



Schirmer Pronouncing Pocket Manual of Musical Terms

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Compiling a pocket dictionary of musical terms at the turn into the 21st century is a bit like engaging in time travel - the compiler, like the reader in turn, moves through literally centuries of terms, each with its own relevance and use: slam dancing and classical ballet, heterophony and time-brackets, coloratura and circular breathing, crumhorns and synthesizers. The reader is struck by the virtual panoply of musical worlds, and by the specialized language each seems to require. The situation is not entirely confounding, however, for although few speak all of these languages, all speak some. Terms from the so-called "common practice" period, used with reference to the overarching musical development spanning Bach to Brahms, are surely the best known. Rhythm, meter, melody, harmony, as musical "descriptors," derive from this era, and continue to function as the basis for comparative understanding of music across time. Terms particular to both earlier and later times are usually less familiar. Music of the pre-Christian era, like that of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance, is little understood without knowledge of the parallel worlds to which they are closely allied. Music in these periods is frequently tied liturgy, poetry, period instruments, and social practices, all of which show a fundamental integration of music in the lives of individuals contemporary with their times. The present edition, fifth in a series launched in 1905 by Theodore Baker and revised in subsequent editions by the revered (and irreverent) Russian-born American lexicographer Nicolas Slonimsky, covers it all. There are literally hundreds of terms, including many new additions from so-called "non-Western" music, each defined in clear, succinct language and cross-referenced throughout. There's also a greatly revised "Noteworthy Musicians" section, equally inclusive in its coverage of individuals representing such diverse musical genres as classical, rock, and jazz.

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