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Interpreting Music is a comprehensive essay on understanding musical meaning and performing music meaningfully—“interpreting music” in both senses of the term. Synthesizing and advancing two decades of highly influential work, Lawrence Kramer fundamentally rethinks the concepts of work, score, performance, performativity, interpretation, and meaning—even the very concept of music—while breaking down conventional wisdom and received ideas. Kramer argues that music, far from being closed to interpretation, is ideally open to it, and that musical interpretation is the paradigm of interpretation in general. The book illustrates the many dimensions of interpreting music through a series of case studies drawn from the classical repertoire, but its methods and principles carry over to other repertoires just as they carry beyond music by working *through* music to wider philosophical and cultural questions.



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Review

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"In this astonishing performance, Lawrence Kramer challenges us to rethink what it can mean to interpret music as listeners, as scholars, and as performers. Virtuosic, exhilarating, and provocative, this book confronts the conventional wisdom around such topics as hermeneutics, subjectivity, history, analysis, modernism, metaphor, and performance to shape our understanding of music into a virtual new order of things. Kramer's wide-ranging and humane outlook in *Interpreting Music* compels us to question what we thought we knew about music and meaning." —Michael Klein, author of *Intertextuality in Western Art Music*

About the Author

Lawrence Kramer is Distinguished Professor of English and Music at Fordham University. He is the author of many books, including *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*; *Opera and Modern Culture*; and *Why Classical Music Still Matters*, all from UC Press.

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