

World Music.” While she does probe a bit at the construction of the discourse of world music, offering different opinions about its usefulness, she ultimately does not outright reject the term, treating it as a flawed yet useful place-holder.

She is also careful to explain the approach she takes in her book: “This... is a modest book, one which hopes to ask questions about the thing we conveniently describe as world music. [...] Its basis is that music is expressive of an idea of a community... What of those outsiders who visit these musical communities? What is it that they—we bring to the places they visit?”

What follows are six whirlwind tours of several different regions. Unlike many world-music guides, these are not geographic regions but rather conceptual areas—liminal musics, music and conflict, the blues, ecstatic music, authenticity, and, finally, singing and community. From a geographical point of view, Gray is refreshingly nonchalant, freely citing relevant Western artists (spanning the gamut of genres) alongside those more typically associated with the term world music.

Each chapter is densely packed with anecdotes and pertinent information that serve to illuminate, contextualize, and link together a disparate array of styles and musical practices. The first chapter “Music on the Margins” sketches a bridge between Portuguese Fado and Greek Rembetika, discussing their common tendency to romanticize and eulogize the darker side of urban life in early twentieth century. Gray, however, colourfully introduces Diamanda Galas’ rembetika-based work into the picture, as well as citing Leonard Cohen, Jacques Brel, and Edith Piaf as possible offshoots of Fado.

The next chapter tackles political conflict and racism and its relation to music, but follows a similarly irreverent trajectory. She touches on Brazilian tropicalismo and the Slovenian avant-garde industrial-pop collective Laibach, and also devotes some serious attention to the ways in which Rwandan tensions between Hutus and Tutsis have manifested themselves through music. She then applies a very even-handed, if somewhat controversial, approach to Israel and Palestine, discussing a range of figures from each side, who fall within the full spectrum, all the way from the vehement to the peacemakers. In cases like this you can see how “no-nonsense” could be construed by certain more casual readers as vaguely misleading. While Gray sheds light on issues which are extremely pertinent to making music in the global arena, she also seems bent on problematizing these issues and provoking questions, rather than offering a simple crash course in world music.

Despite being intent on complicating matters, and despite invoking a lot of post-colonial concepts, Gray remains optimistic about the project of World Music. This stance is rather interesting, given the recent prevalence of the term’s detractors. She writes, “When in 1987, that diverse group of people met at the Empress of Russia to figure out a way to get what they were to call world music out into the wider world, it was not to supply sound as a commodity but, perhaps, to extend the idea of what humanity and its creations actually are.”

Overall, while this little book reads rather densely, it packs a lot of wallop and comes recommended, perhaps as a companion to other more ethnographic studies of world music. —Nick Storring

Heidi Grundmann, Elisabeth Zimmerman, Reinhard Braun, Dieter Daniels, Andreas Hirsch, & Anne Thurman-Jajes eds. *Re-Inventing Radio; Aspects of Radio as Art.* Revolver. ISBN: 9783865884534. <www.revolver-books.de>



“While the death of radio as a mass medium is once again being predicted as imminent, recent developments in transmission technology underline what has long been evident: radio is not about the

transmission of sound but of signal.” So states this self-proclaimed “archive-in-progress” of radio art. This fascinating tome-like volume also serves as a catalogue book to a first exhibition of radio art at the Weserburg-Museum of Modern Art in Bremen, Germany. If there is one message from this book it is that radio-art-transmission culture is alive and well. With over forty articles and 527 pages, written by international artists, curators, media theorists, and historians, this multifaceted book has a plethora of interesting essays, both historical and contemporary, on the state of radio art in our digital world. It serves as a kind of mini-lexicon for the world of transmission art or what some might also call telematic art.

The opening paragraph of Frederick Kittler’s essay beautifully sums up (with a nod to John Cage) what “listening” to the radio is. And Dieter Daniels’ excellent article compares the early wireless age from the 1880s through the 1920s, with the succession from John

Cage to Max Neuhaus as re-inventors of radio, along with today’s YouTube practitioners. A lengthy article by Candice Hopkins on Hank Bull’s experiments in radio art at the Western Front in Vancouver, B.C., provides the reader with a glimpse into early developments of transmission art. Robert Adrian’s radio-art manifesto—a set of twelve aphorisms—includes the following: “Radio happens in the place it is heard and not in the production studio.” Adrian also discusses links between radio art and conceptual art, and consumable and non-consumable art in his interview with Daniel Gilfillans in “Networked Radio Space and Broadcast Simultaneity.”

The central idea of this volume is that radio art is not just about another type of transmission. Today’s radio artists see the new communications technologies such as cell-phones and the Internet as extensions of radio. They present an argument that radio is not about broadcasting but about a communications space, and, of course, about the ever-important question of who controls the communications space. While the articles in this book give us insight into the world of telecommunications, many of them also delve into our socio-political relationship with the digital world.

My only disappointment about this book is that it lacks an index. It does, however, provide extensive Internet links for each article and the last date that these links were accessed.

Re-Inventing Radio is a book with many topical and piquant ideas about the convergence of old and new technologies and our ever-shifting paradigms with technological invention. —Allison Cameron

Seth Kim-Cohen. *In the Blink of An Ear: Toward a Non-Cochlear Sonic Art.* Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd. ISBN: 9780826429711. <www.continuumbooks.com>



It’s happened more often than I’d like, that I will read the artist’s statement of a sonic work and be disappointed in its dated ideas. The odd time I’ve ever engaged in debate with a sonic artist I have usually been astonished

by the gulf between current visual art theory and behind-the-times sonic theory.

