineteenth century divided Maori society. There were those Maori who wanted to continue in the ways dictated by their traditions, and those who wanted to absorb the ideas and features introduced by the Pakeha.\(^5\) This division was particularly marked with respect to music. The two major European influences on Maori music were sailors and missionaries, the latter having the greatest impact. The missionaries sought to change the Maori by establishing European etiquette and values in their society. The Maori were particularly encouraged to accept the doctrine of Christianity. The singing of hymns and chanting of scriptures in the Western, Protestant tradition exposed the Maori to tremendous new musical possibilities. The sailors, on the other hand, had arrived with the intention of exploiting the treasures of a new land. Maori people were contracted to work on their ships or in ports, often in exchange for guns, ammunition, blankets, and tobacco. It was here the Maori came into contact with seashanties and other light, secular forms. Along with these new vocal possibilities came new timbres and textures in the form of Western instruments, most notably brass and woodwind instruments, but also the sounds of the piano and strings. These features have since become integrated into the music of the Maori. However, the importance of music in this society, as a social phenomenon, has been retained.

McLeod has spent many years studying Maori language, culture, and mythology. She feels a strong, spiritual bond with the Maori people which has passed into much of her

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5Pakeha -- lit. "not of this land" -- is the name given by the Maori to the "fair-skinned" settlers.
work. Her respect and admiration is reflected in works like *Earth and Sky* (1968) and *He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are one people)* (1993). McLeod feels that she is part of the land in which she lives; in this way she is no longer *Pakeha* but *Maori*.

If there is a dominant feature in the colonization of New Zealand by the *Pakeha* it is the successful transplanting of "Victorian" British society into these Islands (half a world from Great Britain). The early pioneers were selected on the basis of qualities that would enhance the colony. The selection process appealed to many prospective immigrants, as one contemporary account expresses:

> It was traditional to stress that the pioneers were not refugees or convicts but "selected stock". New Zealand, it had been proclaimed since 1840, was, and would be, the "Britain of the South." It was the Britishness of the colony which most impressed its white population and the many visitors who wrote travel books about it.⁶

A result of the colonization process was that small, motivated communities began to emerge in different parts of New Zealand. Today many New Zealand towns and cities bear the marks of early colonial settlements. These remnants exist in the form of structures and monuments, and in social traditions that are still evident in these towns. The city of Dunedin presents a good example of the way a town was influenced by the nationality of its founders. It was first settled by Scottish people in the first half of the nineteenth century.

As a result it developed a strong tradition of pipe bands and social singing. McLeod went to elementary school in Timaru, a town just north of Dunedin, and believes that her love of pipe bands and Scottish music is in part related to her childhood years in this area. Other societies also established their musical traditions in New Zealand. The growth of Auckland, in contrast to Dunedin, reflected the establishment of a different cultural life. Within its boundaries could be found a vibrant, aristocratic, British society that took pride

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in Auckland's prominent cultural life. A similar social life developed in Wellington after the first colonial ships entered the harbor in 1840.7

McLeod has been strongly influenced by the sense of community music that still exists in New Zealand towns. She believes this is a unique feature of New Zealand music, a feature which she has tried to enhance through her music. In her opinion the "New Zealand voice" is not reflected in the European concert hall environment, but in other styles of music making: popular music, brass bands, pipe bands, and light opera. An important feature of these groups is that they are comprised mostly of amateur performers -- a fact which enhances the spirit of "community" in what they do.

For the whole of the nineteenth century, and through the first decades of the twentieth-century, the idea that Britain was still "home" was important to the people of New Zealand. There was no desire to discover a "New Zealand voice" at this time. It is in the years following the Great War of 1914, however, that important changes began to take place in the way New Zealand people viewed their country and the role New Zealand played in a rapidly developing world. Now there emerged a new generation of New Zealanders -- people who had been born and raised in New Zealand, although many were of European descent. This was a generation who knew the stories and songs of the "homelands" which had been passed on by parents and grandparents, but related to them in a "New Zealand" context. They considered themselves "New Zealanders," and wanted to understand what exactly this implied.

These feelings of change were reflected by a generation of painters and poets who began to depict what they believed to be the real New Zealand. They pieced together a history of "deserts and dragons" as well as the "forests, fountains and fine prospects" that had enticed the early adventurers.8. These artists were reflecting a sentiment that had gained momentum as New Zealand forces entered the Great War in 1914 and found

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renewed strength as the world plummeted into the Depression of the thirties. Artists were now questioning what it really was to be a New Zealander. Looking back from today we might view it as a desperate search for some semblance of a cultural identity.\textsuperscript{9}

As has been seen through history, music is often slow to reflect the change in other art forms. In New Zealand this was no exception. Until the 1940's the country's most recognized composer, considered by many to have been New Zealand's first professional composer, was Alfred Hill (1870-1960).\textsuperscript{10} Hill incorporated many elements of Maori music into his own work and encouraged young Maori children to continue learning the songs and dances of their heritage. His music has been described rather affectionately as being "...nineteenth century in substance...yet with individual touches of charm and manner."\textsuperscript{11} Critics view him as a composer writing European music in a foreign land, but his work was important in laying a foundation for the changes that would take place in New Zealand music in the middle of the century.

In the 1940's the young composer, Douglas Lilburn (1915-), realized that New Zealand composers needed to follow the lead already taken by other New Zealand artists. Lilburn believed it was time they discovered what it meant to be a composer in New Zealand, for themselves. In 1946, at the first Cambridge Summer School of Music held in Waikato, he presented a talk to a group of young composers.\textsuperscript{12} He highlighted the need to find a New Zealand voice and urged those assembled to follow his example. He pointed to the nation's lack of any folk song or "serious" music tradition that could give composers the freedom to search for a unique character, separate from overseas trends. His words were an inspiration that brought together a group of serious composers for the first time.

These people identified with the problems they shared, living in a small country in a

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid. This changing sentiment is well reflected in Cumow's introduction and in his poetry.
\textsuperscript{11}John M. Thomson, \textit{The Oxford History of New Zealand Music}, 220.
\textsuperscript{12}Cambridge is a small country town that lies in the heart of Waikato, New Zealand. It is the site of an important summer music school, established by Owen Jensen in 1946. The school was established at a time when New Zealand artists were beginning to strive towards finding some sort of "national identity," a way of having their work reflect a New Zealand perspective.
geographically remote part of the world. The composers were, however, united in a feeling that a change was about to happen. Lilburn knew he had sown the seeds of change. He also realized, however, that change takes time and that much work needed to be done before distinct patterns, consciously or sub-consciously, would emerge. Lilburn expressed this realization in a rather candid manner:

Stanford summed it up... talking about the many pupils who had passed through his hands at the Royal College; "No cream" he said, "without plenty of milk". So what I'm suggesting to you is that we've produced no cream as yet, but only a dribble of milk and that it's going to take plenty of milk.13

Jenny McLeod was just a young child when Lilburn began promoting the need for change in New Zealand music. Through her childhood, she was unaware of such conflicts being discussed in “serious” music circles. Her early years, however, were full of music making as part of New Zealand's community environment. She was taught how to read music at an early age and found it to be a skill that came very naturally to her. McLeod’s family left Timaru in 1955, and moved north to Levin when she began her High School education. This represented a significant cultural change for McLeod. Levin (located in the traditionally Maori area of Horowhenua) has much stronger associations with the Maori people than does Timaru (with its predominantly Scottish background). McLeod became actively involved with both personal and community musical activities in Levin: from accompanying school and church choirs, to playing for weddings and funerals, and playing in a small band with her two brothers.

Through these experiences she came to understand the importance of tailoring activities such as music to the needs of specific people and places. This idea was enhanced in 1958 when she spent her final year of High School studying in Decatur, Illinois, as an American Field Scholar. She found the standard of music making at Decatur High School

to be very high, but discovered that they were performing the same music that she heard other American schools and ensembles perform. In contrast, what impressed her about school music back in New Zealand was that she often performed music specifically intended for their groups. McLeod took pride in this fact: it was their music, written for them, and performed by them.

It has been said that New Zealand music in the fifties and sixties was "Ten years behind the times" as compared to trends overseas. This is understandable, as communication technology was then less advanced. Many young composers ventured overseas during this time, mostly to Britain, to experience what was going on in the "real world." In the sixties a new generation of composers, including McLeod, began to look further afield. They traveled to Europe and the United States, where contemporary trends were being set. It is interesting to note that many of these composers venturing overseas returned home eventually to base their work in New Zealand.

Why was this? In McLeod's case, she left her country in 1964 to study in Paris with Messiaen. She then traveled to Basel one summer to study with Boulez before going on to Cologne, to study with Stockhausen. Here she was surrounded by some of the most advanced developments in music, ideas that one did not have a chance to get involved with back in New Zealand. McLeod embraced the new principles she encountered and looked for a way to relate to this new music in terms of her New Zealand background. She found success exploring these new idioms. The highpoint of her work in Europe was For Seven (1966), a piece that has been performed on many occasions. But she decided to leave Europe, with its centuries of musical heritage, and return to New Zealand in 1967.

She returned to a country that was undergoing tremendous developments in all aspects of society. The changes were witnessed in such areas as health, education, city developments, and the arts -- this had happened as a result of a stable Government in power and a period of substantial economic growth. The number of students pursuing a college education in the 1960's had increased dramatically. There was a drive for New
Zealand society to keep up with the latest overseas developments, as well as a growing interest in reviving the heritage and traditional values of the Maori. When McLeod returned in 1967 she took up a lecturing position at Victoria University, Wellington. Here she was able to relate the latest overseas trends to students and colleagues. She was also able to pursue certain New Zealand ideals with which she still identified. Her love for *Maoritanga* for instance, particularly the Maori creation poetry, inspired her critically acclaimed work, “Earth and Sky” (1968).

In 1969 Douglas Lilburn presented a second lecture, a reflection on the intervening 23 years since "A search for tradition" (1946). His talk noted the increased opportunities composers now had to write and have their music performed. He continued to urge composers to find a way to express the relationship between musical language and their own experience: "International influences may give our work manner, environment should give it character." New Zealand composers responded to Lilburn's plea. In the decade that followed they incorporated a vast array of international trends and music from different cultures into their work. It was an important stimulus for some, a point of concern for many. McLeod's work at this time reflects this trend towards diversity. She tried to find a spontaneous way of composing that reflected a developing New Zealand society. She believed that popular music represented the true expression of this society and tried to show this in her music. But at least one critic, Frederick Page, noted the lack of unity in the efforts of New Zealand composers in the seventies:

> It is the lack of voice that I noticed in much of the new music that came forward. I listened dutifully, I made notes but I sometimes found myself with nothing to say because nothing was being said.

