

practices in terms of the kinds of sound-producing gestures that are performed and the kinds of mimetic, or congruent, responses that are performed by listeners (in practices where there is such a distinction). Bearing in mind that race, class, gender, and culture are performed in part by the way we respond to the mimetic invitation, one gains a different view when our learned and practiced responses are seen as shaping or controlling a natural urge to move, as opposed to the view that movement is something imported into musical experience and music comprehension.

The desire to lay out a foundation for a theory of musical gesture is not easily realized in a collection of essays by some 21 authors and co-authors, but they have presented a coherent view. However, there happens to be very little consideration of meaning at the level of musical works and practices. The application of the theory is confined for the most part to computer synthesis of human movement (Part III, Chapters 8-11), which is relevant to the topic but which is a very specific area. I can imagine that comparative ethnomusicology might make use of synthesized movement studies, as well as the typologies and definitions offered in Parts I and II, but I suspect that the broadest benefit will come from digesting the evidence and arguments presented by the two editors in Chapters 1, 5, and 6, which elaborate the ideas described above. This core of the book offers an empirical foundation for understanding how music gets into our bodies and, thereby, shapes our affective, cognitive, and social lives. 🍀

NOTE

¹ Gritten, Anthony, and Elaine King. 2006. *Music and Gesture*. Hampshire, United Kingdom: Ashgate.

The Never-Ending Revival: Rounder Records and the Folk Alliance.

Michael F. Scully. Music in American Life series. 2008. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press. ix, 288pp, black and white photographs, notes, index. Cloth.

BY MICHAEL B. MACDONALD

Folk Alliance is an important institution that has contributed to folk music in untold ways. But it should not be forgotten that Folk Alliance is also about business. It is remarkable that a book-length inquiry into this organization had not been previously published. Michael F. Scully's *The Never-Ending Folk Revival* is the first book-length attempt to situate folk music following the folk revival of the 1950s and 1960s. Since this book was published in 2008, Rounder was sold to an entertainment conglomerate, and Folk Alliance, while still claiming international status, is reeling from the separation and demise of Folk Alliance Canada.

It is unfortunate for Scully that these things happened so soon after the publication of this book. *The Never-Ending Revival* is an account of folk music and capitalism colliding. The tension is explosive because, as Scully reminds us, "strictly speaking, a commercial folk song is an oxymoron" (3). But if this were true then Folk Alliance and Rounder Records would never have been possible

in the first place. This tension, although mostly submerged, is central to the text. Even though *The Never-Ending Revival* is in some ways now out-of-date, it is perhaps even more valuable because of the outcomes it failed to foresee. An account written before the arrival of a historic moment offers a privileged depiction of a historical time. This book is therefore important because of both what it says and what it doesn't say.

Scully nods to the impossibility of defining folk music and then quite admirably attempts to do so anyway. While this approach has certainly lost some of its novelty (having been attempted by countless folk music scholars), the discussion which situates folklore, fakelore, and poplore is necessary. The expected assertions are all present and accounted for, such as the common claim that "Americans produced and disseminated noncommercial, community-based music as an unselfconscious part of their daily lives" for the sake of community (19). The characterization of revivalists as resisters of "cultural standardization" (19) is presented as the transition to a discussion of Folk Alliance and Rounder Records as exemplars of this process at work. The final section of Chapter 1 is particularly valuable as it updates the folk revival narrative bringing it very close to the present, which allows the author to make the title-worthy assertion that the folk revival is never-ending.

Scully sets out to situate Folk Alliance and Rounder Records within a folk music narrative, and therefore update the folk music narrative. To this end, he constructs a selective prehistory of folk music in the introduction and Chapter 1. In two enlightening Chapters (2 and 3)

Scully explores the early years of Rounder Records as it emerged from post-revival social and musical trends. In Chapter 4, Scully, in a brief theoretical turn, asserts an "authenticity of self." Surprisingly, only one chapter is dedicated to Folk Alliance, Chapter 5. To conclude, Chapter 6 returns to Rounder Records and its struggles within the popular music industry. The most valuable aspects of these chapters are the individual and institutional histories, even if they suffer from an overt American-centrism.

Scully, in his discussion of folk music, acknowledges the tensions between *making music* and *making music business*. For example, in a description of the formation of bluegrass (97-98), he describes the social and organizational pressures exerted upon a musical style when a group is successful. Other groups tend to imitate what they expect to be lucrative, and therefore social processes around capital efficiencies and accumulation lead to the formation of identifiable genres and subgenres.

