

# The State Of Music: An Insight Into Virgil Thomson's Other Writings and the LOA 277 Library of America

Music is a truly remarkable entity that has transcended boundaries and connected people across time and cultures. It has the power to evoke emotions, transport us to different worlds, and captivate our senses. Behind every piece of music lies a story, a creative process, and a composer's vision.

One such composer who left an indelible mark on American music is Virgil Thomson. Known for his innovative approach and lyrical compositions, Thomson's contributions have not only shaped the landscape of classical music but also influenced various contemporary genres. While his compositions continue to resonate with audiences around the world, his writings offer a unique glimpse into the state of music during his time.

## The Other Writings of Virgil Thomson

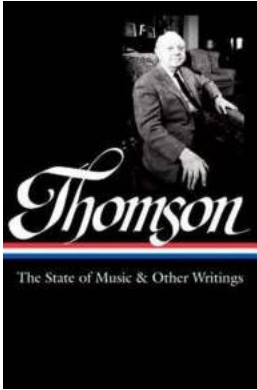
Virgil Thomson was not just a composer but also a music critic and a prolific writer. His writings encompassed a wide range of subjects, reflecting his deep understanding and appreciation for music. In his essays and articles, Thomson explored the evolution of music, provided commentaries on contemporary performances, and pondered the role of music in society.

**Virgil Thomson: The State of Music & Other Writings (LOA #277) (Library of America Virgil Thomson Edition Book 2)** by Virgil Thomson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 12606 KB



Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 1182 pages



Thomson's writings were characterized by his keen observations and his ability to analyze music with remarkable clarity and insight. His engaging prose, sprinkled with wit and humor, made his works accessible to both musicians and non-musicians alike. Thomson was not afraid to voice his opinions, often challenging commonly held beliefs and encouraging readers to think critically about music.

One of Thomson's most prominent works is "*The State of Music*", a collection of essays that provide an expansive overview of the music world during his time. In this collection, he discusses various aspects of music, including its role in education, the impact of technology on music production and distribution, the influence of popular music on classical compositions, and much more. Through his writings, Thomson sought to provoke meaningful conversations and shed light on the complexities of the music industry.

## **The LOA 277 Library of America**

The *Library of America* is a nonprofit organization that publishes and preserves essential American writings. The LOA 277 edition is dedicated to Virgil Thomson's writings, offering an extensive compilation of his essays and articles. This volume

serves as a valuable resource for scholars, music enthusiasts, and anyone interested in exploring the state of music during Thomson's time.

Within the LOA 277 Library of America, readers can delve into Thomson's unique perspectives and engage with his thought-provoking ideas. From his reflections on the relationship between music and politics to his critiques of famous composers and performers, the collection showcases Thomson's in-depth knowledge of music history and his ability to articulate complex concepts in an accessible manner. By studying his writings, one can gain valuable insights into the creative process and the ever-evolving nature of music.

## **The Legacy of Virgil Thomson**

Virgil Thomson's contributions to the world of music extend beyond his compositions and writings. As a composer, he embraced a distinctive style that seamlessly blended traditional and modern elements. Thomson's compositions reflected his innovative approach, characterized by rich harmonies, inventive melodies, and a deep appreciation for the human voice. His operas, symphonies, and chamber music continue to be celebrated for their originality and emotional depth.

Moreover, Thomson's influence on American music extends to his collaborations with other prominent artists. He frequently collaborated with influential writers such as Gertrude Stein, crafting groundbreaking operas that challenged traditional conventions. These collaborations broke new ground in the opera world, embracing experimental narratives and unconventional storytelling techniques.

## **The Timeless Relevance of Thomson's Work**

While Thomson's work was influenced by the time in which he lived, its relevance transcends temporal limitations. His writings, in particular, provide insights into the music industry that are still applicable today. Whether discussing the impact of technology on music consumption or exploring the connections between different musical genres, Thomson's thoughts continue to resonate with modern-day musicians and enthusiasts.

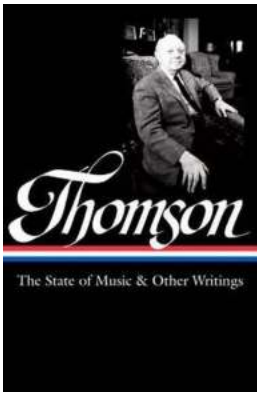
Thomson's ability to adapt to changing musical landscapes and his willingness to challenge traditional norms made him an influential figure in the world of music. His legacy serves as a reminder that music is an ever-evolving art form, continually shaped by the artists who dare to push boundaries and redefine conventions.

