munities in exile. The fact that the contributors come from different countries is a further demonstration of the editors' capacity to have gathered a group of leading historians who adopted a transnational perspective to investigate a transnational phenomenon.

Matteo Binasco

Carole Nelson Trio, *One Day in Winter*, CD Blackstairs Records (689232111922), 2017. $ 15,00/ € 13,40.

One Day in Winter (Blackstairs Records, 2017) is an album by Irish composer, pianist, and saxophonist Carole Nelson, a concept album directly inspired by the landscapes of Carlow, the land-locked county in South East Ireland where the composer lives. It is an accomplished album, evocative and introspective, in a way that manages to be compelling. As a lyrical jazz concept album from Ireland, *One Day in Winter* is a unique proposition. Beyond its strictly musical merit, the album also has significance as an artwork which places itself in a tradition of engagement in, and development of, Irish cultural specificity.

One Day in Winter is the first venture of the Carol Nelson Trio, which sees Nelson on piano (and soprano saxophone in one track), supported by Cormac O'Brien on bass and Dominic Mullen on drums. The album is largely instrumental, with lyrics in two tracks, spoken by Nelson. The Trio is a tight ensemble, but in fact the musicians originally came together for a once-off performance for the Trio Trio Trio Piano Festival in Dublin in 2015, and the idea of the band slowly grew from there. Carole Nelson is best known as one half of Irish jazz-pop duo Zrazy, and her involvement with the band she created with vocalist and composer Maria Walsh in 1991 has continued without a break. In fact, Zrazy released their sixth album, *The Art of Happy Accidents* (Alfi Records), in early 2017, while Nelson's own *One Day in Winter* was released in November of the same year, on the back of the promotional tour with Zrazy.

While the Carole Nelson Trio has a remarkably different musical character from that of Zrazy, there are important points of contact between these overlapping albums. Zrazy is described in its official website as "a unique amalgamation of pop, jazz and celtic influences"[1]. Their take on jazz, while generally upbeat, is also associated with politically committed lyrics which do not shy away from controversial issues; one of Zrazy's most memorable feminist interventions was the recording and performing of a song consisting entirely of the repetition of an actual phone number to access informa-

[1] *Zrazy* official website, <http://www.zrazy.com/about.html> (05/2019).

tion on abortion, at a time when to publicise such a number was illegal in Ireland. By contrast to the outward-directed high energy of Zrazy, the Carole Nelson Trio's sound is lower and slower, the feel introverted, the rhythms more fluent, the politics muted, and Zrazy's pop buoyancy and electronic fluency have been dropped here in favour of a gentle detached contemplation.

Nelson and Walsh have composed for Zrazy separately and together, with Nelson's interest in expansive, lyrically heavier songs being apparent in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, which, remarkably for a music album, was in fact launched by an acclaimed Irish writer, Frank McGuinness. Nelson sang her own lyrics for the first time in that album, in the autobiographical "Night Crossing". The song opens with: "I grew up in London in the same house where / we looked after my father until he was taken. / The house is still standing, someone else lives there. / I took the night crossing back home to Ireland". This interest in narrativity is carried into the very structure of *One Day in Winter*, which is set in one unfolding day. One song is shared by the two albums: the Trio's "Snow is Falling" is a reworking of Nelson's "Snow" for Zrazy.

The more introspective songs in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, and those concerned with memory, were penned by Carole Nelson. Anticipating *One Day in Winter* in its setting, the Zrazy song "Teampall na mBó", about a burial ground for unbaptised babies –a rather unlikely topic for a jazz song–, was inspired by a ruined church in Carlow. "Song for Jim" (co-written with Walsh), dedicated to Nelson's father, is about the precious moments spent with someone waiting for death, and ends with an open question: "I know you think there's nothing else, / we fade away ... / But I have never been that sure". That query is fully investigated in *One Day in Winter*.

