

## Review

Johnson, B., ed. 2016. *Antipodean Riffs*. Sheffield: Equinox. ISBN 978-1-78179-2-803 (hbk). 306 pp.

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While the study of jazz from musicological and theoretical perspectives has been around for some time, it has gained substantial traction in the last decade thanks to the persistence of scholars globally, supported by the rise of journals such as *Jazz Perspectives* and *Jazz Research Journal*. Johnson's edited collection is a welcome addition to growing scholarship on jazz in the Oceania region, much of which Johnson himself has notably generated.

In this context, it is refreshing to see the publication of an edited collection, over the monograph, extolling the values of jazz studies, in which we can find multiple voices, perspectives and critiques, and perhaps moreover, evidence of flourishing interest in the field. *Antipodean Riffs* also represents a range of methodological approaches, including chapters based on archival, observational and ethnographic research, in addition to music theory analyses. The focus for Johnson's book centres on Australia, though scenes and sounds from Asia and New Zealand also play a small part to collectively comprise the Oceanic region. The book as a whole does its part to push back against the 'default' understanding of jazz and its related themes as a US-centric culture, a misconception that is noted several times within its pages.

The volume's contents circulate around several primary frameworks. Case studies of scenes or artists feature frequently—for example Tipping's evaluation of Melbourne and Wellington scenes in search of localized 'sounds', or Ward's micro-analysis of Australian influences on New Zealand swing scenes. 'Alternative' histories that expand upon the story of Australian jazz as we might know it also play a key role, as found in Aline Scott-Maxwell's exploration of the interplay between exotic Asian music and sounds with ideas of jazz music. Similarly, close study of artists, their lives, music and impact provide more personalized accounts of jazz history, for example Karl Neuenfeldt's study of the work of little-known Indigenous jazz vocalist Dulcie Pitt/Georgia Lee, while in-depth musical analyses

are also presented by Sandy Janette Evans (a study of expressive identity in three sax players) and Jane Galbraith (on The Necks and the extension of the piano trio format). In its fourteen chapters, the collection considers some of the key interdisciplinary intersections within jazz studies, such as gender, ethnicity and place.

The progression of chapters is demarcated by three themes—'cultural contexts', 'infrastructures' and 'musicians'. While the first and third sections are well-populated, the intermediary concept creates something of an imbalance. Chapters here include two on festivals, while the third is the aforementioned contribution by Karl Neuenfeldt, which seems to belong much more comfortably to the 'musicians' section of the book. This allocation aside, it seems a little problematic that, while throughout the book (and notably, in much scholarship beyond it) there is a strong notion that Australian jazz can possess its own sound and approaches, this seems to exist in isolation from the infrastructures that support its performance, when looking at the volume holistically. Certainly, beyond festivals, the institution that is Australian jazz also rests upon venues, audiences, and significantly, education. In this way, the book makes more of an impact in describing scenes, musicians and deviant histories, than making waves in this particular area. This is perhaps a reflection on general trends in much of the existing scholarship on jazz, and therefore the concept of 'infrastructure' represents something to be followed up in future research.

This positioning aside, the book does well to balance authorial voices—between male and female contributors, and also those identified as academics, performers, or in some instances both. This collection would likely interest scholars with a developing enthusiasm in the area, and is certainly suitable for students who want to get an idea of methods and approaches to musicological jazz studies in general. *Antipodean Riffs* represents diverse ideas on Australasian jazz, evidencing pride and passion and an indication of invigorating and insightful research to come.