



# NABMSA Reviews

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Christina Bashford, Editor

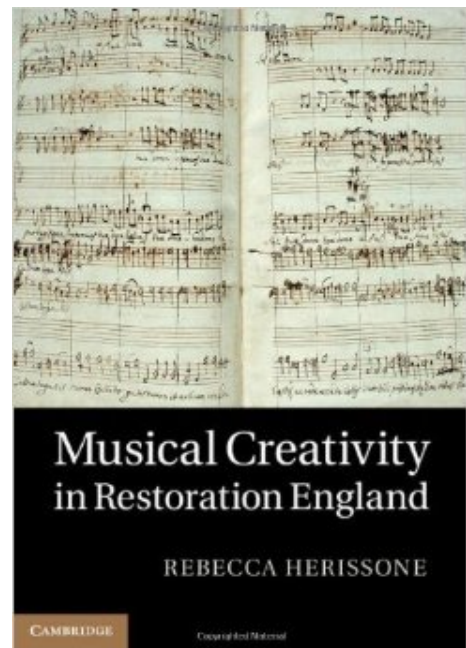
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Rebecca Herissone, *Musical Creativity in Restoration England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. xxx + 429 pp. ISBN 978-1-1070-1434-3 (hardcover)

Since 2000, Rebecca Herissone's comprehensive approaches to the music of Restoration England have illuminated our understanding of this repertory: from her thorough analysis of varied sources in *Music Theory in Restoration England* (Oxford University Press, 2000) to her innovative "*To Fill, Forbear, or Adorne*": *The Organ Accompaniment to Restoration Organ Music* (Ashgate, 2006), Herissone has examined the sources of the music of Purcell and his contemporaries, and has done so from multiple angles that reflect the fact that performers and composers of this period worked together in different genres and for varied purposes. Her latest book, *Musical Creativity in Restoration England*, represents the culmination of wide-ranging research that draws together various strands of inquiry into how we read seventeenth-century sources. It synthesizes her previous work with insights gained in the past few years in order to explain what extant scores reveal about the processes of musical creation, as well as about seventeenth-century ideas about compositional practices.



Logically organized and clearly written, *Musical Creativity* divides into two sections. Herissone entitles the first "Creative Contexts and Principles" and includes two chapters here. These serve as a necessary introduction that deals with the compositional culture of seventeenth-century England and then with her chosen source materials. In Chapter One, Herissone's examination of the principles of musical invention demonstrates that the rhetorical concepts *imitatio* and *emulatio* were still prevalent among Restoration composers, and, more

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importantly, were not confined to musical pedagogy but were employed throughout the creative process. The second chapter, “Sources and their functions,” provides the necessary explanation of the types of materials from which Herissone draws her conclusions, but the examination here is deeper than is found in other research on this period. This piece expands her previous work on “fowle originalls and fayre writeing” and provides useful contexts for interpreting English manuscripts in general. She notes that specific genres required different types of source materials and uses this idea as a beginning point for her consideration of the data. This is not an entirely new approach, but Herissone’s work is the most comprehensive analysis to date.

The second and lengthier section of *Musical Creativity* is “Creative Strategies,” and here Herissone provides four chapters, each beginning with a seventeenth-century quote that signals the direction the chapter will take. The first (Chapter Three) is “‘Ye fowle Orginall in score’: initial invention and the functions of notation.” This chapter compares notational practices used at Oxford and London in order to show that the two differ—sources from Oxford reveal a more consistent use of “preliminary, private notation” (p. 207), while those from London tend to a more immediate use of notation that does not demonstrate successive stages of composition. Chapter Four, “‘I have sent ye full Anthems’: transmission and the culture of serial recomposition,” concerns manuscript transmission and turns to the concept of the “work,” finding that “there was no sense in which a composer’s reading of a piece was considered definitive” (p. 259). This idea has been suggested by a number of scholars (Bruce Haynes [2007], Christopher Small [1998], and myself [2010 and 2013]), but Herissone is the first to demonstrate the practice with compositional evidence from the scores themselves. Chapter Five continues this look at the sources by concentrating solely on consort music, and here again she finds a particular notational practice that has not been discussed in earlier research.

The final chapter examines the tenuous issues of improvisation and memory. Understanding improvisation in a period from which we have no aural evidence is tricky, but Herissone does just that. She discusses arrangement, improvisation, and memory and proves that twentieth-century scholarship that focused on differences among concordances missed the mark and denied the importance of the “re-creative role” of others who adapted music for their own purposes (p. 379). Her sources for this chapter are primarily vocal and keyboard scores, which seem to rely heavily on improvisation and often suggest they were copied from memory.

