

The 2011 IASPM Book Prize - co-ordinated by Antti-Ville Kärjä

Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand

IASPM THANKS TO Antti-Ville Kärjä for his work

The 2011 IASPM prize for a book written in English is awarded to *Protest Music in France* by Barbara Lebrun.

The 2011 IASPM Book Prize for a book written in a language other than English is awarded to *Creating the Myth of 'Japanese Spirit'* by Yusuke Wajima.

Special Mention is given to *El videoclip en España* by Eduardo Viñuela.

For the 2011 IASPM Book Prize, there was a total number of eight nominations for the English-language category and eleven for the non-English one. The latter nominees consisted of four books in Spanish, three in Japanese, three in Portuguese and one in French. The evaluators were recruited through respective IASPM branches. Two evaluators were randomly assigned for each of the books, and they were asked to assess the following: relevance for popular music studies in general, soundness of scholarship, clarity of argument, applicability outside immediate cultural context and clarity of language. The evaluators were also asked to assess if the books were worthy of the main prize itself or a special mention. Evaluators were also encouraged to offer free-form additional commentary. Thus the IASPM Book Prize is seen as an effective feedback mechanism for all nominated books, rather than a mere prize for one individual book.

The topics of the nominated books range from the works of prominent figures and certain genres with national associations but with a global framework to less well-known aspects of popular music histories and considerations of broader socio-cultural contexts of popular music. Each book makes a contribution to the field of popular music studies and once again signals the strength and expanding diversity of the field. Methodologically and theoretically speaking, the interdisciplinary nature of the popular music field becomes truly apparent, as analysis involve popular musicology, gender studies, religious studies, sociology, philosophy, history, media studies and ethnographic fieldwork. With regard to nominees in languages other than English, there is, as might be expected, a more explicit focus on local or national musics. One might note also that there were two nominees who focus explicitly on rap, while no one focused on rap in the English-language category.

On the basis of the evaluations of the nominated books, the most significant challenges of popular music studies pertain to the following: the balance between musical analysis and socio-cultural interpretation; between description and analysis; between taking 'popular music' for granted or grounding case studies in circular argument that leads back to author's own 'fandom'; the lure of speculative rather than theoretically

or empirically founded argument either about artists' intentions or the broader social significance of their works. On a separate note, the risks of Anglocentricity are evident every now and then, especially some North American work which is still being produced as if everyone understood its context. Furthermore, authors and audiences would benefit from more careful editorial work particularly in relation to the use of pre-published material which then become book chapters, as frequently this leads to inconsistency and tautology.

The English-language nominees

The books nominated for the prize were, in alphabetical order by author *Björk* by Nicola Dibben (Equinox/Indiana UP, 2009), *Fado and the Place of Longing* by Richard Elliott (Ashgate, 2010), *China with a Cut* by Jeroen de Kloet (Amsterdam UP, 2010), *Protest Music in France* by Barbara Lebrun (Ashgate, 2009), *Radiohead and the Resistant Concept Album* by Marianne Tatom Letts (Indiana UP, 2010), *Some Liked It Hot* by Kristin McGee (Wesleyan UP, 2009), *Song and Circumstance* by Sytze Steenstra (Continuum, 2010) and *Pop Cult* by Rupert Till (Continuum, 2010). Due to the role of English as the lingua franca of popular music studies, the books were evaluated by both native and non-native speakers: Norma Coates (Canada), Antti-Ville Kärjä (Finland/New Zealand), Åse Ottosson (Australia/Sweden), Geoff Stahl (New Zealand) and Catherine Strong (Australia).

Nicola Dibben's account of Björk is an extensive overview of a single artist and her work is methodologically solid in its popular-musicological approach. Even for 'note-head illiterates' the book provides useful guidelines for listening to music in detail. While 'popular music' is not problematised explicitly, its fluidity becomes apparent through analysis of Björk's works. In general, the account is grounded in mainstream paradigms of popular music studies. Argument and disposition are clear and logical, although argument rests significantly on the ideology of individual creativity and runs the risk of downplaying social and institutional factors. There is also some confusion about the originality and theoretical foundation of interpretations due to reliance on authorial commentary. A general tendency to elevate the creativity of the artist in question occasionally leads to implicit hagiographic value judgments which border on journalistic rather than academic inquiry. Nevertheless, discussions on authenticity and emotion for example are well-founded, and notions about Nordic exoticism and colonialism hold broader theoretical potential.

