

folk legacy of white Americans. Considered in this light, the Trio's popularity with young, white, privileged college students becomes perhaps more explicable than Bush would like to admit. The issue of race is perhaps most explicit in the song "The Tijuana Jail," in which white Californians are oppressed by evil Mexicans, an issue that resonates in right-wing politics to this day. Other songs, however, illustrate this with far more musical subtlety. "Coplas," from the Trio's first album, is a case in point. Guard delivers the Spanish lyrics with a driving, visceral intensity; his performance is thoroughly convincing and pulls the listener along with a vigorous energy. In the bridge, Reynolds and Shane then deliver insinuating comments in a pseudo-Spanish accent (à la "The Tijuana Jail") and pseudo-Mariachi whoops and hollers. It's an odd mix, in that Guard provides a compelling argument for the style (in his performance), but the rest of the arrangement makes its underlying racism abundantly clear, a kind of "Mariachi minstrelsy," as a colleague of mine put it.

Of course, their stroking of the sensibilities of their white collegiate audience was hardly the only component of the Trio's success. The entire folk revival was, in a certain sense, an illusion, but the Trio had the power, for generations of fans, to make that illusion vitally real and powerful. From a personal standpoint, I suspect that many of my musical interests were sparked, to some extent, by my childhood exposure to some parents' collection of albums by the Kingston Trio, Chad Mitchell Trio, Peter, Paul and Mary, and the New Christy Minstrels, among other such groups. There also seems to be little question that the current preoccupation with acoustic "roots music" (again, among young, white performers and audiences) would not be as prevalent as it is, were it not for the bands of the folk revival.

This book is an important contribution to the history of the folk revival, and deserves a place in any comprehensive music collection. As a history, however, it is a starting point that will provide a strong, if sometimes flawed, foundation for future research into the social context of the Trio, the copious primary literature surrounding the group and other folk revival perform-

ers, and the political, social, and musical aspects of the Trio's legacy.

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*Library of Congress*

**Grateful Dead and the Art of Rock Improvisation.** By David Malvinni. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013. [xvii, 277 p. ISBN 9780810882553 (hardcover), \$45; ISBN 9780810883482 (e-book), \$44.99.] Music examples, illustrations, tables, appendix, bibliography, index.

Over the past fifteen years, scholarship on the Grateful Dead has blossomed, with vibrant and illuminating articles filling the pages of a peer-reviewed journal (*Dead Studies*) and multiple volumes of interdisciplinary essays (Jim Tuedio and Stan Spector, eds., *The Grateful Dead in Concert: Essays on Live Improvisation* [Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010], to name just one). Due to the perception that one must use technical musical language to discuss music, much of this fine work has centered on sociological, philosophical, economic, religious, historical, and communicative aspects of the Grateful Dead and their fervent fan base, the Deadheads. The main exceptions to this rule include analytical essays on Dead compositions and improvisations by musicologists and music theorists such as Michael Kaler, Graeme M. Boone, and Shaugn O'Donnell (Michael John Kaler, "Jamming the Blues: The Grateful Dead's Development of Models for Rock Improvisation," *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 9, no. 1 [2013]; Graeme M. Boone, "Tonal and Expressive Ambiguity in 'Dark Star'" in *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis*, eds. John Covach and Graeme M. Boone [New York: Oxford University Press, 1997], 171–210; and Shaugn O'Donnell, "Bobby, Béla, and Borrowing in 'Victim or the Crime'" in *All Grateful Instruments: The Contexts of the Grateful Dead Phenomenon*, ed. Nicholas G. Meriwether [Newcastle, Eng.: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007], 38–51.)

David Malvinni's *Grateful Dead and the Art of Rock Improvisation* is therefore a necessary addition to the growing secondary literature on the music of the Grateful Dead.

Malvinni aims for a comprehensive survey of the Dead's entire career, attempting to elucidate the secrets behind "the transformative effect of music that does not seem to apply to other bands in the rock tradition" (p. 5). Part of Malvinni's agenda is to correct what he perceives as a musicological bias against the band (pp. 9–10). Therefore, he situates Grateful Dead jamming within the historical and social contexts of improvisation. He plumbs a variety of improvisational theories germane to the Dead's eclectic, countercultural interests: he finds a model for the band/audience energy interaction in Karlheinz Stockhausen's concept of "intuitive music" (pp. 107–9), he compares the synergy between fixed and improvised elements in a Grateful Dead jam to Indian ragas (pp. 104–5), and he spends considerable time exploring the complex relationship between the Dead and blues (pp. 27–34) and both modal and fusion jazz styles (pp. 112–15, 158–60).

