

J. P. E. HARPER-SCOTT & JIM SAMSON (EDS), *AN INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC STUDIES* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne *et al.*: Cambridge University Press, 2009), ISBN 978-0521603805, xv+296pp, £15.99 (paperback).

What does one expect from a book entitled *An Introduction to Music Studies*? Will it discuss what 'normally' features under the heading of 'Music' at universities, or on the totality of what should/could attract music-related scholarly attention, regardless of whether or not that is usually part of university curricula? Will it focus on theoretical, musicological approaches or on all aspects of third-level engagement with music?

In the preface to this book written entirely in-house, so to speak, by faculty of the Department of Music at Royal Holloway, University of London, the editors state that the volume is designed 'to be used as a background text and to encourage critical thinking over a broad range of music-related issues.' Furthermore, it 'is targeted at first-year university and college students, non-majors who are considering going on to a music major, and first-year music majors, but is also useful for "A"-level and high-school students' (xiii). J. P. E. Harper-Scott's introduction notes that it is aimed at the third-level music student who will attend 'traditional academic [here = musicological] courses' which are often enriched now by 'performing possibilities' (1).

The Hollowayan musical universe exists in three parts entitled 'Disciplines', 'Approaches to repertoire' and 'Music in practice.' As Harper-Scott explains, the first section discusses 'the ways that musicologists think and write about music', the second one 'what kinds of music are written and thought about' (3) while the third covers music in performance. These three main parts are subdivided into sixteen chapters written by fifteen different authors (Andrew Bowie wrote both chapters 5 and 10). Among the disciplines discussed are music history, music theory and analysis, sociology of music, psychology of music, and music aesthetics and critical theory. The repertoire considered includes world musics, early music, opera, concert music, jazz, popular music, and music in film and television. The practical aspects of music are subdivided into musical performance, composition, music technology and the music business.

Since Guido Adler, the study of music has been categorized many times and in numerous different ways. Music history as well as aesthetics and music theory are well represented in teaching and research at most university departments. Sociological and psychological issues related to music, however, are more often the preserve of departments of sociology and psychology (at least in the English-speaking world; in some Continental countries the situation is different). Older classifications list additional subdisciplines such as, for example, acoustics, iconography or organology, which are not covered in this book, probably due to the fact that they are rarely found in most curricula. The second part also appears to be geared towards current scholarly ap-

proaches and course offerings and the inclusion of jazz, popular music, and music in film and television is timely. Perhaps of most interest are the topics of 'Music in practice': while topics such as performance and composition are to be expected, and while music technology programmes are also well represented at many departments, courses on the economics and business of music are rare (except perhaps as part of arts administration programmes which are, however, usually not at home in music departments). Yet if the goal here was to outline areas in which music graduates might seek employment, several other fields could have been added such as music therapy, journalism, new media (there is very little on videogames or the internet anywhere in the volume) and, in particular, music education and pedagogy.

Each of the sixteen chapters is clearly structured in a similar and accessible format: they open with a brief chapter preview, introducing the main topics, before 'key issues' are highlighted in bullet points. The main text is accompanied by 'feature boxes' offering examples or case studies and is then rounded off by a summary, again in student-friendly bullet points. These are followed by 'discussion topics' designed to 'help you to broaden your thinking on particular subjects through imaginative speculation.' (xv) Finally there are references, annotated lists of further reading and, in some cases, a glossary.

