

Reviews

***Voice of the Magi, Enchanted Journeys in Southeast Brazil.* By Suzel Ana Reily. Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology. The University of Chicago Press, 2002. 266 pp. ISBN 0-226-70939-8
DOI: 10.1017/S026114300421011X**

Suzel Reily has written a major work exploring the popular Catholic musical ensembles of south-eastern Brazil. It will have impact on ethnomusicology, social anthropology and for any study of music and religion. While deftly embedded in anthropological and sociological theory with a thorough and inspiring discussion of existing and current literature, it is at the same time an account of fifteen years of Reily's own life working with groups of musicians based in São Bernardo do Campo, the heartland of Brazil's car industry who come together in their neighbourhood to form a *folias de reis* – *companhias de reis* – (companies of kings). As a participant observer, often playing viola or caixa as an accompanist, she broke the expectations of the groups themselves by being the first person of both her gender and social class to be involved with them: their acceptance of her as a 'reporter' overcame their own prejudices as she was called upon at times by them to fill in or cover at the last minute for core members. Brought up herself in São Bernardo in an American Methodist missionary family, Reily has been formally investigating Brazilian popular Catholic traditions since 1982 and freely admits her initial appreciation of the 'exotic other', the seductive poetics of popular Catholicism and the methodological problems inherent in any ethnography of the 'familiar', i.e. the challenges of defamiliarisation and other cultural baggage (pp. 21–2).

Brazil is one of the largest Catholic countries in the world with seventy-five per cent of the population admitting to devotion to the Church. Reily's study is one of the few that looks at popular Catholicism, a highly localised affair with immediate links with the lives of devotees. The *companhias de reis* are a musical ensemble of predominantly low-income workers who perform during the Christmas season in various regions of Brazil particularly in rural communities. As Reily explains in the preface, they enact the journey of the Wise Men to Bethlehem and back to the Orient, moving from house to house as they sing to bless the families they visit in exchange for food and money. The offerings they collect are then used for a festival on 6 January, the day of the King's. This day is of course popularly celebrated in many Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas as it is in Spain, and in many is celebrated with greater significance than Christmas itself. And, as Reily asserts, 'Today folias have become a common feature of many peripheral neighbourhoods of the country's large urban centres, brought by thousands of migrants who have flocked to the cities in search of a better life'.

One of Reily's pertinent observations on her first visit comes when she finds out that those taking part are also active trade union officials. The first key question that she ponders really underpins the whole book, 'How can such activists be prepared to

take up guitars, tambourines and drums decorated with coloured ribbons and plastic flowers during the Christmas season and sing endless ditties before the manger scenes in their neighbourhood?' The initial answer for one of them (a leader in the metal workers union) lies in the promise of his mothers (*promessa*) to the Three Kings on his behalf when he was a child giving him a lifelong obligation to sing for them each year. While on one level such obligations to the saints exist in order to have their protective power, there are many more levels involved.

Reily divides up all the material, ethnography and observations and analysis of her fifteen years into nine sections. She offers an appendix of musical examples, notes, glossary and bibliography, and a lovely gallery section of black and white photographs of the kind my mother keeps in an old biscuit tin many decades old, i.e. poor black and white reproductions. How I wish publishers had the budgets to treat photographs as the documents they are, giving them the size and attention they deserve, as in the 'coffee table' finish of photography books. In the twenty-first century with DVD and CD-Rom, it seems a crying shame that publishers cannot invest in this documentary side of research.

Whingeing and wishful thinking over, this study works wonderfully on many levels. Chapter I, 'Preparations', works as both an introduction to the book and an account of what is involved in the first stages of *folia* preparation each year as everyone meets and begins to get ready for the journey which will start around 24/25 December. In chapter II, 'Folias', Reily discusses the historical background of the tradition: from descriptions of the musical styles of the groups she works with to mobility and settlement patterns and economic life from the colonial era to the present day. In chapter III, 'Banners', the hierarchical structure of folias is examined. In chapter IV, 'Rehearsals', conceptions of music and music-making and the social relations of musical production are embedded in a rich ethnography revealing the significance of sociability. Chapter V, 'Departures', looks at the ritual that launches each journey and examines how this redefines the social sphere while simultaneously constructing a scared space different from the everyday world. It also shows beautifully how individual biographies are integrated into the collective memory of the community through shared representations of the repertoire. Chapter VI, 'Adoration', focuses on the mythic repertoire of the tradition and the way differing narrative accounts mesh with the moral values of the participants. Chapter VII, 'Visitations', looks at ritual exchange and the deep significance of reciprocal traditions, while Chapter VIII, 'Arrivals', looks at the final festival which ends the final journey bringing together the participants with local people of their community.

Reily's premise is that the apparent naiveté and innocuousness of the *folia de reis* tradition provides a cover through which *folias* have been able to safeguard their cultural capital while the folklorisation of the tradition has allowed for the creation of spaces for its performance in the wider public area. In the final chapter IX, 'Visions', she argues that in contrast to official Catholicism, in the popular Catholic realm the continuous communal re-significance of religious representations maintains a degree of coherence between religious life and daily experience and aspirations. 'Thus enchantment provides a means of organizing communal action in a manner which re-create religious ideals allowing devotees to visualise themselves within a divine moral order. From the margins of society, the infra-political realm of popular Catholicism allows the Brazilian underprivileged classes to periodically reinvent the universe in terms of their understanding of God's natural laws and thereby to create and sustain a vision of an equitable social world' (p. 26).

Thus, through a close and detailed history of the 'ritual journeys' of the *folias* and the musical performances they involve, we are shown the creation of 'sacred spheres' which are both distinct from the participants' everyday world while still intimately linked to it. This is the practice of 'enchantment' which gives the title to the book: it is a mechanism that allows the *folia* community involved to temporarily realise the social ideals of reciprocity and equality embodied in their religious belief, and in their real lives refracted through their union ideals. The fact is that the daily lives of these materially impoverished workers is mediated through with their religious practices and thus reinforces their religious convictions.

What is memorable about the writing is Reily's ability to grip the imagination of the reader by starting each chapter with an oft amusing or provocative anecdote which thereby acts as a springboard, metaphor or template for what is to unfold. These linger in the memory so that, for example, several weeks after reading the 'Banners', I have this vivid picture of a cow eating a banner, the result of excessive alcohol consumption during the journey, when in actual fact I have in reality seen neither cow nor banner nor indeed been to these *folias*! (p. 64). Banners are central to the tradition and identity of a group without which they cannot proceed, and a new one must be found before they can continue.

