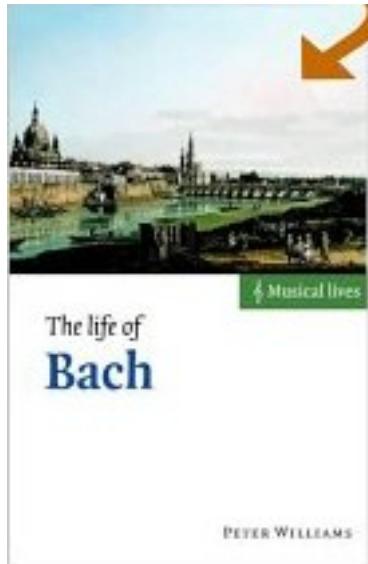


# The Life of Bach



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Bach, like Shakespeare, is known largely by his works, exceptional in quantity as well as quality, and only a few original documents convey any ideas of his life and character. Peter Williams's thoroughly new look at Bach's biography asks many questions about the so-called evidence. What was he like as a young man, as a father, as an aging church servant? What were his preoccupations? What music did he know and how did he compose and perform such an amazing amount of music? Was he a disappointed man? Reading the available documentation critically, especially from the viewpoint of a performer, and going back to the first substantial "biography" of Bach, namely his obituary, Williams suggests new interpretations of the composer's life and his work. In particular he asks if our understanding of Bach has been hindered by the unremitting deference displayed towards him since his death.

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