

From the acclaimed author of *Above the Fire* comes *Concert Black*, a hauntingly elegant novel that unspools a tale of music, obsession, and the fragile architecture of legacy.

Ellen Wroe, a celebrated biographer known for her piercing insight, sets her sights on Cecil Woodbridge, the legendary conductor whose name reverberates through concert halls and conservatories. But Woodbridge, imperious and elusive, rebuffs her approach and conspires to thwart her efforts. Undeterred, Wroe embarks on a relentless pursuit, trailing the maestro across continents—through the archives of his correspondence, into the confidences of his colleagues, and deeper still into the long shadow of his past. Maestro, cellist, king of the baton—Woodbridge is a man enshrined in myth and bristling with contradictions. Beneath the grandeur lies a hidden lattice of ambition, betrayal, and sorrow. As Wroe attempts to chart his ascent, she uncovers not only the cost of genius but the wreckage it often leaves behind.

With lyrical precision and atmospheric sweep, *Concert Black* echoes the psychological depth of Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and the philosophical resonance of Julian Barnes's *The Noise of Time*. From the frostbitten avenues of postwar London to the symphonic stages of Boston and Chicago, biographer and subject circle each other in an elegiac dance—until they collide in a reckoning neither can escape.

A novel of ambition and artistry, *Concert Black* is a symphony of human complexity: piercing, poised, and unforgettable.

**Michael O'Donnell** is the author of the bestselling novel *Above the Fire*. In 2023, Apple Books named him a debut writer to watch. His work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist*, and other publications. A longtime member of the National Book Critics Circle, he lives with his family in the Chicago area.

Read by **Simon Vance**

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CONCERT BLACK

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