



Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections

Ralph P. Locke

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A Japanese geisha, a Middle Eastern caravan, a Hungarian-'Gypsy' fiddler, Carmen flinging a rose at Don José - portrayals of people and places that are considered somehow 'exotic' have been ubiquitous from 1700 to today, whether in opera, Broadway musicals, instrumental music, film scores, or in jazz and popular song. Often these portrayals are highly stereotypical but also powerful, indelible and touching - or troubling. Musical Exoticism surveys the vast and varied repertoire of Western musical works that evoke exotic locales. It relates trends in musical exoticism to other trends in music, such as programme music and avant-garde experimentation, as well as to broader historical developments such as nationalism and empire. Ralph P. Locke outlines major trends in exotic depiction from the Baroque era onward, and illustrates these trends through close study of numerous exotic works, including operas by Handel and Rameau, Mozart's 'Rondo alla turca', 'Madame Butterfly' and 'West Side Story'.

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