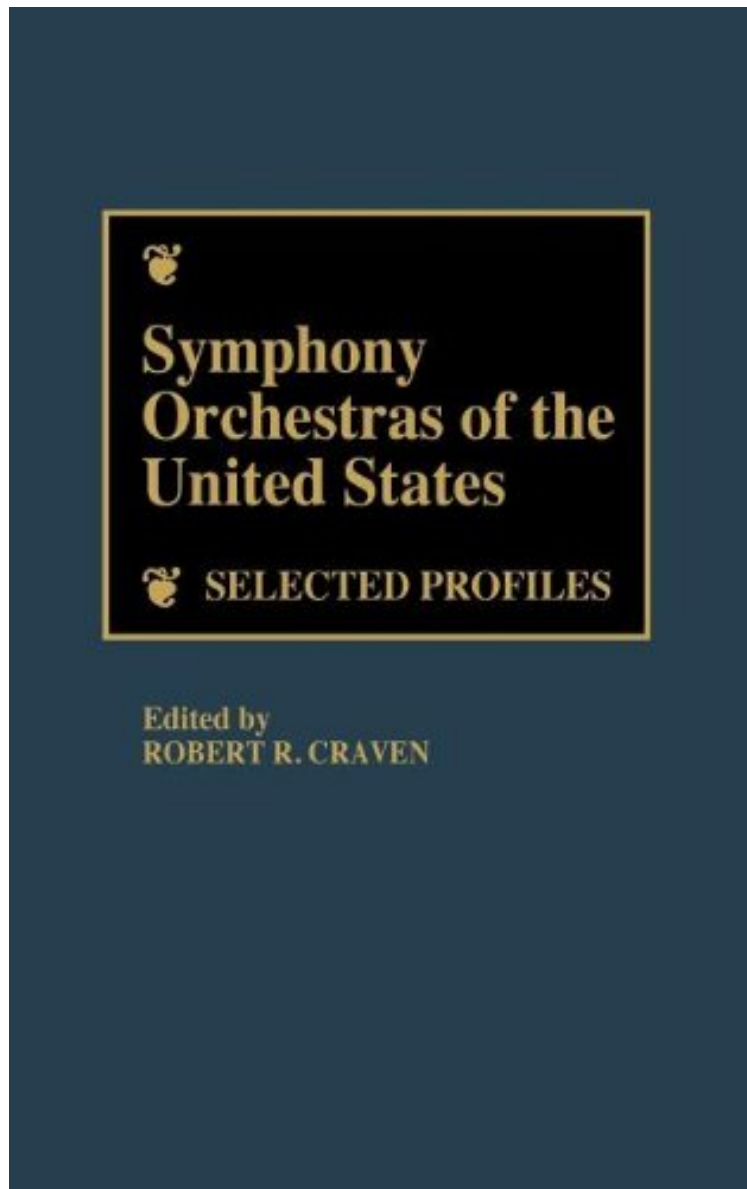


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Symphony Orchestras of the United States: Selected Profiles

Robert R Craven

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From Library Journal This overview of 126 U.S. orchestras (chosen according to several criteria, primarily budget size) provides a selective discography and brief description of the history, activities, and management of each. Organized by state, it is competently written by contributors from many professions, who cover the same material but emphasize different aspects. Though nothing quite like this work exists among musical reference books, it seems of limited use. The book might, for example, be helpful to a high school student preparing a paper or a local chamber of commerce planning a promotional piece, but it does not pretend to be a basis for serious scholarship. Nor will it give the general reader an incisive view of these orchestras. Philippa Kiraly, Cleveland Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Information on American orchestras can be found in many general music reference books, but the treatment is necessarily brief. Even the articles in Grove, while authoritative, are not lengthy. Editor Robert Craven has selected 126 of the largest-budget U.S. symphony and chamber orchestras for more detailed description. He includes all American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL) major' and regional' orchestras plus the 55 highest-budget ASOL metropolitan' orchestras as of the 1981-82 season. Other orchestras were also chosen, so that at least one orchestra in each state is listed, and orchestras unusual for their programming or other activities are included.... The scope and coverage of the descriptions are uniform. Each article provides a history of the ensemble, describes its activities, outlines its budget and administration, and reviews the orchestra's cultural impact.... Each author used both primary and secondary sources, including orchestra and oral history archives, and some interviewed musicians and conductors.... Appended to each description are a chronology of music directors, a short bibliography, and a brief discography (where appropriate), together with information on the ensemble's recording history.... Symphony Orchestras of the United States can be used for both reference and general reading. The careful attention to providing bibliographical and discography information enhances its value as a reference work. Because many readers may simply wish to browse the book or enjoy individual profiles, the volume may be useful in a variety of libraries serving both general users and researchers."-Reference Books Bulletin

"This overview of 126 orchestras in the United States offers historical data, a description of season activities, budget and administration outlines, and a summary of the orchestra's cultural impact on its community and the world. Orchestras researched include American Symphony Orchestra League 1981-82 Major and Regional orchestras, 55 of the highest-budgeted Metropolitan orchestras of that season, and a prominent orchestra from each state not included in the above categories. A wide variety of experts, including musicologists, humanities specialists, orchestra managers, musicians, and music critics contributed to this reference collection."-Symphony Magazine

"Craven has selected 126 organizations from 49 states for this very useful compilation. The selection was based on American symphony orchestra budget classifications (major, regional, metropolitan, urban), with exceptions made for some prominent orchestras falling outside these guidelines. The profiles themselves were written by no fewer than 114 contributors; to the editor's credit, reasonable stylistic consistency is maintained throughout. Each profile contains up-to-date information concerning the administration, budget, personnel, and programming characteristics of the orchestra; a chronology of important events, a selective discography, if commercial recordings have been issued; a chronology of music directors; a bibliography; and a current address. A Chronology of Foundings for Orchestras Profiled, ' a selected bibliography, an index, and brief biographical sketches of the contributors constitute appendix material ... this work should find a place in most libraries with a music collection and in concert management suites, municipal planning offices, and foundation headquarters."-Choice?

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