

Chapter 5

Enter Electronics

The contribution of electronics to music in general and Christian music in particular may be considered in three main areas. Firstly, the discovery of sound recording and radio at the close of the nineteenth century opened a new world in the realm of communication and there were Christians who were ready to take advantage of the new phenomena. The first radio broadcast of a church service is thought to have been from Calvary Episcopal Church Pittsburgh in January 1921,¹ and the first gospel station was licensed to the National Presbyterian Church Washington in 1922. In the same year in Los Angeles the flamboyant Pentecostal evangelist Aimee McPherson (1890-1944) was one of the first women to preach on radio and by 1924 had her own radio station at the Angelus Temple.² Charles Coughlin another prominent radio evangelist from 1926-1944 became a model for those who would later pioneer television evangelism. Billy Graham in the 50's similarly made use of radio with his *The Hour of Decision* programme, and later used television in his campaigns. Other "mega stars" of media evangelism include Oral

¹ The first radio station to transmit regular broadcasts was at Pittsburgh in 1920. The BBC in 1922 was the first European station, and the first service broadcast in the UK was from St Martin's in the Field London in Jan 1924.

² Which cost \$1.5 million to construct! See E Blumhofer *Aimee Semple McPherson* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

Roberts who moved from tent to tube via his *Healing Waters* radio programme, Kathryn Kuhlman who produced more than five hundred telecasts for the CBS network, Pat Robertson who founded the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), Bill Hybels at Willow Creek, Chicago in the mid 70's and Robert Schuller at the Crystal Cathedral (completed in 1979.) Television evangelists achieved immense popularity and wealth, though some like Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker fell into disgrace in the 80's. Even so, the industry has continued to flourish with its 'prosperity gospel'³ preached by current names such as Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer and Morris Cerullo. Cable and satellite television and the Internet has enabled them to expand their activities and appeals for money. Apart from the questionable theology of these 'stars' the fact remains, their multi-million-dollar ministries (with the exception of Billy Graham) are not financially accountable to government or public scrutiny, and current investigations suggest there are serious questions to be asked. But they are big and successful, and as such appeal to the American psyche.⁴ Many of these television ministries are of Pentecostal background which some consider well suited to the media, seeing a parallel between electronic communication and primitive spirituality:

Television is a modern technology that has a curious similarity to shamanism. The shrinking of distance, the larger-than-life presence, the compression of time, the sense of belonging suggested by the congregation's response, the appeal to the emotional rather than to the logic- all integral to the topography of television- are also elements of shamanism.⁵

³ Though Bakker seems to have repented of this theology. See his book *I was Wrong* (Los Angeles: Nelson, 1996).

⁴ The British are more discerning. Cerullo was taken to task by the British Churches for exaggerated claims of healing on one of his UK campaigns in the 90's.

⁵ H Cox *Fire from Heaven* quoted in Redman *The Great Worship....* p.32 .

These pioneers of media form part of the background of Seeker Service Churches with a performance and entertainment element in worship that caters very much for contemporary tastes and preferences. In turn they have developed into what may be categorized today as churches of Contemporary Worship Music (*CWM*) catering particularly for the musical tastes of young people. Of importance too, is the place of radio in missionary work. To give two examples: *Heralding Christ Jesu's Blessings* (HCJB) was founded in 1931 at Quito, Ecuador, and Trans World Radio at Monte Carlo just after the second world war. Music plays a significant part in these ministries with the broadcast of gospel favourites and arrangements of hymns and songs by soloists and choirs. It is estimated that about 90% of the world's population listens to radio or watches television every day, and that the average American watches over three hours of television each day. If this figure is anywhere near the truth, producers of gospel programmes for radio or television know they have a ready-made audience.⁶

Parallel to the development of radio, the recording industry progressed from cylinders to discs by the 1900's and from acoustic to electrical recordings by 1925. Early highlights included Brahms playing his own *Hungarian Dance No 1* in 1893, and Caruso recording ten songs in 1902.⁷ The first opera to be recorded was Verdi's *Ernani* in 1903 by HMV, but it required forty single-side records! As in the case of radio, there were those who wished to use sound recording for religious purposes, and recording companies recognised there was money to be made in such ventures. In the mid 1890's Sankey

⁶ W E Warner 'Radio' in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990) p.755. There are currently 2025 Christian radio stations in America; 49 in Australia. The Australian Christian Channel caters from televised broadcasts many of which come from America.

