



# Surprised by Beauty: A Listener's Guide to the Recovery of Modern Music

*Robert R. Reilly*

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"In sound itself, there is a readiness to be ordered by the spirit, and this is seen at its most sublime in music."  
-- **Max Picard**

The single greatest crisis of the 20th century was the loss of faith. Noise --and its acceptance as music--was the product of the resulting spiritual confusion and, in its turn, became the further cause of its spread. Likewise, the recovery of modern music, the theme to which this book is dedicated, stems from a spiritual recovery. This is made explicitly clear by the composers to whom the author spoke with in the interviews collected in this book.

Reilly spells out the nature of the crisis and its solution in sections that serve as bookends to the chapters on individual composers. He does not contend that all of these composers underwent and recovered from the central crisis he describes, but they all lived and worked within its broader context, and soldiered on, writing beautiful music. For this, they suffered ridicule and neglect, and he believes their rehabilitation will change the reputation of modern music. There are many such composers whom Reilly discusses in this work, along with mention of many new recordings that have released over the past decade.

It is the *spirit* of music that this book is most about, and in his efforts to discern it, Reilly has discovered many treasures. The purpose of this book is to share them, to entice you to listen--because beauty is contagious. English conductor John Eliot Gardiner writes that experiencing Bach's masterpieces "is a way of fully realizing the scale and scope of what it is to be human". The reader may be surprised by how many works of the 20th and 21st centuries of which this is also true.


"Robert Reilly's vision of music is profoundly spiritual, expressive of what is best and most enriching in human life, and having the possibility of leading us to encounter God Himself."  
-- **Stephen Hough**, Pianist and Composer

"A generous and beautifully written book. Reilly brings his impressive knowledge of music to bear on the most human of our experiences with a refreshing clarity and personal directness. He infects the reader with the surprise he himself felt in the discovery of modern beauties.

If you have never heard a single work by any of these composers, be assured that you will want to hear them

all by the time you finish reading this book. More than anything else, *Surprised by Beauty* makes us glad. We rejoice that there are still composers for whom music has a spiritual meaning, that a ferocious love of beauty is still alive in the great works of modern composers, and that this love seems to be inextinguishable."  
-- **Peter Kalkavage**, *Modern Age*

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People live in this new day of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the spare time or they will get great deal of stress from both everyday life and work. So , when we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely without a doubt. People is human not really a robot. Then we inquire again, what kind of activity are you experiencing when the spare time coming to you of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading books. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, often the book you have read is definitely Surprised by Beauty: A Listener's Guide to the Recovery of Modern Music.

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