

Book Reviews

Transforming Music Education by Estelle R. Jorgensen. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002. 179 pp, £19.95, paperback.

Estelle Jorgensen's voice is distinctive, challenging and immensely refreshing. It is a voice from North America with Australian antecedents engaging with the issues that confront music education communities in the advanced democracies of the world. It is something of a unique voice by nature of its particular philosophical method and dialectical approach. There is no place for the presentation of unexamined assumptions or the making of glossy assertions, and the purpose is not to create still another philosophy of music education, another rationale to support a point of view. Nor is Jorgensen's purpose to present the reader with answers to problems and certainly not with the way to proceed in practice, but rather with a way of thinking and a way of being.

The writer's own way requires the endless challenging of assumptions, exposing and stripping bare the roots of arguments, exposing fallacy and meaningless propositions. Jorgensen is a dialectical thinker and this involves much more than identifying polarities and bringing these to resolution in a synthesis. It involves holding differences in tension and allowing multiple and differing perspectives to co-exist. We are encouraged to avoid any rush to resolve differences, to go for this or that approach, but rather to 'take this with that'. In this way we avoid the uncritical acceptance of ideas, leaving assumptions unexamined, the fall into dogma and resistance to the possibility of transformation. The book is about transformation, relentlessly so; the transformation of music education, the music teacher and education in general.

The first essay in the quintet sets the stage and examines present challenges. Established values come into conflict with the spirit of the age calling for the democratisation of music and musical practices. This can be disquieting. While transformation rests upon ideals such as freedom, equality, inclusiveness and humanity, there is a recognition of what is realistic, for the best of humane aspirations invariably collide with systematic pressures toward conformity, injustice and inhumanity, and as a result can only ever be partially achieved. The problems faced by music teachers are societal, artistic and educational and best addressed by individuals in solidarity with others in communities where all voices can be heard, where multiple perspectives are held in view and where no voices are silenced. In making such propositions Jorgensen is of course open to error conceding that such an approach is potentially flawed. However, transform music education and there is the potential for transformation in education and society.

The second essay, 'Justifying transformation', works from the basis of establishing more humane values within a civil society and makes clear why change is necessary. The institutions of music and music education are seriously flawed. Gender, world view, music, education, tradition and individual mindset are examined discretely in dialectical fashion yet interrelated through the presentation of alternative paradigms. The prevailing one is masculine, led by Western establishment ideas, the primacy of subject matter, the role of the teacher as transmitter of knowledge to the receptive student, rooted in the traditional beliefs, values and practices of the past. A contrasting paradigm offers the perspective of women as well as men, valuing a perspective that is both artistic and

spiritual. It is concerned with inclusivity and integration and stresses the dialectical and dialogical nature of learning and teaching.

Throughout, the reader will want to stop and dwell on ideas played with, and the concept of dialogical teaching and learning may be one of them. There is the invitation to examine its genesis in the work of transformational educator Paulo Freire, to dig deeper and in turn to engage with Jorgensen's unexamined assumptions. This is energising and stimulating in itself.

The third essay tackles the task of transforming education. Jorgensen presents nine images of ways in which this can take place: modification, accommodation, integration, assimilation, inversion, synthesis, transfiguration, conversion and renewal. As is the way of the philosopher, each of these concepts is examined, played with, its meaning clarified, its potential evaluated before being held in tension with the others. Those engaged in the transformational process will be challenged to extend their critical and evaluative acumen and willingness to admit to the fragility of any particular solution.

In 'Transforming music', the fourth essay, five images of music are presented: music as aesthetic object, music as symbol, music as practical activity, music as experience and music as agency. Thinking about how we think about music is inevitable, and the sooner educators do this the better if they are to avoid a state of decadence and decline. As expected, the five images are as actors on a stage in dialogue, but before the play commences readers will want to examine for themselves the possible reductive nature of the ways in which these images have been presented, the extent to which they may be themselves characters and stereotypes. Indeed, this may prove to be the best place to start reading the book.

The subject of music transmission, the process whereby musical knowledge is

passed from one generation to the next, is of particular concern, for here transformation may be inevitable or indeed thwarted.

Jorgensen tackles this issue through examining a work of Vernon Howard, *Learning By All Means*, and some six pages are devoted to what is in effect a critical review of the work. Howard has analysed the ways in which artistic learning takes place through means of instruction, practice, example and reflection. This reviewing of the work of other music educators is a key feature of the book as a whole and enables the reader to expand thought and develop an appetite to explore a range of almost certainly less familiar writings from North America and elsewhere. Jorgensen's sources are wide-ranging and eclectic and there are over 500 endnotes to ponder.

The essay ends with a consideration of practical implications. For example, 'teachers need to know deeply the music they seek to teach. How is it constructed? What makes it what it is? How ought it be composed, performed, and listened to? What are the specific contexts that shape its interpretation and performance? What are the myriad skills comprised in its performance?' (p. 113).