Seth Kim-Cohen's *In the Blink of an Ear* sets out to frame a productive and ongoing dialogue on sonic theory. "Unlike what we have witnessed in gallery arts," explains Cohen at the end of chapter three, "The perception of Primacy," "Much practice in the sonic arts has maintained a deeply instantiated resistance to the textual, the grammatological, the conceptual . . . many sonic practitioners continue to find solace in the naturalism of sound."

To arrive at this point Cohen begins the book in 1948, comparing in a linear fashion Greenbergian high modernism as abstract expressionism, or painting for the sake of painting, to Pierre Schaeffer's *musique concrète*, showing the similarities of their essentialist positions along the way. The other two luminaries featured are John Cage and Muddy Waters.

Admittedly, for the first two chapters I found the heavier concentration on the development of the gallery and visual arts a bit puzzling, but the intentions became more apparent. After setting the scene, a highly philosophical dialogue carries the rest of the book as Cohen suggests that the sonic arts can be furthered through an understanding of phenomenology in the Derridian sense (the expanded situation of sound as text). Easing into this idea with Robert Morris' *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making*, (1961) and its relevance to Cage's sound-in-itself priorities, Cohen insists that Cage's preoccupation with score and traditional musicality is reductive, and while it's a bold statement, his points are well articulated. Cohen hails conceptual and minimalist work for achieving release from primordially by "putting the eyes in their place" through embracing the non-retail as Duchamp had done. Cohen takes on the daunting task of doing the same for the ears, suggesting that the listener not listen to something, or at something, but to listen *about* something.

Many of the examples and histories cited are fascinating to read and illuminating. The book succeeded in leading me out of my preconceived notion of sound. Despite revisiting several canonical works (from gallery arts and experimental music and rock), Cohen is able to seamlessly pivot these works on different events, over a nexus of ideas from sonic and visual studies, creating engaging and stimulating new dialogue. A title recommended for those with not only curious ears, but open minds. —Laura Paolini

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Iannis Xenakis. Translated by Sharon Kanach. *Music and Architecture*. Pendragon Press. ISBN: 9781576471074. www.pendragonpress.com.

It is commonly known that Iannis Xenakis was more than a composer; that he studied engineering rather than composition; that he worked for Le Corbusier as an architectural assistant; that he taught himself computer programming in order to create composition algorithms, new methods for digital synthesis, and a graphic music computer system (UPIIC); that he created multimedia extravaganzas with music, lights, lasers, and more. This book, lovingly and painstakingly compiled and translated by Sharon Kanach, provides us with the first detailed exposure of Xenakis's activities as an architect.

Some of Xenakis's writings on architecture have been published before. Those books and articles are not easy to find, however, so collecting them here is very convenient. Even more valuable are the introductions by Ms. Kanach, who provides important context to the work. She has also expended a great deal of effort delving into the Xenakis Archives to find relevant photos, sketches, and letters. Practically every other page of this book contains reproductions of these materials—often in colour (Pendragon Press has to be congratulated as well, for its commitment, and for somehow finding a way to retail this 338-page hardcover book for a very reasonable US \$48).

The book is organized into four main sections: 1) The Le Corbusier Years; 2) Writings on Architecture; 3) Independent Architectural Projects; 4) The Polytopes. It also contains four Appendices: A) The UPIIC; B) Synoptic Table of Xenakis' Life and Works; C) Catalogue raisonné of Xenakis' Architectural Projects; D) Selected Bibliography. There is also a thoughtful Foreword by Toronto architect David J. Lieberman. As a musician, I especially appreciated his concern to emphasize the "performity" of space, the "experiential

quality" of architecture. Mr. Lieberman is very aware of the connection between music and architecture, a relationship that sits at the very foundation of Xenakis' creative work.

While it is well known that Xenakis worked for Le Corbusier in his early years in Paris, it is interesting to follow here the details of his involvement in various projects from 1947 to 1959, and not just the 1958 Philips Pavilion, for which he is best known. There are many documents included in this section of the book that provide insight into this period of Xenakis' life, when he was most actively involved in architectural work. As he states later in the book, the decision to devote himself to music, precipitated by his release from employment by Le Corbusier in 1959, was painful, as he very much wanted to continue his architectural research, but was unable to find the necessary ongoing support to do so.

New to this text are descriptions of multimedia projects that Xenakis worked on but that never came to fruition (in Athens and in Mexico). Perhaps most fascinating, though, are the building projects he undertook, primarily for friends and family. These are described in some detail, and photos and design drawings are included. The most ambitious project he undertook was a proposal for the new Cité de la Musique in Paris (the competition was held in 1984). Even though by then he was extremely busy as an in-demand composer with music commissions from all around the world, he poured a great deal of energy into this project, and was consequently severely disappointed not to be awarded the commission. Who better to build a centre for music than a musician? The rest of us can only imagine what that would have been like, but at least we can see in this book what his design looked like and what his thinking about it was.

Xenakis was a unique figure, highly influential in music but also influential in architecture. *Music and Architecture* helps us understand how that could be. Highly recommended.

—James Harley