



Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music

Barbara B. Heyman

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Samuel Barber (1910-1981) was one of the most important and honored American composers of the twentieth century. Barber wrote in a great variety of musical forms--symphonies, concertos, operas, vocal music, chamber music--but is best known by such compositions as the *Adagio for Strings*, the orchestral song *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, his piano and violin concertos, and his two operas *Vanessa* and *Antony and Cleopatra* the second of which opened the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center. Covering Barber's career and all of his published and unpublished works, this is the only book based upon primary sources: his own letters and those written to or about him, his sketchbooks, his original musical manuscripts, and interviews with friends, colleagues, and performers who were directly involved with him. The biographical material on Barber is closely interspersed with a discussion of his music. Displaying Barber's creative processes at work from his early student compositions to his mature masterpieces, Heyman provides the social context in which a major composer such as Barber moved: his education, how he built his career, the evolving musical tastes of American audiences, his relationship to musical giants like Serge Koussevitsky, and the role of radio in the promotion of his music. *Samuel Barber* stands as a model biography of an important American musical figure.

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