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## RONDALLA DOWN UNDER: A CONTEMPORARY RESURGENCE IN AUSTRALASIA

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### Abstract

Since the initial promotion of multi-cultural policies in the last decades of the twentieth century, Australia, and increasingly New Zealand, have been recalibrating their changing societies to be more inclusive of diversity. Although Filipinos such as Antonio Cubillo, the founder of Australia's first *rondalla* in the early 1900s, lived in Australia at the time of the so called "white Australia policy" nowadays, immigration from countries in Asia is a dynamic feature of Australasian life and diversity is celebrated. Music, as a means of increasing an awareness of this diversity, and creating a sense of identity within a multicultural nation is important. One strand within contemporary Australasian society is represented by the Philippine *rondalla*. This paper reports on the recent development of *rondallas* in Australia. Such ensembles are found in Canberra and Melbourne and also in Ipswich and Townsville in Queensland. A *rondalla* in Palmerston North, which is currently New Zealand's only *rondalla*, is also discussed. Important similarities, as well as great diversity, amongst the groups are demonstrated and the motivation behind the preservation and promotion of traditional Filipino music in migrant Filipino communities is examined.

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