Reily's approach acknowledges that all ethnography is only a partial representation of what is there, and is guided by what she calls a 'holistic ideal of radical empiricism'; it is in this way that she attempts to give insight into ways the *folia* community construct their experiences of fragmentary wholeness through the contradictory coherence of their enchanted realities. 'It is precisely because of the localized nature of popular Catholic practice that their religious life can keep pace with all aspects of daily experience; each time devotees stage a ritual, they engage in the intense processes of negotiation, bringing the shared symbolic repertoire of the tradition to bear upon their contemporary lives'.

Her theoretical analysis is guided by various key figures, including John Blacking, Victor Turner and Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci's dynamic and radical vision altered the way Brazilian anthropologists have looked at the lower classes and their lifestyles, 'seeing human beings as historical agents actively involved in the construction of their own destinies'. He defined folklore as expressions of world and life of the subaltern classes, and he saw popular Catholicism as a sphere for the articulation of the morality of the people (1985, p. 193) rooted in their notions of 'natural law' (p. 9). Gramsci differentiated the concepts of natural law of the Church with those held in the popular domain and argues that people continuously renew their common-sense categories expressed in their popular traditions in accordance with the 'pressures of real living conditions and spontaneous comparisons between the ways in which the various social strata live', appropriating into a 'mosaic of tradition' 'a confused agglomerate of fragments of all the conceptions of the world and life that have succeeded one another in history' (p. 9). Where others before her have focused on symbolic repertoires and normative ritual processes reflecting a rather static and essentialist representation of popular Catholic ethos and subaltern morality, Reily's own focus is on the intense processes of negotiation and resignification of commonsense categories so integral to Gramsci's ideas (p. 10).

And so we follow the process whereby year upon year these groups regenerate themselves to carry out a ritual journey and celebration whatever the historical, social and political circumstance they are part of, and by doing so in the process are themselves re-generated as individuals and a group and a community. Reily's

concluding section, 'Enchanted Visions', is a wonderful synthesis of her material, powered as it is by John Blackings vision of all communal music-making as inherently political coupled with his inspiring words on 'being torn between concern for the world as it is and as it might be' (p. 230).

In the structuring of her work, envisioned in her chapter titles, Reily achieves something ethnographers dream of but rarely achieve: that is, the narrative structure of the book reflects the content it is both engaged with and recounting, i.e. it parallels the annual procedures of the *folias*: so we start with 'Preparations', which doubles as an introduction, and end with 'Visions' by way of 'Folias', 'Banners', 'Rehearsals', 'Departures', 'Adorations'; 'Visitation' and 'Arrivals'. It is customary in a review to ferret out any weaknesses in a text and its arguments. I found that impossible to do here, save that it is at times a little dense. Reily's perspective may not be one shared by sociologists of popular music or even musicologists, but they will surely find it persuasive and it may inspire their imagination: 'Through the divine power of enchantment, a transformation is effected that lasts for the duration of the journey: the world becomes more colourful, adorned with flowers, ribbons and shiny paper, it becomes more poetic and more musical through the performances of the *folia*; there is space for clowning and joking, which enhance the atmosphere of sociability within the ritual frame; food and drink for all become abundant. People are transformed by their direct contact with the Magi: they become more joyful and predisposed to give of their time, their talents and their limited possessions in order to heighten the experience of communion with the saints' (p. 223). Such humanity as witnessed in this book is as humbling as it is ennobling: 'Viva os Três Reis Santo! ... Viva toda a companhia' (p. 147).

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***The Last Party: Britpop, Blair and the Demise of English Rock.* By John Harris. London: Fourth Estate, 2003. 448 pp. ISBN 0-00-713472-X
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The Last Party: Britpop, Blair and the Demise of English Rock by John Harris is, to some extent, a book of contradictions, covering a lot of ground while taking a narrow focus. It provides a primarily journalistic account of a moment in British cultural history. In the mid-1990s the mass media adopted the sound of a few bands as representative of a rejuvenated Britain whilst today's UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, then the leader of a strong opposition to the incumbent Tory party, utilised this air of patriotism by allying the British Labour party to the youth cultural phenomenon that had come to be known as 'Britpop'.

Harris hitches his study of a cultural phenomenon onto a more directly engaged account of the music at its centre. In doing so he applies a narrative structure to a considered and thematic account of developments in Britain's cultural and political history. He hangs his case upon key incidents such as the visit of musician Noel Gallagher's to the prime-ministerial abode at Downing Street and the UK music media's enhanced battle for the number one chart spot between Blur's song *Country House* and Oasis's *Roll With It* during the summer of 1995. Harris' remit is wide,

encompassing changes in the political climate, the shape of the British music industry and detailed accounts of the careers of a number of UK bands (with particular emphasis on Blur, Suede, Oasis and Elastica).

The titular 'Last Party' refers to the period, in the mid-1990s, when bands sporting a distinctively British aesthetic and drawing in particular on the work of 1960s UK acts like The Beatles, The Kinks and The Small Faces, had wrested dominance of the pop music charts away from North American 'grunge' acts. At the same time, a revitalised British Labour party celebrated a return to prominence and then to power. As with many such historical epiphanies, the moment at which they come to be labelled, in this case as 'Cool Britannia' and, more specifically to the music industry, 'Britpop', often marks the onset of a decline.

Central to this book is the thesis that the groups that defined 'Britpop' ended up cutting the British indie rock tradition loose from its ideological and aesthetic moorings. Indie rock in Britain had, in the wake of punk and throughout the 1980s, taken an oppositional stance to the mainstream music industry and the government. The project of forging a sound for British rock that did not derive from recent North American music also included, as one of its primary criteria, the necessity for chart-based financial success.

Harris contends, however, that once the more creative minds had turned away from blatant commercialism, what was left was a celebration of Britishness for its own sake. Bereft of the creative spark that had produced an alliance between contemporary pop practice and an appreciation of its cultural history and context, British rock music, he argues, is stuck in a conservative and conformist rut. This is compounded by the dilution of rock's 'revolutionary' stance resulting from members of these young bands sipping champagne with the Prime Minister.

As Harris says, '... five years after Britpop slid into insignificance, it frequently seems that the mainstream is all there is ... Britpop may have elevated the alumni of the 80s indie milieu to an unforeseen popularity. But it also seemed to pursue a scorched earth policy – and once the smoke had cleared it became obvious what had been lost ... British musicians seem to have reached unprecedented depths of compliance and timidity ... As with politics, music seems to have long since ditched the vocabulary of revolution, and opted for isolated, incremental change' (pp. 370–3).