Following the introductory chapter, in which Malvinni considers issues of authenticity, band historiography, and philosophy (both Heidegger and Deleuze loom large in Malvinni's thinking), he proceeds chronologically through the band's career, choosing one representative performance of selected songs for analysis; however, there is no systematic approach to improvisational analysis. Malvinni lists some jams in meticulous tables, in which melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and other sonic events are noted alongside track timings, allowing for the reader to follow along (e.g., the analysis of "Viola Lee Blues" from 26 April 1969, p. 53). More often, he chronicles a jam in narrative prose with track timings, describing selected musical events such as significant note choices, rhythmic displacements, or changes of mode (e.g., the analysis of "Sugaree" from 19 May 1977, pp. 210–11). Other times he mentions a significant version of a song but then treats it to only one or two inadequate paragraphs (e.g., "Playing in the Band" from 6 August 1974, pp. 154–55). This lack of consistency results in an unevenness in the quality of the analyses. A visual, non-tabular aid might have complemented some of these long prose passages; however, the only musical figures provided are transcriptions of certain melodies.

His most extensive treatment of a jam is reserved for "Dark Star," a song that he rightly maintains "signals the richest, riskiest, and most complex of the band's improvisations" (p. xvii). The mammoth version from 24 April 1972 forms the centerpiece of chapter 4, "'Dark Star': Theorizing Improvisation." In table 4.2 (pp. 118–20) and in the lengthy exposition that follows, Malvinni explicates the mechanics of this particular "Dark Star." Alone, the table format does not always work; for example, the ambiguous entry at 5:07 reads "Garcia E-F oscillation, settling on E, while piano on B (above); Weir complementing" (p. 118). The context for these pitches is unclear; we do not know whether guitarist Jerry Garcia is referring to an E-Phrygian collection or merely a chromatic upper neighbor, and whether these pitches operate within a localized E-minor tonality or against the A-major key of the composition. Equally vague is the nature of rhythm guitarist Bob Weir's "complementing."

Malvinni clarifies the matter in his written episodic analysis, noting that Garcia settles into "the Phrygian note set, E, F, D," and that his invocation of this particular modal collection "functions as an alteration, a quasi blue note in this context, rather than a full-blown modal shift" (p. 125). His play-by-play description of salient moments in the "Dark Star" jam is taut, effective, and highlights the mix of modal melodic sets, polyphony, harmonic ambiguity, and avant-garde noise that is the crux of the best Dead improvisations.

In addition to the close readings of specific performances, Malvinni identifies a number of important general theories of Grateful Dead improvisational practice that are crucial for a holistic understanding of their musical style. For instance, he writes that "Garcia's contrast between various scalar patterns . . . over a strong independent bass counterpoint accounts for much of the richness of the Dead's early improvisations" (p. 64), and then immediately identifies the jamming practice of "That's It for the Other One" as a juxtaposition of E-minor-pentatonic and E-Dorian collections (p. 65). Elsewhere, a comment made in passing helps to explain global tendencies in the Dead's improvisation, such as "accompaniment in the Dead is best thought

as an independent, polyphonic part" (p. 117).

Like all Deadheads, Malvinni loves this music, a sentiment clear from his passionate prose. Yet he seems to lose sight of his audience, or perhaps tries to cast too wide a net of inclusion. The preface claims that the book will rely on traditional elements of pitch-based musicological analysis such as Roman-numeral harmonic designations. Yet in the introduction, he acknowledges that his use of musical jargon might "be a stumbling block to those not versed in music theory" (p. xvii). Before the book has begun in earnest, Malvinni already seems unsure of his audience.

A larger issue is that Malvinni lapses into a habit of discussing the band as though he were speaking to other Deadheads. As a Deadhead, I realized that I was only able to follow a certain sentence or analytical comment because my knowledge base matches the author's, as when he notes an instrumental reference to the melody of the lyric "pouring its light into ashes" from "Dark Star," assuming the reader knows this melody (p. 124). In other places, Malvinni uses the colloquial language of Deadheads rather than the precise language of music analysis. Some of the events listed in table 4.2 (pp. 118–20) include such vague statements as "back down, keyboard part," "textural focus, neat arpeggiated thing," "we have reached landing," and "classic licks."

As a result, the prose oscillates between scholarly discourse and the Deadhead speech patterns that establish and delineate Deadhead identity (Natalie J. Dollar, "'Show Talk': Cultural Communication within One U.S. American Speech Community, Deadheads," *Journal of the Northwest Communication Association* 27 [1999]: 101–20). The monograph's organization mirrors Grateful Dead jamming: there are many independent strains of thought, frequent tangents, constant cross-referencing to other performances, and sometimes it feels as though the connective fabric is on the edge of falling apart. It certainly reflects the spirit of the music and the band's ethos, but falls short of the highest scholarly rigor. Furthermore, Malvinni does not cite recent music theory articles that seem especially pertinent to his discussions of modality (e.g., Nicole Biamonte, "Triadic Modal and Pentatonic Patterns in Rock

Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 32, no. 2 [Fall 2010]: 95–110). Despite this, rock scholars will find that portions of the book can be used to effectively teach lessons about the Grateful Dead, as well as principles of group improvisation and modality in rock music.

There are a number of minor but frustrating shortcomings. Overall, the prose suffers from a lack of careful proofreading, including not only typographical errors but incomplete sentences, omitted words, and other usage errors that frequently mar the flow of reading. Malvinni occasionally makes reference to a concept or fact that had not been previously introduced: for example, he mentions the "Tiger jam" on pages 53 and 58 but does not define the term until page 89.