⁷ Up to his death in 1921 Caruso had received 600,000 pounds sterling on his 154 records.

recorded some hymns accompanying himself on a melodeon and in the late 90's made Edison and Columbia cylinders. The Evangelist Gypsy Smith recorded several twelve-inch records from 1910 -1911, and William Booth made one for Columbia. Following the team pattern of Evangelist and Song Leader set by Moody and Sankey, others followed such as John Chapman and Charles Alexander, but the most prolific of gospel singers in the acoustical recording era was Billy Sunday's soloist Homer Rodeheaver. Between 1913 and 1942 he was on eighteen record labels with over 500 sides issued. His most recorded song was 'Brighten The Corner Where You Are' for at least seventeen different labels (p. 151). Other favourites included 'The Old Rugged Cross,' and 'Since Jesus Came Into My Heart.'⁸ American gospel songs such as Sankey's 'The Ninety And Nine,' Lowry's 'Shall We Gather At The River,' and many of Fanny Crosby's compositions were recorded alongside more traditional hymns such as 'Christ The Lord Is Risen Today.' The following list (pp. 152-3) gives some indication of the hymns and gospel songs that were recorded in the first decade of the twentieth century.⁹ While there are obvious musical differences between them and today's 'hits' (see pp. 155-6) there are also similarities. For one thing there is the verse/refrain structure; for another, tunes such as Townend's 'How deep the Father's love for us' could have been taken out of Sankey's.

EXAMPLE L page 150 (taken from *The Complete Mission Praise* 1999).

⁸ On occasions he also played the trombone! See Bob Olson 'Homer Rodeheaver, Pioneer of Sacred Records' www.garlic/~tgracyk/rodheaver.htm

⁹ For other examples and details of CDs available, see www.tinfoil.com/cms-cat.htm

988 How deep the Father's love for us

Words and music: Stuart Townend

Thoughtfully

E F#m7 E/G# A2

I How deep the Fa - ther's love for us, how

E/G# C#m7 B7sus B7 E F#m7 E/G#

vast be - yond all mea - sure, that He should give His on - ly

A2 E/B B7sus B7 E E/G# A/C# E/B

Son to make a wretch His mea - sure. How great the pain of sear - ing

A2 E/G# C#m7 B7sus B7

less - the Fa - ther turns His face a - way, as

E F#m7 E/G# A2 E/B B7sus B7

wounds which mar the cho - sen one bring ma - ny sons to glo -

E F#m7 E/G# A2 E/B B7sus B7 E

- ry.

- 1 How deep the Father's love for us,
how vast beyond all measure,
that He should give His only Son
to make a wretch His treasure.
How great the pain of searing loss -
the Father turns His face away,
as wounds which mar the chosen one
bring many sons to glory.
- 2 Behold the man upon a cross,
my sin upon His shoulders;
ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life -
I know that it is finished.
- 3 I will not boast in anything,
no gifts, no power, no wisdom;
but I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer,
but this I know with all my heart,
His wounds have paid my ransom.

No. 433. Brighten the Corner Where You Are.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may . . . glorify your Father which is in heaven."
MATTHEW V. 16.

INA DULBY OGDEN and F.S.T.

CHAS. H. GABRIEL.

1. Do not wait un - til some deed of great-ness you may do, Do not
 2. Just a - bove are cloud-ed skies that you may help to clear, Let not
 3. God has promised He will guide you if you read His Word, Let not

1. wait to shed your light a - far; In the sim-ple paths of du - ty to your
 2. self - ish aims your way de - bar; Though but one sad heart you gladden with your
 3. se - cret sin your ser-vice mar; By your shi-ning face let o - thers see you

1. Lord be true, Bright - en the cor - ner where you are.
 2. song of cheer, Bright - en the cor - ner where you are.
 3. know the Lord, Bright - en the cor - ner where you are.

