



Claude Vivier: A Composer's Life (Eastman Studies in Music)

Bob Gilmore

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Claude Vivier's haunting and expressive music has captivated audiences around the world. But the French-Canadian composer is remembered also because of the dramatic circumstances of his death: he was found murdered in his Paris apartment at the age of thirty-four. Given unrestricted access to Vivier's archives and interviews with Vivier's family, teachers, friends, and colleagues, musicologist and biographer Bob Gilmore tells here the full story of Vivier's fascinating life, from his abandonment as a child in a Montreal orphanage to his posthumous acclaim as one of the leading composers of his generation. Expelled from a religious school at seventeen for "lack of maturity," Vivier gave up his ambition to join the priesthood to study composition. Between 1976 and 1983 Vivier wrote the works on which his reputation rests, including *Lonely Child*, *Bouchara*, and the operas *Kopernikus* and *Marco Polo*. He was also an outspoken presence in the Montreal arts world and gay scene. Vivier left Quebec for Paris in 1982 to work on a new opera, the composition of which was interrupted by his murder. On his desk was the manuscript of his last work, uncannily entitled "Do You Believe in the Immortality of the Soul." Vivier's is a tragic but life-affirming story, intimately connected to his passionate music. Bob Gilmore was a noted musicologist and performer who taught at Brunel University in London. He wrote or edited five previous books, including *Harry Partch: A Biography*.

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