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[Review of] Grove Music Online

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Grove music online. Oxford. Annual subscription starts at $1,350.00 for one user
or $1,695.00 for unlimited access
Internet Resource. http://www.grovemusic.com/

[Visited Nov'05] Launched in 2001, *Grove Music Online* (GMO) includes the full text
of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (*Grove II*), ed. by S. S.
Grove (CH, Jul'01, 38-5906); *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. by S. Sadie
(CH, Jul'93, 30-5942); *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 2nd ed., ed. by B. K.
Grove (CH, Mar' 02, 39-3708); and *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women
Composers*, ed. by J. A. Sadie and R. Samuel (CH, Apr'96, 33-4266), as well as
additions and revisions (date-stamped). Laura Macy (editor since 2003) guides the
evolving online incarnation of this classic resource, which provides biographical
coverage of 22,000 composers, writers, and performers, as well as terminology
and topical essays, in over 55,000 articles. A prominent search box on each page
employs a complex comparative search using six criteria, beginning with exact
title matches and ending in "pattern expansions" that attempt to find variant
spellings. This method can foil searches for "George Harrison"; they will be
stopped at the title entry for "Edwards, George (Harrison)." A full-text advanced
search for "George Harrison" does locate 12 articles that mention the late Beatle.

Other advanced search options include biographies, bibliographies, links,
contributors, and works. "Explore" options, which provide chronological and
topical lists, cover biographies and research resources. One may also browse A-Z
lists by, e.g., articles' titles, or view a general index. Cross-references within
articles are exiguous (e.g., the "Alternative Music" entry links to "grunge" but not
to Velvet Underground or avant-garde). Within each article, a navigation bar links
(when available) to illustrations, sound, related articles, external links, an article
search, and, in "Opera" articles, to the performance database *Operabase* (CH,
Sup'97, 34Sup-048). The article search is useful for longer articles (as is the
clickable table of contents on the left), but it can be idiosyncratic: within the
"Trumpet" article, a search for "rock" finds "vibrate" and "swing" acceptable
variants. Nonmatched searches are displayed in the advanced full-text search,
where a modified search is unexpectedly performed in the entire database rather
than within the article.

Some 600 sound links require the free Sibelius Scorch plug-in to play notated
examples. Some illustrations can be viewed and manipulated using another free
plug-in, the 3D Viewpoint Media Player. Articles can be printed or emailed a page
at a time only. Updates occur three to four times a year, which should allow for
corrections, but errors noted in the *Grove II* review are still evident. The site (and
plug-ins) works well in current Windows browsers, but Macintosh users cannot use
article search in IE or Safari, or the 3D plug-in in any browser. GMO continues to
expand its incredible breadth and modernize its approach to content and access,
yet sound and searching enhancements would greatly improve this significant
resource. In the meantime, users can freely access *AMG All-Music Guide* (CH,
Sup'05, 42Sup-0142) for coverage of popular music and high-quality sound
excerpts from a full spectrum of recorded music. Other quality sound resources
are commercially available, including *Classical Music Library* (CH, Jun'04, 41-5623)
and *Smithsonian Global Sound* (CH, Jan'06, 43-2554). **Summing Up:**
Recommended. All levels.

--R. A. Aken, University of Kentucky