



# AMICA International

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## Leginska: *Forgotten Genius of Music*

The Story of a Great Musician

by Marguerite and Terry Broadbent



Ethel Leginska, one of the most talented musicians of the 20th century, was born plain 'Ethel Liggins' in Hull in 1886, but took the name 'Leginska' on the advice of Lady Maud Warrender, in an era when the best top-class musicians had Polish- or Russian-sounding names. After making her London debut at Queen's Hall at the age of ten, she studied in Frankfurt and later with the great Leschetizky in Vienna. She then made successful tours of Europe as a concert pianist before going to the USA where she immediately enjoyed huge success and was dubbed 'The Paderewski of Women Pianists'. Later she composed music, and

then established for herself a pioneering role as a conductor in an era when women conductors were a rarity. This culminated in the founding by Leginska in the late 1920s of her own women's orchestras. She also composed three operas and in 1935 was the first woman to conduct her own opera in a major opera house, one of several notable 'firsts' achieved by this indomitable, pioneering musician. In 1939 Leginska settled in Los Angeles where, as a piano teacher, she built up a large circle of talented students, continuing in this role right up to her death in 1970.

Slight of build but huge in talent, Leginska excelled as a pianist, composer, conductor and teacher. Moreover, Leginska was endowed with a wonderfully engaging, magnetic personality. In spite of all this, and the fact that she recorded more than 70 piano rolls, she is now almost totally forgotten. The purpose of this book is to remedy that situation. The story of Leginska's life in music is a remarkable one which deserves to be told. The book comprises 19 chapters plus a bibliography, eight appendices which include lists of Leginska's gramophone and piano roll recordings, and an index, all printed on white satin art paper. It has 15 preliminary pages plus 354 pages of main text, with more than 70 photographs and many other illustrations. The book dimensions are 9.5" high x 6.5" across. It is published by the North West Player Piano Association, ISBN 0 9525101 4 6.