



# American Muse: The Life and Times of William Schuman

Joseph W. Polisi

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President of The Juilliard School and then Lincoln Center from 1945 to 1968, Schuman (1910-1992) was an artistic catalyst who was instrumental in shaping how America perceived and supported music, dance and drama in the second half of the twentieth centry. His influence as an administrator, educator and composer made him known during this period as the most powerful person in the arts in the United States. Complex, driven, and filled with a confident optimism that characterized America of the time, he thought of himself as part of many different worlds. Those worlds included his life as a composer of more than one hundred works in chamber, orchestral, operatic, and choral settings. His music has been characterized as full of American directness in its vibrant rhythms and brilliant orchestrations. This first-ever complete biography of Schuman will bring the many threads of his life together within the context of the personalities and events that shaped how we experience the arts in America in the twenty-first century.



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