

The Life of Messiaen



♫ Musical lives

The life of **Messiaen**

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Olivier Messiaen stands as one of the most influential composers of the twentieth century and among the foremost religious artists of any era. When he died in 1992, the prevailing image was of a deeply religious man whose only sources of inspiration were God and Nature, and of a composer whose music progressed along an entirely individual path, impervious to contemporaneous events and the whims both of his fellow artists and the critics. The Life of Messiaen paints a more nuanced picture of the man and the musician, peering behind Messiaen's public persona to examine the private difficulties and creative struggles that were the true backdrop to many of his greatest achievements. Based upon the latest research, including previously overlooked sources, this book provides an excellent introduction to Messiaen's life and work, presenting a fascinating new perspective of a man whose story is more remarkable than the myths surrounding it.

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