REFRAIN.

Bright - en the cor - ner where you are, Bright - en the
 Shine for Je - sus where you are!

cor - ner where you are, Some one far from Je - sus may be -

- hold your light a - far, Bright - en the cor - ner where you are.

Table I. Recordings of Hymns released 1902-1910.

	Title	Category	Performed by	Circa
1.	The Ninety and Nine D	Baritone	Frank C. Stanley	1902-1904
2.	Saviour, More than Life	Duet	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1911
3.	There is a Fountain	Mixed quartette	Edison Mixed Quartette	1910
4.	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	Sacred	James F. Harrison	1908
5.	Softly and Tenderly	Duet	Miss Florence Hinkle & Mr. Harry MacDonough	1906
6.	Safe in the Arms of Jesus	Sacred	Harry MacDonough	1908
7.	I Need Thee Every Hour	Duet	Harry MacDonough & John Bieling	1905
8.	Nearer My God to Thee	Quartette	Edison Male Quartette	1908
9.	Let the Lower Lights Be Burning	Duet	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1906
10.	Stand Up For Jesus	Mixed quartette	Edison Mixed Quartette	1907
11.	Christ is Come	Band	Edison Concert Band	1908
12.	Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht D	Solo	Hans Hoffman	1902-1904
13.	O Come All Ye Faithful (Adeste Fidelis) D	Quartette	Columbia Quartette	1904
14.	Joy to the World D	Band	Edison Concert Band	1906
15.	Holy City <input type="checkbox"/>	Song	Irving Gillette	1904
16.	Draw Me Nearer	Duet	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1906
17.	Christ Arose!	Band	Edison Concert Band	1908
18.	Christ, the Lord is Risen Today	Band	Edison Concert Band	1909
19.	All Hail the Power of Jesus Name	Baritone	James F. Harrison	1904
20.	Beulah Land	Song	Frank C. Stanley	1904
21.	Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour	Duet	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1906
22.	Blessed Assurance	Mixed quartette	Edison Mixed Quartette	1909
23.	The Precious Name	Mixed quartette	Edison Mixed quartette	1907

24.	Shall We Gather at the River	Mixed Quartette	Edison Mixed Quartette	1908
25.	In the Sweet Bye and Bye	Tenor	Harry MacDonough	1904-1907
26.	Shall We Meet Beyond the River	Duet	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1906
27.	Rock of Ages <input type="checkbox"/>	Duet	Albert C. Campbell & James F. Harrison	1904
28.	Blest Be the Tie That Binds	Sacred	Harry Anthony & James F. Harrison	1910
			<i>Total playing time: 61:32</i>	

The following decades brought phenomenal growth to the record industry until the depression of the 30's.¹⁰ George Beverly Shea as Billy Graham's song leader succeeded Rodeheaver as the singer of gospel songs in America. In the UK, where there was little passion for American sentimental songs, records were made of traditional hymns especially by cathedral choirs and choral societies.¹¹ Some historical recordings were also made. For example in 1926 Columbia recorded Handel's *Messiah* at the last Handel Festival to be held at the Crystal Palace London.

We have noted that in the 60's radio, television and records made escape from pop music impossible. The outbreak of new songs within the church would also benefit. Scripture Union in the UK produced the LP *Tribute to Youth Praise* in 1969 to mark the

¹⁰ For example, Columbia in one month of 1929 peaked with the release of 4 million records.

