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Sommario/riassunto	This collection of specially commissioned essays offers an accessible introduction to the history of the piano, performance styles, and its vast repertoire. Part 1 reviews the evolution of the piano, from its earliest forms up to the most recent developments, including the acoustics of the instrument. Part 2 explores the varied repertory in its social and stylistic contexts, including contemporary music, with a final chapter on jazz, blues and ragtime. The Companion also contains a glossary of important terms and will be a valuable source for the piano performer, student and enthusiast.