

THE REST IS NOISE BOOK

THE REST IS NOISE BOOK: AN IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION OF A MUSICAL MASTERPIECE

MUSIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN A REFLECTION OF SOCIETY, CULTURE, AND HUMAN EMOTION. AMONG THE MANY BOOKS THAT DELVE INTO THE COMPLEX WORLD OF MUSIC HISTORY AND THEORY, *THE REST IS NOISE* STANDS OUT AS A COMPELLING AND COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC. WRITTEN BY RENOWNED CRITIC ALEX ROSS, THIS BOOK OFFERS READERS AN ENGAGING JOURNEY THROUGH THE TUMULTUOUS LANDSCAPE OF MODERN MUSIC, REVEALING HOW POLITICAL UPHEAVALS, TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS, AND CULTURAL SHIFTS SHAPED THE SOUNDS OF THE CENTURY. IN THIS ARTICLE, WE WILL EXAMINE THE CORE THEMES OF *THE REST IS NOISE*, ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN MUSIC LITERATURE, AND WHY IT REMAINS A MUST-READ FOR ENTHUSIASTS AND SCHOLARS ALIKE.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REST IS NOISE BOOK

OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

PUBLISHED IN 2007, *THE REST IS NOISE: LISTENING TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY* IS A RICHLY DETAILED NARRATIVE THAT CHRONICLES THE EVOLUTION OF WESTERN ART MUSIC FROM THE EARLY 1900S THROUGH THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY. ROSS'S WORK IS NOT MERELY A HISTORY OF COMPOSERS AND COMPOSITIONS; IT IS AN EXPLORATION OF HOW MUSIC RESPONDED TO AND INFLUENCED THE MAJOR EVENTS OF THE CENTURY—WARS, REVOLUTIONS, TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS, AND IDEOLOGICAL SHIFTS.

THE TITLE ITSELF SUGGESTS THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC ARE OFTEN OVERSHADOWED BY NOISE AND CHAOS, BUT WITHIN THAT CHAOS LIE PROFOUND ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS. ROSS AIMS TO UNCOVER THE MEANING BEHIND THE APPARENT DISORDER, REVEALING A STORY OF INNOVATION, REBELLION, AND RESILIENCE.

WHY IS IT CONSIDERED A MUST-READ?

THE REST IS NOISE HAS GAINED WIDESPREAD ACCLAIM FOR ITS ACCESSIBILITY, DEPTH, AND ENGAGING NARRATIVE STYLE. IT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN SCHOLARLY ANALYSIS AND POPULAR WRITING, MAKING COMPLEX MUSICAL IDEAS UNDERSTANDABLE TO A BROAD AUDIENCE. CRITICS HAVE LAUDED ROSS'S ABILITY TO CONNECT MUSIC WITH BROADER HISTORICAL NARRATIVES, TRANSFORMING THE BOOK INTO AN ESSENTIAL RESOURCE FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE 20TH CENTURY THROUGH ITS MUSIC.

MAIN THEMES OF THE REST IS NOISE

THE BOOK IS STRUCTURED AROUND SEVERAL KEY THEMES THAT RECUR THROUGHOUT THE NARRATIVE. UNDERSTANDING THESE THEMES HELPS TO GRASP HOW ROSS INTERPRETS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN MUSIC AND ITS SOCIETAL IMPLICATIONS.

1. THE IMPACT OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL UPHEAVAL

ONE OF THE CENTRAL IDEAS IN *THE REST IS NOISE* IS THAT MUSIC DOES NOT DEVELOP IN A VACUUM. INSTEAD, IT IS DEEPLY INTERTWINED WITH THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CURRENTS OF ITS TIME.

- **WORLD WARS:** THE DISRUPTIONS OF WORLD WAR I AND II LED TO RADICAL SHIFTS IN MUSICAL STYLE AND IDEOLOGY. COMPOSERS LIKE ARNOLD SCHOENBERG AND DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH RESPONDED TO THESE UPHEAVALS WITH

INNOVATIONS IN TONALITY AND FORM.