¹¹ See for example 'Songs of Praise' 12 hymns, Decca SPA 62 Series 250 and 'Sing, O Sing' 13 hymns, Word Records WST 9034 both recorded in the 60s.

publication of *Youth Praise 2*. A year previously David and Dale Garrett in New Zealand compilers of *Scripture in Song* released their first 45rpm extended play record of songs:¹²

We had no idea that such a seemingly insignificant recording was to pioneer a concept which would spread throughout the world during the next ten years.¹³

The invention of the tape recorder particularly in its cassette form in the 60's gave further advantage to musicians including church musicians, and digital recording in the 70's together with videotapes extended the opportunity. But it was the invention of the CD in the 80's and more recently DVDs that has caused the music industry in general and the Christian music industry in particular to rocket into a multi million- dollar industry. We have traced the origins of contemporary Christian music¹⁴ (CCM) to the protest songs and rock and roll of the 60's. By 1975 Myrrh Records in the USA started signing Christian rock acts, and by the late 70's the industry was sufficiently established to publish its own magazine, the *Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*. By the 80's Christian artists such as Amy Grant and later Michael W Smith found themselves as 'stars' with an increasingly blurred line between sacred and secular styles.¹⁵ The four main giants of this empire are Maranatha Music,¹⁶ the Vineyard Music Group, Integrity Music formed in 1987 and Worship Together formed in the late 90's by the EMI Christian Music Group. In Australia today, while a flood of music comes from the USA, a great deal of contemporary Christian music is being produced by the mega churches, although smaller

¹² Even before the publication of their first word book in 1971. Double LP albums and cassettes accompanied their series of books

¹³ Foreword to *Scripture in Song: Book One*. The books carry the invitation to 'Introduce Scripture in Song to a friend.....give a cassette or a record.'

¹⁴ The term was first used by Ron Moore in describing an album by Richie Furay in 1976.

¹⁵ The number of artists in the industry at present are legion. See M A Powell *The Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music* (Peabody Mass: Hendrickson, 2002) for a full survey.

¹⁶ Credited with the first CWM project in the USA – *The Maranatha Praise Album* in 1974.

congregations are also seeking to break into the market.¹⁷ CDs of traditional hymns are still available (from the USA) e.g. '100 Best Loved Hymns' and 'Hymns of Faith,' but they are dwarfed by the worship recordings of contemporary music. Mention has already been made of the output of Hillsong (p. 136). One of their most successful DVDs was a recording called 'Unified Praise' made with the band Delirious:

During Hillsong Conference 2003, Delirious combined with the Hillsong team to record this project. It was an incredible night, with over 20,000 worshippers praising God with one voice. This album features 11 fantastic songs. (DVD # 534301.)¹⁸

Selling at \$39.95, it is not difficult to imagine a healthy profit. Similarly, the Paradise Community Church in Adelaide with a membership of around 4,500 has produced a number of CDs. One of the most popular in 2004 'Paradise Alive Adore' included Guy Sebastian of 'Australian Idol' fame. The album is described as 'a celebration of high energy praise' and sells at \$29.95 with a music book offered at the same price. Another mega church Southside with a membership of 3,500 has produced its 'Honour' CD to mark its 10th anniversary¹⁹ selling at \$29.95, while the Christian City Church at Oxford Falls, Sydney currently advertises its latest releases 'One Day' and 'Erana.' These examples are typical, with CDs, DVDs and accompanying song books not only being purchased by members of these churches, but also being disseminated to smaller contemporary worship churches who wish to imitate the music of mega congregations. Impressed visitors take these items back to their own fellowships, and they are available too from Christian retailers such as Word and Koorong and through the Internet.

¹⁷ See for example *Kingdom Songs* in the discography produced by the Lake Macquarie Christian Life Centre, Newcastle. Of interest is that the pastors of CLCs are trained by Brian Houston of Hillsong!

¹⁸ Word Catalogue, Volume 3, 2005.

¹⁹ It started in May 1994 with 40 members and according to its website with 'nothing in the bank.'

