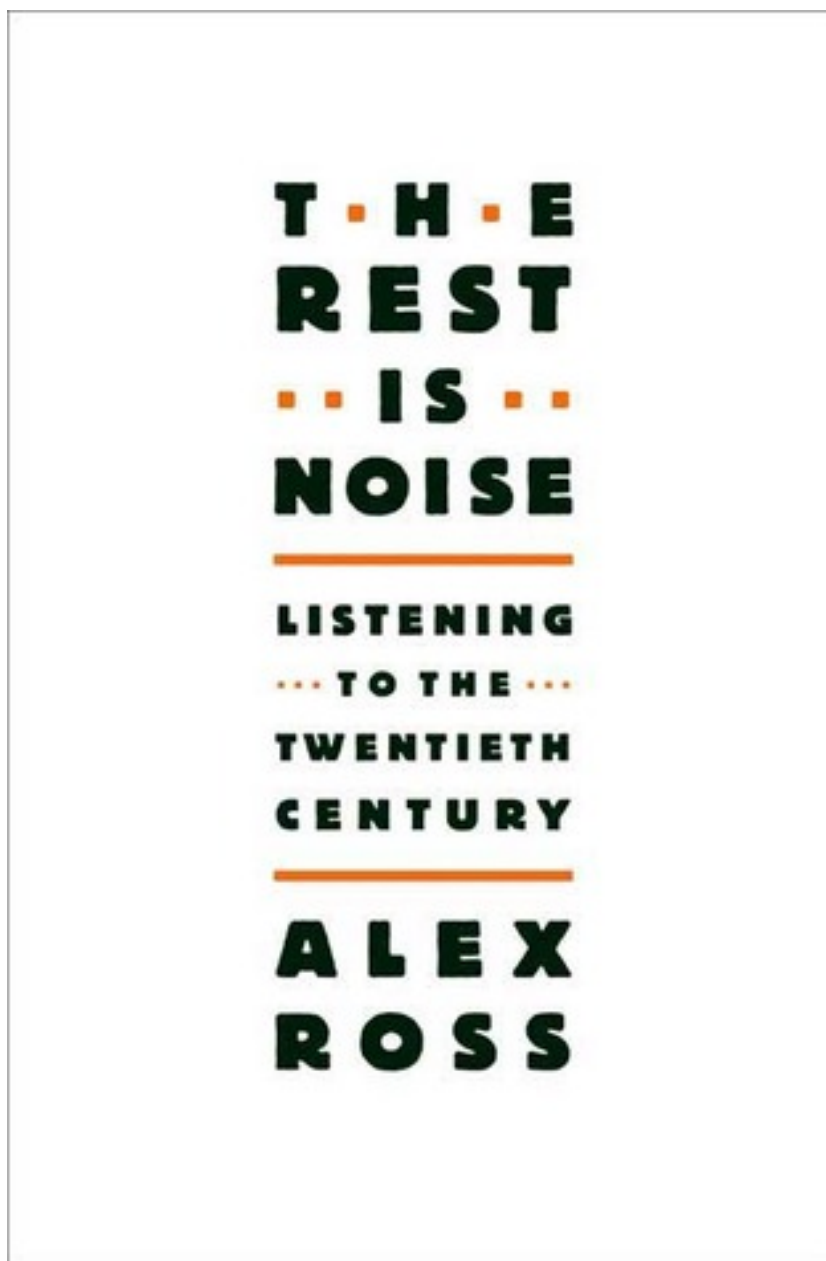


The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century Book PDF Download



By:
Alex Ross

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What people Say:

Tony

You know how you can watch a foreign language movie, without subtitles, and still enjoy the film? You may not speak German but can still tell that Hitler's pissed off. You may not speak French, but you can tell that Juliette Binoche has reached a point of existential doubt in a meretricious relationship.

This book was like that for me. I may not, even now, be able to articulate a difference between atonality and twelve-tone music (is there one?), but I love being told that "some stabbing single

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This book is Music in the Twentieth Century. Or, the Twentieth Century, with music.

