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The history of the *HMAV Bounty* (1) provides an intriguing story of what is arguably one of the world’s most infamous mutinies (Alexander 2003). When this history is portrayed in a 360-degree artwork, which is viewed from the inside in a purpose-built gallery on one of the islands that became the home for many of the descendants of the mutineers, along with its accompanying mediatised soundscape for each listener/viewer, it provides a contact zone (Pratt 1991) for those connected with the artwork where heritage and identity are portrayed through visual and sonic media.

Norfolk Island and the history of the *Bounty* are inseparable. With the contemporary tourist industry an important part of life for many islanders, the history of the *Bounty* provides an opportunity to utilise history for the benefit of tourists and locals alike. What makes this history particularly significant for many under and within the tourist gaze is that it is an essential part of island heritage and identity, and a particularly important foundation in the lives of many Norfolk islanders. Their history is intertwined with the *Bounty*, and their identity is inseparable from it. It is within this somewhat disconcerting context and troublesome background that island heritage is placed on display as a commodity that celebrates this history.

Fletcher’s Mutiny Cyclorama tells the story of the *Bounty*. It traces through the voyage of the *Bounty* the history of Fletcher Christian (1764–1790/93) and the other mutineers, along with their tumultuous journey following the mutiny until their settlement on Pitcairn Island in the eastern Pacific Ocean (47 sq km). On 28 April 1789, under the leadership of Fletcher Christian, there was the infamous mutiny on the *Bounty*, when Bligh and eighteen others were set adrift and the mutineers took over the ship. The mutineers eventually arrived at the uninhabited Pitcairn Island on 12 January 1790 where they settled. The island eventually became a British colony in 1838, and in 1856, due to Pitcairn being much too small for the islanders, which at the time had a population of 193, the Pitcairners, which now included several additional British sailors, were relocated to Norfolk Island, a former penal colony and recently uninhabited, on the other side of the Pacific. However, the community was soon divided when sixteen settlers insisted on returning to Pitcairn in 1858, and a further party of twenty-six returnees departed in 1863 (Draper and Yager 2004; Hayward 2006a, pp. 1, 11–12, 21).

The Cyclorama is a visual spectacle and sonic experience that takes the viewer on the mutineers’ life
that highlights the cyclorama experience. Just as many
art works of musical relevance can inform the cultural
historian on the life and place of a particular musician or
music object, the Cyclorama creates cultural meaning
in terms of illustrating a social history. But what makes
this particular art experience unique among sound and
visual creativity is that the accompanying soundscape
adds to the experience through a social and cultural
negotiation between artist, composer and viewer.

Fletcher’s Mutiny Cyclorama

The term cyclorama describes a ‘large-scale
panoramic landscape painting, usually on canvas,
which is suspended in a circle to form a continuous
scene’ (Featherstone 2008). In terms of its visual
spectacle, what makes the panorama different as an
artwork is that the viewer cannot see the entire work
at the same time. Unless the artwork rotates around
the audience, which is the case with some works,
the viewer must walk around the static work of art,
very often in a building built especially to house the
picture.

Panoramic paintings—some in circular buildings—
have been known for over two hundred years, and the
Cyclorama on Norfolk Island is now one of only several
in the world and is based on this type of artwork that
was especially popular in the early 1800s. However, by

journey from their cultural roots in the British Isles to
their notorious mutiny in the Pacific Ocean. Unlike some
cycloramas, with the one on Norfolk Island there is an
accompanying recorded soundscape mediated through
a personal headset that adds to the viewing experience,
and the performance event provides a focal point for
re-thinking the interconnections between music and art
in that it is not the picture on its own that provides the
social symbolism but the sonic phenomenon too. The
accompanying soundscape consists of music, sound
and speech that add a musical imagery to the visual story
of the mutiny on the *Bounty* and its legacy of the lives
of Pitcairn and Norfolk islanders. While the cyclorama
could be experienced without the music, and likewise
the sounds can be experienced without the artwork
(Cyclorama Soundtrack n.d.), the accompanying sounds
arguably give the Cyclorama its unique qualities.

In this sense, as with many other multimedia artworks, the
visual has helped determine the sonic. That is, while the
recording was made as a result of the visual spectacle,
the soundscape inherently includes sonic symbolism
the time of cinema in the 1900s, this type of art form
decayed rapidly in popularity, and today there are only
around sixty such works on exhibition (International
Panorama Council 2009; Draper and Yager 2004).
Bringing the discussion back to Norfolk Island and the
Cyclorama, in a move related to the growing tourist
industry that now commands a large part of the Norfolk
economy, Marie Bailey, who is a sixth-generation
descendant of Fletcher Christian, devised the idea
of a cyclorama that would portray through image and
sound the social history of Norfolk. The accompanying
soundscape recording was made by Norfolk islander
Rick Robertson. The project took sixteen months to
complete and opened in October 2002. In addition to
the two-dimensional painting, the work of art is given
a three-dimensional component with the inclusion of
several polystyrene rocks, which have been ‘positioned
along with real sand to create beaches and other
collected props . . . to accentuate the 3-D illusion’
(Draper and Yager 2004). In total, the artwork has a
50-metre circumference and is 3.6 meters high (Draper
and Yager 2004).

