

ters approach the titular concepts of *improvisation* and *social aesthetics* to varying degrees, and sometimes not at all. Neither of two articles on big-band jazz investigates improvisation. The first, David Brackett's "The Social Aesthetic of Swing in the 1940s," contains a long apologia entitled "What's Improvisation Got to Do with It?" (pp. 116–20), to which the reader might answer, "Not much." The second, Lisa Barg's "Strayhorn's Queer Arrangements," a really useful explication of gender and race through the collaboration of Rosemary Clooney and Duke Ellington's arranger Billy Strayhorn on the album *Blue Rose* (1956), is perhaps the most engaging article of the book, but its focus is the musical technique of arrangement, not improvisation.

The writers and editors have, for the most part, avoided the "normal" topics of post-1960s improvisation, particularly African-American free jazz (and its successors) and British free improvisation. Only Born mentions the legendary London group AMM and the Feminist Improvising Group (FIG), a much underrated, late-1970s ensemble of which Born was a member. Aside from Eric Lewis's work on AACM, very little of this era of African-American improvisation appears in this volume. There is also little or no reference to the large body of theory and philosophy of indeterminacy, the theoretical partner of post-1960 free improvisation. In fact, the term *indeterminacy* seems to be missing altogether. This lack of context is particularly unfortunate in the few places that encounter experimental music and free improvisation. George E. Lewis erroneously mentions

John Cage's "chance operations" (p. 97; a precompositional tool) rather than his "indeterminacy" (postcompositional performer choice), the concept that Cage favored after 1951. And Nicholas Cook, in "Scripting Social Interaction," a fight against the "negative mythologization of WAM" (p. 60), seems to be completely unaware that Bailey included an entire section on baroque extemporization and more modern classical organ improvisation in *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music*. Cook proposes that an approach like Bruno Latour's Actor-Network Theory might "readily transfer to the analysis of graphic scores" (p. 69) but ignores the extensive body of literature on the interpretation and analysis of indeterminate music in graphic and text scores since 1961. This body of work has done much to elucidate the psychology, linguistics, and social activity that occur between the fixed score and its interpretation in performance. Lacking all of this background support and context, Cook's chapter is the book's weakest.

In spite of these flaws, *Improvisation and Social Aesthetics* is a substantial addition to the literature on improvisation. The breadth of the anthology makes it particularly useful not only to critical theorists and improvisers but also to students of big-band jazz, cinema, dance, and theater. Although this book is by no means a central text on improvisation as a social act, it will provide a good source of information for a number of subject areas and disciplines in any university.

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Experimental Music Catalogue

POPULAR MUSIC

The Pop Palimpsest: Intertextuality in Recorded Popular Music. Edited by Lori Burns and Serge Lacasse. (Tracking Pop.) Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018. [xx, 360 p. ISBN 978047213067 (hardback), \$85; ISBN 9780472123513 (e-book), \$64.95.] Music examples, photographs, tables, index.

“Good artists borrow; great artists steal.” Variations of this aphorism have been attributed to luminaries from a variety of fields, including T. S. Eliot (poetry), Pablo Picasso (visual arts), Igor Stravinsky (music), and William Faulkner (fiction). Not only does this quote imply that a fundamental aspect of creating art involves appropriation from previous works, it also implies that the success of artists (and their work) is strongly related to the skill of this appropriation. To fully assess and understand any work of art, therefore, we presumably need to identify and evaluate the ways in which it takes from the old and makes it new. This guiding principle underpins *The Pop Palimpsest*, an interdisciplinary collection of twelve essays that investigates “intertextual” relationships within recorded popular music. According to the book’s editors, this is the first essay collection to consider the full range of intertextuality in popular music, with previous publications covering only a narrow slice of the broader topic (p. 2). Indeed, what binds the essays in this volume together is a very wide and all-inclusive interpretation of intertextuality. This expanded framework may be one of the book’s strengths in that it spurs readers to think about various types of relationships between musical and nonmusical texts that they had perhaps not previously considered. But it may also be one of the book’s weaknesses, because it seems to allow for almost anything to be considered intertextual, thereby neglecting some of the more overt issues that arise given a more prototypical understanding of the term.