In his book on *fado*, Richard Elliott covers multiple aspects fadoism and fado artists by drawing on a wide range of theoretical fields. Elliot uses a great diversity of sources and relates them to each other, in order to question and challenge both the sources and the way we think about music, artists, place, music practices and representations, global flows of musical imagery, memory and loss. In the book, the interdependent worlds of musics, politics, economics, technology, emotion, power and globalisation are well expressed, albeit with some discrepancy as well as rather lengthy theoretical sections and actual analysis of fado examples. While Elliott does not resort to fixed or

simplified argument, but rather allows for the inherent ambivalence, contradictions and muddiness of the dynamics he investigates, quite a lot of interpretative work is left on the shoulders of readers. Yet it is evident that the descriptions, methods, arguments, analysis and thoughts in Elliott's book are highly applicable to the broader field of popular music studies.

Jeroen de Kloet's take on globalisation, urban youth and popular music in China is a relevant description of a popular music scene that is still relatively unknown in the international field of popular music studies. The author relies on divergent appropriate theoretical frameworks, but makes little attempt to develop them further or challenge them critically. While the different categorisations and labels of Chinese popular music are introduced in detail, this happens more in terms of organising than analysing the material, which leaves the reader with a sense of a fixed process rather than a dynamic one. Stemming from an ambitious set of objectives and one of the most populated countries on the face of the earth, *China with a Cut* provides readers with a useful point of reference in terms of the multiplicities of Chinese popular music.

Barbara Lebrun, in turn, by focussing on protest music in France, incorporates both industry analysis and audience perspectives and does an excellent job in drawing links between the creation and distribution of 'alternative' music, its reception by audiences, and wider societal concerns and divisions. By using a number of case studies, the examination is nuanced and neatly parses the subtleties of cultural politics and practice as well as racial and ethnic dimensions of music making in contemporary France, noting in minute detail how they have coalesced around particular genres and their offshoots. Using media accounts, examination of various discourses (media and otherwise) as well as ethnographic detail, Lebrun covers a wide range of ideas germane to the topic at hand, while also providing a substantive framework which other popular music scholars might also find useful, particularly with respect to the notion of authenticity and a critical take on Bourdieu. The book is ground-breaking – although by no means perfect: its definition of 'protest music' remains rock-centred, risking circularity in argument which could raise doubts as to whether examples have been chosen purposefully. Also for the discussion of nostalgia more theoretical depth might have been beneficial. However, Lebrun succeeds in delivering an insightful analysis of the explicit subject matter as well as a succinct introduction to the dynamics of popular music in France in more general.

Marianne Tatom Letts provides the readers with a worthwhile case study of UK group Radiohead and their strategy to turn their concept albums into critical vehicles. The book provides the reader with greater insight into how bands evolve and place their newer work in dialogue with their earlier recordings. There is a great deal of solid musicological work, but this at times overwhelms the more trenchant cultural and aesthetic politics of the band. The analysis of the music itself needed to be better situated into a more robust and developed understanding of cultural commodification. Overall, however, this is an engaging read and contributes new insights to our knowledge of progressive rock and concept albums.

Kristin McGee's book on jazz women in film and television between 1929 and 1959

helps to reclaim a place in history for devalued and forgotten female musicians. It covers the time period and media explored very thoroughly. Almost too thoroughly – at times it feels as though the huge amount of material to cover results in the work being very descriptive, at the expense of theoretical analysis. There is also a general conflation over categories 'popular', 'mass' and 'jazz', and occasionally the theoretical and contextualising ideas are lost when moving on to the primary research material, and vice versa. The topic is undoubtedly important and the treatment highlights significant gendered aspects of the historiography of jazz and music in general, and in this respect it is rather surprising that the theoretical discussion on music and gender remains quite taken-for-granted. However the scope of the research done is impressive and the work fills in some huge gaps in our knowledge of women performers.