The tracks

In devoting itself to a seldom publicly celebrated part of rural Ireland, Carole Nelson Trio's *One Day in Winter* makes a fresh contribution to the Irish jazz tradition, which has tended to prioritise disengagement with Irish themes and with the Irish musical canon. There are important exceptions, such as Irish-inflected work by guitarist Louis Stewart and bassist Ronan Guilfoile, or vocalist Melanie O'Reilly's intersection of lilting and scat. In addition, we have vocalists Dorothy Murphy and Christine Toibín's work with Irish literature (Joyce, Yeats, Muldoon), the *sean-nós* imprint on saxophonist Michael Buckley or vocalist Sue Rynhart, or blues singer Mary Coughlan's taking the pulse of Irish affairs in song commissions, but it has been more common to find once-off trad raids or Irish-content versions.

One Day in Winter is also a rarity as a concept album, a format long ago blasted to bits by single track downloads. As the press release explained, the album "traces the course of one winter's day, from before dawn to moonrise" – rather than sunset, a significant decision as we will see. Further, this one day stands for a lifetime, from the development of consciousness in infancy

to its fading in old age and death. In a remarkable coincidence, Ronan Guilfoyle's jazz suite *Life Cycle*, to premiere in November 2018, will also offer a concentrated vision of a lifetime, an autobiographical account prompted by Guilfoyle's sixtieth birthday. Such a concept may be a rarity in music, but not so in literature, where an allegory of the journey of life is a classical theme in both secular and religious writing. *One Day in Winter*'s parallel structure is thus similar, for example, to that of Woolf's novel *The Waves*, where the unfolding lives of a group of friends mirror the trail of the sun raising and sinking above the sea on a single day.

One Day in Winter begins just before sunrise, with "Beata Viscera" (trans. "Blessed Flesh"), as the landscape is astir with anticipation. It is a striking opening, because the tune is a reworking of a song of the same name for single voice, written around 1200 by the French composer Pérotin. Pérotin is crucial to the development of Western music, because he created a system of notation for rhythm, which allowed different speeds and rhythms to coexist in ever more complex compositions, and he was among the first to compose using chords (as opposed to two lines of plainchant, or "Gregorian" chant), thus opening the way for a "decentering" of the melodic line, and for a new sophistication of harmonies and "commentaries". It makes sense for a jazz album to pay homage to this moment in the history of music, and even to reclaim it. It is also worth noting that composers and aficionados of minimalist and serialist Western music often feel an aesthetic affinity with early music from the medieval period, that is from 500 to 1400. Nelson's version of "Beata Viscera" is in fact reminiscent of the treatment of the song by the Estonian group Vox Clamantis (in their album *Filia Sion*, ECM 2012), an ensemble which specialises on plainchant, early polyphony, *and* contemporary classical music, and is associated with the style-bridging work of Arvo Pärt. Not coincidentally, Irish modernists working in the first half of the twentieth century often hailed medieval Celtic art and monasticism, partly no doubt as a strategy to sidestep the Reformation.

As unexpected as medieval music is in a jazz album, the choice of song also comes as a surprise. The lyrics of Pérotin's "Beata Viscera", omitted from Nelson's rendition, are a Latin text reworking Psalm 45 to honour the Christian figure of the mother of Jesus, seen here as a miraculous virgin mother who, after the physical upheaval of giving birth, retains her "completeness" (*integritas*, often translated as "purity" to signify a body "unsullied" by sexual intercourse, according to Christian teachings). This religious context is perplexing at first. Historically, there are links between jazz, West African religions, and American gospel, but with "Beata Viscera" as a presentation card, Nelson's album is declaring its kinship to European religious music. *Viscera* can be translated as entrails, womb, or offspring, and at one point in the original's lyrics we learn that "the sun, freed, rises pure", so that the metaphorical sun of Jesus can be equated to the day emerging from the womb of

mother nature. The Christian – here Catholic – tradition can thus be transmuted into a form of pantheism, where Nature (as Gaia, as White Goddess, or as interrelationship in deep ecology) generates and extinguishes, while retaining her "completeness". With this conceptual ablution and praise, the album readies itself for the eternal renewal or resurrection of each new day. A tinkling of bells is heard in the background, but rather than church summons they evoke the bells of sheep or cattle moving to pasture, and are suitably grounding.

