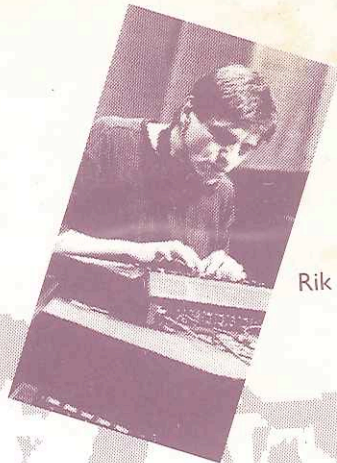




Cathie Travers



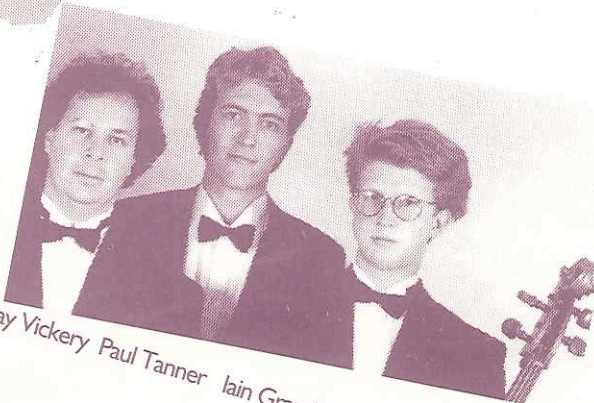
Rik Rue



Julian Knowles



Stevie Wishart



Lindsay Vickery Paul Tanner Iain Grandage



FRIDAY 8pm
23 April
FLY BY NIGHT
CLUB

Bookings
227 8932
\$15 full \$10
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THE BIG MAGNETIC PIG GIG

an air of sameness

Concert

Evos Series
The Big Magnetic Pig Gig
Fly By Night Club

Reviewed by Stuart Hille

YOU would normally expect to hear a multiplex of styles, techniques, sound colours and so on during a contemporary music concert. Some appeal, some don't and that's as it should be.

But Friday night's concert was different. I am sure all eight composers-performers on the program would defend vehemently the originality and uniqueness of their works. Yet, at least from my perspective, removing a bit of detail here and there, everything seemed to blend into a stylistic uniformity.

Part of this may have been the constant use of the "big magnetic pig" — electronics — which, after a while, creates a sameness of timbre. There were however other musical parameters particularly in the compositions by WA composers — Cathie Travers, Lindsay Vickery, Iain Grandage and Paul Tanner — that showed close similarities.

In Travers' *Urban Artefacts*, Vickery's *Phase Matrix* and Grandage's *Reptiles* the harmony had a quasi-tonal quality either in the background or the foreground. Not that there is necessarily something wrong with this but a more adventurous approach to harmony would probably produce more interesting results.

It worries me when the harmony is so tightly enclosed because it either inhibits creativity or shows a lack of it. The same thought applies to rhythm.

I could not find very much exploration of rhythm or rhythmic identity in many of the works. Part of this might be due to a strong reliance on a background beat or pulse.



Stevie Wishart

On several occasions members of the audience were even tapping along.

Some might argue there is nothing wrong with that and I would agree that an audience's interaction in this way was positive and efficacious — had this been a pop music concert. In a contemporary music concert one expects the interaction to be of a different nature — where an audience is drawn into a process, challenged at one point, assuaged at another but never pandered to.

And this is what happens when harmony and rhythm are pacified even (and I expect this is the case)

when the reason is to make the music "more accessible" — a very in vogue concept nowadays.

This is, of course, only my opinion and is based on general observations. There were many engaging sections in each work where harmony and rhythm had more colour and vitality but it was only a moment here and there. It is the overall concept and approach that concerns me.

Swallowing state pride, I found the segment by Sydney-based sound artists Stevie Wishart, Ric Rue and Julian Knowles to be more satisfying. This might be because they are



Cathie Travers

dealing with different areas and their extensive use of improvisation (or at least a sense of it) keeps one guessing and not predicting.

They are certainly very effusive performers — perhaps too much so at times — but they got their message across with considerable panache, be it by tape manipulation, sonic projection or on the humble hurdy-gurdy.

The lighting effects by Antonello Scuderi enhanced each performance and the sound control by Norbert Roth (though there was a bit of a glitch in the system) gave the music resonance and clarity.