In his account on the wide-ranging body of work of David Byrne, Sytze Steenstra approaches the topic from a philosophical point of departure and thereby brings in some intriguing and novel problem, as far as the mainstream trajectories of popular music studies are concerned. Therefore, the treatment remains at the rim of popular music studies, and for example the role of popular music as the hinge on which Byrne's other artistic work depends remains largely obscure. Furthermore, as there is no attempt to engage in analyses of Byrne's personality or motivations, the book comes off as a bit clinical. Of course, for more philosophically oriented popular music scholars as well as for the Byrne devotees, Steenstra's insights will undoubtedly be valuable.

Rupert Till addresses the timely topic of popular music in post-secular western societies. This means almost inevitably that an explicitly interdisciplinary stance and a wide application of different strands of popular music studies is adopted in the analysis. Alongside explicit detours to religious studies, the book offers a critical take on subcultural theories for example, as well as insightful popular-musicological juxtapositions between musical sounds and social practices. The treatment remains however more descriptive, anecdotal and speculative than analytical, and there seems to be a fundamental inherent contradiction between the emphasis on postmodern relativism on one hand and implicit essentialism and Eurocentrism in the treatment of his subject on the other. Nevertheless, the book is undoubtedly of aid in attempting to understand current social, cultural, religious and musical contexts in western societies.

The nominees in a language other than English

The books nominated for the prize were as follows, grouped on the basis of language:

French: *Les publics du rap* by Stéphanie Molinero (L'Harmattan, 2009). The book was evaluated by Barbara Lebrun and Isabelle Marc Martinez.

Japanese: *Network Musicking* by Akinoro Ideguchi (Keiso Shobo, 2009), *Globalisation and Music Culture* by Reiichi Kimoto (Keiso Shobo, 2009), and *Creating the Myth of*

'*Japanese Spirit*' by Yusuke Wajima (Kobunsha, 2010). The books were evaluated by Akitsugu Kawamoto, Yoshitaka Mori and Masahiro Yasuda.

Portuguese: *A escuta singular de Pixinguinha* by Virginia de Almeida Bessa (Alameda, 2010), *Polca paraguaia, guarânia e chamamé* by Evandro Rodrigues Higa (Editora UFMS, 2010), and *Música Brasileira e Identidade Nacional na Mundialização* by Michel Nicolau Netto (Annablume, 2009). All authors here are Brazilian. The books were evaluated by Jose Ribeiro Paiva and Felipe Trotta.

Spanish: *Tito Francia y la música en Mendoza* by María Inés García from Argentina (Gourmet Musical, 2009), *Música de cine en España* by Teresa Fraile from Spain (Ocho y Medio, 2010), *Las historias de la música en Hispanoamerica* by Juliana Pérez González from Columbia (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2010), and *El videoclip en España* by Eduardo Viñuela from Spain (ICCMU, 2009). The books were evaluated by Julio Arce (Spain), Marita Fornaro (Uruguay) and Liliana González (Cuba).

The generous help provided by Christian Spencer Espinosa in the process is also hereby acknowledged.

Stéphanie Molinero's sociological study of French audiences of rap music provides a unique foray into reception theory, methodology and analysis. It makes a good point of going against commonly received clichés, underlining the fact that rap is best understood as a highly diverse music genre. The grounds for avoiding the question of ethnicity remain however obscure, and the use of the term 'popular' seems ambiguous and can cause analytical contradictions. By engaging with other national contexts or with other music genres, a stronger sense of the specificity (or not) of the French rap case could have been delivered. There is however an element of strong originality in the audience research, which was carried both through questionnaires and live interviews. As the first properly qualitative analysis of French rap audiences, Molinero's study is in a groundbreaking position.

Akinoro Ideguchi, in his book on music at the information age, approaches the contemporary consumption and making of music in terms of reference rather than possession. This is an excellent viewpoint. The author considers the physical details of digital media as they relate to making and copying music, in order to consider the essence of today's music. The scope of the book is very broad, which causes some ambiguities in argumentation. There is an impressive range of materials which is unfortunately not interwoven organically. This hinders also the broader international application of the ideas expressed in the book, despite a number of interesting and enlightening points with world-wide relevance.

Reiichi Kimoto's account on rap music in Japan contributes to the contemporary trend of studying globalisation and localisation in popular musics of the world. The author demonstrates his understanding of existing theories and his point of criticism is clear, but further original developments are not offered very clearly nor confidently. Alongside a series of theoretical discrepancies, the overall organisation of the book is somewhat questionable. The topic is a great addition to the existing studies on

Japanese popular music, but the international appeal of the treatment remains limited.