The second track in *One Day in Winter*, "Sun Rising over the Blackstair", is another instrumental piece. It starts with a gentle slow movement, which metamorphoses into a cascade of light, settling on the piano while the bass comes in – like shadows forming all at once –, and the melody steadies itself, punctured by controlled flickers. The title refers to Blackstairs mountain (732m.). With a distinctive black and grey top, and overlooking vast flatlands, the mountain gives its name to the Blackstairs range, marking the border between county Carlow and county Wexford. Here is where the album, already swerving away from an accepted international language of jazz by invoking early medieval music, situates itself, in a dramatic closeup after "Beata Viscera", on a very specific location. The press release for the album gave the coordenates: "Living between the River Barrow and the Blackstairs Mountains in Carlow gave Carole both the physical and mental landscape for composition". Reviewers have linked Carole Nelson's style to jazz pianists Keith Jarrett and Paul Bley[2], and we may hear too the gentle confidence and self-absorption of Bill Evans, who is often described as the epitome of the European jazz tradition.

With strict temporal logic, the third track is titled "Low Light through bare Trees". It opens with a gently marching drum: the noun, adjectivated by the piano. With several breaks and a rhythm change, the tune perfectly evokes the unexpected shapes, the playful strangeness, of objects whose profile seems to be shifting.

Since the album's story arc stands for a lifetime, this section would seem to correspond to the rise of consciousness and the sketching of individuality, as some kind of uniform voice tentatively emerges in spurts and starts and silences, to then collect itself. It does so by picking up the opening, and moving to a higher note, a higher plane. In track four, "Snow is Falling", we arrive at childhood. With a subject tentatively in place, a predicate begins to be drafted. A curved melody scoops up the mind of a child. Neatly corresponding with the delight in language, this song introduces the spoken word

[2] See Daniel Rorke, "Carole Nelson Trio – *One Day in Winter* – Album Review", *Jazz Ireland*, 16 January 2018, <https://www.jazzireland.ie/blog/album-reviews/168-carole-nelson-trio-one-day-in-winter-album-review.html> (05/2019).

into the album. Carole Nelson's commentary is poised between the poetic and the documental. She says: "You wake up and feel / the cold air take your breath away / And all is new and beautiful / like when you were a child". In a game of perspectives, the speaker is an adult communicating with her adult self, as it recalls itself as a child, when "you make the first footprint / in the perfect snow". After, "[y]ou feel the drift of the land east to west"; that is, you feel, and inaugurate, *time*.

Track five, "Cold Rushing River", also begins in uncertainty with a stretch of undefined sounds, from which gently springs a reprise of the opening "Beata Viscera" with a faster rhythm, followed by variations, as if the same basic substance (rather than just the same basic melody) could reshape itself into a multitude of morphologies, when life literally rushes forward. After evoking the lack of a course, a trickle emerges, and a direction is pursued, but with currents overlapping. The next track, "The World is Full of Love", is firmly delineated. Another instrumental piece, it is driven by a bolero-like pulsing, reminiscent of the popular song "Besame mucho" (trans. "Kiss me a Lot"), an international hit in 1941 and a popular tune with jazz singers and musicians ever since. In the original, the core lyrics demand: "Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me / as if tonight was the last time. / Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me / 'cause I am afraid to lose you again". Composed by the Mexican Consuelo Velázquez when she was a young woman, she later explained that she had written the song before she had ever kissed anyone, simultaneously attracted and repelled by the sinfulness she associated with lust and romance. In Carol Nelson's day-as-life narrative, "The World is Full of Love" may thus remit us to erotic awakening.

