

DIGITAL RESOURCE REVIEW RILM Music Encyclopedias

Launched in 2015, RILM Music Encyclopedias (RME) is one of three recent new initiatives from the Répertoire international de littérature musicale. The others are RILM Abstracts with Full Text and MGG Online (*Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*). This review essay considers RME from several perspectives: the titles included, competing online packages, searching capability, functionality of the platform, usefulness for researchers and – to a lesser extent – cost. While RME has great potential as a research tool, this review outlines possible ways that the product might be enhanced for wider adoption.

RILM Music Encyclopedias has 45 titles as of June 2017. Four titles were added in January 2016, and annual additions of new titles are planned.¹ Additionally, one title, *Komponisten der Gegenwart* (KDG), has regular updates that are added online. As of June 2017, the RILM website notes that RME includes encyclopaedias from 1775 to the present, with eight languages represented, and 263,000 entries. A full list of titles is available at http://rilm.org/encyclopedias/.

A consideration of the publication dates of the titles included is useful, especially for researchers interested in a particular era. The titles in RME are drawn from diverse periods. The earliest, Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de musique*, was indeed published in 1775. Only one other title, Lichtenthal's *Dizionario e bibliografia della musica* (1836), was published before 1850. Three titles were published between 1850 and 1899. Figure 1 shows the dates of all 45 titles (completion date is used for multi-volume titles published over a span of years). As shown in Figure 1, the highest percentage of titles, 42%, date from 2000 forward.

Generally speaking, many of the current titles in RME are not essential for study of nineteenth-century music. For example, several titles focus on twentieth-and early twenty-first century music. A few examples include Bloom's *Broadway*, Matzke et al., *Das Gothic- und Dark Wave-Lexikon*, Kostelanetz's *Dictionary of the Avant-Gardes* and Henderson and Stacey's *Encyclopedia of Music in the 20th Century*.

The eight languages represented in RME are English, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Czech, Greek and Slovak.² Figure 2 is a pie chart showing the breakdown of the titles by language. Over 50% of the titles are in English, with German titles representing 20%, French and Italian titles combined representing roughly another 20% and Dutch, Czech/Slovak and Greek each represented by one title. The lack of a Spanish title, such as *Diccionario de la música Española e hispanoamericana*, is notable.³

¹ The four titles added in January 2016 are: Československý hudební slovník osob a institucí, Dizionario degli editori musicali italiani, 1750–1930, Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire and Opernlexikon. See http://rilm.org/encyclopedias (accessed 20 June 2017).

² Československý hudební slovník osob a institucí is in both Czech and Slovak.

³ Alexandra Campoli tells me that RILM is in negotiations for this title. Email communication between author and Alexandra Campoli, 7 June 2017.

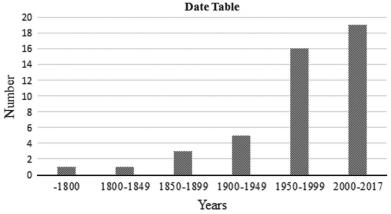


Fig. 1 Completion dates of the 45 Encyclopaedias in RME

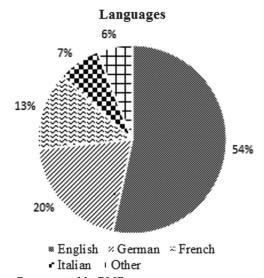


Fig. 2 Languages Represented in RME

Because over half of the encyclopaedias included are in English, a closer look at the English language publishers represented is informative. Nine titles (20% of the total encyclopaedias in RME and 37.5% of the English titles) were published by Routledge. Greenwood Press (now part of ABC–CLIO) is represented by five titles in English and Taylor & Francis by two. These publishers, and other places their titles are available, will be discussed further below.

The titles included in RME vary in scope and emphasis. Some, such as the first edition of George Grove's *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1879–90) are general. Others are very specific, indeed, such as Junchen and Kaufmann's *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ* (1985–95). While historical titles, such as the first edition of Grove, are valuable for experienced researchers, they may not be the first title of choice for most, especially students. Very narrowly defined titles, such as the Junchen and Kaufmann, also have a smaller readership, who may not need them online in full text.