The conclusion to the final chapter draws us back to Herissone’s initial chapter on the principles of *imitatio* and *emulatio*. In fact, each chapter has its own conclusion, and this feature assists the reader in absorbing the new ideas and evidence provided throughout. The writing is persuasive and engaging, and the book includes numerous musical examples as well as tables and figures. *Musical Creativity in Restoration England* is the sort of book that scholars of all areas can benefit from reading and is highly recommended.

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David Atkinson and Steve Roud, eds.,  
*Street Ballads in Nineteenth-Century  
Britain, Ireland, and North America: The  
Interface between Print and Oral  
Traditions*. Farnham, Surrey;  
Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. xiv +  
289 pp. ISBN 978-1-4724-2741-0  
(hardcover)

Scholarship on street music, or music-making in the street, is a significantly under-represented area of research in various fields, including musicology, ethnomusicology, and popular music and cultural studies. For scholars of British nineteenth-century music, the capacity for research in this area is significant, given the huge amount of primary source material that is available, much of it languishing in archives—material that has not been looked at for years, even decades.



Detail of a chapbook

*Street Ballads in Nineteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and North America* is not a book on street music *per se*; rather it is concerned with street literature such as broadsides, chapbooks, and songsters (that is, billboards, posters, and pocket-sized books of song texts), and with the sometimes ambiguous place this literature holds in print and oral traditions. According to the book's blurb, the volume aims to engage with "the long-running debate over the origin of traditional songs by examining street literature's interaction with, and influence on, oral traditions" (publisher's blurb).

Steve Roud's introduction is an examination of the problems and historiography of the influence of print and oral traditions upon each other, and of the complex and sometimes changing relationships between the two. He sets this dichotomous debate in terms of current research and historical, folk-song contexts. This piece of writing is a carefully considered approach to the subject and it very competently sets the scene for the rest of the book.

None of the twelve chapters in this book disappoint, but in the interests of space I will concentrate on just a few that especially caught my attention. Chapter 2, by David Atkinson, is titled "Was there really a 'mass extinction of old ballads' in the Romantic Period?". Atkinson tackles the view put forward by William St Clair in his *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge University Press, 2004) that old ballads became extinct. At first it appears that Atkinson wholeheartedly disagrees with St Clair, but in a process of extremely careful analysis, Atkinson eventually concedes that St Clair may have been correct. Atkinson surveys copyright law, the increase of choice in reading matter and, through three examples, he illustrates the way that some songs went out of circulation, despite their existence in later published collections. Chapter 4, "The Newcastle Song Chapbooks" by Peter Wood, examines several collections of folk songs compiled and printed in the north-east of England and accounts for the huge number of chapbooks (1,912) produced by Newcastle printers, noting

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that 15% of the songs within these chapbooks were collected from singing. Wood suggests particular geographical, commercial, and musical influences as reasons that Newcastle was the hub of such production. In Chapter 11, “Mediating Maria Marten: Comparative and Contextual Studies of the Red Barn Ballads,” Tom Pettit examines the balladry arising from murder of Maria Marten in Polstead, Suffolk, in 1827. The chapter studies six ballads that took the murder as their subject matter and by analysing their syntactic properties and “received narrative”—along with derivatives, including reports from journalists—Pettit constructs a “comparative appreciation” of sung narrative. Pettit’s chapter is arguably the most ambitious in the book and offers a new and fresh approach to studying ballads.

There is much to commend in the book. The notes on terminology, sources, abbreviations, collections, and citations in the front matter are useful for new scholars in the area, as well as for those already familiar with balladry, because the meaning of terms such as “songster” can differ substantially. Most chapters deal with extensive amounts of primary source materials and provide some particularly nuanced histories of printing and dissemination. The care and precision with which Atkinson and Roud have edited the book is obvious in the meticulous handling of sources and footnotes, the careful introduction and conclusions to each of the chapters, and an engaging, polished writing style across the volume.

All the contributors display knowledge of a large mass of primary sources and ephemera that might easily be described as encyclopaedic. The level of detail brought to bear in most chapters is remarkable. It left me wondering about the extent to which we are promoting research of ballads and related literature in our colleges and universities today. Can we, and should we, do more to teach nineteenth-century popular music and to encourage scholarship in the era? This book is a significant contribution to, and will no doubt have a direct impact on, future studies of street music and its various literatures.

