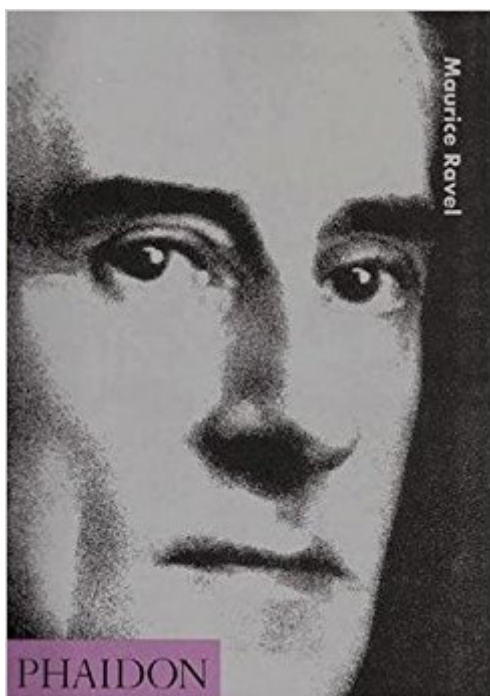


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Maurice Ravel (20th Century Composers)



Synopsis

Much of the music of Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) is among the most accessible of any written in the last hundred years; the man, however, was notoriously difficult to get to know. In Maurice Ravel, Gerald Larner aims to trace the development of the composer's personality not only through events in his life and in the society around him but also through his music, which is more revealing in this respect than is generally believed. This beautifully crafted book offers many fresh insights into the life and work of this enigmatic composer.

Book Information

Series: 20th Century Composers

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Phaidon Press; y First printing edition (September 25, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0714832707

ISBN-13: 978-0714832708

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.8 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,971,100 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in [Books > Humor &](#)

[Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Composers > Ravel](#) #734 in [Books > Arts &](#)

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Customer Reviews

He is remembered in the United States primarily for the rather banal repetitions of Bolero, but Maurice Ravel wrote a great deal of music more worthy of celebration: ballets like *Ma Mere l'Oye* (Mother Goose) and *Daphnis et Chloe*; orchestral and piano works like *Pavane pour une Infante Defunte* (Pavane for a Dead Princess) and the *Rapsodie Espagnole*; operas like *L'Enfant et les Sortileges* (The Child and the Enchantments); and settings of Greek and Jewish songs. British author and critic Gerald Larner offers a well-researched, well-written, accessible biography of Ravel's life and compositions that explores his music and his motivations, a part of the Phaidon Press Limited 20th Century Composers series.

Ravel was always sensitive about his diminutive size and the constant comparison of his work to

that of Debussy. His compositions were considered dangerously progressive by the musical establishment of the day, but his Bolero has become one of the war horses of the symphony orchestra. Music critic Lerner offers this entry in Phaidon's "20th Century Composers" series as the first biography on Ravel to appear in English in nearly a decade. In this discussion of his life and works, the works come second. The analysis of the music is rather superficial, avoiding technical terms and lacking a single musical example. Illustrations and photographs, however, are excellent and abundant. This, along with the absence of footnotes, indicates that the book is intended for the general reader rather than the music student. Recommended for public and academic libraries. Michael Colby, Univ. of California, Davis Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

An excellent biography although not fully informative about the composer's death. An article in the British Medical Journal reveals a lot that the author never found.

The description for this book is laughable as the intro begins with this sentence: "He is remembered in the United States primarily for the rather banal repetitions of Bolero, but Maurice Ravel wrote a great deal of music more worthy of celebration." Ewwwkay. "Rather banal"? "Wrote 'a great deal' of music more worthy"? Does the idiot who wrote that even know Ravel's work or symphonic music at all? Obviously not. If you think Bolero is "banal," go see it performed by a live orchestra and don't rent the movie "10." I look forward to reading other reviews about this book written by people who know what the crap they are writing about.

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