The final essay is entitled 'Creating alternatives', and by now the reader will be familiar with the injunction to break out of little boxes, resist easy solutions, the fall into dogmatism and any confirmation of the status quo. It won't do to hold to a 'this or that' approach to teaching music. It won't do to train music teachers in one way rather than another. World views, methodologies and practices of the past need to be transcended and principles of practice rooted in humane principles such as justice, civility, goodness, fidelity and mutuality. All this will be familiar territory to those involved in the training of music teachers, for example, as we observe the extent to which the new teacher longs for the quick fix and

the workable solution, losing sight of possible alternatives and engagement in dialectical thinking, testing alternatives in dialogue with learners and keeping alive the imagination. This is not the usual way of their mentors and models in schools, nor of state agencies leading reform.

Jorgensen's agenda is intentionally ambitious, timely and irresistible. In the current climate in England, where a belief in 'what works best here is best for everywhere' within the thinking of government agencies and where 'standards' and 'standardisation' lead the way, there is much food for thought. The work will cause readers to reflect on moments of transformation in their own lives as music educators, the often unexplainable dynamics involved as inspirational connections were made with other music educators, past and present. There will be the false dawns to reflect upon and the many times of being becalmed. The challenge to forge better communities from the local to the national to the international is daunting. The classroom music teacher is more likely to feel part of a school of teachers than a world of music teachers. Finding practitioners in a state of transformation is not easy, and finding learners in this state is no easier. But they do exist and have always existed. The constraining forces of institutional and political agendas are fierce blocks to the kind of transformation envisaged by Jorgensen. But this merely serves to underline the urgency with which to hold at the front of the mind the notion of transformation. Anti-dialectical thinking may of course be endemic to the human mind in society, antithetical to the exercise of power and leadership and to the maintenance of security and sanity. But that is the world of the past and we need to show how music education might be different. 'How can music education policy makers break free from the strictures of top-down, paternalistic, and managerial thinking?' (p. 144). For

Jorgensen, answers lie in a re-vision of roles and responsibilities, different kinds of leadership valuing consensus building, taking a longer view, being circumspect and an altogether different way of being. For Jorgensen, music education is a hopeful and optimistic endeavour, and her work here rekindles an undying belief that it is possible to make a difference, that the situation can be improved. A good start will be to read this book.

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Supporting Musical Development in the Early Years by Linda Pound and Chris Harrison. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2002. 156 pp, £45 (hardback), £15.99 (paperback).

This book belongs to a series entitled 'Supporting Early Learning' which now includes ten volumes covering a range of subject areas and topics in early years education. The editors' preface for the series informs us that these books are designed to be of interest 'to all those concerned with the care and education of children from birth to 6 years old'. The overall aim of the series is to demonstrate that children within this age phase have 'particular developmental learning needs, and that all those providing their care and education would be wise to approach their work developmentally' (p. vii).

Texts which extend understanding of how best to encourage musical activity among young children and to support aspects of practice are needed. The field of early years education as a whole is in a state of flux and developing at a fast pace. This development goes hand in hand with a rapid expansion of activity in early years music, in part linked to generous funding schemes

such as the National Foundation for Youth Music and the wider educational remit of arts organisations. Many of those who work in early years music are in the position of having little or no prior specific training, but are adapting related skills and 'learning on the job'. Important, therefore, that there are books that provide the background knowledge and principles that will support this process.

This book is divided into three distinct sections: Musical Behaviour, Music in Education and The Role of Adults. While this is helpfully straightforward and clarifies the purpose of each of the chapters, it raises what I think is the main drawback of this book and indeed of the series as a whole. Reading the editors' preface more carefully, they emphasise the birth to six age phase but go on to give a description of what they hope for in each book in educational terms. Here the 'education-speak' drawn from formal schooling as it is organised for older children suddenly seems at odds with the youngest age phase (birth to age three). I wholeheartedly endorse the need for rigour and the painstaking analysis of practice at all ages. My concern is that to draw across, automatically, the conceptual structures of schooling into areas of provision that are so different risks bypassing what is distinctive and important about the earliest age phase. For example, the prime developmental characteristic of the years of baby- and toddlerhood is the close relationships with primary caregivers. It is within these relationships that meaningful development takes place. To take an individualistic view of development and then only later to consider the role of adults as an 'add-on' is to separate out the key dimension of practice with the very young.

However, having set out my main reservation, I believe the book will provide a welcome source of information and ideas for nursery and foundation stage practitioners

and the many music specialists who are currently working in early years contexts. Although the chapter on musical development has gathered quite widely, it is a reminder of just how patchy our understanding of young children's musical capabilities is and of the ways in which these capabilities interact with opportunities children encounter. There is much work still to be done. For too long young children have been neglected by researchers, who have tended to focus on later ages when more 'mature' versions of musical activity are assumed to emerge. An inbuilt paradox influences research into early years music. Devalued by the general low status attached to young children and by the deficit views of early childhood derived from developmental psychology, it is an age phase which is nevertheless acknowledged as important because it must hold the starting points for what will follow. As a consequence, in developmental accounts the early years tend to be acknowledged but moved through quickly and summarily, characterised by broad general descriptions of exploratory behaviour. Important, then, that chapters such as this one give focused, detailed attention to these years.

