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Architecture Books Every Library Should Have

Gene Waddell
College of Charleston, waddelle@cofc.edu

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Reviewed by Phillip Powell

The art of Biography
Is different from Musicography.
Musicography is about Cellos
But Biography is about Fellows.

Steen writes biography as a “fellow” who has spent his life as a musician. Not only has he had a long career as an organist in the UK, he is presently (2005) the chairman of the Royal College of Music Society.

More or less, Steen describes the lives of about 50 European composers. Coverage does vary depending on the overall effect on the public of the last 250 years. Musical giants Bach, Mozart, Tschaikovsky, and Wagner—to name a few—have 30 to 35 pages devoted to their lives. Lesser composers are bundled together in a single chapter. An example of this is titled “Central-European Nationalists: Smetana, Dvorak, Jaceck, and Bartok.”

What makes this book so compelling is that Steen really lives up to the little dirty mentioned above. This reviewer is a total novice when it comes to things musical. Music is something to be enjoyed rather than analyzed. The author concentrates on a composer’s life rather than his music. The reader is taken through the composer’s life in a fair amount of detail. His family life is discussed both during his childhood and during the time he marries. And if he is not one to go to the altar, then a composer’s liaisons are discussed—be they straight or gay.
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Roman

Beltrami, Luca. 1898 Il Pantheon... coi Rilievi e Disegni dell'Architetto Pier Olinto Armanini. Milan: Tipografia Umberto Allegriti.


Medieval


Renaissance and Baroque


Chetie, George H. 1937 Queen’s House, Greenwich, Being the Fourteenth Monograph of the London Survey Committee. (London: the Committee.)


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<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
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Neoclassical


Greek Revival


Beaux Arts


Chicago Tribune. 1993 International Competition for a New Administration Building for the Chicago Tribune. MCMXCVII. Containing All the Designs Submitted in Response to the Chicago Tribune’s $100,000 Offer Commemorating Its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, June 10, 1922. Chicago: Chicago Tribune.


McKim, Charles Follen; William R. Mead; and Stanford White. 1973 Monograph of the Works of McKim, Mead & White, 1879-1915.


Modern


Neri, Pier Luigi. 1956 Strutture, New York: F. W. Dodge Corp.


General


Gene Waddell is an architectural historian; College Archivist, College of Charleston; and author of Charleston Architecture, 1670-1860 (Charleston: Wyrick & Co., 2004).