

## *The Way We Listen Now*

This is a book that can be read with great pleasure and considerable profit by the general reader today. But when, in a century's time, historians want to know what musical life was like in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and what judgment, opinion and taste was current then, this book will certainly be capable of giving them a cultivated and accurate answer. Without exception, these essays are of permanent importance and value. Only the richness and diversity of their subject matter make it impossible to give an adequate idea of their variety and scope, not to mention their stature.

*Hugh Wood*

This is the first selection of essays by Bayan Northcott, one of the most distinguished British music critics of the generation that followed Hans Keller (1919-85). For many decades he has captivated readers with his breadth of knowledge, acuity and pursuit of the highest standards; at the same time he has also emerged as a composer. So it is the meeting point of critic and artist that these writings celebrate.

The book falls into four parts. The first deals mainly with musical questions, the second with music for words, the third with a gallery of composers from J. S. Bach and Mozart to Elliott Carter and Judith Weir, and the fourth with the various states of music from the 1980s to the present. An envoi reflects on endings and silence. Many of the essays were written for *The Independent*, and include some of the drawings by Michael Daley that originally accompanied them. There are six further drawings by Milein Cosman, and a comprehensive bibliographical survey.



BAYAN NORTHCOTT was born in Harrow in 1940, and has lived and worked mainly in London. He has written extensively for *Music and Musicians*, *The New Statesman*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Independent* and the *BBC Music Magazine*, as well as for many other publications. In 1980 he edited a collection of essays on *The Music of Alexander Goehr* (Schott), and his compositions include a Fantasia for guitar (1982), a Sextet (1985), a Horn Concerto (1998) and Four Votive Antiphons (1997-2003).

CHRISTOPHER WINTLE (Editor) teaches at King's College London and is author of *All the Gods: Benjamin Britten's Night-piece in Context* (Plumbago, 2006). He has edited four volumes of Hans Keller's writings, including *Essays on Music* (CUP, 1994) and *Film Music and Beyond* (Plumbago, 2006), as well as Julian Littlewood's *The Variations of Johannes Brahms* (Plumbago, 2004) and Hugh Wood's *Staking Out the Territory* (Plumbago, 2007).

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Northcott

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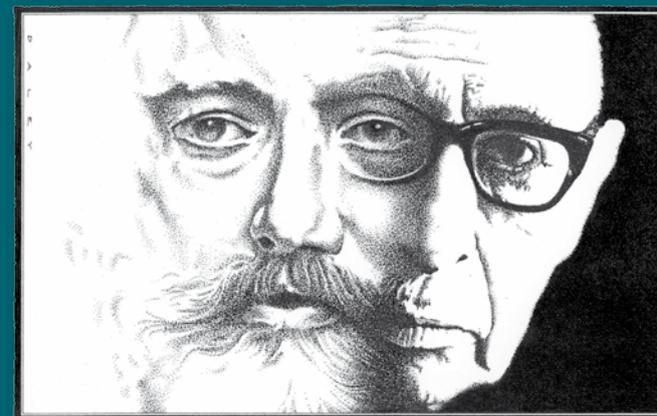
Plumbago

Poetics of Music

# The Way We Listen Now

*and Other Writings on Music*

Bayan Northcott



*edited by*  
Christopher Wintle

*drawings by*  
Milein Cosman and Michael Daley