In track seven, "The Sky Darkens", the speaker's voice returns. The album's sleeve notes explain that the text is "an adaptation of the Buddhist meditation on ageing and death". Invoking Buddhism in an Irish artwork is, beliefs aside, as effective in bypassing the catholic-protestant divide, as the medievophilia of Irish Revivalists and early modernists once was. The opening words declare that "[a]ll that I hold dear I will leave behind", and remind us that "it is the nature of all things to fade away". The melody meets this with an impassible surface, and unexpectedly incorporates a warmth and frisson perhaps intended as a counterweight, in a joyous treatment of the *tempus fugit* theme. The repeated coupling of "A crow flies / The sky darkens", calls upon us to focus on the present – regardless of its ostensible irrelevance –, and it also serves to relocate this Buddhist idea to Ireland, where the crow is a symbol of the Morrigan, goddess of war (and by way of carrion, associated with crones). "The Silence in Between", the eighth track, is the quietest in the album, and the one where the separate components of the Trio become most conspicuous. Here we fully appreciate the imaginative and rather self-sufficient percussion of Dominic Mullen, and the bass of Cormac O'Brien, who has been described as a "perfect juggler of risk-taking and foundation"

(*ibidem*), and whose contribution is perhaps excessively muted in the album, by contrast to the live performance. A good many songs in *One Day in Winter* start in slowness and lack of definition – here, the tentativeness is sustained, with the deliberate discretion of a spider's web, more emptiness than thread.

Again, there is a remarkable contrast with the tune that follows, "Stories by the Fire", which has the familiarity of a standard Hollywood film score, and the reassuring rhythm one may find on a meditation track or an Irish ballad, where the melody is a means rather than an end. All the preceding gliding and rushing seems to give way to sauntering here – somewhat unjazzily steady. "Stories by the Fire" sounds as if it was meant to accompany lyrics but, alas, there are none. The title's reference to storytelling places the album in a tradition of not merely oral, but aural storytelling, where music also has a place. The title also reminds us that the album is structured as a parable, with the concentration and complexity of a Dickinson poem, but written in the free and easy lexicon of a Whitman. The *One Day in Winter* story comes to an end with the track "Moon Rising over the Blackstair", which takes up some of the preceding threads and moods, with some aural affinity to the sun rising (in track two) and to the safe progression of a story by the fire (in track nine). The track and the album close with two lines on the piano, one grounding and assuring, and another featuring a slight rush of anticipation rising to an unfinished point. The moon is up, and the silence stands before us with a certain majesty. It is an honourable end.

Irish references

The specifically Irish locatedness of *One Day in Winter* has yet to be mentioned by commentators, while, remarkably, Carole Nelson's English background is regularly noted by them. As strikingly, reviews make no mention of the album's concept, which is one of its greatest strengths. Nor are the lyrics commented upon, suggesting a discomfort with autobiography, with poetry, or both. Also remarkably, reviews have characterised Nelson's music by a "lack of complexity", which clearly makes the reviewers a little anxious, and which is as clearly gendered. Consider this, from Cormak Larkin: "The London-born pianist and composer may not have all the flashy chops of some of her male colleagues, but the directness and honesty of her playing – spacious, meditative and open-hearted – more than makes up for it"[3]. With similar double-edginess, reviewer Daniel Rorke declared that: "The compositions are always interesting, yet avoid overt complexity – no small feat indeed for Nelson as composer"[4].

[3] Cormak Larkin, "The Best Jazz This Week: Carole Nelson Trio and GoGo Penguin", *The Irish Times*, 13 January 2018, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/the-best-jazz-this-week-carole-nelson-trio-and-gogo-penguin-1.3349652> (05/2019).

[4] See Rorke, "Carole Nelson", n.p.