Before discussing individual titles further, a good starting point is an overview of the standard music encyclopaedias included in RME. The EBSCO promotional page (http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/rilm-music-encyclopedias) highlights titles in the categories of national/subject specific, general and historical. Standard RME titles of note include the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, Fétis's *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*, Eitner's *Biographisch-bibliographisches Quellen-Lexikon*, Riemann's *Musik-Lexikon* and Honegger's *Dictionnaire de la musique*.

Considering other options for these five titles is helpful. The *Garland Encyclopedia* of *World Music* is available from Alexander Street Press (ASP) as a stand-alone title. ASP's version is preferable because it provides the streaming audio tracks from the original CDs and also presents the search terms in context. Further, during June 2017, the links to the figures (i.e., illustrations) in RME's Garland were not working. Having access to MGG Online would, potentially, eliminate the need for the remaining titles online for many researchers. However, both Fétis and Eitner are available for free online from multiple public domain repositories.

The content represented by these 45 titles is eclectic. When considering the wide range of contents in RME, Stephen Henry suggested, 'I have to guess some of the decisions regarding what content to include were made based on what could be licensed'. No doubt he is correct. According to Alexandra Campoli from EBSCO, content decisions are made by the RILM Advisory Board and Commission Mixte. Campoli also mentioned that user suggestions are considered.

Because licensing is surely a challenge, careful comparison of the titles included in RME but available elsewhere for free or by subscription/purchase is helpful for those considering this package. At the RILM Music Encyclopedias website, the first sentence promoting the product states, 'RILM Music Encyclopedias is an ever-expanding full text compilation of reference works, most of which are not available anywhere else online'. Despite the claim that most of the titles are not available from other sources, careful analysis shows that about half of the titles (51%) are available in full text elsewhere. In fact, as the Appendix indicates, some of the titles are freely available from other sources, while others are available for purchase or subscription (see Figure 3).

Let's begin with those that are freely available online. Henry pointed out that six of the original 41 titles 'are in the public domain and are readily available in HathiTrust or IMSLP'. Examples include the Grove (first edition), Fétis and Eitner. Another title, added in January 2017, is also in the public domain – the *Encyclopédia de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire*. Additionally, Google Books and/or Internet Archive also include these seven titles that represent 15.5% of the total titles included in RME. (See the Appendix, entries 5, 7, 8, 16, 19, 21 and 29.) Two additional German titles are available online for free. The *Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie* (HmT) is offered at the Virtual Library of Musicology (https://www.vifamusik.de/startseite/). *Komponisten der Gegenwart* (KDG) is also available with a free search (at https://nachschlage.net). These two titles bring the total available online for free to 9, or 20% of the 45 titles.

A total of 14 RME titles are offered for purchase as ebooks or subscriptions from other publishers or vendors. Earlier, the high percentage of titles from the publisher Routledge was noted. Seven of the Routledge encyclopaedias are offered on

Stephen Henry, 'RILM Music Encyclopedias', Notes 73/1 (2016): 150.

⁵ Email communication between author and Alexandra Campoli, 1 June 2017.

⁶ RILM.org, rilm.org/encyclopedias (accessed 13 June 2017).

Henry, 'RILM Music Encyclopedias', 149.

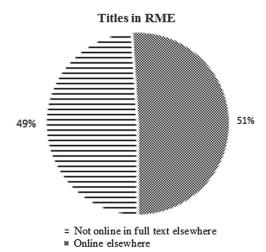


Fig. 3 Titles in RME and Their Availability Elsewhere

ProQuest's EBook Central platform. (See Appendix entries 10, 11, 15, 24, 26, 28 and 45.) Three titles are available from Taylor & Francis, see Appendix entries 12, 17 and 25. Another two are offered by ABC–CLIO (Appendix entries 33 and 41), and one is offered by De Gruyter (Appendix 31). And lastly, as discussed above, Alexander Street Press, offers the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* as a standalone subscription (Appendix 30). While not freely available, these 14 titles (22% of the total) may be purchased à *la carte*, rather than as part of a package. Because the contents of RME is wide-ranging – from Goth to band music – this is a significant consideration.