## **In**

Virgil Thomson's compositions and writings are a testament to his enduring legacy in the world of music. As a composer, he created captivating pieces that showcased his innovative style and lyrical sensibility. As a writer, his essays and articles provided profound insights into the state of music during his time, challenging readers to question and appreciate the intricacies of the art form.

The LOA 277 Library of America offers a comprehensive collection of Thomson's writings, allowing readers to delve into the mind of a visionary composer and critic. Through his essays, Thomson continues to shape our understanding of music, reminding us that it is an ever-changing entity that reflects the times in which it is created.

Virgil Thomson's works will forever stand as a testimony to the power and beauty of music, inspiring generations to come to appreciate and explore the vast world of sounds and melodies.



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A Pulitzer Prize–winning music critic presents an unprecedented collection of the writings of the great composer-critic and father of American classical music, Virgil Thomson

Following on the critically acclaimed edition of Virgil Thomson’s collected newspaper music criticism, The Library of America and Pulitzer Prize–winning music critic Tim Page now present Thomson’s other literary and critical works, a body of writing that constitutes America’s musical declaration of independence from the European past. This volume opens with *The State of Music* (1939), the book that made Thomson’s name as a critic and won him his 14-year stint at the *New York Herald Tribune*. This no-holds-barred polemic—here presented in its revised edition of 1962—discusses the commissions, jobs, and other opportunities available to the American composer, a worker in a world of performance and broadcast institutions that, today as much as in Thomson’s time, are dominated by tin-eared, non-musical patrons of the arts who are shocked by the new and suspicious of native talent.

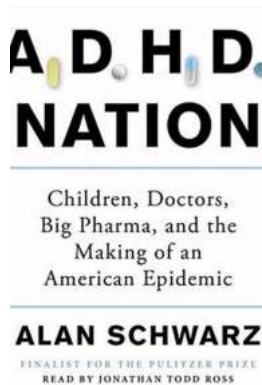
Thomson's autobiography, *Virgil Thomson* (1966), is more than just the story of the struggle of one such American composer, it is an intellectual, aesthetic, and personal chronicle of the twentieth century, from World War I-era Kansas City to Harvard in the age of straw boaters, from Paris in the Twenties and Thirties to Manhattan in the Forties and after. A classic American memoir, it is marked by a buoyant wit, a true gift for verbal portrait-making, and a cast of characters including Aaron Copland, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Paul Bowles, John Houseman, and Orson Welles. *American Music Since 1910* (1971) is a series of incisive essays on the lives and works of Ives, Ruggles, Varèse, Copland, Cage, and others who helped define a national musical idiom. *Music with Words* (1989), Thomson's final book, is a distillation of a subject he knew better than perhaps any other American composer: how to set English—especially American English—to music, in opera and art song. The volume is rounded out by a judicious selection of Thomson's magazine journalism from 1957 to 1984—thirty-seven pieces, most of them previously uncollected, including many long-form review-essays written for *The New York Review of Books*.

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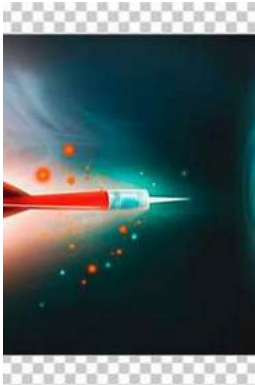
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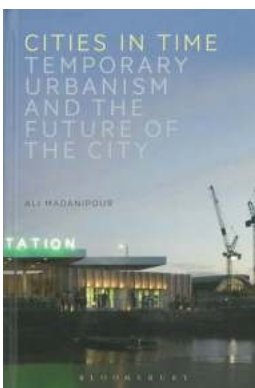
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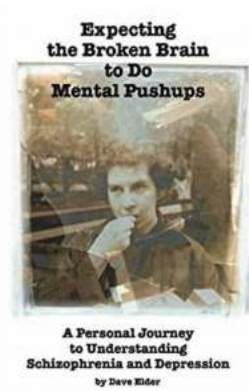
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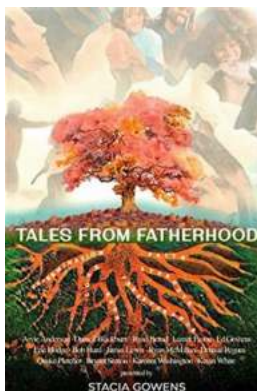
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