



Beethoven and Me: A Beginner's Guide to Classical Music

Earl Ofari Hutchinson

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Political analyst Earl Ofari Hutchinson is best known as an African-American commentator on politics, race and social issues. Yet, for decades he has inhabited another world that seemingly is as far removed from the day's political and social conflicts that he specializes in discussing and writing about as the sun and the moon. It's the world of Western Classical Music. He has long had an enduring love and passion for the music and has written and commented about it on his radio shows and in his columns. Now, in his forthcoming book, *Beethoven and Me: A Beginner's Guide to Classical Music*, Hutchinson breaks through a hard barrier that has long separated politics and social commentary from music, in this case classical music. He shares his many personal experiences in concert halls and his observations about the world of classical music. *Beethoven and Me: A Beginner's Guide to Classical Music* is a fast paced, easy to understand survey of the music's well-known and not so well-known composers, their music and their struggles for recognition. He brings a fresh and his very personal perspective in discussing them and their music. Hutchinson makes it easy for the reader by deliberately minimizing using technical terms and language. Throughout the book, he provides the reader with a highly personal running commentary of his experiences in front of and behind the orchestra stage during two decades of active listening and commenting on classical music. Along the way, he details the influence and struggles of African-American, Hispanic and women composers in the classical music world who more often than not have been shamefully neglected or marginalized in the classical music tradition. *Beethoven and Me: A Beginner's Guide to Classical Music* is Hutchinson's personal, and very selective, impressionistic walk through the history, tradition and experience of classical music. It's a primer written for a very beginning listener. Hutchinson has boldly stepped out of his role as a political and social commentator to show that music and the compelling social issues of the day need not be separate.

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