This account of musical development comes to life with the introduction of some examples of children's musical activity taken from observations. Describing playful activity of necessity becomes wordy, but it is nevertheless essential in order to capture and convey what it looks and sounds like. However, although this chapter on musical development has been assembled from major texts, in my view some important pieces of work have been omitted. To give some examples, there is no mention of the work on lullabies and playsongs by Trainor (1996; Trehub & Trainor, 1998) or the research into musical play by Littleton (1998) and Custodero (2002). And a wider reading of Trevarthen's more recent work (2000)

would have given an up-to-date account of his important contributions. Furthermore, the reliance on secondary texts weakens some of the information since it has already been filtered once. Accounts of Werner's research into young children's singing, for example, are relied on to provide information on children's development as spontaneous singers, yet the discrepancies in Werner's work have now been revealed by returning to his original data.

The chapter on curriculum introduces the 'music as language' model that Linda Pound and Chris Harrison have developed in earlier work. This model provides a very useful transfer of processes from the development of language to the support of musical activity among young children which many early years practitioners will find accessible. In terms of processes, the model can help to shift the dominance of adult-led versions of musical activity which are so prevalent in music education at all stages. The chapter then continues by discussing different dimensions of the 'music curriculum' at different age phases. The phase of birth to age three, when changes from a newborn to the active three-year-old are the most dramatic in the whole lifespan, is conflated to one age phase covering all three years, and the 'curriculum' activities slip into descriptions which read very similarly to the developmental chapter. In considering the older age phases, three–five and five–seven, the discussion of curriculum gets into its stride, particularly when the statutory curriculum is introduced. It runs on smoothly into the chapter on music as a tool for learning, with some gems in the links between music and mathematical thinking, as we might expect with Linda Pound's expertise in both areas. This chapter is very orientated to the domains framed by the foundation stage curriculum and other formal curriculum requirements. In this respect the discussion provides

much-needed, detailed information to support foundation stage practitioners.

A following chapter on musical environments becomes more practically orientated with some useful information, well-structured lists and tables encapsulating well-considered information. It is valuable to dwell in detail on the features of the musical environment, and the discussion promotes an expectation of children's spontaneous musical play. And finally the role of adults, so integral to a book on early years music, is arrived at in the final section. Personally I find the assumption that practitioners will lack confidence is overemphasised here. Confidence is not a stable attribute but is situation-dependent and so will vary according to circumstance and what adults perceive to be its demands. Some ongoing work by Street is beginning to suggest that the motivation to be an effective parent or carer to very young children can override anxiety about perceived lack of musical, or specifically singing, ability. Anxiety centres less on the act of singing itself than on how it is received, and babies and very young children are perceived to be non-discerning and non-judgemental receivers.

As throughout, this chapter on the adult role speaks more appropriately to practitioners at foundation and even early Key Stage 1 than to the diverse, full range of adults involved in the care and education of young children. The section which then addresses 'supporting parents and carers' seems to confirm that the audience held in mind has shifted away from the childminders, parents and carers as identified in the preface for the book.

This book emphasises just how complex, interesting and challenging the field of early years music is. It covers a wide age phase within which the chronological changes are dramatic and far-reaching. It incorporates carers and practitioners with diverse backgrounds, trainings and priorities.

It deals with musical activity happening in many contexts and in many forms of organisation, from home care to formal schooling. The imperative, in my view, is to debate the assumptions that colour our understanding of music in early childhood and around which versions of practice are being constructed. This book is a very valuable contribution and a much-needed text. The ongoing task is to evolve understandings and versions of practice in early years music which can loosen it from the structures of 'schooling' and embrace the characteristics and features of these earliest years.

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The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical

Introduction edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton. London: Routledge, 2003. vii + 368 pp, £16.99, paperback.

If there is a key tension within the pages of this compendium of arguments for the value of the mutual consideration of the two terms

'culture' and 'music', it is to all intents and purposes that same crucial tension that separates modernism from postmodernism, the pull between universality and specificity. This finds expression in so many ways in this collection that it will be superfluous to enumerate them at this point, and in any case to do so would be to draw attention away from the ostensible topics of its contributors' arguments. Nonetheless, it underpins everything I can observe going on here.

Recent years have, of course, seen a dramatic rise in the academic linkage of these two key terms, some instances of which have so questioned our assumptions that we may well feel that we don't know what 'music' is any longer. It is useful, then, that Richard Middleton's introduction ('Music studies and the idea of culture') reminds us that 'culture' is a concept that is even more unstable. How does it interact with 'nature'? How do we manage both its universality (it is found everywhere) and its specificity (it is found everywhere to be different)? Is it simply something we do (with specific parts of our lives), or is it everything we do coloured by our culture? For Middleton, it is the political dimension that is currently paramount, as his chapter observes, but it is an aspect of the care with which the editors address issues of power relations that their contributors do not necessarily follow this line. Indeed, they follow no line at all, which leads to some interesting correspondences and potential arguments. In 'Music and social categories', for instance, John Shepherd, well known for his work in theorising the relationship between the structures of musical sounds and the societies that produce them (a universalising concern), historicises and focuses on the reasons for the failure of the most thoroughgoing such theory, that of homology. In the process, he expresses disquiet with the current emphasis in the discussion of musical meaning that is placed