Christian radio stations broadcast them daily and televised broadcasts on the ACC add to their popularity. The advantage of such electronic phenomena is obvious. Local church musicians who very often cannot read music (see page 141) can learn by listening, and by means of a few simple guitar chords reproduce the songs of Hillsong and the like. We are left in no doubt that the recording industry has proved to be an indispensable aid to the growth of contemporary Christian music. Australia's Christian Copyright Licensing authority (CCLI) makes regular surveys on the basis of royalty payouts, and estimates that the top twenty five worship songs between April and September 2004 were as follows:²⁰

1	Shout To The Lord	Darlene Zschech
2	Here I Am To Worship	Tim Hughes
3	Lord I Lift Up Your Name	Rick Founds
4	How Deep The Father's Love For Us	Stuart Townend
5	The Power Of Your Love	Geoff Bullock
6	Ancient Of Days	Jamie Harvill & Gary Sadler
7	Come, Now Is The Time To Worship	Brian Doerksen
8	Open The Eyes Of My Heart	Paul Baloche
9	Worthy Is The Lamb	Darlene Zschech
10	Shine, Jesus, Shine	Graham Kendrick
11	What The Lord Has Done In Me	Reuben Morgan
12	My Redeemer Lives	Reuben Morgan
13	There Is A Redeemer	Melody Green Sievright

²⁰ Obtainable from their website. www.ccli.com.au.

14	Everyday	Joel Houston
15	I Give You My Heart	Reuben Morgan
16	Above All	Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche
17	God Is Great	Marty Sampson
18	The Potter's Hand	Darlene Zschech
19	Jesus, What A Beautiful Name	Tanya Riches
20	The Heart Of Worship	Matt Redman
21	Eagle's Wings	Reuben Morgan
22	The Servant King	Graham Kendrick
23	King Of Majesty	Marty Sampson
24	Hear Our Praises	Reuben Morgan
25	This Kingdom	Geoff Bullock

Three examples from this list have already been given; Kendrick's 'The Servant King' p. 131, Zschech's 'Shout to the Lord' p. 137 and Townend's 'How deep the Father's love' p.150. Another is given on the following page, Geoff Bullock's 'This Kingdom.' All have become extremely popular as congregational songs in recent years. Of these 25 modern classics 17 are found in Kendrick's *The Source* hymnbook (2 vols.), but only 4 in *TIS* suggesting the editorial committee could have done better.

EXAMPLE LII (page 158 taken from *The Source*, 2001).

278 Jesus, God's righteousness revealed (This kingdom)

Verse

D A/C# F#7 Bm7

Je - sus, God's right-eous-ness re - vealed,

Am7 D7 G D/F#

the Son of Man, the Son of God, his king-dom

Em7 G/A A Bm7

comes. Je - sus,

Am7 D7 Gmaj7 F#m7 Em7

re-demp-tion's sac - ri - fice, now glo-ri -

D/F# G G/A A7 *Chorus*

fied, now jus-ti - fied, his king-dom comes. And his

king-dom will know no end, and its glo-ry shall know no bounds,

for the ma - jes - ty and pow - er of this

king-dom's King has come, and this king-dom's reign, and this

king-dom's rule, and this king-dom's pow - er and au - tho - ri - ty,

Je - sus, God's right-eous-ness re - vealed.

2. Jesus, the expression of God's love,
 the grace of God, the word of God, revealed to us;
 Jesus, God's holiness displayed,
 now glorified, now justified, his kingdom comes.

While radio, records, television and CDs etc. have assisted contemporary Christian music, the invention of new musical instruments for the actual making of music has also contributed to its growing popularity. In the 30's the electronic organ replaced many a pipe and reed instrument (harmonium) often on purely economic grounds. The trend has continued to the present time, and some examples from the Newcastle area serve to illustrate this. A local Anglican church has recently purchased an 'up-market' model with full pedal board for \$33,000. This is a considerable amount, but the church was left without choice as it would have cost over \$80,000 to renovate its pipe organ, together with ongoing costs. It is currently seeking (not very hopefully) to sell its pipe organ. Another Anglican church has recently invested in a more modern superior instrument, reluctantly coming to the decision that their ancient electronic organ was no longer suitable.²¹ Three Roman Catholic churches in this area (all in the same Parish) have all opted to buy electronic instruments. They are not as well equipped as the abovementioned organs having only a dozen or so pedals, and in my view this brand is more suitable to a living room. However, on the basis of cost, the possibility of installing a pipe organ was never an issue. But electronic instruments are not without their problems. The local Lutheran church has not been able to use its organ for months. Some new parts are required and can only be obtained for this particular brand from Italy! The church waits patiently. This change however in a growing number of churches to electronic instruments has not been considered too radical, in that the better electronic organs today seek to simulate a pipe organ sound. Unfortunately, smaller congregations have to settle for inferior models. The acoustic piano has suffered a similar fate. Electronic keyboards by such giants as Yamaha and Roland have dispensed with the need

