SYDNEY LIVING MUSEUMS PRESENTS

SOUND HERITAGE SYDNEY
Making music in historic places

28 MARCH 2017
ELIZABETH BAY HOUSE
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12.50pm   Lunch/introduction to Elizabeth Bay House & tour

1.50pm   Words and Music – Elizabeth Bay House Saloon
- *Silence and Listening: An introduction to the sounds and music collection of Rouse Hill estate, 1813–1980s*
  Nicole Forsyth (Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney)

   A concert celebrating music making in the historic home, with Katrina Faulds, Brianna Robertson-Kirkland, Nyssa Milligan, James Doig, Ian Blake and Sandra France

2.45pm   Afternoon tea

3.00pm   Historic Music and Dance
- *Rediscovering Dance and Dance Music in Historic English Houses*
  Dr Katrina Faulds
  (University of Southampton)

- *Dancing in Fetters: The culture of convict dance*
  Heather Clarke
  (Queensland University of Technology)

4.00pm   Building Soundscapes with History
- *Pleasure Garden: Listening, through time*
  Dr Genevieve Lacey (recorder virtuoso, serial collaborator and artistic director)

4.30– 5.00pm   Closing panel discussion
  Chaired by Ian Innes
  (Sydney Living Museums)
MUSICAL SOUNDSCAPES IN THE HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM
Professor Jeanice Brooks, University of Southampton

Music is a powerful tool for shaping emotion and environment, suggesting and inspiring action, and colouring narrative. These uses, widely familiar from film, television and video games, are relatively common in cultural heritage contexts. But outside the musical museum sector (musical instrument museums, popular music collections, composer residences) music has most often been used to create atmosphere or mood, rather than to evoke former residents’ use of music in specific times and places. The music employed may have no provenance to the space, and it usually functions as a background element, almost never fully engaged in interpretation. Music’s role in the human, historical soundscape of the house remains inaudible and ignored.

Recently, this situation has begun to change, partly through international partnerships and leadership from Sydney heritage institutions. Professor Jeanice Brooks explores these new developments by reviewing experiments in recovery and interpretation of the musical past of English country houses. Brooks describes the activities of Sound Heritage, a research and interpretation network of academic music historians, early music performance experts and heritage professionals from the curatorial and visitor experience domains, before focusing on a series of interpretation experiments at Tatton Park, Cheshire, based on the house’s historic music collections. Music was an important daily activity for past residents, and evoking this activity can help to people the properties in visitors’ imaginations, while at the same time providing a powerful antidote to the static sense that historical settings convey for some audiences. Better knowledge of the role of music in country house architecture, decoration and social life, and of musical links to artefacts and objects, can provide powerful new interpretive tools and highlight connections between tangible and intangible heritage.

BIOGRAPHY
Jeanice Brooks is Professor of Music at the University of Southampton (UK). She is co-founder of the Sound Heritage Network, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain, and director of the Austen Family Music Books digitisation project. She has worked extensively on the musical history and interpretation of National Trust houses, including Tatton Park, Killerton House (Devon) and Mottisfont (Exeter), as well as independent and privately owned historic houses. Her scholarly research includes articles on music, collection and display in 18th- and 19th-century domestic settings.
CURATING THE COLONIAL MUSICAL MUSEUM
Dr Graeme Skinner, Honorary Associate, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Why should we want to eavesdrop on our musical ancestors? And how can we reliably reimagine the lived sonorous world of early Australian settler colonists, and of their British homeland relatives? This brief overview reconsiders the types of physical and musical artefacts available to us, the kinds of historical documentation and other records that we can access, preconceptions and prejudices we should abandon, existing tools we can use or adapt, and the real and virtual resources we need to devise and develop to bring the colonial musical museum to new audiences.

BIOGRAPHY
Graeme Skinner is an Australian musical historian, and an honorary associate in musicology at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney. He is author of the biography Peter Sculthorpe: the making of an Australian composer (UNSW Press; ebook 2015). In his regularly updated research website Australharmony (sydney.edu.au/paradisec/australharmony) he documents the musical history of Australia’s colonial and early Federation eras, and curates a complementary virtual archive of Australian colonial music resources and user tags inside Trove. With co-author Michael Noone, he is also completing a catalogue of the plainsong and polyphonic choir books of Toledo Cathedral, Spain.