This chapter structure is unsurprisingly prone to some repetitiveness; key issues and summaries often appear rather similar, but this is not a disadvantage given the target audience. The 'further reading' lists are not very extensive (between three and twelve titles; the reference lists are usually much longer). This may of course make it more likely that a student actually consults some of the books (I still remember feeling initially overwhelmed, as a young student, by course bibliographies covering several pages), yet on the other hand makes it all the more important that those few entries are carefully selected and between them offer a comprehensive up-to-date introduction to their areas. John Rink's chapter on psychology of music, for example, recommends for further reading *Psychology for Musicians* (edited by Lehmann, Sloboda & Woody, 2007), his own *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding* (2002) and John Sloboda's *The Musical Mind: The Cognitive Psychology of Music* (1985). However, Rink's book—despite touching on psychological aspects of performance—is not in essence a publication about the psychology of music, while Sloboda's 1985 volume—although being termed a 'classic'—is now more than twenty-five years old: quite a long time in a discipline heavily reliant on empirical studies. Two of the these three books focus on performance, thus reflecting the author's own work in this area, while all three are authored or co-edited by British-based researchers; maybe a more recent publication by Diana Deutsch (besides Sloboda, another 'classical' author in this field) could have been included in the list of further reading. The choice may well have been influenced by the fact that Rink is not mainly active as a music psychologist (best-known as a Chopin

scholar, he lists 'performance studies, theory and analysis, and nineteenth-century studies' as his main research interests on his webpage)—even a music department as large and renowned as Royal Holloway's cannot have specialists to cover all sub-disciplines of music studies.

Having said that, the chapter offers an interesting introduction for beginners and is certainly thought-provoking. Rink identifies the cognitive representation of pitch and rhythm, the development of musical competence and skill, processes underlying musical performance, and emotional responses to listening to music as objects of recent research and offers critical views on his subject (for example, he notes that most relevant music-psychological studies engage with Western tonal music only). 'I wonder whether you see this as a limitation and maybe even a deficiency' (62), he asks us straight away—alongside Harper-Scott, Rink is the only author to address the reader directly. He also links up well with issues discussed in several other chapters (it is obvious that the authors were aware of at least the overall outline of the other chapters which resulted in an unusually high but very welcome number of cross-references). But how do the other chapters tackle their respective topics?

In his opening chapter on music history, Jim Samson essays a modern take on historical understanding, avoiding positivist pitfalls. Initial thoughts regarding the historicity of art-works still performed and listened to today are followed by a discussion of intra- and extra-musical influences, the object of music history (art versus popular) and the narrativity of historical reconstruction. Some of the proposed discussion topics (contextualizing Machaut in relation to Beethoven, or making a case for Rossini's relevance against that of Beethoven) might be asking rather too much from beginners, while others (regarding the role of national viewpoints in music history or the possible structure of a history of pop) appear better suited to encourage students' engagement. The discussion topics are an important part of this book's concept and could become the starting point not just of discussions but also of larger essay, poster or presentation projects. Yet to achieve this it is crucial to keep them neither too simplistic (for example by asking for merely a chapter summary) nor too demanding (assuming a degree of knowledge or understanding that the average student is unlikely to have acquired already). Questions which build on concepts that the students are familiar with (in this case nationalism or pop music) are most likely to interest them and to facilitate familiarization with concepts discussed here. A lecturer using this book in class could of course always come up with additional discussion topics (and while I read it several sprang to mind).

Rachel Beckles Willson's chapter on music theory and analysis focuses mainly on the differentiation between these two concepts, i.e. deductive and inductive critical approaches to the understanding of musical structures. In the context of this volume,

analysis can only be covered theoretically, without providing much detail or even examples (something applicable to several chapters, but more glaringly obvious here than elsewhere), so that subsequent discussion topics asking the students actually to go and analyse some pieces are likely to require supervision or tutorial support. One of Beckles Willson's key points is the fact that analysis and theory are not about being right or wrong but about providing plausible readings and explanations: a thought that relates to all chapters of at least the first two parts of the book.

The chapter on sociology of music is provided by Katharine Ellis. She opens by discussing its goals and methodologies before presenting a number of examples. While all of these are non-empirical and relate to the musical past (referring to authors such as Adorno, McClary or DeNora), an inclusion of empirical studies on contemporary musical scenes might have produced a broader and more revealing picture. Ellis proposes some very good discussion topics such as analysing a newspaper article for its underlying sociological assumptions or contemplating whether being able to identify musical or social tensions equips sociologists to solve them.