In keeping with its broadly journalistic methodology and style, *The Last Party* relies heavily upon interviews with the protagonists, many of whom seem better able to appreciate in retrospect, away from the hurly-burly of media attention, the creative forces that led to the success of bands like Oasis and Blur in the first place. This is aided by Harris's reflective style, which throws into sharp relief the hyperbolic statements made at the time. Particularly telling is an account of the rave reviews for Oasis's *Be Here Now*, an album to which history and hindsight have been less than kind, which expands outwards from a portrait of Oasis's own hubris and touches upon a more general tendency for rock bands and scenes to create mythologies which they cannot live up to.

As Harris writes, 'In all the responses to *Be Here Now*, one could detect an age-old syndrome. Its advocates seemed to be driven not by the album's merits but by a massed desire to maintain Oasis's myth and thereby prolong the delirious fun that had started three years before ... hyperbole was hurtling away from reality, driven by a force that was all its own. By the end of the year, the praise hurled at Oasis would look deeply misplaced' (p. 341).

Throughout Harris displays a welcome and surprisingly engaging attention to detail which fleshes out rather than swamps his narrative. He manages to successfully depict the careers and travails of his primary case studies, including grizzly accounts of romantic triangles, drug addiction and intense personal rivalries, without lapsing into salaciousness, prurience or hagiography, but also without reducing the stories to a dry recital of the facts.

He is less thorough in his account of the political developments of the time, although this is perhaps forgivable given that his emphasis here is on the politicians' use of, and effect upon, popular music rather than their wider agendas. Whilst *The Last Party* does not provide a detailed analysis of the Labour party's move away from the left, it does offer an insight into the populist tendencies and personal predilections which made the courting of rock stars in the pursuit of votes a natural manoeuvre for Tony Blair. In light of his subsequent PR-driven style of government, the accounts of Blair's days as a rock performer at university are both entertaining and revealing. In Harris' words, 'Ugly Rumours [Blair's band] took to the stage – or rather the lawn – after performances by an all-female string quartet and a local trad jazz band, dressed in candy-striped jackets and straw boaters. Unbeknown to his colleagues, Blair had the idea of allowing them to join the group in an impromptu celebration of musical togetherness. Such were the first stirrings of what is now known as Blairist inclusivism' (p. 158).

If Harris's book is occasionally somewhat episodic, veering between descriptions of developments in the music industry and the evolution of the political landscape, this is perhaps the inevitable consequence of trying to elucidate a moment of collision between two seemingly disparate spheres of activity. To the extent that he does examine the British music industry, however, greater mention of other musical developments of the time – ('trip-hop', 'drum 'n' bass', the continued success of dance music and the world-conquering Spice Girls, for instance) – would have been a welcome addition. He mentions that the reclamation of the Union Jack from the far right and the rise of a fashionable and fashion-led patriotism were not limited to 'Britpop'. But although he does well to place it in the historical context of punk, rave music and 'baggy', he is less assiduous about examining it alongside the plethora of other British music that was also heard in the 1990s. This is somewhat mitigated by the thoroughness with which he covers the 'Britpop' bands and the fact that his argument pertains to 'indie rock' music in particular. Nevertheless, the spotlight rests almost exclusively on white British rock and greater attention to other genres might also diminish the sense of a British popular music that is now languishing in the imaginative doldrums.

Overall, his style is commendably entertaining and expressive, providing a neat balance between the subjective and the descriptive. His turn of phrase and sketches of people, such as Tony Blair participating in Labour's 'Youth Experience Rally' wearing, '... a deeply nervous grin, like an over-eager teacher embroiled in a playground snowball fight' (p. 304) help to imbue the book's compelling narrative. Likewise, his frequent recourse to material gathered from extensive interviews allows the music industry personnel to appear as three-dimensional human beings rather than just stock caricatures in a musical scene. This is particularly effective during his account of the decline of 'Britpop' from artistic endeavour into drug-fuelled indulgence and the subsequent reinvention of some of its more creative proponents.

If Harris allows his own musical preferences to inform his argument then, ultimately, this does not sit at odds with the thrust of a book that lays no claim to

academic objectivity and is, above all, highly readable. Similarly if *The Last Party* is shot through with an implicit sense of the betrayal of the left in Britain both musically and politically, it is always clear and well argued without lapsing into strident polemicism. Eventually this means that the book succeeds equally as a cautionary tale of both the standard pitfalls of rock excess and the more insidious dangers for musicians and politicians alike of building reputations and careers upon fashionable totems instead of ideological or aesthetic principles.

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***Who Needs Classical Music? Cultural Choice and Musical Value.* By Julian Johnson. Oxford University Press, 2002. 140 pp. ISBN 0-19-514681-6
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Classical music has greater value than other music, even if it is liked by few people, even if it has come to be associated with patriarchy, with wealth, privilege and class divisions. This is the polemic posed by Julian Johnson in his extraordinary book, *Who Needs Classical Music?*

The idea that classical music is in crisis will be familiar to those who are engaged with it, but perhaps less familiar to those for whom classical music is simply one cultural choice among many. From this latter perspective, the idea that classical music is suffering a 'crisis' is simply the petulant and bewildered cry of a small elite who used to have the unquestioning support of the power base but which now fears relegation to the status of one-among-many. In defence of classical music, Johnson argues for its distinctive value, claiming that it does things which other cultural forms do not do, just as those other forms do things which classical music does not. Part of this distinctiveness, he claims, is classical music's 'self-conscious attention to its own musical language'. Johnson's argument rests on the idea of 'music itself': that there are objective differences between musical pieces and between musical styles, and these articulate different values. Music is therefore not an empty sign for other things despite, Johnson claims, having been taken as such by some branches of the sociological study of music. According to Johnson, classical music has a richness of meaning which is in opposition to the uses to which it is often put. Classical music, he argues, embodies ideals of Enlightenment humanism: 'individuality, freedom, self-identity expressed in a collective whole'. Classical music affords the experience of valuing something in and for itself, and therefore to participate in this sense of being valued. It is for these reasons, he claims, that we need classical music.

The debate about the value of classical music will be familiar from discussions of the public funding of the arts, and of educational curricula, but they are faced head-on here and pursued in valuable depth. For example, the idea that music has objective values and that some people are better equipped through educational processes to make judgements on behalf of other people, will be offensive to many. But Johnson's argument is based not only on claims of this music's inherent worth, but on justification for it based on a particular idea of what constitutes 'value'. If music is about pleasure, self-identity and expression then there are few grounds for claiming the authority of particular value judgements, but if its significance lies in its relationship with society, then knowledge and skill are needed to make such judgements,

authority can be justified, and public funding on the arts can be defended – or at least, according to Johnson's argument.