Admittedly, the discussion of intertextuality in music requires an element of metaphor. In its central meaning, intertextuality refers to a specific set of literary devices—including allusion, quotation, pastiche, and parody—whereby one work of literature is referenced in another, typically with the

hope that readers will pick up on this reference and infer meaning from it. A parallel situation is easy to imagine for music if we take the “text” to be a musical work. And analogous instances of quotation or parody, for example, are common throughout the history of music, as J. Peter Burkholder expertly sketches out in the book’s foreword. But the danger in each additional level of abstraction is that the term’s initially solid meaning becomes further and further watered down, such that it is ultimately rendered rather meaningless. In his essay on different cover versions of Leonard Cohen’s song “Hallelujah,” for example, Allan Moore takes the performance to be a text; Simon Zagorski-Thomas, in his essay on the relationship between electronic and acoustic sounds, takes timbre to be a text; in the essay by Serge Lacasse and Andy Bennett on mix tapes, the selection and sequence of songs in a compilation is a text; for Stan Hawkins, who focuses on the music video for the Eurythmics song “I Need a Man,” Marilyn Monroe’s persona is a text. In this loosened sense, intertextuality no longer concerns simply one song referring to another. Rather, it allows for some generic aspect of a song (or songs) to evoke some vague category of style, recording technique, cultural iconography, or whatever else. From Fiol-Matta’s collective perspective, this is the power of intertextuality: to expose and interpret threads from the vast web of possible connections. But that description could essentially be taken as a synonym for music analysis itself. With intertextuality defined so generically, in other words, it does not seem clear what the difference is between simply analyzing music and analyzing music from an intertextual perspective. After all, if music—as the quote above suggests—has always been about borrowing, has not music analysis always been about unpacking it?

To be fair, each essay in the collection provides interesting insights into aspects of one or more musical works. But the discussion often seems unnecessarily bogged down by having to be couched in terms of a reworked conceptual framework of intertextuality despite the availability of more straightforward, equally effective methods. In his chapter on dialogic intertextuality, for example, William Echard posits that the mercurial stylistic diversity of Neil Young's career can be seen as a balancing act between the conflicting pressures of gaining credibility within the rock tradition while also establishing an individualistic voice. Echard's essay is strongest when he is citing criticism contemporary with the changes in Young's style, showing a pattern of response that initially involves disapproval but is then followed by retrospective reevaluation. This is solid scholarship, but there is nothing about it that demands the concept of intertextuality. Notably, the term *intertextual* (or any of its variants) is used only a few times once the chapter finally moves—around page 179, more than halfway through—to the discussion of Young's music and its reception. The utility of devoting a hefty portion of the chapter to unraveling ideas about intertextuality by Julia Kristeva, Mikhail Bakhtin, Theodore Gracyk, and others in order to formalize musical style as a text is questionable, as it distracts from and delays the musical observations that the chapter has to offer. Perhaps what is most lamentable is that by spilling so much ink on nuanced definitions of *intertextuality*, Echard misses the opportunity to engage with the many cases of more obvious intertextuality involving Young's work, such as his resetting of Don Gibson's lyrics in "Oh Lonesome Me," his appropriation of a Rolling Stones melody in "Borrowed Tune," or Lynyrd Skynyrd's response to his song "Alabama."

