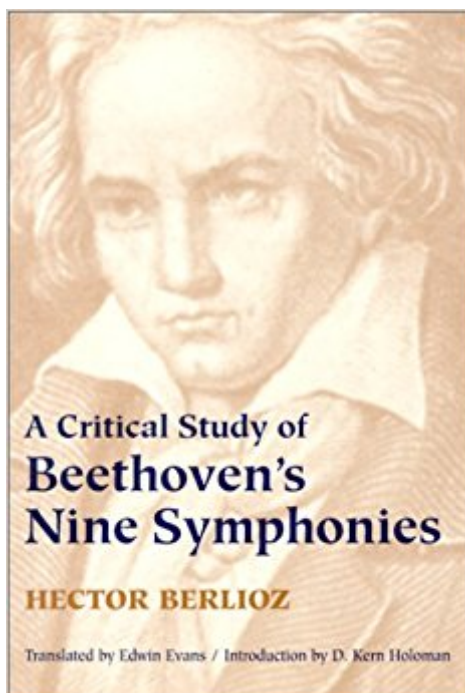


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A Critical Study Of Beethoven's Nine Symphonies



Synopsis

A daring composer in his own right, Hector Berlioz made a considerable reputation and a modest living for himself writing about music. This compact volume gathers brief, pithy essays Berlioz wrote on Beethoven's nine symphonies, his opera, *Fidelio*, and his piano sonatas and trios. Berlioz vividly depicts the salient features of the music with observations that are acute and passionate, as valuable for musicians as for amateurs. Beyond its astute commentary on the music, however, Berlioz's book offers a rare firsthand look at the reception and reputation accorded Beethoven's music in the decades following his death. Berlioz transcribes the comments of amateurs leaving the conservatoire after a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and provides a mocking glimpse of the French appreciation of the great German composer: What stands in the way of the music of 'Fidelio' as regards the Parisian public is ... the great disdain of the composer for sonorous effects which are not justified. He addresses Beethoven's skillful use of the orchestra as an instrument of drama and the general disapprobation that greeted this approach. He also includes a satirical piece on the fad of calling up the spirit of a composer and transcribing new, posthumous compositions. Berlioz's essays testify to the tumult caused by Beethoven's music in his time and offer ways to approach the music that remain enlightening and fresh.

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Customer Reviews

Interesting critiques of Beethoven symphonies by another legend in music history. A bit dated, but a fascinating read.

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