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Kevin Allen, *Gracious Ladies: The Norbury Family and Edward Elgar*. Vol. I. Alverstoke, Hampshire: Kevin Allen, 2013. xiv + 924 pp. ISBN 978-0-9531227-6-9

Readers of L. Frank Baum’s 1900 classic *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* are often surprised by two things: first, that Dorothy’s slippers are not ruby-colored as in the 1939 Technicolor movie, but silver; and that there is not just a sequel but some thirteen further books in this series. Despite the film’s misleading conclusion that evokes John Howard Payne’s lyrics for Sir Henry Bishop’s famous sentimental song “Home, Sweet Home,” Dorothy finds her magic slippers under her bed in Kansas; she can return to Oz at her leisure. She does so often, but by Baum’s thirteenth book, *The Magic of Oz* (1919), Dorothy Gale is a vestigial character whose appearances are brief.

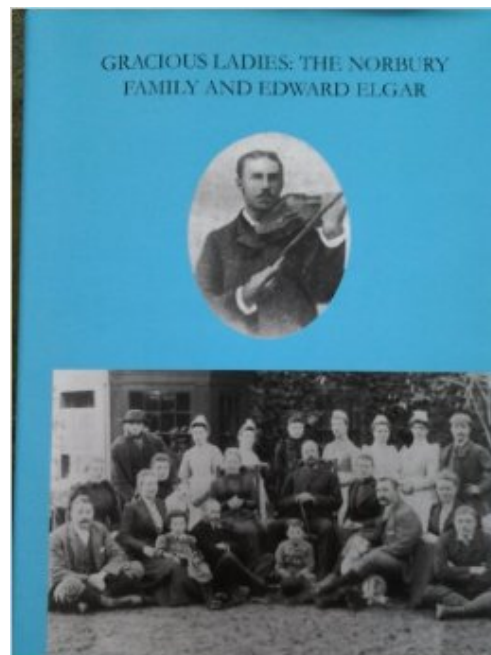
In Kevin Allen’s massive first volume of a two-volume excursus entitled *Gracious Ladies: The Norbury Family and Edward Elgar*, it is Elgar himself who suffers the fate of Dorothy Gale. As this volume progresses, mentions of Elgar and his wife, Alice, become fewer and farther

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between, often limited to such asides as, “Alice’s verdict on the performance [of *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf*], conducted by Edward was predictable if succinct; ‘Most magnificent. Deo Gratias;’ prayers had been answered” (p. 877). By the end of the sixteenth and final chapter of this first volume—page 924—the reader might be nonplussed to discover that the story comes to an end some two years *before* Elgar composes his Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 36, the “Enigma” Variations, while some of Elgar’s friends who will be “pictured within” that score (like the ever-gracious Winifred Norbury) receive more careful attention than Elgar himself. The final page inscribed with “END OF VOLUME ONE” is discouraging to the reader after so much effort; even the most determined Elgarian may well blanch with dismay, if not quite horror.

Why write at such great length about Norbury and her family? Because, simply put, Edward Elgar put her initials above the eighth variation of his “Enigma” Variations. Of course, the entire point of the variations was the composer’s need for narcissistic gratification: he was interested not in portraying his friends but rather imagining how they viewed *him*.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, as Jerrold Northrop Moore points out, the variation marked “W.N.” is as much about Winifred Norbury’s house as it is about her: “Thoughts of the Worcestershire Philharmonic suggested the Misses Norbury and Hyde, and he began a variation whose sketch was first labelled ‘2 sec[retar]ys’. Then, on Sunday 23 October, when he walked up to Birchwood with Troyte Griffith, they were caught in a thunderstorm and sheltered in the Norburys’ comfortable old house Sherridge in the foothills below. So the ‘2 secretaries’ idea came to focus at Sherridge as a sort of minuet evoking the old house.”<sup>2</sup> (Tellingly, both Winifred Norbury and her charming house disappear from Moore’s magisterial biography *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life* after page 262, never to return.)

