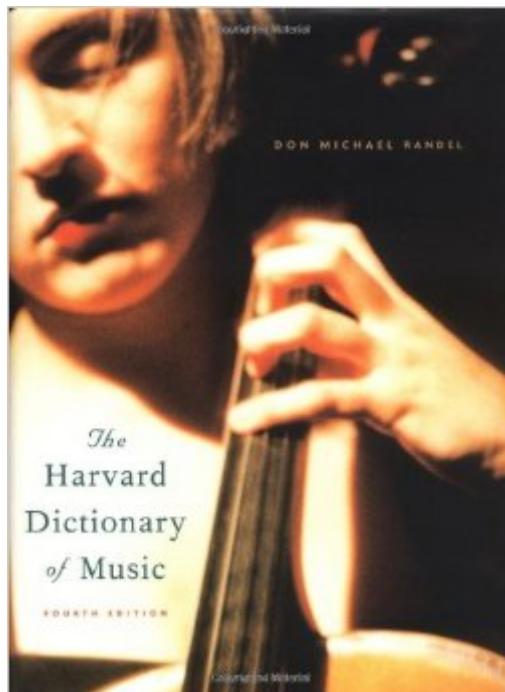


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The Harvard Dictionary Of Music (Harvard University Press Reference Library)



Synopsis

This classic reference work, the best one-volume music dictionary available, has been brought completely up to date in this new edition. Combining authoritative scholarship and lucid, lively prose, the Fourth Edition of The Harvard Dictionary of Music is the essential guide for musicians, students, and everyone who appreciates music. The Harvard Dictionary of Music has long been admired for its wide range as well as its reliability. This treasure trove includes entries on all the styles and forms in Western music; comprehensive articles on the music of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Near East; descriptions of instruments enriched by historical background; and articles that reflect today's beat, including popular music, jazz, and rock. Throughout this Fourth Edition, existing articles have been fine-tuned and new entries added so that the dictionary fully reflects current music scholarship and recent developments in musical culture. Encyclopedia-length articles by notable experts alternate with short entries for quick reference, including definitions and identifications of works and instruments. More than 220 drawings and 250 musical examples enhance the text. This is an invaluable book that no music lover can afford to be without.

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Customer Reviews

This is a joy to read, hold and behold. The first thing that struck the bibliophile in me was that lovely quality paper. It gives the book heft but is a pleasure to read. I got this as well as the Groves/Norton. Why? Because I set out to buy the Oxford Companion but saw that I could get 2 reference books for the price of the Oxford. The Harvard omits all the biographical entries so the 2 are complementary. The Harvard uses all that space to provide great in-depth articles. If I had to go for one I would

choose the Harvard - nowadays the Bios can be had in an instant on the net, whereas the Harvard assimilates a lot of learning in its entries.

I received this book as a graduation gift from my high school and junior high band directors. I knew it would come in useful since I am starting as a music education major in the fall, but I wasn't sure exactly how often I would use it. Right away, I found myself able to find answers to little things I didn't know. I also have a violin student who asks questions about anything and everything. This has definitely come in useful with teaching him! This book has everything, some times a little more than I wanted, but still has the answers I look for.

One has to appreciate the thoroughness and range of this new edition of the well-known reference source for all things musical save biographical data which this dictionary has traditionally excluded, but then it is not a biographical dictionary of which there are many that can be consulted. This dictionary is not just for information, but also primarily for education. Therefore, don't stop reading just because the information you are looking for is getting too detailed; try to learn from it.

Back around 1987 (or so), I walked into a local mega-bookstore to find a music dictionary that would help me navigate a couple of Renaissance and Medieval music books I was trying to read through. I'd written down various terms that I would use as the litmus test to gauge how effectively (clearly, concisely and thoroughly) each dictionary would be able to tell me what I needed and wanted to know, and/or how well it defined things I already knew well. So once I'd entered the store, I grabbed their three or four music dictionaries off the shelf and started comparing their entries for each of 8 or 10 musical terms/ideas. I found that the Harvard version was unsurpassed, and in fact rarely equaled in the quality of its entries. Oftentimes the other dictionaries flung around jargon; or their explanations were superficial, or would skirt some of the issues, assuming that I, for one, would already know what THEY were supposed to be explaining to me. I remember after having bought the book, that whenever I needed to find out something, it would give me what I needed almost without fail. One example of this occurred on the day I wanted/needed to learn how to read and understand figured bass (having never looked into this before). I was doubting that the Harvard would give me what I needed, as it seemed on the surface to be so very complicated. Was I ever wrong! After reading the Harvard entry, I was reading through and playing Corelli on my keyboard sequencer (albeit slowly) within about 15 minutes. Although I had also conversed with a friend who was a composition major, that was for no more than a minute or so.

This is one of the classic volumes of encyclopedic music scholarship in a one-volume package. Another reviewer mentions this, but it is worth mentioning again: biographical information--and some very accurate biographical information--tends to be readily accessible on the Internet, but concise, accurate information about instruments, forms, genres, styles, and so on, is not always quite as reliable. It's all here, though, and in a format and physical publication that is affordable and attractive. The Harvard Dictionary has real substance, physically and scholarly.

A dictionary isn't really that exciting, but this is truly a great resource. I'm a music education major getting my masters degree, and this book has really helped me to get a grasp on some of the information I'm studying. If you are a musician at all, especially a music teacher, invest in this book, you will use it!

I don't have a music degree, but took lessons from my accomplished pianist Mom for 8 years beginning on my 4th birthday. Since I don't have much theory knowledge, even though I've been playing the piano for over 48 years, I wanted a music reference book that I could also learn from. I am planning to add the Harvard Biographical Music Dictionary to my music collection, as this music dictionary doesn't give in-depth biographies on composers, since it is a MUSIC dictionary. This book is for anyone wanting to own a great music reference book and will be an invaluable addition to your music library.

What more can you say? This is the definitive reference for all musicians and music lovers too poor to avail themselves of the Groves Encyclopedia (most musicians fall in the "too poor" catalogue, of course). Buy it, and be enriched.

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