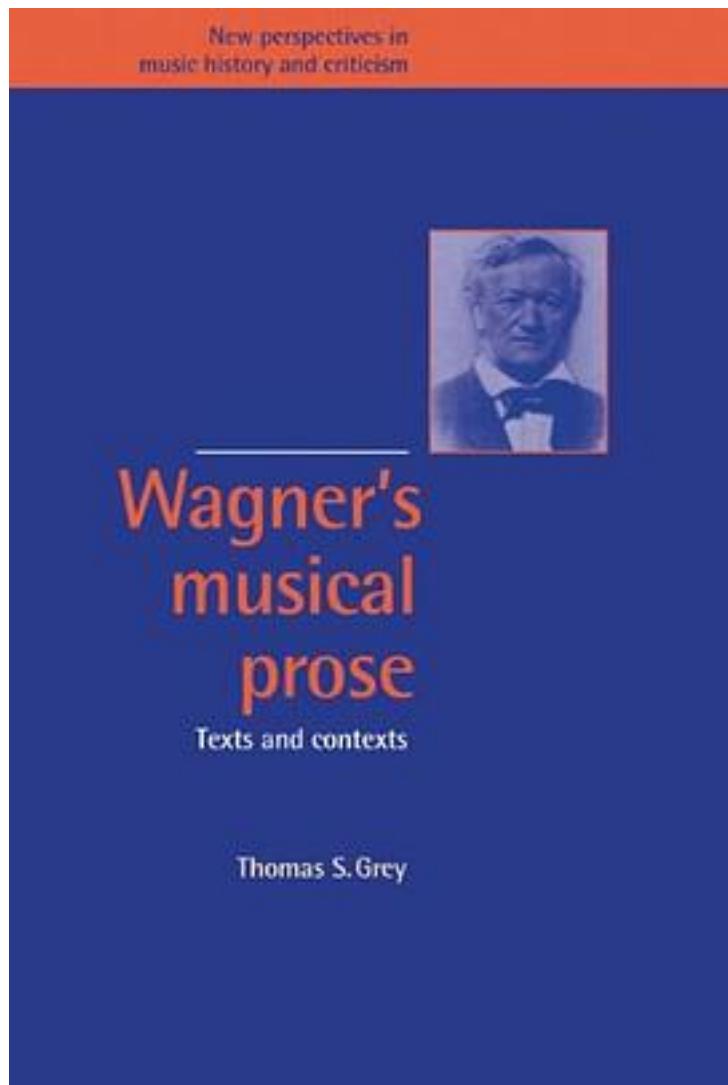


Wagner's Musical Prose



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This book is a study of the prose writings of Richard Wagner and their relevance to an understanding of his music and drama, as well as their relation to music criticism and aesthetics in the nineteenth century in general. As a by-product of Wagner's many-faceted career as musician, conductor, cultural critic and controversial ideologue, the writings are documents of undisputed interpretative value. This study focuses on Wagner's words on music, and interprets them in the light of the musical, aesthetic and critical contexts that generated them. Professor Grey considers Wagner's ambivalence concerning the idea of 'absolute music' and the capacity of music to project meaning or drama from within its own system of referents. Particularly relevant are Wagner's appropriation of a Beethoven legacy, the metaphors of musical 'gender' and 'biology' in Opera and Drama and the critical background to ideas of 'motive' and 'leitmotif' in theory and practice.

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