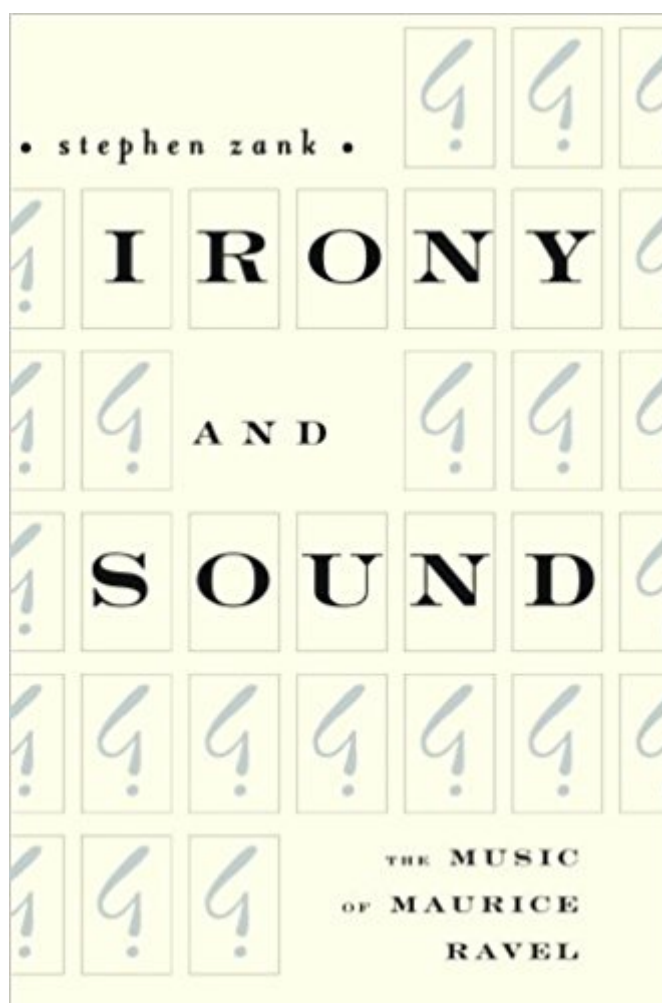


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Irony And Sound: The Music Of Maurice Ravel (Eastman Studies In Music)



Synopsis

What is it about Bolero, Gaspard de la nuit, and Daphnis et Chloe that makes musicians and listeners alike love them so? Stephen Zank here illuminates these and other works of Maurice Ravel through several of the composer's fascinations: dynamic intensification, counterpoint, orchestration, exotic influences on Western music, and an interest in multi-sensorial perception. Connecting all these fascinations, Zank argues, is irony. His book offers an appreciation of Ravel's musical irony that is grounded in the vocabularies and criticism of the time and in two early attempts at writing up a Ravel Aesthetic by intimates of Ravel. Thomas Mann called irony the phenomenon that is, beyond compare, the most profound and most alluring in the world. *Irony and Sound*, written with insight and flair, provides a long-needed reconsideration of Ravel's modernity, his teaching, and his place in twentieth-century music and culture. Musicologist Stephen Zank has taught at University of Illinois, University of North Texas, and University of Rochester. He is the author of *Maurice Ravel: A Guide to Research*.

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Customer Reviews

An accomplished, handsome, and thorough book. . . . Zank has clearly mastered (Ravel's output) fully, usually providing insightful musical examples in the course of each of his chapters. Ravel's manipulation of dynamics (and other musical parameters) as a means of building irony into musical sound becomes clear through Zank's able analysis. H-FRANCE-NET (Kelly Maynard) Read the

complete review at <http://h-france.net/vol11reviews/vol11no83Maynard.pdf> A thoughtful and important contribution to Ravel studies and a welcome respite from the customary "life and works" approach. . . . A careful reading of the "Aoua" movement from the Chansons madÃ©casses is one of Zank's most penetrating. . . . Raises crucial questions in (the) final pages. . . . Scholars, enthusiasts, and intrepid general readers will discover illuminating insights that will provide fruitful paths for further inquiry. MUSIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION NOTES (Keith E. Clifton) Irony and Sound is one of finest studies of Ravel ever written. Subtly, eruditely, Stephen Zank puts into play a great many definitions of irony, definitions ample enough to cover almost the whole range of Ravel's aesthetic -- including maybe the greatest of Ravel's ironies: his way of limiting himself to a rigidly inflected, virtuosic surface of sound, depthless, but suggesting depth by means of anamorphoses or rebuses imprinted on the surface. --Daniel Albright, Ernest Bernbaum Professor of Literature at Harvard University and author of Musicking Shakespeare: A Conflict of Theatres (University of Rochester Press) Filled with detailed insight into the thought world of Ravel and his time, and, best of all, close reading of the music. . . . Most illuminating. . . . Can be read with profit by anyone interested in the composer's work. . . . (The chapter on synaesthesia) is certainly one of the best expositions of this complex notion. . . . This book gives a full picture of Ravel and the intellectual issues of his circle. FANFARE

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