Her chapter is followed by John Rink's contribution on the psychology of music before Andrew Bowie concludes the part on musicological subdisciplines with his essay on music aesthetics and critical theory. Bowie presents several 'case studies': on the one hand the development of the concept of music aesthetics and its position in the German discourse from Kant to Wagner, and later the influences of political and ideological struggles as exemplified by the Nazis' 'degenerate music' and 'formalism' in the USSR. The final section of this chapter is dedicated to the changes instigated by the 'new musicology'. Many of the issues discussed here are complex, and parts of the text (namely the section on aesthetic judgment) could be too demanding for first-year students. In addition, some of Bowie's discussion topics may be rather broad and unspecific for beginners and lack the references to the students' own experiences that questions in other chapters exemplify ('Can music be true?', for instance, or 'Does music need philosophy, or does philosophy need music?' (91)).

The second part of the book opens with Henry Stobart's chapter on world musics—a good choice as a familiarity with ethnomusicological methods and viewpoints can support the readers' critical approach to subsequent Western and more familiar parts of the repertoire. Stobart first briefly outlines the history, goals and methodologies of comparative musicology and ethnomusicology before focusing on four core questions: 'Does Music have a place?', 'Can world music be mapped?', 'Sounding authentic?' and 'Can we trust our ears?' (91). All of these questions are applicable to the subsequent chapters as well, as are most of the discussion topics which centre on issues of classification and elitism.

As Stephen Rose points out early on in his chapter on early music, the term 'early music' is used to denote both a period and a performing approach. Consequently, he complements sections on issues of notation, performance styles, functions of music before 1750 and the emerging role of the composer with a discussion of the concept of authenticity, questioning to what extent we can (and should) recreate the music of the past.

In his chapter on opera, David Charlton outlines the many problems opera has always faced as a multi-media art form and presents the reader with some of the ways in which to interpret this complex genre, from Petrobelli's tripartite division of action, verbal expression and music to Auden's claim of opera's superiority over film. With questions like, 'Does the director have the right to change the ending of an opera?' (151), he opens up an assessment of today's pluralistic operatic world.

With 'Concert music' Eric Levi seems to have drawn one of the shortest straws within the repertoire part as he has to cover a diverse range of genres, including song, piano music, chamber music, concerto, symphony and oratorio. He contends with this by showing the role of patronage, the division of public and intimate genres and the impact of nationalism, modernism, globalization and postmodernism on two paradigmatic genres—the string quartet and the symphony—while there are only some sixty words dedicated to songs and not many more to piano music. His chapter appears to have been less well proofread than others as he has Mendelssohn reviving the St Matthew Passion in 1830 while Louis XIV is still alive in 1722.

While Andrew Bowie's (second) chapter initially outlines the historical development and social contexts of jazz (also highlighting the different analytical approaches necessitated by a focus on the recording rather than the score), what he is really interested in appears to be the dichotomies of technical prowess and originality, of innovation and audience appeal—problems not unknown in early as well as contemporary Western art music. Consequently, several of his discussion topics could be applied to almost any other genre: 'Is jazz now too concerned with its own history, rather than with its own future?', or 'Does jazz rely more on innovation than tradition, or vice versa?' (186)

The study of popular music is perhaps still one of the more divisive issues in musical circles—while it is by now well embedded in several university departments, others continue to avoid a serious engagement with it in their curriculum. Hence it sounds like more than just preaching to the converted when Elizabeth Eva Leach states that popular music studies are by now 'thoroughly institutionalized within the academy' (197) and that 'studying at university requires you to take an intellectual view of non-intellectual, and even anti-intellectual material' (198). A discussion of methodologies employed in popular music and culture forms the core of Leach's

chapter, highlighting the necessary interaction of musicology, sociology and media studies. Discussion topics such as analysing the special meaning that a pop song has for individual students are likely to engage many of them from the start and may well lead to a smoother early engagement with scholarly methods and critical thinking.