The idea that classical music might espouse values different from those of other music also warrants serious attention. Johnson highlights the dangerous confluence of market forces with the characterisation of contemporary culture in terms of multiplicity and plurality, arguing that it has encouraged reception practices in which products become interchangeable. He argues that the functional expectations of popular culture have come to dominate so that they become the expectations of all music, even though classical music was shaped by different functions. Claims for the uniqueness and 'difficulty' of classical music inevitably lead to accusation of elitism. By way of a rebuttal, Johnson argues that the charge of elitism is a symptom of a pseudo-democracy, where anti-elitism is used to refuse opportunity and deny intellectual aspiration. Johnson turns the tables on those who would claim that classical music is elitist and asks the reader to consider what is *anti-elitist* about denying people the opportunity to become acquainted with different repertoires of music and listening practices.

There is much to admire and provoke in this book, but two aspects seem particularly problematic in relation to popular music and are problems shared with the Adornian theory to which it is indebted. One danger is that the book reproduces the unhelpful dichotomy between art and popular music which has dogged reception of Adornian theory. Johnson defines classical music as 'music that functions as art, as opposed to entertainment or some other ancillary or background function'. This allows for a definition of music based on use and function (in relation to material characteristics), rather than on stylistic divisions. This seems to promise an approach which could tell us something about 'critical' and 'uncritical' music and the criteria used to make such judgements, rather than the valuing of different genres. However, the examples Johnson mentions are drawn from Western concert music (that is, after all, the focus of the book), and as a consequence what emerges is the familiar equation drawn between classical music and critical music, and between popular music and uncritical music. In addition, the definition of popular music as 'a set of musical uses and functions rather than a musical style' reinforces traditional ways of approaching popular versus classical genres which neglect their musical materials and forms. By failing to delineate the central terms in sufficient depth, Johnson is in danger of over-generalising from Western chart-based hits and implying that popular music is not self-conscious about its musical materials and forms.

A second problem inherited from Adornian notions of the relation between music and society is an assumed identity between production and consumption. This is the argument that individual choice is constrained to what the market makes available and is too easy to rattle off in the absence of empirical evidence. Although independent record labels, and amateur music-making are not free from market influences, their existence counters the idea that individuals' choices are determined solely by the products made available by commercial organisations. As twenty years of cultural studies has shown, products do not determine meanings and uses, and music is process as well as product.

The potential offensiveness of the book lies not just in what is said but in the manner of its saying. In this respect it embodies the very principles it espouses for classical music. Absence of referencing and footnotes enhances the engagingly direct style, but use of the plural pronoun 'we' and 'our' positions the reader as complicit with Johnson's views and assumes an identity between author and reader. One view

would be to read this mode of address as an unthinking acceptance of the complacent rhetorical conventions of an earlier version of academic discourse. However, this mode of address is congruent with the argument for the objectivity of musical qualities and values, which, Johnson claims, are not simply his, but are universally true.

Johnson's stated purpose is not to reinstate classical music to the elevated position from which it appears to have fallen, but to ask what classical music might do for us and why it might be worth our attention. As Johnson points out, for some people classical music has now come to be associated so strongly with patriarchy and class divisions that for many there simply isn't anything sufficient left for it to have redemptive power. In addition, classical music's uniqueness, according to Johnson, lies partly in its refusal of the everyday. However, by refusing to partake of the everyday, by virtue of its autonomy of musical forms and materials, it risks making itself irrelevant to the very sphere to which it opposes itself.

A major criticism of the book, and of the position which it represents, is that its justifications for the distinctive value of classical music remain elusive, distributed through the text and often appearing as homologies between musical and social processes (for example, 'the interaction of the separate voices embodies a musical analogue of the perfectly balanced community' [p. 67]). Until the values that are distinctive to classical music, and how these are realised in its material form, are spelled out much more clearly, the claims to greatness made for classical music will continue to be taken as either complacency or a conviction born out of ignorance of other cultural forms rather than as critical insight. While this sets a clear agenda for proponents of classical music, the burden for understanding lies both with those who would make the case, as well as those who would dismiss it.

This book will be offensive and shocking to many but it warrants serious engagement rather than refusal. Read it and discuss the issues it raises as widely as possible because it offers the opportunity for serious debate about music and its relationship to the way we live our lives.

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***Bossa Nova: The Story of the Brazilian Music that Seduced the World.* By Ruy Castro, trans. Lysa Salsbury. Chicago: A Cappella, 2000. 372 pp., discography, glossary, index, photos**

***Tropical Truth: A Story of Music & Revolution in Brazil.* By Caetano Veloso, trans. Isabel de Sena. New York: Knopf, 2002. 354 pp., glossary, index, photos**
DOI: 10.1017/S0261143004240119

The two books discussed here are recent additions to the growing body of Brazilian music in English. The first treats *bossa nova*, the *samba* derivation invented in Rio de Janeiro in the late 1950s and early 1960s that reached audiences around the world through the song 'A garota de Ipanema' ('The Girl from Ipanema'). The second treats the music known as *tropicália*, a pop rock genre of Brazilian music that began in Bahia

and flourished in São Paulo in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Though the latter did not score any single international hit, its recent revival outside of Brazil attests to its lasting appeal. What makes the reading of these books together so interesting is that they make clear how interrelated the musics' histories are, even though they sound so little alike.

Whereas *bossa nova* was a reaction against the gloomy lyrics of *samba-canção* (e.g. 'Waiter turn out the light/Because I want to be alone') and the music of the big-throated crooners of 1940s–1950s radio, like Lúcio Alves, Orlando Silva, Dick Farney and even Frank Sinatra, *tropicália* was in part a reaction against the nasal, self-absorbed singer-songwriters of *bossa nova*, typified by João Gilberto, and their tireless lyrics about the sun, the beach and the music itself. Gilberto and Antônio Carlos Jobim, the best-known stars of *bossa nova*, admired the operatic jazz belters; they felt that their music and lyrics, however, did not relate at all to their generation. *Tropicália*'s biggest stars, Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil, for their part, acknowledged their debt to *bossa nova*'s singers, musicians and composers; but, like the generation before them, they felt a major musical change was needed to artistically represent the reality of their world.

