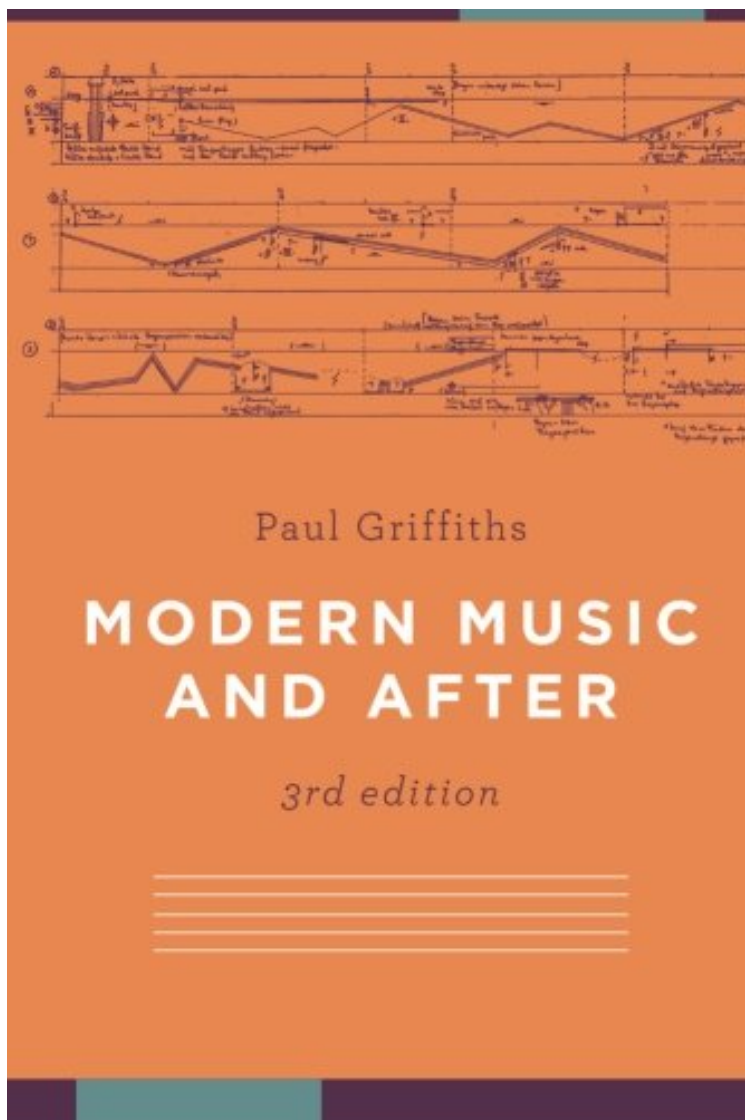


(Ebook pdf) Modern Music and After

## Modern Music and After

Paul Griffiths

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#815314 in Books Griffiths Paul 2011-02-16 2011-02-16 Original language: English PDF # 1 6.00 x 1.30 x 9.20l, 1.41 #File Name: 019974050X373 pages Modern Music and After | File size: 62.Mb

**Paul Griffiths : Modern Music and After** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Modern Music and After:

31 of 33 people found the following review helpful. Excellent on both the music and the social dynamics By Automeus MODERN MUSIC AND AFTER should really be kept in print, though the market may be small, as it is the best book on the subject. It serves, among other things, as the best record guide to the post-war avant-garde that I've found, although since '95 it has become somewhat outdated. Griffiths imbues the story of the serialist avant-garde with high drama. The hero of his story is Pierre Boulez. Messiaen is the mentor, and Stockhausen the brother, a source