MUSIC FROM HOME: SYDNEY LIVING MUSEUMS’ SHEET MUSIC COLLECTIONS AND THE SCOTS IN AUSTRALIA
Dr Brianna E Robertson-Kirkland, University of Glasgow

Dr Brianna Robertson-Kirkland discusses the late 18th- and early 19th-century tradition of collecting and preserving Scottish songs in print. These print editions, including music treatises intended to teach early 19th-century music-making practices, were designed for the use of domestic music making by the rising middle class.

The Stewart Symonds sheet music collection, held by the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Sydney Living Museums (SLM), contains some of the earliest surviving examples of Scottish music brought to Australia in the 19th century. This collection provides insight into the Scots musical tradition that existed in Australia and the type of music being disseminated in the domestic setting through tuition and more general music making.

Through an examination of SLM’s music collections, Robertson-Kirkland tests previous scholarly assumptions that the Scots did not maintain their national identity after emigrating, while also considering Cliff Cumming’s findings in his 1993 paper ‘Scottish national identity in an Australian colony’ (The Scottish historical review, vol 72, no 193, part 1 (April 1993), pp22–38) that ‘the Scots in these foundation years deliberately sought to maintain their identity, asserting their national distinctiveness’.

BIOGRAPHY
Brianna Robertson-Kirkland works as both a singer and a researcher and recently completed her PhD research on the 18th-century castrato singer Venanzio Rauzzini and his students, funded by a University of Glasgow College of Arts internship scholarship. Earlier this year she gave a talk about her research at the sold-out event TEDxGlasgow, a locally organised event licensed by the famous TED organisation. She has sung in masterclasses and private lessons with early music specialists, including Emma Kirkby, Nicholas Clapton and Robert Toft, and regularly performs lecture-recitals at conferences and events. Her research interests span a wide variety of topics, and in September 2016 she organised an interdisciplinary workshop at the Glasgow Women’s Library that explored the topic of women and education in the 18th century. Brianna received a grant from the University of Glasgow’s Ross Fund to undertake a one-month research project examining the SLM sheet music collections. She will continue to research the role of music education when she embarks on a research project at Chawton House, Hampshire, in April 2017, supported by the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Visiting Fellowship Award.
THE DOWLING SONGBOOK PROJECT: 
MAKING MUSIC MATTER AT ELIZABETH BAY HOUSE
Dr Matthew Stephens, Sydney Living Museums

For almost four decades, music has played an important part in the interpretive and programmatic communication of Sydney Living Museums’ historic properties. Music has appeared in individual house recitals, larger music series, interpretive soundscapes and Indigenous programs or as entertainment at public programs and events. A tendency to rely on the German musical canon when making music in our historic houses has recently been challenged by a better understanding of SLM’s own extensive sheet music collections. In a project led by the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection (CSL&RC), sheet music in a number of SLM’s historic houses and in the CSL&RC has been assessed and a small percentage recatalogued and digitised.

A better understanding of SLM’s music collections, including the discovery of a number of significant items, has prompted SLM to bring to life some of this repertoire within a 19th-century domestic context. Between July and October 2016, SLM collaborated with Professor Neal Peres Da Costa, Historical Performance Unit, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and his students to perform in Elizabeth Bay House pieces from an extraordinary volume of sheet music bound in Sydney in c1840. Belonging to a well-known Sydney couple, the volume contained not just songs purchased in Sydney in the 1830s but also Grosse’s instructions in singing, a treatise published in London of which no other surviving copy is known. Coupled with handwritten ornamentation on some of the songs, the Dowling songbook offers a rare opportunity to explore musical taste and performance practice in 1830s Sydney. This paper describes the development of the Dowling Songbook Project and its potential impact on future music performance in SLM’s historic properties.

BIOGRAPHY
Matthew Stephens is Research Librarian at the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Sydney Living Museums. He commenced his tertiary studies at the music department of the University of Sydney, followed by library studies and a doctorate in Australian library history. Matthew leads a project which involves evaluating, cataloguing and digitising sheet music collections held in SLM’s historic house museums and promoting their performance. In 2016, SLM was awarded the National Trust Heritage Award for Research and Investigation for the Elizabeth Bay House ‘Lost’ Library Project, which had derived from Matthew’s doctoral research. Always keen to explore the intangible heritage of SLM’s historic houses, Matthew looks forward to sharing more of our fascinating reading and music-making history.
LISTENING TO THE PAST – PERFORMING THE PAST: RESTORING THE VOICES OF LANYON HOMESTEAD, MUGGA MUGGA AND CALTHORPE'S HOUSE
Dr Jennifer Gall, Australian National University