Yusuke Wajima, in focusing on the history of *enka* genre in post-war Japan, problematises the generic label in question successfully and appropriately questions the wide assumption about enka's status as authentic Japanese music. The myth of alleged Japanese spirit of enka is revealed with recourse to an abundance of historical evidence. The account proceeds logically and the arguments are very clear. The book is useful for international popular music studies in that it deeply relates to the issues of westernisation in the eastern world, which in turn relates to the issues of globalisation in popular music. If translated, the book constitutes a very precise point of reference. In addition, the author uses careful and polite wording on every single page. In general, this is one of the landmark publications in Japan in the last couple of years.

Virginia de Almeida Bessa's investigation into the history of popular music in Brazil in the 1920s and 1930s is a strong case contributing significantly to the formulation of analytical categories in the historiographical inquiry of popular music. In its hybrid appropriation of both historiographical and musicological approaches, the book is based on consistent and well-thought argument. While the topic of the book is unmistakably local and national, the treatment holds a substantial amount of international appeal and applicability. While much of the book focuses on two great composers of Brazilian popular music, it would be an outstanding reference point for anybody interested in the subject matter.

Evandro Rodrigues Higa's account on three genres from Campo Grande region in Latin America constitutes original work about less-discussed issues. The regional rather than national demarcation produces a relevant work with transnational concerns, and thus by definition challenges the dominant national frameworks of much popular music studies. The treatment however remains descriptive for the most part, and therefore the broader applicability of the ideas is questionable. For those interested in Brazilian popular music, the book will be of great interest though.

Michal Nicolau Netto's study on the relationship between national identity and globalisation in Brazilian music is a relevant addition to the investigations of musical and cultural processes that indeed are global in nature. Thus the topic holds a significant amount of broader applicability, yet much space is given to rather superficial and generalised explanations about the background of the study. While terminology is not totally unambiguous, the discursive analysis of disseminating Brazilian music world-wide would provide a useful model for analysis of other contexts too.

María Inés García, in her account on the *nuevo cancionero* Tito Francia, focuses on a figure who is less-known but has high relevance, especially in relation to the history of popular music in Argentina. The criteria and perspectives of the analysis are grounded adequately, and the use of primary sources is ample and rigorous. Methodologically, the main strength of the book is in its application of social history, whereby multifaceted processes of exchange between ideas and practices become apparent.

The musical analysis in turn is rather limited. While there is a local emphasis in the topic, there are several aspects in the analysis that have broader potential, especially in regional terms and in relation to the field of popular music studies in Latin America. Stylistically, however, the book is an unhelpful mixture of colloquial and academic language.

Teresa Fraile's examination of contemporary film music in Spain raises the question of how to relate a very popular medium to the notion of popular music, as the focus is on the film soundtracks in more general. Fraile's analysis follows the guidelines laid by the extensive existing body of film music research, and is carried out appropriately. The treatment centres, by definition, on the national context of Spain, but there are some references to European and North American cinema.

In her account on the historiography of music in Latin America, Juliana Pérez González produces a clear and fluent analysis of the historiographical tendencies both within popular music studies and in relation to other fields of music research in Latin America. The historiographical texts analysed are exhaustive, and the general historical, theoretical and methodological points of departure are clearly well covered, justified and utilised. Some important textual sources, institutions and discourses are however missing from the treatment, and due to the focus on historiography of music in general, popular music is not the sole let alone the primary object of study. In its field, the book clearly stands out as a pioneering work and serves as a model for similar enquiry into the construction and politics of historiographical knowledge about music, regardless of geographical area.

Eduardo Viñuela's approach to music videos in Spain stems from a local perspective while offering an analysis that is easily applicable on a broader level. The use of primary sources and scholarly literature is of the highest standard and to be applauded, and the author demonstrates good knowledge of the existing body of research in relation to audiovisual popular music. Historical phases are tied to contemporary forms of audiovisual expression in an exemplary fashion. Argument is logical and clear, and the account is firmly embedded in current paradigms of popular music studies, with a particular sensitivity to the musicological inquiry into audiovisual texts. The theoretical focus, the management of a wide range of information and the elaboration on the interdisciplinary points of departure in the analysis of audiovisual phenomena are applicable to other similar contexts and constitute a model for a musicological study in this particular field.

