



# Mahler: A Biography

*Jonathan Carr*

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**Although Gustav Mahler is seen today as one of the groundbreaking composers of the modern era, he remains widely misunderstood both as man and musician. In *Mahler*, Jonathan Carr reexamines Mahler's life and work through the circumstances leading to his death in 1911.**

The focus is on Mahler's last decade, his tempestuous marriage to the alluring Alma Schindler, his work as a "summer composer" in isolated huts in the country, his revolutionary achievements as director of the Vienna opera and his final years in America. But it sets the stage by looking into Mahler's earlier career as a talented, ambitious, and often ruthless conductor.

In her memoirs Alma drew Mahler as a sickly, cerebral recluse. Arnold Schoenberg called him a "saint." Leonard Bernstein, largely responsible for the Mahler "boom" in the Sixties, found a "secret shame" at the heart of Mahler's music, "the shame of being a Jew and the shame of being ashamed." Jonathan Carr looks behind these myths, and using letters, diaries, and other material hitherto unavailable in English, he brilliantly challenges some of the most widely held assumptions about Mahler.

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