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Tune
Imogen Holst’s Tune (Faber, 1962) is a searching enquiry into the invention of tune and at the same time a comprehensive anthology of tunes from folksong to the present day. Plainsong, street-cries, the songs of the English lutenists, Bach’s dances, and Mozart’s arias - whatever the origins and character of the tunes in question, Imogen Holst (daughter of the composer, Gustav Holst) has something fresh and revealing to say about them. And she does not confine herself to familiar ground. One of her most illuminating chapters is devoted to the music of India, where a raga can provide improvised ‘tune’ of several hours duration. This chapter is the result of her personal experience of studying music in India, and it is typical of her vivid approach to the subject. Her book is for everyone who likes to sing, play, whistle, hum or listen to a good tune.

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