on connotation (the consideration of associative relationships obtaining between musical sounds and some external field of reference), calling for renewed attention to be given to structural relationships: referring to the importance of Elvis Presley, he argues that 'Presley gave a specifically musical shape to a situational moment in a manner that was structural as well as connotative' (p. 78). Antoine Hennion, writing in 'Music and mediation: toward a new sociology of music' from a very different disciplinary background (that of sociology), expresses a similar concern in his call for a return to caring about musical works. He argues that music, fundamentally, is mediation – it mediates people – but that even though its power is socially constituted, that does not validate social reductionism. He uses the term 'work' to focus on this musical 'thing', without acknowledging that the term itself is problematic (and not only in its shifting relationship with 'labour'). Ruth Finnegan ('Music, experience, and the anthropology of emotion') prefers the term 'text', more usual nowadays, but perhaps uses it in a very limited way, to explain why it is that the words of songs so often get preference over the music. Jeff Todd Titon also focuses on the notion of 'text', but as used by Clifford Geertz, arguing that, within the anthropological discourse in general, it marked a move from a science-based to a humanities-based approach. Titon critiques Geertz's advances, in arguing for the need to escape from the control an ethnographer exercises over the account s/he writes. Nicholas Cook's chapter ('Music as performance') takes its lead from performance studies in suggesting that, rather than talk about 'texts' at all, we should consider the notion of the 'script', with all the greater degree of flexibility of interpretation this implies. (This is the uncertainty about what 'music' is that I referred to above.) This serves to shift the

emphasis towards the performer, but other essays are concerned to shift emphasis even further, towards the listener and what the listener does, even if that listener is also a highly trained academic.

Both Lawrence Kramer ('Subjectivity rampant! Music, hermeneutics, and history') and Rob C. Wegman ('Historical musicology: is it still possible?'), in different ways, argue for the urgent recognition of the inherent subjectivity, and hence historical contingency and partiality, of all meaning (Kramer) or knowledge (Wegman). Wegman's answer is, if we accept his argument, yes, provided we also accept our (individual and collective) fallibility. In 'The cultural study of musical instruments', Kevin Dawe joins them in decrying classificatory systems for instruments because they are incapable of registering the contextual specifics of different instruments. Martin Clayton's 'Comparing music, comparing musicology' offers a related argument in respect of Indian classical traditions, addressing the importance of avoiding collapsing experience into discourse – the specifics of localised experience must remain within our grasp. For Clayton, this means we must undertake comparison, but too often we fail to make the basis of our comparison explicit. Simon Frith, in a strangely low-key chapter ('Music and everyday life'), makes a similar point in arguing for the importance of music to our sense of identity. He argues, however, that we need more detailed research on how this takes place. Richard Middleton's chapter ('Locating the people: music and the popular') also focuses on who it is that exhibits culture, arguing that 'the people' is not the simple, universal category it is often made out to be, but one whose manifestation is constantly transformed. Unusually in this book, he focuses on musical examples – from John Lennon, the Spice Girls and Eminem – but he does make a number of difficult assumptions of his

readers, such as recognition of the difference between a subject as a 'field' and as a 'discursive property'.

Clayton's insistence on comparison, which feels intuitively right, can only be made with recognition of the pertinence of difference. David Brackett's 'What a difference a name makes: two instances of African-American popular music' pursues this, observing how the African-American concept marks genre difference respectively in 1947 and 1996, and how this markedness has changed in the intervening years. Kofi Agawu's 'Contesting difference: a critique of Africanist ethnomusicology' takes the opposing tack, arguing that we should replace an assumption of difference with one of sameness, largely for the political reasons Middleton raises. He argues that there is 'nothing self-evident about the categories used to distinguish African musics from Western music' (p. 232), and that the erection of such categories results in ideologically distorted representations of such musics.

Difference may be a universal feature but one that should not take priority in specific cases. Throughout these chapters, then, we see played out competing claims of structuralism and post-structuralism. These claims are played out where we would most expect them, too. David Clarke, in 'Musical autonomy revisited', appears to take a retrogressive step in arguing for the rehabilitation of the concept of autonomy. However, his argument depends not on revisiting old ground, but on observing certain tendencies in (very recent) dance music practices. There is a tension here between simply observing practices, and moulding them by inserting them into other discourses. Gary Tomlinson ('Musicology, anthropology, history') takes an opposing tack – in disinterring the roots of the autonomy concept in the disciplinary separation of history from anthropology, he

hopes to see it wither, and in the process he explicitly calls for a recovery of pre-Enlightenment intuitions about music.

Although the tone of the volume is not uniform, in general it is rather user-friendly. These may be weighty issues to consider, but most of the contributors manage to communicate very clearly, whether their topic is generally familiar or not, frequently by overviewing the current state of knowledge in their field. Eric F. Clarke's exploration of the ecological approach to musical meaning ('Music and psychology'), of asking what music affords, what meaning it makes available in particular environments and specific experiential contexts, is an excellent introduction to an under-utilised theory. The title of Nicola Dibben's related chapter, 'Musical materials, perception, and listening', promises to explain much, until we realise there is much here still to be known. Dibben argues against the hierarchical approach to cognition and perception that is normative amongst researchers in this field, arguing instead that we create meaning associatively, and that this is what requires addressing, thereby setting herself up somewhat in opposition to Shepherd (above) – another instance of the key tension I have outlined. Lucy Green's discussion ('Music education, cultural capital, and social group identity') also summarises recent research (this time in the field of music education) in arguing that the too-speedy introduction of both popular and world musics into the curriculum has been a mixed blessing where there is a lack of integration in respect of their ideological positions. Indeed, her single-paragraph elucidation of the concept of ideology for music study is perhaps the best I have yet come across. Martin Stokes, in 'Globalization and the politics of world music', bemoans the ignorance that both 'world music' advocates and those celebrating globalisation processes betray of

