

The Lives and Times of the Great Composers

Michael Steen



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Explore the life of Bach, the respectable burgher much of whose vast output was composed amidst petty turf disputes in Lutheran Leipzig; the ugly, argumentative Beethoven in French-occupied Vienna, obsessed by his laundry; Mozart, the over-exploited infant prodigy whose untimely death was shrouded in rumour. Steen gives us the story of Verdi, who composed against the background of the Italian Risorgimento; the family life of the Wagners; and Brahms, who rose from the slums of Hamburg to become a devotee of beer and coffee in fin-de-siècle Vienna, a cultural capital bent on destroying Mahler ... and much more.

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