- **REVOLUTIONS AND REGIMES:** TOTALITARIAN REGIMES, SUCH AS STALIN'S SOVIET UNION AND NAZI GERMANY, USED MUSIC BOTH AS PROPAGANDA AND AS A FORM OF RESISTANCE. COMPOSERS NAVIGATED CENSORSHIP AND IDEOLOGICAL PRESSURES, OFTEN RISKING THEIR CAREERS AND LIVES.
- **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS:** CIVIL RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY, AND ANTI-COLONIAL MOVEMENTS INFLUENCED THE THEMES AND ACCESSIBILITY OF MUSIC, LEADING TO NEW GENRES AND FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

2. TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND ITS INFLUENCE

ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY DRAMATICALLY TRANSFORMED HOW MUSIC WAS COMPOSED, RECORDED, AND CONSUMED THROUGHOUT THE CENTURY.

- **RECORDING AND BROADCASTING:** THE ADVENT OF RADIO, VINYL RECORDS, AND LATER, DIGITAL FORMATS EXPANDED ACCESS TO MUSIC WORLDWIDE, INFLUENCING LISTENING HABITS AND COMMERCIAL PRACTICES.
- **ELECTRONIC AND COMPUTER MUSIC:** THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYNTHESIZERS, TAPE MANIPULATION, AND COMPUTER ALGORITHMS OPENED NEW CREATIVE POSSIBILITIES, LEADING TO GENRES LIKE ELECTRONIC, AMBIENT, AND EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC.
- **SAMPLING AND REMIXING:** IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES, DIGITAL TOOLS HAVE DEMOCRATIZED MUSIC PRODUCTION, ALLOWING ARTISTS TO REMIX AND REPURPOSE EXISTING SOUNDS IN INNOVATIVE WAYS.

3. THE ROLE OF INNOVATION AND REBELLION IN ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

THROUGHOUT THE 20TH CENTURY, MANY COMPOSERS CHALLENGED TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF HARMONY, MELODY, AND FORM.

- **MODERNISM:** COMPOSERS LIKE STRAVINSKY AND SCHOENBERG BROKE AWAY FROM CLASSICAL CONVENTIONS, EXPLORING DISSONANCE, ATONALITY, AND NEW RHYTHMIC STRUCTURES.
- **EXPERIMENTALISM:** THE AVANT-GARDE PUSHED BOUNDARIES FURTHER, INCORPORATING NOISE, IMPROVISATION, AND UNCONVENTIONAL INSTRUMENTS.
- **GLOBAL INFLUENCES:** NON-WESTERN MUSICAL TRADITIONS INFLUENCED WESTERN COMPOSERS, LEADING TO A MORE DIVERSE AND ECLECTIC MUSICAL LANDSCAPE.

NOTABLE COMPOSERS AND MOVEMENTS COVERED IN THE BOOK

THE REST IS NOISE HIGHLIGHTS A WIDE ARRAY OF INFLUENTIAL FIGURES AND MOVEMENTS THAT SHAPED 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC.

1. ARNOLD SCHOENBERG AND THE SECOND VIENNESE SCHOOL

SCHOENBERG'S DEVELOPMENT OF ATONALITY AND THE TWELVE-TONE TECHNIQUE MARKED A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM TRADITIONAL TONALITY, EMBODYING THE MODERNIST SPIRIT OF INNOVATION AND REBELLION.

2. IGOR STRAVINSKY AND BALLETS RUSSES

STRAVINSKY'S GROUNDBREAKING COMPOSITIONS LIKE THE RITE OF SPRING REVOLUTIONIZED RHYTHM AND ORCHESTRATION, OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHAOS AND VITALITY OF EARLY 20TH-CENTURY EUROPE.

3. DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH AND SOVIET MUSIC

SHOSTAKOVICH'S COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET REGIME EXEMPLIFIES HOW POLITICAL REPRESSION INFLUENCED ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, OSCILLATING BETWEEN CONFORMITY AND SUBTLE DISSENT.

4. JOHN CAGE AND THE EXPERIMENTALISTS

CAGE CHALLENGED NOTIONS OF MUSICAL AESTHETICS WITH HIS USE OF CHANCE OPERATIONS AND UNCONVENTIONAL SOUNDS, USHERING IN A NEW ERA OF EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC.

5. MINIMALISM AND POSTMODERNISM

LATER CHAPTERS EXPLORE MINIMALIST COMPOSERS LIKE STEVE REICH AND PHILIP GLASS, AS WELL AS POSTMODERN APPROACHES THAT BLEND STYLES AND CHALLENGE HIERARCHICAL NOTIONS OF HIGH AND LOW ART.

