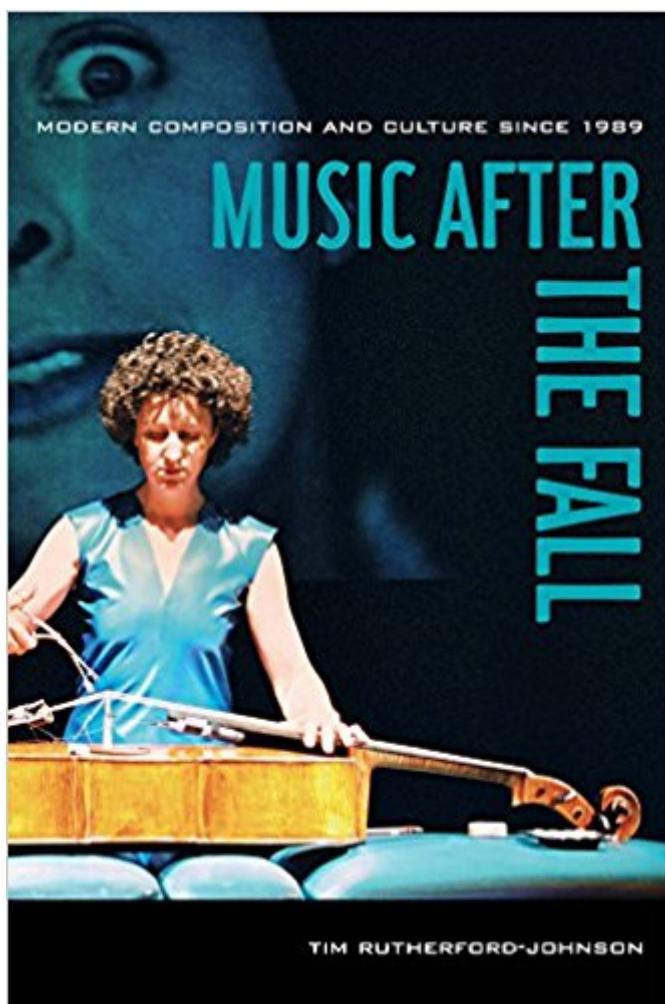


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# Music After The Fall: Modern Composition And Culture Since 1989



## Synopsis

Music after the Fall is the first book to survey contemporary Western art music within the transformed political, cultural, and technological environment of the post-Cold War era. In this book, Tim Rutherford-Johnson considers musical composition against this changed backdrop, placing it in the context of globalization, digitization, and new media. Drawing connections with the other arts, in particular visual art and architecture, he expands the definition of Western art music to include forms of composition, experimental music, sound art, and crossover work from across the spectrum, inside and beyond the concert hall. Each chapter is a critical consideration of a wide range of composers, performers, works, and institutions, and develops a broad and rich picture of the new music ecosystem, from North American string quartets to Lebanese improvisers, from electroacoustic music studios in South America to ruined pianos in the Australian outback. Rutherford-Johnson puts forth a new approach to the study of contemporary music that relies less on taxonomies of style and technique than on the comparison of different responses to common themes of permission, fluidity, excess, and loss.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"...an essential survey of contemporary music." (New York Times) "In relaxed and readable prose, Rutherford-Johnson describes in detail how pieces of new music might be received, experienced or understood by a general audience, without any need for a background in musical training...an informed, engaged and thoughtful account." (The Journal of Music) "Music After the Fall

succeeds, faced with a bewildering range of styles, in showing us how to approach the at times forbidding terrain of contemporary music." (Gramophone)

“Tim Rutherford-Johnson is probably the most authoritative international chronicler of the composed music of our time, and in this book he manages the near-impossible feat of mapping a field that is changing by the day. He is a rigorous thinker, yet he avoids dogma and shows unexpected sympathies. What results is an indispensable work of intellectual passion.”  
•Alex Ross, author of *The Rest Is Noise* and *Listen to This*  
“Studded as it is with just insights, Rutherford-Johnson’s book is even more remarkable and valuable for the perspectives it offers on the period since the climacteric of 1989. Here are some new tools for thinking, rethinking, and thinking on.”  
•Paul Griffiths, author of *Modern Music and After* “It’s a sign that a book is a conversation changer when that book creates a need for its own existence. Music after the Fall is just such a radical rewriting of what we might require from a historical analysis of new music, taking an ecological approach that accounts for race, gender, technologies, and institutional and socioeconomic forces. A compelling and exhilarating read.”  
•Liza Lim, Professor of Composition, University of Huddersfield

A thoroughly enjoyable and engaging read that traces a novel path through the recent history of western art music. Highly recommended.

One of the most inventive, erudite, ambitious, and wise books I've read on the subject of contemporary music. While it builds on the great precedents of Paul Griffiths's "Modern Music and After", for instance it attains a new level of synthesis; its categories are artful, networked, and deep. I can't think of a better introduction to the subject.

Buyer beware? All 3 of the people quoted in the blurbs (Ross, Griffiths, Lim) are thanked in the Acknowledgements as major influences on the author and the book. No wonder they like it. Just sayin'.

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