With 23 titles available from other sources (9 titles available for free and 14 available for purchase/subscription), that leaves 22 titles that are only available online as part of RME. These titles can be separated into two groups: those included in HathiTrust in 'Limited (search-only)' access and those not available online anywhere. The first group includes 15 encyclopaedias. (See Appendix entries 2–4, 6, 13, 18, 22–23, 27, 34–36, 38–39 and 42.)

The 7 titles not available online elsewhere, with their language, are:

Algemene muziek encyclopedie (Dutch)
Das Blasmusik-Lexikon (German)

Das Gothic- und Dark Wave-Lexikon (German)

Dictionnaire des œuvres de l'art vocal (French)

Pagkomio lexiko tis mousikis (Greek)

Science de la musique: Formes, technique, instruments (French)

Steirisches Musiklexikon (German)

These can be found in the Appendix under the following entries: 1, 9, 14, 20, 40 and 43–44.

 $^{^8}$ Hathi Trust's 'Limited' (search-only) is preferable to snippet view or preview in Google Books, because it points the user to specific page numbers where the search term appears.

One final consideration about RME's content is the list of titles to be added in January 2018. At the time of writing, these include: Neues Historisch-biographisches Lexikon der Tonkünstler, The 20th Century Violin Concertante and Il melodrama italiano: Dizionario bio-bibliografia dei compositori. The first title is freely available in Internet Archive, the second title – which is not really an encyclopaedia – is freely available online from the author and the third title is available online for purchase from the publisher.

Of the current titles in RME, some of those available for individual purchase or licensing have been mentioned above. These, including the Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, offered by ASP, are potential competitors to RME. In addition to offering a more functional version of the Garland Encyclopedia, ASP also offers the Classical Music Reference Library, which includes encyclopaedias published by Schirmer Reference. These include Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, Baker's Dictionary of Music and Baker's Student Encyclopedia of Music. Classical Music Reference Library also includes the International Dictionary of Black Composers (Fitzroy Dearborn) and Women Composers (G.K. Hall), which, though primarily a collection of scores, includes short biographies. While Classical Music Reference Library is significantly smaller in the number of titles than RME, this entirely English language collection may be more appealing to American and British libraries supporting primarily undergraduate programmes in music. Additionally, the Music Online search interface from ASP retrieves results from all the packages to which a library subscribes. For example, if your library has both Classical Music Library (streaming audio) and Classical Music Reference Library (text), a search on 'flute' would find encyclopaedia entries and audio recordings.

ASP's Classical Music Reference Library offers cross-searching of the five titles just listed. Oxford Music Online (OMO) from Oxford University Press provides cross-searching of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (including Grove spin-off encyclopaedias) along with the *Oxford Companion to Music*, the *Oxford Dictionary of Music* and the *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*. OMO is the most essential of the packages discussed here for the majority of music research needs.

No other product currently offers the ability to search the full text of 45 music encyclopaedias with a single search. A major advantage of RME is the cross-title searching offered on the EBSCOhost platform. The familiarity and power of the advanced search interface from EBSCO is significant. The full text searching is based on the html versions of all 262,854 entries. Of these, over 99,000 (approximately 38%) also include PDFs.

Cross searching the full text of so many titles yields results impossible (or highly unlikely) to find using the print versions of these encyclopaedias. A search on the obscure flutist René Le Roy (1898–1985) in RME pointed to results in two unexpected titles, the *Supplemento al Dizionario universal dei musicisti* and the *Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound*. Finding information on this French flutist in an Italian encyclopaedia and one devoted to recordings is unexpectedly welcome.

Because the cross-title searching is an important advantage of RME, consideration of the search functionality is important. The researcher can select to search all 45 titles, a single title, or a combination of titles. RME has a few variations in the search options worth exploring (see Figure 4).

