

music is revisited by von Blumröder and Grintsch. Neither examines specific composers. Instead, each presents a more wide-ranging discussion of their chosen subject. Von Blumröder evaluates many sources relating to electroacoustic music's early history and tackles the thorny problem of how to unravel the fundamental differences between *musique concrète* and *elektronische Musik*. Grintsch provides a thorough survey of reproduction techniques with particular reference to loudspeaker systems such as the *acousmonium*, *Gmebaphone* and *BEAST*.

One feature of the volume deserves special mention. The book is 'framed' by the opening and closing chapters based on work by two sadly missed figures in contemporary music: Henri Pousseur and Heinz-Klaus Metzger. In a transcribed lecture Pousseur reminisced about his relationship with Luciano Berio. It is touching to read the genuine affection that Pousseur had for Berio and his deep regret when he described how he missed the opportunity to visit Berio during his final days in hospital. I have to confess I had similar emotions when I heard of Pousseur's sudden death. Pousseur kindly participated in various projects I initiated and even now I think of questions that only he could answer. They are, of course, questions that now can never be asked. A chapter such as this is an important historical document which, even if there are no startling revelations, demonstrates the humane values of a greatly missed composer and theorist. The editors must be congratulated on its inclusion. Lastly, Metzger's short discussion concludes the book. He considers Adorno's question of 'truth' in music and demonstrates how an intelligent reading of this philosopher (surely one of the most important of the twentieth century) can alert us to matters of social and political importance. We ignore them at our peril.

In conclusion, this book contains many discussions that will be of importance to both analysts and musicologists. Moreover, the indexes facilitate searching for specific subjects. This should be an obvious function of an index but frequently I have encountered publishers who insist on a single index of personal names and compositions only. The omission of such detailed indexes (I accept this is a personal gripe of mine) is a sad indictment of much academic publishing today. In the case of 'Topographien' the publisher has wisely included an index of concepts and other subjects to facilitate more effective cross-referencing. My one criticism is that the reproduction of some large-format scores made reading the notes a considerable challenge, but that may be the case with the particular copy I was reading.

I would urge anyone interested in contemporary music to read this volume – and others in the series. You will not be disappointed.

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**Sophy Smith: *Hip-Hop Turntablism, Creativity and Collaboration*. Burlington, VT, and Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. ISBN: 978-1-4094-4337-7
doi:10.1017/S1355771814000314**

In *Hip-Hop Turntablism*, Sophy Smith presents a musical analysis of turntablism with a focus on hip-hop crews that are part of a scene characterised by 'a sense of community and collectiveness' (4); in this case, Scratch Perverts and The Mixologists, as well as DMU Crew. The first two crews are based in London and are further connected through various collaborations, while DMU crew have two members from London but came together as a creative team in Leicester, which is also where Smith's place of work, De Montfort University (DMU), is located. This presentation allows a model to be developed to note and understand the creative processes and output of a musical performance, the 'routine', of a hip-hop turntablist crew.

Turntablism is a musical performance practice in which the record player turntable is utilised as a musical instrument, whereby minute portions of musical recordings become sonic elements in their own right. In the words of DJ Babu of turntablist crew Beat Junkies, 'a Turntablist is a person who uses the turntables not to play music, but to manipulate sound and create music (quoted on p. 4). During the last few years, this performative practice has been morphing into controllerism, whereby digital files of music recordings are manually manipulated on a controller panel, yet vinyl discs are the preferred medium of the turntablist.

That the record player can be used as a musical instrument illustrates a rather porous division between listening and composing – audiences are able to actively repurpose recordings as source material for new music. Following the rise in importance of the DJ during the 1970s, in a parallel world, Toffler introduced the term 'prosumer' to refer to a healing of 'the historic breach between producer and consumer' (Toffler 1981: 11) that was produced during the age of mass (re)production. Applying this idea to DJ culture, Brewster and Broughton (quoted on p. 27) state that

the choices [the DJ] makes as *consumer* (which records he chooses the buy and listen to) are the defining part of his worth as a *producer* (how creative and distinctive he is).