their own history, that in these discourses there is no awareness of how we have reached our present position – in its continued travels, he argues that there is ‘little “new” about “World Music”’ (p. 307). This is an important essay, raising questions as it does about both hybridity and the political importance of extreme nationalist responses to globalisation. Not all the contributors summarise the current state of knowledge within their own fields – a more uniform approach here might have been more successful. Nor are all writers as simply communicative. Kramer’s style, as usual, is difficult, as is Philip V. Bohlman’s discussion of the ways in which music energises culture (‘Music and culture: historiographies of disjuncture’). He does, however, offer a clear typology of such breaks – colonial encounter/racism/nationalism/eschatology – which always makes difficult writing clearer, in pursuing his argument that, since music is fully embedded in culture, it can never act outside it, never transcend it. Jason Toynee’s ‘Music, culture, and creativity’ is also complex. He argues that creativity is fundamentally social, and therefore offers an explanation of the myth of the individual creator. His essay is courageous in that he takes on both ‘classical’ and ‘popular’ worlds, but I don’t find him entirely convincing – his argument overlooks, for example, the listening pleasure of stylistic redundancy, which seems to me no less the result of properly creative work than outright ‘originality’. Most tricky for me is Ian Biddle (‘Of mice and dogs: music, gender, and sexuality at the long fin de siècle’), who offers the reader no such crumbs as Bohlman had in his discussion of gender and sexuality by means of two stories by Franz Kafka. And I, for one, needed them. Although the issues surrounding culture/music are big, central issues, some contributors raise either smaller, or seemingly much more peripheral, questions. Trevor Herbert, for example, in

‘Social history and music history’, develops an argument similar to those of Kramer and Wegman in arguing for the importance of microhistory, of taking on the historical specifics of very local traditions, in his case the brass band tradition. And Ian Cross, in ‘Music and biocultural evolution’, asks questions of the role of music in the early life of both humans as individuals and humanity as a race, but declaring that music cannot be reduced to such an understanding. Mark Slobin addresses another marginal issue that should, perhaps, be much more mainstream – that of diaspora (‘The destiny of “diaspora” in ethnomusicology’). He is troubled by adequate definitions, with which he spends much time, focusing on a variety of examples (Jewish, Chinese and Tamil diasporas). After so much theory, it is refreshing to close with Dave Laing’s much more straightforward consideration of the various relations between music and ‘the market’ (‘Music and the market: the economics of music in the modern world’). No less polemical than most of the other contributions, it does at least bring us back to a more familiar world. In all, then, a highly varied book, impossible to really summarise properly. There is, though, much to consider – it represents a pretty good overview of the current position within Anglophone scholarship of the relationship between those two most troublesome terms.

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The Cambridge Companion to Jazz edited by Mervyn Cooke and David Horn.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 403 pp, £47.50 (hardback), £16.95 (paperback).

Cambridge University Press has published a number of musical *Companions*, which deal in depth and breadth with composers,

instruments and genres. These aims are amply fulfilled in this multi-authored book, and editors David Horn and Mervyn Cooke draw on a wide pool of musicians, academics, journalists and freelance writers.

The opening 'brief chronology' gives a year-by-year *résumé* of the main developments in jazz from 1890 onwards. At the end, a similar section offers short biographies of the music's principal contributors over the past century. These are useful resources, but given the book's celebration of jazz as an agent for social change, it is a shame that the only women featured in the latter are Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald. A list that includes the indifferent clarinettist Mezz Mezzrow could surely find space for composers as significant and innovative as Mary Lou Williams and Carla Bley.

A particular strength is the book's international focus. The authors rightly emphasise that jazz has not recently globalised: it has been a worldwide phenomenon almost from the start. There are references throughout to jazz from the 1920s to the present in places as far afield as Scandinavia, the Far East and Africa. Links between jazz and its relationship with literature and the other arts are pursued. Robert P. Crease contributes a significant chapter that shows how jazz dance emancipated 'the female body, which could now perform with a new vitality and originality rare in older social dances'. In the final chapter, Krin Gabbard explores images of jazz conveyed in films and photography.

The book is rather like a jazz performance where individuals take solos based around common underlying ideas. Consequently, there is some repetition of content between contributors. Overall, the editors mitigate this tendency through skilful cross-referencing. However, they cope less well with the varied quality of the writing.

