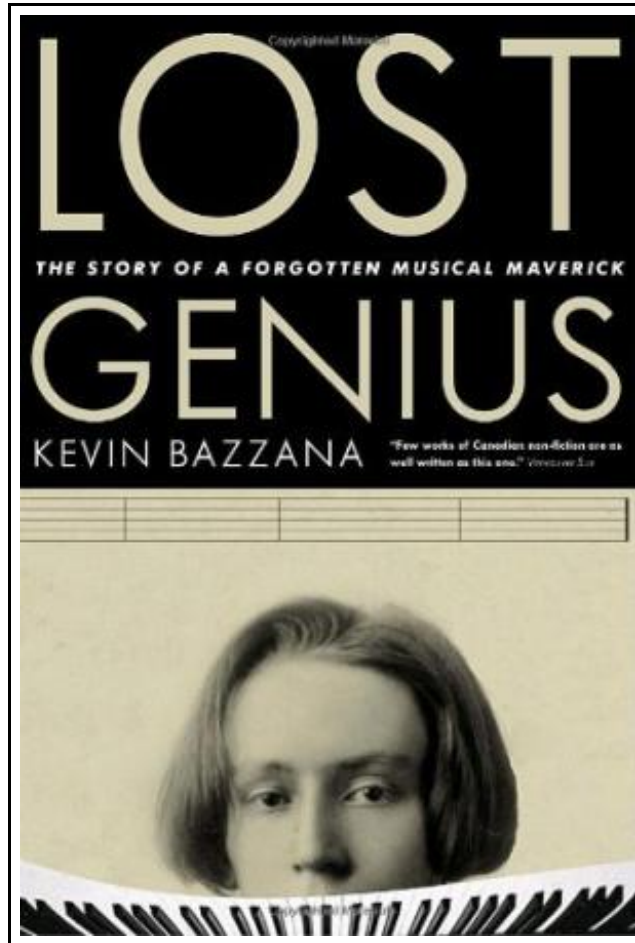


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Reviews

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(Mitchell Kuhn III)

LOST GENIUS: THE STORY OF A FORGOTTEN MUSICAL MAVERICK



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McClelland & Stewart. Paperback / softback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Lost Genius: The Story of a Forgotten Musical Maverick, Kevin Bazzana, The award-winning author of "Wondrous Strange," the critically acclaimed biography of Glenn Gould, explores the bizarre, untold life of another brilliant and eccentric musician. The composer Arnold Schoenberg called him an "utterly extraordinary" pianist of "incredible originality and conviction," yet today he is all but forgotten. Born in Budapest in 1903, Ervin Nyiregyhazi (nyeer-edge-hah-zee) was a remarkable prodigy: at eight he performed at Buckingham Palace, and when he was thirteen a psychologist published a book about him. In his teens, his idiosyncratic, intensely Romantic playing electrified audiences and astounded critics in Europe and America. But his adult career quickly foundered, and he was reduced to penury. In 1928, he settled in Los Angeles, and eventually he withdrew from public life, preferring to spend his time quietly composing. Psychologically, he remained a child, and found the ordinary demands of daily life onerous -- he struggled even to dress himself. He drank heavily, was insatiable sexually (he married ten times), and described himself as "a fortissimo bastard," yet such was his talent and charisma that he numbered among his friends and champions celebrities such as Jack Dempsey, Theodore Dreiser, Bela Lugosi, and Gloria Swanson. Rediscovered in the 1970s, he enjoyed a brief, sensational, and controversial renaissance before slipping back into obscurity. He died in 1987. "Lost Genius," the product of ten years' research, is the first biography of Nyiregyhazi, whose story is among the most fascinating -- and bizarre -- in twentieth-century music. "From the Hardcover edition."



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