



Ernst Krenek and the Politics of Musical Style

Peter Tregear

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Ernst Krenek has been described as a “one-man history of twentieth-century music.” His vast compositional output encompasses many of its extremes and expresses many of its contradictions. Few have attempted, however, to contextualize Krenek’s compositional output because our understanding of classical music in the first half of the twentieth century still largely remains focused on the music of a few canonical figures. Responding to renewed interest from performers in Krenek’s work, particularly his operas, Peter Tregear’s *Ernst Krenek and the Politics of Musical Style* addresses this gap in the scholarly literature and makes an important contribution to our comprehension of the ways in which his music reflected and informed broader social and political debates in Austria and Germany at the time.

Focusing on Krenek’s compositional path from the eclectic musical language of *Jonny spielt auf* to the austere twelve-tone technique of *Karl V*, Tregear provides an historical and critical context to this most historically significant period of Krenek’s creative life. His study also enriches our understanding of many of Krenek’s contemporaries, such as Alban Berg and Arnold Schoenberg. This book should interest students, scholars and practitioners with an interest in modern opera, and contemporary classical music as well as early-20th-century German history more generally.

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