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND LEGACY OF THE REST IS NOISE

EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT

ROSS'S BOOK HAS BECOME A STAPLE IN UNIVERSITY COURSES ON MODERN MUSIC HISTORY, CULTURAL STUDIES, AND EVEN POLITICAL HISTORY. ITS INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH HELPS READERS SEE MUSIC NOT JUST AS ENTERTAINMENT BUT AS A REFLECTION AND CATALYST OF SOCIETAL CHANGE.

INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY MUSIC DISCOURSE

THE BOOK'S INSIGHTS HAVE INFLUENCED MUSICIANS, CRITICS, AND SCHOLARS, INSPIRING NEW PERSPECTIVES ON HOW TO INTERPRET CENTURY-SPANNING MUSICAL DEVELOPMENTS.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF LISTENING AND APPRECIATION

BY PROVIDING CONTEXTUAL STORIES BEHIND COMPLEX COMPOSITIONS, THE REST IS NOISE ENCOURAGES READERS TO LISTEN MORE ATTENTIVELY AND APPRECIATE THE RICH TAPESTRY OF MODERN MUSIC.

Why You Should Read *The Rest Is Noise*

Whether you are a seasoned musicologist or a curious newcomer, the book offers numerous benefits:

- It provides a comprehensive overview of 20th-century music's evolution.
- It connects musical developments with broader historical and political contexts.
- It introduces you to influential composers and their groundbreaking works.
- It fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of modern music's diversity and complexity.
- It encourages critical listening and personal engagement with music.

Conclusion

The Rest Is Noise by Alex Ross stands as a monumental achievement in music literature. It demystifies the often chaotic and revolutionary spirit of 20th-century music, revealing how artists responded to and shaped their turbulent times. By weaving together stories of composers, political upheavals, technological advances, and cultural shifts, Ross offers readers a compelling narrative that enriches their understanding and appreciation of modern music. If you are eager to explore the depths of 20th-century soundscapes and understand the profound stories behind them, this book is an essential read that will resonate long after you turn the last page.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is *'The Rest Is Noise'* by Alex Ross about?

'The Rest Is Noise' is a comprehensive history of 20th-century classical music, exploring how cultural, political, and technological changes influenced composers and their works.

Who is the author of *'The Rest Is Noise'*?

The book was written by Alex Ross, a renowned music critic and cultural commentator for *The New Yorker*.

When was *'The Rest Is Noise'* published?

It was first published in 2007 and has since become a seminal text on modern music history.

What are some key themes covered in *'The Rest Is Noise'*?

Key themes include the impact of World Wars, political ideologies, technological advancements, and cultural shifts on the development of classical music in the 20th century.

Is *'The Rest Is Noise'* suitable for beginners in music history?

Yes, the book is accessible to general readers and provides a compelling narrative, though it also offers in-depth insights for more knowledgeable audiences.

Has 'The Rest Is Noise' Won Any Awards?

Yes, it has received numerous accolades, including the 2007 National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism.

Are There Any Adaptations of 'The Rest Is Noise'?

Yes, the book was adapted into a documentary series by the BBC, further exploring the themes and stories presented in the book.

Additional Resources

The Rest Is Noise: An In-Depth Exploration of Alex Ross's Masterpiece

Introduction

"The Rest Is Noise" by Alex Ross is not just a book—it's an immersive journey through the tumultuous world of 20th-century classical music. As a renowned music critic and cultural commentator, Ross offers readers a compelling narrative that intertwines musical developments with historical and political contexts. This book has become a seminal work for both music aficionados and newcomers alike, providing a comprehensive overview of a century that radically transformed the musical landscape. In this review, we will explore the core themes of the book, analyze its strengths and weaknesses, and evaluate why it remains an essential read for anyone interested in modern music history.

Overview of the Book's Scope and Structure

"The Rest Is Noise" covers a broad timeline—from the early 1900s through the early 21st century—highlighting pivotal composers, works, and musical movements. Ross structures the narrative thematically and chronologically, weaving in cultural, political, and technological influences that shaped the music of each era.

The book is divided into several thematic sections:

- The Birth of Modernism and the Shock of New Music
- The Interwar Years and Political Turmoil
- The Mid-20th Century and the Cold War
- Postmodernism and Contemporary Music

This structure allows Ross to contextualize musical innovation within the broader societal changes, making the book accessible and engaging for readers with varying levels of musical knowledge.

