

FOURS WHICH HAVE BE INVESTIGATED

Detours Which Have To Be Investigated

Ivan Ilić and Benoît Maire

HEAD, Geneva, PB, 51pp, \$49.99

NO ISBN (BOOK PLUS CD & DVD)

AVAILABLE FROM WWW.MOLLAT.COM

Ilić and Maire put music's Morty
firmly back on the artistic radar

When I started writing about music in the late 1990s, the American composer Morton Feldman was firmly off the radar – a detour too far, apparently, for inclusion in the mainstream classical press. But two decades on the rise and rise of Feldman is unstoppable. He has arguably become the most influential figure around, a yardstick against which younger composers must measure their own experiments into harmony and form. Feldman's extended duration compositions stripped away conventional narrative; harmony had licence to do nothing more

than paint the air, cushioning inchoate melodic motifs as they evolved gradually over time.

Detours Which Have To Be Investigated combines the intelligent design of an art catalogue with copious nods towards the graphic topography of Feldman's own scores. Morty (you get the feeling that only his mother called him Morton) was an aficionado of the aphorism, both witty and wise, the most celebrated of which the visual artist Benoît Maire has designed in large text that snakes across different pages. *Bon mots* like "Is music an art form? Or has it always..." waits for the arrival of the punch line over the page – "been showbiz". Elsewhere, you turn a page and see nothing at all. Blank pages symbolise Feldman's structurally hectic silences.

Pianist Ivan Ilić contributes an insightful, whimsical text gauging the evolution of his own

relationship to Feldman's music, and on an accompanying CD is his marvellously spacious and resonant performance of *Palais de Mari*, the last solo piano work that Feldman composed before his death in 1987. An additional DVD documentary takes the listener inside the mechanics of performing *Palais de Mari*; also included is some super-rare

footage of Feldman himself.

Feldman was known for the intensity of his relationships with fellow composers and artists (most notably John Cage and Philip Guston) – an underlying subtext of the book is how Ilić and Maire's own friendship blossomed through their mutual fascination with Feldman's music. Music plays cupid. **Philip Clark**



Morton Feldman

FOUR NEW BOOKS WORTH READING THIS MONTH...

[NON-FICTION]

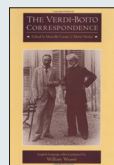
The Verdi-Boito Correspondence

Marcello Conati

University of Chicago Press,

PB, 384pp. \$48.99

ISBN 9780226273891



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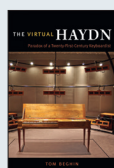
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Tom Beghin

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HB, 368pp. \$96

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[NON-FICTION]

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A comprehensive and readable survey of the current landscape of music-related apps for both iOS and Android mobile devices, including tablets and smartphones.

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University of California Press,

HB, 496pp. \$97

ISBN 9780520279490



A nuanced exploration of why innumerable boys were castrated for singing between the mid-16th and late-19th centuries thus revealing the entire foundation of Western classical singing.