



What to Listen for in Music (Mentor)

Aaron Copland

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"Note on the Revised Edition: Almost twenty years have passed since the first edition of this book was issued in 1939. It is naturally gratifying to me to know that it has continued to be found useful by music listeners since that time, both in America and abroad. During the past two decades we have witnessed an unprecedented spread of interest in all forms of music throughout the world. Both the quantity and quality of music listening have changed, but fortunately for the author, the basic problems of "what to listen for" have remained about the same. For that reason, only minor corrections were needed in the body of the text. Two new chapters have added--one on the thorny question of how present-day composition should be listened to, the other considering the comparatively new province of film scoring and its relation to the movie-goer. The first of these added sections needs a word of explanation in view of my original claim, in the Preface to the first edition, that contemporary composition posed no special listening problems of its own. This still seems to me to be true. Nevertheless, it is equally true that after fifty years of so-called modern music there are still thousands of well-intentioned music lovers who think it sounds peculiar. It seemed worth an extra try to see if I could elucidate some few facets of new music listening that do not come within the scope of other chapters. Both new sections are based on articles originally prepared for The New York Times Magazine. My thanks are due the editors for permission to recast some of the material originally printed there. At the back of the book a list of recordings of works mentioned in the text (with a few additions) will be found. For those interested in further reading, a short bibliography has been added, including a special listing of books by composer-authors. These were set down in the hope that listeners would want to hear composers speak for....." [by Aaron Copland, Crotonville, New York, 1957]

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