

Edited by Lawrence Kramer, Alberto Nones

# Classical Music in a Changing World

*Crisis and Vital Signs*

SERIES IN MUSIC

## About the editor

**Lawrence Kramer** is Distinguished Professor of English and Music at Fordham University, the editor of the journal *19th-Century Music*, and a prizewinning composer whose works have been performed throughout the United States and Europe. His work has been translated into ten languages and has been the subject of session meetings at scholarly societies and symposiums in the United States, Europe, and China. Kramer's numerous books on music and culture include, most recently, *The Hum of the World: A Philosophy of Listening* (2019), and *Song Acts: Writings on Words and Music* (2017). *Musical Meaning and Human Values* (2009), co-edited with Keith Chapin and based on an international conference held in Kramer's honor in 2007, featured the premiere of seven songs for voice and cello to texts adapted from Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*, since then incorporated into the eleven-song cycle "Bearing the Light," premiered in New York City in 2014. Performances since 2019 include "From The Ghetto" for Voice and Piano; Part Songs for Mixed Chorus; Angels of Wind and Fire: Book I of Song Acts (six songs), for Mezzo Soprano, Baritone, and Piano; "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" for Voice and Piano; *The Distances: Piano Quartet no. 2*; and *Reflections and Memories: String Quartet no. 8*, included on the CD accompanying this volume.

**Alberto Nones** teaches History and Aesthetics of Music at the G.Puccini Conservatory of Music of Gallarate, Italy. He is the author of four books on topics as diverse as Verdi, twentieth-century Italian opera composer Riccardo Zandonai, baroque composer Francesco Antonio Bonporti, and the Doors, and has published two edited volumes and many articles in academic journals. An accomplished concert pianist, he performs throughout Europe and has recorded various CDs, among which: *Complete Mazurkas* by Chopin (Continuo Records, 2016), which has been acclaimed by some of Italy's most respected critics; *Brahms's Sonatas for Piano and Violin* (Luna Rossa Records, 2017, with violinist Franco Mezzena); and most recently *Pietro Cimara L'Infinito - Arts Songs for Soprano and Piano* (Da Vinci Classics, 2019, with soprano Nunzia Santodirocco).

Since 2011, Nones has worked as author and broadcaster of radio programs for RAI, the Italian national broadcast company. He is the founder and president of the Associazione Europea di Musica e Comunicazione (AEMC), which organizes, among other things, an academic conference on "Music, Communication and Performance" that has caught the attention of scholars and musicians from all corners of the world.

## Summary

In recent years classical music has become a test case for debates over the future of culture. As times have changed, the value traditionally placed on this music has been challenged on social rather than aesthetic grounds. Lovers of classical music have been asked how its privileged history can be reconciled with growing demands for social justice and social inclusiveness. They have been asked how the music's standing as one of the great accomplishments of the West can be reconciled with the many injustices on which those accomplishments in part depended. How can the future of classical music escape the darker shadows of its past?

'Classical Music in a Changing World: Crisis and Vital Signs' addresses the crisis provoked by such questions in two complementary ways. Several of the chapters show how the classical music world is already grappling with the crisis, and finding vital signs beyond the borders of the music's traditional European strongholds: in Turkey from Ottoman times to the present, in Colombia, and in a Black American film. Other chapters identify areas that still need improvement, especially on behalf of female and LGBTQ+ musicians, and suggest how advances can be made both on concert stages and in schools. This volume, which opens with an introduction by Alberto Nones that contextualizes the book and outlines the main arguments of its chapters, contains an essay by Lawrence Kramer that examines the place of classical music in the history of consciousness—a history now changing rapidly—and concludes with a Postscript written by the two editors.

The writing in this volume will be accessible to a wide audience, including scholars and students, professionals and amateurs, performers and listeners. Teachers will find it a source of lively classroom debate, and scholars a source of learning outside the usual arenas. The book's "vital signs" include the accompanying audio tracks (available for download at: <https://vernonpress.com/book/1281>), which feature vibrant music-making from a diverse range of performers and composers.

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July 2021 | Hardback 236x160mm | 116 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-64889-151-9  
Also in Hardback Audio CD Edition (\$52/€44/£39) | ISBN: 978-1-64889-213-4

SUBJECTS Music, Art, Cultural Studies

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