Listening to the Past: Music in historical places (2015) and the subsequent project Performing the Past (2016) represent a new concept of engagement with heritage properties. Performing music from house museum music collections on restored historical instruments and incorporating recorded sounds in audio guides provide alternative ways to access house museum collections, opening a unique window into past lives. In the words of Mark Smith (‘Futures of hearing pasts’, Morat, 2014):

‘To their credit, museum curators and curators of historical homes are, increasingly it seems, turning to historians of the senses for advice about how best to incorporate the senses onto their spaces [and into their spaces]. The most thoughtful curators are anxious to historicize the senses so that visitors get a sense not only of the sounds of the late nineteenth century ... but what they meant to people at the time. ... their reproduction can tell us not only about the nature of the past, but about our own intellectual preferences and prejudices.’

Dr Jennifer Gall discusses how Performing the Past builds on Listening to the Past to translate the musical heritage of historic houses into the present through four interconnected performances, featuring new music commissioned for historical instruments:

- Lanyon – Settling In: transportable music
- Lanyon – Art in Isolation: classical keyboard music in the bush
- Lanyon – The Piano Speaks: old sounds in new music

BIOGRAPHY
Jennifer Gall is assistant curator of documents and artefacts at the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia and an ANU Visiting Fellow. She was awarded her doctorate, ‘Redefining the tradition: the role of women in the evolution and transmission of Australian folk music’, at the ANU School of Music in 2007. She researches the relationship between music and popular culture, particularly the intersections of traditional music and popular and western art music in Australian settler society, with a focus on the music of forgotten Australian women musicians. Jennifer is music critic for The Canberra Times. She co-edited Antipodean traditions: Australian folklore in the 21st century (2011) with Professor Graham Seal and has written several books for the National Library of Australia.

SILENCE AND LISTENING: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOUNDS AND MUSIC COLLECTION OF ROUSE HILL ESTATE, 1813–1980s
Nicole Forsyth, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Music and the people who made it sound are currently quiet on the heritage site of Rouse Hill estate, managed by Sydney Living Museums. It is, however, far from being a ‘silent’ history – from its Darug traditional owners to the six generations of the Rouse–Terry family who inhabited its built environment from 1813 to the 1980s, music has always been a feature of the lives of the people who lived here.

In this presentation, Nicole Forsyth will explore place, music and sound, the collection, context and possible interpretive ways of hearing Rouse Hill estate once more.

BIOGRAPHY
Nicole Forsyth is a violist, researcher, curator and educator with a 30-year freelance career encompassing historical performance, chamber music, new music/cross-platform work, community cultural development, teaching and orchestral performance. She has played for all the historically informed performance groups in Australia, including Orchestra of the Antipodes – Pinchgut Opera. She co-founded the groundbreaking historical performance chamber group Ironwood in 2006, and managed the group from 2011 to 2015, including extensive education program work, national and overseas touring, and developing programs for regional...
Dance was part of the fabric of genteel social and cultural life in late 18th- and early 19th-century England. Both town and country houses played a significant role in hosting dance, ranging from intimate family gatherings through to balls that catered for hundreds of guests. In doing so, dance was woven into narratives of luxury, display, patronage and class. The act of staging a ball had implications for how exterior and interior spaces were emphasised and repurposed, and for how objects (including guests) were displayed. While such occasions have largely been lost to time, dance music in domestic collections can help bridge the gap. These scores offer an insight into the pedagogical value of dance, the rich manner in which dance intersected with operatic and balletic culture, and the propagation of dance music in the provinces. As a material reminder of an ephemeral art form, domestic dance music can inspire both re-creation of the past and creation of contemporary works.

Boughton House in Northamptonshire has creatively devised dance events that simultaneously reflect the large music collection in situ and encourage collaboration with leading artists. Notwithstanding logistical issues, historic properties have a real opportunity to engage with dance history and invest in a marginalised aspect of cultural heritage.
The notion of convicts having a life which included music and dance is strikingly at variance with the prevailing image of convict heritage. However, dance was an integral part of everyday life among the lower orders and one of the most popular forms of recreation in the early colony. Convicts danced to escape the drudgery and harshness of their existence; dance provided social cohesion, a sense of belonging and a cultural identity in a strange new land. They were encouraged to dance for their good health on the long voyage to the colony, and some even danced to the music of their jangling chains. In the settlement, the authorities commented on their rowdy, disorderly dancing in the proliferation of public houses. Convicts referred to dance even in relation to punishment: the treadmill became known as the ‘dance academy’, and on the hangman’s noose, the condemned danced the ‘gallows jig’. Clarke’s research offers a range of unexpected perspectives on the cultural life of early Australian convicts.
A year ago, Dr Genevieve Lacey premiered Pleasure Garden in the grounds of Vaucluse House, Sydney. It was the culmination of two years of work and of her relationship of more than 30 years with a 17th-century musician, Jacob van Eyck.