The repertoire part finishes with Julie Brown's chapter on music in film and television. Selecting a scene from *Blade Runner* as her main example, she explains the different diegetic and non-diegetic functions of film music, as well as its ability to provide additional information, for example by anticipating future events or emotional states. She also outlines different theoretical approaches to the study of film music from Adorno/Eisler to Gorbman and Chion. Despite its presence in the title, music in television does not feature very much in this chapter. Again, it should be easy to get students to engage with the issues discussed here, such as in Brown's first discussion topic which invites students to describe and analyse the music of one of their favourite films without watching it again.

The 'Music in practice' part of the book is opened by Tina K. Ramnarine's chapter on musical performance and is a philosophical reflection on performative aspects of music, thus still addressing students of musicology rather than up and coming practitioners. Performance (not just in a Western context) is discussed as experience, process and embodied practice, as a mode of interaction and as tied to specific social occasions. The discussion topics underscore this reflective approach, for example by questioning what turns practice into performance.

As composition is more of a cerebral activity (at least for most members of our cultural sphere), Julian Johnson's subsequent chapter might be of more use to budding composers than Ramnarine's might be to performers. Johnson reflects on how to plan and structure a composition, as well as on the relationship between composers, performers and audiences, particularly regarding the dichotomy of originality and expectations. Unlike several other chapters, this one does not attempt to generalize its subject, for example by reflecting on the creation of music in different cultures or during different periods, but rather is dedicated to the specific conditions found in Western conservatoires. In this way, the approach chosen here deviates somewhat from that pursued elsewhere in the book—yet it is, on the other hand, perhaps more pragmatic as this is what students are likely to encounter in modules which they might take as part of the study of composition or music[ology].

The same applies to Brian Lock's introduction to music technology. This is probably the most descriptive and least reflective chapter of the book as its author feels the need to explain in some detail how technology 'works' in its support of composition and the recording of music. Like the previous chapter, this one appears to be a preparation for specific situations which could be encountered in third-level pro-

grammes; its focus on the production side of music leaves little room for issues of dissemination and interaction with the audience, such as the internet's impact on all aspects of music's production and reception.

The volume closes with Nicholas Cook's chapter on the economics and business of music. After an initial look at the economic aspects of the première of Beethoven's Ninth he concentrates on the rise and fall of the music profession and issues of copyright. He finishes the book with some particularly juicy discussion topics, such as whether or not classical music ought to be subsidized in the future and whether or not the music industry provides the consumer with what s/he wants.

The structure of *An Introduction to Music Studies* is clearly not intended to follow a logically consistent path: not all possible subdisciplines of music are covered in the first part (music history is much more than a subdiscipline anyway while aesthetics and critical theory might be regarded as subdisciplines of the philosophy of music), whereas the repertoire in the second part leaves much room for overlap (some operas are early music as well, concert works are used as film music, pieces of world music become popular). The third part is the least consistent as three of its chapters could have featured in the first part as well (poietic, performative and economic aspects are surely part of historical, analytical, sociological and philosophical approaches to music). Only music technology is presented in a way that suggests that the chapter is intended to prepare the reader for an actual engagement with the matter itself, rather than inviting the student to reflect on its general relevance within a larger picture. The structure of the book follows a more pragmatic approach: broadly speaking, its chapters reflect the programmes, courses and modules as they might be encountered in music departments in the English-speaking world. A more systematic approach can be seen in a German introduction to musicology published in 1998, Helmut Rösing and Herbert Bruhn's *Musikwissenschaft. Ein Grundkurs* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1998). It is in six parts entitled 'What is music?' (a question touched on only in passing by *An Introduction*), 'The uses of music', 'Making music', 'Teaching and disseminating music', 'Describing music' and 'Discovering music'. However, an approach like this may be less suitable for first-year students, many of whom are only beginning to discover and train their critical and reflective faculties. This is where the strength of the Royal Holloway volume lies: not only does it provide broad introductory surveys into different aspects of (mainly) musicological studies, it targets particularly the development of critical thinking and the application of what has been learned in other areas. To this extent, it succeeds very well indeed and I intend to use it to good effect in my teaching.

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