

## Herbert Von Karajan: A Life in Music

Richard Osborne



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One of the greatest and most celebrated performing artists of the twentieth century, Herbert von Karajan (1908-1989) dazzled, intrigued, and intimidated the music world. As the young Karajan told his brother, "Whether it's conducting, skiing, or motor racing, I simply want to be the best." Richard Osborne draws on his own extensive conversations with Karajan, interviews with those who knew the conductor, and a treasure trove of primary sources to bring into focus the flamboyance and flaws of an extraordinary musician as well as the turbulent international music scene over six decades. The author debunks many legends about Karajan, particularly those relating to his membership in the Nazi Party, which he opportunistically joined in 1935 to obtain a conducting appointment. While the decision haunted him throughout his life, Karajan's career flourished after the war. A jet-setting superstar, he once held, simultaneously, six of the world's most prestigious musical posts, including director of the Salzburg Festival, artistic director of the Vienna State Opera, and conductor for life of the Berlin Philharmonic. After signing with legendary producer Walter Legge, Karajan achieved international fame through his best-selling recordings. He also embraced the challenge of adapting to rapidly changing technologies, and quickly mastered each new medium -- television, vinyl LPs, tapes, and CDs. This comprehensive, well-balanced, and objective biography will stand as the definitive work on this exceptional maestro.

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