

ition with the “real songs” (meaning the long narrative songs) form an important part of this chapter as well, and it is in that section that some bigger issues are revealed about how music and musicians are valued and judged.

Heather Sparling has a warm and welcoming style of writing, with which she invites us into her (and her informants’) world. Readers will come to know and appreciate the complications of a well known but not-always-celebrated genre in a society in which many people know each other, and opinions run strong. People in the fields of ethnomusicology, folklore, history, musicology, Celtic studies, and education will all benefit from reading this work, and this is why: so much of this material rings true not only in its own context, but also in the broadly applicable theoretical underpinning that serves as its foundation. In exploring this work, for example, I found connections to the work I have done with both the politics and pedagogies of “lesser traditions” in West Java.

As a work about a genre that many know *of* but few actually know *about*, this book will take its place among the key works on Scottish and Irish music at home and abroad. *Reeling Roosters and Dancing Ducks* is more than that, though; those other works are about the songs and/or the instrumental dance music. By focusing on a genre that is simultaneously vocal and instrumental music, Sparling brings to light some crucial elements of music making that do not take centre stage. Instead, mouth music appears in the parlours, kitchens, and places away from the spotlight where people and their musical practices and preferences are both complicated and fascinating. 🍀

Roy Cape: A Life On the Calypso and Soca Bandstand. 2014. Jocelyne Guilbault and Roy Cape. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press. 286 pp.

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You may be forgiven for not recognizing the name Roy Cape, even if you listen to a lot of Caribbean popular music. A musician’s musician and influential bandleader, Cape has backed up a litany of calypso and soca notables in the calypso tent, on tours and in recordings: The Mighty Sparrow, Lord Kitchener, The Mighty Chalkdust, Denyse Plummer, Black Stalin, and many others, but only rarely has a hit borne his name in the top credits. But in one of those delicious ironies of academic publishing, Roy Cape is the subject of an academic (auto) biography, before many of the stars that he backed over his long career (I use the parentheses in “[auto]biography” to highlight that this is a jointly authored work, the product of Roy Cape himself along with scholar Jocelyne Guilbault). *Roy Cape* is thus not only an important work of experimental biography, but also a potent end run around the star system that so often constrains what is considered a worthy biographic subject even in scholarly research.

For my tastes, biography has long been underdeveloped as a methodology in ethnomusicology, whereas it has been a staple for musicologists studying western classical music, jazz, or western popular music and rock. Ethnomusicologists have typically shunned this most particularist approach in favour of stud-

ies of musical communities, genres, and scenes, with only a dozen or so notable exceptions. Perhaps the closest in intent is the (auto)biography of South African jazz singer and pianist Sathima Bea Benjamin, written jointly with Carol Muller, called *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz* (Duke, 2011). While *Musical Echoes* constituted an important look at gender and jazz in South African music, the aspirations of the authors to truly write together, to create a collaborative and polyvocal text, fell short by their own account. In contrast, while reading *Roy Cape*, readers may end up feeling as though they are sitting around a coffee table in Trinidad with Guilbault and Cape, passing around old pictures and telling school stories or reminiscing about bands, sometimes with friends dropping by to *lime* (laugh, joke, drink, and tell stories).

This sense of intimacy derives from how the authors represent their journey together through the convention of a *conversation* between Guilbault and Cape. In truth, sometimes the text more closely resembles a traditional interview transcript, but often it achieves the feeling for the reader of interloping on a conversation. There are passages in one or another's voice, and there are also sections that bring in the voices of Cape's colleagues and fellow musicians. It is a strength of the book that the authors have chosen to maintain the sense of a dialogic revelation of biographic material, rather than producing a seamless and synthesized narrative. Intriguingly, the voices of the two authors achieve a different kind of balance in almost every chapter, as they approach their storytelling through multiple techniques.

Something interesting seems to happen when musical scholarship turns toward depth-oriented life stories of musicians: often the focus becomes much more about work (if even a "labour of love" as the authors stress). Whereas community ethnographies might emphasize themes such as the connections between musical style and identity, musicians' life stories often pivot back to the effort involved in learning to play, practicing/rehearsing, touring, gigging, developing a reputation, and attempting to achieve success. The themes that Guilbault and Cape explore throughout the book aren't imposed on the narrative but rather seem to grow out of Cape's experiences, struggles, friendships, aesthetics, and ideology. What is involved in surviving as a gigging musician in a small country with a musical calendar dominated by the buildup to a single event (Carnival)? How do you keep a professional band together, obtaining contracts and reasonable salaries, under such circumstances? I can't think of any other work in ethnomusicology that explores these seemingly mundane but absolutely critical topics with such sensitivity and insight.

A revealing section of the book is written in Guilbault's voice and chronicles a Carnival in which she heard Cape's band playing for a cavalcade of calypsonians in the Spektakula calypso tent, and then followed his band on a float in the Mardi Gras road march, and then some years later caught his band backing soca singer Destra Garcia in a Toronto nightclub. Imagine the exhaustion produced by having to keep current in such multiple contexts of performance, some of which (as they do at Carnival) all seem

to happen at once. By performing in Carnivals that take place in cities with large expatriate communities in Canada, the US, and the UK, Cape and his fellow musicians inscribe the patterns of migration of Trinbagonian and other Caribbean emigrants and help to maintain the cultural ties that make a larger global Caribbean community feel concrete. It is another form of circulation for a peripatetic musician; in describing Cape's career, Guilbault speaks often of the "regimes of reputation and circulation" that have defined that career.