Core Themes and Analysis

Historical Context and Political Influences

One of Ross's most compelling strengths is his ability to connect musical evolution with significant historical events. From the upheavals of World War I and II to the Cold War tensions, the narrative demonstrates how politics, ideology, and societal upheaval directly influenced musical styles and composer choices.

For example, Ross describes how the rise of fascism and communism in Europe affected composers' careers and musical directions. He explores how figures like Shostakovich navigated oppressive regimes, often encoding subtle messages within their compositions. Similarly, the influence of revolutionary ideologies is evident in the

WORKS OF STRAVINSKY, SCHOENBERG, AND OTHERS, ILLUSTRATING HOW MUSIC BECAME A REFLECTION OF IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICTS.

INNOVATION AND MUSICAL LANGUAGE

ROSS METICULOUSLY TRACES THE EVOLUTION OF MUSICAL LANGUAGE THROUGHOUT THE CENTURY. FROM THE DISSONANCE AND CHAOS OF EARLY MODERNISM TO THE SERIAL TECHNIQUES OF SCHOENBERG AND THE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS OF COMPOSERS LIKE MAHLER, THE BOOK MAPS OUT HOW MUSICAL LANGUAGE EXPANDED AND DIVERSIFIED.

KEY FEATURES INCLUDE:

- THE ADVENT OF ATONALITY AND SERIALISM
- THE INFLUENCE OF JAZZ, ELECTRONIC MUSIC, AND POPULAR CULTURE
- THE RISE OF MINIMALISM AND POSTMODERN APPROACHES

ROSS DISCUSSES HOW EACH INNOVATION CHALLENGED TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF MELODY, HARMONY, AND FORM, PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF WHAT MUSIC COULD EXPRESS AND ACHIEVE.

INFLUENTIAL COMPOSERS AND WORKS

THE BOOK PROFILES NUMEROUS INFLUENTIAL COMPOSERS, PROVIDING INSIGHTS INTO THEIR LIVES, PHILOSOPHIES, AND COMPOSITIONS. NOTABLE FIGURES INCLUDE:

- IGOR STRAVINSKY
- ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
- AARON COPLAND
- PIERRE BOULEZ
- JOHN CAGE
- PHILIP GLASS

ROSS DOESN'T MERELY LIST COMPOSITIONS; HE ANALYZES KEY WORKS, REVEALING HOW THEY EXEMPLIFY THE MUSICAL TRENDS AND CULTURAL CURRENTS OF THEIR TIME. FOR INSTANCE, HIS DISCUSSION OF STRAVINSKY'S THE RITE OF SPRING EXPLORES ITS REVOLUTIONARY RHYTHM AND ORCHESTRATION, WHICH CAUSED A RIOT AT ITS PREMIERE AND REDEFINED MODERN MUSIC.

STRENGTHS OF "THE REST IS NOISE"

- COMPREHENSIVE SCOPE: THE BOOK COVERS A VAST PERIOD, TOUCHING UPON NEARLY EVERY MAJOR MOVEMENT AND FIGURE IN 20TH-CENTURY CLASSICAL MUSIC.
- CONTEXTUAL DEPTH: ROSS'S INTEGRATION OF POLITICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS ENRICHES THE UNDERSTANDING OF MUSICAL DEVELOPMENTS.
- ENGAGING NARRATIVE STYLE: THE WRITING IS ACCESSIBLE, LIVELY, AND OFTEN ANECDOTAL, MAKING COMPLEX MUSICAL THEORIES UNDERSTANDABLE TO LAY READERS.
- ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES: THE DETAILED ANALYSES OF KEY WORKS HELP READERS APPRECIATE THE INNOVATIONS AND EMOTIONAL DEPTH OF THE MUSIC.
- VISUAL AIDS: THE INCLUSION OF PHOTOGRAPHS, SCORE EXCERPTS, AND TIMELINES ENHANCES THE READING EXPERIENCE, PROVIDING VISUAL CONTEXT.