Both styles of music were conceived of as movements by their main practitioners, though *tropicália* began with greater organisation, uniting visual artists, poets, musicians and actors. Both were rejected by the media initially (though *bossa nova* caught on with the mainstream much more than *tropicália* ever did) and ridiculed by established musicians and journalists as lacking any of the creativity or artistic merit of previous musical trends. *Bossa nova* and *tropicália* musicians themselves were met with hostility, derision and indifference by large sectors of the Brazilian listenership. How hard it is to imagine today how delicate songs like 'Corcovado' ('Quiet nights and quiet stars . . .'), or the strumming of Veloso's guitar and his James Taylor-like voice could incite outrage in audiences!

Ruy Castro spent many years as a music journalist and columnist for Brazilian magazines and newspapers, during which time he saw from a 'close distance' the inner and outer workings of *bossa nova*. His book is written with great detail, a broad scope, a strong personal voice and humour ('Would it be possible to one day forgive Baden [Powell] and Vinícius [de Moraes] for popularizing the *berimbau*, the most annoying instrument in the world after the bagpipes?' [p. 231]). The myriad anecdotes are a rare treat for aficionados of *bossa nova* and fans of Brazilian music in general: it is possible to create a kind of family tree of who played with whom when and where, and what they recorded on what label under whose direction and with what musicians. Musicologists may be inspired to go back to the early *bossa nova* hits, such as 'Samba de uma nota só' ('One-Note Samba') and 'Desafinado' ('Off-key') to determine what it was about *bossa nova*'s interpolations of samba's rhythms and its harmonic extrapolations that made it a true musical innovation. Casual listeners will certainly benefit from the discography, enabling them to go beyond the countless collections of 'biggest hits' which tend to differ one from another only through their song sequencing order and angle of the cover photo of the statue of Christ the Redeemer. I found it particularly interesting reading today, given the recent resurgence of interest in *bossa nova*: any local music store's well-stocked Brazil section will have more than a dozen discs of originals, remixes, versions and new compositions.

Veloso, one of Brazil's most prolific and influential musicians over the last thirty-five years, has given us an intensely personal book that details his country's

political history, the artistic movement of *tropicália* and an insider's guide to his and Gilberto Gil's careers from their origins in Bahia through their return from exile and musical break with *tropicália* in the early 1970s. Veloso's candour about his difficulties as a musician, his fears as a provocateur, his sexuality and his admiration for his comrades, chief among them Gil, makes him a sympathetic storyteller. The book reads at turns like a novel, an autobiography, a historical work and a cultural analysis of a musical movement. For those readers unfamiliar with the subject, *tropicalismo* (the movement's name) made Brazil the nexus of everything: a place to mix popular music from Europe and the US with popular music from Brazil; fashion from Paris with indigenous Brazilian 'fashion' (stereotyped images of Brazilian autochthonous cultures); technological advancements with primitivism; art with food and religion. 'In *tropicalismo* (in the wake of anthropophagy), there is a tendency to make Brazil exotic as much for the tourists as for Brazilians. No doubt even I myself reject what seem to me ridiculous attempts to neutralize the strangeness of this Catholic tropical monster, in the hunt for the crumbs of ordinary international respectability' (p. 159). What results is a short-lived, syncretistic orgy of symbols, sounds and sensibilities – taking the form mainly of music and performance – determined to simultaneously upset the complacency of 1960s nationalist artistic expression and the repressive order of military dictatorship. In doing so, the artists wanted to carve a new path that married commercialism, because of its appeal, with fun, thoughtful, internationalist art. 'Eric Hobsbawm, in his comments on our 'brief twentieth century', has written that, between the wars, 'in the field of popular culture, the world was either American or provincial . . . This is a reality that the *tropicalistas* would not wish to deny. Much less would we wish to confront it with melancholy' (p. 183). Instead, they wanted to destroy the dichotomy. The movement lasted officially just one year, from 1968 to 1969, but its practitioners continued experimenting in similarly audacious veins for some years. Like *bossa nova*, *tropicália* has experienced a renaissance, making the reading of Veloso's book a great way to understand the story behind the music and make its listening that much more pleasurable.

Neither book is perfect. Castro's suffers at times from excessive and hyperbolic foreshadowing, with statements like 'this song would change the world forever'. Veloso overdoes self-effacement, as when he says, '[T]oday I am recognized above all as the author of some songs written in the mid-seventies and afterwards' (p. 320). On the other hand, he admirably asks difficult questions of himself, such as, 'Now that the days we call heroic have passed, I have to submit all of my pretensions to a question: to what extent did my opportunity for shining as a great figure of MPB [Brazilian Popular Music] depend upon the drop in demand for quality incited by that same wave of supposed popularity that I helped to create?' (p. 144).

The main shortcoming of both books is that unfortunately for musicologists and musicians, neither Castro nor Veloso attempt to address the music itself in any illustrative way, which is a great pity. Both authors generally approach the music through the lyrics, particular performances, stylistic decisions or technical conditions, which means that there is work yet to be done.

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The Cambridge Companion to Singing. Edited by John Potter. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 286 pp. ISBN 0-521-62709-5
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'Our voices *are* us'. With this sentence, contained in the first lines of the introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Singing*, John Potter summarises the idea that stands as the leitmotif of the volume, namely the aim of exploring the enormous diversity of singing traditions found across the world, each of which invariably responds to an essential necessity that all humans share: that of expressing their inner selves.

In an attempt to cover the various singing traditions that pervade Western culture, the volume is organised into four parts – *Popular traditions*, *The voice in the theatre*, *Choral music and song* and *Performance practices* – which, in turn, are subdivided into a series of self-contained chapters. Each of these is devoted to the difficult task of providing the reader with a general overview of the historical evolution, the technical characteristics and most influential groups or soloists in each of the analysed styles. It must be said that the dominant comprising aims of the volume give rise to a somewhat erratic structure, leading the reader from world music to rock, rap and jazz, and from there to opera and choral music.

Making a conscious effort to leave behind what has today thankfully become an obsolete assertion – that only classical singing is valid as an aesthetic and technical model – the first part, *Popular traditions*, undertakes an in-depth exploration of several of the most significant popular music traditions in the world. One of the most interesting chapters in this section is the one written by radio programmer John Schaefer. It deals with so-called 'world music': from India to Turkey, Zimbabwe to Cuba, Armenia to Australia, this chapter traces the various 'song-lines' found throughout the non-Western world. It also covers the impact that some of the exponents of such traditional music, like the Bulgarian Women's Choirs or Pakistan's Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, have exerted on Western mass media in the last years.

