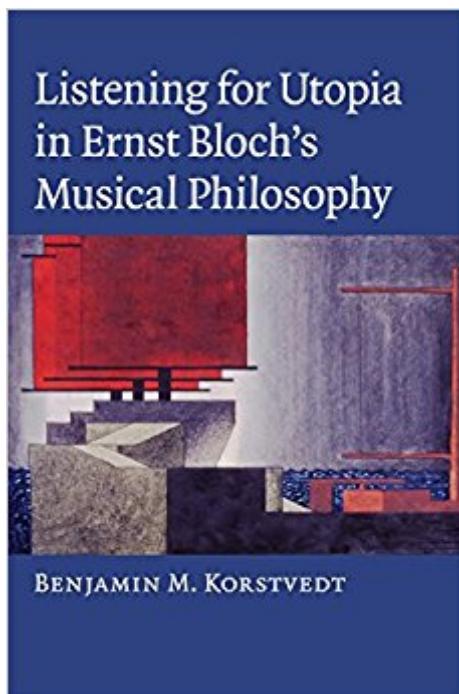


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Listening For Utopia In Ernst Bloch's Musical Philosophy



Synopsis

The musical writings of the German philosopher and theorist Ernst Bloch are extraordinarily rich, but also unusually dense, at times even cryptic. Bloch, a profoundly heterodox thinker, brilliantly wove cultural criticism into a larger project of what he termed 'revolutionary gnosis'. Listening for Utopia is both an explication of Bloch's musical thought and a critical development of it. Ultimately, the book seeks to reanimate Bloch's philosophy of music in ways that connect with current musicology. The work begins with a detailed study of concepts crucial to Bloch's aesthetics that situates them within both his philosophical system and German critical theory of the early twentieth century. The second half of the book comprises a series of essays that take up key ideas from Bloch, decipher them through contextual and close reading, and develop them through critical application to salient musical masterpieces by Wagner, Mozart, Bruckner and Brahms.

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Customer Reviews

Advance Endorsement Despite Ernst Bloch's significance for the philosophical reception of Austro-German music, his work has too often been overlooked in the literature, eclipsed especially by his contemporary Adorno. Benjamin Korstvedt's Listening for Utopia offers a welcome corrective to this tendency. Marshalling a formidable knowledge of Bloch's writings and their cultural context, and viewing it through the prism of his views on the music of Mozart, Wagner, Brahms and Bruckner, Korstvedt mixes clear and insightful commentary on Bloch's ideas with apposite studies of their musicological and music-analytical implications. The result is a most valuable contribution to

our understanding of both Bloch and the repertoire he addressed. Julian Horton Associate Professor of Music, University College Dublin

Ernst Bloch's philosophy of music is richly insightful, but often forbidding in its density. This book makes Bloch's musical thought accessible to modern musical scholars by deciphering its conceptual bases. Korstvedt then uses ideas derived from Bloch as the starting point for critical essays on Wagner, Mozart, Bruckner and Brahms.

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