Upon such a slender foundation, Allen builds the massive edifice of a biography of the Norbury family; Elgar merely provides a pretext for his researches. Allen has published several books on Elgar, all extremely well received by those whose rose-colored vision of Elgar’s life and personality admits no chiaroscuro. The finest of his books is *August Jaeger: Portrait of Nimrod* (Ashgate, 2000), which is filled with interesting and useful information for future scholars. The rest of Allen’s books (including the present volume) have been published under his own imprimatur. *Elgar the Cyclist* (2002) is a charming and succinct exploration of one of the composer’s favorite leisure activities; less charming is his earlier book *Elgar in Love: Vera*



<sup>1</sup> Byron Adams, review of *Elgar Studies*, ed. J. P. E. Harper-Scott and Julian Rushton (Cambridge University Press, 2007), in *Music & Letters*, 91 No. 3 (August 2010), p. 451.

<sup>2</sup> Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 251.



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*Hockman and the Third Symphony* (2000), which bases itself largely upon the testimony of Vera Hockman regarding a non-extant source—a cache of love letters supposedly sent to her by Elgar and destroyed in a fit of jealousy by one of her lovers—with no supporting evidence of their actual existence.

*Gracious Ladies* is clearly meant to be his magnum opus, and Allen asserts that it “offers a fresh approach to a rich period in Worcester’s history—at once a compelling family saga, a panorama of Victorian cultural and social life, and an account of the City’s most famous son, Edward Elgar, as he emerged from obscurity.” Fluently written and exhaustively researched, *Gracious Ladies* is indeed the biography of a large family in the West Midlands. But the story of Winifred Norbury and her family pales beside the real subject of this book: the incredible panoply of music-making that went on in the British provinces in the final decades of the Victorian era. *Gracious Ladies* is replete with descriptions of the Norburys’ busy musical life: “Winifred was not present at that Festival Choral Society concert, but was busy with not one, but two of her own, reviewed in the same number of *Berrow’s*” (p. 518). Allen also reveals the crucial role that women like Winifred Norbury played in bringing music to their communities; indeed, the men (including Elgar and other professionals) follow in their energetic wake. Scholars who study the music of the late Victorian period in the West Midlands will find this book, as long and at times garrulous as it is, to be an invaluable resource. That Allen sheds no new light on Elgar’s life—to the point that, like Dorothy in Baum’s epic series of novels, he all but vanishes from the narrative at times—is unimportant compared with the tapestry the author weaves of music’s vital role in the lives of the determined, tough, and well-organized women of Worcestershire.

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Martin Dowling, *Traditional Music and Irish Society: Historical Perspectives*. Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. xix + 350 pp. ISBN 978-1-4094-3510-5 (hardcover)

Ashgate’s excellent Popular and Folk Music series, under the general editorship of Derek Scott and Stan Hawkins, includes a number of books that have examined in scholarly depth and detail the characteristics, place, and function of vernacular music in Ireland. The most recent of these, by Martin Dowling, Lecturer in Irish Traditional Music at Queen’s University of Belfast, focuses particularly on the social, historical, and political aspects of the music, and engages in a broad sweep from the eighteenth century to the opening years of the twenty-first century. Dowling is well placed to have authored such a substantial and wide-ranging study, with his balance of expertise as an academic, a performer (he is an excellent fiddler), and a former Traditional Arts Officer of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Written in five very substantial and thoroughly researched chapters, the book explores in turn: the inheritance of the eighteenth century; the foundations in the nineteenth century of a modern tradition; music in the revival period; James Joyce’s interest in traditional song; and the place of music in the peace process in Northern Ireland. Although it includes a number of traditional melodies in musical notation, their role is in the main illustrative, for the book’s

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principal concerns are historiographical and critical.

In the first chapter, Dowling considers the interfaces between Gaelic and Anglo-Irish cultures in the eighteenth century, concentrating initially on the harpers and their tunes, while searching for a Gaelic substrate of country-dance music. The middle part of the chapter includes a lengthy digression that draws on the fascinating observations of the English bluestocking, Mrs Mary Delany (née Granville), on music and dance in Ireland in the century's fourth to sixth



decades. Mary Delany's second husband was the Dean of Down Church of Ireland Cathedral and at times the couple employed a harper in their household, something symptomatic of the new forms of patronage that had developed since the disenfranchisement and decline of the Gaelic aristocracy. After the death of the most famous of Irish harpers, Turlough Carolan, it appears that Carolan's son collaborated with Dean Delany in a publication of his father's music.

Dowling notes, with considerable perception, that "if there is a coherent historical narrative of Irish traditional music which stretches back in time through the eighteenth century to late medieval Ireland, it is an inchoate one" (p. 82). It is in the period subsequent to the 1798 rebellion in Ireland that he detects the "crucial ingredients" of what is now understood as Irish traditional music emerging, and the social context for this development is convincingly elaborated in the second chapter. Strongly informed

by the author's previous work on the rural economy and tenant right in Ulster, the chapter also brings into play that most invaluable contemporary source of information about the culture of the 1830s, the *Ordnance Survey Memoirs*.

