



Microgroove: Forays into Other Music

John Corbett

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Microgroove continues John Corbett's exploration of diverse musics, with essays, interviews, and musician profiles that focus on jazz, improvised music, contemporary classical, rock, folk, blues, post-punk, and cartoon music. Corbett's approach to writing is as polymorphous as the music, ranging from oral history and journalistic portraiture to deeply engaged cultural critique. Corbett advocates for the relevance of "little" music, which despite its smaller audience, is of enormous cultural significance. He writes on musicians as varied as Sun Ra, P.J. Harvey, Koko Taylor, Steve Lacy, and Helmut Lachenmann; and among other topics, he discusses recording formats, investigates the relationship between music and visual art, dance, and poetry, and with Terri Kapsalis, analyzes the role of female orgasm sounds in contemporary popular music. Above all, Corbett privileges the importance of improvisation; he insists on the need to pay close attention to "other" music, and celebrates its ability to open up pathways to new ideas, fresh modes of expression, and unforeseen ways of knowing.

Microgroove: Forays into Other Music Details

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Author : John Corbett

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Mills College Library says

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Phil Overeem says

I could go on reading Corbett daily for the rest of my life. This is largely interviews, but they are with musicians not of the accessible stripe, and Corbett a) knows how to pick 'em; b) knows how to engage them; and c) knows how to question them in order to force them to clarify their ideas. When the pieces are in essay form, he writes with energy, passion, playfulness, and immense knowledge of the world of improvised music.

dimwig says

I HAD LOTS OF FUN READING THIS BOOK

i mean i don't know what else to say it's very affirming stuff re lots of stuff i care v deeply about specifically IMPROVISATION also eclecticism, interesting to mix interviews and magazine articles and reflective/exploratory musings with random bits of more academic stuff re use of female orgasm in pop music & orientalism in american experimental composition.

Bill Hsu says

(7/27) From the Introduction:

... [Derek Bailey] told me that he couldn't imagine any reason that a person would come hear him play unless they were attracted to the sound of what he did. Wow, I thought, you've got to be pretty deep down the rabbit hole to find that sound *attractive*.

That's an interesting take on this music. I've increasingly found that I have to be attracted to the timbre of the sounds before I can be totally engaged with the rest of the goings-on. I *did* find Bailey's guitar sound attractive, from as far back as I could remember, probably in duet with Evan Parker's twisty, spooling soprano sax. And more recently, Martin Kuchen's baritone sax, Pascal Battus and Dafne Vicente-Sandoval's raspy sandpaper-y duets, Jeremiah Cymerman's Pale Horse trio, Nashaz by the Berlin/Lebanon quartet of Neumann/Sehnaoui/Thieke/Vorfeld, and the electronics of Marc Kate, Bagdassarian/Baltschun/Beins, and Choi/Drumm/Hong. What pulls me in immediately are the attractive surfaces of the sounds; then I look for the connections. I guess I've already been deep in the rabbit hole for years...

Update: the interviews are great, the essays can be hit and miss.

Monica says

Mostly of interest for those interested in free jazz/improv although Corbett writes about other types of music. I especially enjoyed an interview of Corbett on his record-collecting passion.

Duke Press says

"Corbett has just published a terrific new anthology of his writing called *Microgroove*, the long delayed follow up to his 1994 book *Extended Play*. . . . There's a lot of great stuff in the new book—which went through multiple iterations over the years, scrapped and revisited several times—but in his introduction to a piece called 'Twenty Seven Enthusiasms: A Spontaneous Listening Session,' Corbett expresses a major part of what makes his work so special. 'Show and tell was always my favorite part of school,' he writes, eventually explaining that 'you accumulate things not to own them, but to share them.' It's what he's done as a writer, a music presenter, and, in recent years, a gallerist, at Corbett vs. Dempsey." — Peter Margasak *The Chicago Reader* Included preview of his events.

10/02/2015

"One of the more interesting features of *Microgroove* is the inclusion of multiple pieces on some of the artists. This allows Corbett to consider them from different angles or over time, providing a fuller picture of their art in the process. That, combined with the eclectic scope of Corbett's interests, makes of *Microgroove* a rich, multifaceted survey of some of the more challenging artists of the last two decades." — Daniel Barbiero *Avant Music News*

10/27/2015

"The far ranging scope of the 53 essays and interviews collected in these nearly 500 pages, dating from 1993 to just last year, reminds us that even within music's commercially neglected fringes complex gradations of sub genre exist, separating the hardcore avant garde devotee from one who thinks they're down because they own a copy of *Space Is the Place*. ... But first and foremost [Corbett] is a devotee of challenging and outré sounds, and his essays are most compelling when he dives headfirst into his chronicles with a fan's enthusiasm and verve. ... These pieces beautifully balance serious musical scholarship and critical analysis with the kind of collar grabbing, "give this a listen" excitement that draws us all to music in the first place." — Matt R. Lohr *Jazz Times*

10/28/2015
