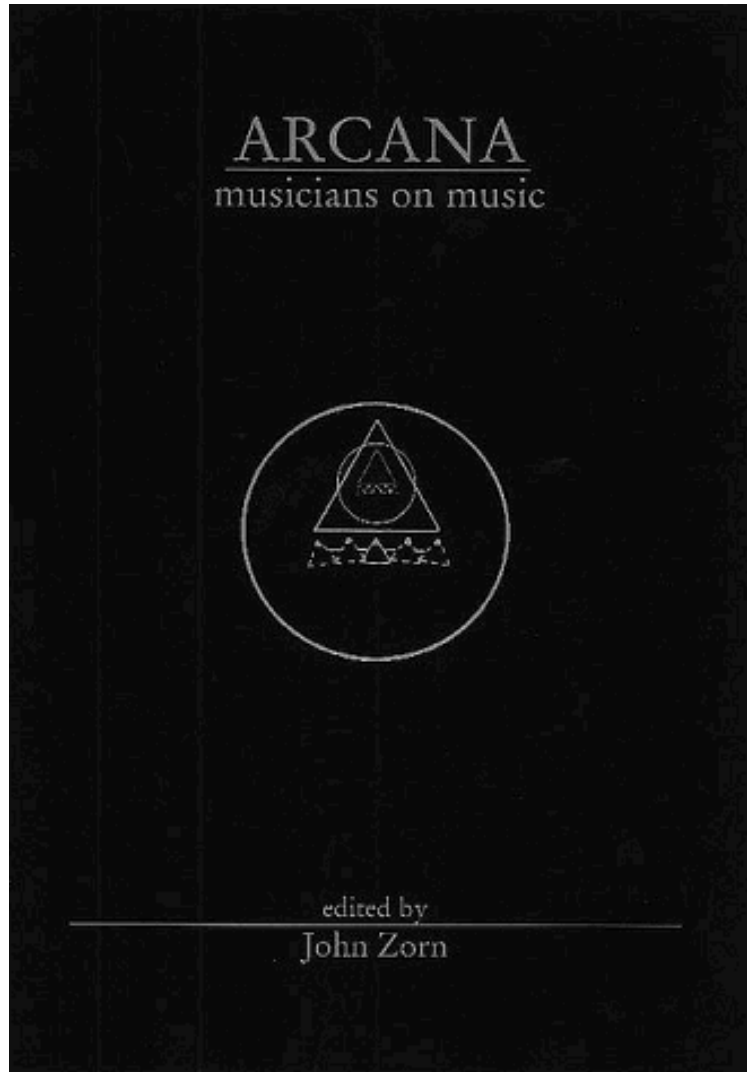


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Arcana: Musicians on Music

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From Brand: Granary Books : Arcana: Musicians on Music before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Arcana: Musicians on Music:

26 of 26 people found the following review helpful. The Classic Guide to StrategyBy Michael SeanAs John Zorn outlines in his introduction to the book, he assembled this project as a reaction to the lack of insightful critical writing about the generation of adventurous musicians he is a part of. This group of artists and their work is not easily defined, although critics have tried applying ambiguous terms like 'comprovisation,' 'postmodernism,' and 'totalism.'" Anyone familiar with the output of record labels like Tzadik, Avant, Atavistic, and Knitting Factory will recognize several names among the contributors. Unlike the usual music essay which dissects an artist's recordings, most of these are

very informal and intriguing peeks into the thought processes and compositional practices of the musicians themselves. Bill Frisell provides an approach to guitar fingering, Marc Ribot talks about earplugs, Ikue Mori discusses how she works with drum machines, and Bob Ostertag details how he adapted the sounds of a queer riot for string quartet. There's a discussion on plunderphonics with John Oswald, an overview from Elliott Sharp on his group Carbon, and David Mahler expounds his responses to a set of nine questions posed by Pauline Oliveros. The writings range from brief 2 or 3 page entries (Mike Patton's "How We Eat Our Young," Marilyn Crispell's "Elements of Improvisation") to long and elaborate essays (Scott Johnson's "Counterpoint," David Rosenboom's "Propositional Music"). Some of the contributions are more unusual, such as Zorn's "Treatment for a Film in Fifteen Scenes," Fred Frith's notebook extracts, or Peter Garland's journal of his trip to Australia's Northern Territory. All of them provide for inspiring and thought-provoking reading, making this an invaluable book for both fans of these artists and aspiring musicians of the avant garde. An appendix of brief bios for each artist ends the book, along with short lists of recommended listenings.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. GlimpsesBy William WoodArcana is a book that you will go back to again and again. Whether it is to look at Fred Frith's notes on composing and playing (great fun for Frithophiles deciphering the music involved) or the fingering techniques of Bill Frisell this is a book that inspires the act of making music. All of the contributors have uncovered some real gems and John Zorn has done a great job editing this book. This is not a how to book by any means, in fact Arcana offers far more than that. This is a what if book, a glimpse rather than a map. If you are a musician I feel you will find lots of things in this book to inspire, and for music fans we have a history of sorts that I am sure will enrich your listening pleasure. Highly recommended.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. e need more words! in the avant-garde not sounds. By Anna Novak There are video and Audio lectures as well as essays and multiple choice questions and answers.

Answering a need for critical attention towards experimental and avant-garde music, Arcana is a ground-breaking work--as far-ranging and dynamic as the current generation of musicians. Through manifestoes, scores, interviews, notes and critical papers, performer/composers address composing, playing, improvising, teaching and thinking in and through music. Rather than an attempt to distill or define musicians' work, Arcana is a remarkable book--challenging and original--essential for composers, musicians, theorists and fans alike. Edited by John Zorn, it includes contributions from Bill Frisell, Marc Ribot (on earplugs), Ikue Mori (on drum machines), Bob Ostertag (on a string quartet) There's a discussion on plunderphonics with John Oswald, an overview from Elliott Sharp on his group Carbon, and David Mahler expounds his responses to a set of nine questions posed by Pauline Oliveros. The writings range from brief 2 or 3 page entries (Mike Patton's "How We Eat Our Young," Marilyn Crispell's "Elements of Improvisation") to long and elaborate essays (Scott Johnson's "Counterpoint," David Rosenboom's "Propositional Music"). Some of the contributions are more unusual, such as Zorn's "Treatment for a Film in Fifteen Scenes," Fred Frith's notebook extracts, or Peter Garland's journal of his trip to Australia's Northern Territory. All of them provide for inspiring and thought-provoking reading, making this an invaluable book for both fans of these artists and aspiring musicians of the avant garde. An appendix of brief bios for each artist ends the book, along with short lists of recommended listenings.

About the Author John Zorn is a central figure in New York's music community. Instrumental in developing venues for experimental music such as The Knitting Factory and Tonic, Zorn is a composer and performer credited with having widely expanded the audience for challenging, free-form music. His projects range from his own musical outfits, Masada, Cobra, and Naked City among others, to composing a piece for the New York Philharmonic and producing a Burt Bacharach tribute album.