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15 *Maoritanga* — knowledge of Maori culture and society.
Was it really a lack of voice? Or does it reflect a time when artists were taking the international ideas they had absorbed and using them as a stimulus for their own work in a New Zealand context? At the time these new trends might have made no sense to the critics, but if we look back now these changes can be seen in a new light: "plenty of milk" is important for growth.

New genres had become important to composers like McLeod, especially multimedia events and works in the electronic medium. There was also a desire among composers to see their music performed and promoted, which led to the formation of CANZ in 1975, and the staging of the first "Sonic Circus" in Wellington the same year.¹⁸ Not only was this a chance to get new works performed, but it also promoted substantial interaction among New Zealand composers. This was a difficult but exciting time for composers. They sought ways to express their music as New Zealanders, being true to themselves while making their work accessible to both the public and performers. In recent years their hard work has begun to pay dividends in the form of increased public awareness and respect. But at what cost has this been achieved? Is the successful New Zealand artist catering too much to public demand? It will become evident in later chapters that this issue is a major concern McLeod has worked through in her career.

I would like to propose that McLeod, and other composers, performers and critics of her age and experience, form a generation that succeeded in establishing a real sense of New Zealand tradition in their work. It was not the work of one person that brought this idea to fruition, but the collective efforts of many. McLeod's work in the years following her return from Europe exemplify this growth. She will be revealed as an artist who has striven to find a voice that reflects her intimate understanding of the land she comes from, and the changes that are continually evolving in all aspects of this complex society. Jenny

¹⁸CANZ (the Composers Association of New Zealand) and The Sonic Circus (an irregularly staged, multimedia event that features the works of many New Zealand composers) have been important vehicles for the promotion of new music in New Zealand. The organization and aims of the first three "Sonic's" are discussed by David Farquhar in the CANZ Newsletter (October, 1965), 1-3.
McLeod holds an important position in New Zealand music. It is a place that is representative of a country discovering its own voice in the wilderness.
CHAPTER 2: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Not I, some child, born in a marvelous year,
Will learn the trick of standing upright here.¹

Nineteen-sixty-one must be considered an important year in this study, for it marks the beginning of McLeod's university education. It was during her three years of study at Victoria University, New Zealand, and then later as she pursued her studies in France, that her most influential musical associations were made. Through these years McLeod was given the opportunities to explore and develop both the musical skills and mental powers that would keep her actively questioning the mundane, striving to have her music express what she wanted, through her active career. Two men in particular were instrumental in influencing McLeod's career -- Frederick Page and Oliver Messiaen -- whom she came to regard as not just her mentors but also her friends.

This chapter will concentrate on the formative years of McLeod's work, 1961 - 1967. During these years she received essential technical and background education in music, skills required for all musicians. McLeod was given opportunities to hear, compose and perform music in a wide variety of forms and styles. This was a time when she came into contact with important influences that developed both her character and work. It was the period when she proved to herself and her teachers that there were many bold and beautiful strokes in her pen. McLeod established her desire to achieve success as a composer.

When McLeod left Horowhenua College in 1959, her sights were not set on undertaking a music degree at university. She actually put off university life for eighteen months while she worked on a horticultural research station just outside of Levin. The plan then was eventually to begin a Bachelor of Arts degree with the aim of becoming a teacher.

After she attended the Cambridge Music School at the end of 1960, McLeod changed her plans dramatically.

By the time McLeod attended the Cambridge Music School it had become an important gathering point for young artists. The aims of the school were established at the initial gathering in 1946, where the young composer, Douglas Lilburn, was invited to be the resident composer.\(^2\) Lilburn, accepting the invitation, presented a talk which outlined the difficulties facing young composers working in a country whose musical inheritance was derived from an eclectic variety of international sources.\(^3\) He stressed the need for composers to discover their own identity as New Zealanders, urging them to be selective with the external and internal influences they chose to express. Most importantly he recognized that these ideas would take time to develop: composers, working individually, would one day be able to look back on all their work as a collective whole and there see the emergence of a New Zealand voice. This talk proved to be an inspiration to successive generations of young composers and musicians.

The questions and challenges raised by Lilburn were as important, and relevant, to McLeod in 1960 as they had been when the talk was presented fourteen years earlier. I believe that, in her own way, McLeod was challenged by and found her own answers to the issues Lilburn identified.

McLeod became part of the music-making at Cambridge in 1960 ("ten days where everyone was as mad about music as I was"), where she found, to her surprise, just how vital contemporary music could be. The idea that you did not have to be dead to be a

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\(^2\) Douglas Lilburn (1915 - ) is now one of New Zealand's most celebrated composers. He left New Zealand in the 1930s to study composition with Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music, London. Although the influence of his teacher, and of Sibelius, are prominent in his music, Lilburn is renowned as a New Zealand composer with an authentic New Zealand voice. His music evokes a real and powerful landscape that had earlier not been achieved. In the 1940s he had become aware of changes taking place in art and in literature, as New Zealand artists struggled to establish a national "tradition" in the arts, and worked hard to promote similar ideals in music circles. Lilburn's importance in preparing a path for composers such as McLeod must not be underestimated. Detailed information on this remarkable man and his work can be found in John Thomson's *The Oxford History of New Zealand Music* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991).

\(^3\) This talk has since been published as Douglas Lilburn, *A Search for Tradition*, introduced by John M. Thomson (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1985).
composer was refreshing to her and, as a result of that summer, she put off all thoughts of
an Arts degree. McLeod enrolled in the music program at Victoria University, beginning
her studies in composition with Lilburn.

For McLeod, university offered a life where contemporary music came alive. She
found Lilburn's commitment, concern, and love of music stimulating. She greatly admired
the diversity of character and technique he incorporated into his work. Lilburn's influence
on McLeod's early compositions is evident in her pieces from these years. She firmly
maintains that rather than consciously imitating her teacher she made a point of doing things
that were unexpected.4 Nevertheless, works such as Cambridge Suite (1962) and Little
Symphony (1963) reflect the spacious, "New Zealand" sound for which Lilburn had
become known. The clear, open phrases and balanced structures of these works are
reminiscent of such pieces as Lilburn's Diversions (1947) and the overture Aotearoa
(1940). Other similarities exist in the style of these two composers: short, rhythmic
phrases; certain orchestral colors; and a clear and simple harmonic language. These
elements are evident in their works from this period.

Being a student at university, however, involves much more than mere academic
learning. It is an environment that develops independence and confidence, as well as life-
long friendships. These important qualities were enhanced and encouraged in McLeod by
the couple she refers to as her "real parents": Frederick and Evelyn Page.

In 1946 Frederick Page was invited to be the first music lecturer in New Zealand.
He helped many generations of young students through school with his personality,
enthusiasm for music, and a love of life that few could resist.5 As McLeod has written:

...his sheer love of the human spirit, his life long concern
that it should broaden, deepen, become stronger, more

4From private correspondence with McLeod.
5Frederick Page is another extraordinary figure in the history of New Zealand music. His life, and the
impact it had on others, are beautifully detailed in Frederick Page: A Musicians Journal ed. John Thomson
compassionate, more dynamic...just more. For him the person was paramount.6

Page believed it was important for his students to hear and to appreciate new trends in "serious" music. McLeod acknowledges this as an important part of her increasing awareness of contemporary European music. Page was intent on trying to keep up with the latest overseas developments, so much so that when McLeod eventually returned from Europe in 1966 he insisted on receiving instruction in the latest Continental ideas. The Pages had the personal philosophy that music was a small part of a greater whole, a belief that was passed on to McLeod and remains with her today. She notes that

....they taught me a whole lot more about "quality" -- in art, in books, in films, in music, in food, in conversation, in laughter -- in short, quality in living. From Fred and Eve I learned how to really look, to really listen and to really taste.7

The influence of Frederick Page on McLeod's musical development can thus be witnessed both directly and indirectly. In practical terms, he tutored her in piano and was one of her professors while she was at university. He also encouraged her to expand her concepts of "music" to accommodate a more universal understanding; to become receptive not only to the works of others but also to her own ideas. She remembers Page as being a man who loved life and the people that were part of it. He loved beauty in anything, yet would speak his mind if someone, or something, failed to match up to the standards he expected. For the young McLeod, now intent on a career composing music, her association with Page was timely, and his influence served as an important guide to the dramatic changes taking place in her life and work in years to come. "An immortal friend" is how McLeod describes Frederick Page, truly a precious gift for her.

6Jenny McLeod, ibid. 166.
7From part of a letter written by McLeod in response to a questionnaire she was asked to complete. It is part of a collection of private papers held by the composer.
New Zealand, in the mid-1960's, was still a country far removed from the rest of the world in many respects. The situation, however, was slowly changing. Since World War II New Zealand had been advancing steadily in national political and social reform. There were also notable developments in the field of music. Increased Government spending saw the establishment of a National Symphony Orchestra and the New Zealand Ballet Company. The Government also contributed towards the increase of funds available to support "Composer in Residence" projects and overseas study for promising young artists. Nonetheless, there was a feeling that New Zealand was still ten years behind the times with respect to trends overseas.\textsuperscript{8} A great many young musicians were completing their education in New Zealand, and furthering their studies overseas was the next logical step. McLeod felt this need; she headed for France and the opportunity to study with Olivier Messiaen.

The decision to study with Messiaen had come about after McLeod heard a recording of his Quartet for the End of Time at the Cambridge Music School in 1965. She recalls this performance as being a revelation, driving her to discover more about this man's work. She knew then that she had to study with Messiaen.\textsuperscript{9} Later that year she performed the piano piece Cantéyodjâ, the first live performance of a work by Messiaen to be heard in the country. Here then was her chance to immerse herself in the European avant-garde scene by studying with some of the most acclaimed composers of the twentieth century. In terms of her development as a composer, this decision to travel was an important one, for the musical languages of Lilburn and Messiaen lie poles apart. To advance in her own directions McLeod needed to have the experience of working with both

\textsuperscript{8}"Ten years behind the times" is how many people viewed New Zealand's position in music at this time. From interviews I conducted with people who composed, studied and taught in the 1960's, I found there to be a consensus that "Yes, we were ten years behind the times, but that was because we were following the ideas we wanted, not slavishly following overseas trends." How the arts were affected by social and political changes at that time is given a brief airing in "The National Government and Social Change," by Barry Gustafson, in The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand, ed. Keith Sinclair (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1990), 267-294.

