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Glenn Gould: The Ecstasy and Tragedy of Genius

Peter Ostwald

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"[Glenn Gould] marks a major advance in our understanding of one of the 20th century's most significant performing artists.... Ostwald is as engrossing a writer as any who has tried his hand at biography."?Ted Libbey, *Washington Post Book World*

The Canadian pianist Glenn Gould was a child prodigy and a musical genius whose 1955 recording of Bach's "Goldberg Variations" catapulted him to world fame. He was also plagued by lifelong depression, was terrified of playing before live audiences, and consumed prescription drugs by the handful. He died at fifty of a massive stroke. In this acclaimed biography, the late psychiatrist Peter Ostwald ? himself an accomplished violinist and longtime personal friend of Gould's ? raises many questions about Gould and his music. Was his genius sponsored by eccentricity or vice versa? Do those with genius sacrifice themselves for a higher ideal while remaining personally unfulfilled? Ostwald lays bare the energy and contradiction behind Gould's brilliance. "Learning more of the man, absorbing Peter Ostwald's picture and analysis, has sharpened my ears and made me more acutely receptive.... [An] important and illuminating biography."?Oliver Sacks "[A] superb psychological study ... a poignant personal memoir."?*Time* "This brisk book is discerning rather than reductive, and guaranteed Freud-free. A."?*Entertainment Weekly* Illustrations

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