This preoccupation with casting intertextuality as a sweeping intellectual model is most conspicuous in the book's first chapter, by Lacasse. Building on the work of literary theorist Gérard Genette, Lacasse lays out his framework for "transphonography" (p. 9), in which he attempts to categorize all the possible ways that recordings of popular music might be linked. His system quickly becomes needlessly jargon-heavy, though. For example, he rebrands recordings of a song as "phonograms" (p. 11), a change in musical meter as "transmetrification" (p. 19), the act of quotation as "interphonography" (p. 26), and editing and remixing as "quantitative transformations" (p. 22). The desire to create a cohesive system is understandable, but at what cost? I worry that the primary function of Lacasse's taxonomy is to make an analysis sound more academic rather than to clearly communicate ideas between people. This concern becomes manifest in the following chapter by Roger Castonguay, who applies "Genettean hypertextuality" (p. 61) to the music of Genesis. The core of Castonguay's discussion comprises an analysis of "Los Endos" (the last track on *A Trick of the Tail*), outlining how this song reuses and transforms earlier material from the album and a B-side entitled "It's Yourself." The nuts and bolts of the analysis read like standard music theory, and thus it seems circumspect that "Genette's hypertextual taxonomy has made it possible to turn the organicists' goal on its head by uncovering a hidden diversity within the unity of the musical surface" (p. 75), since one can easily envision existing analytical techniques achieving that same basic goal.

Not all of the book's chapters are so excessively burdened by overtheorization. The essay by Mark Spicer, for example, which traces the influence of the Beatles on the music of the Electric

Light Orchestra, takes a similar stance as Echard's essay on Young. Specifically, Spicer highlights the balance that ELO had to strike in order to establish themselves as successors to the Beatles without being perceived as unduly derivative. As a context for his argument, Spicer invokes Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence" (*The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1973]), but he spends the bulk of his chapter leading the reader through a rich array of music examples and commentary. Similarly, Justin A. Williams uses the Game's "We Ain't" and Kendrick Lamar's "m.A.A.d. City" as case studies to show how rap artists construct their position within the lineage of previous artists through the use of sampling, quotation, and other methods. He supports his argument with ample evidence and examples, including detailed tables of lyrical references and flow. When Williams engages with theories of intertextuality, he does so in a cogent and pithy way that enlightens rather than clouds the points he is trying to make. Given its widespread use of sampling, hip-hop music seems like an especially fertile style in which to investigate intertextuality, so an accompanying essay on rap by Lori Burns and Alyssa Woods is a welcome addition. Burns and Woods propose a similar thesis to Williams's, arguing that Eminem, Jay-Z, and Kanye West (like the Game and Kendrick Lamar) construct their place in the history of hip-hop through the use of intertextual play. The book could probably have benefited from at least one more chapter on rap, though, considering how endemic intertextuality is to the style and what a large chunk of the popular music landscape hip-hop/rap music now occupies.

Generally speaking, the collection is like many others: the appeal of any individual essay will hinge strongly on the academic interests of the reader. For those wishing to engage with a spec-

trum of approaches to intertextuality in recorded popular music, the book offers a kaleidoscopic if somewhat motley assortment of readings. If anything, the collection presents a model for how to take practically any topic in music analysis and turn it into a paper on intertextuality. This desire to make things fit under the rubric of the book's title is perhaps best symbolized by the inclusion of the essay by Mary S. Woodside, which in all fairness is a well-researched work of music scholarship. But what is a chapter on nineteenth-century French vaudeville doing in a book ostensibly about recorded popular music?

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Pat Metheny: The ECM Years, 1975–1984. By Mervyn Cooke. (Oxford Studies in Recorded Jazz.) New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. [xxii, 298 p. ISBN 9780199897674 (hardcover), \$74; ISBN 9780199897667 (paperback), \$18.95; ISBN 9780199897670 (e-book), \$9.99.] Music examples, illustrations, discography and filmography, index.

Pat Metheny: The ECM Years, 1975–1984 traces the development of Metheny's style as a guitarist, improviser, and composer during the formative part of his career. Examining the eleven albums he created on the ECM label during a span of eight years (1976–84), this study presents an engrossing assessment of Metheny's style, development, and philosophy on jazz. Cooke sets out to explore three main concepts: "the fundamental notion of a 'new paradigm' capable of keeping jazz relevant"; the "increasing symbiotic relationship between improvisation and composition"; and finally, "the various strategies through which a linear model for musical narrative was constantly varied" (p. 26).

Cooke provides context for how Metheny's music fits in the community