\textsuperscript{9}Through conversations with McLeod and close study of documents held in her private collection, one realizes just how strong was her conviction to study with Messiaen. As far as she was concerned, there were no other alternatives at this time.
styles. Having satisfied herself that she had mastered the skills Lilburn had taught her, she believed it was time to move on and broaden her understanding of music. She needed to realize her own potential as a composer. McLeod refers to her need to travel as satisfying her curiosity, to find out what was out there.\textsuperscript{10} It is here that we clearly see an important characteristic of McLeod's nature that provides an essential connecting thread despite the varied directions her work has taken. For McLeod, music must always be a process of discovery. When this element is gone she feels a real deadness in her work and begins to seek out new directions in which her energies can be focused.\textsuperscript{11} This was the case in 1964 as McLeod set sail for Paris and the famous composition class taught by Messiaen.

Boulez, a composer and former student of Messiaen, once remarked that Messiaen's pupils were "marked for life". This was something McLeod discovered as she began studies in composition with Messiaen. His music, and long term friendship, were an important influence in McLeod's development as a composer and in her growth and awareness of music as a powerful vehicle for expression. McLeod recalls the time she spent in Paris as an intense mental and spiritual experience. Although this was not her first major overseas expedition it was still not an easy transition. McLeod had to come to terms with a new culture while keeping up with the academic expectations of her professors. This proved difficult, especially with her limited grasp of the French language -- an obstacle complicated by Messiaen's poor English.

McLeod believes that this was the period in which she began to approach music in a highbrow, intellectual way in order to come to satisfactory terms with the diverse concepts found in avant-garde music. This is a goal that was shared by other New Zealand composers who desired to look beyond Britain -- to Europe, to the United States and to Asia -- to find the sources of intense theoretical developments in the field of music. Was this the attraction that Europe held for McLeod?

\textsuperscript{10}From interviews conducted with McLeod, June - August, 1993.
\textsuperscript{11}ibid.
In her Conservatoire class McLeod found she was able to focus on many of the elements she loved in music. Analysis was one topic that greatly interested McLeod. Messiaen's own love of analysis encouraged McLeod to develop a skilled and creative understanding of the musical and structural interest that lies within a composition. He exposed her to new ways in which the fundamental elements of music -- timbre, melody, text, rhythm, dynamics, texture, structure and harmony -- could be presented within a work. Three elements in particular became dominant features in McLeod's later writing: structures, sound and rhythm. Messiaen also introduced her to new concepts and new ways to think about music. She was learning to use and hear new colors and timbres (which reflected some of the most striking aspects of Messiaen's music) in ways that were far removed from the things she had learned back home.

Much has been written regarding Messiaen, his life, and his skill as a composer so I will not dwell on these areas. What I will relate, however, are some of McLeod's first-hand accounts of her acquaintance with this important figure.

In a radio presentation in April 1993, McLeod attempted to relate the impact that Messiaen had on her:

Of course, I'm very tempted...to describe his childlike quality, his "larger-than-life-ness"; his contagious enthusiasm and wonder at things, the way he drew you into his world whenever he spoke, how he treated you completely as an equal, and simply ignored all your deference and shyness; to describe his warmth, his frankness, eagerness, spontaneity, wildness, braveness; how he constantly and quite naturally did and said little things that showed his affection, understanding, and concern for you...\(^{13}\)

\(^{12}\)There are two biographies on Messiaen that I found particularly useful: Roger Nichols, \textit{Messiaen} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), and Clara H. Bell, \textit{Olivier Messiaen} (Boston: Twayne, 1984).

\(^{13}\)Taken from \textit{Composer of the Week}, an illustrated talk for Radio New Zealand, Concert FM, 25 April 1993, by Jenny McLeod.
McLeod found that Messiaen's teaching style, influenced by his composing, was very personal; analysis projects he assigned were often taken from the music he was working on at the time. She maintained a close friendship with Messiaen, keeping in contact with him up until his death in 1993 (this included a brief visit to Paris in 1987). From her days as a student, she recalls the excitement of hearing several of his works premiered: the private performance of Et Expecto (1964) at the Holy Chapel in Paris, and the first performance of Colours of the Celestial City (1963), which to her surprise contained New Zealand bird song. McLeod's contact with Messiaen had a profound impact on her work, although it was not until much later that she became completely aware of the full importance of her association with him. As she now reflects:

He revealed to me a musical world of incomparable colour and imagination; but even more importantly he was a living example, at the very highest level, of pure love and humility.\(^\text{14}\)

McLeod's most notable achievement during her study abroad was a work for a small ensemble, For Seven, completed in 1966. This work can be seen as a culmination of many of the new ideas she had been learning to work with, and hence as her emergence as a mature composer. It has become one of her most celebrated pieces, and arguably the most important example of avant-garde and serial techniques to come from the hand of a New Zealand composer during this period.

For Seven was first performed in the final concert at Stockhausen's music course in Cologne, then later by Bruno Maderna at the Darmstadt and Berlin festivals. Its significance and impact on New Zealand music is evident in the continued attention lavished on the work.\(^\text{15}\) Proportions based on numeric ratios form an integral part of this work, which is conceived around a symmetrical structure and divided into three main parts.

\(^\text{14}\)From personal papers held by McLeod, written in 1993.
\(^\text{15}\)The most recent performance of For Seven was at the New Zealand Women's Music Festival, Wellington, August 1993.
McLeod uses ratios to determine pitch and rhythm which later become the basis of written out *accelerandi* and *ritardandi*. Another important feature is the relationship between foreground and background material. McLeod blurs their boundaries in an attempt to provide more color to the work, by occasionally letting the "background" ideas break through, thus creating more interest within the ensemble. This work represents McLeod's most serious attempt at systematizing rhythm, in an idiom that she would nonetheless soon reject. Looking back on the work, McLeod now feels she understands *For Seven* in ways that were not evident to her earlier. Originally she had not conceived the piece in terms of representing anything; instead she was thinking only in very abstract terms. Now, however, she can see the intense imagery others perceive in the music: sub-consciously composed sounds that reflect the bird song and insect life of a New Zealand forest.\(^{16}\)

By the end of 1966, McLeod was ready to return to New Zealand. This marks a significant point in her career: it represents a conscious decision to leave Europe, where she could have continued to work successfully. She chose to leave Europe and bring her energy and ideas back to New Zealand and the small group of people who would understand the avant-garde sounds and structures she had encountered. Her formal training was complete for now; she was ready to move ahead.

From 1961 to 1966 Jenny McLeod met many figures that became important and influential in her life. Her contact with Frederick Page had opened her eyes to the opportunities life held and how to make the most of these opportunities. Messiaen, on the other hand, not only became a life-long friend, but a mentor that McLeod looked up to like no other. I believe, however, that these relationships would have been for naught if it were not for certain inner qualities possessed by McLeod: qualities that would surface after her return to New Zealand. They would challenge her to reexamine and question every musical principle she had earlier accepted. Her personality drove her to find a way to satisfy not

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\(^{16}\)An important analysis of *For Seven* was undertaken by McLeod, who offers interesting insights into the process and detail that went into such an integrated work. In Jenny McLeod "The Composer Speaks: Jenny McLeod on *For Seven,*" *Music in New Zealand* (Spring 1992), 29-31.
just the desires of the performer and audience but also her own needs as a composer. The chapter four will focus on these issues.
CHAPTER 3: "PIANO PIECE 1965": AN ANALYSIS

What we express has in some way to be real, true to life, and original. By "original," I mean that which is our own, which has the true spark of life -- and not necessarily something which is merely "different" or "new."¹

In 1964 McLeod left New Zealand to study composition in Paris with Oliver Messiaen. A result of her contact with European avant-garde music and ideas was that her own approach to music became much more intellectual. Two important compositions were penned during her travels in Europe: Piano Piece 1965 (1965), and For Seven (1967). Both works are highly detailed in their conception and intricately constructed. They show McLeod coming to terms with the new ideas and serial techniques that composers such as Messiaen, Boulez, and Stockhausen were incorporating into their music at this time.

In this chapter I will focus on Piano Piece 1965, examining the formal implications of McLeod's composition. This work won second prize in the "1965 Class of Messiaen" composition competition and reveals McLeod's skills in European avant-garde serial techniques.

Piano Piece 1965 is a work in one movement for solo piano. It is divided into nine sections; each is separated by fermatas and interact to create a large arch form that pivots around the middle section, section five (Fig. 1). The opening four sections are mirrored in the second half through recurring rhythmic patterns, pitch group material, and tempi. These ideas will be discussed as we proceed through the analysis.

The pitch material is derived from a twelve-tone row stated in the right hand in the opening measures (Fig. 2).² By modifying the prime-row a twelve-by-twelve-note matrix can be generated. The row-forms of this matrix become the basis of pitch groups from

¹Jenny McLeod, taken from "A Composer's Choices," an address delivered at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Louisville Symphony Orchestra (September 1987).
²It has been brought to my attention that this row resembles that used by Webern in his Konzert, op. 24.
which McLeod constantly draws material. The initial row gives prominence to certain intervals, particularly the half-step (which occurs four times), the major third (occurring three times) and the minor third (occurring twice). There is also a perfect fourth and a whole step within the row. The half-step is featured prominently throughout Piano Piece 1965, although it is often disguised by inversion (as a major seventh) or octave displacement. The next two dominant intervals are the whole-step and the minor third. These too are often inverted or played in different octaves, but the essential color of the groups is retained and obvious to the ear.

(Fig. 2)

Another feature of McLeod's use of the row is that it is often partitioned into four-note groups. These can then be reordered according to interval size (from smallest to largest). All of the pitch-sets have their own properties and distinctive sounds, and are used as important building blocks within the work (Fig. 3). With the exception of section six, McLeod constantly uses pitch material taken from the matrix formed by the original row. Her treatment of this pitch material, however, reveals McLeod's interest in

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3From this point I will incorporate the system of numbering intervals promoted by Peter Schat and his theory of the "Tone Clock" (Peter Schat, The Tone Clock (Amsterdam: Hardwood Academic Publishers, 1993), 57-73). A half-step = 1, a whole-step = 2, a minor third = 3, etc. Thus, the group G♯ B C can be referred to as 3+1, or simply 3 1.
distinctive colors and sounds of each group. She often chooses not to adhere to the twelve-tone practice of keeping notes strictly in the order in which they appear in each row. An example of this occurs in the very opening statement of the prime-row, where in m. 3 the C is repeated after the E (Fig. 4). If, however, this note is considered in a horizontal context, as part of the first eighth-note of m. 4, then the pitch-group G♯ B C (3 1) is revealed. This is the first statement of a tri-group, comprised of a half-step and a minor third, that serves as an important unifying idea throughout the work. A similar repetition occurs in the opening statement by the left hand, of P 7, in m. 9. Here the E is doubled, but in a horizontal context it becomes part of the tri-group E F G (1 2) -- this is another important motive in the piece.

