



## Experiencing Beethoven: A Listener's Companion

*Geoffrey Block*

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Experiencing Beethoven, music historian Geoffrey Block explores in layman's terms a highly representative body of about two dozen Beethoven instrumental and vocal works, offering listeners who know him well, or are just discovering him, an opportunity to grasp the breadth and depth of his musical genius.

Experiencing Beethoven places the composer's works within the evolving context of his personal and professional life and social and cultural milieu. Block sheds light on the public and private audiences of Beethoven's music, from the concerts for the composer's own financial benefit to the debut of the "Eroica" Symphony at the palace of Prince Lobkowitz to the historic public premiere of his Ninth Symphony.

Experiencing Beethoven paints a portrait of the composer's youth in Bonn, his early triumphs and artistic maturation in Vienna, and—despite the challenges his music posed to his contemporaries—the recognition he received during his lifetime as the most acclaimed composer of the era. Block conveys the range and scope of Beethoven's achievement, from his heroic style to his lyricism, grappling throughout with the composer's power to communicate his idealistic musical vision to listeners in both his time and ours. Finally, *Experiencing Beethoven* explores why Beethoven's music continues to enjoy an unwavering appeal in an age saturated with a range of musical styles.



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