The opening chapters deal with the identity of jazz, including the multiple meanings of the word itself. One salient characteristic of jazz is that it is a *recorded* medium. David Horn emphasises the significance of 'the record's ability to be at one and the same time both the music *and* the performance – in other words, to break the sequentiality that had been dominant hitherto'. Horn succinctly summarises the learned objections to jazz made by musicologists such as Adorno. As he says, 'neither the listening public nor jazz musicians seem ever to have been especially concerned by [them]'. Unfortunately, some contributors resemble Adorno in the opacity of their language. Bruce Johnson, on 'Jazz as cultural practice', wields a particularly leaden pen: 'A defining contour is the connection between ocularcentrism and the intellect in maintaining a regime of knowledge-as-control, precipitating as among many other things, a fixation on product rather than process.' This verbiage is even more frustrating since the content throughout, including Johnson's, is so interesting, informative and stimulating.

When we come to authors who address musical experience directly, the writing does indeed start to swing. Ingrid Monson's excellent chapter on improvisation is characterised by simply expressed, thought-provoking observations. Her use of notated examples is apt and economical. The book as a whole could have benefited from more of these. For example, in 'Jazz as musical practice' Travis Jackson gets bogged down in a verbal description of rhythms that would have been better conveyed through notation. A few pages later, Jackson's notated illustrations of the construction of jazz chords are both lucid and helpful. Another good writer is Peter J. Martin, who explores the relationship between 'Spontaneity and organisation'. His chapter focuses on the

achievement of Charlie Parker, who, like many great musicians, and indeed like jazz itself, was a paradoxical mixture of radical and conservative. However, when Martin hears Parker quoting Louis Armstrong's 'West End Blues' in his 1949 live recording of 'Cheryl', I again longed for a notated comparison of the two passages.

In 'Jazz among the classics', Mervyn Cooke focuses on Duke Ellington. His chapter is rich in insight, particularly on the way that Ellington's harmonies are 'inextricably linked' with the orchestration. At the core of Cooke's chapter is an intriguing account of the reaction of the Norwegian musical establishment to Ellington's recomposition of Grieg's *Peer Gynt*. The story serves to highlight an underlying theme of the book: the ability of jazz to blend, or rather 'fuse', with other styles and genres.

An interesting contributor, for historical among other reasons, is Darius Brubeck, who writes about the year 1959, an *annus mirabilis* that produced several albums that have endured in the public mind: Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*, Charles Mingus's *Ah-um*, Coltrane's *Giant Steps* and Brubeck's father Dave's *Time Out*. Brubeck's chapter ranges widely and includes an interesting discussion of how the system of chord symbols (which differs in significant ways from European chord nomenclature such as figured bass) has conditioned the way jazz musicians think about and engage with harmony as they improvise. 1959 also saw the publication of perhaps the most influential book of all on jazz theory: George Russell's *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organisation*. Brubeck concludes with a helpful elucidation of Russell's ideas.

In any chapter on 'free jazz', one must surely define terms and say what 'free' means. Free from what? Jeff Pressing does not quite do this convincingly, but his

straightforward account, which introduces a word new to me, 'harmolodic' (in reference to Ornette Coleman's stylistic innovations), usefully covers a good deal of ground, embracing the contributions of musicians as stylistically diverse as Keith Jarrett and John Zorn.

Stuart Nicholson raises similar questions of definition in his comprehensive chapter on 'fusions and crossovers'. Nicholson's starting point is the commonly accepted meaning of the word 'fusion' – the commercial imperative that led jazz to get into bed with rock at the end of the 1960s. However, he goes on to embrace world music ('Global Fusions') and the international jazz scene, in particular the contribution of artists such as Jan Garbarek. He reminds us that in Britain some years before the emergence of jazz-rock, Joe Harriott and John Mayer created their 'Indo-Jazz Fusions'. Nicholson also covers the contribution of eastern European musicians such as Krystof Komeda, who composed powerful soundtracks for the films of Roman Polanski. He concludes with a sideswipe at those influential musicians who ignore the way jazz has 'continually been reinvigorated by the process of appropriation' and would try to turn the music into a museum of American culture.

Symptomatic of its absorption into the cultural mainstream is the fact that jazz now features in many education programmes. David Ake's chapter is informative, but tends to deal more with the organisation of teaching rather than the processes of learning. (For a real grasp of what musical learning entails, go to *Thinking in Jazz* (Berliner, 1994), a book that several contributors hold in high esteem.) Ake covers the continuing growth of jazz in higher education, but I would have liked to read more about the role of high schools in the early development of players who later became fully fledged jazz musicians. Ake

warns of the tendency of courses to promote norms 'for tone, vibrato, pitch' which seem to run counter to the congenial idiosyncrasies that jazz musicians develop when self taught, or left to grow in the informal communities where the music originally thrived. However, the question 'Can this be taught?' is not unique to jazz. It can be asked of any music.

After David Sager's chapter on the myths surrounding the birth of jazz, Thomas Owens looks at jazz analysis. He has high, if qualified, praise for pioneers such as André Hodeir and Gunther Schuller, despite their alleged 'Eurocentricity'. Owens concludes with examples of recent forays into Schenkerian analyses of Louis Armstrong (What would Armstrong have said about these?). However, as long as they convey a love of the music, and this enthusiasm is infectious enough to encourage readers 'to listen for themselves', jazz scholars will have not just performed acts of analysis; they will have done some teaching, too. Dated as they may seem from today's global academic perspective, Hodeir and Schuller did all these things superbly.

