



Beethoven: Anguish and Triumph

Jan Swafford

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Jan Swafford's biographies of Charles Ives and Johannes Brahms have established him as a revered music historian, capable of bringing his subjects vibrantly to life. His magnificent new biography of Ludwig van Beethoven peels away layers of legend to get to the living, breathing human being who composed some of the world's most iconic music. Swafford mines sources never before used in English-language biographies to reanimate the revolutionary ferment of Enlightenment-era Bonn, where Beethoven grew up and imbibed the ideas that would shape all of his future work. Swafford then tracks his subject to Vienna, capital of European music, where Beethoven built his career in the face of critical incomprehension, crippling ill health, romantic rejection, and "fate's hammer," his ever-encroaching deafness. Throughout, Swafford offers insightful readings of Beethoven's key works.

More than a decade in the making, this will be the standard Beethoven biography for years to come.

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