PROS

- WELL-RESEARCHED AND AUTHORITATIVE
- BALANCES TECHNICAL ANALYSIS WITH STORYTELLING
- OFFERS FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILIAR WORKS AND COMPOSERS
- SUITABLE FOR BOTH CASUAL READERS AND MUSIC STUDENTS

CONS

- SOME SECTIONS MAY ASSUME PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF MUSICAL TERMINOLOGY

- THE DENSE COVERAGE CAN BE OVERWHELMING FOR READERS NEW TO CLASSICAL MUSIC
- FOCUSES PREDOMINANTLY ON WESTERN COMPOSERS, WITH LIMITED DISCUSSION OF GLOBAL MUSICAL DEVELOPMENTS

CRITICISMS AND LIMITATIONS

WHILE “THE REST IS NOISE” IS WIDELY PRAISED, IT IS NOT WITHOUT CRITIQUES:

- EUROCENTRIC FOCUS: THE BOOK PRIMARILY CENTERS ON EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN COMPOSERS, WITH LIMITED EXPLORATION OF NON-WESTERN MUSICAL TRADITIONS THAT ALSO EXPERIENCED SIGNIFICANT 20TH-CENTURY TRANSFORMATIONS.
- DEPTH VS. ACCESSIBILITY: SOME READERS SEEKING DETAILED TECHNICAL ANALYSES MIGHT FIND CERTAIN SECTIONS SUPERFICIAL, AS ROSS AIMS TO MAINTAIN ACCESSIBILITY.
- NARRATIVE BIAS: AS WITH ANY HISTORICAL ACCOUNT, ROSS’S INTERPRETATIONS AND EMPHASIS REFLECT HIS PERSPECTIVES, WHICH MAY NOT ENCOMPASS ALL VIEWPOINTS OR LESSER-KNOWN FIGURES.

IMPACT AND RELEVANCE TODAY

SINCE ITS PUBLICATION, “THE REST IS NOISE” HAS CEMENTED ITS PLACE AS A FOUNDATIONAL TEXT IN MUSIC LITERATURE. ITS INFLUENCE EXTENDS BEYOND ACADEMIC CIRCLES, HELPING POPULARIZE MODERNIST AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AMONG GENERAL AUDIENCES. THE BOOK HAS INSPIRED NUMEROUS LECTURES, COURSES, AND DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND HISTORY.

IN AN ERA WHERE DIGITAL ACCESS AND STREAMING HAVE TRANSFORMED HOW WE ENGAGE WITH MUSIC, ROSS’S CHRONICLE OFFERS VALUABLE CONTEXT, ENRICHING THE LISTENING EXPERIENCE. UNDERSTANDING THE TURBULENT HISTORY BEHIND THE WORKS ENHANCES APPRECIATION AND CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH MODERN COMPOSITIONS.

CONCLUSION: A MUST-READ FOR MUSIC ENTHUSIASTS

“THE REST IS NOISE” STANDS OUT AS A MASTERFUL SYNTHESIS OF MUSIC HISTORY, CULTURAL COMMENTARY, AND STORYTELLING. ALEX ROSS’S ABILITY TO DISTILL COMPLEX MUSICAL IDEAS INTO ENGAGING NARRATIVES MAKES THIS BOOK A TREASURE FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE EVOLUTION OF 20TH-CENTURY MUSIC. WHILE IT MAY CHALLENGE NEWCOMERS WITH ITS BREADTH AND DEPTH, THE REWARD IS A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW MUSIC BOTH SHAPES AND IS SHAPED BY THE TUMULTUOUS WORLD AROUND IT.

IN SUMMARY, WHETHER YOU ARE A SEASONED MUSICIAN, A STUDENT, OR SIMPLY A CURIOUS READER, “THE REST IS NOISE” OFFERS A COMPELLING, INSIGHTFUL, AND BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN EXPLORATION OF A CENTURY THAT REDEFINED MUSICAL BOUNDARIES. ITS ENDURING RELEVANCE LIES IN ITS CAPACITY TO CONTEXTUALIZE MUSIC AS A VITAL EXPRESSION OF HUMAN HISTORY AND CULTURE—TRULY, THE REST IS NOISE, BUT ROSS ELOQUENTLY SHOWS US HOW THAT NOISE BECAME THE SYMPHONY OF THE MODERN AGE.

