

Babette Babich, *The Hallelujah Effect: Philosophical Reflections on Music, Performance Practice, and Technology* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013). Paper: (London: Routledge, 2016).



The Hallelujah Effect is three books in one, examining music and media in each iteration: social and digital, broadcast (particularly radio), and ancient Greek tragedy.

The first part explores recorded, social media, and digital transformations of music including Facebook and YouTube. The focus is on Leonard Cohen, particularly the eponymous 'Hallelujah' including a hermeneutic of its theological undercurrents and the sexism of Cohen's lyrics, John Cale's interpretation and scoring of the song as this first made Cohen's song a hit, the tension between interpreters, mostly male, of the song, from Jeff Buckley to a bootleg version by Bob Dylan and, including a discussion of other songs by Joan Baez, Madonna, and Lesley Gore. This section

also explores some of the reasons for the relative lack of attention to k.d.lang's version(s) of *Hallelujah*, including a hermeneutic of her music videos not only of Cohen but Patsy Cline's *Johnny Get Angry*, examining the differential object of desire, male and female as female desire tends to be eclipsed in favor of the male, condemned to nescience (even, famously so, for Freud).

The second part of the book pursues this with a reading of the Frankfurt School and the 'Culture Industry,' particularly Adorno's phenomenological hermeneutics of television and film and especially radio, including the physiognomics of the 'radio face.' The dimension of performance practice and technology is here also a matter of cultural manipulation and social control, including a discussion of the community-forming power, as Adorno explores the notion, of the symphony. The difference between live and recorded, a difference ablated in digital-social media, is key to the time-space of that community.

The third part of the book further explores the technology of sound by way of a musicological reading of *mousikē technē*, the educational culture and practice of music in antiquity, as Plato speaks of this and specifically in terms of the 'technology' that is the Ancient Greek language as a means for recording sound and *qua* phonetic achievement, as a means for *reproducing* sound, in addition to a dedicated discussion of the musical culture of the tragic work of art, as Nietzsche argued that ancient tragedy was an expressly *musical* form which he explored in terms not only of the nature of the tragic work of art as a cultural legacy but also in terms of myth (Oedipus and Prometheus) by contrast with more theatrical modern, tragic forms (Shakespeare, via Schlegel and Tieck, Schiller, and Goethe) and in the context of what he called the 'becoming human of dissonance' via an analysis not of Wagner's music as many scholars continue to assume but a hermeneutic of Beethoven and the voice as absolute music.