The remaining three chapters of this first section lead the reader through the singing languages of rock, rap and jazz, concentrating on their origins, as well as on some of the most relevant singers in each field. In 'Rock singing', Richard Middleton emphasises the idea of 'authenticity' as the basis on which the style is grounded. According to Middleton, this idea can be further divided into two groups of characteristics: On the one hand, 'natural expression', 'individuality' and 'directness', meaning the kind of non-affected, quasi-spontaneous quality that is said to be the essence of rock singing; on the other hand, 'narrativity', 'gesture' and 'intoned expression', referring to the particular interrelation between words and melody that has pervaded rock music from the beginnings of the genre.

In 'The evolving language of rap', musician and journalist David Toop explores the 'hybrid' quality of the style, which places itself in between speech and song. This hybridity is directly linked with the tradition of storytelling historically inherited by black Americans, and with the primarily vindicating nature of the genre. These two characteristics are essential in order to understand why rap is much more than a musical style. As Toop puts it, the evolving language of rap 'has played a significant role in the general acceptance of black dialect and African-American oral culture'.

Last, in 'Jazz: the first hundred years', John Potter begins by acknowledging the fuzziness of the term 'jazz' itself: 'even jazz singers find it very hard to define the word except in terms of itself'. This idea is linked to the conception of jazz as 'musician's music', which refers to the thoroughly exploratory nature of the genre, and thus the

difficulty of finding a specific, never-changing definition for it. Towards the end of his chapter, Potter makes an important remark on the present female dominance of the genre: 'The new fin-de-siècle generation of jazz singers is very much a female, post-feminist one'. As a conclusion, he discusses the two evolutionary directions that jazz singing may follow in the future, either 'a sentimental one', or 'the path of reinvention'.

The second part, *The voice in the theatre*, deals with stage music, starting with musical theatre and films, and moving on to classical opera. The ordering of the chapters in this section might be a bit disconcerting for any reader approaching this discipline for the first time. The first chapter, 'Stage and screen entertainers in the twentieth century', by musicologist Stephen Banfield, covers the performance practice of singing entertainers as a 'vital component of the mass culture of its period'. Banfield's chapter relies on two previous studies in the 1970s. He uses three types of source material for performance practice, namely recordings, film, and written and spoken documentation, and divides the evolution of stage entertainers into what he calls two 'shifts': the first has to do with issues of class – the classical trained voice is replaced by the popular trained one – and the second, with age and gender – the male adolescent and the girlie woman become the central figures on stage; this second shift is importantly characterised by the incorporation of the microphone into stage acting. One of the originalities of this chapter is the final list of historical recordings, which works as a listening guide both for the expert and also for the newcomer.

The second and third chapters, by opera specialist John Rosselli, analyse an earlier period in stage music, starting from the beginnings of opera in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and finishing up with the grand opera figures of the nineteenth century. In 'Song into theatre: the beginnings of opera', Rosselli explores the two mainstream opera traditions – Italian and French – that emerged in Europe around 1670, as well as the modern figure of the 'opera singer'. In 'Grand opera: nineteenth-century revolution and twentieth-century tradition', Rosselli renders a very interesting summary of the principal opera composers and works in Europe from Rossini's groundbreaking *Guillaume Tell* to Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*.

The third part deals with *Choral music and song*. In the first chapter, 'European art song', opera singer Stephen Varcoe defines art song as a style 'intended to be accompanied by a keyboard (...) Secondly, the poem (...) should have been chosen not only for its suitability as a song, but also for the composer's ability to identify with it and to express its meaning in an individual manner (...)'. Varcoe explores the evolution of this eminently vocal genre starting with the German Lied of Schubert and Schumann in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, going on with the works of Mahler and Strauss in Germany, Saint-Saëns and Bizet in France, and finishing up with the more contemporary works of Debussy, Satie, Poulenc, Britten or Schoenberg.

The subsequent two chapters provide an overview of sacred choral tradition in England and the United States. Both the author of 'English cathedral choirs in the twentieth century', Timothy Day, and the author of 'Sacred choral music in the United States', Neely Bruce, agree that the most important characteristic of these choirs is the particular singing style they have, married to 'a purity of tone, accuracy in intonation, precision in ensemble, and absence of rhetoric', and, in the case of American choral music, married also to a great amount of multicultural influences.

The fourth and last part, *Performance practices*, is an overview of singing techniques and performance practices in different times, as well as a teaching guide.

Of these, the first one, 'Some notes on choral singing', by Finnish conducting teacher Heikki Liimola, is addressed to the conductor of a potential choral ensemble. It concentrates on vocal exercises which could be helpful when facing an ensemble rehearsal, from warming up techniques to some psychological hints that, according to the author, any conductor of a singing ensemble should take into account.

The second, 'Ensemble singing', by John Potter, the editor of the volume and a member of the vocal groups the Hilliard Ensemble and Red Byrd, concentrates specifically on certain techniques of classical ensemble singing, or consort singing, that is 'one voice to a part'. Potter focuses on three main points of interest, namely the basic procedures during consort rehearsals, the sound of the ensemble, and some of the techniques used in early music singing: 'a huge amount of repertoire for ensembles comes under the heading of early music'. The subsequent three chapters concentrate on the historical evolution of singing techniques from the Middle Ages to the Romantic era, and from there to contemporary times.

'The voice in the Middle Ages', by Joseph Dyer, covers the theoretical conception of the human voice during the Middle Ages, as well as some of the most important singing treatises written during that period. In 'Reconstructing pre-Romantic singing technique', Richard Wistreich explores the evolution of singing techniques in Europe during the period extending from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century. Just like the previous chapter, this one also concentrates on some treatises written during this period, focusing on what was said to be a good voice at that time.

Linda Hirst and David Wright close this subsection on the evolution of singing techniques with a chapter called 'Alternative voices: contemporary vocal techniques'. The most particular characteristic of twentieth-century singing is, according to the authors, the conscious separation from the dominant stream of *bel canto*: 'Certainly the rich, almost bewildering, variety of written and improvised styles that has now been opened up, as well as the opportunities for these styles to interact in new and fertile ways, point to the fact that vocal quality can be just a freshly or differently expressive, away from the constraints of *bel canto* style'. The chapter highlights the fact that, nowadays, vocal pieces are often based on the collaborative work between composers and singers themselves, in such a way that the spectrum of techniques and repertoire opens up to innumerable possibilities.

The subsequent two chapters are pedagogical, and deal with the teaching and learning of singing. In the case of David Mason's 'The teaching (and learning) of singing', the reader is faced with a concise and very useful overview of the pedagogy of singing from the seventeenth century to the twentieth century. In 'Children's singing', Felicity Laurence proposes and explains some basic techniques that may be useful when rehearsing children's ensembles. As she puts it, '*all* children can sing, learn to sing better, and have the right to do both'.

