

Stout Centre Review

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Editorial

In his classic *A History of Melody*, the Hungarian musicologist Bence Szabolcsi remarked how each generation seemed to have a different sense of time and movement within itself, to set a different tempo as it were. This is clearly evident when the popular dance styles of this century are considered, with the set patterns of the Quadrille giving way to the Schottische, followed by the Foxtrot and the Charleston, through to the rock and roll of the mid-1950s and the floodgates of rock and reggae, evolution in reverse some may think. Brian Salkeld, a pioneer in the history of recorded sound in New Zealand, focuses on 'The Dancing Decade' of 1920-1930 in this issue but he touches on other significant events of the period that together make up a distinctive aural mosaic. Recordings form a vital part of history and the Sound & Music Centre of the National Library is stimulating interest in this field by making their resources available to a wider audience.

Visitors to San Francisco, if set down in particular areas blindfolded, may well think on having their sight restored that they are in Wellington, so similar are architectural styles, terrain, colour and vegetation. William Toomath explores this relationship in a cogently argued paper that adds to our knowledge of what constitutes the New Zealand architectural vernacular and the degree to which it has been influenced by American design rather than British. He describes how the official policy for state houses adopted in 1936 moved away abruptly from the popular low-pitched bungalow style and towards an English cottage model. This traditional form henceforth became the dominant trend: 'The mould was set for a typical New Zealand house for decades thereafter'.

Finally, Richard Boast's article on the legal and historical issues that arose in the Muriwhenua lands case taken to the Waitangi Tribunal by the five northernmost tribes is no formidable document, but a penetrating discourse on issues which are of general concern. He points out that scholars in anthropology and Maori studies as well as historians 'need to keep themselves well-informed about the Waitangi Tribunal process' and he outlines the need to reconcile the tensions 'created by the demands of litigation and the obligations of one's own scholarly craft'.

The November 1992 issue will feature the Lowe family collection of dance books and manuscripts, now on loan to the Turnbull Library, with articles on language, costume, dance notation, family history and the colonial ball in New Zealand. As usual this will be distributed free to members of the Stout Research Centre. Additional copies can be purchased for \$10 (including postage) from the Centre.

J.M. Thomson

Cover: Entertainers from the 1920s. Front cover, clockwise from top left: Pat Hanna, Charleston dancer, Lance Fairfax, Bransby Williams; Back cover: Anna Pavlova, Will Hay, Billy Hart, character from 'Chu Chin Chou'.

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