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Virtuoso: The Life and Art of Niccolo Paganini, Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein, Ignace Jan Paderewski, Fritz Kreisler, Pablo Casals, Wanda Landowska, Vladimir Horowitz, Glenn Gould

Harvey Sachs

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Dust jacket notes: "Ever since Niccolò Paganini caused impressionable listeners to question whether his incredible dexterity came from the devil himself, the public has been enthralled by the great instrumentalists. Awe-inspiring on stage, did these exceptional people really lead tempestuous, turbulent lives? Or were they, behind the facade, normal men and women? What exactly spurred them to attain supremacy in their field, and what was the cost in human terms? Nine outstanding musicians, each lionized in their own time, are featured here by Harvey Sachs, who brings his expert knowledge and acute perception to bear on the achievement of these virtuosi and the magnetism of their personalities. The book, which draws on a vast range of contemporary sources and eye-witness accounts, begins with Paganini and Liszt - the quintessential romantic virtuosi, idols of poets, painters and susceptible women - and reaches the modern age with the already legendary Horowitz and the eccentric Glenn Gould. The spotlight is also turned on Anton Rubinstein, Paderewski, Kreisler, Casals and Landowska. The musicians' individual merits and defects are weighed from first-hand evidence, recordings are discussed where appropriate, and each is the subject of a level-headed, judicious reappraisal that will make this book of interest to all music lovers." Hardcover, 6.5 x 9.5 inches, 208 pages, illustrated with 45 photos and drawings, Bibliography, Index.