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Music & the Birth of Modernity

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Music & the Birth of Modernity

Pre-1700s

Rameau - Musical Theory & Harmony

1700-1800

1800-1900

Goethe and the lied - Music, Text, Folk Art

1900-WWII

Wagner's Legacy in French Symbolism, &c.

Music and the Birth of Modernity


d'Alembert & Diderot - Moving Forward

Rameau's Origins of Passion in Melody

Rameau - Musical Theory & Harmony

Goethe was one of the first major figures to emerge in the 19th Century. Although he was not a musician himself, critics commonly refer to him as being "musical in nature" and hundreds of his works, including "Die Leiden des jungen Werthers," have been set to music. Rameau's theory of music was well established by Kant in the fact that he didn't believe that art had a moralizing function.

Rameau's views on music were shaped by his understanding of the cosmos. He believed that music was a reflection of the universe, and that it was a means of conveying the divine. Rameau's theories were further justified as they came at an expanded theory of aesthetics. He structures our understanding of the world in a manner similar to a dynamic, organic process in perpetual flux. "Art alone, by creating its own language, can be a means for expression." Derrida helps us to understand the role of music in the arts and society.


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