

## Editorial

This issue is *Context's* twenty-first. In noting this achievement, we must surely also celebrate the diversity of its contents, even if, serendipitously, the three articles in this issue all deal with aspects of word-setting. We begin in fourteenth-century France with David Maw's exploration of the technically sophisticated and aesthetically masterful polyphonic song composition of Guillaume de Machaut. Maw suggests that one solution to the problem of sustaining free polyphonic invention in Machaut's songs was a kind of 'parody' technique. Provided in the article is a discussion of the meaning and relevance of the concept of parody, as well as explanations of how Machaut employed this technique in his songs. Next we move to Laos, and a new, more detailed explanation by Adam Chapman of how the lexical tones of the Lao language interact with other elements to create the melody in the traditional *khap-lam* vocal music genres of Laos. Nissim Ben-Salamon then gives a scholarly comparison of a single melody, that of the penitential poem *Adon Haselihot*, as performed in four Jewish communities separated by time and distance. He links these four communities to the long-standing tradition of the Babylonian Jews, and acknowledges the significance of the melody as communicator of the spirit of the poem.

Two composer interviews are included in this issue. Australian composer Matthew Bieniek talks with American composer Martin Bresnick about his shift away from 'the house of modernism' to a re-engagement with tonal and quasi-tonal resources, and his acknowledgment of the need for a composer to be 'chameleon-like' in being able to write appropriately for a wide range of audiences. Australian composer Neil Kelly, interviewed by Wez Pictor, has made quite a different shift, from an aspiring popstar nicknamed 'The Professor' because he could read music, to a 'serious' composer 'teetering on the brink of tonality' in his engagement in collaborations between musicians and visual artists, where common ground is sought between the two artforms.

The final contribution to this issue, apart from abstracts of four recently passed theses in music from Australian universities, takes us back to Lutheran Saxony in Bach's era. Jan Stockigt provides a very interesting report on her current research, which involves the examination of Catholic liturgical music written and collected by composers at the Dresden royal chapel.

The *Context* editorial committee is pleased, at long last, to release this latest issue, and looks forward to receiving submissions on any aspect of music, especially from early-career academics and postgraduate students.



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