The Cambridge Companion to Jazz makes a substantial contribution to jazz scholarship. Despite reservations about some of the writing, I recommend it to general readers, teachers and students alike. It adds considerably to our knowledge of how this wonderful and universally appealing music has had such a lasting impact on culture throughout the world. From start to finish, the book absorbingly engages with the continually shifting debate about what counts as jazz. Perhaps I should leave the last words to Duke Ellington, whom Cooke quotes at the head of his chapter: '[Jazz] is not in need of tolerance, but of understanding and intelligent appreciation. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly difficult to decide where jazz starts or where it stops, where Tin Pan Alley begins and jazz

ends, or even where the borderline lies between classical music and jazz. I feel there is no boundary line, and I see no place for one if my own feelings tell me a performance is good.'

Reference

Berliner, P. (1994) *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*. Chicago: University of Chicago.

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Who Needs Classical Music? Cultural

Choice and Musical Value by
Julian Johnson. Oxford: Oxford
University Press, 2002. 140 pp, £18.99,
hardback.

My lifetime has seen a gradual change in attitudes to the relationship between classical music and other styles and genres. No institution exemplifies this transformation better than the BBC (the British Broadcasting Corporation). Some 45 years ago, when I started listening, the main diet of Radio 3, the BBC's main classical station, was European music of the 18th–20th centuries. Nowadays the menu is much more varied: besides the 'standard' repertoire, we find early music, folk music, world music, jazz and some experimental rock music. The central repertoire of classical music has had, to an extent, to shift aside to make way for these other styles. Classical music itself has acquired a rival broadcasting outlet in the highly successful commercial station Classic FM, which is often criticised for presenting classical music as though it were simply 'easy listening' without offering emotional challenge or mental stimulation to listeners. Julian Johnson, in this interesting and powerfully written short book, believes musical experience is becoming 'dumbed down' and marginalised through these trends

towards pluralism and alternative forms of presentation. Education, the media, the recording industry and concert promoters now tend to give the public what it 'wants' rather than what it 'needs'. Most people, it seems, are content with music that is emotionally vacuous and intellectually undemanding. As a result, many never experience the riches of Western musical culture, and miss something that is potentially a truly civilising influence.

Johnson sees the world of music today and humankind's relationship to it as being in crisis. We are swamped with music of all kinds, but most people never learn how to listen in the same way, say, as they learn to read a narrative or watch a film. Music serves largely as half-heard background. This is all very well with music intended as background, but what about the great tradition of Western art music, which will only be truly enjoyed if we give it our undivided attention and have acquired the ability to follow the way it unfolds in time through its 'discursive' exploration of abstract ideas? Johnson, like his intellectual forbear Adorno, who detested 1930s jazz, is particularly scornful of pop and rock music, which he sees as embodying the opposites of these ideals.

However, Johnson's obvious dislike of pop tends to weaken his case. He is keener to point out differences than to compare like with like. While I agree that neither pop (nor, for that matter, instrumental jazz) can compete in structural complexity with fugue or sonata form, there are areas of similarity, which Johnson fails to acknowledge or explore. One of these, perhaps the most obvious one, is that both classical and popular musics have made and are continuing to make significant contributions to the song repertoire.

Some 35 years ago Tony Palmer, the pop music critic for the *Sunday Times*, received opprobrium for claiming, in a review of the

Beatles' *White Album* (1968), that John Lennon and Paul McCartney were the 'greatest songwriters since Schubert'. Perhaps, given the extraordinary staying power of the Beatles' achievement in the public consciousness, the comparison is not, after all, so far-fetched. Classical *Lieder* and pop songs occupy a similar timescale and often possess an equivalent complexity of form. Since 1960, rock and pop musicians such as Sting, Elvis Costello, Joni Mitchell and Burt Bacharach have created songs that are as musically interesting and as emotionally engaging as any vocal works occupying a similar timescale produced over the past ten centuries. Although I would not go quite so far as to say that the songs the Beatles were composing in the 1960s compete with Schubert, I would say that they were at least as good as the songs that, for example, Benjamin Britten was writing during the same decade. Popular music is neither as shallow, nor is classical music, especially in some of its late 20th-century manifestations, as profound, as Johnson would have us believe. Any teacher who, over the past 20 years, has witnessed the revolutionary expansion of opportunities for music-making in non-classical styles in schools and colleges will realise that classical music no longer has the monopoly over the curriculum that it once had. Students who engage in composing, performing, listening to and thinking about pop and rock music are also, quite rightly, now considered as serious people engaged in serious activities.

While Johnson is careful to make distinctions within classical music (his comparison of the opening movement of Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' with its finale is a case in point), he treats pop as a homogenous category open to the most sweeping statements. When he declares rock to be 'rhythmically impoverished', I wonder how much of this music he really knows?

For example, would he genuinely include Bacharach's 'Say a Little Prayer' in the category of rhythmic impoverishment (especially the wonderfully ecstatic performance of that song by Aretha Franklin)? I could cite others.