Chapter 1 chronicles how Cape grew up musically in a Belmont orphanage, learning tailoring and the craft of clarinet playing. We get a sense for difficult family life at the lower ends of the poverty spectrum in Trinidad, the impact of the Catholic orphanage schools, and the lively urban street life and music that surrounded the young Roy Cape. In Chapter 2, we encounter Cape in the early arc of his career, as he joins and performs in a succession of bands. The chapter is enlivened by album covers from the period and by the descriptions of the bands' cosmopolitan mix of songs. Cape and Guilbault bore down into Cape's sound aesthetics in Chapter 3, even his choice of mouthpieces and reeds, looking not only at his sound production but the habits of listening that produced his individualistic and highly identifiable timbre. Chapter 4 focuses on Cape as a bandleader, especially his ability to get gigs, run rehearsals, maintain personnel, and develop repertory. For me, Chapter 4 constitutes the "meat and potatoes" of the book: it is where Guilbault and Cape explore the themes that propel this account forward, and it is

also where their dialogue becomes most interwoven.

In the next chapter the two authors select photos gathered from over Cape's career, on which both Cape and Guilbault comment (Chapter 5); they then arrange commentary ("testimonials") from those who have performed with Roy Cape over the years in Chapter 6. The final chapter revisits themes of reputation and circulation, and it looks at border crossing, touring globally, networking, and disseminating/transmitting the tradition (one young musician calls Cape the "university of the Local Music" [p. 227]).

As I noted above, *Roy Cape* is an experimental work of biography: Guilbault and Cape explore different ways of engaging with each other and with the narrative throughout. Some will strike readers as more successful than others, although not all readers will likely agree on which. Personally, I found Chapter 6 ("Working With Roy: Musicians and Friends Speak"), the chapter of testimonials, simply too disruptive to the flow of the rest of the book. Whatever one thinks about any of these strategies for dialogic writing, it is indisputable that they emerge directly from the honesty and reflexivity with which both authors approach their collaboration—they are representing their journey together *along with their struggle to find a way to respect the different qualities of their voices in the mix.*

This book is a moving account of the musical life of Roy Cape with much to teach all of us about the musical labour of love that goes into the production of successful careers in popular music, especially in a small postcolonial nation like Trinidad and Tobago. And in their own polyvocal labour of love, the two

authors have shone a light on a possible path forward for writing about music in a way that respects the individualistic and idiosyncratic nature of musical experience, the agency of musicians at the margins, and the mutually constitutive nature of musical ideas and musical practice. 🍀

REFERENCES

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Popular Music Matters: Essays in Honour of Simon Frith. 2014. Dir. Lee Marshall et Dave Laing. Surrey : Ashgate. 235 pp., relié, index.

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Un livre en l'honneur de Simon Frith était de l'ordre des choses prévisibles tant l'homme et son œuvre ont marqué le développement de l'étude des musiques populaires et de la sociologie de l'art des trente dernières années. Si l'on s'en remet aux éditeurs du présent ouvrage, Frith est l'un des auteurs les plus cités dans l'étude des musiques pop (1). C'est à l'occasion de son départ à la retraite de l'Université d'Édimbourg en 2013 (Frith étant né en 1946) que Dave Laing (dont la carrière journalistique puis académique à l'Université de Liverpool est parallèle à celle de Frith) et Lee Marshall (sociologue et professeur à l'Université de Bristol) ont caressé le projet de publier

un ouvrage collectif en l'honneur de leur collègue. Le collectif a finalement vu le jour en 2014 avec plus de 14 chapitres. Ces derniers sont augmentés d'une préface signée par le critique de rock Robert Christgau (l'une des grandes plumes de *Village Voice*) et d'une postface signée par Andrew Goodwin (professeur d'études médiatiques à Berkeley), à quoi s'ajoutent des textes courts rédigés par Jon Savage, Karen Lury, Kevin Milburn et Sarah Thornton, qui sont des témoignages personnels de leurs liens tissés avec Frith.

Ces témoignages sont sympathiques, mais ils accentuent surtout la dimension « réseautage » du livre, de laquelle ressort le caractère consacré du procédé, le parcours exemplaire de l'homme justifiant les honneurs. Car dans ce genre de livre sous forme d'hommage opère toujours une tension entre le désir de célébration et le désir de dépassement, ce qui est observable dans ce cas-ci. On en retiendra le fait que la qualité des contributions se situe davantage dans les chapitres que dans les témoignages, notamment ceux qui surmontent le caractère événementiel de l'ouvrage pour discuter les idées de Frith, en rappeler leur attrait ou les mettre en perspective, puis les critiquer ou les dépasser pour faire progresser les connaissances.

En ce sens, le collectif proposé par Laing et Marshall constitue une véritable contribution scientifique : on peut observer au fil des pages des analyses fines et des concepts en phase avec les réalités musicales actuelles (comme on le verra plus loin), bien que la longueur des chapitres (de 8000 à 9000 mots) freine la possibilité d'études poussées. Les deux éditeurs expliquent ainsi le résultat obtenu : « Bien qu'il y ait des chapitres qui présentent un