

Art Music: Love, Listening, and Soulfulness: 0

Matthew Del Nevo



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Listening to music is not merely something one does, but something central to a way of living. Listening has the power to transport one into another way of being. It is a mode of feeling and forms the bedrock of deep emotion. Written from the viewpoint of a philosophy of sensibility, Matthew Del Nevo notes that this perspective may not be in fashion, but it follows a long tradition.

Del Nevo emphasizes the aesthetic experience of listening to art music as it has developed and disintegrated in Western civilization. He recognizes a deep psychological element to what he calls "soul"—or more accurately "sensibility." He addresses music in a non-technical way, taking up the powerful art theory of Charles Baudelaire, the music philosophy of Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner, and takes a strong critical stand against modernist intellectual art music.

The importance of this book for the musically- literate reader is its insight into the metaphysics of nostalgia. This comprehension is missing from nearly all musical instruction because we have lost sight of it. Del Nevo asserts that this understanding must be brought back into our culture. And since this is a book about listening to art music, it is no less about sensibility and its cultivation, which in its object form we call culture. An engaging book, Art Music will appeal to those interested in music, culture, and philosophy.

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