One Day in Winter is firmly planted in rural Ireland, and crucially produced by a resident rather than a visitor. Irish connections are further invoked twice, once on each of the tracks with lyrics. In "The World is Full of Love", the speaker refers to her companion as *mo chroí*, a gaelic term of endearment meaning "my heart", or beloved. The Irish language is often used to signal authenticity in a self-conscious manner, in literature, art, and the media. This particular intervention is unobtrusive, but it signals allegiance, not just to the beloved but to the culture, who become fused by this simple spell. Some years ago in a brief conversation with the composer, she retold an incident when someone had referred to her as the epitome of Irishness, and Nelson ended the anecdote by saying: "Me! A *sassenach*!". A gaelic term for the English, normally used as a term of abuse, *sassenach* is rare enough in Anglophone Dublin, where the conversation took place, and rarer still in self-deprecating mode. There is the same sense of knowing appropriation in this song's use of *mo chro*í, more self-aware than tokenistic.

"Snow is Falling" alludes to the work of Joyce. The speaker describes waking up after a restless night caused by "the stupid debris of life". At the window, delighted by the visitation of snow, she is pulled back in time to the infinitely vast and luminous days of childhood, "[t]he big freeze" of a time without responsibility: "Nobody's going to work today / We're all going out to play". The speaker chuckles, and the melody gently tumbles up, and then stands and slips and slumps – getting up again. Naturally, music has a special relationship with time; it is "made of" time, we may say, and it is perceived as a sequence. "Snow is Falling" leaves the Joycean quote for the end: "Sleep lies heavy, a blanket of snow / on all the blessed dreamers. / And you remember a story you once read / [where] snow was falling 'on all the living and the dead' ". Again, the unobtrusive literary intertextuality (like the cultural intertextuality of *mo chroí*) hits the right note. Joyce's short story "The Dead" (1914), where the quote comes from, is set in Dublin on a winter's day, and it deals with memory, and the thawing of certainties. The ending of the story, like the song's intimation of snow-as-death, also rewrites all that went before.

Modernism and jazz

It is not just in terms of an Irish connection that the invocation of Joyce in *One Day in Winter* is relevant, but also as a nod to the stylistic tradition that he represents. We could see Nelson's intertextual aside as a declaration of affinity with modernism. It is rarely acknowledged that jazz is a key development in the movement. The improvisation and syncopation associated with jazz in fact have made a greater impact within, and beyond, its own medium, than cubism or stream of consciousness have made in theirs, to give two iconic examples of modernist innovation. There is a tendency in Modernist Studies (which is exacerbated in Ireland) to focus on literature, despite the awareness that modernism was an attack on traditional styles and themes in all fronts, from painting

and architecture to dance and design. Music has tended to be studied separately, with Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913) almost invariably cited as the eye of the storm, with the occasional addenda of Schoenberg's atonality. The links between popular music and modernism have only begun to be investigated in earnest in the last few years[5]. In classical music in an Irish context, Mark Fitzgerald has recently discussed the "belated arrival" of modernism, suggesting Rhoda Coghill's *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* (1923), which sets to music a Whitman poem, as a kind of proto-modernist Irish composition on account of its "harmonic ambiguity" and "unresolved ending"[6]. Those descriptors could as easily be applied to *One Day in Winter.* Fitzgerald goes on to review other composers' "mildly modernist tendencies" and to suggest a belated peak of postwar modernism in Ireland in Seóirse Bodley's *Meditations on Lines from Patrick Kavanagh* (1971)[7].

One way of defining the styles of modernism, in every medium, is as a series of reconfigurations of rhythm, and with those, a rethinking of the human conversation with time. It is well established that theorists of time such as Bergson or James were influential on the first modernist wave. Their work highlights a special relationship between time and consciousness. Consider the sliding thought patterns in Dorothy Richardson's *Pointed Roofs* (1915) or, in a concentrated form, Woolf's "The Mark on the Wall" (1917). In film editing, a syncopated rhythm matches a psychopathic strain in *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (Dir. Germaine Dulac, 1928) or in *Borderline* (Dir. Kenneth Macpherson, 1930). The mobile furniture by designers such as Eileen Gray may be seen as a reconfiguration of once-static matter to accommodate the fluid needs of the modern mind. The wave-based dance style developed by the choreographer (and theorist of movement) Isadora Duncan, sought to reproduce an organic, eternal continuity. In painting, we can see cubist and surrealist imagery as exercises in simultaneity. And so on. If we make the modest and uncontroversial claim that Time and the perception of Time play a role in modernism, then jazz, which consists of a reorganisation of time patterns in music, is in a privileged position to showcase that role.