²¹ It offered a 'banjo' sound amongst others, and was sold for \$100.

for ongoing tuning and are generally cheaper to buy new than a normal piano. They also weigh less and are thus easier to move around on a stage setting. But chiefly, the growing popularity of the electric guitar,²² and other keyboard instruments such as the synthesizer,²³ gave to young people the wonder of amplification. Music suddenly became loud, and sometimes very loud! This was necessary at large gatherings such as rock concerts, and inevitably young Christians influenced by this culture sought to imitate this style of music (including the volume) within their churches. Perhaps too there were psychological reasons for excessive loudness. It helped to create, mood, atmosphere, and if youth felt their voice was being ignored, they could now make their point by turning up the volume control! Among the many young aspiring musicians attracted to the guitar was a Liverpool teenager destined for international fame:

I had a £15 acoustic Zenith guitar, which I still have in my studio. I swapped a trumpet for it.... You couldn't sing with a trumpet stuck in your mouth.....If you had aspirations in the singing line it had to be something like a guitar.²⁴

McCartney became friends with another young enthusiastic songwriter from a nearby suburb and encouraged him on the instrument:

The first thing Paul did was teach John (Lennon) how to tune his guitar; previously John had paid a musically inclined neighbour to do it for him. Once they were both in tune, they began to practice their guitar playing in earnest.Paul knew many more guitar chords but, being left-handed, he knew them all in reverse. John had to learn them backwards and then mentally transpose them for a right-handed player.²⁵

²² Invented by Les Paul in 1949. In the 60s over 36,000 were sold!

²³ Invented by Robert Moog in 1964.

²⁴ B Miles, *Paul McCartney* (New York: Holt, 1997) p. 21.

²⁵ Ibid p. 30. Paul progressed to his violin shaped Hofner bass and John to a Rickenbacker, both bought in Hamburg while working there in their pre Cavern Club days.

Around the same time in the south a teenage Mick Jagger inspired by a Buddy Holly concert at Woolwich a few years earlier, had formed a band and meeting up with an old primary school friend Keith Richards, invited him to audition for the Blue Boys:

The performance was a revelation..... on his semisolid Hofner cutaway, Richards was already a budding guitar hero, playing with style and ease. He was welcomed into the group at once.²⁶

The above and a host of other bands dominated the pop charts throughout the 60s. In the UK Cliff Richard and The Shadows, Jerry and The Pacemakers, The Animals, The Kinks etc. all gave to the world of popular music the new sound of the electric guitar. In America the industry was dominated by the likes of Bill Hayley and The Comets, The Beachboys and The Monkees, though chief in this new pantheon was Elvis Presley who with his guitar and suggestive gesticulations acquired the adoration of hysterical teenage girls. It is no wonder that young people copied their heroes by taking up the instrument in and outside of the church.²⁷ It symbolised what music for youth was all about.

Electronics have made massive contributions to music in general and Christian music in particular with the advent of computers. Music can now be stored on computer files and printed off as required. MIDI files can assist those who cannot read music by instructing electronic instruments to play songs as required. Scores can be downloaded from the Internet, so there are unlimited resources for those who wish to take advantage of them.

²⁶ J Ewing *The Rolling Stones* (Sydney: The Book Company, 1996) p. 10. 'The Rolling Stones' was formed in 1962 by Brian Jones which included Richards on guitar and Jagger on guitar and vocals.

²⁷ Including young Harry Webb (Cliff Richard). See his autobiography *Which One's Cliff?* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990) p. 35.

