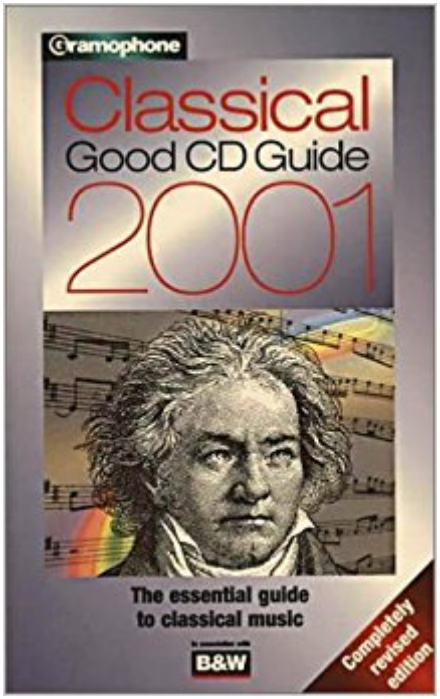
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Gramophone Classical Good CD Guide 2001 (Gramophone Classical Music Guide)



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Synopsis

Published in October 2000, this essential guide contains reviews by the world’s leading writers on classical music. Whether you’re looking for a Mozart symphony or a Turnadge opera, a Liebermann concerto or a Haydn string quartet, the Gramophone Classical Good CD Guide provides you with access to the expertise to ensure that the choices you make are the best possible. With a Suggested Basic Library, ratings for the best discs and over 5,000 reviews, the Gramophone Classical Good CD Guide is the essential buy for anyone interested in classical music.

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Customer Reviews

There are two major guides to recorded classical music. "The Penguin Guide to Compact Discs" attempts to list in each edition everything available from the major labels at press time. However, the gives us what is new along with the best of what is older. Both serve a very useful purpose and I am quite pleased with the 2001 edition of the Gramophone offering. For example, there are now available two versions of "The Mikado" on EMI, and one each on London, Telarc and TER. This edition mentions only one of the EMIs and gives plentiful reasons for that choice. Starting with a list of the 100 "greatest" classical recordings and a recommended library, both of which one can accept or ignore as simply somebody’s opinion, we have the actual review sections covering 1263 pages. Here we have Adam to Zimmermann on 1110 pages with the selected recordings listed (where

appropriate) by orchestral, chamber, instrumental, and vocal. There are then sections dealing with collections that include several composers: orchestral, chamber, instrumental, vocal, historic vocal, early music. And finally we have two excellent indexes of reviews and of artists. In this way, I was able to locate very quickly every mention of a particular baritone whose recordings I am collecting. (There were only four listed out of many that exist, but I could not get even that far in the Penguin format.) This volume will now sit with all the older ones for quick reference, especially concerning older recordings, which are being reissued on several "budget" labels by Philips, EMI and many of the other major companies. Incomplete but valuable nevertheless.

While I prefer the Penguin Guide if you only want one, because it is more comprehensive and has what I find to be a better rating system, the Gramophone Good CD guide is very valuable in its own right, with recommendations certainly on all major pieces of classical music and opera and on many lesser known ones as well. The reviews are very well and concisely written, indeed one can get a valuable education just reading the guide, and I have yet to go wrong with a recommendation. The best of all worlds is to have both this guide and the Penguin and to use both before selecting a CD to buy; I personally use Penguin as my main guide and then use Gramophone to see if they recommend the same recording (quite often they do) or if they have alternative recommendations.

When it comes to classical CD guides, you only really have two choices: the Penguin Guide and the Gramophone Good CD Guide. The former is the behemoth of the industry - it aims to be thorough, and its comprehensiveness is unmatched. But the Gramophone Guide may be a better choice if you are looking for just a few suggestions rather than an exhaustive comparison of what’s out there. It’s also more user-friendly, with an excellent index of every work reviewed by composer and another index of performers. Of course, if you’re like me you NEED THEM BOTH!

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