

## FILM IN THE SIXTIES

The gradual progress being made to screen more Australian content on television was not replicated at the cinema. Locally made films were rare and Hollywood still monopolised the silver screen with productions such as *Psycho* (1960), *Cleopatra* (1963), *The Sound of Music* (1965), *Oliver!* (1968), *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Planet of the Apes* (1968), *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), and *Easy Rider* (1969), covering all genres. At the end of the decade, the federal government increased funding to support production of Australian-made films.

## MUSIC IN THE SEVENTIES

### FESTIVALS AND POLITICAL CHANGE

The 1960s ended with songs of protest and the psychedelic music of performers such as the Doors and Jimi Hendrix. The Woodstock music festival in 1969 was the pinnacle of youth culture in the United States. Australia followed suit with the 'Pilgrimage for Pop' at Ourimbah on the New South Wales Central Coast in 1970, the 'Meadows Technicolor Fair' in South Australia in 1972, and from 1972 to 1975 the 'Sunbury Pop Festival' in rural Victoria. Gough Whitlam's Labor Government was elected in 1972, ending twenty-three years of conservative rule in Australia, and seemed to be addressing many of the pressing issues being protested and sung about. Ending Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War and passing legislation addressing inequities in Australian society regarding women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and migrants were all on the agenda. While much of the music from the late 1960s remained popular, new influences from overseas started to take hold of Australian popular culture. Local bands started to develop a distinctive Australian flavour.

### BUBBLEGUM MUSIC

Some music of the late 1960s and early 1970s deliberately targeted teenagers with simple, catchy lyrics and tunes that could be danced to. It was referred to as 'bubblegum music', the most popular groups being Ohio Express with songs such as 'Yummy, Yummy, Yummy', and the Archies with 'Sugar, Sugar'. A US group, the Monkees, became very popular during this period with a British lead singer and a sound very similar to the Beatles. They were deliberately manufactured for mass consumption through television and perfected the art of appealing to the youth market. African-American music through the Motown record label was having an influence on popular music, with a young Michael Jackson as the lead singer for his band of brothers, the Jackson Five. Other family-based groups such as the Osmonds and the Carpenters emerged that had a sound that relied upon harmonies and simple, catchy tunes. The development of more serious 'soft rock' aimed at an older audience saw groups such as the Eagles from the US and Australia's Little River Band enjoy considerable success.



SOURCE 4.4.5 ABBA with television host Daryl Somers (centre) during their visit to Australia in 1976

Q How does this source inform historians about the relationship between music and television in the creation of popular culture?

### DISCO

The global phenomenon of **disco** took off in Australia in the mid-1970s via US artists such as KC and the Sunshine Band and later the Village People, who drew upon influences from homosexual subculture of the time. European performers Leo Sayer and ABBA were also popular, perhaps more so in Australia than other parts of the world. Australian-based performers also contributed to the disco movement with artists such as John Paul Young and the Bee Gees, who achieved worldwide recognition for their contribution to the soundtrack of the hit film *Saturday Night Fever* (1977).

### GUITARS AND GLAM ROCK

Disco was very different to the music that had come before it, and it was distinctly 1970s. However, the heavy rock of Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and home-grown AC/DC took music in a new direction and added another dimension to the image of 1970s popular culture. **Glam rock** started in Britain with performers such as David Bowie, Gary Glitter and Roxy Music who dressed in elaborate costumes, wore make-up and platform shoes, and whose androgynous nature reflected shifting gender stereotypes. Australian group Skyhooks combined the look of glam rock with controversial lyrics that saw much of their music, including the hit 'You Just Like Me Cause I'm Good in Bed', banned in some parts of the media. Glam rock was very popular in Australia, with Split Enz and Sherbet also proving to be successful local talent. **Shock rockers** took things a step further in the late 1970s, using elaborate sets and stunts in their performances to excite the audience. The painted faces, costumes and fireworks of KISS were very popular in Australia, but the pretend decapitations of animals on stage by Alice Cooper led to some questioning this type of music.

SOURCE 4.4.6 Glam band Skyhooks pose in their extravagant costumes at the height of their musical career, 1975.

Q Compare the appearance of Skyhooks to the Seekers in Source 4.4.3. How are they different, and can you draw any conclusions about changing attitudes or trends from this?



### PUNK

Perhaps the most confronting music to develop during the 1970s was **punk**. It was rebellious, loud and very threatening to traditional society. Brought to the world from Britain by the Sex Pistols and the Clash, and the Ramones from the United States, punk artists were anti-mainstream popular culture and their appearance had a 'do-it-yourself' look that rejected consumerism. As such, it was only ever really popular as part of a subculture in Australia. The Saints were probably the most successful Australian punk band, but punk did influence Australian musicians such as Nick Cave. Among all of this new and sometimes controversial music, an interesting development occurred when Sister Janet Mead's rock version of 'The Lord's Prayer' spent three weeks at number one in the national charts in 1974.

## TELEVISION IN THE SEVENTIES

### HOME-GROWN CONTENT IN COLOUR

Television continued to expand into more remote parts of Australia during the 1970s, reaching Kalgoorlie, Mt Isa and Darwin in 1971. Colour television was available in 1975, and within three years seven out of ten households had switched to colour. The success of Australian programs in the 1960s encouraged the production of more home-grown content. In 1976, the federal government imposed a quota of 50 per cent local content to be broadcast between 4.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m. Some of Australia's most popular and iconic television programs first aired in the 1970s, including *Matlock Police* (1971–75), *Young Talent Time* (1971–89), *Hey Hey It's Saturday* (1971–99), *A Current Affair* (1971–), *The Young Doctors* (1976–82), *The Sullivans* (1976–83) and *60 Minutes* (1979–).

Other programs broke social barriers, such as *Number 96* (1972–77) that featured full nudity and an openly gay character, or *The Paul Hogan Show* (1973–84), *The Aunty Jack Show* (1972–73) and *The Norman Gunston Show* (1975–79), which all used humour to address many of the social and political issues of the period. Molly Meldrum's *Countdown* (1974–87) was a crucial contributor to popular culture, bringing live musical acts, many of which were Australian, to youth across the country. Sport broadcasting was becoming more sophisticated and live matches screened more often, which brought more money from advertising into sport. The dominance of overseas programs on Australian television was beginning to be challenged.

SOURCE 4.4.7 The cast from the cult series *The Aunty Jack Show* (1972–73)

Q 1 What might be the purpose of this photograph? How do you know?  
2 Based on the images in the source, what type of program do you think *The Aunty Jack Show* was?

