



***Made in Finland. Studies in Popular Music.* Edited by Toni-Matti Karjalainen and Kimi Kärki. London: Routledge, 2021. 276 pp. ISBN: 978-0-367-22891-0
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The series *Studies in Popular Music* has been quite successful in presenting popular music research in a globalising world. These windows on various national contexts have considerably widened our understanding of what can be researched in this multidisciplinary field, and how. Moreover, they have restated the importance of the national level, when studying a cultural practice. Too often, music has been situated into 'space and place', ignoring the significance that a certain language, border, passport or army can have in framing, defining and regulating popular music.

This edited volume contributes nicely to the series by presenting a country, Finland, which is 'So sadly neglected and often ignored/A poor second to Belgium when going abroad' (Monty Python 'Finland'). In 14 chapters divided into five parts, plus a fascinating coda, the book presents a variety of musical practices in and about this Nordic country, from well-known heavy metal to hockey novelty songs, from odd 1930s electronic experiment to 1990s minimal techno.

Finland is a country built on a strong political will and its music quickly became a means to support the country's sovereignty and create a national brand. Finnish uniqueness is described in the introduction by Toni-Matti Karjalainen and Kimi Kärki as double-sided: historically working between East and West, and nowadays framed between the local and the global, as artists are continuously negotiating across these scales. The introduction also reveals another significant aspect, which can be easily spotted in international conferences: the Finnish contingent of popular music scholars is widely spread across universities in the country, and shows an impressive range of subjects, themes and theoretical standpoints, contributing greatly to the advancement of academic research on the subject.

The first part of the book collects three chapters about the 'Emerging Foundations of Popular Music in Finland'. Olli Heikkinen examines the way mainstream music in Finland has shifted across the years, not always following an Anglo-American lead, but dealing in fascinating ways with foreign influences and accentuations of Finnishness. Terhi Skaniakos follows a particular era in the late 1970s and early 1980s which saw the emergence of *Suomirock*. Her analysis is discourse-based, with references to media attention and societal change. Toni-Matti Karjalainen carries out a fascinating study of the genesis and development of Finland as a heavy metal nation, focusing on German and British magazines across 20 years and looking into the slow affirmation of Finnish bands abroad, and their defying role in establishing sub-genres such as melodic death metal.

Part II is about 'Environment, Borderlines, Minorities'. Pekka Suutari focuses on Karelian music. Karelia is a sparsely populated but vast region spreading across Finland and Russia. Its language and musical tradition have widely contributed to Finnish culture and cultural life. This heritage took up an uncompromising political role after World War II, when many Karelians were forced to abandon land occupied by the Soviet army and music became a site for memory building. Johannes Brusila introduces us to Swedish-speaking minorities and to their own peculiar identity negotiated discursively, according to the author, in three distinctive

circles. The core is based on the small scale of private performances and third-sector institutions, the middle circle is based on the combination of belongings and affinities within Finland, and the outer circle covers the negotiations across Sweden, Finland and the international market.

Part III discusses transnationalisms. Kari Kallioniemi deals with the 'British invasion' and the way the UK and Finland interacted in different popular music eras from beat to punk, from prog to folk music. Univocal understandings of Finnishness are here put into question by continuous negotiations based on de-anglicisation, imitation and integration. Saijaleena Rantanen deals with a complementary form of transnational activities by focusing on Finnish North Americans and their musical legacy in handwritten and published songbooks, covering love for the home country, workers songs and, surprisingly, gender equality themes.


Part VI concentrates on the Finnish underground and its subcultural dimension. Petri Kuljuntausta guides us through DIY culture and early electronic instruments with bizarre examples of oddball inventors, producing sounds that culminated in the work of celebrated composer Erkki Kurenniemi. Pertti Grönholm puts the spotlight onto minimal techno and the Turku-based Sähkö label, showing that this label's intransigent attitude, developed in raves and bedroom productions, first conquered foreign critics before receiving any attention in the home country itself. Juho Kaitajärvi-Tiekso and Juho Hänninen look at three cases of contemporary underground artists: Jukka Nousiainen, Litku Klemetti and Henrik. They focus on the success of these acts in connection to social media and online platforms, and how new technologies transformed the meaning of the underground scene.

