



**Craig Harris. *Rise Up! Indigenous Music in North America*. University of Nebraska Press, 2023. 328 pp. ISBN: 9781496236159.**

<https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/bison-books/9781496236159/rise-up/>

With *Rise Up! Indigenous Music in North America* (2023), music historian and percussionist Craig Harris delivers a most valuable resource for anyone interested in Indigenous music on the North American continent and popular music in general. It allows not only for deep insight into the diversity of the contemporary music scenes on Turtle Island, but it also makes its readers aware of the impact Indigenous artists have had on the genres (pop, rock, hip hop, etc.) through which North American culture has shaped popular music on the entire globe. Most parts of the book convene the autobiographical voices of numerous Indigenous artists versed in singing and the playing of a wide array of instruments (including Native flutes, drums, electric guitars, and turntables). In their own words, these artists relate their stories to readers in the form of shorter (e.g. Leela Gilday (Dene), 163-166) and longer accounts (e.g., Calvin Ishoni Standing Bear (Oglala and Sicangu Lakota), 78-92). Rather than an academic study of these different artists and their oeuvres, *Rise Up!* is an archive of voices – the voices of those who have dedicated their lives to their art; voices that have, in many cases, been ignored by the music industry, critics and scholars, and mainstream listeners. The book is thus an important intervention into the mainstream reception of music in North America because it gives long overdue credit to Native musicians and generates more awareness for the thriving of Native musical practices in the present.

*Rise Up!* is a continuation of Harris's *Heartbeat, Warble, and the Electric Powwow: American Indian Music* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), which provides a survey that focuses more on elaborate discussions of Native sonic traditions and how Native musicians emerged within different genres of pop music. Harris's previous book is concerned with tracing the developments of Native music traditions from past to present, whereas the methodology of *Rise Up!* is more akin to an encyclopedia. *Heartbeat, Warble, and the Electric Powwow* also presents a more structured contextualization of settler-colonial oppression, both past and present. *Rise Up!*, too, introduces some contexts in chapters 1-4 ("Fingerprints," "Anthropologists," "Assimilation," and "Stereotypical"), yet, while these chapters create an important frame, especially for readers unfamiliar with the history of settler colonialism in the US and Canada, the chapters would have benefited from some more rigid organizing and a clearer structure. Readers further interested in the issues raised here could turn to Harris's previous work as well as to Philip J. Deloria's *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), John W. Troutman's *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934* (2013), and Dylan Robinson's seminal *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (2020). In general,

*Rise Up!* would have presented an even more valuable, stand-alone resource if Harris had further developed his critical and his curational voice in order to guide readers more consistently throughout the book.

Chapter 5, "Defiance," begins with Harris's introduction to the achievements and influence of an older generation of well-known Native artists like John Trudell (Santee Sioux and Mexican, 1946-2015) and Floyd Westerman (Dakota, 1936-2007). The chapter also features non-Native figures like Peter LaFarge (1931-1965) and Buffy Sainte-Marie (1941-), whose false claims to Native identity were uncovered by a CBC report in late 2023, which shook the Indigenous music community (see Leo, Woloshyn, and Guerriero for the original report, and Wex, Cyca and Meriläinen for two Native perspectives on the aftermath of the report). Harris's book went into print before the allegations came to light, and the influence both LaFarge and Sainte-Marie have had on North American music remains. Yet, further framing would have helped readers understand why the life and work of the artists discussed here was defined primarily by "defiance" - a notion that has remained an important driving force for many Native musicians alive and working today. These artists find entry in the remaining chapters of the book, which are more and less organized along the lines of different musical practices and notions of genre. Chapters 6, 7, and 9 give the stage to artists most skilled at drumming and other rhythmic practices ("6. Beating of the Heart"), Native flutes ("7. Sound of the Wind"), and song (9. "Sing It Loud"). Chapters 10-13 allow musicians of rock ("10. Rockin' the Rez"), reggae ("11. Rocksteady"), hip hop ("12. Tongue Twisters"), and classical music ("13. Connections") to introduce themselves. It is a perk that chapter 12 also includes Native dancers Maria and Marjorie Tallchief (Osage, Scottish, and Irish), gesturing to the crucial, inextricable connection that exists for many Native cultures between sonic practices and dance (see for example, Young Bear and Theisz 38; see also Troutman 10). Chapter 8 ("Ancestral Voices") convenes three artists who see their music, above all, as the practice of passing on and keeping alive Native traditions.

Across these chapters, many readers will surely be able to find artists whose work they may not yet know. I was particularly grateful to learn about and listen to the stories and the music of Jack "Crazy Flute" Holland (Tsalagi, Lakota, Scot), Shon Denay (Oglala Lakota and African American), and Callie Bennet (South Korean and Diné). Jack "Crazy Flute" Holland's rapid style has earned him the title "the heavy metal rocker of the Native flute" (93), and Shon Denay's voice and music creatively combine neo-soul, hip hop, jazz, and R&B into a unique blend. Callie Bennet, in contrast, is more clearly identifiable as a country musician, who uses her music to represent the culture of her adoptive family and the wider Diné community she was welcomed into as a very young child. All these artists' cultural backgrounds and creative outputs reveal the richness of Native musical expression. They succinctly show how diversity and hybridity shape the work of both Native music and pop music in general (the two are, of course, inextricably interlinked) and how Native musicians and Native traditions have been important creative driving forces for North American (pop) culture.



The greatest strength of *Rise Up!* is that it gives as much room as possible to the unmediated voices of so many different Native musicians. Readers have a chance to learn firsthand from the artists about what has inspired them, what has shaped their lives as artists, and what their music means to them. Some of the artists' accounts emerge from and are delivered in the form of interviews, but most tell their stories in their own words without intervention. *Rise Up!* thus brings together a collection of voices that are allowed to follow their own directions. Naturally, Harris's book does not feature all the Native artists readers might be hoping to find in it. The rich diversity and large number of Native musicians on Turtle Island simply do not allow for a book such as this to ever be complete. Southwestern and Plains tribes are prominently represented; other regions, such as the Pacific Northwest, less so. It would have been appreciated to also hear the voices of some Native Alaskan and Inuit artists active on territory occupied by Canada (like Arias Hoyle or Tanya Tagaq) as well as more First Nations musicians (for example, Nuxalk and Onondaga rapper JB The First Lady or Haisla rap duo Snotty Nose Rez Kids). The character of the book and the multitudes of Indigenous musicians on Turtle Island, however, practically demand that Harris's book remains an open, unfinished archive, with new gaps springing up continuously – gaps that readers themselves will have to fill. Aside from the helpful index, a list of all the artists included in the book would have increased their visibility further. *Rise Up!* deserves praise for being an encouragement, an encouragement to listen, both to the stories Native musicians have to tell and, of course, to the music they are graciously sharing with the world. In Harris's own words, "Enough said...It's time to listen" (295).

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