Unfortunately, Scully allows the cause of the tensions to remain mostly unnamed. For instance, he asserts that "spontaneous, nonprofessional group performance is now exceedingly rare" (23) but a casual stroll through any community will provide ample evidence that this is not true: pub sessions, karaoke, open stages, community choirs, guitar groups, and garage bands abound. The social relations of community "musicking" are fundamentally misunderstood. Scully's historical work, his interviews with music industry professionals, and his situating of contemporary professional folk music are all superb, but because he does not connect the ideology of folk

music to social music-making, he misses an important opportunity to expand the definition and discussion of folk music. Nor does he connect capitalism with its distinct set of social relations. These two disconnects hide the source of the class tensions that Scully sees but struggles to articulate. Folk music, at least as it is idealized, has a set of music-making social relations that is outside of music-capital social relations. Scully does not seem to notice that *The Never-Ending Revival* could be renamed "The Emergence of Class Struggle in Folk Music."

By ignoring these social relations he asserts avoidable essentialisms. For instance, Scully describes the founding of Rounder Records as having been "midwived by the great folk boom" (58), ignoring the social relations which enabled this economic project to emerge. Further, he suggests that Rounder Records was a blend of Folkways and Electra, as well as a combination of the revival's idealized romance with the anarchy of the counterculture (89). But he pays little attention to the founders' remark: "We really didn't decide to start a company, we decided that we wanted to put out some records" (87). Rounder founders may have imagined themselves as outlaw capitalists (89), but they did so by first misunderstanding capital (182-210) and its impact on class and social relations. Scully observes that Rounder founders misunderstood their position as owners, misunderstood their workers, and ironically, for a folk music label, opposed the founding of a union. He begins to discuss the emergence of class within folk music but then backs away to treat the safer topics of tradition and authenticity.

Perhaps it is understandable that

Scully does not wish to discuss class. Situating folk music within its appropriate business environment is no easy task. It is a task that, while not flawless, Scully has executed with style, clarity, ingenuity, and a great deal of passion. Scully's personal story of return to folk music in the 1990s as a search for something more than top-40 pop music is instructive. He likely speaks for a large population who, being unsatisfied *consumers* (3), has returned to folk/roots/traditional music. Perhaps this recurring interest is a quest for community and meaning. Or perhaps the baby-boomers are returning to the great folk boom with nostalgia, disposable time, and disposable income.

The Never-Ending Revival concludes on a positive note. Scully describes the relationship that Folk Alliance and the wider folk music community have developed using the Internet. He suggests that the Internet may well prove to be the future of folk music because "people can take their ideas straight to mp3 and the world" (218). But he also admits, and presciently, that folk music scholarship will have to address intellectual property rights and digital freedoms. Once again, the dialectic between creativity (freedom) and commerce (bureaucracy) is expressed. It is this dialectical tension and how it plays out that makes this book so valuable. I would have liked Scully to take the reader by the hand more often to illustrate where and how this dialectic emerges. But the *Never-Ending Revival* is a valuable resource and a groundbreaking account of the social transformations that have been occurring in and around folk music since the 1960s folk revival. It very well may be at the forefront of a new approach to folk music studies. With

the increased globalization of capital, perhaps an understanding of the relations between creativity and industry, the relations that Scully so expertly describes, may form the core of new models of folk music theory. 🍁

The Place Where You Go to Listen: In Search of an Ecology of Music. John Luther Adams. 2009. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press. xvi, 180pp, black and white illustrations, colour illustrations, bibliography, discography. Paper.

BY DAVID PAQUETTE AND ANDRA MCCARTNEY

The Place Where You Go to Listen is a sound and light installation created by John Luther Adams for the *Museum of the North*, located at the University of Alaska. The title is a translation of *Naalagaviik*, the Iñupiaq designation of a coastal place where, according to a local legend, a woman used to sit and listen to the invisible voices of nature. Adams' installation offers a multisensory, real-time composition based on the sonification of a number of data streams including seismic and electromagnetic activity, time of day, seasonal changes and moon cycles. According to Adams, sonification is not a simple sonic transposition, but rather it is "the process of mapping data with *some other meaning* into sound" (113). While it is not commonly found among practitioners of acoustic ecology, this compositional approach can also be heard in the work of certain composers such

as Andrea Polli and Don Sinclair. The book offers a detailed discussion of the creative processes and ideas that led to the production of *The Place*, as well as Adams' thinking on music and the arts, nature, ecology, and his own compositional practice.

The foreword, written by *New Yorker's* music critic Alex Ross, introduces the installation from the point of view of an audience member. Ross visited *The Place* in 2008, two years after its opening, and spent two days exploring its ever-changing sonic and light ambiances. His brief analysis of Adams' work brilliantly summarizes the philosophical leitmotifs of the book:

On the one hand, [*The Place*] lacks a will of its own; it is at the mercy of its data streams, the humors of the earth. On the other hand, it is a deeply personal work, whose material reflects Adams' long-standing preoccupations with multiple systems of tuning, his fascination with slow motion formal processes, his love of foggy masses of sound in which many events unfold at independent tempos (x).

Adams proceeds, in the first section of the book, to present the most important tools and concepts that guide his compositional practice. From the use of noise as raw musical material to the shifting compositional process provoked by real-time manipulation, he sets up the technological and artistic context in which *The Place* could appear. Of particular importance is the relationship between the place of the installation and the larger environment