Instead of using subject headings, RME uses keyword 'equivalencies' based on variations of spelling in the various languages. These seem to work in unexpected and sometimes confusing ways. I searched the term 'flute' in three different ways

⁹ Email communication between author and Alexandra Campoli, 1 June 2017.

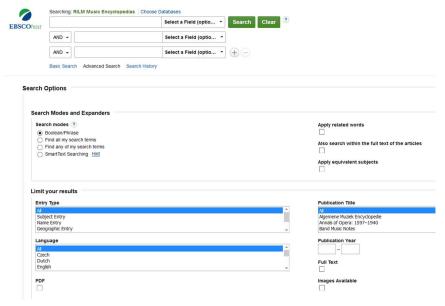


Fig. 4 RME Advanced Search Screen.



Fig. 5 RME Results Screen for 'flute'

only to receive the exact same number of results. Leaving the dropdown at the default, 'Select a Field (optional)' yields 4,550 results. The exact same number of results come up when either 'SU Keyword Terms' or 'TX All Text Fields' is selected. Providing search options in the drop-down menu that provide identical results is not helpful to researchers.

The subject keyword equivalences are also confusing. They seem to be designed to favour English language searchers. The search 'flute' mentioned above finds articles on the instrument in other languages. For instance, the first result is the French article titled 'La Flûte' by Louis Fleury from the *Encyclopédie de la musique et*



Fig. 6 RME Subject Entry Example

dictionnaire du Conservatoire (see Figure 5). So the search term 'flute' finds articles with titles for the instrument in other languages. However, the opposite is not true. Searching 'flûte' or 'Flöte' does not find the English articles titled 'flute'. At the minimum, some documentation about this is needed. At best, a subject heading schema or thesaurus would be ideal. Henry's review includes additional examples of concerns with the subject searching and subject indexes for RME.¹⁰

The five entry types are worth noting: subject, name, geographic, work and front/back matter, because each can be used to limit search results. One of the most intriguing uses of the full text searches is to search a name or work in geographic entries. Another technique is to search a city or country in a name entry. As an example, the search 'flute' limited to geographic entries finds 165 results, including the entry on the Philippines in the *Dictionnaire de la musique: Science de la musique*. Again, such results are very difficult to find using encyclopaedias in print format.

Continuing with examples on the search term 'flute', the following number of entries in the various entry types were found. The term was found in 3,129 name entries, 884 subject entries, 312 work entries and 165 geographic entries. In comparison, searching 'flute' and limiting to 'Entry Title' found only 28 results. See the sample Subject Entry in Figure 6.

One of the most promising functions of RME was the built-in translation tool, provided by Language Weaver Service. Unfortunately, this does not work as hoped. One would expect that it would translate text from any of the eight languages to any of the others. However, the tool will only translate from English to one of the other languages, using the html version of the full text. So a German user can translate the English article on flute from the first edition of *Grove* to German, but the English user cannot translate the German article in *Riemann* to English. At present, searching equivalences seem to favour English language users, but the translation tool favours non-English speakers. It is to be hoped that, in time, RME will accommodate all searchers equally, regardless of their primary language. Again, documentation or search tips would be appropriate. In comparison, the translation tool incorporated in MGG Online works more comprehensively.

¹⁰ Henry, 'RILM Music Encyclopedias', 151–2.

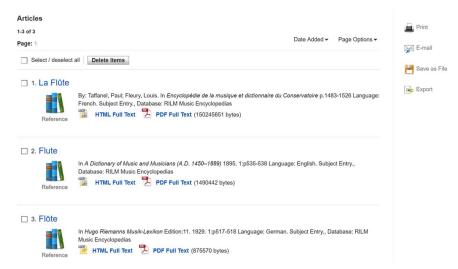


Fig. 7 RME Folder View Example

According to the MGG Online website, it provides 'automatic translation from German to over 100 languages via Google Translate integration'. ¹¹ Perhaps RILM and EBSCO can integrate Google Translate into RME as well.