Part V goes back to the wider national community and to the amplification of its significance via sport events and stadium gigs. Kaj Ahlsved analyses the relation between the Lions (the nickname for the Hockey national team) and dedicated songs, ranging from official themes to novelty DIY instant songs. Hanna-Mari Riihimäki and Anna-Elena Pääkkölä write about alternative femininities and how they can queer national discourses via authority, appropriation and parody. They use performance and musicological analyses to combine a genealogy of women musicians with an in-depth study of Alma's 'Dye my Hair' video. Kimi Kärki ends this section with a close analysis of big music events such as the Total Balalaika Show 1993, Eurovision 2006 and Heavy Metal Sibelius 2017. These mega-events carry deep symbolic meanings and reflect various socio-economic and geo-political issues, ranging from the collapse of the Soviet Union to the culmination of the Nokia years and the country's centenary in 2017.

A useful Coda reflects further on issues of music export, genres, reputation and specific target countries, and an Afterword with an interview of Tuomas Holopainen of Nightwish, both by Toni-Matti Karjalainen, close the volume.

One of this book's greatest achievements is showing how popular music produces a very heterogeneous culture. The country's small population, currently 5.5 million, has always given out a sense of cultural homogeneity; however, minorities such as the Swedish-speaking population, Karelians, Roma and Sámi all emerge in several chapters, and the geo-political position between Scandinavia and Russia is made evident and critically assessed. Moreover, the book provides accomplished and well-crafted definitions of key Finnish terms such as *iskelmä*, *Suomirock*, *rauta-lanka*, *humppa* and others. Finally, each chapter has exhaustive reference lists and discographies. Images that will stay for me forever are the band Panasonic

eating raw meat soaked in vodka (p. 150) and the tragic destiny of the Alexandrov Ensemble (p. 207).

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Manchester Unspun. Pop, Property and Power in the Original Modern City.
 By Andy Spinoza. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2023. pp.365. ISBN
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Until his recent retirement, the well-connected Andy Spinoza led a Manchester-based public relations agency. Before that he was editor of *City Life* (1983–1989), Manchester's alternative 'what's on' weekly. When the *Manchester Evening News* (*MEN*) took that over (1989–2005) 'Spin' ran *MEN*'s *Mister Manchester* gossip column. He has known the city's football stars, pop musicians, soap idols and politicians. It is the interplay of these demigods and monsters by which this memoir – covering roughly 1980–2020 – deserves the attention of this journal. After all, there are a number of books about the Manchester music scene, most of them feeble in their delineation of facts and horrible in the quality of writing. Scholars on this subject need a practised and even-keeled editor like Spinoza to lead them through the multiform connections between, say, football manager Sir Alex Ferguson, Simply Red singer Mick Hucknall and pop producer Pete Waterman. Spinoza encountered them 'at the intersection of the city's social life – regeneration, music and football' (p. 224). In particular he focuses on property.

There are plenty of anecdotes of the kind that traditionally decorate memoirs, my favourites here being the *MEN* editor who kept referring to Van Morrissey, and the credible tale of The Smiths' singer hiding from one of his enemies in a fashion store changing room and refusing to come out until his foe had left (p. 226). However, of greater value is Spinoza's attempt to re-examine the muddled Manchester mythology of Factory Records (1978–1993), the suicide of Joy Division's singer Ian Curtis in 1980, the travails of the Hacienda night club (1982–1997, demolished 2000) and the death in 2007 of Tony Wilson, television personality and Factory founder. Wilson often said, 'When forced to pick between truth and legend, print the legend' (p. 280), and a number of Factory faces have obliged him. Spinoza recalls a celebratory book assembled by Factory to mark 10 years of the Hacienda. He was asked by its editor Jon Savage to 'write what you want'. Spinoza did so, comparing the club's original libertarian principles to the 'Faggots are disgusting' banter coming a decade on from Factory's new signing Happy Mondays. According to Spinoza's account, Savage said that this contribution 'pushed the wrong buttons', and he rejected it (pp. 141–143). Instead they printed the legend, and continue to do so.

Aiming in contrast for evidential veracity, Spinoza starts with the arrival in 1979 of Margaret Thatcher's government which delivered to the North 'a Darwinian death sentence to [light and heavy] industry ... Between 1972 and 1984 the city lost 207,000 manufacturing jobs' (pp. 39–41). In 1986 Thatcher abolished