(Fig.3)

(Fig.4)

4"Tri-group" denotes any group of three notes, a term I use in preference to "triad" in order to eliminate any tonal connotations of the latter. This idea will be expanded to include larger groups: "tetra-group," "penta-group," etc.
There are two important rhythmic motives that are developed throughout Piano Piece 1965 (Fig. 5). The first motive is a three-note pattern, comprised of one long and two short beats (L S S). The second rhythm is also a three-note pattern, but it contains a long, a medium, and a short beat (L M S). Permutations of these motives are treated in a way that is similar to the pitch material -- the patterns are often reordered or hidden in merging lines, as in m. 3 and m. 6.

McLeod presents the material she intends to develop through the piece in the opening section (mm. 1-13). The texture of this section is sparse, which enables all the material to be heard clearly. Tension is developed and maintained through abrupt rests and subtle swells in the dynamics. Through such techniques, the feeling that something powerful is about to happen is portrayed successfully to the listener.

(Fig.5)

Starting at m.14 (section two), McLeod begins to introduce small fragments of different rows. A feature of the fragments, indeed of the entire work, is that no importance is given to a particular version of the row. McLeod draws on a wide variety of groups, rarely repeating the same fragment. It should be noted here that the pitch-groups will appear both horizontally and vertically (e.g. mm. 24-25). If we use Schat technique to

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5When measure numbers are given please refer to the attached score. This will serve to create a proper context around the feature being discussed.
analyze the pitch-classes of different groups, we note an interesting feature: the groups McLeod selects are comprised largely of tetra-groups based on the two horizontal groups that were identified in the opening section (Fig. 6). M. 35 is an important climax because it marks the closing of section two. The climax is achieved by dramatically contrasting the dynamics, texture, and rhythm of this measure with what had previously been heard. Note also the introduction of the major third in the pitch-group of the chord, a very audible effect.

Section two begins a gradual accelerando, which will be continued in section three. The effect of this change in tempo is heightened in several ways: by a gradual thickening of the texture, by the use of commas to briefly break the line, and by incorporating crescendos that lead up to a comma then drop back immediately afterward (mm. 23, 28, and 34).

(Fig.6)

The third section is the longest in the work (mm.38-200). It continues to develop the accelerando through to a climax at m. 134 (piu allegro. $\cdot \cdot \cdot =144$). This section is also broken into smaller units, divided by commas. Again, a sense of gradually building towards a climax is achieved by a number of devices: the gradual layering of the texture; surging crescendos that suddenly drop away, only to come back with more intensity; and a flexible tempo that moves from $\cdot \cdot \cdot =120$ at the opening of the section, through $\cdot \cdot \cdot =138$ at m. 89, and finally reaches $\cdot \cdot \cdot =144$ in m. 134. After this point the tempo begins to drop back to $\cdot \cdot \cdot =120$. Variants of the rhythmic motives occur frequently in this section. However, McLeod now introduces quasi ostinato ideas that give drive and intensity to the work, and sustain the power once the climax is reached (m. 88). Pitch material is combined with these rhythmic ideas. The voices are gradually layered to give a group with
the interval-class 11, seen in the third tetra-group of the original row. Against this pattern is a complete statement of R10 (mm. 105-114). The climax is finally reached at m. 134, highlighted by punctuated chords treated in a similar manner to those of the second section. At m. 138 another ostinato section begins, once again emphasizing half-step and whole-step colors in the classes of the pitch-groups (Fig. 7). Against this, beginning at m. 146 is a counter subject based on the row I 5. McLeod releases the tension of this section by removing elements she had earlier intensified. She continues this idea through to m. 200, where all that remains is a slow, quiet, repeating half-step figure.

(Fig. 7)

In contrast to what has been heard previously, the fourth section (mm. 201-241) is less organized in terms of groups taken from the matrix. Emphasis is instead focused on interval-class relations and rhythmic variants. A link with the other sections is provided by the regular appearance of groups containing only half-steps and whole-steps. As was seen in other sections, these groups are often disguised by large intervals which are difficult for the eye to see, but which are often obvious to the ear.

Section five (mm.242-261), as mentioned earlier, serves as the pivot around which the outer sections are mirrored. It opens with a statement of P11. This is appropriate for the middle of the arch form as it is numerically the furthest row from P0. Features of earlier sections are evident here -- fragments of rows, important interval-classes, and variations on the two rhythmic patterns -- but the material is treated in a way that is rather sporadic and thus highlights the remoteness of this section to the outer sections.

The closing three sections closely resemble their opposite sections. Section six (mm. 262-293) restates the fragmented nature of section four, although different rows are drawn on for pitch material. It basically retains the tempi and length of its opposite section.
There is, however, a significant contrast in the dynamics: this section is much louder than was previously heard.

Section seven (mm. 294-361), although much shorter than section three, restates the dramatic climax to $\frac{1}{4} = 144$. Many similar ideas are reworked in this section -- compare, for example, mm. 303-322 with mm. 146-162. An important new feature introduced in this section is a two-part rhythmic canon a sixteenth-beat apart, that begins in m. 323. This is skilfully developed into a three-part canon at m. 330.

The penultimate section, mm. 363-427, is organized in a similar way to section two: the tempo is back down to $\frac{1}{4} = 100$, and there are three sections divided by commas. An interesting change in this section is that at m. 384 poco rit. is indicated. The equivalent point in section two is marked poco accel. (m. 23). This serves to emphasize the feeling that the end of the work is near. Once again, McLeod is using new pitch material in an interesting way. Measure 371 begins a passage that develops into a three-part texture. The middle line begins by stating the first six notes of R 5, then pivoting around the A flat, playing the last six notes of I 3 (the line now sounding as the top voice). The intervals of these two lines mirror each other. At the same time, the relationship between the A flat pivot note, and the notes on either side of the A flat, are a minor 3rd and a major 2nd -- two important features of the work (Fig. 8).

(Fig. 8)

The final section begins at m. 428. Various rows are clearly stated through this section while elements such as texture, dynamics, and tempo reflect the ideas that were stated in the opening. Notice how McLeod uses the last six notes of R 11 in m. 447, then mirrors the notes in m. 449. This is the last row to be heard before the final statement of the prime-row. The closing bars, beginning in m. 451, are interesting because the prime-
row only gradually unfolds -- the notes appear in order, but notes that have already been heard in the row are repeated around the other notes.

Although the work is based on a twelve-tone row, I was unable to find evidence to support the idea that she might have serialized elements such as rhythm, tempo, and dynamics. These elements, however, are treated in relation to the overall arch-form of the work.

*Piano Piece 1965* is a work that captures the imagination both visually and aurally. It demonstrates McLeod's competence in working in a genre that was relatively new to her. In any event, this is a serial work that draws on non-serialized aspects to create the underlying structure of the piece. McLeod does not let herself get caught in the restricting shackles of strict twelve-tone technique. As a result she is able to include unique and personal features into *Piano Piece 1965* that reveal her skill as a composer.
CHAPTER 4: YEARS OF CHANGE

I find I cannot separate the quality of a [person's] work from [their] quality as a human being...It provides a human experience rather than a merely aesthetic experience.¹

This study now enters an interesting, rewarding, yet difficult part of McLeod's career. McLeod left Europe to return to a position as a lecturer at Victoria University, New Zealand, in 1966. She found that because of her success in Europe she was immediately accepted as a leading authority on contemporary European music back home. McLeod had been planning to return to New Zealand, but coming back presented several crucial problems: how to incorporate what she had learned overseas into her work in New Zealand; how to cope with becoming a recognized public figure through publicity by the media; and how to have her music appreciated by those for whom it was composed. The problems she faced were not unique to her. The way she coped with them, however, serves to illustrate the issues that were important to young New Zealand artists in the closing years of the 1960s, through the 1970s, and into the 1980s. Two works in particular show us the important changes taking place in McLeod's approach to music: Earth and Sky (1967) and Under the Sun (1972).

The first problem concerns the influence overseas trends should have on New Zealand music. There were New Zealand musicians and critics who argued that rather than copying forms developed abroad, artistic expression should be allowed to emerge naturally from the community. Others believed that whatever fundamental types of artistic expression were imported, each would be modified to achieve a new character. Such modifications would happen in their own way through the creative interpretations of the New Zealanders who produced and performed the music.² This was an important issue

¹An extract taken from a brief, informal autobiography by McLeod, September 1982.
²Peter Tulloch, Dominion, 22 April 1987, 15.
for composers, performers, and critics. For McLeod this included a self-evaluation of her role as a composer and teacher, and the establishment of expectations in these fields.

A second consideration I wish to address in this chapter involves the role the media played in bringing public acclaim to McLeod's work. The influence of the media is particularly noticeable after the success of her multimedia spectacular, *Earth and Sky*, in 1968, and her appointment as Professor of Music at Victoria University, in 1971. Newspaper articles on McLeod offer a revealing insight into some of the personal issues she was struggling with at this time: success itself; what it was to be a role model for others as a New Zealand composer; how to find a balance between an intellectual perspective and a less sophisticated, more human approach to life and work; and the attempt to satisfy personal needs. It is important to realize that these ideas existed side by side in McLeod; each influenced the others. She was searching for a way to incorporate her varied experiences into her work: the influences of Europe, philosophical approaches she had adopted, the bond she felt with New Zealand, a love of Maori culture, and her desire to communicate with people. There is a negative side to such press coverage. It relates to the way events are portrayed, or what people say, often quite unintentionally, when a reporter asks questions that demand more than a brief, off-the-cuff answer. Examples of such answers are found in the interviews with McLeod in the mid-1970s. Many reporters chose to focus only on the sensational aspects of what she said; they often failed to portray adequately her efforts to understand the contrasting concepts of "popular" and "serious" music. Here was a time when she was rapidly moving away from the deadness she felt with "serious" music and exploring the new possibilities she saw in "pop" music.

When McLeod returned to New Zealand she was consumed by a highly intellectual approach to art. At this time, she believed she fully understood all there was to know about contemporary music. She passed on the high-powered intellectualism of Stockhausen and Boulez through her teaching. McLeod continued to develop this intellectual approach in the early 1970s, embracing the concepts of structuralism and aesthetic perception put forward

In 1967 McLeod received a commission from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council to compose a work for the 1968 Wairarapa Primary Schools' Annual Music Festival. The terms of the commission were to compose a work that was within the performing abilities of 250 local school children and amateur performers -- a sizable ensemble to work with, but with terrific production possibilities. This was an opportunity McLeod had been wanting. The commission presented her with a chance to incorporate her overseas experience with elements that were unique to New Zealand. She was also excited by the chance to work with a large number of enthusiastic, amateur performers, most of whom were children. Writing music that was accessible to children was an important consideration, as McLeod notes:

> I get so annoyed at the kinds of things adults make kids do in concerts, trying to make them do things that adults do but which children can't do very well at all. Children have their own strengths and I was quite sure I could write something for children to do in which they could take pride and which would really have an impact on the adults that came to watch.

