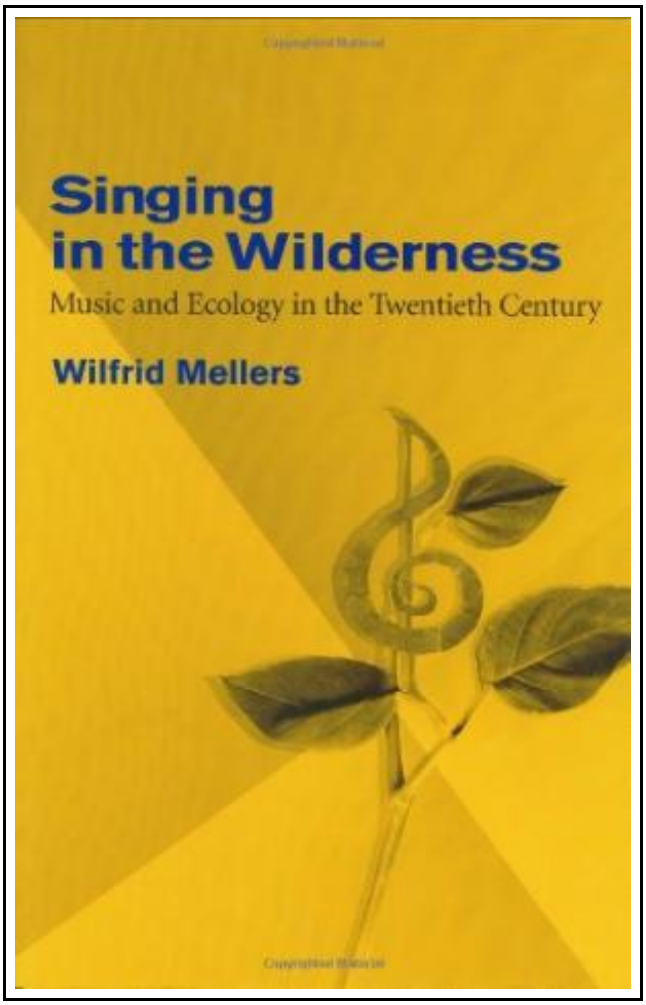
Singing in the Wilderness: Music and Ecology in the Twentieth Century



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SINGING IN THE WILDERNESS: MUSIC AND ECOLOGY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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University of Illinois Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Singing in the Wilderness: Music and Ecology in the Twentieth Century, Wilfrid Mellers, Displaying the broad erudition and intellectual agility that have informed a lifetime of scholarship, Wilfrid Mellers offers a set of diverse reflections on how western art music illuminates the shifting relationship between humankind and the natural world. Beginning with two turn-of-the-century operas - Frederick Delius' "A Village Romeo and Juliet" and Claude Debussy's "Pellias et Mlisande" - that present humankind as lost in a tangled wood that is at once internal and external, Mellers develops the theme of wilderness in sociological, psychological, ecological, and even geological terms. He discusses Leos Jan ek's "Cunning Little Vixen" ("the ultimate ecological opera") as a parable of redemption and explores the delicate yet dangerous equilibrium between civilization and the dark forest in works by Charles Koechlin and Darius Milhaud. Elements of wilderness and the city combine to infuse the music of Heitor Villa-Lobos and Carlos Chvez with a blend of primitivism and sophistication, while a creative tension between desert landscape and industrial mechanization inspires the works of Carl Ruggles, Harry Partch, Steve Reich, and Australia's Peter Sculthorpe. The volume culminates in a discussion of two American urban folk musicians, Duke Ellington and George Gershwin. By suggesting how the "musicking" of ecological issues articulates twinned perspectives on music and our place in the world, Mellers raises intriguing questions about the links among tradition, talent, learning, and instinct. Brimming over with fresh ideas and unexpected cross-pollinations, "Singing in the Wilderness" is a stimulating addition to the oeuvre of a distinguished and inventive scholar.

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