Pleasure Garden is a listening garden – a gently interactive instrument. It responds to the movement of passers-by: different layers of the composition are triggered by their presence and move subtly across the garden as visitors explore it or sit awhile and listen.

The source material comprises van Eyck’s own music, field recordings collected from the places in which the work was made, and layered new works with improvisation at their core. The composition is sparse and delicate. Its space allows the environment in which it is installed to become a vital part of the sound world.

Lacey’s presentation tells the story of Pleasure Garden’s origins and making, and features some snippets of the composition. Hovering somewhere behind the work is a quote from Jeanette Winterson (Art objects: essays on ecstasy and effrontery, Random House, London, 1995, prelude) which has inspired much of Lacey’s approach to life and her use of historical material in her work:

If truth is that which lasts, then art has proved truer than any other human endeavour. What is certain is that pictures and poetry and music are not only marks in time but marks through time, of their own time and ours, not antique or historical, but living as they ever did, exuberantly, untired.
SOUND HERITAGE SYDNEY

CONVENER
Matthew Stephens
Research Librarian, Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Sydney Living Museums
matts@sydneylivingmuseums.com.au

NETWORK
Fiona Berry
Digitisation Projects Assistant, Rare Books and Special Collections, University of Sydney Library

Ian Blake
Composer and performer

Jeanice Brooks
Co-Founder - Sound Heritage network, Department of Music, University of Southampton

Caroline Butler-Bowdon
Director, Strategy & Engagement, Sydney Living Museums

Ed Champion
Visitor Services Coordinator, House Museums Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Heather Clarke
Doctoral studies, Queensland University of Technology

Anna Cossu
Portfolio Curator, City Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

James Doig
Postgraduate performance studies, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Gillian Dooley
Publishing Support Librarian and English and Creative Writing Liaison Librarian, Flinders University

Katrina Faulds
Performer and administrator, Sound Heritage network, University of Southampton

Mel Flyte
Assistant Curator, House Museums Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Nicole Forsyth
Historical Performance Division, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Sandy France
Composer and performer

Jennifer Gall
School of Music, Australian National University

Leona Geeves
Wagner Society in NSW Inc

Clare Gleeson
Doctoral studies, Victoria University of Wellington

Bronwen Griffin
Consultant musical instrument conservator

Scott Hill
Portfolio Curator, House Museums Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Beth Hise
Head of Curatorial & Exhibitions, Sydney Living Museums

Ian Innes
Director, Heritage & Collections, Sydney Living Museums

Ian Jack
Senior Fellow and Archivist, St Andrews College, University of Sydney

Genevieve Lacey
Performer and artistic director

Michael Lea
Doctoral studies, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Sophie Lieberman
Head of Programs, Sydney Living Museums

Alan Maddox
Senior Lecturer in Musicology, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Megan Martin
Head of Collections & Access, Sydney Living Museums

Nyssa Milligan
Postgraduate performance studies, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Helen Mitchell
Senior Lecturer, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Kerry Murphy
Head of Musicology, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne

Lisa Murray
City Historian, City of Sydney Council

Joanna Nicholas
Portfolio Curator, House Museums Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Emma Nixon
Doctoral studies, Queensland Conservatorium, University of Griffith

Neal Peres Da Costa
Historical Keyboards and Historical Performance Division, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Vincent Plush
Doctoral studies, Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide

Anna Reid
Dean, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Rosemary Richards
Doctoral studies, University of Melbourne

Brianna Robertson-Kirkland
Visiting Fellow, University of Glasgow

Josie Ryan
Performer and music educator

Graeme Skinner
Honorary Associate, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney

Fiona Starr
Portfolio Curator, Macquarie Street Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Toner Stevenson
Head of House Museums Portfolio, Sydney Living Museums

Colin van der Lecq
Consultant piano conservator and tuner

Daniel Yeadon
Historical Performance Division, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney