



## **Koalas in Perigueux: The IAML Conference**

**Perigueux, France, July 7-13, 2001**

**By Alison Hall  
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**and Georgina Binns  
President, IAML Australia**

### **Introduction Alison Hall**

Being IAML's Secretary General has both advantages and disadvantages. One of the latter is that, during the conference week, business has to take precedence over pleasure. This means that it's hard to get to all the sessions I would like to, as time has to be spent dealing with various items of IAML's business, either matters that are on my list to attend to, or other matters that arise during the week. As it fortunately turned out, the Australian branch of IAML happened to put out its newsletter, *Crescendo*, not long after the conference, and it contained a very lively, interesting account of events written by the President, Georgina Binns. I felt that her account contained interesting information about the pre-

conference library visits that I was unable to make, and more about the conference sessions themselves, and therefore would be interesting and informative for CAML members to read. Additionally, this would also be a good gesture of international collaboration between two of IAML's branches, especially as we both experience a similar logistical problem: that of trying to organize a relatively small organization located within a very large country. So, here is Georgina's account, to which I will add some further comments of mine own.

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Truffles, foie gras, champagne, etc.,  
etc. - *c'est très bon* - but so was the

conference! In July this year I travelled to France to participate in the nineteenth congress of IAML. It was also the fiftieth birthday of IAML, so there was even more reason to pop open a bottle of champagne.

## Paris

The conference began in Paris with two days of optional library tours. I joined these tours with approximately 50 other delegates from around the world. We met at the Cité de la Musique with a welcoming French breakfast of coffee, pastries and fruit and soon met up with old friends and new. The Cité de Musique ([www.cite-musique.fr/anglais/index.htm](http://www.cite-musique.fr/anglais/index.htm)) is an amazingly rich site with no less than five music information centres. Situated in La Villette park, in the northeast of Paris, the Cité de la Musique was one of President François Mitterrand's last great projects. Inaugurated in January 1995, it is a centre for music education activities, music information centres and historical centres, and is open to the public. Amongst these institutions are a number of performance venues and all the buildings have some architectural significance. The libraries and information centres at the Cité include the Paris Conservatoire's Hector Berlioz Médiathèque, the Centre de documentation de la musique contemporaine, the Centre de documentation du Musée de la musique, the Médiathèque pédagogique and the Centre d'informations musicales. It is an impressive site and the libraries and information centres are very well resourced and work co-operatively in

projects and in assisting the students and other users. These were all visited during a very busy day. Our guides spoke English, so this made communication easy.

The following day we met at the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF) ([www.bnf.fr/](http://www.bnf.fr/)), site François-Mitterrand, the recently opened new building located in the thirteenth *arrondissement* on the banks of the Seine. It is an imposing, monumental building with four corner towers designed like open books, vast wooden steps leading to a podium, in the centre of which is a forest of trees. To get into the library you then have to go down again via escalator to enter. (Not a "disability friendly" library!) The resources of this new library are impressive with an intense digital library program, *Gallica 2000*. This is the latest version of the BNF digital library, and contains multimedia documents spanning the entire period from the Middle Ages to the early twentieth century. With 35,000 fixed images from different French collections, including those of the BNF itself, 35,000 digitized printed volumes in image mode, and 1,000 titles in text mode, Gallica 2000 is one of the largest digital collections available free of charge on the worldwide electronic network. There are also extensive audiovisual facilities available through a digital server used by up to 80 audio/video workstations simultaneously with digitized film and sound and "jukeboxes" providing access to 2,880 VHS and 292 CD-ROMs.

## **Perigueux**

At the BNF, I met up with Roger Flury (our colleague from the National Library of New Zealand) and we travelled to Perigueux by train along with many other music librarians. We were the sole representatives from our respective countries attending the conference. Perigueux is a pretty town, situated in the Dordogne region, north of Bordeaux, in southwest France. With a population of 38,000, it has a fascinating history with Roman ruins from the city of Vesuna, a medieval and renaissance quarter with narrow winding streets and Saint Front Cathedral, which dates from the tenth century and is a Unesco-protected site. My hotel was situated on the river Isle with a fantastic view of the cathedral, similar to that on the cover of the conference promotional material. I walked up through the old town, a different street each day, to the conference venue, a modern theatre complex in the city square.

## **Meetings**

The conference was busy with over 400 delegates and, as national representative, I attended the open council meetings, presenting reports on outreach activities, the national report and spoke to a number of issues including the privacy of contact details for individual members on the Web and also the formation of multinational branches (U.K. and Northern Ireland). A comparative analysis showed the original Australia and New Zealand Branch is the only precedent. I also attended the RILM meeting to glean information on the latest developments

and attended a selection of sessions. Of course, the highlight for Australia was the success of our bid to host the 2007 IAML. Lobbying amongst the members of the board and council from Day One paid off and I think the clip-on koalas also had something to do with it! The board was very impressed with our bid and the preparation we had done at such an early stage. Feedback from colleagues is that they will be looking forward to travelling to Sydney in 2007.

