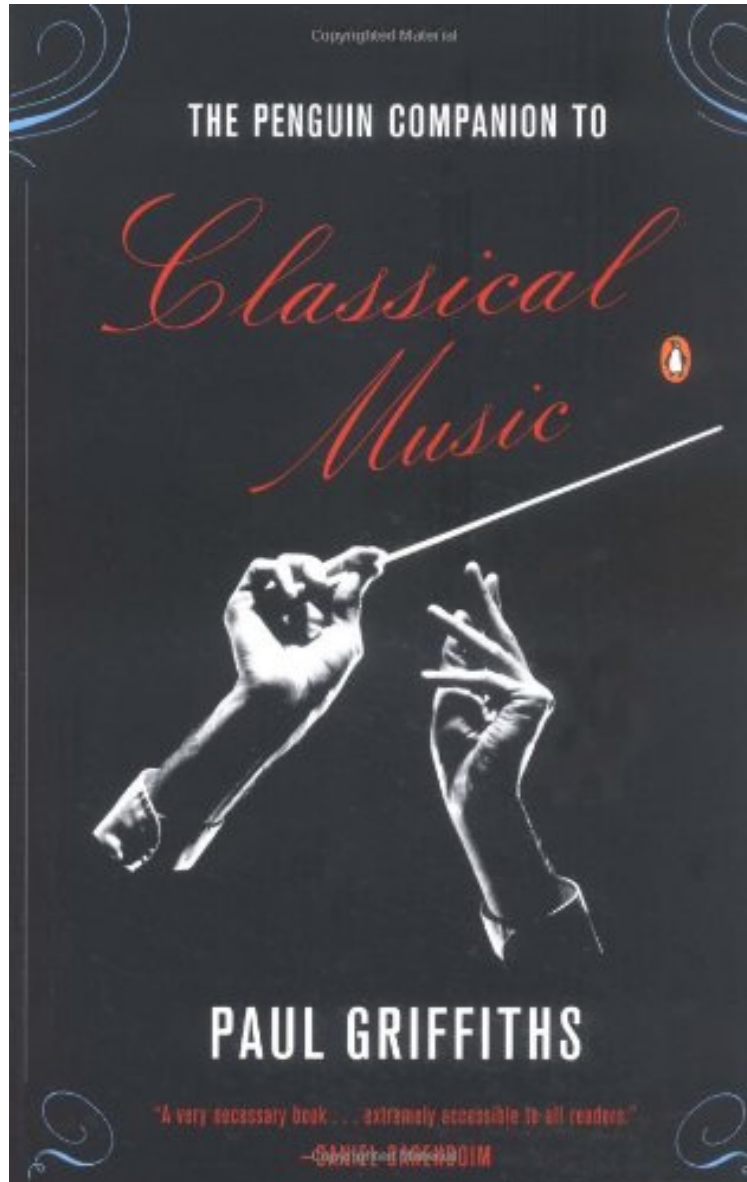


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The Penguin Companion to Classical Music

Paul Griffiths

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Paul Griffiths : The Penguin Companion to Classical Music before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Penguin Companion to Classical Music:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Essential guidebook to classical music By Megan Prokes If you are a classical musician, an amateur musician, or just love music, this is a great reference book to have around. Extremely thorough entries can answer any question. It's out of print, so grab a copy while they're still around! 1 of 1 people found

the following review helpful. penguin companion to classical musicBy musicThis is a very worthwhile book to have. I am so glad to have purchased one since it is now out of print, maybe they should consider reprinting another edition.4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. OK for starters, but there are better ones out thereBy R. NadeI enjoy reading the kinds of books that provide background information about artists, composers, and music to enhance one's enjoyment. So, I have several in my library at home.Unfortunately, this "companion" pales in comparison to others. For me, its weaknesses are in the writing and comprehensiveness.The writing style is a bit on the terse, joyless side; it isn't particularly engaging or interestingly written. When it comes to the human side of classical music, I want to get a flavor of the people and their place in classical music. But the style here is pretty dry. Overall, the writing is not *bad*, it's *ok*.Respecting comprehensiveness, it lacked many entries I was expecting to find, particularly from this source - Penguin. They're the people who bring us the Penguin Guide to Classical Music, containing a kajillion ratings of classical music recordings on CD and DVD. When I look at that Penguin Guide, there is a lot of music, artists, and composers rated there that may be less familiar to the public, but they're not in this "companion" guide. I guess I was expecting some kind of relationship, or more integration between the two Penguin tomes. Also, in many instances, I knew that there should/could have been more information in the entries I did find.Ultimately, I consider this companion guide best for the beginner to intermediate listener.I eventually gave mine to a friend who has just begun to get into classical music, and he is enjoying it.For an example of one that I feel is more enjoyable and will take you farther in your music-listening journey, check out the NPR Listener's Encyclopedia of Classical Music. Ironically, it reads more like a companion, and the Penguin Companion reads more like an encyclopedia!

In this impressive volume, music critic Paul Griffiths offers a succinct and comprehensive guide to the history, forms, and personalities of classical music. Here readers will find: Biographies of thousands of composers from Albinoni to Zappa, with in-depth treatment of major figures Coverage of individual works, including plot summaries of operas and ballets Articles on the history of music and instruments Entries on musical forms, from medieval plainchant to z contemporary minimalism Clear definitions of technical terms and jargon And much more This is a must for all those interested in the colorful and complex universe of classical music.

About the AuthorPaul Griffiths, former chief music critic of the New Yorker and a regular contributor to the New York Times, has been writing about music professionally for more than thirty years and is a recipient of the Commonwealth Writers Prize.