The "essence" of the nineteenth century tradition, Dowling argues, lay in the perfection of the uilleann pipes and in the pipers' reinterpretation of the "international county dance repertoire," which gave rise in turn to a "distinctively Irish instrumental style" (p. 114). He regards 1815 (the terminal year of the Napoleonic wars) as a crucial juncture, for from that point on, musicians, instruments, and musical forms associated with the military and disbanded yeomanry increasingly "infiltrated the civilian tradition" (p. 95). Thus, the Great Famine of 1845-50, which set in train an enormous decline in the Irish population through death and emigration, had the effect of accelerating cultural changes that were already well established. Rural post-famine Ireland, Dowling contends, saw increasing social control exerted by the church, the police, and stronger farmers, and this took its toll on outdoor drinking, music, and dance, with the pub increasingly becoming the site for these activities and the status of the uilleann pipes gradually falling into decline.

The focus moves in the third chapter to the revival of, and the response to Douglas Hyde's call for, the "de-Anglicising" of Ireland. At its heart is a discussion of the activities of the Feis Ceoil Association, and the oireachtas and feisanna of the Gaelic League, and of their pursuit of a "national essence." Here Dowling usefully exploits the writings of the extraordinary protestant

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Irish scholar and musician, Annie W. Patterson, apparently the first woman to hold a doctorate in music across the two islands (from the Royal University of Ireland). Invoking the theorisation of Slavoj Žižek and Pierre Bourdieu, Dowling constructs a two-dimensional coordinate model of Dublin culture around 1904, to examine the strategies of the Gaelic League and the Feis Ceol Association, in which the vertical axis “moves from international hybridity to perceived national essence” (p. 174), and the horizontal from “low” to “high” musical culture. At the extreme of the upper-right quadrant of this graph is placed the symbol {X}, which “is constructed to be ineffable and unobtainable, arrived at elsewhere . . . or in some future conjuncture of the Irish nation” and signifies the apparently “impossible task of developing a national art music along the lines of Finland, Poland, and Czechoslovakia” (p. 175). While no major form or school of national art music would emerge in the nineteenth century, despite the attempts of composers such as Stanford, of more importance was the fact that “traditional music . . . would eventually move to the centre of the discourse of the nation’s music” (p. 205).

Although at first blush the fourth chapter’s shift to James Joyce may seem to disrupt the narrative flow, this rather more concise section of the book offers valuable insights into Joyce’s musical tastes and his incorporation of music into *Dubliners* and *Ulysses* (the narrative of the latter takes place on June 16, 1904); it also continues the themes established in the previous chapter. Dowling’s conclusion is that Joyce “has taught us an important lesson about the ‘authentic inauthenticity’ of our musical traditions and how they might be reinvigorated amidst the fixating and sterilising influences of professionalised performance and the discourse of ethnic national essence” (p. 248).

The final chapter, a consideration of traditional music and the peace process in contemporary Northern Ireland, includes testimony from musicians whom Dowling interviewed in fieldwork. The analysis of the Ulster Scots movement, which draws on the Lacanian concept of suture as developed by Slavoj Žižek, Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe, is one of the most sophisticated and convincing discussions to date of the phenomenon, which gained particular momentum after the Good Friday Agreement (1998), the peace deal which notionally brought the so-called “troubles” to a negotiated end. Of its suturing of the predominant “two traditions” model (unionist and nationalist), Dowling comments that “the positive historical contribution of Ulster Scots is not merely to counterbalance nationalist claims in a multicultural field, but also to constitute Britishness itself as an obstacle to the growth of a more open-endedly multicultural society in Northern Ireland” (p. 297). Dowling proposes a more radical departure for the *status quo* through a “confederacy of minorities . . . in which Irish and British identities are weakened by more localised and contingent identifications” (p. 297).

This book is an original and important new study, which will undoubtedly be of considerable value to scholars and practitioners of Irish traditional music but is also likely to be attractive to a much broader readership interested in Irish political and social history. Dowling offers a lucid, sophisticated, and balanced analysis that has the potential to move the longstanding debate about music and identity on the island of Ireland forward.

