



'Music education does not just make children more musical; it unleashes their creative powers,' says Richard Gill, OAM, in a recent issue of *Limelight* magazine. For over 50 years, Richard has been an internationally respected mover and shaker in the Australian music scene. We find out what makes him tick.

AS A YOUNG PERSON, DID YOU HAVE A ROLE MODEL OR SOMEONE WHO INSPIRED YOU TO TAKE UP MUSIC?

When I was a young child living in Epping, NSW, Margaret and Mary Kauter, who lived next door to us, practised the piano on a regular basis and were a source of inspiration. They were fabulous pianists who were studying at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

WHAT ARE YOUR MEMORIES OF LIBRARIES WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?

Epping School of Arts had a library that we visited every afternoon after school. I would read a book on the way home and then go back to the library to get another book. It was the best place on earth and had a very special book smell, which is still in my memory. I loved getting the book stamped.

WHAT ROLE DO LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS PLAY IN YOUR CURRENT CAREER?

I would live in a library if I could! Our study at home has three walls full of books. I am completely surrounded by books and love being so. Libraries are the centre of the world's gravity in my view.

THINKING ABOUT ALL THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LIBRARIES (SUCH AS MUNICIPAL, SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY) ARE THERE ANY CHANGES OR NEW FEATURES YOU LIKE TO SEE LIBRARIES ADOPT THAT WOULD SUPPORT MUSIC AND MUSICIANS MORE?

Libraries, such as music libraries, need specialist librarians who understand the stock, know the systems and who are not frightened by the names of composers or styles of works. Music librarians need to know about all musical genres – not just so-called classical music – and to be across all contemporary music, and jazz, in particular.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MUSIC BEING PLAYED IN LIBRARIES – EITHER AS BACKGROUND MUSIC OR LIVE PERFORMANCES?

Music, as a one-off special performance in a library with an invited audience, perhaps celebrating new acquisitions or new works recently added to a catalogue, makes great sense. Background music is a distraction and I find it insulting having music in restaurants or coffee shops where it is so loud one cannot have a conversation. I avoid any place with background music.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT CHILDREN LEARN MUSIC?

Children should learn music because it works on the mind, the heart, the spirit, the soul and the imagination in unique ways. Because of its abstract nature it empowers children to think in abstract terms. Its ultimate good is realised when a child makes his or her own music.

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

HOW HAS THE TEACHING OF MUSIC CHANGED OVER YOUR CAREER?

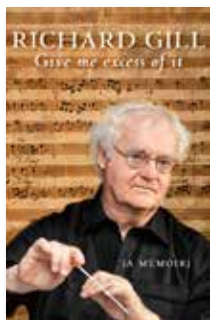
Knowledge of the repertoire commonly associated with music has, in my view, decreased and we now admit much more music to the table. This is not a bad thing, but we need to remember that our music evolved through a very long tradition of folk and composed music. To deny that tradition is to endanger our chances of an increasingly greater and richer understanding of all music.

DO YOU FEEL THAT EDUCATION IN THE ARTS IS PROMOTED ENOUGH IN SCHOOLS?

In some schools there is a strong and vibrant culture of serious study of the art forms. However, in too many schools there is little or no emphasis on any art in favour of two things which cannot be described as subjects but which frequently are: literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy are conditions arrived at as a result of studying. Arts education, especially music education, can be a powerful catalyst in aiding the acquisitions of many skills leading to a child's becoming literate and numerate. We still have a long way to go in Australia.

DO YOU THINK IT'S EVER TOO LATE TO LEARN MUSIC?

Based on my experience, no! I'm still learning about music and enjoying it hugely. You might struggle with the violin or flute at 85, but the struggle can be great fun. More important, however, is that if you can still hear you can learn about music forever. 🎵



Give Me Excess Of It: A memoir by Richard Gill is published by Macmillan, rrp \$24.99.

Dreading your library move?

If the thought of moving makes you want to hide, then it is time to call the experienced library relocation team at Chess Moving.

Chess pioneered the library relocation trolley system in Australia. We simply transfer whole rows of books from your library shelves, to our fully enclosed and lockable trolleys, then replace them intact at your new location.

Your sequential library system is preserved providing you with fast access to contents during relocation - and fast installation at your new library.

We also provide purpose built waterproof and lockable crates for files, large books, newspapers and periodicals.

So take the worry out of your library move - call the experts at moving today's modern libraries Australia wide.

 **13 14 69**

www.chessmoving.com.au



INTERSTATE
OVERSEAS
LOCAL