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978-1-108-05730-1 - Catechism of Musical Aesthetics  
Hugo Riemann Translated by H. Bewerunge  
Frontmatter  
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One of the most important musicologists of his age, Hugo Riemann (1849–1919) influenced an entire generation in its thinking. He held several teaching posts before settling at the University of Leipzig in 1895. A prolific writer on music theory, publishing works on almost every aspect of the subject, he is best remembered for his celebrated *Musik-Lexikon* (1882). These three lectures, setting out his thinking on how we listen to music, were first published in 1888 as *Wie hören wir Musik?* and in 1895 in this English translation by Heinrich Bewerunge (1862–1923), plainchant scholar at St Patrick's College, Maynooth. Each lecture deals with a different aspect of the overarching question posed in the original title, revealing Riemann's thoughts on the transformation of hearing into feeling, the different psychological effects of dynamics, emotional responses to rhythm and harmony, and passive and active listening.

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HUGO RIEMANN  
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OF  
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BY  
DR. H. RIEMANN.

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TRANSLATED BY  
THE REV. H. BEWERUNGE,  
PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC, MAYNOOTH COLLEGE.

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## PREFACE.

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More than thirty years ago Hanslick's work "Vom Musikalisch-Schönen"\* put an end to the previous vague rhetorical declamation on the essence and object of music, and stimulated to keener reflection on the different factors which combine to produce that effect which music produces. Since then a pretty extensive literature has arisen, one portion of which retains Hanslick's system of Formalism — that is to say, declares the form of music to be its substance —, while the other maintains that music is capable of rendering poetic ideas musically, and that that is its office, and rejects all music that will be merely music, as an empty play with forms. To these two groups, which until within a recent period were the only ones existing, of late a third one seems to be added which, in a certain sense, reconciles the contradicting views of the other two, not simply by way of compensation and compromise, but by giving a third definition which combines and materially perfects the other two.

I became acquainted with those books, with whose positive results the following pages fairly coincide, only after I had written and partly delivered these lectures; I do not, however, regret this, because they undoubtedly would have influenced my train of thought,

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\*) Translated by G. Cohen and published by Novello under the title "The Beautiful in Music".

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and hindered me from finding something, though it may be but little, that is new, and that gives to my work the stamp of individuality. When Fr. von Hausegger says that music is first and above all *expression*, and when Arthur Seidl lays stress on “*entering, with one’s feeling, into the forms of movement of music*,” that, certainly, is something akin to the *Subjectivation* of music on which I insist. Still I believe that by distinguishing the *elementary*, which arises simply from the impulse to *impart* oneself (Hausegger’s “Music as Expression”), from the *formal*, which belongs to the impulse to *play* (which according to Hanslick is everything), and from the *characteristic*, which in itself is alien to music and is drawn into its sphere only by the impulse to *imitate* (music not as the expression of the subject but as expression of an imagined object) — I have set up something that is worth developing. For the listener there result principally two altogether different ways of perceiving music, in one of which music is felt as the manifestation of one’s own *will* (complete subjectivation), while in the other it is, partly at least, objectivated by the *imagination*. But the more, in absolute music, the formal preponderates over the elementary, that is to say, the less music is felt, and the more it is made — the more imperfectly shall we subjectivate it, the more it will remain outside of us; on the other hand, imitative music, in spite of scene and programme, — if only it does not proceed too restlessly, but rather leaves time for the expression of sentiment of the represented beings to develop (that is to assume form) — can affect us so sympathetically that, for moments at least, we can completely subjectivate it and identify ourselves with the object represented.

H. R.