David Cooper  
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Wyndham Thomas, *Robert Saxton: "Caritas."* Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2012. xvli + 178 pp. CD. ISBN 978-0-7546-6601-1 (hardcover)

This volume is one of Ashgate's "Landmarks in Music since 1950." For those unfamiliar with the series, I should explain that it offers an author something of a rare opportunity to present an extended examination and discussion of a work, while a glance at the rather eclectic range of constituent titles suggests that inclusion has more to do with an author's own advocacy than with fulfilling a systematic publishing plan. Thus the series enables authors to make a case for music which may have fallen victim to the vagaries and difficulties of programming, or for an opus that lends itself to revisionist or alternative critical perspectives. Robert Saxton's chamber-scale opera *Caritas* finds itself in the company of Birtwistle's huge opera *The Mask of Orpheus*, Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*, and Jonathan Harvey's *Song Offerings* and *White as Jasmine* (for texted works), while companion orchestral and instrumental pieces include Hans Werner Henze's *Tristan*, Nicholas Maw's *Odyssey*, and Messiaen's *Oiseaux exotiques*. Clearly, then, this volume about *Caritas* is likely to be significant as a means of furthering greater awareness of the work. This is especially valuable in an environment where a commission guarantees the first performance but follow-up performances are much harder to come by. And such difficulties are multiplied when it comes to opera. The author points out that although there have been various articles about Saxton's music and compositional aesthetic, this is the first monograph on him, coinciding with his sixtieth birthday.

*Caritas* was commissioned jointly by Opera North, the British opera company based in Leeds, and by the renowned Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival in West Yorkshire. The libretto is by the distinguished British playwright, Sir Arnold Wesker. *Caritas* is based on an actual story of a mediaeval anchoress. An anchoress was a female anchorite whose religious impulse had led her to choose a reclusive life, withdrawing from the everyday world and being immured in a small cell within a church with a sightline to the altar through which the sacraments and basic provisions were passed. The term "anchorite" derives from the Greek word meaning "to withdraw", and a famous anchoress was the mystic, Julian of Norwich. Wesker's subject, which he treated originally as a play (1981), subsequently himself making the adaption to the libretto, was based on the historical life of Christine Carpenter, who in 1329 became an anchoress in the village of Shere in Surrey. For the purposes of the drama, Wesker transported the location to Norfolk and adjusted the dates in order to relate the action to the English peasant uprising of 1381. To provide a précis for the the libretto: Christine rejects her family and fiancé (who joins the Peasants' Revolt and is killed) in order to become an anchoress; but quickly she realizes that she does not have a true vocation, and so the divine visions she so desperately seeks as proof of her devotion do not appear to her. In a desperate state, she begs to be released from her vows but is refused by the Bishop of Norwich and, mocked by the village children for not having the revelations expected of her, she becomes insane. Christine's situation—the victim of the merciless inflexibility shown by her Bishop—becomes the striking subject for Wesker's theme about the anti-human consequences of dogma when taken to its ideological extremes. The opera is cast into two acts, the short, explanatory scenes of Act 1 giving way to the extended continuity of Act 2, which Saxton casts musically as a "large-scale Passacaglia symbolising Christine's incarceration" (p.30). Even allowing for this abbreviated telling of the libretto, the opera's concern with ritual and

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psychological states will be evident, themes that have been a strong focus of Saxton's music.

*Caritas* was premiered during the 1991 Huddersfield Festival in the very attractive Wakefield Opera House, designed by the renowned nineteenth-century theatrical architect, Frank Matcham (of London Coliseum fame), but seating an audience of only some 500. Thomas suggests that it was this performance space's physical size that accounts for *Caritas* being conceived as a chamber opera, although my strong recollection of the event was that the production did not give the effect of a scaled-down work; rather, the proportions of the theatre worked very much to enhance the physical impact of the drama itself. Although *Caritas* has not been given a stage production in London, it has been comparatively fortunate in that its premiere was followed by a London concert performance and that a recording taken from the premiere has been available, first on the Collins Classics label and then reissued in 2004 by NMC Recordings (the label that has done so much to ensure the preservation of British music in recorded performance). It is this recording which is included with the book, thereby opening up the musical experience directly to readers.