With the support of an Arts Council grant she began work on the enormous, multimedia work, *Earth and Sky*. The inspiration for *Earth and Sky* can be traced back to McLeod's New Zealand upbringing and her love of Maori culture and language, which have been discussed in earlier chapters. A third source of inspiration came from a small

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3The commitment with which she pursued these theories was intense, and one can only speculate how her thinking would have developed if she had stayed in Europe. Eventually McLeod left teaching because she believed such concepts had progressed far beyond the abilities of her students.

4From a private interview with McLeod, 27 July 1993.

5Much of the music in *Earth and Sky* has already been discussed by other authors. I found the analysis by John Croft that appears in *Music in New Zealand* (Spring 1993), No.22, 20-24, particularly interesting as it examines the music in the light of McLeod's current work with the "Tone Clock" theory. For now I wish to focus my attention on the impact *Earth and Sky* had as a "New Zealand" work.
book of New Zealand poetry McLeod had carried throughout her travels in Europe.\textsuperscript{6} The works in this anthology had sustained her when life in Europe became frustrating and she found herself longing for home. Contained within this collection was a translation of the Maori Creation myth, a beautiful account of the creation of Life passed on in ancient Maori lore.\textsuperscript{7}

The third problem facing serious music in New Zealand was achieving recognition and support from the New Zealand public. In \textit{Earth and Sky} McLeod was looking to direct her music to a broader, if not less sophisticated audience than that at which she believed "serious" contemporary music was generally aimed. She was becoming frustrated with certain features she had experienced in contemporary art music, particularly the formality and control she felt was imposed by avant-garde composers. At the same time she wanted her music to be accessible to all New Zealanders, most of whom are largely ignorant of the new directions music has taken this century. \textit{Earth and Sky} was New Zealand music for New Zealand people. It represents a step forward in the direction that Lilburn had wanted when he first asked the question, "Where is a New Zealand voice in music?"\textsuperscript{8}

The results \textit{Earth and Sky} achieved were remarkable for many reasons. First, to conceive a work on the scale of \textit{Earth and Sky} is impressive: 3 large choirs; 2 small choirs; an orchestra of brass and percussion instruments, pianos, and an organ; a narrator (on tape); and countless hours of work from a dedicated production crew. Second, the work incorporated elements of dance, theater, solo and ensemble music, works of art painted by school children, lighting and sound effects. This was a multi-media spectacle on a scale that few New Zealanders had ever witnessed. At the time, \textit{Earth and Sky} was labeled by many critics as "the Great New Zealand Work." McLeod maintains that this had never been her intention in undertaking this work and denies that it ever deserved such status.

\textsuperscript{7}The opening lines of the Creation myth were used as the epigram to begin this thesis.
\textsuperscript{8}Douglas Lilburn, \textit{A Search for Tradition} (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1984), 5.
She does, however, admit that it reached out to people in a unique way: "There is no doubt that it was our thing that we were doing in New Zealand." She believes its success owes much to the talent and commitment of the children who took part and to the Maori poetry on which the work was based -- imagery that all New Zealanders can relate to on some level.

As is the case with any production, Earth and Sky received its share of negative criticism. Some reviewers found the extensive use of narration tended to be too specific, while dramatic tension between the different media involved was not fully exploited. They also felt that theatrically the climax of the production seemed to come at the end of the first act, which structurally was too early in the work. I, however, believe that the most important response came from the general public in New Zealand. It does not really matter whether they enjoyed the production. What is important is that they were stirred to respond in some way to what they experienced; they were responding to a New Zealand work.

The most popular way for the average New Zealander to voice an opinion is by writing letters to newspapers. Earth and Sky elicited this sort of action. "I left the theater tired and deafened by the pointless cacophony - so bad that some of the audience covered their ears" was how an anonymous writer to an Auckland newspaper described his experience of the production.

Such interest would not have been generated if this had been a work by a non-New Zealand composer. A foreign composer would be expected to present something unexpected; if it was unacceptable such a work could be easily forgotten. This was not possible with McLeod's work and the public responded, showing that they were in some way concerned with the state of music in New Zealand. Finding a New Zealand "voice" is something that involves the whole country, not just one or two figures. It takes time to establish identity in a bi-cultural country. It requires some sort of catalyst to stir people into

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9 Elizabeth Kerr, "Jenny McLeod Talks to Music in New Zealand", in Music in New Zealand (Spring 1988), 10.
11 From an anonymous letter to the Auckland Herald, 3 March 1970.
action. Lilburn's words had stirred composers into action in the 1940s; two decades later McLeod successfully transferred those ideals to a public that was finally ready to listen.

The idea of a strong sense of community involvement on all levels is a characteristic of New Zealand life. McLeod's achievement in *Earth and Sky* can be seen as an awakening to this ideal, and the possibilities within. Since the 1968 production in Masterton, *Earth and Sky* has been produced four times. McLeod believes that the performances in Tauranga came the closest to realizing her conception of the work -- as something for all people in a community to become involved with, and in which to take pride. The production of *Earth and Sky* staged in Auckland, in 1970, failed to realize McLeod's intentions. McLeod felt it was too sophisticated, too perfect in its conception. The adults in charge relegated the masses of children to tiers at the back of the stage, which was not what McLeod had intended. Such changes caused the production to fall short of the "New Zealand work" that the other productions had achieved.

What has been written so far might give the impression that Jenny McLeod had composed a work that had completely changed the course of New Zealand music. In a small way it did, but it was just one part of a much larger revolution. These were years that saw composers in New Zealand take a more investigative approach to their work. They were actively experimenting with ways to infuse New Zealand elements into their music. Many of these ideas were based on developments being made overseas, which composers had come in contact with during their travels. It is hard to find a suitable explanation for this surge of activity in the late 60s and early 70s. Perhaps it could be viewed as a period when New Zealand composers sought to undergo changes similar to those that composers in Europe and America had been subject to twenty years earlier. McLeod's work became

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13 Drawing from their experiences, both in New Zealand and overseas, composers were actively expanding the scope of music in many ways: Lilburn was now working with electronic sources having set up the first Electronic Music Studio in New Zealand in 1965; John Cousins (b 1943) and John Rimmer (b 1939) were exploring sound, movement, and structure in their highly experimental works; and composers like Annea Lockwood (1939) and Jack Body (1944) were devising new ways to present multimedia works.
an important part of this larger current, an example of what New Zealand composers were striving to achieve at this time.

Much of the evidence detailing this period in McLeod's life exists in the form of newspaper and magazine articles. They portray a very interesting picture of a new conflict emerging within McLeod: the feeling that she had found her niche as a New Zealand composer, versus the feeling that serious contemporary music had not satisfied her needs, that there was still something missing. Looking back on this time she observes that "a lot had happened to me at musical levels. But a lot had not happened to me at musical levels." 14

McLeod began to actively implement her new ideas. As a result, she planned many changes to the music department, in her role as Professor of Music at Victoria University. She believed that teaching music in New Zealand must involve more than restating contemporary European trends. She wanted to develop an integrated department that combined music with literature, drama, and film. She also sought to introduce courses in "popular" music, which she regarded as the "vital music of today." She developed these bold ideas further, using the press to propagate her rather controversial thoughts on the general state of music:

In her [McLeod's] view concert doing is doomed. "I don't think it will survive more than twenty years in its present form," she told me [Howard Smith]. "Orchestras aren't going to survive except as museum pieces to play museum music," she says. "By the very nature of their work they are bound to become cynical, blasé, and disillusioned...there is nothing but disenchantment towards truly modern music...most contemporary music isn't for the average listener...music written today just happens to be reflecting a society that lacks communication." 15

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15 Taken from an article by Howard Smith in The Dominion, Wellington, 18 July 1970.
It is difficult to know how to interpret McLeod's statements. Looking back today, McLeod feels that much of what she said was designed to spark controversy. Beyond this, however, it was her way of verbally expressing qualities she now believed were missing in her music. These feelings gathered momentum as she began her next major work, Under the Sun.16

Under the Sun represents the point in McLeod's career where she started to move away from "serious" genres to experiment with Rock music. Under the Sun was an attempt to duplicate the formula that had been so successful in Earth and Sky: a large-scale, multi-media work involving a large cast of mostly amateur performers. As with Earth and Sky, Under the Sun received strong public support, and praise from critics who noted the broad strokes of color, sound, and movement within the work. They also leveled some serious criticism at the production. Some of the strongest criticism, however, came from the composer:

....I didn't really have the technique to cope with something that big, and the players couldn't cope. I'm dissatisfied with a lot of music in it, because it's so primitive, organizationally and rhythmically.17

I believe that McLeod's motives for attempting such an extravagant work were genuine. In the end, however, the sheer enormity of the project became too much. Six hundred performers took part, with an estimated ten percent of Palmerston North's population becoming involved in some way with the production. Critics, like Peter Zwartz, point to lighting and sound difficulties, and the lack of a unifying thread in the story as weaknesses in the work. The subject McLeod had chosen to depict was the life of "Earth" from its beginnings as a gaseous mass, through the evolution of life, to the death of the sun.18 The story is relayed to the audience through a pre-recorded narrative, while the

16 Under the Sun was commissioned for the Palmerston North Centennial Celebrations in 1972.
18McLeod wrote her own text for Under the Sun.
music and dramatic action takes place on stage. Retaining a logical and coherent thread through such an epic tale has its obvious problems. I believe that this is the fundamental distinction between Earth and Sky and Under the Sun: the latter lacks direct relevance to New Zealand both in the choice of subject material and in the setting of the text. In Under the Sun McLeod chose to move away from using imagery that was directly related to New Zealand, focusing instead on a more universal subject. In doing this the work became something that was no longer unique to New Zealand. The work became consumed in worldly issues, losing sight of the "New Zealand voice" that was evident in Earth and Sky.

For the purposes of this study, Under the Sun is significant because at one point a song is scored for a Rock band. In incorporating such an ensemble, McLeod underlined the growing importance she believed rock music had in her music and, on a larger scale, in Western society. This was one of her earliest attempts at serious composition in a "popular" idiom. She now regarded "pop" music as the vital contemporary music of the twentieth century, a parallel to the tribal music of other cultures. For McLeod rock music exists as a community phenomenon, something that all people in a society can get involved in. She feels that "serious" Western art music does not generate such a response. Rock music provided her with new ways to communicate her ideas to the people of New Zealand.