One of the interesting aspects of considering Jazz an exemplar of modernism in the West, is that it has carried on unabated from its beginnings at the turn of the twentieth century, as a powerful force in the "roaring twenties", with a second peak of influence in the Swing era in the early and mid 1940s, to the development of Bebop, Acid Jazz, and beyond onto the pre-

[5] For example, Carol J. Oja's *Modernism and the Jazz Age* (2000), or Alfred Appel's *Jazz Modernism* (2005).

[6] Mark Fitzgerald (2018), "A Belated Arrival: The Delayed Acceptance of Musical Modernity in Irish Composition", *Irish Studies Review* 26, 3, 349.

[7] Fitzgerald used "mildly modernist" to describe Frederick May's *String Quartet* (1936, 352). For Bodley, see *ibidem*, 354.

sent day. Within an evolving form, there has been an unbroken continuity throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty first century. The end of Western modernism has been subject to debate; it is generally given in literature as no later than WWII, but the post-war years saw a flourishing of a second wave of modernism in classical music, architecture, and film, and an overall closing line tends to be drawn in the 1970s, when the movement is superseded by postmodernism. However, a neomodernist wave of stylistic and conceptual experimentation has been identified in current work in fields as diverse as architecture, design, and literature. Contemporary Irish composers of classical music such as Gráinne Mulvey or Ann Cleare, for example, have been associated with modernism (356). This neomodernist wave, which "prolongs and surpasses modernist innovations"[8], may be explained by the fact that postmodernism has "nowhere to go"[9], or as an exercise in nostalgia. But either explanation presupposes a break – jazz is proof, if proof is needed, that modernism never went away. I see Carole Nelson Trio's *One Day in Winter* as an example of Irish neomodernism.

Ireland and jazz

1934 saw the culmination of an "anti-jazz" movement in Ireland in a demonstration in Mohill town, county Leitrim, with thousands in attendance and the explicit support of the then Taoiseach Eamon de Valera. The event was commemorated by Zrazy in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, with the cheerful track "Down with Jazz!" The instigator of the campaign, the Gaelic League activist Peter Conefrey, a priest in the village of Cloone, declared at the demonstration's rally that jazz "is borrowed from the language of the savages of Africa, and its object is to destroy virtue in the human soul"[10]. It is easy to caricature this manifestation of rural conservatism, but its effects have been lasting. Informed by the campaign, the Public Dance Halls Act of 1935, which made it illegal to hold public dances in Ireland without a license, is still in force, though its application has softened. Jazz had reached all corners of Ireland through the wireless, and it would be in the 1970s that a wave of jazz musicianship would coalesce influenced by Chas Meredith's jazz programmes on Irish national radio.

Carole Nelson is one of a number of Irish artists with an international vocation who has resisted the lure of the city and is rewriting the association

[8] Monica Latham (2015), *A Poetics of Postmodernism and Neomodernism: Re-Writing* Mrs Dalloway, London, Palgrave, 8.

[9] Anne Fogarty (2018), "After Modernism? Joycean Traces in Contemporary Irish Fiction", Unpublished paper, *Joyce Studies Symposium*, Bizkaia Aretoa, Bilbao, University of the Basque Country.