Robert Saxton, courtesy of  
robertsaxton.net

Helpfully, Thomas has conceived this book as something of a “toolkit” to the opera, and its structure leads the reader through its planning, composition and reception processes. A generous number of well-chosen music examples illustrate the analytical discussion of the score and the dramatic unfolding of the opera, and this presentation constitutes the book's central chapter. A nice touch is the reproduction of some pages of the compositional sketches, which convey a sense of the meticulousness with which Saxton plans his music. Wesker's libretto is reproduced in full (Appendix E). In the opening chapter, Thomas presents *Caritas* in its wider British musical context. Saxton in his boyhood sought advice from Benjamin Britten, and Thomas indicates a parallel between two of Britten's late Church Parables (*The Burning Fiery Furnace* and *Curlew River*) and *Caritas* in their ritual frames and plainsong references. Under the general heading “Religious Opera,” Thomas identifies a number of other contemporaneous British works with religious identities, such as Maxwell Davies's *Taverner* (1977), Jonathan Harvey's church opera, *Passion and Resurrection* (1981), and James Macmillan's liturgical drama, *Visitatio Sepulchri* (1993). Other chapters discuss the historical basis of *Caritas*, Wesker's adaptation of the original stage play into the opera libretto, the opera's reception, and Saxton's work since *Caritas*. The book concludes with an interview between the author and Saxton. This volume provides a comprehensive introduction to *Caritas* and an entry to Saxton's artistic identity and compositional processes. Some people may find the discussion of *Caritas* too accepting, but one of the merits of its approach is that it provides readers with a good basis on which to form their own judgement about its musical and operatic quality.

David Wright  
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Barry J. Faulk and Brady Harrison, eds., *Punk Rock Warlord: The Life and Work of Joe Strummer*. Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014. xiii + 197 pp. ISBN 978-1-4724-1055-9 (hardcover)

Barry J. Faulk and Brady Harrison's edited collection of essays on The Clash's frontman, Joe Strummer, *Punk Rock Warlord: The Life and Work of Joe Strummer*, reads much like the experience of a punk rock gig: there are strong, conflicting views expressed in different styles and tones, and excitement and inspiration spring up from the various chapters. The editors have purposefully gathered a group of informed, yet diverse voices—from academics spanning the disciplines of history, English, and communication studies, to public service workers turned teachers, to independent writers, artists, and journalists. The perspectives offered in this study



Joe Strummer by Joe Kerrigan, used by permission under a CC-attribute license

range from those offered by Strummer admirers and validators who praise the musician's work and legacy to those from harsh skeptics who, while appreciating Strummer and The Clash, question Strummer's contributions to the shape-shifting era of punk. What this collection of voices adds to the growing field of popular music studies is a "new urgency," in the words of the editors, to break away from the "universal perspective of modernism" that has dominated the study of music and instead to focus on the "vexed problem of what constitutes authenticity in music and to offer a critique of musical practice as the product of free, individual expression" (p. ix). Given the explosion of new studies of punk rock and popular culture and the already growing body of work and documentaries on Joe Strummer and The Clash, Faulk and Harrison's volume is a timely re-assessment of punk's "year zero" moment of the mid-to-late 1970s and indeed provides a nuanced, complex account of one of punk rock's earliest icons.

The eleven essays in this volume are organized into four sections to create a multi-dimensional study of Strummer. Many of the opening essays emphasize the evolution of Strummer's identity changes, from his early days as John Mellor, the middle-class son of a civil service diplomat, to Woody Mellor, the London squatter-turned-music rebel by way of Woody Guthrie's influence, to the Joe Strummer of The Clash and beyond. In "Don't Call Me Woody': The Punk Compassion and Folk Rebellion of Joe Strummer and Woody Guthrie," Edward Shannon presents a detailed analysis of Guthrie's life, music, and politics, and suggests ways in which Strummer sought to embody Guthrie as a model of creative activism. Shannon's assessment that "in his life, in his work, and even in his death, Joe Strummer has inherited the mantle of Woody Guthrie" (p. 24) leads logically into Lauren Onkey's argument in "Joe Strummer: The Road to Rock and Roll," which positions Strummer not as a post-Guthrie artist but as a legitimate rocker who harnessed the musical energy and iconography of the 1950s in order to change the world: "Strummer's faith in the power of rock and roll was a consistent element of his public persona, even when he was most critical of the ways that the music had gone wrong" (p. 25). Onkey cautions, however, against interpreting