The last section closes with the chapter 'Where does the sound come from?', written by Johan Sundberg. This chapter offers a scientific view of the act of singing which works as a perfect complement for the dominantly musicological character of the volume. As Sundberg puts it, this section provides the reader with 'a system of solid information about singing' which 'offers the possibility of supplementing the understanding of singing by physical, tangible facts'. These facts, thoroughly explained in this chapter, have to do with the generation and control of voice sounds by breathing patterns, the function of the larynx in the process of phonation, and all the phenomena related to resonance.

What the general reader might miss for the volume as a whole is a general conclusion, so that it could be clearly understood as a unit with a specific goal. Also, the specialised reader might be left wondering about the practicalities of such a comprehensive volume; it is my view that it would be much more interesting and illustrative if it was accompanied by a CD with a sample of each singing tradition dealt with in the book.

One aspect that makes the reading slightly difficult is the fact that the footnotes are listed altogether at the end of the volume, which makes them awkward to follow. The book also lacks an explanation of the technical terms presented in the different chapters, which makes it a more potentially difficult read for non-musicians. As a positive point, the fact that each chapter is conceived independently – there is a different writer for each one – makes it easy to read for those who want to focus on a specific singing style.

The Cambridge Companion to Singing will interest singers, students of music, concert goers and the general public who will find it a good 'travel book' in the sense that it provides a good overview of singing traditions found worldwide. This series is one of the most interesting ideas to have come out into the market in recent years.

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***Jazz and Death: Medical Profiles of Jazz Greats.* By Fredrick J. Spencer. University Press of Mississippi, 2002. 311 pp. DOI: 10.1017/S0261143004260111**

Jazz and Death is an instantly provocative title that sets the imagination searching for possible topics. And there are many of them, including jazz music and the commercial death of many musicians, not least Derek Smalls and company from Spinal Tap. Then there is 'Jazz music, music of the devil', a music that consigns both the listener and practitioner to the fires of hell and damnation. There is also jazz as a music that leads musicians into a seamy world of drugs, criminality and death. It is this final stereotype that comes closest to the topic of this book, which presents medical profiles of jazz greats in its aim to dispel some of the myths and inaccuracies that surround the passing of many jazz superstars. The key point therefore is that this text is written from a medical perspective rather than an ethnomusicological one. As a result, its contents are divided up into sections rather than presented in chapters with the author giving each class of ailments a section to itself. Major causes of death such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, substance abuse and mental illness are presented alongside some incongruous sections such as dental disease, mumps, food poisoning and influenza. Homicide, perhaps for obvious reasons, gets a section to itself.

The author, Fredrick Spencer, outlines quite clearly at the start that his aims are to be precise and accurate when reporting the medical profiles of jazz musicians with the goal of correcting many of the errors of previous writers, while shedding more light on some particularly famous cases. He also hopes that the text will inspire more historical research into the lifestyle of famous jazz musicians. The book is undoubtedly scholarly and it is clear that the research has been executed and reported meticulously. Moreover, the author's medical background certainly lends the whole

book an air of authority in all matters physiological. His passion for jazz is also evident: this text reads as if it is written by a medical doctor with a deep passion for jazz music. In short, I think Dr Spencer can rest assured that his book achieves the object of bringing the medical and jazz worlds together.

One of the reasons I was particularly drawn to reading this book was learning more about the somewhat morbid stories (apocryphal or not) that jazz musicians themselves like to tell during the downtime at gigs, between songs or at rehearsal. Indeed, taking a very broad-brush interpretation of this book, which is definitely not what the author intends for his readers, I learn that just about all of these stories are essentially true. Lee Morgan was indeed shot by a jealous partner in a night-club (appropriately called Slugs) during a gig. Wardell Gray's body was discovered in the Nevada desert in ambiguous but certainly drugs-related circumstances. While the author does discuss Chet Baker's dental problems, inflicted by drug dealers who knew where to hit a trumpet player when he owed them money, the well-known anecdote that he fell to his death from a window in Amsterdam, is told later in the book. Hearing, once again, of the utterly tragic circumstances surrounding the death of Jaco Pastorius was particularly moving. Here was the most influential electric bass player of all time, a man who took fretless bass playing to its lyrical and improvisational zenith, living as a down-and-out and then beaten to death by a night-club doorman. These and many more vignettes, including details surrounding the deaths of Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, Thelonius Monk and Charlie Mingus, are presented within a context where emphasis is on the medical and physiological.

Indeed, the extent to which the fine details of some medical conditions are explained may well strike many readers as somewhat bizarre or, if I am being entirely honest, downright ludicrous. For example, the author gives vast amounts of detail regarding the physiological features of syphilis and seems to relish telling a most bizarre story of syphilis transmitted between one particularly unfortunate couple. In another section, a photograph of 'The Tonsil Guillotine' is accompanied by captions and diagrams detailing its use during tonsillectomies. We also get considerable detail about the finer points of eye disease and ear infection. Of course the author would countenance that these details are crucially important within a text focused upon detailing medical profiles of jazz musicians. Perhaps herein lies a problem with the book because I think these highly technical descriptions will only be of interest to readers with a specialist medical interest.

The book certainly complements some previous medical writings on jazz and a recent paper by G.I. Wills called 'Forty lives in the bebop business: mental health in a group of eminent jazz musicians' (2003, *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 183, pp. 255–9) which discusses the relationship between mental illness and jazz musicians. One case in point is worth discussing here. One of the pioneers of early jazz, indeed some say the 'inventor of jazz', trumpeter Buddy Bolden, spent the last twenty-four years of his life incarcerated in the Insane Asylum in Jackson, Louisiana. Spencer's research provides a detailed and illuminating account of some key features related to Bolden's life. His sensitive approach contrasts with a more controversial claim made by S.A. Spence who, in his paper 'Dementia Praecox and the birth of jazz' given in 2001 at the Royal College of Psychiatrists Summer Meeting, proposed a causal relationship between Bolden's improvisational virtuosity and a supposed schizophrenia-related cognitive impairment. Of course, Michael Ondaatje's book, *Coming Through Slaughter* (1979, Picador, London) provides a truly inspirational and partly fictional account of Bolden's life and death.

