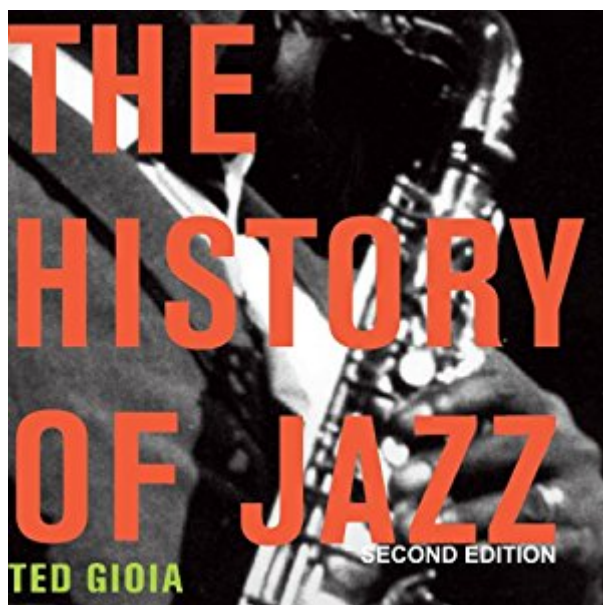


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The History Of Jazz, Second Edition



Synopsis

Ted Gioia's *History of Jazz* has been universally hailed as a classic - acclaimed by jazz critics and fans around the world. Now Gioia brings his magnificent work completely up-to-date, drawing on the latest research and revisiting virtually every aspect of the music, past and present. Gioia tells the story of jazz as it had never been told before, in a book that brilliantly portrays the legendary jazz players, the breakthrough styles, and the world in which it evolved. Here are the giants of jazz and the great moments of jazz history - Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington at the Cotton Club, cool jazz greats such as Gerry Mulligan, Stan Getz, and Lester Young, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie's advocacy of modern jazz in the 1940s, Miles Davis's 1955 performance at the Newport Jazz Festival, Ornette Coleman's experiments with atonality, Pat Metheny's visionary extension of jazz-rock fusion, the contemporary sounds of Wynton Marsalis, and the post-modernists of the current day. Gioia provides the listener with lively portraits of these and many other great musicians, intertwined with vibrant commentary on the music they created. He also evokes the many worlds of jazz, taking the listener to the swamp lands of the Mississippi Delta, the bawdy houses of New Orleans, the rent parties of Harlem, the speakeasies of Chicago during the Jazz Age, the after-hours spots of corrupt Kansas City, the Cotton Club, the Savoy, and the other locales where the history of jazz was made. And as he traces the spread of this protean form, Gioia provides much insight into the social context in which the music was born.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The failure and success of this book are paradoxically one and the same. The author covers jazz from its very beginnings to current day. In so doing he provides an excellent context of this dynamic art form's progression through many different phases, styles and periods. However, many of the critical implications and ramifications of this progression, both upon society, and society upon this art form, are largely lost due to the extensive nature of the subject matter and the author's attempt to cover the topic linearly in its entirety. Toward the end of the book you see the author's style coalesce as he seemingly tires of the subject matter, rushing to a conclusion which in fact is a single paragraph in the subject heading of "The Globalization of Jazz." This after endless lists of artists seemingly for the sake of completeness. The ending is a bit of a let down as the current and future state of Jazz, both critical components of this subject matter (we use history to provide us with context and direction) were largely overlooked. None the less the book is a very good read and does cover some excellent introductions to many artists that many readers might not know of or might not know of their impact on this critical musical style/category. The same can be said for many events and turning points in the history of this art form. I dinged one star because surprisingly enough the author, despite covering much less influential, current-day, female jazz vocalists, and despite endless lists to apparently ensure many artists are included, suspiciously misses even a remote mention of Dee-Dee Bridgewater. Why? I have my thoughts but I leave the answer for the potential reader to ponder.

Really loved this book. I knew nothing about jazz and this was a really was a great introduction to it. I downloaded all the songs in the book as I read along to better understand what the author was talking about. Helped a lot! Even today when I read biographies about jazz artists or friends mention jazz artists I am not familiar with, I always go back to this book for touch up references. If you don't know anything about jazz (like I did) and especially if you don't know anything about music . . then I can see how this book might be a bit hard to read, understand, and at times might become a bit dull. For those with a bit of music theory and want to know this history of jazz, then this is a great place to start.

I am certainly not a musician, and just a casual listener of jazz music. However, I found this book very interesting, informative and readable. I found it piqued my interest in learning more about the history of jazz, and some of its great performers and performances. Gioia does an excellent job - with minor exceptions - of interweaving three themes throughout the book. He sets the scene in American history - his historical accounts of 18th and 19th century New Orleans are particularly

fascinating - in which the music existed. He does a great job of providing detailed accounts of the great jazz performers and their music. My personal view is that very little awareness of the artist or his / her most noted works is needed to appreciate and understand these descriptions. The third theme is the changes in the styles / trends / preferences of jazz music over the years. Certainly some understanding of music theory is helpful here, but not essential. I found the book highly readable, although it is a long read. The two minor quibbles I have about the book are the vocabulary, and the last chapter. The vocabulary is certainly at a fairly high level. I am certainly glad I had my dictionary app handy on multiple occasions. The vocabulary manifests itself in both musical jargon - which I presume is unavoidable - and in use of words such as interstices (on multiple occasions). The last chapter reflects the challenge of any historian - to try to identify trends and their future historical significance - that are contemporary to the writing of the book. As other reviewers have noted, Gioia resorts to listings of names of artists on multiple occasions that add little depth or value to the writing, or are of little help to the reader. However, in the same chapter, Gioia's comments about the impact of present day technology on the distribution of and access to jazz music are very insightful, as is his linkage of his comments on Joshua Redman to the rise of formal jazz musical education and instruction. Overall, as a casual listener of jazz music, I highly recommend this book. In fact, I have already purchased Gioia's latest work - The Jazz Standards - as a result of his deepening of my interest in this musical genre.

So far an excellent read. Lots of facts and the backstory I knew nothing about. Lots of specific music cited, too bad there isn't some way to link from the book to another medium and listen to what he's talking about as you are reading. Now, I'm switching between the book and Youtube.

This narrative, complete in many ways especially the state of jazz in today's world, the book from my perspective missed the inclusion of some incredibly important individuals in the development of this story.

Ted Gioia writes a very unbiased book on the history of jazz. Many of the documentaries/books have lots of opinions, but Ted Gioia tries to remain neutral. We had to read this book for my first year in Jazz Studies at the Eastman School of Music

Jazz has many attractions but needs to be understood to be appreciated at its deeper levels. That is what I was attempting to do in listening to this book and it delivered. To understand the roles of

syncopation and improvisation in the various eras that defined the growth of jazz is essential to its appreciation and this book delivered in spades - as well as describing the contributions of all the important players and composers. I highly recommend it.

It is an explanatory and attractive book about the history of jazz.

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