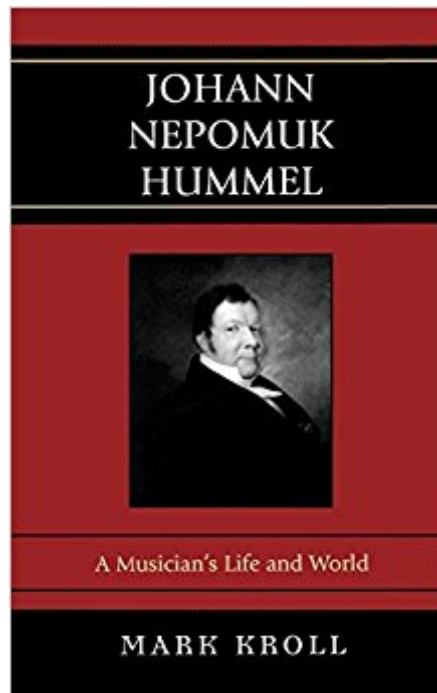




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# **Johann Nepomuk Hummel: A Musician's Life And World**



## Synopsis

Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) was an influential teacher, composer, and musical innovator considered by many to be the greatest pianist of Europe in his lifetime. Hummel played a significant part in the transformation of musical style during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; he was one of the first professional musicians to take on multiple roles as both an artist and an entrepreneur – a model that continues to be followed to this very day. *Johann Nepomuk Hummel: A Musician's Life and World* is the first English-language study of this important composer and performer. Its thirteen chapters focus on different aspects of Hummel's life, music, and career, such as his family and early years, his experiences living under the regime of the Habsburg monarchy, and his personal and musical relationships with important composers of both the classical and romantic periods, including Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schumann, Liszt, and Chopin. Author Mark Kroll gives a survey of Hummel's legacy as a performer and composer, placing his life and works within the context of the social, political, economic, and cultural transformations occurring at the time. Kroll offers a complete picture of this pivotal juncture in music history and the role of the musician in that society as well as our own. Numerous musical examples are also included. An appendix providing the original language version of all translations, an exhaustive bibliography, and a complete, annotated list of Hummel's works conclude this invaluable treatise.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Kudos to the author. . . I highly recommend this distinctive work. (American Reference Books

Annual) Describing the composer's life and world rather than life and works makes for an absorbing picture and gives readers all kinds of glimpses of what it was to be a successful pianist and prolific composer during the earlier part of Hamilton's "golden age". Who thought and said what to whom, and how livings were made and careers developed, is endlessly fascinating. . . . just to have a convenient collection of remarks by Mozart, Haydn and Co., including Goethe himself, is a treat for the reader, who will find here many a vivid vignette of people, places, and events. . . . Especially helpful are the...musical extracts comparing Hummel with others...[and] the brief comparisons here with real composers (Schubert, Chopin, Schumann). (Musical Times) There remains a glaring lack of accessible treatments of certain major figures who were subsequently handled less than kindly by history. . . in the world of piano music none are more deserving of attention than Hummel...a straightforward presentation of the composer's life and works is the first necessity – and that is what Kroll gives us. . . his writing style is clear, his footnoting extensive, and his overall chapter organization perfectly cogent. . . We needed a decent book on Hummel, and now we have one. (Journal of Musicological Research) Mark Kroll has filled an important gap in literature. . . . Kroll's biography...has the distinction of being the first English-language biography on Hummel's life and career from birth to death....An extremely important addition to any library with a music collection. It should prove useful to anyone interested in Hummel or in any one of the composers among his circle of friends and associates. (Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association) Mark Kroll's new biography of Johann Nepomuk Hummel is a welcome contribution to the literature surrounding this unjustly neglected figure. . . . The book is certainly welcome, and it has been researched and written on a scale commensurate with Hummel's stature and importance as a pivotal musical figure in European musical life of the early nineteenth century. Kroll's ambitious work will hopefully stimulate a new wave of interest in this unjustly neglected and often misunderstood figure; it will certainly serve as the indispensable source of information about Hummel that we have lacked for so long. (Eighteenth-Century Music) This is the first biography of [Hummel] in English. The last as well, one suspects, given its breathtaking comprehensiveness, solicitude for the smallest details, and attractively fluent idiom, all of which militate against the very idea of a subsequent author adequately essaying the topic. (Modern Age) [T]his book is [most] welcome, [the] first to cover all aspects of the life and career of Hummel. . . [Kroll has supplied a wealth of information. . . [and] uncovered unpublished documents of great interest. . . . [It] explores the relationship of Hummel and Schubert. . . . [and] the chapters on Hummel's relations with Schumann, Liszt and Chopin will be of interest to specialists of Romanticism. . . It was time to shed light on a composer who occupied a

central place in his lifetime, and [who] paved the way for musicians of the Romantic era. (Laure Schnapper *Revue de Musicologie*)

Mark Kroll is professor emeritus of music at Boston University and visiting professor at Northeastern University. He is the author of *Playing the Harpsichord Expressively: A Practical and Historical Guide* (Scarecrow Press, 2004).

This wide-ranging and thoroughly researched book looks at Hummel's sometimes adventurous life, personality, his relationships with other people, and his teaching methods, as well as his music. There are numerous accounts of socialisations - ranging from teaching advice and conversations to parties and his family affairs - with other people, including Liszt, Chopin, Schumann, and of course Mozart with whom Hummel studied, so that we learn about his manner of dealing with people - in short, what he was like as a human being. I've enjoyed reading the book very much.

USD99?!!! Is this book gold-plated? There goes my chance to read about one of my favourite composers. Now will someone more sensible publish this book at a sensible price?

This book has a rather strange ending. There is absolutely no information about the fatal illness and the death of Mr. Hummel. A writer's taboo??

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