



Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: A Portrayal of Its Musical Content, With Running Commentary on Performance and Literature As Well

Heinrich Schenker

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Heinrich Schenker was one of the most influential music theorists of the 20th century. His treatise on the Ninth Symphony, which was his first major work, contains an analysis of the score, prescriptions for performance and a critical survey of earlier studies of the symphony. Widely acclaimed when it first appeared in Germany in 1912, the book has now been translated into English. Schenker's primary concern in this book is to discuss the tonal content of the Ninth Symphony, to reveal the psychological effect and interplay of tonal shapes or motifs. He proceeds sequentially through each movement, section by section, describing the motifs and their relation to the underlying harmony and phrase structure. He also explains complex tonal shapes in terms of simpler underlying patterns of voice leading, a subject he carries out more systematically in later works. The sections dealing with performance provide information about projection of bar groupings, articulation, and dynamics. Schenker's critiques of previous writings about the Ninth Symphony include discussions of Wagner's several essays on the subject. In the translator's preface, John Rothgeb focuses on the public reception of the book and places it in the context of Schenker's later works.

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