Even 'overheads' are history, most churches having replaced them with computer programmes and digital imaging. A contemporary music church is also likely to be equipped with a sound desk and lighting control unit to provide a rock concert atmosphere, hand microphones for the song leaders, and all manner of electronic gadgetry to be found in the secular music scene. It would seem too that even an individual's weekly offering has not escaped technology with Catholics being encouraged to make 'regular electronic planned giving.'²⁸

The above is indicative of our changing society fashioned by advances in technology:

We are living in a rapidly changing world, a statement quite obvious to the observer of technology. But there is one thing the individual wrapped up in his technological world may have overlooked: the change in music. Yes the world of music has been changing at an unprecedented rate, too.²⁹

This progress for all its worth is not without its negative side:

Electronic music evolves continuously as technology evolves.....To write about the present is already to write history since the state of the art changes not by decades, but by days and hours. Perhaps because of the very speed of change we lose a sense of where we have come from....³⁰

All this seems far removed from the situation of around fifty years ago when for example in a country church a harmonium and a few hymnbooks sufficed. An increasing number

²⁸ Catholic Development Fund Brochure.

²⁹ N H Crowhurst, Preface to *Electronic Musical Instruments* (Blue Ridge: Tab Books, 1971).

³⁰ J Appleton & R Perera, Preface to *The Development and Practice of Electronic Music* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1975). The point is well made as this book and Crowhurst's both written in the 70s are now obsolete. For example CD burners and iPods that can record thousands of CDs are now common, and Sony has recently introduced MDs. For an up to date treatment, see P Manning *Electronic and Computer Music* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

of mainstream churches are making use of CDs and computer technology, though they remain wary of the Christian rock band up front with its passion for excessive volume which they find offensive in a church setting. Neo Pentecostalism in the form of Christian Outreach Centres, Christian City Churches and Christian Life Centres are however without restraint in embracing all electronic technology and thus appeal to a younger generation. This appeal of electronic music to young Christians seems to be firstly because it is new, exciting and not associated with old-fashioned music.³¹ It is basically simple, and for the most part does not require a superior technique. Secondly, and very importantly, it is loud and expressive of 'power,' a theme which has a central place in Pentecostal theology. Thirdly, its strong beat allows for physical expression for the more energetically inclined, whereas mainstream churches with elderly congregants and traditional hymns are more controlled by Anglo Saxon reserve. One strand at least can be traced to Afro-American culture, and perhaps there is some truth in the American proverb that 'melody is for the brain, harmony for the soul and rhythm for the flesh!' Fourthly, the culture of much contemporary secular music is suggestive of the independence and rebellion of youth. It dares to be different and even offensive. Something of this sentiment lies at the heart of revivalism where the offer of overwhelming power and the challenge to be different is not only voiced by the speaker, but echoed in the style of music. However, the acceptance of electronic instruments has not been without resistance. At one extreme the Eastern churches have maintained their *a cappella* tradition, and Non-Instrumentalist Protestant churches continue to object on biblical (New Testament) grounds to instruments of all kinds. In mainstream churches organists are divided over the value of electronic instruments compared to 'the real

³¹ 'Old fashioned' being understood by youth as anything over 25 years old!

thing.’ There is in the mind of many the odd and erroneous perception that organs have been used in churches from time immemorial and are therefore acceptable. In reality, controlled tests have shown that listeners actually find it difficult and sometimes impossible to distinguish between a pipe and a superior electronic organ.³² But the main objection to modern instruments such as electric guitars and the like appears to be social i.e. because of their association with secular culture. This protest as we have noted is as old as Christianity itself, and has remained a continued tension within western Christianity down through the centuries. We can say with certainty that the dawn of the electronic age has served only to heighten the tension. Classical music has stayed for the most part within the bounds of traditional instruments and left the world of electronics to the ‘pop’ genre. Where the transition to contemporary music and instruments has occurred within churches, the experience has often been painful, as we will observe in the next chapter.

³² See for example the BBC’s series ‘Howard Goodall’s Organ Works’ where such a contest occurs.