This is further illustrated by examples of modernist avant-garde artists and composers who have explored the record player as a creative device since the 1920s. Additional examples of pioneering DJ practices are provided from the world of Jamaican reggae, New York disco clubs and the formation of hip-hop. Smith concludes that

The music of UK hip-hop turntable teams reflects the more contemporary preoccupations with postmodernism

whilst retaining the characteristics of modernism as championed by earlier turntable musicians such as Maholy-Nagy and Schaeffer. (28)

The engagement with the modernist avant-garde seems a distraction from the potentially rich ethnographic material and the specific genealogies regarding the work practices of the three UK-based hip-hop crews considered here. Perhaps a more general book on turntablism could have benefitted from a deeper discussion of modernist and postmodernist theory in relation to the turntable as musical instrument and European avant-garde musical practices. However, here this seems like a side-step, a distraction that does not increase an understanding of what these DJ crews do. Instead, to understand technical innovation and collective music performance in hip-hop turntablism, one would expect an approach in which Black Atlantic politics and music practices deserve further attention (see also Gilroy 1993 and Rose 1994).

In the realm of social marginalisation, innovation is possible through the exploration of new technologies exactly because the absence of institutionalised musical frameworks enables a rapid response to techno-economic change. Also, scarcity of resources can encourage new approaches that require one to think outside the box. For example, 'digging the crates' is the turntablist practice of seeking out second-hand recordings. This is a relatively affordable way to gain a large record collection of rare (in other words, almost unique) recordings that are simultaneously sufficiently disposable to be stickered and scratched. The process of collecting is a crucial component in the creative process of DJ-ing, and requires further attention in understanding the compositional processes of hip-hop turntablism.

The discussion of musical practices of hip-hop turntablism becomes more specific where structural, rhythmic and melodic compositional techniques are given attention. Some techniques are related to general DJ-ing, which could have been unpicked some more. Other techniques, more specific to turntablism, are rather briefly addressed. It seems that an opportunity was missed to provide a deeper genealogical understanding of these techniques in relation to hip-hop culture and the various practices of dance party and competitive DJ-ing. Perhaps original ethnographic insights could have further enriched these descriptions of DJ techniques.

For example, the discussions of turntablist techniques seem based on existing literature that addresses American DJ techniques, while the crews under investigation are from the UK. This geographical shift adds a fresh dimension to their arsenal of musical techniques. In particular, further insight is needed into the creative practices of Jamaican sound-system crews, while the related development of break-beat DJ techniques in the UK could have helped to explain some of the diverse musical and creative processes that are analysed within the collaborative practices of each of the three crews.

The collaborative creative process is crucial to Smith's approach to turntablism. Such teamwork is not only prominent in the practices of sound-system and DJ crews but can also be seen in examples of break-dance and graffiti crews. Hip-hop crews work together as creative units at regular rap and dance battles. DJs also compete for the biggest party crowd and, via a hip-hop trajectory, through specific DJ competitions that celebrate the skilful art of turntablism; being part of a mutually supportive crew can help enormously in gaining success.

To develop an analytical model of the creative team effort and musical output of a turntablist crew, Smith refers to Farrell's notion of collaborative processes in artistic groups. She also utilises Lamden's observations of 'devising' in a group performance, a specific sequence of events that ranges from generating ideas to rehearsal and performance. This is applied to the interpretation of how crews such as Scratch Perverts and the DMU Crew operate, leading to Smith's adapted model framework of the devising process that takes place in hip-hop crews.

Although of relevance to hip-hop scholars and turntablism practitioners, the book does not seem to specifically address this potential readership. Not only do European avant-garde artists get disproportionate attention, and creative group processes are explained with reference to performative practices other than those of DJs and music groups, Smith also seems to aim for a formal musicologist readership: for example,

Turntable teams ... do not create their compositions from within the western art tradition of an independent artist working in isolation, which is then communicated through staff notation. (51)

Indeed, beyond the comparable *détournement* of the record player, the cultural relationship between hip-hop turntablism and Western art is somewhat slim, yet the particular binary contrast that is presented here is misleading for at least two reasons. First, there are plenty examples of solo artists in the history of turntablism, not least at DJ competitions; some of these pioneers are acknowledged elsewhere in the book, such as Grand Wizard Theodore, Grandmaster Flash, DJ Flare and DJ Qbert. Second, Smith shows in her development of a new analytical model that turntablists have developed different types of notation. Some are derived from staff notation, while other notation models are graphically much closer to what the DJ actually does. This variety in notation seems similar to the range in notation models used in dance choreography, which also depend on the genre for which the notation is used.

A development of a formal analytical approach is central to the final discussion of the compositional processes that Smith observes in the three hip-hop teams. This leads to a useful process-based model as well as a method in which to address the compositional

components of a hip-hop turntablist music performance. Smith's analysis, an elaboration of an article that previously appeared in this journal (Smith 2007) ultimately establishes the strength of the study, refining an informed understanding of hip-hop turntablism as a specific musical practice. Perhaps, at the next opportunity, insights could be addressed to a turntablist readership and to the expanding field of DJ scholars.

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