A few additional EBSCO search features deserve mention. RME offers the ability to have the articles read aloud, a feature especially useful for vision impaired searchers. Finally, each result may be placed into a folder. Once in a folder, the entries can be printed, emailed, saved as a file or exported (see Figure 7)

In his review, Henry noted, 'As a librarian I have a hard time imagining the situation where I would recommend a researcher log in to *RILM Music Encyclopedias* and start searching. (What would be the research question that would benefit from results from both *Großes Sängerlexikon* and *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ?*)'. ¹² Although a scholar of the reception history of a composer, performer, genre or concept (like *Leitmotif*) or someone studying the history of encyclopaedias would find this resource useful, I share Henry's concerns. Specifically, I have a hard time imagining how I would teach students to use this package in a music information literacy class. RME has great potential, but as it stands, there are concerns related to both the content and the functionality of this resource.

The benefits of RME include its broad range of international content, the number of titles included (and RILM's commitment to building the content) and the ability to search across the full text of the encyclopaedias included. While broad content is an advantage, the range here is something of a mixed bag. Also, several major titles, as noted above, are either not included in RME or are available in better versions elsewhere. This combination of languages, date coverage and general versus specialized content, might hinder wide adoption of this product. The cross-searching on the EBSCO platform is a benefit and is widely known. However, limitations of the subject searching and translation functionality in RME are a concern, as noted above.

MGG Online, rilm.org/mgg-online/ (accessed 15 June 2017).

¹² Henry, 'RILM Music Encyclopedias', 150.

Full text searching of several of the standard historical titles in RME is also available for free from widely known repositories of public domain texts, such as Google Books and Internet Archive. Many of the current, specialized titles, especially those from Routledge, are available for purchase or subscription from ProQuest or other vendors.

With roughly half of the content in RME available elsewhere, libraries may want to consider the unique content in RME in light of their music library's user needs. Pricing from EBSCO is based primarily on institution size. According to Alexandra Campoli, national libraries get a fixed rate, and developing countries receive a 50% discount. For US and UK academic libraries with strong undergraduate music programmes, Oxford Music Online and Alexander Street Press's Classical Music Reference Library would likely be higher acquisitions priorities. For libraries with graduate programmes and an emphasis on musicology, MGG Online would also likely be viewed favourably before RME. Cost versus value is a decision for each institution because library budgets are limited. Time will tell if the freely available titles become available elsewhere in a music discovery tool, such as ASP's Open Music Library.

Consider what encyclopaedia titles would be most useful for you and your students. Along with the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to cross search *Grove Music Online*, *MGG*, *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* and the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*? All of these titles are currently available online from different publishers – Oxford University Press, RILM/EBSCO, ASP and Credo Reference, respectively. Your top five wish-list may differ based on your research and teaching needs, along with the degrees and programmes of emphasis at your institution. Since RILM and EBSCO already have an agreement for MGG as a separate product, adding this title to RME seems like a possible starting point that would significantly enhance its content.

Each reader will have his or her own idea of the perfect package of online music encyclopaedias to use for teaching and research. The wish-list above, including encyclopaedias currently available from four different publishers, might be attractive to many US music schools. In time, we can all hope for increased licensing cooperation between publishers and vendors. At present, this package from RILM and EBSCO raises concerns about both content and usability.

 ${\bf Appendix}$ RILM Music Encyclopaedias: Titles Available Online Elsewhere 14

	Title	Editor	Available Online?
1.	Algemene muziek encyclopedie, 2nd ed. (1979–84)	Robijns & Zijlstra	No
2.	Annals of Opera, 1597–1940, 3rd ed.	Loewenberg	No*
3.	(1978) Band Music Notes, Rev. ed. (1979)	Smith & Stoutamire	No*

Email communication between author and Alexandra Campoli, 1 June 2017.

 $^{^{14}\,}$ See http://rilm.org/encyclopedias for full bibliographic information (accessed 20 June 2017).

