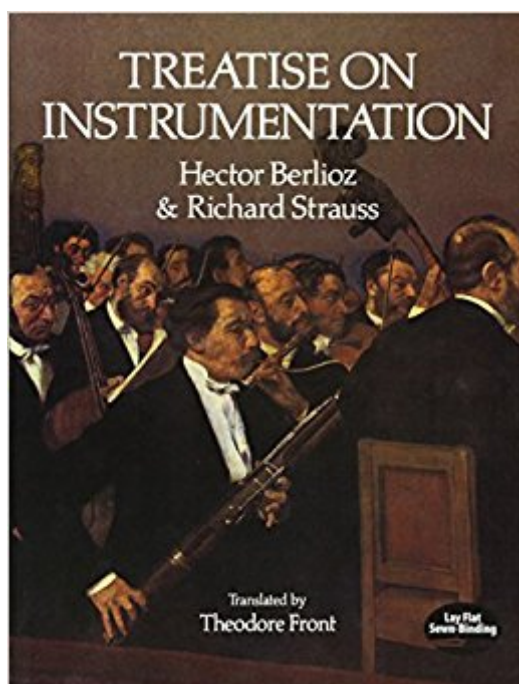


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Treatise On Instrumentation (Dover Books On Music)



Synopsis

The most influential work of its kind ever written, appraising the musical qualities and potential of over 60 commonly used stringed, wind and percussion instruments. With 150 illustrative full-score musical examples from works by Berlioz, Mozart, Beethoven, Gluck, Weber, Wagner, and others, and numerous smaller musical examples. Complete with Berlioz' chapters on the orchestra and on conducting. Translated by Theodore Front. Foreword by Richard Strauss. Glossary.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: French

This is perfect for someone who wants to see, know, and understand how the various instruments of an orchestra work: their ranges, characteristics, abilities...it gives many many examples from various compositions from various composers: Wagner, Berlioz, Beethoven, Gluck, Weber, Mozart...Every part of the book except for a couple pages in the beginning talk about the specific instruments...the "meat" of the book IS the book...no "fluff." This is very helpful for a composer who wishes to know the abilities, limitations, and characteristics of each of the different instruments. It also tell you what can be done on each instrument, what should be generally avoided. For the violins, it even gives the difficulty rating and subsequent sound from the violins for every Major and Minor key! (Some of which are impossible or impracticable, so be careful when composing.) This

also includes a section by Strauss on the development of some instruments between Berlioz' time and Strauss' time (especially the Saxophone family), as well as a section by Berlioz on conducting.

This book was recommended to me by , having bought many similar titles in the past. This is by far the best book of it's type that I've found. Hector Berlioz sets out each section of the orchestra in a logical fashion, reference book style and describes each instrument in a clear, readable and enjoyable manner. We gain, not just his in-depth knowledge of the instruments, but all his experiences of them within the orchestra. He offers tips regarding scoring that can make all the difference within an orchestration. The editing by Richard Strauss does nothing but enhance the work, adding his comments on the more modern versions of the instruments etc. This is a first class book on instrumentation/orchestration and would recommend it to composers of all levels of experience. (Who can't learn from a master?) A.W. Roberts (Composer)

good!

Got my book in couple days time. Good as new. thank you!

This is a classic text on orchestration. Written by a respected composer and orchestrator. Yes, it is dated, but the updates by Strauss (also dated) help. This is definitely NOT the book with which a contemporary beginner student of orchestration should start. Blatter or Adler's books would do much better. (Kennan's book, which was my first book on orchestration is inferior to these two, in my opinion.) This Strauss-edited Berlioz book is more for the long-term student of orchestration, and one that is willing to read & study quite a bit to get relatively few tidbit jewels. For a beginner, it might be hard to decipher what was valid at the time of its writing, but is now erroneous information. Again, a classic along with Rimsky-Korsakov's text, but more for the aficionado than somebody trying to learn basics or contemporary practice.

Perfect

The revision by R. Strauss added a lot of technical in-depth, that today remains current.

For a sixty-year-old book, it is not surprising to find some items which are outdated. At the time the book was written, the saxophone was a new invention. Not realizing how widely the invention would

be disseminated, Berlioz devotes less than half a page to the subject. He offers comparable space to a couple of Adolph Sax's other inventions--the saxtrombas and the saxtubas--which most of us have never even heard of. There was also an instrument called the octobass, which was like a contrabass, but with three strings tuned to G, D, and A. Oh well, it's always nice to learn a little music history. There are a few inaccuracies which were never true, though. On page 29, he allows the reader to write octave harmonics for any pitch on the violin. Unless the player has abnormally large hands, that is only possible using an open string as the fundamental. On page 146, he enumerates the easiest chords on the guitar. I don't understand why he doesn't mention the dominant sevenths on G, D, A, and E. Those are just a few inaccuracies, though. On in the discussion on the piano on page 161, he takes a shot at damper pedal junkies. My sentiments exactly! A few times, though, I wondered if Berlioz had a geranium in his cranium. On pages 408-409, he advocates a festival orchestra with the numbers multiplied manifold. He calls for 120 violins to be divided into eight to ten sections. He also calls for 30 harps and 30 pianos. I doubt seriously if his dream will ever be realized. In the discussion on kettledrums, he brags about the notorious kettledrum octet in his Requiem mass. (I've even seen this passage cited as a bad example in a later orchestration textbook.) If you ever heard the piece, you will surely agree that only a roar results, no matter how accurately the drums are tuned. And on top of that, he adds an unturned bass drum!

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