The process of learning to compose "pop" music posed some unexpected problems, however. Despite all her intellectual understanding McLeod found she was unable to compose an acceptable song in this medium. Finding herself confronted with something she could not do had never happened before. McLeod found that the key to success in this genre lay in improvisation: learning how to create music freely and spontaneously. She recalls spending hours learning to improvise with the band involved in Under the Sun and in so doing discovering new life and freshness in her work.

As the seventies unfolded, tremendous changes became apparent in McLeod's life and work: she began to lose the motivation to continue teaching at university; her music
was taking her in new directions; and she felt the need to explore and understand her inner-being. She became interested in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy and eventually found "continuous and complete commitment" through the Divine Light Mission. The group helped McLeod find contentment and inner knowledge through the practice of meditation. The only music McLeod composed at this time was for a Rock band in which she had become involved. In 1976, she resigned her Professorship, choosing to focus her energies on the Divine Light Mission and her band.

Many of McLeod's colleagues regard her actions at this time as an indication that she had effectively given up on a serious career in music. The assumption is incorrect, however. McLeod approached the shift to Rock music seriously, never thinking of it as "giving up music." Her experiences in the late seventies led her to develop new ideas regarding rock music and its role in society. Her thoughts on this are formulated in what she calls "the unconscious theory of Rock music." McLeod's basic premise was that Rock music represents the reversal of Classical music, a notion that has developed quite unconsciously in many performers of Rock music. She believes that the Rock idiom has asserted itself in unique ways in many different societies. She observes that in many cases these new ideas have been integrated with the traditions and music unique to a culture. In McLeod's opinion, Reggae and contemporary Maori music can be seen as exemplifying these ideas.

Yet, the unconscious theory of Rock music extends beyond its impact on society. At a deeper level McLeod sees opposing forces, based on dominant and sub-dominant cycles, at work in all music. The dominant cycle is essentially represented by an ascending, tonic to dominant feel while the sub-dominant cycle revolves predominantly around a descending, sub-dominant to tonic pattern. McLeod sees the dominant cycle

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19 The Divine Light Mission was a humanitarian organization which aimed at helping people discover themselves through meditation.
20 McLeod Private Correspondence (1991), in possession of Jenny McLeod. McLeod has speculated extensively on the relationship between popular and classical idioms. Many of these thoughts are recorded in correspondence with a Dutch colleague who had developed similar ideas regarding rising and falling tendencies in music.
represented most clearly in Classical music, while popular music (with its roots in the Blues) has the sub-dominant cycle as an essential feature of its language. When McLeod first formulated these ideas she tried an experiment with a work by Bach. She took the Prelude No. 1 in C major and inverted all harmonic root movement (while retaining 7th harmonies) and found that she came out with a very acceptable rock progression.\textsuperscript{21} She found that dominant-7th and diminished-7th chords now resolved in quite different ways, familiar to her ears as a standard blues-gospel type progression.\textsuperscript{22}

Having a “theory of Rock music” was one thing, but actually being able to write and perform in this style was another. It took McLeod many years of playing Rock music before she reached a level of proficiency with which she could be happy. The songs she wrote at this time are lost to us now, but the skills and theories she developed became part of a greater pool of experience she would draw on in later years.

Moving out of the seventies, McLeod became unsettled as a composer. Yet again she had the feeling that there was something missing in her music. She had begun to experiment with ways to combine Rock music and Classical ideas. This met with little success until Rock Sonata No. 1 and Rock Sonata No. 2, completed in 1987. These works represent the culmination of her experiments in combining dominant and sub-dominant (rising and falling) forces. They also mark the end of a period in which McLeod’s focus was almost exclusively on “pop” music.

This chapter has examined a rather extraordinary twenty-year period in McLeod’s life. Her changing ideals resulted in a tremendous shift in the focus of her career. Celebrated as a local celebrity in the early seventies, McLeod had removed herself from the public eye by the end of the decade. These were the years when McLeod, having been acclaimed by critics for finding a “New Zealand voice,” needed to take the time to discover her own voice. By the mid-eighties she had become fluent in many genres: serial music,

\textsuperscript{21}Here, “inverted” harmonic root movement means to replace chord V with IV, chord VI with III chord VII with II, and vice versa.

\textsuperscript{22}McLeod Private Correspondence (1991).
aleatoric idioms, neo-classical and neo-romantic forms, and rock/popular genres. Her search now was for a way to have freedom and freshness in her work while being able to draw on all her skills as a composer. The next chapter will focus on her current directions in music, the Tone-Clock theory.
CHAPTER 5: NEW DISCOVERIES

It is a foolish person...who suddenly decides that now he or she "knows enough," and has no need to learn anymore -- especially when it comes to music.¹

We have seen so far how Jenny Mcleod's career is divided by a number of distinct changes. These are seen either as a shift in style or as a changing attitude in her approach to music. This chapter will continue to look at the issues she confronts, and focus on the period beginning in the eighties. We will see how she resolves these issues to arrive at her current position as a composer. This is a period of maturity, growing confidence, and independence. At this time McLeod seeks to draw upon many diverse elements in her music. This includes popular styles, aleatoric elements, electronic music, and the more traditional features of orchestral music. It is a period when McLeod's music is in demand, yet she still needs to find a distinctive and original voice to satisfy her personal desires. The solution to this dilemma comes in 1988, when she meets Peter Schat and encounters his theory of the "Tone Clock." As a result of this encounter, McLeod finds a new freedom in her music. We will finally see how she establishes a suitable balance that resolves the conflict between satisfying her own desires as a musician and as a composer of music for other people. Furthermore, an examination of McLeod's work in the nineties will present us with a clear idea regarding what it means to have a "New Zealand voice."

Although McLeod continued to explore the properties of popular music up until Rock Sonata No.2 (1988), her most recent approach to composition can be seen to have its beginnings back in 1981. It was at this time that McLeod begins to work with "serious" styles of music again, exploring idioms that were new to her. This new approach began after she returned from an eighteen-month trip to Australia and the United States. The break came at a time when McLeod had become disillusioned with the teachings of the

Divine Light Mission; she left their group to pursue her spiritual needs on her own. During her travels she had continued to compose "pop" songs while working for a small theatrical company in California. After this job, she found work making stained glass windows.

We have seen in earlier chapters how McLeod approaches her work from two positions: a desire to communicate with ordinary people and the music with which they are familiar; and the need for an intellectual approach to art and life. These ideals are still present in her work through the eighties. There is, however, an important difference between this latest approach and her earlier ideas. With such a wealth of experience to support her, McLeod now looks for a way to compose freely in whatever style she chooses. This period is marked not so much by a need for change but an attempt to reconcile her diverse experiences with her needs as a composer.

As McLeod comes to terms with the need to establish unity in her diversity, so her composing comes to be allowed more freedom. This freedom can be seen in the diverse styles she employs during the eighties. The approach is based on her belief that a composer must tailor a piece of music to suit the needs of the performers and the intended audience. To illustrate the range of styles, I will focus on four characteristic works: *Childhood* (1981); *Piece for Wall* (1982); *Sun Festival Carols* (1983); and the film music for *The Silent One* (1983).

In 1981, while still composing in the popular idiom, McLeod accepted a commission to compose an *a cappella* work for the Wellington Bach Choir. *Childhood* is based on a cycle of ten short poems written by McLeod. She regards this work as the point in her career when she chose to include "serious" styles of music in her composing again. The poetry depicts the myriad thoughts and moods displayed by a young child throughout any day: the quick mood changes, spontaneous thoughts, and constant wonder that are characteristic of a small child. The poetry is unaccompanied by instruments, which results
in a highly integrated setting of the words and music. The music necessarily reflects the nature of the child's thoughts.

*Embodying a radically different compositional approach, Piece for Wall* is a graphic score commissioned by the Alexander Turnbull Library as a poster promoting an exhibition of scores by New Zealand composers in 1982. This is an extremely abstract work that further illustrates the diverse styles on which McLeod now felt free to draw. The following is an extract from the performance instructions for the work:

This piece is suitable for performance by any and all walls. It is the composer's fond hope, indeed, that many walls will be crying out for a piece like this. Once the score is pinned to the wall the performance is deemed continuous.\(^2\)

*Sun Festival Carols*, eight songs composed for the 1983 Wellington City Council "Sun Festival," was a large-scale undertaking by McLeod. The *Sun Festival Carols*, like *Earth and Sky* and *Under the Sun*, were intended to be performed by large numbers of school children. The important feature evident here is the use of electronic music, her first attempt at composing in this idiom. McLeod had previously not worked with electronic music because she felt it lacked the expressive qualities she desired. After working with these new techniques of generating sound, however, she found that the medium contained many possibilities which could be incorporated into her music.

The final example to illustrate the diversity of McLeod's works from the early eighties is the music she composed for the feature film, *The Silent One*. Although McLeod had previously composed the incidental music to a number of theatrical works, this was her first attempt at writing a film score. *The Silent One* presented McLeod with the new challenge of combining music with specific visual images. Set in the islands of Polynesia, the film tells the story of the friendship between a boy and a giant sea turtle. Because of the many underwater sequences in the film, the music was needed to keep the story flowing as

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\(^2\)Introduction from Jenny McLeod's *Piece for Wall* (Wellington: Alexander Turnbull Library, 1982).
well as complementing the visual image; this was no longer merely background music. McLeod found she had to present the music as broad strokes of sound instead of focusing on small details as she had done previously. Her music for The Silent One won the New Zealand Recording Industry "Best Film Soundtrack" Award in 1984.

The eighties were a decade when McLeod's music was in demand. All her work at this time involved writing music to fulfill the requirements of the many commissions she received following her return to composing "serious" music. The positive side of such a demand was that McLeod now made a full-time living as a composer. She discovered, however, that she had an important problem to confront: the need to find a way to satisfy her own needs musically while satisfying the requirements of those for whom she composed. Thus McLeod once again found herself running into what she considered a dead-end with her work.

The needed stimulus came unexpectedly in 1988. She was invited to be a guest composer in Louisville, Kentucky, at the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Louisville Symphony Orchestra. It was at this festival that McLeod came into contact with Peter Schat, the Dutch composer, and his theory of the "Tone Clock." This encounter proved to be the stimulus McLeod was looking for in her work. Since 1988 she has embraced the "Tone Clock" theory proposed by Schat, and developed it to the extent that she is now a world authority on the subject. The "Tone Clock" has become the basis of McLeod's most recent work. It has given her a fresh new way to draw on her many analytical and compositional ideas.