## **Sessions**

Some of the highlights of the sessions were the projects being undertaken at the National Library of Canada and the Library of Congress to digitize sheet music and sound which is out of copyright. There was an obvious focus on French institutions and activities and as French government employers have to present in the French language, there was great demand for the simultaneous translation service provided in English. The plenary session was entitled, "From Shore to Shore: 1,000 Years of Musical Interchange in the Mediterranean," with speakers including Christian Poche, an ethnomusicologist, on music literature of the Arab world; Frederic Lagrange on archives of 78-rpm records in Egypt; Hatem Touil from Tunisia speaking on the mission and collections of the Centre d'études arabes et méditerranéennes in Tunisia; and Veronique Ginouves from Aix-en-Provence speaking on French traditional music as world music through recordings and oral transmission. Both this session and the concerts had a southern European/north African flavor.

## Concerts

Each night a concert was offered including the unique sound of the Viellistic Orchestra with nine hurdy gurdies, a percussionist and a double bass playing early music, modern music and jazz, Ensemble Tre Fontane performed songs of southern Europe with an Arab-Andalusian influence, and the Ensemble Proxima Centauri, a contemporary music group from Bordeaux. This last ensemble premiered a specially commissioned work for the fiftieth birthday of IAML called *Cris de cerise* by François Rosse. The score was published by J. M. Fuzeau, Courley, France and every delegate received a copy the night of the premiere. The conference dinner and bal musette (dance) was held at the Castle of La Chapelle-Faucher in a valley a half hour bus ride from Perigueux. Our colleague, Don Roberts from Northwestern University, opened a bottle of 1951 Armignac to celebrate 50 years of IAML and the foie gras and French wine were well supplied. A wonderful evening to end a fascinating week of French culture and music librarianship.

Australia is now on the map in the eyes of many music librarians around the world, with our offer to host a forthcoming conference. I encourage and recommend participation in future conferences. The knowledge that is gained, and the network of colleagues and friends from the many types of music libraries in our world which is developed from participating in this forum, is well worth the effort. I look forward to seeing more IAML

(Australia) members at Berkeley next August.

*Au revoir!*

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And now a few additions from me!

The *fonds* of the Opéra-Comique, and the Bibliothèque-Musée of the Paris Opéra Gustave were described at a session of the Research Libraries Branch. The collection of the Opéra-Comique consists mainly of manuscript and printed scores of both orchestral and vocal material, dating from the end of the eighteenth century to the 1970s. The scores contain many annotations and other information relating to performance practice, such as notes by conductors, composers, stage directors, and performers, stage directions, cuts, inserts, and so on, which bring to life the way in which these works were originally performed. The library-museum of the Paris Opéra is similar to this. The *Fonds Gustave Charpentier*, located in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, includes manuscripts, printed scores, annotated orchestral material, street cries, and sound recordings.

The Commission on Service and Training included a session describing an enterprise in the U.K. called *Music Libraries Online*, a Higher Education funded project to create a virtual union catalogue for music in the U.K., using Z39.50. Work done thus far includes identifying different cataloguing practices among partner libraries, with the aim of moving towards greater harmonization, and means of identifying

collection strengths and accessibility, possibly via collection-level description. The MLO gateway can be found at: [www.musiconline.ac.uk](http://www.musiconline.ac.uk)

There was also a description of the new library law in Denmark, which prescribes that all libraries in Denmark should “Promote information, education and cultural activity by making available books, periodicals, talking books and other suitable material, such as recorded music and electronic information resources, including the internet and multimedia,” by 2003 at the latest. As a result, most municipalities are offering courses to develop library skills, and the Royal School of Library and Information Science is offering continuing education in the field of music librarianship. Trainers will learn, amongst other things, how to teach colleagues who have no experience at all in the field of music, a challenge to be sure!

As mentioned by Georgina, this was IAML’s fiftieth anniversary, so, of course, we had a birthday party, celebrated with foie gras, champagne, and a birthday cake (though no one jumped out of it!), and at our General Assembly, greetings were sent and brought to IAML, both by some of our elder statesmen, and by representatives of some of the international organizations with whom IAML has long standing connections. As this was also a congress year, elections for new Board members were held, with results as follows:

President:

John H. Roberts (U.S.)

Vice-Presidents:

Dominique Hausfater (France)

Federica Riva (Italy)

Ruth Hellen (U.K.)

Kirsten Voss Eliasson (Denmark)

Overall, it was an excellent meeting. Perigueux is a delightful town, large enough to provide plenty of enticing shopping and gourmet restaurants, and small enough to get to know. The Nouveau Theatre, where the meetings were located, was just the right size for our meeting, with plenty of space available for hanging around and meeting people. Conference sites for future years are now arranged until 2008, which is very gratifying, and there are a large number of inviting venues for us to look forward too.

2002 Berkeley, CA, 4-9 August

2003 Tallinn, Estonia 6-11 July

2004 Oslo, Norway, June 20-25

2005 Warsaw, Poland

2006 Gothenburg (?), Sweden

2007 Sydney, Australia

2008 Naples, Italy (?)

I hope that many of our members will take the opportunity to come to next year’s meeting in Berkeley. I know that the U.S. branch have been working very hard on their preparations, and are hoping that IAML members will not be deterred at all by the recent events. This is a time for those of us in the cultural community to stand together.