[The Rest Is Noise Book](#)

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Alex Ross, 2007-10-16 Ross, music critic for The New Yorker, journeys from Vienna before the First World War to New York in the 1970s and 80s. The result is not so much a history of 20th-century music as it is a history of the 20th century through its music.

the rest is noise book: *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* Alex Ross, 2011-08-25 Alex Ross’s sweeping history of twentieth-century classical music, winner of the Guardian First Book Award, is a gripping account of a musical revolution.

the rest is noise book: *The Rest Is Noise* Alex Ross, 2007-10-16 Winner of the 2007 National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism A New York Times Book Review Top Ten Book of the Year Time magazine Top Ten Nonfiction Book of 2007 Newsweek Favorite Books of 2007 A Washington Post Book World Best Book of 2007 In this sweeping and dramatic narrative, Alex Ross, music critic for The New Yorker, weaves together the histories of the twentieth century and its music, from Vienna before the First World War to Paris in the twenties; from Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia to downtown New York in the sixties and seventies up to the present. Taking readers into the labyrinth of modern style, Ross draws revelatory connections between the century's most influential composers and the wider culture. *The Rest Is Noise* is an astonishing history of the twentieth century as told through its music.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: Music for All: Music in FDR's America Alex Ross, 2013-02-28 This is a chapter taken from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, *The Rest is Noise*.

the rest is noise book: *Listen to This* Alex Ross, 2025-09-23 One of The Telegraph's Best Music Books 2011 Alex Ross's award-winning international bestseller, *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*, has become a contemporary classic, establishing Ross as one of our most popular and acclaimed cultural historians. *Listen to This*, which takes its title from a beloved 2004 essay in which Ross describes his late-blooming discovery of pop music, showcases the best of his writing from more than a decade at The New Yorker. These pieces, dedicated to classical and popular artists alike, are at once erudite and lively. In a previously unpublished essay, Ross brilliantly retells hundreds of years of music history—from Renaissance dances to Led Zeppelin—through a few iconic bass lines of celebration and lament. He vibrantly sketches canonical composers such as Schubert, Verdi, and Brahms; gives us in-depth interviews with modern pop masters such as Björk and Radiohead; and introduces us to music students at a Newark high school and indie-rock hipsters in Beijing. Whether his subject is Mozart or Bob Dylan, Ross shows how music expresses the full complexity of the human condition. Witty, passionate, and brimming with insight, *Listen to This* teaches us how to listen more closely.

the rest is noise book: *The Rest Is Noise Series: Dance of the Earth: The Rite, the Folk, le Jazz* Alex Ross, 2013-01-17 This is a chapter from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, *'The Rest is Noise'*. Further extracts are available as digital shorts, accompanying the London Southbank festival programme.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: The Golden Age: Strauss, Mahler, and the Fin de Siecle Alex Ross, 2013-01-17 This is a chapter from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, *'The Rest is Noise'*. Further extracts are available as digital shorts, accompanying the London Southbank festival programme.

the rest is noise book: *Audible Signs* Michael Alec Rose, 2010-08-26 Whether it's a song by Brahms or by the Boss, a serenade by Mozart or a ballet by John Harbison, music radiates a diverse spectrum of meaningful signs, hidden in plain hearing. To enjoy the interplay of musical signs, it helps to recognize them in the first place. The various iconographic strategies of *Audible Signs*—including commentary on graphic works, books, poems, and film—yield new appreciations and critiques of composers of vastly divergent styles and technical materials. Author and composer Michael Alec Rose helps readers decode the signs composers give us in their music—sounds that invoke very particular ideas, images, and cultural contexts—and reveals the extraordinary ingenuity with which certain pieces deploy recognizable figures in a musical landscape. None of this can be done systematically. Each artwork reinvents the code and demands a unique set of approaches. But the chapters in this invigorating book spring from the same musical ground, where the only thing that matters is to pay attention to the wonders of great music.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: The Art of Fear: Music in Stalin's Russia Alex Ross, 2013-02-28 This is a chapter taken from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, *The Rest is Noise*.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: Apparition from the Woods: The

Loneliness of Jean Sibelius Alex Ross, 2013-01-17 This is a chapter from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, 'The Rest is Noise'. Further extracts are available as digital shorts, accompanying the London Southbank festival programme.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: Invisible Men: American Composers from Ives to Ellington Alex Ross, 2013-01-17 This is a chapter from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, 'The Rest is Noise'. Further extracts are available as digital shorts, accompanying the London Southbank festival programme.

the rest is noise book: Ultimate Blogs Sarah Boxer, 2008-02-12 "What are you working on?" "An anthology of blogs." "I didn't know you had a blog." "I don't. It's an anthology of other people's blogs." "How do you find good blogs?" "I read. I surf. I look at blog contests. I follow links. I ask people about the blogs they like." "Is a good blog hard to find?" "Yes. Very." A Book of Blogs? WTF!! Sarah Boxer, a former New York Times reporter and critic, travels through the blogosphere (more than 80 million blogs — and counting) and finds some masterpieces along the way. Among the bloggers in the anthology are: two fashion critics mocking the inexplicable "fugliness" of celebrities a Marine Corps lieutenant stationed in Fallujah in 2006 a 19-year old student in Singapore cheerfully pining for her ex an illustrator's tiny saga of a rodent and his ball of crap Odysseus's sidekick telling his side of the Iliad and Odyssey Revealing and deceptive, grand and niggling, worldly and parochial, these blogs comprise a snapshot of life on the wild, wild Web.