The "Tone Clock" theory, as advanced by McLeod, sets out a new way of interpreting and understanding the properties of the chromatic system, and the music composed within that realm. The theory, in its simplest form, works on the idea that in a twelve-note, equally tempered chromatic system there are twelve possible combinations of
triads (Fig. 1). These twelve triads can be quickly memorized, because each has a particular group of associated properties and colors. The triads, and their extensions into larger groups, then become the basis for musical analysis and composition. McLeod points out an important property of the triads: each will fit into the chromatic scale four times without doubling a tone. This property enables every chromatic tone to be assessed in terms of a particular hour. McLeod believes it is important to become so familiar with the triads that a knowledge of the sound and form of each triad becomes instinctive (in the same way that a musician instinctively recognizes the major and minor triads, scales, and structures, familiar in the traditional tonal system). Because of these features, McLeod feels that the "Tone Clock" offers the musician a logical way to move through music that is removed from the traditional concepts of tonality.

![Diagram of triads and their properties](image)

An important function of the "Tone Clock" Theory for McLeod stems from its ability to encompass all music written for equally tempered chromatic instruments: from Bach, to Boulez, to BB King. The "Tone Clock" theory can be applied to the analysis of

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3 "Triad" refers here to any group of three notes. Because there are twelve triads, Schat assigns each one an hour of the clock. This analogy creates a useful visual representation and serves as the origins of the title, "Tone Clock."

4 I do not propose to go into a detailed account of the actual theory behind the "Tone Clock" -- this is not the purpose of this thesis. McLeod has recently had a book published which offers a translation of Schat's original theory, a survey of how she has recently developed the theory, and examples of how these ideas can be applied to the analysis of music. See Peter Schat, The Tone Clock, translated and edited by Jenny McLeod (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1993).

5 Equal temperament in the music of the Baroque period is a widely debated issue in current musicology. However, for the purposes of this study I am assuming that most musicians who are performing music from the eighteenth century think in terms of equal temperament.
eighteenth and nineteenth-century tonal music. It is also an effective tool when examining
the breakdown of tonality in the music of the twentieth century (as exemplified in the music
of such composers as Messiaen, Boulez, and Stockhausen). McLeod acknowledges that
many of the ideas presented by the "Tone Clock" are not new. She notes that the chromatic
realm had been charted earlier this century by such theorists as Alois Haba, Nicholas
Slonimsky, Joseph Schillinger, and Elliot Carter. McLeod, however, believes that the
ideas and concepts of these authors were not clearly stated, and that their theories were
difficult to apply practically to music. She explains it as follows:

What concerns me here is the development of an appropriate,
effective, economic, practical working terminology for the
chromatic realm, a vocabulary whose terms are
comprehensive, characteristic, and as easily memorable as
possible.  

Simplicity is the key attraction here. McLeod compares the "Tone Clock" theory
with Alan Forte's "Set Theoretical" analysis, which she feels frequently becomes too
technical and complex. She believes that Forte's analytical techniques create a number of
problems for those trying to apply his theory to their work. Such working problems
include: the way Forte dispenses with terminology that is familiar to the average musician;
the numerous integer-groups employed by Forte, which are hard to remember and visually
difficult to distinguish; and how the transposition of Forte's integer sets can become
difficult and confusing. For McLeod, an important consideration in any analytical theory is
its ability to reconcile theoretical ideas with practical, working issues for the musician.
Forte's theory does not meet this requirement, in her opinion. McLeod believes that not
enough importance is placed on the structural properties of a group, and how a group
actually sounds. This is perhaps where the "Tone Clock" theory has its strongest appeal

for McLeod. It allows her to combine effectively the practical and theoretical issues with which she is confronted: what are the actual musical sounds? how do structures relate to each other? what colors characterize each group?

McLeod is clearly not discrediting Forte's theory. In fact, she acknowledges the effectiveness of "Set Theory" analysis techniques when dealing with certain genres of music -- for example the music of Boulez. Through studying the "Tone Clock" theory, McLeod believes she now understands the properties and possibilities available in the chromatic system. In her opinion a musician must make use of the most effective tools available for their purposes; the "Tone Clock" theory is one such useful, accessible, tool.

The "Tone Clock," as mentioned earlier, offers McLeod more than a new analytical process: it also guides the harmonic and melodic development of her most recent compositions. Seven Tone Clock Pieces (1989) was her first attempt at composing with this system.\footnote{Jenny McLeod, Seven Tone Clock Pieces, Music Editions No.8 (Wellington: Waitata Press, 1993). Piece No.1 was composed for David Farquhar on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday. Piece No.7 was composed for Oliver Messiaen's eightieth birthday.} Contrast is a key feature of these seven short compositions. In The Tone Clock, Schat suggests that each of the twelve triads, because of their inherent structure, carry certain colors and feelings. Each piece, therefore, conveys a particular character McLeod feels is representative of the triads and extended groups she is using. For example, the tonality of symmetrical fourths, a feature of the ninth hour (2+5), is developed by McLeod in the first of the Seven Tone Clock Pieces. The conspicuous absence of a major or minor third in this triad lends an impression of openness to the melody and the accompanying chords (Fig. 2). In contrast to this, piece III begins in the second hour (1+2). The asymmetry of this triad, with its close intervals, gives a more "striking" quality to the sound. McLeod enhances the features of the second hour triad by setting a fast tempo and incorporating punctuating accents into the piece (Fig. 3). Complex rhythmic activity and chordal texture feature prominently in the Seven Tone Clock Pieces. She is now thinking largely in terms of color and structure when using the "Tone Clock."
Overall, these pieces mark an important step for McLeod, who has found a way for her music to express originality and enthusiasm.

\( \text{\( J = 90 \)}\)

(Fig. 2)

\( \text{(\( J = 144, J = 288 \)) Fast, very firm, strict tempo}\)

(Fig. 3)

Since the Seven Tone Clock Pieces, McLeod has become increasingly familiar with the properties of the chromatic system. She is satisfied that she now has the freedom to compose spontaneously without the feeling of being trapped in a particular system. McLeod’s work has taken on an important dual focus as it moves into the nineties; not only has she begun to accept commissions again, but she is now writing music for herself.\(^9\)

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\(^9\text{In 1988 McLeod stopped accepting commissions in order to give herself the time to learn about the “Tone Clock” and the various properties of the chromatic system.}\)
An example of such a work is *Paddy Doreen* (1993), which McLeod composed for the Doreen family reunion in 1994. The piece is written in the style of an Irish reel, and features a lively melody over simple, chordal accompaniment. The words, also by McLeod, tell the story of Patrikus Doreen, and his son Patrikus Peter Doreen, who traveled on one of the early ships that brought settlers to New Zealand.

As McLeod moves into the last decade of the twentieth century, I believe that finally her work reveals her maturity as a New Zealand composer. Her current work is a product of many years of frustration and persistence. I feel that McLeod's music now stands out as an example of what it means to have a "New Zealand voice."

How does McLeod convey a "New Zealand voice?" Firstly, it is not one voice but many voices. These voices represent not only the people who are part of the land, but also the land itself. This idea essentially ties in with a second point: the relationship between the people of New Zealand and the environment in which they live. New Zealanders are conscious and proud of their unique position in relation to the rest of the world, as a small, distant, island nation. Even though New Zealand is a relatively young country there are now established traditions that are unique to the land. A "New Zealand voice" must be cognizant of this; it must reflect the specific traits and energy of the people and land for which a work is written. Thirdly, a "New Zealand voice" is aware of, and has experienced in some way, music as an international phenomenon. The composer must be in contact with trends and features that are evident in the music of other countries. Finally, a "New Zealand voice" must contain the original and fresh ideas of the composer -- that is to say that the composer must satisfy his or her own needs as well as those for whom the work is written. McLeod's work embodies all of these elements.

Jenny McLeod might deny that her work is representative of a "New Zealand voice." Her argument would be that the music she now writes is only what she wants for whomever she wishes. I believe, however, that in her struggle to find an individual voice

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10Paddy Doreen was McLeod's great-great-great-grandfather, whose son arrived in New Zealand on the first ships to sail into Wellington Harbor in 1840.
McLeod has arrived at what it means to have a "New Zealand voice." McLeod is one of many composers in New Zealand discovering a "New Zealand voice" in their own unique way. As these composers continue to develop the concept of a "New Zealand voice" in their music, so do the people of New Zealand respond to such music that is being written for them and about them. Chapter five will examine McLeod's thoughts on issues currently influencing New Zealand Music: the role of women in music, the importance of broadcasting in promoting New Zealand music, and her most recent work.
CHAPTER 6: A CONTEMPORARY NEW ZEALAND COMPOSER

How it can take so long to find oneself as a composer is a complete mystery to me. But I must say finally that I regret none of the past. What I have learned, I learned with depth and conviction born of one's real experience and this cannot but serve me well.  

Jenny McLeod has been an active composer for over thirty years now. Her experiences have influenced the diverse changes in her career that have so far been examined. This chapter seeks to draw together McLeod's current thoughts on music, music in New Zealand, and her role in New Zealand as an established and respected composer. Several issues that McLeod is currently concerned with will be discussed. Is her present work with the "Tone Clock" the creative outlet she has been searching for? What are her current thoughts on the role of women with respect to music and New Zealand? How important is Maori culture in her latest works? How should the people of New Zealand be promoting an awareness of the music in their land?

McLeod now looks back on her early years in music only to laugh at many of the things she said and did. It is only from the vantage point of time, however, that we can step back and see how her attitudes and ideals have evolved. She is a composer who has learned from her experiences. A willingness to change has enabled McLeod to move her life and career in directions that were important to her at different times.

