



Music and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart

Ralph P. Locke

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During the years 1500-1800, European performing arts reveled in a kaleidoscope of Otherness: Middle-Eastern harem women, fortune-telling Spanish 'Gypsies', Incan priests, Barbary pirates, moresca dancers, and more. In this prequel to his 2009 book Musical Exoticism, Ralph P. Locke explores how exotic locales and their inhabitants were characterized in musical genres ranging from instrumental pieces and popular songs to oratorios, ballets, and operas. Locke's study offers new insights into much-loved masterworks by composers such as Cavalli, Lully, Purcell, Rameau, Handel, Vivaldi, Gluck, and Mozart. In these works, evocations of ethnic and cultural Otherness often mingle attraction with envy or fear, and some pieces were understood at the time as commenting on conditions in Europe itself. Locke's accessible study, which includes numerous musical examples and rare illustrations, will be of interest to anyone who is intrigued by the relationship between music and cultural history and by the challenges of cross-cultural (mis)understanding.

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