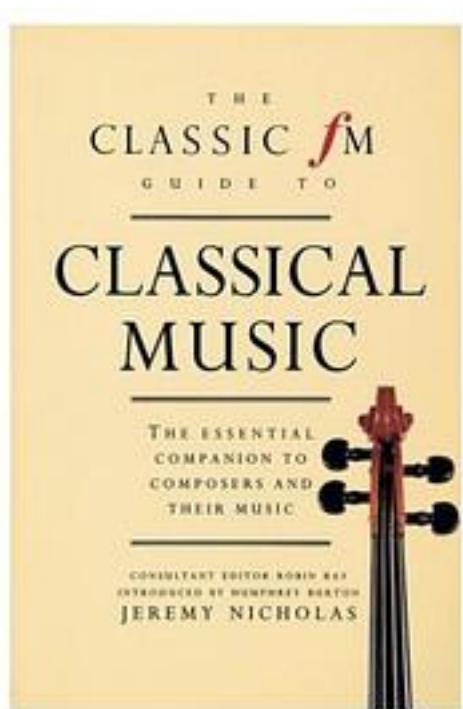


The Classic fm Guide to Classical Music



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From Library Journal

Nicholas (The Beginner's Guide to Opera, Crescent, 1994) draws on his background in broadcasting and music journalism for this popular treatment of 500 composers and their works. Major composers (e.g., Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms) receive several pages of coverage, while lesser figures appear in brief articles or in just a line or two in the chronologies. The chronologies provide useful timelines for music and for composers from around A.D. 1000 to the present decade and include links to contemporary, historical, and cultural events. Even though intended as a listening

guide, specific recordings are seldom mentioned. Instead, Nicholas provides entertaining, concise, and knowledgeable descriptions and recommendations for many of the works often heard on classical FM radio. With its clear organization and fine index, the book is ideal for browsing. Recommended for those likely to be tuned in to classical FM stations and for readers in need of an up-to-date listener's handbook. James E. Ross, WLN, Seattle

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From Booklist

With classical music wending its way into television commercials, this guide will be a popular source for those who are interested in learning more about the composers of this music. The book is arranged alphabetically by composer with more than 400 biographies. One hundred of the entries are two to three pages in length, with sections on the composer's life, music, and a discussion of major works. Each entry begins with a quotation (Leonard Bernstein--"A born entertainer of a superior sort" --D. Henahan, New York Times), birth and death dates, type of music, influences, and contemporaries. Contemporaries who are also included in the volume are noted in capital letters. Black-and-white photos and cartoons are provided for some entries. The rest of the entries are shorter--less than half a page--and combine the life and major composition of the composer.

Nicholas writes in an entertaining style with sidelights such as the fact that Adolph Adam's *Cantique de Noel* was featured in *Home Alone* and that Alan Sherman popularized the ballet music from *La Gioconda*. The biographies are fair and to the point--the role of Richard Strauss in Nazi Germany is described as inexcusable.

The choice of whom to include is balanced, with the author commenting in the introduction that the majority of Western classical composers are white males. Surprising omissions are Fanny Mendelssohn and the twentieth-century composers Philip Glass, John Adams, and Steve Reich. The last three are included in a chronology of composers that is preceded by a chapter on the history of music. A glossary and excellent index complete the source.

Discovering Great Music by Roy Hemming (2d ed., 1994) is a comparable title but covers fewer composers. The Classic FM Guide is a recommended source for public and academic libraries. It would also find a place in home libraries of classical music aficionados. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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