Does the book shed any light upon the much-talked about causal link between jazz music and unhealthy life styles that ultimately lead to a variety of problems including mental illness and drug addiction? The answer here is an emphatic no. However, this is not a weakness of the book but rather an indication of the inextricable and multifaceted link between performers' musical and personal identities and the socio-cultural milieu within which they live (see R.A.R. MacDonald, D. Miell and D.J. Hargreaves, *Musical Identities*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

In summary, I found this book a very curious read. Fascinating and moving in places and overly technical in others. There can be no questioning the author's dedication and gargantuan effort in pulling together a text of this nature. If you have a fascination with the idiosyncrasies of medical ailments of the jazz greats then this book is definitely for you. In addition, academic researchers will certainly find many interesting and thought-provoking points of reference in the book. It could certainly serve as a valuable reference text to be dipped into when the time is right. Moreover, the casual reader with an interest in biographical details of jazz musicians will find many of the vignettes fascinating. However, reading the book in its entirety from start to finish left me thinking that perhaps I don't have a deep enough interest in the finer points of medical science to fully appreciate or be inspired by it.

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***How Popular Musicians Learn.* By Lucy Green. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2001. 238 pp. ISBN 0-7546-0338-5
DOI: 10.1017/S0261143004270118**

Lucy Green's latest book has been on the shelves for only a year or two, but already feels like a necessary part of music education literature. The book raises many questions: notably about the relationship between pop music and other genres; classroom and instrumental teaching; the connections between listening, performing and composing; and the balance between teaching and learning in acquiring and valuing performing skills. In her small-scale study of fourteen popular musicians, Green does not claim to be able to provide definitive answers in each of these areas, although she does make some practical suggestions for teachers that offer much potential for future research.

How Popular Musicians Learn is written in a clear and accessible style, avoiding the theoretical and technical language of Green's earlier books (*Music on Deaf Ears*, 1988; and *Music, Gender, Education*, 1997) and taking care to explain terms and practices that may be unfamiliar to various sections of a potentially broad readership. There is extensive use of lengthy interview material, bringing the participants alive in an engaging way, but there is some repetition of quotes which weakens their impact and interrupts the narrative style. I would like to have heard more of the author's voice in interpreting the data: interview quotes are often presented without comment, or with only brief summaries of the ideas they include. Where Green does point out the subtleties of language used by interviewees, or the differences between their viewpoints, there are brief moments of greater analytical depth, which readers are generally left to construct for themselves from this 'hands-off' approach.

Green is careful throughout to acknowledge the continuum between informal and formal learning, and in the introductory chapter she draws on non-Western cultures to illustrate alternative models to formal schooling. One of the central themes of the book is that despite this continuum, there is often a disjunction between the musical education provided in classrooms or instrumental lessons, and the musical needs of the pupils involved. The focus here is on that disjunction as experienced by popular musicians, but this work reveals the potential for further investigations of children's perspectives on their music education. Like Patricia Shehan Campbell, who in *Songs in Their Heads* (1998) found evidence of learning taking place between – perhaps even despite of – the activities led by a class music teacher, Green has consulted the learners rather than the teachers to give a fresh perspective on the acquisition of musical skills. This ought not to be a revolutionary step, but research in music education has been remarkably slow to value children's perspectives, tending to study the outcomes of their learning rather than how they experience the processes.

The methods of Lucy Green's study are perhaps more contentious than her research focus: data are drawn from interviews with fourteen popular musicians aged between fifteen and fifty, all living in and around London. This is therefore a small-scale study with the associated limitations of this approach, but Green outlines her reasons for working this way in a clear and straightforward account of her methods, stating that she continued her interviewing well past the point when ideas were being repeated by different respondents, and illustrating throughout the book that her findings are consistent with those of the established literature. Fourteen interviews *does* seem a small amount of material from which to make a book; but then again, it is a great deal more empirical evidence than many musicological texts present, and offers a much richer picture than, for example, any large-scale questionnaire overview could provide. To simply demand *more* data before believing in this study would be a rather superficial response, but the book's strength is not so much in delivering an understanding of how popular musicians learn in general, but rather in the insight given on how these particular people have understood their learning histories. The title perhaps promises too much, and the different expectations brought by readers from education, psychology and sociology, as well as musicians of all kinds, mean that some will inevitably be disappointed. It is unreasonable, however, to blame Green for that; the problem is not what this book does, but that so much remains to be done.

Given the historical tension over the roles of popular and classical music in the school curriculum, it would have been easy for this book to reinforce those hostilities and misunderstandings by setting one genre against the other in familiar circular debates. It is refreshing, therefore, to find not just the author but also her interviewees expressing respect and interest for all kinds of musical approaches, and actively seeking connections between the self-directed learning that these popular musicians have engaged in, and the educational provision they have been offered in school. The descriptions of school music lessons given by the older participants are shaming: very few report any positive or memorable learning, and most recall feeling alienated from the classical, theoretical focus of the curriculum. The views of the younger participants come in the next chapter, so leading the hopeful reader to anticipate the happy ending of improved provision for the younger interviewees, who had attended school since the reforms of the National Curriculum and the GCSE. The picture that comes across initially is not so rosy: there is over-use of the keyboard, continued reliance on the dynamism (or otherwise) of individual teachers, and an inconsistency

in the variety of musical genres that find their way into the classroom. However, where the older generation of pop musicians had found no place for their enthusiasms in the classroom, their younger counterparts reported submitting pop compositions for their GCSE portfolio, even if these were tolerated rather than actively taught by their teachers. Younger musicians also seem keen to foster the connections between their music-making in and out of school, so countering some of the well-established fears in the music education literature (including Green's earlier work) that teacher involvement in pop music is necessarily uncool and undesirable.

Green ends with a discussion of educational implications, with ideas that include incorporating 'purposive listening' (listening with the intention of learning) into classical instrumental lessons, and building similar techniques into classroom music lessons by sending small groups of instrumentalists into practice rooms to copy a recording. She admits that these approaches would need trial and research in classrooms. They would also need to be done with conviction by teachers, which might represent a greater challenge, especially as even the teachers amongst Green's interviewees make little use of their own learning techniques with their pupils. Green notes that teachers want to feel responsibility for the learning that takes place in their classrooms, but proposes valuing new roles for the teacher, including offering encouragement, praise, opportunity, resources – all more important, at least to the pop musicians interviewed here, than traditional teaching patterns of intervention and externally imposed control.

Returning to this book a year after I first read it, I have found new aspects of interest and value, as well as much which has quickly become familiar and helpful to educational discussion. Lucy Green has navigated the boundaries of academic disciplines and musical genres with great skill: I would recommend this book to any reader with an interest in musical learning, as the questions it raises should provide a stimulus for developing practice and research in many new and potentially fruitful directions.

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