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Designed as a companion volume to The New Harvard Dictionary of Music (Harvard Univ., 1986), this volume primarily features brief entries on 5500 historical and contemporary composers of Western art and concert music, with some popular figures (e.g., Ray Charles) included. Compared with editor Nicolas Slonimsky's excellent Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (LJ 1/92. 8th ed.) or Michael Kennedy's Oxford Dictionary of Music (Oxford Univ., 1994. 2d ed.), HBDM comes in a weak third, with numerous contemporary performers (e.g., Eschenbach) and composers (e.g., Santos) missing. Additionally, no rationale for inclusion or omission is provided. Updating also is spotty, with many contemporary entries stopping in the early Eighties. Recommended only as a supplementary volume to the aforementioned titles for large music collections. Anthony J. Adam, Prairie View A&M Univ. Lib., Tex.