VCE Music Advice for teachers 2017–2022

Context resources

Influences on composers, performers and audience members can be many and varied. In VCE Music, consideration of the context of a work can include study of specific musical, cultural, historical, social, political, environmental, gender, economic, legal influences, practical and commercial considerations, and issues relating to the likely performer/s of the work.

Some examples might be:

* ‘Cross-fertilisation’ or the development of new/hybrid forms and styles that arises when musicians from different traditions (for example style/genre or cultural) work together or draw on each other’s practice to create new work.
* The impact of technological advances for example, development of valves on brass instruments resulting in increased capacity to play in different keys, in pianoforte manufacture resulting in an increased range of dynamic and tonal qualities, the influence of music from one culture on composers from another cultural background, for example the influence of music from Asia on Debussy, The Beatles, John Coltrane, or Phillip Glass; the on-going development of digital instruments and equipment resulting in new approaches to composition and different performance possibilities.
* The impact and effect of social/historical events on music works and practitioners, for example, composition of pianoforte works for left hand alone following WWI or the effect of the 1960s civil rights movement on the use of African-American musical traditions in popular music.
* The early twentieth century recording industry which allowed for only three- to four-minute recordings and its effect on the structures of popular music of the time.
* The cultural integration of music in the North Indian classical tradition resulting in the religious/mood/temporal qualities of the Indian raga.
* The systems of patronage, commissions, dedications and contracts in different periods and their effect on music created.