



Hans Von B?low: A Life and Times

Alan Walker

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Hans von B?low is a key figure in 19th century music whose career path was as broad as it was successful. Music history's first virtuoso orchestral conductor, B?low created the model for the profession-both in musical brilliance and in domineering personality-which still holds forth today. He was an eminent and renowned concert pianist, a respected (and often feared) teacher and music critic, an influential editor of works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Beethoven, and a composer in a variety of musical genres. As a student and son-in-law of Franz Liszt, and estranged friend of Richard Wagner (for whom his wife Cosima famously left him), B?low is intricately connected with the canonical greats of the period. Yet despite his critical and lasting importance for orchestral music, B?low's life and significant achievements have yet to be heralded in biographical form.

In *Hans von B?low: A Life and Times*, Alan Walker, the acclaimed author of numerous award-winning books on the era's iconic composers, provides the first full-length English biography of this remarkable musical figure. Walker traces B?low's life in illuminating and engaging detail, from the first piano lessons of his boyhood days, to his first American tour, to his last days as conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. Unearthing B?low's extensive and previously unavailable correspondence and writings, Walker conveys amusing and informative anecdotes about this unique musical legend- from his sardonic and clever personality to his meticulous devotion to his work-and reveals enlightening insights on the still-contested sensibilities of musical-compositional style and "idea" at play in the vibrant musical world of which B?low was a part.

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