The book works best when the reader listens along with the cited performances. Malvinni wisely selects officially released versions of songs to analyze, ensuring not only standout jams but excellent sound quality. Generally this makes for easy-to-follow jam charts and analytical prose; however, some of his choices pose access problems to the average reader. The version of "That's It for the Other One" analyzed on pages 64–69 is from the box set *Fillmore West 1969: The Complete Recordings* (Grateful Dead Records LC3213 [2005]), a limited-edition collection, unavailable through any streaming service, that sells for over \$500 on the secondary market. This limitation essentially prevents most readers from following this important analysis. The centerpiece of his chapter 4 "Dark Star" exegesis is taken from a 24 April 1972 concert, available for purchase or on streaming applications (*Rockin' the Rhein with the Grateful Dead*, Rhino R2 78921 [2004], 3 CDs). However, Malvinni takes his track timings for this monumental analysis from the sold-out, limited-edition box set *Europe '72: The Complete Recordings* (Rhino GRA2-6023 [2011], 73 CDs). Thus, the reader following along with this important analysis must add four seconds to every referenced timing (there are nearly one hundred) while listening to the more widely available *Rockin' the Rhein* version.

Malvinni claims that the type of improvisation manifested in "Dark Star" is "singular in the history of popular rock music" (p. 99). The same improvisational parame-

ters, however, govern some compositions performed by Phish, who are often linked to the Grateful Dead by virtue of their shared approach to live jamming and their overlapping, fervent audience. Malvinni therefore provides a precedent and a methodological approach for the analysis of Phish improvisations and the performance history of a Phish song such as "Tweezer," which, like the Dead's "Dark Star," constantly "refer[s] to itself and its own historical unfolding" (p. 99).

Still, because the Grateful Dead seem to defy most existing models for writing about improvisation, a monograph that sets out to examine the Grateful Dead's oftentimes alchemical style of group improvisation, to place it within the existing discourse on improvisation, and to examine its philosophical underpinnings is both welcome and (perhaps overly) ambitious. Much of the book is likely too technical for average rock fans and Deadheads without backgrounds in music theory, although the latter, especially, will find many passages that intuitively resonate.

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**The Art of Nick Cave: New Critical Essays.** Edited by John H. Baker. Bristol: Intellect, 2013. [vi, 282 p. ISBN 9781841506272 (paperback), \$35.50; (e-book), \$20.] Illustrations, bibliography.

**Autobiography.** By Morrissey. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2013. [459 p. ISBN 9780399171543 (hardcover), \$30; ISBN 9780143107507 (paperback), \$18.] Illustrations.

Editor John H. Baker, a faculty member in English, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies at the University of Westminster, has assembled this work, a collection of critical essays on Australian rock musician Nick Cave, best known for the musical acts Birthday Party, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, and Grinderman. Nick Cave has a cultlike following, which may have inspired this work. His songs, as well as his books, plays, and other output, draw inspiration from the Bible, and he stated in an interview with

the *Guardian* that most of his songs can fall under the themes of love, possession, and violent death (Simon Hattenstone, "Old Nick," *Guardian*, 22 February, 2008, <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2008/feb/23/popandrock.features>, accessed 19 September 2014). Musically, Cave has been inspired most dramatically by Lou Reed and David Bowie. More recently, he can be classified as Southern Gothic, having provided some of the haunting music for HBO's *True Detective* series.

Baker explains in the introduction that the essays were culled from a one-day conference on Nick Cave organized by the University of Westminster, and that "papers on his work outside of songwriting would be particularly welcome" (p. 5). Perhaps because Baker is himself an English professor, he has included essays that focus almost exclusively on the literary aspects of Nick Cave's work and very little on his music. The book is divided into five parts: "Cave, the Songwriter," "Murder Ballads," "Film and Theatre," "Influences," and "Sacred and Profane." The contributors are primarily faculty in English, theater, and music at universities worldwide. Each essay has a bibliography, but there is no master bibliography for the book, nor is there an index. For the most part, while some essays could be read or reviewed out of context, the majority work best as complementary pieces of a larger body of Cave scholarship. This book is not for the casual appreciator of Nick Cave: the essays require a working knowledge of the singer's life, his interest in theology and religion, and the folk tales and legends referred to in the songs.

The first essay explores *The Boatman's Call* and is based entirely on the author's interpretation of Cave's lyrics. It is somewhat dry and challenging to read, much like a serious literary analysis of a poem or short story. The author does not use literary jargon or write in an exclusionary way, but instead analyzes the lyrics so deeply that it may be difficult for casual listeners of these songs to appreciate. For example, on page 16, the author, in describing the song "Lime-Tree Arbour," says "tactile experience reaffirms itself again, as in the opening track's potent image of being held in the beloved's arms." The author also assumes that the reader has seen Wim Wenders's *Wings of Desire* and will accept