Johnson claims that a grasp of the formal complexity of classical music is a key to its understanding. However, empirical investigations fail to support this contention. As Nicholas Cook (1990) points out, there is a disparity between how musicians talk about musical structures and how listeners actually experience them, if indeed they respond to them at all when listening. I have often wondered why many people (including myself) who enjoy formally complex classical music get equal satisfaction from listening to jazz, whose structures are less developed. In common with many listeners, I have found in John Coltrane's 'A Love Supreme' transcendental qualities similar to those I have experienced from late Beethoven. This has nothing to do with perceiving 'structure'; it has everything to do with responding to the deep conviction of the music's creators.

Johnson sees pop as ephemeral: 'Last year's music is dropped, like last year's clothes.' However, mounting evidence over the past 100 years contradicts this claim. Until the advent of sound recording, the only way of preserving music for posterity was through notation. The only music that got preserved was so-called 'art music'. Folk and popular forms did not get a look in, until pioneers such as Bartók and Kodály went around the Balkans recording folk songs on wax cylinders. Since the early 1900s, all this has changed: popular music has been preserved for posterity. Therefore, it has been possible to test the assertion that 'art' music is for posterity while popular music will last only until the next fashion takes over. A visit to any record store will confirm that jazz music from the 1920s to the present, and

rock albums from the 1960s, are still available and, presumably, enjoyed by the public. For music to increase its hold through repeated audition, it has to set going a learning process that persuades the listener that there is much more under the surface than one can grasp at first hearing. The best pieces of classical, jazz and rock music do these things: it is not simply nostalgia for a misspent youth that makes me return to my Beatles collection: there are musical subtleties there that I continue to pick up and respond to in a deeper way.

Johnson finds it difficult to come to terms with the fact that classical music now has to compete for posterity. He sees a contradiction in pop's use of advanced technology to communicate primitive musical ideas. 'The underlying materials and formal patterns of much music made today are not just simple, but archaically so.' He would be unlikely to acknowledge that classical musicians might learn from this expertise. In her fascinating study of IRCAM, the prestigious Parisian electronic music centre, the anthropologist Georgina Born (1995: 261) reports a similar aloofness to popular culture displayed by the people at the top of the organisation. Born overheard a visiting composer express astonishment and frustration at the lack of awareness of multi-track recording procedures and their aesthetic potential: 'If there's one thing I'd do if I had the power, it would be to get a top [pop] record producer in here for a year to teach good studio techniques!'

I have been hard on Johnson's thesis precisely *because* the book is so eloquently written and persuasively argued. While questioning many of his assertions, he has made me think about *why* I disagree with much of what he says. *Who Needs Classical Music?* is an admirable, if somewhat prickly, contribution to the current debate about musical values.

Reference

- Born, G. (1995) *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*. London: University of California Press.
- Cook, N. (1990) *Music, Imagination and Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

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Information Sources in Music edited by
Lewis Foreman. München: K. G. Saur,
2003. 444 pp, no price given, hardback.

Lewis Foreman states in his introduction that *Information Sources in Music* is primarily a guide to printed and documentary sources. The book lives up to this claim by taking three different approaches. Some chapters, as might be expected, explore information sources according to their format (for example, ephemera, periodicals and newspapers, the Internet and theses); some chapters evaluate the producers, suppliers or guardians of information as potential sources (for example, second-hand dealers, broadcasters, composers' trusts and governments). The remaining chapters take a topical approach to specific aspects of musical research, including sources for those studying women in music, film music, the early music revival and music publishing.

The majority of the sources mentioned are in English, but there is also an acknowledgement that music literature, especially about foreign composers and music theory, is extensively written in other languages, particularly German. Jürgen Schaarwächter's chapter on foreign language material is successful insofar as it highlights the range of material available to those with some language skills.

Like other titles in this series, *Information Sources in Music* is aimed at

those with little or no knowledge of information sources in the subject – especially interdisciplinary researchers approaching music for the first time. As such, it aims to be an introduction to information resources rather than a comprehensive anthology – of use, for example, to undergraduates embarking on an introduction to musicology course. Perhaps for this reason, several chapters also provide an informative introduction to the key areas of scholarly concern within certain aspects of music (the early music revival, for example). Music educators may find this a helpful first point of call when starting research, although there is only passing mention of music education sources in the section entitled 'Educational institutions'. I feel that the book may be most useful to librarians who handle music enquiries, especially those librarians with little or no musical knowledge.

A feature that is to be commended is a list of present owners of a variety of imprints used over the past century or so, which will be of value to anybody researching music publishing, trying to trace copyright ownership, or wanting to acquire more recent editions. The volume is also well indexed, so that the researcher studying a particular topic which happens to be mentioned in the book (Gerald Finzi, brass bands, rap music, to give just a few examples) can turn to the pages recommending possible sources to consult and organisations to contact.

Although this book is ostensibly what its title describes, I was left with some strong reservations. I remain unsure about the criteria for selecting information sources on some topics, but not on others. The arrangement of chapters is somewhat arbitrary and could perhaps be improved by taking some account of information-seeking strategies. Perhaps most importantly in today's fast-moving electronic age, when students increasingly turn to the Internet for

information, any guide to sources that appears in printed form needs to be treated with some caution. A spot-check revealed that some web sites mentioned are already no longer current and more detailed reading indicates that some chapters are far more

up-to-date than others, indicating this book probably had too long a 'gestation period'.

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