Symphonic Etudes
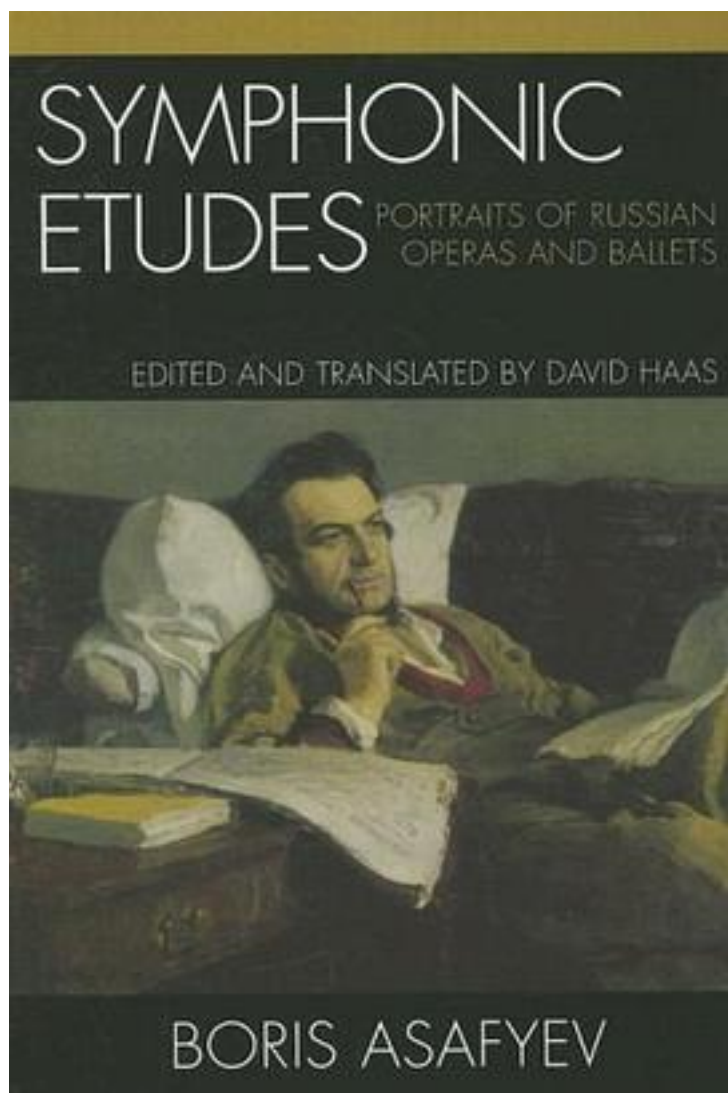
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When Boris Asafyev's first edition of Symphonic Etudes appeared in 1922, it was recognized as the most extensive, insightful, and sophisticated text on Russian opera and ballet yet written. The second edition in 1970 was accepted as a classic of music criticism and has since functioned as a foundation for Russian nineteenth-century scholarship. Now this important book is available in English, its text and footnotes fully translated and annotated by David Haas. Symphonic Etudes: Portraits of Russian Operas and Ballets is divided into 19 essays, most of which were originally written for program booklets distributed during the 1921-22 season of the St. Petersburg State Theatre. The book's chronological coverage extends from the 1830s until World War I, with particular attention given to Glinka's Ruslan and Lyudmila, the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, and Musorgsky, and the first two of Stravinsky's ballets. Rather than provide his literate Russian audience with superfluous plot summaries and lists of characters, Asafyev instead created "psychological and stylistic" portraits. As a result, each work discussed emerges as a distinctive achievement as well as a means for examining one or more aspects of an unfolding national tradition. David Haas provides a translator's preface and introductory essay that will acquaint the reader with the basic terms, concepts, and significance of Asafyev's operatic aesthetics, while extensive translator's endnotes give accurate score references and serve to illuminate the author's numerous literary and other allusions. With the new accessibility of this pioneering work, Anglophone readers-students, teachers, scholars, and music lovers alike-will have access to an insider's appreciation of Russia's multigenerational contributions to music for the stage.

作者介绍:

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