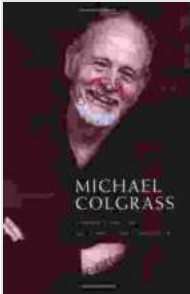


# Michael Colgrass: Adventures of an American Composer



## Michael Colgrass: Adventures of an American Composer by Michael Colgrass

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1255 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 244 pages



## Early Life and Education

Michael Colgrass was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 22, 1932. His father, Chester, was a jazz musician, and his mother, Dorothy, was a pianist. Colgrass began playing the piano at the age of three and started composing at the age of eight. He studied composition at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago and later at the Juilliard School in New York City.

Colgrass's early influences included the music of Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, and Leonard Bernstein. He also studied with the renowned composer Aaron Copland. Copland's influence is evident in Colgrass's early works, which often feature American folk and jazz elements.

## Career

Colgrass began his career as a composer in the 1950s. His early works were primarily for chamber ensembles and orchestra. In the 1960s, he began to experiment with electronic music and electroacoustic music. He also composed several operas and film scores.

Colgrass's music is often described as minimalist. However, he does not consider himself to be a minimalist composer. He has said that he is more interested in creating music that is "accessible and emotionally expressive." His music is often characterized by its use of repetition, ostinatos, and drones.

Colgrass has received numerous awards and honors for his music. In 1978, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his orchestral work "Deja Vu." He has also received the Grammy Award for Best Classical Composition and the National Medal of Arts.

## **Teaching**

In addition to his career as a composer, Colgrass is also a dedicated music educator. He has taught at the Juilliard School, the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Southern California. He has also given master classes and workshops around the world.

Colgrass is a strong advocate for music education. He believes that music is essential for the development of the human mind and spirit. He has said that "music can teach us about ourselves, our world, and our place in it."

## **Personal Life**

Colgrass is married to the pianist and composer Anne LeBaron. They have two children, a son and a daughter. Colgrass and his family live in Los

Angeles, California.

Colgrass is an avid hiker and birdwatcher. He is also a passionate advocate for environmental protection. He has said that "music is a powerful tool that can be used to raise awareness about important issues."

## **Legacy**

Michael Colgrass is one of the most important and influential American composers of the 20th and 21st centuries. His music has been performed by leading orchestras and ensembles around the world. He has also received numerous awards and honors for his work.

Colgrass's music is known for its accessibility, emotional expressiveness, and innovative use of sound. He has helped to shape the sound of American music for over six decades. His music will continue to be performed and enjoyed for many years to come.

## **Selected Works**

### **Orchestral Music**

- Deja Vu (1977)
- American Symphony (1989)
- The Earth Is Our Mother (1992)
- Symphony No. 2 (1998)
- Three Chinese Pieces (2002)

### **Chamber Music**

- String Quartet No. 1 (1957)
- Piano Sonata No. 1 (1959)
- Wind Quintet No. 1 (1962)
- Brass Quintet No. 1 (1964)
- Percussion Quintet (1966)

## **Opera**

- The Letter (1979)
- Leaves of Grass (1989)
- The Tower (1997)

## **Film Scores**

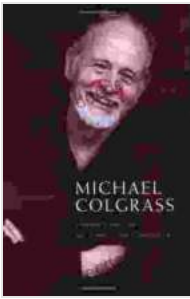
- The Man Who Would Be King (1975)
- Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)
- Apocalypse Now (1979)
- The Elephant Man (1980)
- Amadeus (1984)

## **Further Reading**

Michael Colgrass's website

Interview with Michael Colgrass in the Juilliard Journal

Interview with Michael Colgrass on NPR

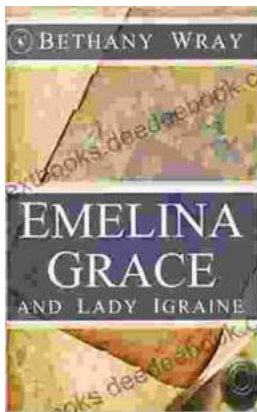


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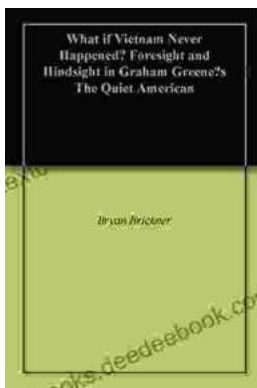
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