

Classical Music Discographies, 1976-1988: A Bibliography. By Michael Gray. Discographies, No. 34; Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989. 334 pp. ISBN 0-313-25942-9. \$45.00.

This *Journal* published its most recent bibliography of classical discographies in Vol. 17. It closed with the year 1985, supplementing the first volume of R. R. Bowker's *Bibliography of Discographies* (reviewed in *ARSC Journal* Vol. X, Nos. 2-3, p. 297-298) and three intervening supplements published in this *Journal*. Now we have a single source to consult in place of the four previous supplements, and it adds three more years of coverage as well.

There are two main problems with published discographies. They range from excellent to worthless, and they appear in a bewildering variety of books, appendices to books, periodicals, pamphlets, and ephemera (record booklets, concert programs, and such). This bibliography attempts valiantly (and quite successfully) to cope with the second problem. In its format it also makes a small dent in the first problem, identifying the kind of elements most often found in the more scholarly discographies by assigning identifying numbers to such features of a good discography as the inclusion of release dates, matrix and take numbers, indexes, and place and date of recording.

Since the Bowker Volume, I covered the period from 1925 to 1975, we now have an index to virtually all of the discographies published up to the recent past, for the present volume includes some items overlooked before. The new volume overcomes some of the problems posed by the subject headings of the first one, but there are so many subject discographies that it's hardly possible to do anything but read through the book carefully, making mental notes of what to look for. Otherwise, composers and performers are listed in one alphabetically and also identified by nationality and function.

To my mind, almost as important as the seven annotated points of inclusion is the indication of how many pages the work takes up. I checked "Chants--Plain, Gregorian, etc." to see what I could learn. The most extensive entry (published in 1983) occupied pages 214-19 of an Italian periodical. Even if I had not already seen the article, I would know that it might be worth looking at but could hardly be very thorough. (It is also very accurate, as it happens.)

There are endless ways of using this book, all of them important. If one is going to tackle the discography of a composer or performer, it is smart to look up the previous attempts (the least one can do is improve on them). If one is going to attempt a discography of a vocalist who recorded, say, a lot of Wolf songs, it would be smart to check to see if there is a Wolf discography that gives dates of recording or release (there is) or vice versa.

Serious record collectors need discographies, but they need this book in order to find them. It has to be read through, however, or its content will sometimes evade discovery. I wish I had published my latest work in time for inclusion. Now I may have to wait another decade to see it listed. *Reviewed by J. F. Weber*

Pop Memories. By Joel Whitburn. (Record Research Inc., 1986). 657 pp.

This is a dangerous book. Readers are all too familiar with cases of inaccurate, sometimes wildly inaccurate, information that got into print under seemingly reliable