The Prizes

In the category of English-language books, there was one book which was unanimously deemed as worthy of the 2011 IASPM Book Prize. No Special Mention will be granted in this category. **The book awarded the prize is *Protest Music in France* by Barbara Lebrun.**

On the basis of the many evaluations, the general quality of books in languages other

than English was deemed higher than ones in English. There were two books that were unanimously recommended to be awarded with the 2011 IASPM Book Prize, and several considered worthy of a Special Mention. **On the basis of the qualitative assessments provided by the evaluators, *El videoclip en España* by Eduardo Viñuela is granted a Special Mention and the 2011 IASPM Book Prize is given to *Creating the Myth of 'Japanese Spirit'* by Yusuke Wajima.**

As the Chair of the 2011 IASPM Book Prize Committee, I thank the individual evaluators, the publishers who willingly sent the books across the globe, and first and foremost the individual authors who through their efforts have helped in maintaining the virility of popular music studies.

Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, 29 June 2011

Antti-Ville Kärjä

List of Nominated Books:

Almeida Bessa, Virginia de (2010) *A escuta singular de Pixinguinha. História e música popular no Brasil dos anos 1920 e 1930*. Alameda.

Dibben, Nicola (2009) *Björk*. Equinox/Indiana University Press.

Elliott, Richard (2010) *Fado and the Place of Longing: Loss, Memory and the City*. Ashgate.

Fraille, Teresa (2010) *Música de cine en España: señas de identidad en la banda sonora contemporánea*. Ocho y Medio.

García, María Inés (2009) *Tito Francia y la música en Mendoza: de la radio al Nuevo Cancionero*. Gourmet Musical.

Higa, Evandro Rodrigues (2010) *Polca paraguaia, guarânia e chamamé: estudos sobre três gêneros musicais em Campo Grande-MS*. Editora UFMS.

Ideguchi, Akinoro (2009) *Network Musicking: Music Culture of the 'Age of References'*. Keiso Shobo.

Kimoto, Reiichi (2009) *Globalization and Music Culture: Rap Music in Japan*. Keiso Shobo.

de Kloet, Jeroen (2010) *China with a Cut. Globalisation, Urban Youth and Popular Music*. Amsterdam University Press.

Lebrun, Barbara (2009) *Protest Music in France. Production, Identities, Audiences*. Ashgate.

Letts, Marianne Tatom (2010) *Radiohead and the Resistant Concept Album: How to*

Disappear Completely. Indiana University Press.

McGee, Kristin (2009) *Some Liked It Hot. Jazz Women in Film and Television 1928–1959*. Wesleyan University Press.

Molinero, Stèphanie (2009) *Les publics du rap. Enquête sociologique*. L'Harmattan.

Nicolau Netto, Michel (2009) *Música Brasileira e Identidade Nacional na Mundialização*. Annablume

Pérez González, Juliana (2010) *Las Historias De La Música En Hispanoamérica (1876–2000)*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Steenstra, Sytze (2010) *Song and Circumstance. The Work of David Byrne from Talking Heads to the Present*. Continuum.

Till, Rupert (2010) *Pop Cult. Religion and Popular Music*. Continuum.

Viñuela, Eduardo (2009) *El videoclip en España (1980–1995): gesto audiovisual, discurso y mercado*. ICCMU.

Wajima, Yusuke (2010) *Creating the Myth of 'Japanese Spirit': History of Enka in Post-War Japan*. Kobunsha.

Evaluators: Julio Arce (Spain), Norma Coates (Canada), Marita Fornaro (Uruguay), Liliana González (Cuba), Akitsugu Kawamoto (Japan), Antti-Ville Kärjä (Finland/New Zealand), Barbara Lebrun (France/UK), Isabelle Marc Martinez (France/UK), Yoshitaka Mori (Japan), Åse Ottosson (Australia/Sweden), Jose Ribeiro Paiva (Brazil), Geoff Stahl (New Zealand), Catherine Strong (Australia), Felipe Trotta (Brazil), Masahiro Yasuda (Japan).