



Tore Mortensen
Fortællinger om jazz. Dens vej gennem Statsradiofonien, Danmarks Radio og DR
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The book's stories begin in the 1920s when jazz was regarded as a cultural form too low for national radio and end in the 2000s as jazz had become a cultural form too high for national radio! In between, Tore Mortensen describes what went right and then what went wrong thus making this an account of the rise and fall of jazz in the Danish National Radio. Eleven authors contribute to the account, among them Erik Moseholm, Ole Izard Høyer, and Thomas A. Jakobsen. Høyer and Jakobsen are employed at the Centre for Danish Jazz History which is led by the main author, and the book is a result of the Centre's work and a research network grant from FKK (the Danish Council for Independent Research | Humanities).

Generically, the book is a historical account of 90 years of interaction between music and media. Mortensen divides the history into, at first, three periods (1925–59, 1959–96, and 1996 to the present) coinciding with the years the National Radio changed names from Statsradiofonien (the state broadcasting corporation) to Danmarks Radio (Danish National Radio) to DR. Then the history is divided into six periods (1925–50, 1950–60, 1960–75, 1975–91, 1991–2001, 2001–9). This is complemented by two chapters on television (1959–75, 1975–2009). It is not explained why the general and the more specific divisions are not quite compatible. The author sensibly distinguishes between five different kinds of programmes: (musical) entertaining, historical, critically informative, creative, and news.

This account of jazz and jazz culture in relation to the national broadcasting corporation in Denmark is mainly informed by Danish traditions for jazz history and less by Danish traditions for media history. Internationally, modern jazz historiography superseded old school jazz history with a vengeance in the early 1990s but there are not many traces of that here. The historiographic tools used are those of the anecdote, the concept of a golden age, and the doings of great Danish men. One might argue that it is oral history, but at no point is the writer separated from the narrator, which one would expect from an oral history. What is – among other things – a history of mediatisation of a musical genre is not present in the narrative. The influence of changing media policies through the years are used to structure the narrative, but information about and analysis of how media policies, technologies, programme production restrictions, etc. influenced the genre in general and programme production specifically is scarce. In this way media historiography does not seem to be part of the theoretical horizon.

It is indeed stories about men. A few women are mentioned, but even if it is true that most of the people involved were men at least one of the 20–25 'portraits' ought to include a woman (Grete Hemmeshøj for example) or a reflection on the 'missing' women. In these global times it is also surprising that there is no mention of jazz and media in other countries and no references whatsoever to international research – not even on music and radio (e.g. Alf Björnberg and Stephen Barnard). Apparently, the book was written for and by the local jazz aficionados, a relatively small group of male connoisseurs and collectors, whose habitus equals 'good music' with 'serious' music (p. 54) and whose tastes prefer the 'non-commercial' Radio Jazz Group, an ensemble that the audience ignored despite its artistic qualities (p. 119). There is nothing wrong about liking such exceptional music, but it is not a very scholarly approach to place such a taste as an implicit premise for a historical account. Last but not least, the

eternal bickering of ‘the jazz people’ about the merits of one musician or another, which seems to be the lifeblood of the journalistic part of the milieu, is strangely missing from the account.

When all this is said, it must be mentioned that the book does contain a lot of valuable information: the mentioning of a host of jazz programmes throughout the whole period, the list of programmes in the Radio Jazz Club series 1947–53 (pp. 42–45), the list of contributors to Jazz News (p. 93), the overview of the radio big band’s activities (pp. 164–65), and the numerous portraits of radio people broadcasting on jazz. All this will probably prove important to further studies on music and radio. Also, more than 90 per cent of the spreads contain pictures, most of them musicians’ pictures taken by Jan Persson, but the programme hosts are well documented as well. In several places the details of the everyday life of the radio staff is illuminated and the accounts of changing policies and power structures are a useful background to this. So even though *Fortællinger om jazz* is methodological and theoretical old school and lacks a number of important perspectives it delivers useful information for future jazz and media studies.

Morten Michelsen



Michael Hauser

Traditional Inuit Songs from the Thule Area

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Michael Hauser’s two-volume publication offers an immensely rich study of the traditional drum-song of the Inuit, primarily the Inughuit from the Thule area, and from other arctic areas, e.g. Baffin Island. The nucleus of the work consists of Hauser’s ‘transcriptions and scientific processing’ (p. 19) of professor Erik Holtved’s collection of 134 traditional Inuit songs, mostly drum-songs, recorded in 1937 in the pre-World War II Thule area (Uummanaq, today called Pituffik). The analyses of this early material is supplemented by Hauser’s own substantial collections of approx. 340 songs (recorded in 1962 with Bent Jensen) and 240 songs (recorded in 1984 with Pauline M. Lumholt) from Qaanaaq, where the former Thule population settled after being forcibly removed in 1953 when the Thule Air Base was built. The book, dedicated to Holtved (1899–1981), is as much an accomplishment of a life’s work of his predecessor as of his own.

Traditional Inuit Songs from the Thule Area is a monumental piece of work in more than one sense: by its sheer physical proportions, by the huge number of transcriptions and analyses, by the effort put into it – Hauser has worked on more than 800 hours of recordings – and by the meticulous and thorough processing of the data. It is a veritable must-have for future researchers in the field of Inuit songs as well as for those who care to know what to listen for, or is looking for something specific, when venturing into the recording collections.

The first section provides an overview of the main sources of knowledge of traditional Inuit music originating from expeditions, collections, and studies relating to Inuit musical culture in the Thule area, on the Eastern and Western coasts of Greenland, and in Canada. In the second section, Hauser relates his deliberations on the analyses, the pentatonic tone material, and the adjusted notational system, according to which he transcribed Holtved’s, as well as his own collections, in order to facilitate comparisons. His accounts of the applied phonetic system, notational symbols, and abbreviations (pp. 137–39) are inserted in this sec-