**Soundscape Art**

Having studied at the Sydney Conservatorium, Rick
Robertson is now based in Sydney as a professional
musician (Hayward 2006a, pp. 162-163). He wrote
and recorded the music entirely on his own using a
synthesiser keyboard. As a multimedia artwork, the
Cyclorama blends visual and sonic media. While the
artwork itself does not have any direct musical imagery
of, for example, musical instruments or performers,
there are several scenes that depict places where music
making would take place (e.g., churches and social
gatherings). Thus, the place of music in the Cyclorama is
one of an accompanying soundscape, which is entitled
‘The Journey—Portsmouth to Norfolk’, although it is
inherently linked to the content of the artwork through
sonic imagery and cultural reference. The soundtrack is
not intended to be divorced from the artwork, although it
can be purchased on CD (Cyclorama Soundtrack n.d.;
Robertson, in Hayward 2006a, p. 163).

While the interconnection between music and art has in
more recent years become more entwined with temporal
installations and performative events, the Cyclorama was
conceived as a permanent artwork that was static on the
one hand, although moving in the viewer’s eye as they
move around the scenes, yet dynamic through music on
the other hand. That is, the accompanying soundscape
provides a clear way through which the viewer can attach
sound to visual symbol. In other words, there are certain
sounds or places in the recording that are specifically
associated to certain parts of the artwork and allow the
viewer a way of passing through the cyclorama within the
29 minutes provided by the soundtrack.
1. While nature was sinking in stillness to rest
   The last beams of day light shone dim in the west,
   O'er fields by pale moonlight I wandered abroad
   In deep meditation I thought on my Lord.

2. While passing a garden I paused to hear
   A voice faint and plaintive from one that was near.
   The voice of a sufferer affected my heart
   While pleading in anguish the poor sinner's part.

3. I listened a moment then turned me to see
   What man of compassion this stranger might be.
   I saw Him low kneeling upon the cold ground
   The loveliest Being that ever was found.

4. So deep were His sorrows so fervent His prayer
   That down o'er His bosom rolled sweat, blood and tears.
   I went to behold Him, I asked him His name,
   He answered 'Tis Jesus from Heaven I came.

5. I am thy Redeemer for thee I must die,
   The Cup is most bitter but cannot pass by.
   Thy sins like a mountain are laid upon me.
   And all this deep anguish I suffered for thee.
The music used on the soundtrack includes sonic symbols with the aim of representing authentically the journey to the South Pacific, the mutiny, the mutineers, Pitcairn and Norfolk. This is achieved in several ways, sometimes with existing pieces, arrangements or original compositions. For example, the recorded soundscape of a hornpipe played on a fiddle accompanies visual imagery of Bligh and his crew dancing as a form of exercise, and Cook Island drumming is intended, although somewhat unauthentically, to depict life in Tahiti (Robertson 2008). Moreover, the original music itself is actually based on some of the traditional religious music that is inseparable to everyday social life on Pitcairn and Norfolk. As the composer notes:

*The main themes are based on traditional hymns that were composed on Pitcairn Island by Driver Christian and George Hunn Nobbs [one of the composer’s ancestors]. It is said that the lord came to Driver Christian in a dream and told him to compose these Hymns. The Hymns I’ve used are Gethsemane and Come Ye Blessed for the Pitcairn scenes, as these were both written on Pitcairn and The Ship of Fame for the Norfolk Island connection as this Hymn was sung a lot on Norfolk when the [whaling] industry was in full cry. Gethsemane has a strong melody that was perfect for a recurring theme. (Robertson 2008)*

One may wonder why hymn singing is featured so much in the soundtrack. By 1800, after the atrocities of infighting among the new small island community on Pitcairn, mutineer Alexander Smith (after 1808 he was known as John Adams) (Hayward 2006a, p. 25), who had killed fellow mutineer Matthew Quintal in 1799, was left as the last surviving non-Polynesian islander (he died in 1829). ‘Smith’s isolation and the fate of his fellow mutineers appear to have prompted a profound change as he turned to religion and endeavoured to be pastor and patriarch of the small community’ (Hayward 2006a, p. 24). Having turned away from a life of heavy drinking and now the last surviving mutineer, ‘he used a bible and prayer book saved from the Bounty to teach the emerging generation to be honourable and moral’ (Draper and Yager 2004). A mixture of Christian and Tahitian cultural influences were subsequently the main aspects of life on Pitcairn. In connection with hymn singing, ‘by the 1850s hymn singing had been a staple of island life for over 50 years’ (Hayward 2006a, p. 30; see also Hayward 2006b), which had been reinforced after the arrival of schoolmaster John Buffett in 1823 who had been on board the whaling ship Cyrus. Even today, some hymns feature so strongly on Pitcairn and Norfolk that they are frequently found not only in sacred contexts but also in secular ones too (Hayward 2006a, p. 170).

