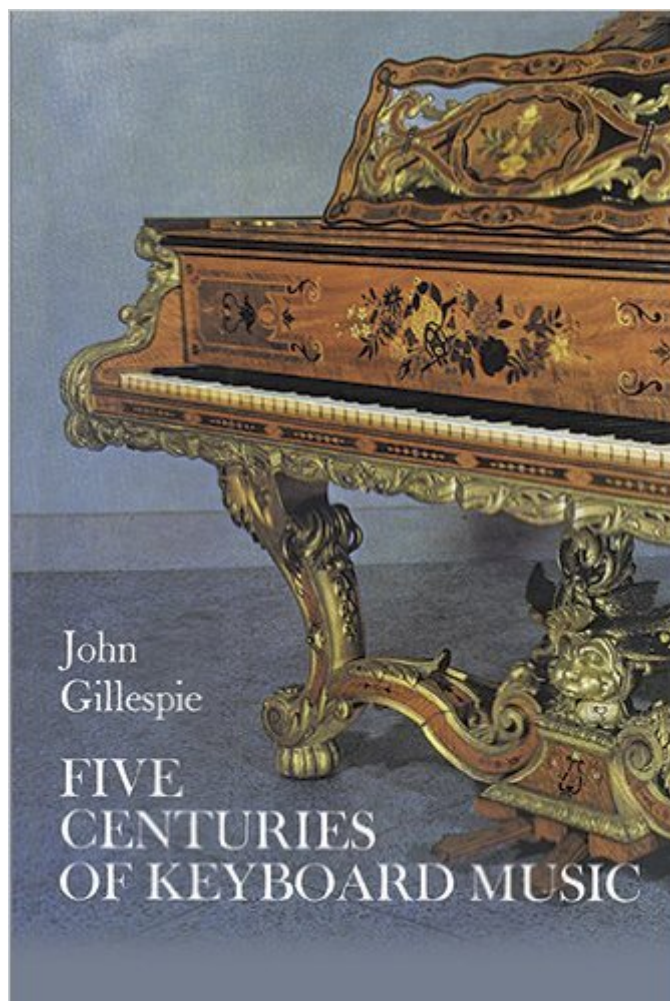


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Five Centuries Of Keyboard Music (Dover Books On Music)



Synopsis

Gillespie discusses 350 composers and their works for harpsichord and piano, including Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, and Debussy. Includes 116 musical examples, illustrations, and a glossary of musical terms.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In places a good read. In other places, wrong, or too brief, and lacking probative insights. The below comments are just a few examples. In places, the author mistakes his own personal views for scholarship. As an example, he writes that Liszt's Dante sonata is "bristling with technical difficulties, the music nevertheless is completely ineffectual." Really? I wonder whether the author has ever played the work. If it is "completely ineffectual" why did Arrau, Brendel, Ranki and a host of other great pianists record it or perform it at recital? So, I would say the author's description is nonsense. What he should have written is that he does not like the work. In truth, the Dante sonata is not at the peak of Liszt's Sonata in B Minor which is one of the greatest piano works ever written. But it is still a wonderful work, and a book that dismisses it so abruptly as being "ineffectual" without even attempting to justify its position makes me wonder whether the author is reliable in his appraisals of other works. Having said that, the author does praise the Sonata in B minor for its originality, but then later (as noted below) suggests the Romantic composers' piano sonatas contain their least effective piano music. Other cases show the author to be at odds with fact. For example, at p 232 he states that Chopin's Sonata in B Minor "more strictly adheres to tenets of classic sonata form."

The author is simply wrong here. The first movement does not adhere to classic sonata form, but is in a loose sonata form which Chopin modified - like virtually all great creators he knew the rules, but saw fit to bend or break them when his artistic purpose required.

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