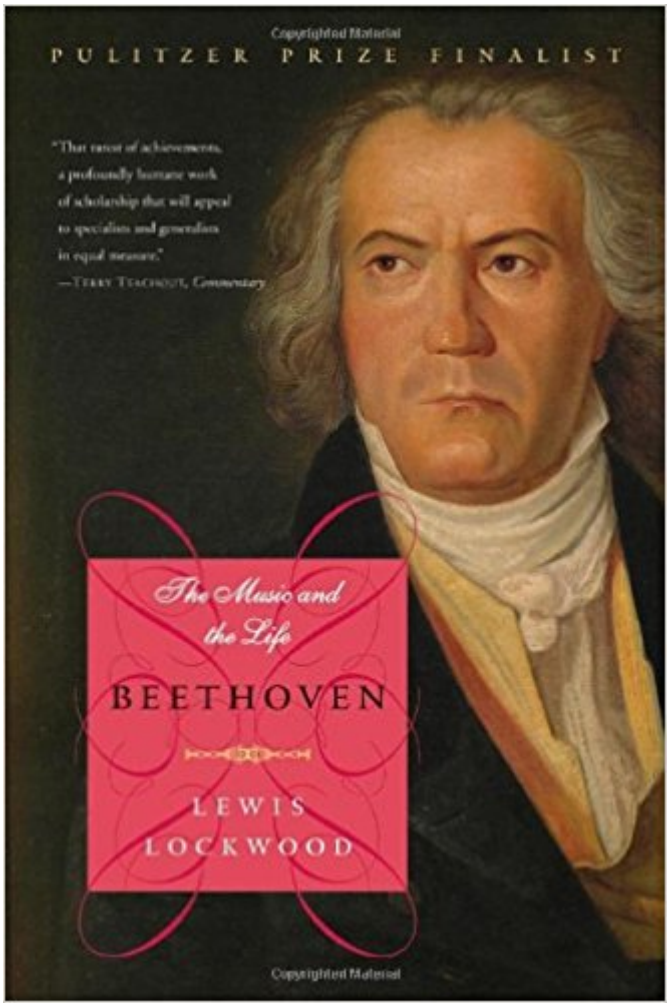
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Beethoven: The Music And The Life



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Synopsis

An authoritative work offering a fresh look at BeethovenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life, career, and milieu. Ã¢â ¬Å“MagisterialÃ¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢New York Review of Books. This brilliant portrayal weaves Beethoven's musical and biographical stories into their historical and artistic contexts. Lewis Lockwood sketches the turbulent personal, historical, political, and cultural frameworks in which Beethoven worked and examines their effects on his music. "The result is that rarest of achievements, a profoundly humane work of scholarship that willÃ¢â ¬â ¢or at least shouldÃ¢â ¬â ¢appeal to specialists and generalists in equal measure" (Terry Teachout, Commentary). Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.Ã Â "Lewis Lockwood has written a biography of Beethoven in which the hours that Beethoven spent writing musicÃ¢â ¬â ¢that is, his methods of working, his interest in contemporary and past composers, the development of his musical intentions and ideals, his inner musical life, in shortÃ¢â ¬â ¢have been properly integrated with the external events of his career. The book is invaluable." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Charles Rosen "Lockwood writes with poetry and clarityÃ¢â ¬â ¢a rare combination. I especially enjoyed the connection that he makes between the works of Beethoven and the social and political context of their creationÃ¢â ¬â ¢we feel closer to Beethoven the man without losing our wonder at his genius." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Emanuel Ax "The magnum opus of an illustrious Beethoven scholar. From now on, we will all turn to Lockwood's Beethoven: The Music and the Life for insight and instruction." Ã¢â ¬â ¢Maynard Solomon "This is truly the Beethoven biography for the intelligent reader. Lewis Lockwood speaks in his preface of writing on Beethoven's works at 'a highly accessible descriptive level.' But he goes beyond that. His discussion of the music, based on a deep knowledge of its context and the composition processes behind it, explains, elucidates, and is not afraid to evaluate; while the biographical chapters, clearly and unfussily written, and taking full account of the newest thinking on Beethoven, align closely with the musical discussion. The result is a deeply perceptive book that comes as close as can be to presenting the man and the music as a unity."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Stanley Sadie, editor, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians "Impressive for both its scholarship and its fresh insights, this landmark workÃ¢â ¬â ¢fully accessible to the interested amateurÃ¢â ¬â ¢immediately takes its place among the essential references on this composer and his music."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Bob Goldfarb, KUSC-FM 91.5 "Lockwood writes like an angel: lucid, enthusiastic, stirring and enlightening. Beethoven has found his ablest interpreter."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Jonathan Keates, The SpectatorÃ Â "There is no better survey of Beethoven's compositions for a wide audience."Ã¢â ¬â ¢Michael Kimmelman, The New York Times Book Review 50 illustrations