McLeod regards herself as fortunate to have grown up in New Zealand: she describes it as "a different kind of learning." She believes New Zealand is in a unique position to discover an identity as a young nation that is geographically removed from the rest of the world. Her feeling is that European musicians have a burden of tradition bearing down on them, which is not evident in New Zealand. This burden exists in the form of expectations, a result of many hundreds of years of cultural development. New Zealand

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composers, however, are not only free to draw on European ideas when they wish, but they can also choose to actively pursue cultural development in their own society. The reality of this idea came to McLeod back in 1966, when she returned from her studies in Europe. She found that New Zealand society did not share a desire to mold its culture around such distant and complicated ideas. McLeod's travels to Europe, however, were an important step in her development as a composer. It was in this environment that she learned how to cope with music at a highly intellectual and technical level, though McLeod asserts that the overall importance of these years away were only gradually revealed to her years after her return to New Zealand.2

An important quality of McLeod's work is the emphasis she places on music as a community experience. This idea stems from her belief that it requires all participants (composer, performers, and audience) to give life to a piece of music. Furthermore, it is the quality of that shared experience which determines the success of a composition. McLeod realized the value of composing music for a community when she said:

These "ordinary people" proved not so ordinary after all. They have qualities I had forgotten about, and so did their music... music that has forgotten how to dance has lost its spiritual balance.3

A central theme throughout this study has been that Jenny McLeod's music is composed for New Zealand people in their own environment. This is true of most of her music, with the possible exception of the works she composed while studying in Europe.4 Music composed for a particular people and environment illustrates the emergence of a

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2From interviews with McLeod, July- August, 1993.
3Jenny McLeod, taken from "A Composers Choices", an address delivered at the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Louisville Symphony Orchestra (September 1987).
4Although McLeod now believes that the sounds of New Zealand insect and bush life can even be heard in For Seven. She notes, however, that these sounds were not deliberately included in the score.
"voice" in a culture. Through the work of composers like McLeod, a "voice" can be seen to have gradually emerged in New Zealand since the mid-twentieth century.5

When considering the question "What is a 'New Zealand voice'?," another question must be asked: "Can McLeod's 'New Zealand voice' be successfully expressed when her music receives a performance outside New Zealand, away from the environment for which it was intended"? As "music," there is no reason why it would not be successful. McLeod's music is structurally sound, carefully integrated, and thematically developed. It must be remembered, however, that the audience would be hearing a foreign work and would judge it as such. Just as it is difficult to listen to a performance of seventeenth-century music with twentieth-century ears (now matter how "historically accurate" the interpretation), so too is it difficult to listen to music composed for a society with which we are unfamiliar. The closer one's relationship is to the circumstances surrounding a composition, the more qualities one hears reflected in that work. These ideas above are issues McLeod has recognized in her most recent work, He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are one people).

He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are one people) was completed in 1993, having been commissioned for the people of the Maungarongo marae in Ohakune.6 Before she began the piece, McLeod needed to make a number of important decisions. Her first desire was that the work focus on the people of Maungarongo. Secondly, McLeod wanted the words and music to express the importance these people placed in the land on which they lived.7 A third decision was that the words and music would relate the bond between Maori and Pakeha as they share the same land. Finally, McLeod chose to write the text herself, in Maori.8 This final decision was also one of the most important: it shows the emphasis

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5I am not claiming here that New Zealand is unique in having an original voice. I do, however, assert that the "New Zealand voice" has a unique quality. This quality is something that the people of New Zealand can identify as their own. It is a quality that is rooted in the country's people, their relationship to the land, the spiritual bond that binds them, and a shared ancestry.
6Ohakune is a small New Zealand town that lies in the central North Island.
7A central feature of the landscape around Ohakune is three large volcanoes (two of which are still active). These mountains and the surrounding land have an important spiritual significance to the Maori people.
8Maori is the native language of the people of Maungarongo.
McLeod places on communicating with people in their own language, and the respect she has for their "voice."

He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are one people) is composed for a large choir, a chamber choir, a Maori choir, and two pianos. McLeod incorporates elements of traditional Maori music into this work such as emphasis on a rhythmic pulse, and a chant-like melody which often ends with the final pitch falling away. The fundamental construction is based on ideas she has been developing with the "Tone Clock." The composer is very satisfied with this work, and believes she has now found a way to balance her own needs with the needs of those for whom a work is intended.

An issue that has not been discussed thus far is McLeod's views on her role as a female composer in New Zealand. One reason is that until very recently she did not consider "women in music" to be an issue that she needed to address in New Zealand. She has, however, begun to think about what it is women are able to offer New Zealand music; in doing so she has drawn some interesting conclusions. McLeod discusses the issue of "Women in Music" in relation to what she calls "the masterpiece syndrome." Her theory begins with the idea that Western music exists largely as a creation of men. She goes on to suggest that as part of this manifestation composers feel that they must strive to create a large-scale masterpiece, a monumental work. In striving to achieve this masterpiece she feels that many musicians and critics often fail to recognize the true qualities of a smaller work. McLeod believes that these qualities are represented in the works of many women (who are often working with a particular audience in mind rather than creating the definitive work). She acknowledges that for many composers these distinctions are blurred, noting that up until very recently she too worked towards the goal of writing a "masterpiece." She now believes that this goal is inappropriate in New Zealand music, which exists on a more intimate and personal level.
Many of the issues involving women and music were highlighted for McLeod at the 1993 "Smokefree" New Zealand Women Composers Festival, held in Wellington. It came as somewhat of a revelation to McLeod to discover that she shared a real sympathy and feeling with other women. She has come to the conclusion that her gender plays an important part in the way she approaches her work. It might appear that McLeod has waited until rather late in life to arrive at such obvious conclusions regarding women and music. These conclusions, however, are based on years of working through many issues related to her own experiences. These latest developments show that she is still actively questioning who she is and what it is she wants her music to represent.

McLeod is continuing to expand her ideas in new directions. In 1993 she was asked by the newly formed New Zealand Academy for the Humanities to present her views on the state of music in New Zealand. The presentation she gave is a testament to the commitment she has devoted to her work. Her observations portray a country coming to terms with many of the same problems she has faced during her life. She sets these issues out under six headings: the need to listen and learn from the Maori; the need to listen and learn from women; the need to become aware of our own unconscious cultural assumptions and values; the need to have a commitment to human values; and the need to support a national identity.

If these headings represent an outline of what it means to have a "New Zealand voice," then Jenny McLeod exemplifies this ideal. Her work draws inspiration both from personal qualities and from her awareness of the role her music plays as part of New Zealand community life. McLeod, through her life and work, is continually discovering

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9This festival, held in August 1993, brought together composers and musicians from all over New Zealand. They participated in concerts, seminars and panel discussions all aimed at promoting an awareness of the importance of women in New Zealand music. The festival was so successful that there are now plans to make this an annual event.

10For a general overview and discussion on these issues related to women composers, see Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). I found the section, "The Paradigm of 'Great Composers,' 'Great Pieces'" (200-10), particularly interesting. Here Citron discusses many of the ideas McLeod is currently considering.

what a "New Zealand voice" means. One might even conclude that there is no New Zealand voice to be "discovered," that a "voice" is emerging naturally, as the country grows and changes. Jenny McLeod will continue to compose music in a way that explores her relationship with a changing home. She will continue to develop her music and ideas, along with other New Zealand composers, always looking for something new, yet continuing to define the "New Zealand voice." The final words belong to Jenny:

Art is a sort of personal religion. It engages me on every level, demands my complete dedication, drives me mad, shames me, exhilarates me, puts me in a panic, makes me toe the line - and is enormous fun. My style now may be simple or complex depending on the kind of audience I'm addressing, though sometimes I'll do the opposite of what you are expecting.12

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Mason, Bruce. and Peter Zwartz. "After Under the Sun New Zealand Ceases Forever to be a Provincial Society...." New Zealand Listener. 21 June 1971, 5-6.


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"Newspaper Clippings." Record ID 81-119-009.
"Newspaper Cuttings and Articles on Jenny McLeod." Record ID 85-030-17.

Interviews:


## APPENDIX A:
**JENNY MCLEOD: COMPLETE LIST OF WORKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Suite</td>
<td>- piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Six Little Pieces</td>
<td>- piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three Serial Pieces</td>
<td>- strings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cambridge Suite</td>
<td>- chamber orchestra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Dialogue on a Northern Shore</td>
<td>- music for a radio play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four Profiles for Solo Cello</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Troilus and Cressida</td>
<td>- incidental music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little Symphony</td>
<td>- chamber orchestra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-4</td>
<td>String Trio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Diversions</td>
<td>- orchestra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metamorphosis</td>
<td>- violin, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Song of the Nativitie</td>
<td>- choir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh What a Proud Dream Horse</td>
<td>- (words: e.e. cummings) choir, wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>quartet, horn, trumpet, percussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Song Cycle: Epithalamia</td>
<td>- (words: W.S. Broughton) baritone,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Piano Piece 1965</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>For Seven</td>
<td>- flute, clarinet, violin, viola,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>violoncello, marimba/vibrphone, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>- incidental music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Brandywine Chooses a Gravestone</td>
<td>- incidental music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Twelfth Night</td>
<td>- incidental music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Earth and Sky</td>
<td>- music theater for children and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>amateurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Under the Sun</td>
<td>- music theater for children and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>amateurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Once Upon a Twinkle</td>
<td>- (22 short pieces) piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Ring Round the Sun</td>
<td>- 2 pianos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ameros</td>
<td>- a musical comedy in seven scenes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For Children</td>
<td>- 2 pianos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Just Music</td>
<td>- 2 pianos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicholas and the Easy Chair</td>
<td>- incidental music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Childhood, 10 short songs.</td>
<td>- choir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Through the World</td>
<td>- (words: William Blake) mezzo soprano, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good Old Conference Blues</td>
<td>- choir, handclaps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer City Sizzle</td>
<td>- choir, orchestra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Piece for Wall</td>
<td>- graphic poster score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>The Silent One</td>
<td>- music for feature film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sun Festival Carols</td>
<td>- solo voice, chorus, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Cuckooland</td>
<td>- music for television series.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dirge for Doomsday</td>
<td>- choir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Africana</td>
<td>- wind and brass ensemble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Music for Four</td>
<td>- 2 pianos, 2 percussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goodnight Christchurch</td>
<td>- 3 pianos, 400 recorders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Wellington March</td>
<td>- military band.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Haunting of Barney Palmer</td>
<td>- music for television film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Neglected Miracle</td>
<td>- music for documentary film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Emperor and the Nightingale</td>
<td>- narrator, chamber orchestra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Courtship of the Yonghy Bonghy Bô</td>
<td>- (words: Edward Lear) choir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Beyond the Roaring Forties</td>
<td>- music for documentary film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hymn for the Lady</td>
<td>- choir, small choir, piano, percussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Images of New Zealand</td>
<td>- music for documentary film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three Celebrations for Orchestra.</td>
<td>- (words: Edward Lear) soprano, clarinet, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Dong with the Luminous Nose</td>
<td>- chamber ensemble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suite: Jazz Sketches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rock Sonata No. 1</td>
<td>- piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rock Sonata No. 2</td>
<td>- piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Seven Tone Clock Pieces</td>
<td>- piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>To Simon</td>
<td>- Bass voice, piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paddy Dorreen</td>
<td>- 3000 members of the Dorreen family, guitar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He Iwi Kotahi Tatou (we are one people)</td>
<td>- large choir, maori choir, chamber choir, 2 pianos.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B:

PIANO PIECE 1965
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Appendix B - 26 pages
Piano Piece 1965

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