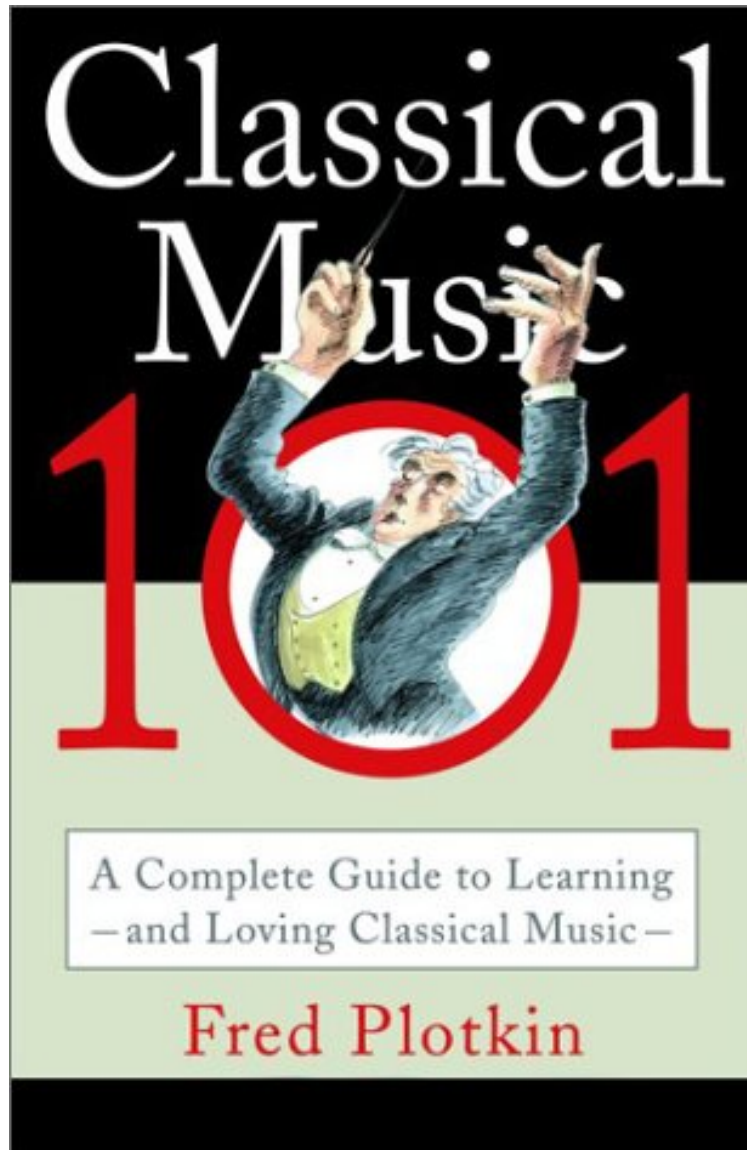


Classical Music 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving Classical Music

Fred Plotkin

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Fred Plotkin : Classical Music 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving Classical Music before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Classical Music 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving Classical Music:

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Unhappy!By OrquideaExpected something different with more

explanations about classical music, about the content in a work of music. The explanations did not enlighten my knowledge, tried to look within the book something that made me aware the whys and reasons behind classical music in general. I am not interested in knowing on classical songs, or operas, I wanted to know first one thing to move to the next step. I did not find what I wanted in this book. I am returning it.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.
Four Stars
By Jim
looking forward in completion.
11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. "A Disappointing Inflated Book"
By RON 10
This is the most disappointing book about classical music I've ever read. At first glance the book seems promising; dedicating numerous pages to one musical composition, while other books settle for much shorter comments. This build out an expectation for a thorough analysis of the musical piece; but it turns out to be an "optical illusion". The book is wordy, tedious, shallow, and soporific. For example a total of 16 pages (145-160) are dedicated to Beethoven's 7th Symphony. In this chapter you get a 5 pages long list of conductors which has nothing to do with the 7th symphony; for "dessert", Mr. Plotkin, portrays an ordeal the Philadelphia Orchestra went through while choosing a director out of 634 candidates. The author also doesn't forget to list all past directors too. What does it have to do with B's 7th Symphony and how does it contribute to the understanding of the 7th Symphony? Not only it's a waste of time and space but it also distracts the reader's attention off the main subject. In Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" (pages 121-2) it doesn't get any better, you get a journalistic gossip reportage-like of the temperature outside and inside of the concert hall; the author does not forget to mention the audiences' disappointment of previous performances which took place that evening. The Rhapsody is commented in a "grand total" of few lines out of 2 pages... You'll be better informed by reading the CD's inserts of the music you're listening to and the following books although old but contain valuable and interesting information: "Listener's Anthology of Music" by Lillian Baldwin (1948). The enlarged edition "The Enjoyment of Music" by Joseph Machlis (1970). There are newer editions of the latter book written by different authors, which I haven't seen yet. 2 Stars gained for recommended CDs list and for the contact info of concert halls.

A Paperback Original. The author who has taught tens of thousands of people to love opera now introduces readers to the rich and soul-stirring world of classical music. For anyone who is aching to discover classical music, this comprehensive and accessible book is the ideal teacher. Writing in the clear and highly entertaining prose that made *Opera 101* the standard text in its field, Fred Plotkin -- music expert, teacher, lecturer, and famous author -- presents classical music in a way that respects both the reader and the art form. In *Classical Music 101*: --The reader will discover how to become an expert listener, which is essential for learning to love classical music.--A thousand years of music are explored, with emphasis on great works in all styles. Significant composers will be profiled in depth, including Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, and many more.--Important musicians, such as pianist Emanuel Ax, singer Marilyn Horne, and conductor James Levine, speak about their art in interviews. *Classical Music 101*, the newest addition to a highly successful series intended for readers who don't consider themselves dummies or idiots, will help the person drawn to the finer things in life (and readers who don't know how to approach them) discover the glories of music.

From Library Journal
The latest of many introductory books on Western classical music, Plotkin's is a fine addition to the genre, though some may prefer Robert Sherman and Philip Seldon's more traditionally organized *Complete Idiot's Guide to Classical Music* or Michael Walsh's hilarious and opinionated *Who's Afraid of Classical Music?* While most such books are at least partially chronological, Plotkin's revolves almost entirely around the orchestra's instruments and the listening experience. He presents material as coursework, and his strictures about really listening (as opposed to mere "hearing") are well taken and certainly apply to all kinds of music. A valuable feature are the interviews with classical musicians interspersed throughout. One weakness is that opera is not significantly treated, perhaps because Plotkin covered that ground in an earlier book, *Opera 101: A Guide to Learning and Loving Opera*. The discography is organized by chapter rather than composer (which makes it a bit awkward to use as a stand-alone source), but it is superior to the one in the *Idiot's Guide*. Recommended for libraries desiring an up-to-date and informative general introduction to classical music. Bruce R. Schueneman, Texas AM Univ. Lib., Kingsville
Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. "His insights and techniques are sound" -- *Timeout Magazine* "Recommended for libraries desiring and up-to-date and informative general introduction to classical music." -- *Library Journal*
About the Author
Fred Plotkin is the author of the bestselling and acclaimed *Opera 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving Opera*, which is the standard text in North America for discovering the glories of opera. He writes for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Opera News*, *Das Opernglas*, and *Gourmet*. He lectures on music for leading institutions, including Columbia University, the Juilliard School, and the Smithsonian. Plotkin is a popular guest on the intermission features of the Chevron Texaco-Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, and many shows on National Public Radio. An expert on Italy, he has written five definitive books on Italian food and wine.