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Customer Reviews

Although he breaks no new ground, Lockwood (a Harvard professor emeritus in music and a leading Beethoven scholar) does offer an extremely cogent account of the works as they relate to the well-known three phases of Beethoven's remarkable creative life. It's appropriate that the title places the music first, because it is Lockwood's highly observant account of the composer's musical development that will strike readers most forcibly. There is nothing much new to say about the life, and here Lockwood only goes through the motions, pausing only to observe that despite all the speculation, it is doubtful that Beethoven ever enjoyed the physical love of a woman, notwithstanding his many infatuations and sometimes passionate letters. On the music, however, he has many fine insights, particularly into Beethoven's very conscious and determined development of his skills, and his often-neglected splendor as a melodist. A regular Beethoven listener could do worse than use Lockwood's accounts of the works, particularly the middle and late ones-he's inclined to give scant shrift to anything before the Opus 18 quartets-as concert or record notes, written at exactly the right pitch for knowledgeable music lovers who don't have a score in front of them. Lockwood is also thorough regarding the impact of such previous masters as Handel, Bach, Mozart and Haydn on Beethoven's art. Many illustrations not seen by PW; in an unusual extra, about 100 musical examples linked to the book are available on a dedicated Web site.Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A recognized authority on Beethoven, Lockwood (music, emeritus, Harvard) concentrates primarily on his subject's music and development as a composer before dedicating separate chapters to biography and the historical, political, and cultural milieus. This particularly refreshing approach, modeled on Abraham Pasis's "Subtle Is the Lord": The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein and Nicholas Boyle's Goethe: The Poet and the Age, differs from other recent studies that focused more on Beethoven's life (e.g., Barry Cooper's Beethoven and Maynard Solomon's Beethoven). All of Lockwood's narrative, including the discussion of specific compositions, will be accessible to serious music lovers with only a modest technical background. This results partly from an interesting innovation, especially pleasing to specialists-100 additional musical examples are available on a companion web site (www.wwnorton.com/ trade/lockwood), allowing the author to be far less technical in his discussion. Lockwood's study offers a new and authoritative interpretation of a prodigiously gifted and complex man and artist who saw himself as Mozart's heir. Highly recommended for public and academic libraries.Timothy J. McGee, Univ. of Toronto Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

4.5 Stars - Very insightful book. A must read for anyone interested in classical music. Tells you everything you need to know about Beethoven. Lockwood writes with clear and informative prose. The book is also very well researched and organized. The only reason I have to knock off a half star is because I wish Lockwood would have spent more time talking about Beethoven's personal life. The book is about 75% music, 25% bio. Personally, I would have preferred to have more biography, and less music analysis. But that's just me. Overall though, it's a great book.

A pretty good read on one of my heroes.

Ludwig Van Beethoven is no easy man to write about, and his music at times defies description and shrugs off analysis. However, Lockwood has risen to the occasion. With painstaking thoroughness and an eye and ear for detail, he serves as our guide through a life that was filled with obstacles at every turn, and yet out of that, Beethoven was able to create works of enduring genius. Here was a man who shook his fist at the heavens and defied convention. He scorned the ordinary and had no time or patience for niceties. Lockwood misses nothing in this probing, sensitive and very honest account of a difficult man who wrote extraordinary music. At times, we learn more than we might need to, but for the serious reader, this book is both a challenge and a joy. I commend it highly!

Of course any study of Beethoven has to put his great music in the foreground. This book alternates between sections on Beethoven's life and its connection to his musical development, which are well-written and illuminating, and long descriptions of his major works: symphonies, piano sonatas, string quartets etc. Reading these in a vacuum, without hearing the music, was not very useful to me, although these descriptions would be helpful as liner notes to a CD, or on a concert program. Guess they'll come in handy as a reference, but I find for a reader such as myself, a great fan of classical music but lacking knowledge of composition and musical theory, they get in the way; the book would have been half the size and twice as readable without them.

Lockwood's Beethoven gives an excellent overview of the great composer's art, life and times. If one wants a bit more of a psychological profile, Maynard Solomon's biography is my favorite. Thayer's Life of Beethoven is a more stolid volume, but it also has much more detail about smaller events in the composer's life.

As a college undergrad I took a music course taught by Lockwood many years ago. He was good as a teacher, and I knew he was a LvB scholar, so I always hoped to see a book about LvB's music. After I left college he published not one but at least two such books.This one was written for the general audience, someone who wants to learn about LvB's life as well as his music. Unfortunately, the interweaving leaves the book in the awkward position of fulfilling neither purpose. As a biography it's too brief, and if you were looking for in-depth analysis of LvB's great music you'd be disappointed like myself. I guess one purpose it can serve is as a casual introduction to the background of LvB as a person and as a musician, against the cultural-political backdrop of his times. However, I myself find the coverage too shallow, way too shallow.

Beautifully written combination of Beethoven's life and a fairly technical history of his musical development. Fine for this music major, but perhaps a little challenging for some. Book itself is lovely to hold, nice paper, adequate margins and fine illustrations. My book club is eating it up.

This book, Beethoven: The Music and the Life, was part of my daughter's Wish List and I ordered it for her birthday. Although it was used, the condition was remarkable. Upon thorough examination, I could find no pencil marks or ink blotches, no dog eared pages, no smudges and no tears. The spine was solid and the cover was in good condition. Moreover, the book arrived on time. I would

recommend this book for anyone who appreciates music history or biographies.

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