

The Making of Music

Ralph Vaughan Williams

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Ralph Vaughan Williams : The Making of Music before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Making of Music:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. estimable teachingBy LuelCanyonThis little 61 page book is comprised of a revision of five lectures given by Vaughan Williams at Cornell and Yale universities in 1954. The subjects covered are Why do we make music and What is music, How do we make music, What are the social foundations of music, The folk-song movement, and finally a deft little summary of sorts entitled Making your own music. Vaughan Williams reveals his deepest beliefs about music in these few pages, beliefs one finds richly abiding in his musical works. He is uncompromisingly English throughout - clear and spare and jubilant at the truth music affords - all done with subtlety, clarity and inventive thought. Mendelssohn used to say that the meaning of music was too precise for words, and perhaps this English composer has successfully defied that conclusion with these forthright essays. Citing Tovey that Bach never wrote for unaccompanied chorus (something that hadnt strictly speaking occurred to me), Vaughan Williams quotes from 'St John's Passion' then chases Bach's true intentions over a page and a half finally concluding that perhaps what Bach really intended is actually realized in performances of his keyboard music played on a modern piano, not "the nasty jangling of the harpsichord to which he was condemned for filling in his continuo". Biting and bright, these essays reveal Vaughan Williams the composer as much as anything I can think of short of the music itself. A useful and invigorating few pages.

This monograph is based on four lectures which the venerable and distinguished British composer delivered at Cornell University. He explains the nature of rhythm, the relation of folk music to the composer, why we make music, the social foundations of music, and more.