(Continued)

	Title	Editor	Available Online?
4.	Biographical Dictionary of Afro-American and African Musicians (1982)	Southern	No*
5.	Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (1886)	Brown	Public Domain [†]
6.	Biographical Dictionary of Russian/Soviet Composers (1989)	Ho & Feofanov	No*
7.	Biographie universelle des musiciens, 2nd ed. (1866–81)	Fétis	Public Domain [†]
8.	Biographisch-bibliographisches Quellen- Lexikon (1900–04)	Eitner	Public Domain [†]
9. 10.	Blasmusik-Lexikon, 5th ed. (2010) Broadway: Its History, People, and Places, 2nd ed. (2004)	Suppan & Suppan Bloom	No ProQuest
11.	Concise Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, 2nd ed. (2013)	Koskoff	ProQuest
12.	Conductors and Composers of Popular Orchestral Music (2013)	Musiker & Musiker	Taylor & Francis
13.	Československý hudební slovník osob a institucí (1963–65)	Černušák, Štědroň & Nováček	No*
14.	Gothic- und Dark Wave-Lexikon, 2nd ed. (2003)	Matzke, Seeliger, Kuhnle & Bruckbauer	No
15.	Dictionary of American Classical Composers, 2nd ed. (2005)	Butterworth	ProQuest
16.	Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 1st ed. (1879–90)	Grove	Public Domain [†]
17.	Dictionary of the Avant-gardes, 2nd ed. (2001)	Kostelanetz	Taylor & Francis
18.	Dictionnaire de la musique: Les hommes et leurs oeuvres, Rev. ed. (1993)	Honegger	No*
19. 20.	Dictionnaire de musique (1775) Dictionnaire des œuvres de l'art vocal (1991–92)	Rousseau Honegger & Prévost	Public Domain [†] No
21.	Dizionario e bibliografia della musica (1836)	Lichtenthal	Public Domain [†]
22.	Dizionario degli editori musicali italiani, 1750–1930 (2000)	Antolini	No*
23.	Dizionario universale dei musicisti, 2nd ed. (1937–38)	Schmidl	No*
24.	Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music (2005)	McNeil	ProQuest
25.	Encyclopedia of Music in the 20th Century (2013)	Henderson & Stacey	Taylor & Francis
26.	Encyclopedia of Recorded Sound, 2nd ed. (2005)	Hoffmann	ProQuest
27.	Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ (1985–95)	Junchen & Kaufmann	No*
28. 29.	Encyclopedia of the Blues (2006) Encyclopédie de la musique et dictionnaire du Conservatoire (1913–31)	Komara Lavignae & La Laurencie	ProQuest Public Domain [†]
30.	Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, 2nd ed. (1998–2002)	Nettl, Stone, Porter & Rice	Alexander Street Press
31. 32.		Kutsch, Riemens & Rost Eggebrecht & Riethmüller	De Gruyter ViFaMusik.de (free)

(Continued)

	Title	Editor	Available Online?
33.	Historical Dictionary of the Music and Musicians of Finland (1997)	Hillilä & Hong	ABC-CLIO
34.	Hollywood Songsters, 2nd ed. (2003)	Robert & Pitts	No*
35.	Hugo Riemanns Musik-Lexikon, 11th ed. (1929)	Riemann	No*
36.	International Encyclopedia of Women Composers, 2nd ed. (1987)	Cohen	No*
37.	Komponisten der Gegenwart (1992–)	Heister & Sparrer	Nachschlage.net (free)
38.	March Music Notes (1986)	Smith	No*
39.	Opernlexikon (1975–83)	Stieger	No*
40.		Tolika	No
41.	Paris Opéra (1983–90)	Pitou	ABC-CLIO
42.	Percussionists: A Biographical Dictionary (2000)	Barnhart	No*
43.	Science de la musique (1976)	Honegger	No
44.	Steirisches Musiklexikon, 2nd ed. (2009)	Suppan	No
45.	Tin Pan Alley (2003)	Jasen	ProQuest

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[†]Freely available in Google Books, Internet Archive, Hathi Trust and/or IMSLP.