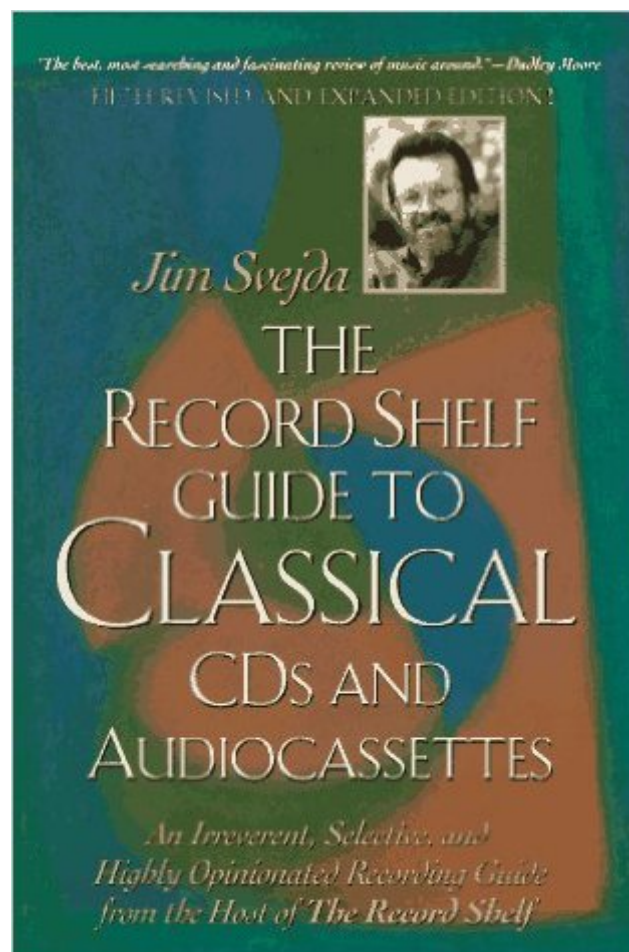


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# The Record Shelf Guide To Classical CDs And Audiocassettes: Fifth Revised And Expanded Edition (Insider's Guide To Classical Recordings)



## Synopsis

Jim Svejda has done it again! In this fully revised and expanded edition of *The Record Shelf Guide to Classical CDs and Audiocassettes*, the irreverent and opinionated author guides readers to more of the best in classical music. Host of the long-running American Public Radio show *The Record Shelf*, Svejda has assembled this comprehensive guide alphabetically by composer. Meant to be used as a reference manual, Svejda concentrates mainly on what he feels is the classical music people actually listen to most. In his opinion, this consists of music produced from the middle of the eighteenth century to roughly the middle of the twentieth. This book is filled with Svejda's own brand of unusual, acerbic comments and sugary prose. It includes feisty reviews such as ". . . Pachelbel was a third-rate baroque non-entity who occasionally rose to the level of second-rate in some of his organ music." And praise of favorites such as Fritz Kreisler, ". . . one of the greatest violins in history whose recordings of Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn concertos remain unsurpassed in their Romantic daring and philosophical depth . . ." About the Author: Jim Svejda hosts the popular weekly American Public Radio show *The Record Shelf*, as well as the CBS Radio program *On Film*. In addition to his radio programs, he is the station manager for KUSC in Los Angeles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How many classical music aficionados do you know with a sense of humor, and a willingness to use it even in regard to the music they love? In all of my years of studying music I have come

across only one (and he's not an academic) : Jim Svejda, one of the funniest men to ever write about music. For his incredible humor alone this book is easily recommendable enough. Where the problem starts for me is in Svekda's personal tastes -- they are quite conservative. How ironic that such an iconoclastic and irreverent guy can be so orthodox in his tastes in music, but then again that is part of the charm I guess that makes him so inimitable; you never can predict him, and if you try you are inevitably wrong! That is how I found the experience anyway due to the paradox that Svejda represents. Case in point: despite loathing just about every bit of modern music he comes across, he praises almost everything Schoenberg ever did. If there is one point of contention I would have with The Record Shelf it would be this phobia of modern music. Missing from the book are names like Cowell, Crumb, Riley, Partch, Reich, and scads of others who I had hoped would receive at least a passing remark given the book's 800-page length. It wasn't that he was required to like it - a guy as outspoken as this could easily tell us why these composers don't deserve recognition. Even Ligeti is left out, at the expense of scores of people of whom I have never heard. But Svejda's objective here, was to present music that one is likely to HEAR; not necessarily names that one is likely to know. So you can expect to find out about some composers you don't know, but ought to try. In addition, he does not take the stance so common in academic circles, whereby innovation is the only prerequisite for quality.

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