[10] Quoted in Cahal Brenan (2011), "The Anti-Jazz Campaign", *The Irish Story*, <http://www.theirishstory.com/2011/07/01/the-anti-jazz-campaign/#.W5KlsEZKjIU> (05/2019).

of rural Ireland with stagnation. Online projection and marketing have allowed a freedom that would have been inconceivable twenty years ago. Some of the most successful and respected creative Irish enterprises have chosen rural Ireland as their base: Cartoon Saloon, the animation film company based in Kilkenny, or Guth Gafa, the international documentary film festival based in Kells, are two examples. Despite Father Conefrey's racist evocation of savagery, jazz has of course been traditionally associated with urban modernity and eclecticism.

Interestingly, the Irish jazz scene is somewhat at odds with that assumption. To begin with, the Irish capital's jazz profile is not as cohesive or as stable as one may expect. In 2008, Dublin, Cork and Belfast may have formed a "dependable circuit" for visiting and local jazz musicians[11], but with the closure of J.J. Smyth's in April 2017, after thirty years in operation, the Dublin jazz scene suffered a blow, although Arthur's Upstairs is slowly establishing itself as a blues and jazz venue, and a number of pubs and cafés regularly host live jazz. The majority of dedicated Irish jazz musicians and performers must still consider relocating in order to have a viable career. If they stay in Ireland, compromise is inevitable – non-specialised private tuition in instrument or voice is the main earner for many jazz musicians in the country, while most others resign themselves to separate their professional lives from their musicianship.

There are a number of important jazz festivals in the main cities in the island, however. Led by Cork, which has hosted an annual jazz festival since 1978 (thus celebrating forty years in 2018), there are well established festivals in Limerick and in Belfast (both nine years old in 2019), and a host of other, newer festivals. Most of them were originally set up by jazz fans or jazz musicians rather than by promoters, and often grew from smaller events. One of the exceptions is the City of Derry Jazz & Big Band Festival, created by the City Council in 2001 after identifying "a gap in the market for a music festival to fit within the Council's existing events diary", as the council explained in the depressingly mercantilised language now generally used to refer to cultural events[12].

Most remarkably, in the last two decades a series of successful international jazz festivals has been created away from the main Irish cities. Some of them in towns such as Bray in county Wicklow (celebrating twenty years in 2019), Kinsale, or Sligo. And annual jazz festivals are also taking place in small villages. For example, in the villages of Doonbeg in county Clare (also

[11] Kevin Stevens (2008), "Now's the Time: The State of Irish Jazz", *The Journal of Music*, <http://journalofmusic.com/focus/nows-time-state-irish-jazz> (05/2019).

[12] City of Derry Jazz Festival website, <http://www.cityofderryjazzfestival.com/started> (05/2019).

celebrating twenty years in 2019), Ballydehob in county Cork (since 2007), Cloughjordan in Tipperary (since 2011), or Ramelton in Donegal. The official website from the Ballydehob Jazz Festival anticipates its potential audiences' surprise at such a location, in "this improbable corner of the world", presenting the anomaly as an asset, by offering "world class talent couched in a pretty little country village"[13]. A similar marketing ploy is used by the only festival in Ireland dedicated to a single musician, gipsy jazz king Django Reinhardt; the "Django Sur Lenon" Festival, the official website declares, takes place "in the picturesque village of Ramelton"[14].

Clearly this phenomenon is part of a reaction to the boom in massive outdoor music festivals (generally focusing on pop and pop-rock), with smaller festivals offering a less impersonal or more "authentic" experience, while retaining all the inherent contradictions of boutique hotels, glamping, and bespoke tours. The rural jazz trend is also tuned to the Irish Tourism Board's strategy of branding Ireland as the "green island", but there is something jarring about this juxtaposition of village life, picturesqueness, and jazz. Writing in 1924, music historian Paul Stefan praised jazz as "[a] reflection of the times: chaos, machines, noise, the highest peak of intensity"[15]. Hardly a slogan for arcadian reverie. In another way, the very remoteness of those rural settings is an imaging of the commitment and connoisseurship nowadays associated with jazz practitioners and audiences.

