

BOOK REVIEW

'Komponisten Schreiben für Akkordeon'

by Klaus Kronibus -

A German language, 737 page reference book.
Publisher is: Deutschen Harmonika-Verband e.V.
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Review by Stefaan Walraet

This book in German is a work of reference with very short biographical entries for 2,000 composers or accordionists who have written or arranged compositions for accordion (solo, ensemble, orchestral, etc).

The author states in his introduction this book is not a scientific work. One of the major purposes of the book is to offer organisers of accordion recitals and concerts more background information about composers and arrangers of accordion music.

The author Klaus Kronibus mentions that it is not his purpose to add complete lists of compositions of each composer /arranger/ accordionist. This would be outside the planned project. Therefore it is interesting to use the book as a compliment to Accordion Repertoire Lists (such as the RIM, published by Astrid in 't Velt).

Let me first say, this book is of great value for accordionists worldwide making an English translation very useful.

Accordionists will welcome this publication because there has been a need, for a long time. The book is 737 pages long and includes a personal selection by the author. The process of selecting and gathering the information must have been very time consuming.

In my personal opinion, the book is very valuable because it is one of the first in its kind. Hopefully similar books will follow, or further editions.

The book focuses on composers and arrangers of accordion music, so it is not a collection of accordionists or performers.

Sometimes performers and concert artistes are included because of their merits in the field of arranging music or publications (books, articles, etc).

At the end of the book is a list of bibliographical info and hyperlinks to websites relating to composers for accordion.

The biographical notices vary from a few lines to half a page. I presume the author had to set limits to his project. Sometimes one would have wished the notices to be a bit longer, but time consuming projects like this one, have their limits.

Klaus Kronibus deserves great respect because he had to do this job by himself. Normally, projects like this take many years and are done by a team of researchers. As Klaus Kronibus mentions, lexicons will always need updates and newer editions.

Klaus Kronibus has produced a work of reference we can use for further research in the field of accordion history.

Many composers in the book are of German origin. Perhaps the author had easier access to German information sources. One would have liked the book to include more composers of other continents and countries (such as Russia, Bulgaria, Rumania, etc). There is little information in English (or in German, French, Spanish, Italian, etc) about composers from these countries.

An interesting field of research will become available for scientists when Russian documents will be translated in English. It is time for scientists in the field of accordion pedagogy and accordion history to start the process of gathering information, classification and interpretation of the gathered information, translation in English, storing this information in the most adequate way (e.g. books, internet websites and internet encyclopaedias), and finally to make the information accessible to the accordion interested public all over the world.

If we do not centralize the information within a few years, many documents relating to the accordion culture could get lost for posterity. Klaus Kronibus has done a great job for the accordion community and later generations will thank him for this hard work.

Stefaan Walraet