

WEST MEETS EAST: ARTS ENCOUNTER OF A METAPHYSICAL KIND

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ABSTRACT

Encounters with the visual, musical, theatrical and other arts of Asia tend also to be encounters with the metaphysical underpinning of those traditions. This paper suggests a model for processing these Asian cultural influences. Examples are taken from *Transcultural Synaesthesia* (Lachlan, unpublished PhD in progress) which processes and integrates influences from Indian, Chinese and Japanese creative systems. The essence of the model is also explored as a means of processing influences from the products of the creative systems of other non-Western cultures.

Necessarily, one part of the challenge to Australian, and indeed other Western artists, musicians, dancers, thespians and other creative people, is to negotiate paths by which to absorb, integrate, and use influences from often entrancing Asian traditions without causing offence to the people to whom these traditions belong. The other part of the challenge is to achieve this without also denying ourselves access to and the excitement of exploring Asian ways of giving tangible expression to often abstract cosmological concepts.

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