the rest is noise book: "Music's Obedient Daughter" Sabine Lichtenstein, 2014-03-01 A libretto is an indispensable part of an opera as a musical genre: with few exceptions, operas have been the subject of musicological studies, and instrumental versions of sung or unsung opera numbers may be heard, but we never listen to libretto texts being performed without the music. Thus as a literary form the libretto is a highly specific genre with its own particular attributes. This volume offers an approach to the libretto through the discussion of these attributes in many different examples. It explores what may be expected of a librettist in response to the demands of the genre's characteristics, his trials and tribulations, his exchanges with the composer while adapting or converting a source, almost always a literary source, into the eventual libretto, and about the different musical ways of dealing with the text. In this way the volume clarifies the fundamental differences between the libretto and other literary genres.

the rest is noise book: Julian Anderson Julian Anderson, Christopher Dingle, 2020 Julian Anderson is renowned internationally as one of the leading composers of his generation. This substantial book of conversations with the scholar and critic Christopher Dingle captures Anderson's thoughts and memories in-depth for the first time, not only providing biographical information and background material, but also capturing the workings of a remarkable mind. It is rare to find a composer prepared to speak extensively and honestly on as broad a range of topics as Anderson. These extraordinarily diverse conversations range far beyond his own compositions and even beyond the sphere of music, exploring issues of broad cultural interest.

the rest is noise book: The Rest Is Noise Series: City of Nets: Berlin in the Twenties Alex Ross, 2013-02-28 This is a chapter taken from Alex Ross's groundbreaking history of twentieth-century classical music, The Rest is Noise.

the rest is noise book: Roman Polanski Ewa Mazierska, 2007-05-25 Polanski is one of the most talented and distinguished of modern film makers. A well-informed cultural traveller, interested in the position of the outsider, he is hard to pigeonhole: he moves easily between mass audience and art-house tastes, between settings and genres; his films, including 'Two Men and a Wardrobe', 'Cul de Sac', 'Rosemary's Baby', 'The Pianist' and 'Oliver Twist', represent diverse characters and cinematic influences. Like a magpie, he's interested in everything he encounters, but then easily discards his treasures and moves onward. Covering all Polanski's films as director, this welcome book addresses the eclecticism, ambiguity and paradoxes of his cinema, while seeking out the common elements in his films. Ewa Mazierska examines the autobiographical effect of Polanski's films, his characters and diverse narratives, and the place of absurdism, surrealism and the 'double life' of things in his cinema. She looks into the function of music, of religion, power, patriarchy and

racism in the films, as well as Polanski's literary adaptations and his use and subversion of film genres. Herself a Polish emigre, she uncovers Polanski's Polish roots and the extent of their influence on the cinema of this mercurial film maker, at large in the world.

the rest is noise book: Towards a Twenty-first-century Feminist Politics of Music Sally Macarthur, 2010 Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music opens up a new way of thinking about the absence of women's music. It does not aim to find 'a solution' in a liberal feminist sense, but to discover new potentialities, new possibilities for thought and action. Sally Macarthur encourages us, with the assistance of Deleuze, and feminist-Deleuzian work, to begin the important work of imagining what else might be possible, not in order to provide answers but to open up the as yet unknown. The power of thought - or what Deleuze calls the 'virtual' - opens up new possibilities. Macarthur suggests that the future for women's 'new' music is not tied to the predictable and known but to futures beyond the already-known. Previous research concludes that women's music is virtually absent from the concert hall, and yet fails to find a way of changing this situation. Macarthur finds that the flaw in the recommendations flowing from past research is that it envisages the future from the standpoint of the present, and it relies on a set of pre-determined goals. It thus replicates the present reality, so reinforcing rather than changing the status quo. Macarthur challenges this thinking, and argues that this repetitive way of thinking is stuck in the present, unable to move forward. This book sets out to develop a new conception of subjectivity that sows the seeds of a twenty-first century affirmative, feminist politics of music.

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