Yet in Ireland, "the rural" is a complex proposition. The colonial imprint of "big house" landlordism, followed post-independence by a "cultural affiliation between the state and the rural", and the population's widespread aspiration to individual land ownership, have translated into a permissive rural housing policy facilitating internal migration towards rural areas and away from cities[16]. It has been claimed by human geographers that this context has resulted in the last few years in a kind of "spatial anarchy" in the Irish countryside, "allowing rural communities to grow and diversify" in unexpected ways, for example by encouraging a "broader" social mix than in rural England (64, 67). Thus, the sprouting of rural jazz festivals across the island, and the very existence of an album such as *One Day in Winter*, may actually signal a socially fertile soil for a diversity of aesthetic choices.

[13] Ballydehob Jazz Festival website, <http://www.ballydehobjazzfestival.org/about/> (05/2019).

[14] Django sur Lennon Festival website, <http://djangosurlennon.com/> (05/2019).

[15] Quoted in James Donald (2010), "Sounds Like Hell: Beyond Dystopian Noise", in G. Prakash (ed.), *Noir Urbanisms: Dystopic Images of the Modern City*, Princeton, Princeton UP, 45.

[16] Menelaos Gkartzios, Mark Shucksmith (2015), " 'Spatial Anarchy' versus 'Spatial Apartheid': Rural Housing Ironies in Ireland and England", *Town Planning Review* 86, 1 56.

Musicologist Mark Fitzgerald has suggested that "[p]erhaps a new history of Irish modernism will be constructed around an examination of how modernism, abandoned by practitioners in literature, migrated instead at a later junction to other art forms" (Fitzgerald 2018, 356). Jazz and rural Ireland, in a syncopated tune by the Carole Nelson Trio, will have to be part of that new history.

Aintzane Legarreta Mentxaka

Giulia Bruna, *J. M. Synge and Travel Writing of the Irish Revival*, Syracuse, Syracuse UP, 2017, pp. 256. GBP £29.59 (paperback). ISBN 978 0 8156 3533 8.

Readers and scholars familiar with the works of John Millington Synge will be aware of the controversy surrounding *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907). Following the opening performance of *Playboy*, Arthur Griffith infamously described the play as "a vile and inhuman story told in the foulest language we have ever listened to from a public platform". In 1926, with reference to *Playboy*, William Butler Yeats declared to rioters protesting Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* (1926), "You have disgraced yourself again. Is this to be the recurring celebration of the arrival of Irish genius?" It is such controversies and praise for *Playboy* that have contributed to the popularity of this play, as well as Synge's other dramas. As Giulia Bruna notes:

> Synge traditionally sits among the pantheon of Ireland's greatest playwrights and founding figures of the Irish national theater. His plays, from *Riders to the Sea* to the controversial *The Playboy of the Western World*, have been praised by critics for their unflinching portrayal of rural Ireland and for their bravura in the use of Hiberno-English. (2)

Yet, while Bruna acknowledges that Synge's nonfiction "has been analyzed primarily as a kind of rough work for his plays" (3), central to her study is the contention that Synge was among the pre-eminent travel writers of the Revival period.

Bruna declares her study aims to adopt a new approach; "Provid[ing] a new context in which Synge's travel writing can be read and sheds light on a critically overlooked genre: travel writing compiled by Irish artists and activities affiliated with Revival networks" (4). In broad terms, Bruna historicises Synge's travel writing and does so with ease as she places Synge's writings on Aran, Kerry, the Congested Districts and Wicklow in the wider contexts of Travel Writing, Journalism and Revivalism. More importantly, Bruna argues Synge refused to Romanticise the West like Yeats and Augusta Gregory (to name a few) and refutes the generalisations written by Patrick Pearse and Desmond Ryan. Bruna is keen to demonstrate that her study does not seek to reproduce the efforts of Tony Roche, John Wilson Foster and Nicolas