
BOOK REVIEWS/RECENSIONS

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner. *Women Composers and Music Technology in the United States*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006. 301 pp. ISBN 0-7546-0461-6 (hardcover).

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner's *Women Composers and Music Technology in the United States* stands both as an accomplished effort of documentation and as a comprehensive resource guide for anyone interested in contemporary feminist scholarship in American music. This work came about for a range of reasons. To begin, as in many other fields, music and histories of music have more often than not either discriminated against women or ignored them altogether. These instances of erasure have occurred in various ways, whether in scholarly texts of musicology that fail to mention important women in the field or universities that have few to no female composers enrolled as professors in their music departments. However, Hinkle-Turner does point out in her introduction that feminist music research has been growing steadily, and that there are literary sources that no longer omit women. Instead of just focusing on the phenomenon of exclusion, the author sets out to provide something different: an in-depth discussion of over a hundred American female music composers, engineers, performers and professors. She includes biographical information about them, where they studied, where they taught, a listing of each person's pertinent works, and she remarks upon any instruments and technologies used or preferred by each of her subjects. These composers range in style and subject matter from the abstract, such as the *musique concrète* of Jean Eichelberger Ivey's *Pinball* (p. 26) or the percussive suit of Laurie Anderson's *Drum Dance* (p. 222), to the societal relevance of the AIDS epidemic as depicted in Carolyn Bremer's *Not A Witness* (p. 175), the landmine crisis of Cambodia as documented in Anna Rubin's *Landmines* (p. 82), or the struggle of a cancer survivor as told by the author herself (p. 194).

Hinkle-Turner intends to demystify the realm of the "avant-garde" by presenting women who create electroacoustic music, film soundtracks and scores, avant-garde operas, video art and performance pieces. As such, she focuses on women who have historically not had the same recognition, fame or financial support as female pop musicians—the imagery of the MTV superstar is absent here. Hinkle-Turner sets the parameters of her research to cover a timeline from the 1930s to the present, and defines her subject range as artists who were either born in the USA or produced the majority of their works on American soil.

The author takes the standpoint of archivist and collector. Her documentation is meticulous and thorough, the appendices rich with extra resources, web-