

DEAR UNCLE MAX

Send questions to Dear Uncle Max, AGO National Headquarters, 475 Riverside Dr., Suite 1260, New York, NY 10115.

I am looking for a list—under one convenient cover—of the organ (and possibly choral) works for composers who have been cataloged: Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Buxtehude, etc. I would settle for sources of separate, up-to-date lists for each composer. Can you help?
S.H., Wash.

The Hobbits, we are told by Tolkien, "liked to have their books filled with things that they already knew, set out fair and square with no contradictions." Very comforting. I, for one, would like reference books to have exactly what I am looking for in convenient form—no more no less. Tain't often that way and, in the long run, probably for the best. If you are willing to settle for less than the one convenient cover, perhaps I may be of help.

A magic number will be *ML 134*. This is the Library of Congress catalog number for complete listings of works by composers. You can go right to *ML 134*, if you are on the Library of Congress numbering system—and most libraries are by now—and after locating the number on the shelf, proceed alphabetically by composer to inspect what your library holds. For instance, under Bach you will find:

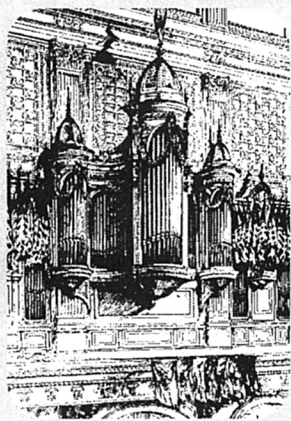
Schmieder, Wolfgang. *Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der musikalischen Werke von Johann Sebastian Bach*. Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis (BWV). 2nd edition, Breitkopf und Härtel. Wiesbaden, 1990.

You can also find Ludwig Ritter von Köchel's Mozart, Anthony van Hoboken for Joseph Haydn, and Georg Karstädt for Buxtehude, and many others. If your library does not use Library of Congress cataloging, you will need to go to the card catalog, computer, or reference librarian to find what you need.

An even easier way may be to go directly to *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Alas, it is not under one cover. It does, though, have just one title for its 20 volumes. Each volume is approximately 875 pages. That means about 17,500 pages of information. A new edition is expected to be coming out as we move into the next century—it won't be shorter! The article on J.S. Bach is 55 pages long and includes a complete list of his works with comments of various sorts—easy to use. The articles also give a bibliography of the most significant works for further study. The sorts of things covered will

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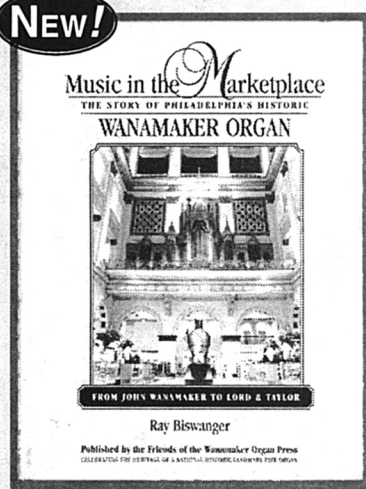
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be clear from the article about any one particular composer.

While you only ask specifically about mainstream composers, one ongoing problem is finding information about lesser-known composers who do a lot of work between editions of Grove's and other reference works. It may be good to keep in mind the *Music in Print* series, published by Musicdata in Philadelphia. There are separate volumes for *Organ Music in Print* and *Choral Music in Print*—these are updated regularly and are a must for music stores to operate efficiently.

I might also mention *The Music Index*, A Subject-Author Guide to Music Periodicals Literature, Harmonie Park,

23630 Pinewood, Warren, MI 48091. Articles about music are coordinated and alphabetized from various sources—a very handy tool.

Last, in spite of what I may have said about librarians before, it is good to have one for a friend—they are interesting people and very helpful. Also useful is to know a musicologist, I know a couple; they are the only souls who spend more time in the library than librarians. The ones I know have their meals sent up, a change of bedding and clothing every week, live in the stacks, and emerge on alternate years to see if the sun is still shining.

MAX B. MILLER, FAGO