As noted by the composer, three hymns are prominent on the soundtrack. As well as being transformed into
1.

Pitcairn Anthem 'Come Ye Blessed'

Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand: Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and ye visited me,

I was in prison and ye came unto me; In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me.

'Come Ye Blessed' (Church of England on Norfolk Island n.d., p. 1).
The Ship Of Fame

1. What ship is this you're sailing in, This wondrous Ship of Fame? The
   ship is called "the Church of God" And Christ's the Captain's name. Come

Chorus

join our happy crew! We're bound for Canaan's shore! The

Captain says "There's room for you And room for millions more".

2. What wages do you get on board
   This ship that you commend?
   We've love and joy and peace and grace
   And glory in the end.
   Chorus

3. And what's the crew that sails with you
   On board this ship so grand?
   The Saints of God all washed in blood
   And under Christ's command!
   Chorus

4. Do you not fear the stormy seas
   Your barque may overwhelm?
   You need not fear the Lord is near
   And Christ is at the helm!
   Chorus

5. Then hoist the sails and catch the breeze
   And soon the journey's o'er
   The ship will land you safe at last
   On Canaan's happy shore.
   Chorus

'The Ship of Fame' (Church of England on Norfolk Island n.d., p. 3).
original themes on the soundtrack, segments of original versions have been included. As islanders understand it, ‘Gethsemane’ is attributed to pastor and schoolmaster George Hunn Nobbs, who came to Pitcairn in 1828 and was particularly influential on the island, and Driver Christian, who had been born on Tahiti in 1831 during a failed attempt to settle there when the population, now 88, was deemed too large for the island (Hayward 2006a, p. 38). While the text and music are known outside Pitcairn and Norfolk (e.g., Revival Melodies, or Songs of Zion 1843, p. 24), it has been suggested that this hymn was probably popularised during the early years of settlement on Norfolk Island rather than on Pitcairn Island (Hayward 2006a, p. 170; cf. Church of England on Norfolk Island n.d., p. 2). The title of the hymn, ‘Gethsemane’, points to the Biblical context of the Garden of Gethsemane, and the text has a religious setting. The piece, which is in triple metre, has a melody that is mostly pentatonic and momentarily hexatonic. In terms of the musical content of the soundscape:

The Cyclorama soundtrack comprises a 29 minute long low-dynamic accompaniment to the display’s images. . . . [T]he piece uses sampled vocal and string sounds, sound effects and saxophone and flute parts. . . . Two thirds of the way through the piece, following an extract from the 1954 choir recording of Gethsemane, the audio composition features a short humorous anecdote of Pitcairn life . . . Following the 1954 recording of The Pitcairn anthem, The Journey features a conversation between Trent Christian and his sister Tania, in-role as period Pitcaimers discussing the wisdom of a move to Norfolk. This sequence is followed by a string arrangement of The ship of fame, to signify The Morayshire’s voyage. . . . The 1954 version of The ship of fame then features. (Hayward 2006a, p. 163)

Conclusion

Cycloramas such as the one on Norfolk Island provide a context for the re-thinking of music and art. The pictorial artwork is experienced with an accompanying soundscape that is heard as part of any visit to the site. Fletcher’s Mutiny Cyclorama, as with all cycloramas/panoramas, provides a visual spectacle that the viewer cannot possibly take in all at once. Unlike a framed artwork, it is viewed in stages as the visitor passes around the artwork. In this setting, it allows the viewer/listener a space in which to experience the artwork in a process that might be termed ‘mediatised performance’ (cf. Auslander 1999; Phelan 1993).

As a contemporary tourist attraction the Cyclorama represents its culture through visual and sonic imagery
that is intended to stand for what it means to be a Norfolk islander today. The cyclorama mixes an historical art form with a contemporary soundscape that is itself based on heritage and modern creativity. As a contact zone that mediates between the lives of Norfolk Islanders, who they are and where they’re from, the Cyclorama provides through image and sound a celebration of an extraordinary social and cultural heritage.

Endnotes

(1) HM Armed Vessel Bounty.

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