



rehearsal at the Cirque
d'Hiver

John T. Baird

The Understanding of Music

FIFTH EDITION

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University of Florida

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Preface

What does an author do to improve an already successful book? It's a logical question, one that any author considering revision spends many hours pondering. In a sense, it's a simple matter: Keep what is good, and change what isn't. But the hard issues are deciding what is good in the previous edition and discovering how to improve what isn't so good.

In the case of *The Understanding of Music*, there was a solid foundation of features on which to build. Instructors and readers have responded favorably (many times enthusiastically) to the selection of basic information, the wide coverage of types and styles of music, the logic of a chronological approach, the clear and down-to-earth writing style, the "post hole" technique of concentrating on a limited number of works that can serve as examples of types of music, the relating of music to the larger culture, the Listening Guides that help listeners to perceive works of music better, the enrichment boxes, and the supplementary *Record Album* and *Study Guide and Scores* booklet.

Improvement, however, is always desirable and necessary to meet the changing emphases and audiences in music appreciation courses. For example, more attention is being given to critical thinking by students; the goal is to have the students synthesize and apply the information they gain in a course. To aid in this effort, this edition presents questions about music at the conclusion of each chapter under the heading "Thinking about Music." Most of these questions have no one correct answer; rather they encourage students to think about what they have learned.

Some chapters have been extensively revised for this edition. The opening chapter has been altered to emphasize the purpose of the course, while the chapters on opera and twentieth-century music now provide a clearer look at their respective topics and include new material. The Glossary has been expanded significantly and is now keyed to the page in the text where the term first is discussed. Also, several enrichment boxes have been improved, including those on the development of notation and Beethoven's hearing. In short, this edition represents a great deal of "fine tuning" of the material and ideas in the preceding edition.

A number of the works given special attention in the text have been changed. Works new to this edition are: Dufay, *Missa L'homme armé*; Gabrieli, *In ecclesiis*; Chopin, *Fantasia-Improptu*, Op. 66, Rachmaninoff, *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*; Bartók, *Concerto for Orchestra*; Prokofiev, *Violin Concerto No. 2*; Berg, *Wozzeck*; Ives, *The Unanswered Question*; and Carter, *Sonata for Flute, Oboe, Cello, and Harpsichord*.

The same questions about revision and improvement also confronted the *Record Album* and *Study Guide and Scores*. Several of the recordings have been improved and some new works have been added. The *Study Guide and Scores* not only contains review questions and ideas for developing listening skill but also presents eight works in simplified scores and one libretto. While few nonmusicians can read music, with a little practice most can follow simple scores as they listen, which helps them to keep their attention on the music and to understand it better. The *Instructor's Manual* has also been updated and revised.

I would like to thank all those who encouraged me in my efforts to be a teacher and writer. I am indebted to the many students in my music appreciation classes, from whom I learned much about how to aid them in their understanding of music.

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Finally, thanks beyond the power of words to express are due my wife, Marjorie, who, as a teacher of music courses, offered many valuable suggestions. With gratitude I recognize her encouragement and editorial advice.

Charles R. Hoffer

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