It starts with Richard Strauss conducting

. Puccini took the train north; Mahler

attended. Schoenberg and Berg were there. Hitler said he was. And if you recall:

Doctor Faustus

LeverkÃ¼hn looms large in this history, a twisting of Evil with Music, and a twisting of Music and the human soul. The notes I heard kept asking "What's next?" and "What's next?" In slow movements, and fast.

Greg

This book took me way too long to read, which is a little strange because I found it very interesting

and quite inspiring. I'm tempted to give it five stars, but I'm too much of a dilettante when it comes to cough,

music to not necessarily take everything that the author is saying at face value. I do have two complaints about the books though, the first is that the author clearly dislikes the one of the few people I probably do count as an actual hero of mine. I don't hold it strongly ag

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music to not necessarily take everything that the author is saying at face value. I do have two complaints about the books though, the first is that the author clearly dislikes the one of the few people I probably do count as an actual hero of mine. I don't hold it strongly against him that he finds Adorno to (what's the word), not necessarily wrong, but some kind of extremist snob for lack of a better word. Every time Adorno makes an appearance on these pages he comes across like a rapid attack dog of anti-everything except for strict Schoenberg non-mass appeal. Which might be true, I've never really delved into his music writings too deeply, but the picture of him as an

is I like a bit of a cartoonish exaggeration.

The second complaint I would have of the book is that it kind of stops short of being a history of 20th century music and kind of peters out around 1976 with Reich's

. A few other composers are talked about and works that they release in the same year, but all talk of the last quarter of the century is treated in a very fragmentary and stilted manner. Maybe there isn't much to talk about, but the style of the book changes in the last fifty pages or so in a way that makes the very end of the book read like a series of notes the author made on a handful of composers and records. In this last section there are also name droppings of pop artists like Radiohead, Sonic Youth and Bjork, which pulls together the history of serious music with pop music, but without doing much more than dropping the names in the swirl of the kind of chaotic finish.

The author also uses the phrase 'moshpit of the mind' which is almost totally inexcusable in the context it's given in, and actually shouldn't be used by anyone. It's moments like that which seem to make the author trying to hard to sound hip, but there isn't anything hip about using the word moshpit, and really the only people who would ever say something like that are someone's dad who heard the word and thinks it's what with it people are saying. I can't hold this against the author too strongly though.

All in all I really enjoyed this book, and it's treatment of pre-World War 2 music especially in Germany was very informative to me. I have a feeling that anyone seriously into modern music will find the book to be missing some of their favorites, or think the book treats certain movements too quickly, but as a general overview of a chaotic century's musical trends this book seems to do it's job just fine.

Hadrian

The story of classical music in the 20th century is no doubt one of intense changes and an immense cast of characters. How, exactly, did we go from

in the beginning of the century to

and

with a bit of

and

in between?

Ross takes two main approaches here - the first is a political/social context in which classical music evolved and influenced each other. His story begins in

Vienna and that era of social experimentation, through the dictators

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Jonathan Barry

I think this book is best read and listened to at the same time; it really adds to it. As such, I created a Youtube playlist to go along with your read, which you can find here:

If you're looking for a listen with better sound quality and don't mind finding them yourselves (I can't blame you), then here is the list of songs that I thought captured the book:

Richard Strauss "Also Sprach Zarathustra

Gustav Mahler "Symphony No. 8

Claude Debussy "Arabesque I

Cl

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kaelan

This isn't something I say lightly, but pretty much everyone should consider reading Alex Ross'

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I first became acquainted with this book in my late teens. By that time, I'd already immersed myself quite heavily in free jazz, noise, and the like. But classical music—especially the 20th century variety—had thus far eluded my understanding. Like many otherwise adventurous young listeners, I felt overwhelmed by the plethora of composers, performers and recordings to choose from. And in this regard, avant-jazz was—comparatively speaking—pretty straightforward: all you needed to do was track yourself down a copy of

or

or

. With composed music, the problem was knowing where the hell you should even start.

Enter