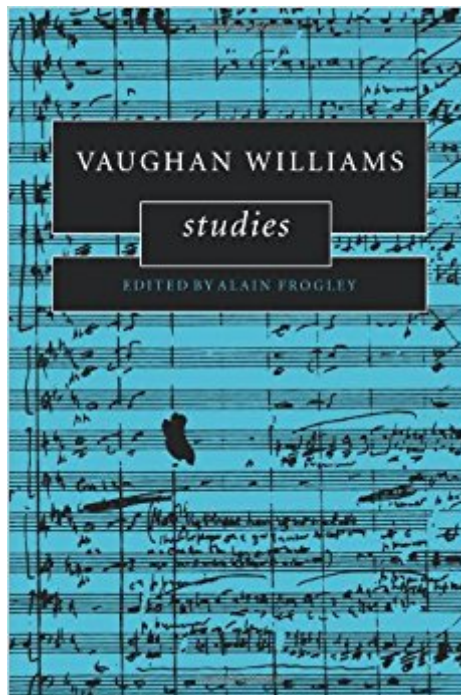




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Vaughan Williams Studies (Cambridge Composer Studies)



Synopsis

Despite Vaughan Williams' seminal importance in British music, international stature as a symphonist, and wider significance as an icon of Englishness, very little new research on his life or music has been published since the mid-1960s. The ten essays presented here examine diverse subjects such as the place of Vaughan Williams in the construction of English national identity in this century, the role of rhythm in his symphonies, music for propaganda films, and his unpublished early orchestral pieces; major works such as the Tallis Fantasia and the Fifth Symphony are analyzed in depth.

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Review of the hardback: '... These ten substantial chapters offer insights into Vaughan Williams as both man and musician. As a collection of essays this is a random rather than a balanced survey, though nonetheless welcome in discussing important issues in depth. The standard of presentation is high, with clear musical examples enhancing detailed analyses of the Tallis Fantasia and Fifth Symphony.' Terry Barfoot, BBC Music Magazine

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A landmark in Vaughan Williams criticism. The book handles questions both of intellectual milieu (Frogeley's essay on English musical identity relates it to a wider movement) and of Vaughan Williams's musical art. The essay on VW's use of rhythm is outstanding, thoroughly refuting the picture of him as some musical bumpkin, but essays of this type require some familiarity with the nuts and bolts of music as well as the ability to read it. The book well rewards the effort it requires. This has become a favorite book, one that I reread.

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