



Jazz in American Culture (American Ways Series)

By Burton W. Peretti

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This history of jazz, spanning the twentieth century, is the first to place it within the broad context of American culture. Burton Peretti argues persuasively that this distinctive American music has been a key thread in the tapestry of the nation's culture. The music itself, its players and its audience, and the critical debates it has prompted, tell us much about changes in American life since 1910. Mr. Peretti traces the emergence of jazz out of ragtime during a time of tumultuous growth of cities and industries. In the 1920s jazz flourished and symbolized the cultural struggle between modernists and traditionalists. As Americans sought reassurance and self-esteem during the Great Depression, jazz reached new levels of sophistication in the Swing Era. World War II encouraged rapid changes in popular tastes, and in the postwar decades jazz became both a voice of a globally dominant America and an avant-garde music reflecting social and political turmoil. Today, Mr. Peretti concludes, jazz symbolizes important cultural trends and enjoys a new prestige in a complex musical scene. *Jazz in American Culture* tells a peculiarly American story, evaluating the music as well as those who created it, and opening new perspectives on our cultural history.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This brief but thorough survey is an accessible history of jazz, suitable for listeners new to the music and for those who have long been familiar with it. Burton W. Peretti takes as his thesis the notion that jazz is intimately linked with American history, "associated with the rise and fall of America's cities [and] with the fluctuating reputation of American culture around the world." In this examination of the music and the men and women who made it, Peretti traces the links between jazz and the culture that formed it (and that was, in turn, influenced by it).

From Library Journal

It is generally agreed that jazz became an identifiable style of music at around the turn of the century. This brief survey by Peretti (*The Creation of Jazz*, LJ 9/1/92) focuses primarily on jazz as a cultural, rather than a musical, phenomenon in the course of the last century. He points out that jazz has had a huge impact on the music of this century?from folk to both American and European modern classical to pop music and rock'n'roll. But he focuses on how jazz has influenced and been influenced by the social movements in American history, examining its function as a social marker for the emergent youth culture of the 1920s, the aura of countercultural rebellion that grew around it in the 1940s and 1950s, its place as a source of African American pride during the Civil Rights movement, and so on. Peretti writes in a straightforward, felicitous style, making the book accessible to a broad readership. Only the reading list, with its incomplete bibliographic citations, leaves something to be desired. Heartily recommended for all libraries. ?Rick Anderson, Penacook, Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

Involving...it breaks new ground...There is an important story to tell here. (*Virginia Quarterly Review*)

A surprisingly coherent narrative...Written in the style of good journalism makes this a pleasurable read. (*American Music*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Hayden:

The book *Jazz in American Culture* (American Ways Series) has a lot associated with on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of help. The book was compiled by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research just before write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after looking over this book.

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