of friendly but intense rivalry. Schoenberg is the father figure who Boulez "kills" even as he carries on his tradition, but of course crediting Webern. The history gives a palpable sense of the excitement of this avant-garde circle, which came together at Darmstadt. Cage and his zen anarchism presents a radical challenge to the integral serialist Project, and begins to explode it. This takes us through the 1950s. The second part of the book is equally good, as the linear sense of progress unravels in the 1960s and '70s and fragmentation sets in. A fascinating development which Griffiths documents, but does not comment on, is the resurgence of sacred music as the secular avant-garde disintegrates. The Estonian composer Arvo Part is but one example of this trend, what might be called the reassertion of the pre-modern in the context of the post-modern. The third section is not as good, and resembles other similar books in being more an encyclopedia of entries on various composers and trends. There doesn't seem to be much alternative to this for now, but it's interesting to imagine how the present period may be reconstructed in light of future developments... In his introduction Griffiths laments the loss of a sense of shared criteria for evaluating the diverse music of the moment. But of course books like this contribute to the construction of those criteria! Peter J. Martin's *SOUNDS AND SOCIETY* (see my review) is an excellent analysis of how music evaluation is socially constructed -- there are no objective, inherent qualities, and so something like writing a book or even posting reviews to a website serves to shape the reception of the art. An interesting topic to pursue would be the divergent paths of Boulez and Stockhausen, with the former becoming an esteemed conductor and not only championing the avant-garde, but also turning back to the once scorned romantic tradition, while Stockhausen followed an increasingly idiosyncratic path and became a revered figure for the 90s electronica movement, a "Father of Electronic Music"! *MODERN MUSIC AND AFTER* is indispensable for anyone trying to understand the rich complexities of contemporary composition. I recommend Morgan's *TWENTIETH-CENTURY MUSIC* (see my review) for the pre-WWII period, and Gann's *AMERICAN MUSIC IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY* (see my review) for greater detail on the postwar U.S. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful and insightful By Ken Foster Excellent thoughtful and insightful take on music after 1945. Should be read with a history of electro-acoustic music set. Does not make too many assumptions about the value of the music and let's the reader decide the complex value of the compositions covered. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bought it once, bought it again By John\_GI read this about a decade ago. I liked it so much I recently bought the latest version on Kindle.

Over three decades, Paul Griffiths's survey has remained the definitive study of music since the Second World War; this fully revised and updated edition re-establishes *Modern Music and After* as the preeminent introduction to the music of our time. The disruptions of the war, and the struggles of the ensuing peace, were reflected in the music of the time: in Pierre Boulez's radical reformation of compositional technique and in John Cage's development of zen music; in Milton Babbitt's settling of the serial system and in Dmitry Shostakovich's unsettling symphonies; in Karlheinz Stockhausen's development of electronic music and in Luigi Nono's pursuit of the universally human, in Iannis Xenakis's view of music as sounding mathematics and in Luciano Berio's consideration of it as language. The initiatives of these composers and their contemporaries opened prospects that haven't yet stopped unfolding. This constant expansion of musical thinking since 1945 has left us with no singular history of music; Griffiths's study accordingly follows several different paths, showing how and why they converge and diverge. This new edition of *Modern Music and After* discusses not only the music of the fifteen years that have passed since the previous edition, but also the recent explosion of scholarly interest in the latter half of the twentieth century. In particular, the book has been expanded to incorporate the variety of responses to the modernist impasse experienced by composers of the 1980s and 1990s. Griffiths then moves the book into the twenty-first century as he examines such highly influential composers as Helmut Lachenmann and Salvatore Sciarrino. For its breadth, wealth of detail, and characteristic wit and clarity, the third edition of *Modern Music and After* is required reading for the student and the enquiring listener.

"Recommended for all libraries serving music programs at the undergraduate level or higher. There is a wealth of information here, and few write as knowledgeably and engagingly on new music as Griffiths." --*Fontes Artis Musicae*"Griffiths has done an outstanding job of making this music at least intellectually accessible. It is our job as listeners, if we seriously care, to seek it out and try to encounter it on its own terms. Highly recommended for libraries with sections on new music, composition, music theory and contemporary aesthetics/philosophy." --*Music Media Monthly*"*Modern Music and After* remains as close a definitive survey, study, guide and analysis to its field as there is; it can be recommended without reservation. The standards of scholarship and authorship are indeed high...Production standards, are of course, high; and the price is beyond reasonable -- that alone should convince you to buy this third edition, even if you've read the earlier one(s)...the updates and referencing are significant. For a comprehensive, readable, authoritative, entertaining, lively, open-minded and all round well-written book on the development of music in our time, there is no better." --*Classical.net*"Recommended for all libraries serving music programs at the undergraduate level or higher. There is a wealth of information here, and few write as knowledgeably and engagingly on new music as Griffiths." --*Fontes Artis Musicae*Praise for the first edition:"Griffiths is excellent about a whole host of composers he admires....Any reader, enthusiast or specialist, will find much to interest and

provoke. This book is probably the best of its kind in English today." --Ian Pace, *Tempo: Quarterly of Modern Music*"Griffiths is so fluent, so practiced a writer in this field that it is understandable if the closest he gets to sceptical disengagement is in suggesting that a composer leaves critics, and even musicologists, lost for words." --Arnold Whittall, *The Musical Times*"[A] marvellously thought-provoking and engaging text." --*The Musical Times*"A must for the student, and also for the general reader." --*The Times*"As impressive for its accuracy, as for the clarity, acumen, and wit of its writing." --*Classical Music*About the AuthorPaul Griffiths is an acclaimed writer on contemporary and classical music whose books include *A Concise History of Western Music* and *The Penguin Companion to Classical Music*. He is also known as a librettist (Elliott Carter's *What Next?*) and novelist. In 2002, Griffiths was honored by the French government as a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.