

## Readings for offer holders

The texts are provided to help provide you with an insight into the kinds of material you will come across during the first year of study within musicology. This is just a quick cover note to explain a bit of context for each of the digitized extracts that we've shared with you. All four have been chosen because they relate to the first-year unit Approaches to Musicology, which you study in semester one.

### **Marcia J. Citron, 'Women and the Western Art Canon: Where Are We Now?'**

Marcia Citron is one of the leading figures in feminist musicology. Her book *Gender and the Musical Canon*, published in 1993, was one of the key texts to emerge from the first generation of US scholars associated with what has subsequently become known as the 'New Musicology'. In this essay from 2007, Citron reflects on the changes (or lack thereof) that took place following the publication of *Gender and the Musical Canon* and the debates that have taken place within musicology during that time. Indeed, one of the central ideas you'll be exposed to in first-year musicology is canon: this is a crucial concept that often draws on Reception Studies to examine how composers, performers, institutions, publics and discourses gel together over time to create 'history'. The concept of canon therefore opens up the ways in which certain traditions of artists and works dominate histories of the arts. Many of us in the Music Department here at Manchester (Rebecca Herissone and myself, for instance) undertake research in Reception Studies with particular interests in how canons form and change over time.

### **Richard Taruskin, 'The Poietic Fallacy'**

Taruskin is one of the most prominent – arguably the most prominent – living musicologists. (You might also enjoy his collection of acerbic essays and *New York Times* pieces published as *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays*.) In the essay 'The Poietic Fallacy' Taruskin lays out just how music criticism, and especially music criticism of western art music, relies heavily on a belief in the composer's intentions. But how can we possibly know what the composer intended just by listening to the music? Or, how does our knowledge of what we think composers were doing inform the way we listen? These are absolutely fundamental questions at the heart of the 'New Musicology', and issues you get to grips with in the third class of Approaches to Musicology.

### **Jeff Todd Titon, 'The Music-Culture as a World of Music'.**

This chapter is given as one of the readings in the first of two lectures from Caroline Bithell, which are designed to introduce you to key concepts and questions in the field of ethnomusicology. Jeff Titon is an American ethnomusicologist, now retired. In this chapter, Titon grapples with the question of how we should understand the meaning and the differences

between music and musical cultures in a truly global context. In the opening pages, for example, he writes: 'Every human society has music. Although music is universal, its meaning is not.'

### **Carl Dahlhaus, 'Church Music and the Religion of Art'**

Dahlhaus was a particularly influential German musicologist, who, especially between the 1960s and 1980s, fundamentally shaped the way scholars thought about the aesthetics of western art music and the study of its histories. He is well-known in the history of musicology for his discussion of the concept of 'absolute music': that is, how the culture of instrumental music after Beethoven defined the ways in which music was subsequently composed, performed and especially received by critics, scholars and publics alike. As he writes here, the culture of modernity which this period enacted meant that music had to pass 'the test of the aesthetic maxim that music must be new to be authentic.' In large part, we still live with this idea today, as Taruskin is so keen to argue. In this particular chapter, Dahlhaus seeks to examine where the roots of absolute music (secular, concert-hall music for the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie) come from, focusing on the influence of church music, both in terms of its social status and its compositional models.

### **Arnold Whittall, 'The Minimalist Experiment'**

This chapter is taken from a block of 6 lectures that I will deliver as a case study within Approaches to Musicology in 2020. In this case study we explore how the canon of musical minimalism evolved after the 1970s; as part of this we also consider lesser-known music that was taking place during the crucial years when minimalism moved from the margins to the mainstream (from roughly the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s), much of which has been subject to exciting new research in contemporary music studies, especially within the US. Whittall's chapter is not a part of this new direction in research but it does give a good overview of the canonical figures, works and techniques, written from the position of a specialist analyst and historian of twentieth-century music.

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