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Strummer, his remarks, or his music from a “rockist” perspective. Pete Wylie coined the term “rockism” in 1981, to mean debates that attempt to rank or dismiss popular music in terms of the music’s authenticity, a situation all-too-familiar in discussions of punk rock, where charges of being a poseur or “selling out” resound. Strummer’s “1950s rockabilly look” is not, in Onkey’s view, that of the admiring poseur but a symbol that “challenges rockism in many fundamental ways” (p. 29). Strummer was not merely capitalizing on the musical past as a crass act of self-promotion. Rather, as Brian Cogan argues in “From the 101’ers to the Mescaleros, and Whatever Band was in-between: Joe Strummer’s Musical Journey (or Why Woody?),” Strummer was all about widening punk into “an inclusive social movement” through acts of “self[-]creation, self re-creation, and self[-]promotion” (p. 32). In this reading, Strummer cannot be simply dismissed as a “year zero” punk hero, no matter the evidence of his own self-mythologizing. The authors herein demonstrate clearly how he actively embodied meaningful influences to provide a frame of reference for his own times, as a way to engage the consciousness of his audience. As Onkey states, “It’s not about individual genius, but a community of listeners” (p. 29).

This understanding of Strummer as a kind of protean performing social historian attempting to transform his audience smartly contextualizes his interest in, and work with, world music, social causes, and race issues. Mark Bedford’s essay, “‘This is Joe Public Speaking’: Why Joe Strummer’s Passion is Still in Fashion,” conducts a sociological study of English Clash fans in order to document the very real ways in which Strummer affected their lives and redirected them to important, life-long social causes. While Bedford’s pool of interviewee data is admittedly thin and lacking in ethnic, geographic, and gender diversity, his work does suggest ways in which future studies of fan culture will be necessary to develop more critical social histories and to elucidate meanings about popular music that move us beyond mere theoretical discussion or rockist arguments. Justin Wadlow’s essay about The Clash’s time spent in the USA in the early 1980s, “‘I am so bored with the USA’: Joe Strummer and the Promised Land,” exposes the rockist criticism lodged at Strummer and The Clash by the British press of the time, particularly in the scathing rejections of the album *Sandinista!*. Wadlow stresses how this so-called “Americanized” period of The Clash missed the point of Strummer’s “openness of mind and his incredible capacity to take in any influence he would come across, always listening to what the world had to say, in any given form” (p. 131).

One of the highlights of this collection is Walidah Imarisha’s essay, “Culture Clash: The Influence of Hip[-]Hop Culture and Aesthetics on the Clash.” Included in the final section of the book, her essay builds on Wadlow’s observation of Strummer’s “openness” to influences and describes, in intelligent and engaging analytical detail, how Strummer’s persona enabled a breaking down of racial barriers through his interactions with American hip-hop artists and through the band’s enthusiasm for hip-hop music and culture. Just as several critics of Strummer and The Clash have noted Don Letts’s influence on the band and its interest in reggae, so Imarisha extends this cultural lens to Strummer’s interest in multicultural expression, by illustrating his support of, and work with, the Sugarhill Gang, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, and Kurtis Blow. Imarisha does a comparative analysis of the impoverished economic conditions of Britain in the late 1970s and the Notting Hill race rioting in August 1976 with the infamous New York City blackout in July 1977, an event that served as

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a touchstone for the brewing racial and economic unrest in the USA, to suggest that Strummer's experience of the former enabled him to easily understand the "conditions of no work, of governmental neglect, of racism and exploitation" (p. 150) found in early hip-hop. She cites Puerto Rican emcee Not4Prophet and Public Enemy founder and emcee Chuck D as artists who respected Strummer's open acknowledgment of hip-hop and African-American culture and his incorporation of these elements into his music. In this way, we can understand The Clash's multiculturalism as an act of transatlantic political solidarity. Imarisha's essay also provides a sense of organizational and thematic unity to this collection, since she contends that Strummer and Chuck D share an artistic, intellectual kindred spirit much akin to the one Shannon claims Strummer shared with Guthrie.

Faulk and Harrison's collection is a timely, comprehensive portrait of a widely discussed and often misunderstood punk artist. It is an accessible collection of scholarship coming from diverse backgrounds that pushes beyond mere idolatrous popular praise or critics' squabbles about a band's integrity or worth and informs its audience of Strummer's real achievements in music and politics as well as the sometimes paradoxical nature of his professed beliefs. The essays also provide sound cultural and historical context of Britain's complex social, racial, and economic landscapes during the 1970s and 1980s. This combination of close analysis of the music, the man, and his changing cultural contexts makes *Punk Rock Warlord: The Life and Work of Joe Strummer* a useful resource for punk/Strummer aficionados, knowledgeable scholars and writers in the field of pop music studies, and students wanting to learn more about the foundations of the punk scene and one of its most seminal offspring.

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