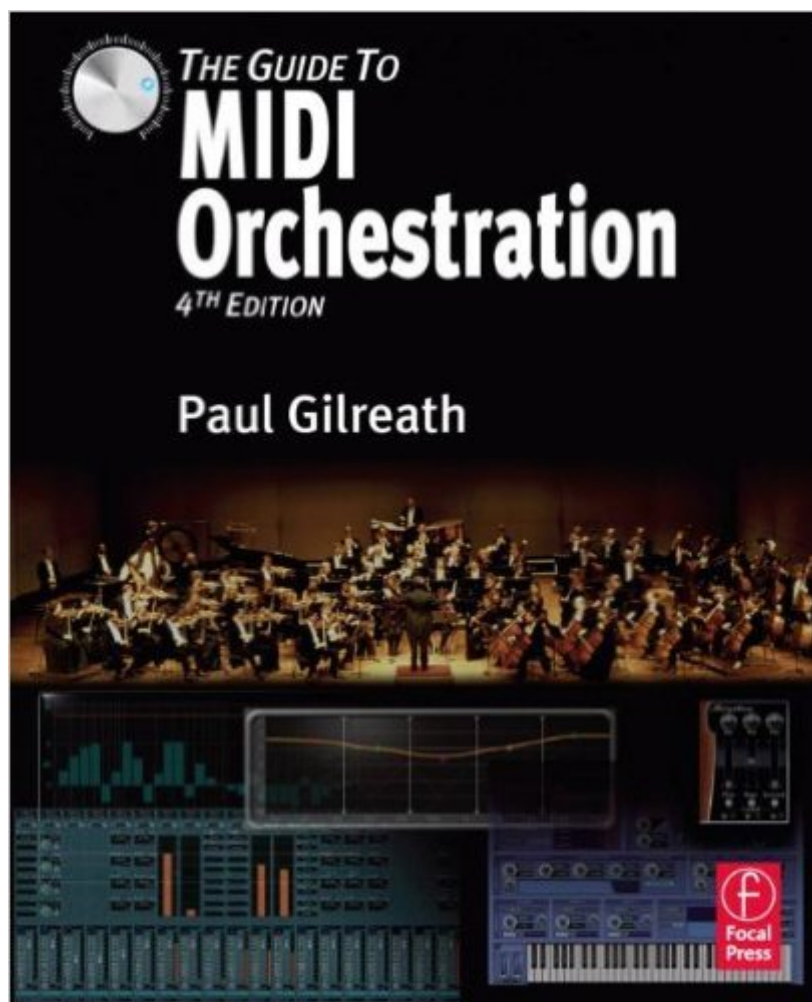


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# The Guide To MIDI Orchestration 4e



## Synopsis

Since its initial release in 1997, Paul Gilreath's *The Guide to MIDI Orchestration* has been the premiere text on creating realistic emulations of a symphony orchestra using samplers and computer recording techniques. Now in its fourth edition, *The Guide to MIDI Orchestration* explains how to merge this ever-expanding technology with the artistry of orchestration to produce the most lifelike recordings possible. The book is written for composers, arrangers, and MIDI musicians of all levels, and will be helpful to game composers, film and television composers, traditional orchestral composers, teachers, instructors, and the serious hobbyist. Highlights of the book include:

- Introduction to and overview of the orchestra
- In-depth discussions of each orchestral section
- Detailed information on each instrument's timbre, range and uses
- Discussions of orchestration techniques
- Demonstrations on how to build an orchestration from the ground up
- Presentations on techniques for achieving balance and musical interest
- Setup and recommendations for software and equipment
- Details on setting up a multi-computer network for use as slave computers
- Overview of software sampler and Digital Audio Workstation software
- Presentation of note entry methods
- DAW and sampler template implementation
- Detailed steps for achieving realistic reverberation and instrument placement
- Start to finish steps to achieve a final mix
- Insightful interviews with top mastering engineers

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm going to rate this book 5 stars because I think it accomplishes exactly what the author has set out to do. That is, to give people who need to write professional, realistic-sounding 'classical' MIDI arrangements a reference guide on how to make MIDI playback sound like a real orchestra. The main hurdle to attain realistic orchestra sounds is to know how the real instruments are played and then to try to reproduce that using different samples, envelope parameters, volume, panning, etc. Since samples are static recordings of each instrument or section, you must bend or tweak the samples to mimic the human nuances that may not be included in the sample. For example, this book tells you how to make your violin samples sound legato, staccato, how nuance the up-bow or down-bow techniques, glissandos, etc. It tells you how to balance a whole string section, where in the sound field to place the sub-sections, which sections should dominate in various styles of music, etc. That said, this book is not meant for the newbie MIDI composer, armed only with their Casio keyboard and a shareware sequencing program. No, this book also will lay out the various computer hardware you will need to produce professional recordings (we're talking video game, Hollywood movie soundtrack, TV commercial quality), and the software that you will need as well. In addition, you will need to purchase sample libraries that are comprehensive - meaning having several samples for each instrument; like samples at a low volume, mid volume, high volume, staccato attacks, legato attacks, etc... you get the picture. Some knowledge of both computer hardware/software AND of musical terminology and/or musical experience is expected.

I received a free item to review. Those already familiar with traditional orchestration or jazz arranging looking to move into the electronic realm can skim the early chapters on instrumentation and get right to the meat of technical setup, the specifics of sample libraries, scoring techniques and formulating a workflow for the task at hand. Musicians coming from an electronic music background looking to broaden their instrumental pallet to include digital orchestration will find Galreath's book to be one of a small handful of worthwhile texts on the subject. As useful as it is however, I'd strongly recommend (and I think Galreath would agree) first or concurrently studying a traditional orchestration text (i.e. Adler, Kennan, Forsyth, Piston) as well as some of the better-known jazz and commercial arranging texts (i.e. Sebesky, Mancini, Israels, Corzine, Pease and Pulig (Berklee), Grove). The challenge of many orchestration books is twofold: To separate instrumentation from the largely static body of technical information about instrument ranges and common practice playing techniques from orchestration in the whole: Ensemble scoring techniques, musical arrangement and transcription considerations, instrumental combinations, color

and timbre blending, as well as practical performance considerations. Galbreath's book attempts to cover both bases and I have to say I wish he'd spent less time on instrumentation – if only to allow for even more depth in the scoring techniques, libraries, workflow and other areas that really set this book apart. His examples lean toward traditional orchestral techniques: clear demarcation of theme and accompaniment, divisi parts, arched dynamics.

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