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Review of Hildred Roach's Black American Music: Past and Present, 2nd ed.

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collecting and publishing these important conversations with jazz artists running the gamut from Clark Terry to Anthony Braxton—from Mose Allison to Henry Threadgill. Their differences, similarities, opinions, and experiences make for delightful and informative reading.

The wealth of personal and professional free-flowing information gained from each conversation should be attributed to the authors' relaxed but focused style. Each musician is guided by the "right" questions, making the reading more efficient. The reader will, however, need to view the information from the decade in which it was given. Some things, such as a player's early experiences and influences, are unaffected by time. But some players may have changed, developed, evolved since this interview and now might even take issue with their own statements of the 1970s.

Jazz Spoken Here seems to offer something to every reader. Clark Terry and Ruby Braff have advice for music educators, Mercer Ellington gives family insight into the Duke Ellington orchestra, and Art Blakey will take the reader on a spine-tingling road trip through the Old South. Blakey's interview, alone, is worth the price of the book.

Wayne Enstice and Paul Rubin have assembled an important and long-lasting addition to America's musical art form.

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BLACK AMERICAN MUSIC: PAST AND PRESENT.

By Hildred Roach. 1973, 1976. 2d ed. Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing, 1992. ISBN: 0-89464580-3 (cloth); 0-89464766-0 (pbk.). Pp. xxii, 368. \$52.50 (cloth); \$42.50 (pbk.).

This edition has been revised and merged from two volumes into one with the purpose of paying "tribute to Pan-African composers and their music." (p. xv) The treatment of this subject, however, occurs as the final chapter and only consists of one-eighth of the book. Presumably, *Black American Music's* title should reflect a Pan-African emphasis. Roach draws from the research of Walter Whittlesey, Maud Cuney Hare, James Trotter, and music dictionaries to write brief chronologically arranged sketches from Chevalier de Saint Georges of the West Indies to Ashenafi Kebede of Ethiopia. She admits that her work is incomplete due to the unavailability of photographs for identification purposes [problematic in itself], the inaccessibility of geographic locations, and the lack of known

compositional output.

Black American Music describes the African musical heritage, the work, play, and spiritual songs of the slave era, the emergence of the black professional, and contemporary trends in art and popular music. Roach has attempted the mammoth task of documenting past and present, known and unknown composers of African descent from across the world. Her effort is to be commended (especially as a pianist and not a musicologist), although her results are not without problems.

The chronological arrangement of composers by birth rather than by genre or musical style leads to confusion in understanding the historical development of the music. Furthermore, some discussions are curious in length. Charlie Parker, for example, is treated in four short paragraphs which summarize his life, style, and compositions. Billy Taylor, on the other hand, is described in one and one-half pages.

In an effort to explain various musical procedures in African-American music, Roach uses "parallel" examples from the European art tradition. Sometimes she goes too far to prove her point, almost as if there is a need to justify African-American music in terms of European concepts and terminology, even if inappropriate to African-American music. For example: In describing the rhythmical freedom of the African musical heritage, she likens it to the "over the bar phrases" experienced in the music of J. S. Bach! (p. 9)

The bibliography does not appear to have been significantly updated since the first edition. Dena Epstein's article on "Slave Music" (1963) is included, but not her more recent book on *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals* (1977). The 1965 edition of *Baker's Biographical Dictionary* is listed, rather than the 1991 edition. Most of the sources date from the 1960s and early 1970s.

The composer's birth and death dates are not consistently included. Many death dates are missing including Virgie Carrington DeWitty (1980), Frederick Hall (1982), Roberta Martin (1969), and Maude Cummings Taylor (1984). Careful proofreading was not done regarding spelling, capitalization, and details on musical illustrations.

This work is helpful, however, in that Roach includes a list of the composers' publishers and record companies (Appendix C) which could further the exposure to, and the performance of, the works from this vast musical legacy.

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