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Illustrated Lives Of The Great Composers



Synopsis

This series of biographies presents the great composers against the background of their times. Each draws on personal letters and recollections, engravings, paintings and, when they exist, photographs, to present a complete picture of the composer's life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Over the course of the last few months I have been nursing an ever increasing love of Shostakovich. This is the first book I have read on the master and, in light of other readings I have done (Volkov, Fanning, MacDonald, Wilson) this turned out to be a good primer. Its strength lies in that (outside from a few quotes from Testimony) it stays away from the Volkov controversy and focuses mostly on facts (i.e. who Zhdanov, Sollertinsky, Meyerhold were, the political horrors of Stalin, his major works in relationship to his life). For those searching for a book a that isn't too daunting, but will still give them a thorough introduction, this is a good start.

I am a huge Shostakovich fan and I like this publication. This book is full of photographs of the composer Dmitri Shostakovich and the world around him. It is invaluable for the pictures alone. I have had this book only one day and have gone through all the pictures and captions. I am glad to see for instance the attention in photographs to the 11th symphony "The Year 1905" which gets so little attention otherwise, but I feel is nonetheless a masterpiece. There are even pictures of life in

Russia before Shostakovich was born. The only thing which I think is lacking if anything is more pictures after 1966 until Shostakovich's death in 1975. Forgetting the pictures there is also commentary which offers a unique perspective and summing up of each period of Shostakovich's life. The bibliography is quite long and extensive research was done even though there are limitations to just how much you can put into a book like this. A picture can tell a thousand words and I love this illustrated guide. Five Stars.

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