



Jean-Philippe Rameau: His Life and Work

Cuthbert Girdlestone

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The definitive biography and critical study of Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764), this volume deals at length not only with the composer's musical achievements but also with aspects of his life and work that made him one of the most important cultural figures in eighteenth-century France. Fascinating incidents include his central position in a musical controversy that excited the enmity of Rousseau, Diderot, and the Encyclopedists; his friendship and collaboration with Voltaire; and his position as the author of a treatise on harmony that endured for two centuries.

This critical evaluation focuses chiefly on Rameau's musical works, devoting entire chapters to his operas and ballets as well as his chamber music, cantatas and motets, and minor works. Additional topics include his links to Lully, his influence on Gluck, and the nature and importance of his acoustic and harmonic theories. Supplements include more than 300 musical examples, numerous useful appendices, indexes, an extensive bibliography, and a new Introduction by the distinguished musicologist and historian Philip Gossett.

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