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Music Is My Mistress (Da Capo Paperback)



Synopsis

“Music is my mistress, and she plays second fiddle to no one.” This is the story of Duke Ellington; the story of Jazz itself. Told in his own way, in his own words, a symphony written by the King of Jazz. His story spans and defines a half-century of modern music. This man who created over 1500 compositions was as much at home in Harlem’s Cotton Club in the 1920s as he was at a White House birthday celebration in his honor in the 1960s. For Duke knew everyone and savored them all. Passionate about his music and the people who made music, he counted as his friends hundreds of the musicians who changed the face of music throughout the world: Bechet, Basie, Armstrong, Lena Horne, Ella Fitzgerald, Sinatra, to name a few of them. Here are 100 photographs to give us an intimate view of Duke’s world; his family, his friends, his associates. What emerges most strongly in his commitment to music, the mistress for whom he saves the fullest intensity of his passion. “Lovers have come and gone, but only my mistress stays,” he says. He composed not only songs that all the world has sung, but also suites, sacred works, music for stage and screen and symphonies. This rich book, the embodiment of the life and works of the Duke, is replete with appendices listing singers, arrangers, lyricists and the symphony orchestras with whom the Duke played. There is a book to own and cherish by all who love Jazz and the contributions made to it by the Duke.

Book Information

Series: Da Capo Paperback

Paperback: 544 pages

Publisher: Da Capo Press; 2nd edition (February 21, 1976)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0306800330

ISBN-13: 978-0306800337

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 5.5 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 16 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #125,478 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #23 in [Books > Arts &](#)

[Photography > Music > Biographies > Jazz](#) #100 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Duke Ellington wrote down a few paragraphs about 100 or so people he met along the way. For

example, you might get a whole page describing Johnny Hodge's personality and one interesting story about him. Think of the book as something you read in the "john." There are just a series of short articles you can read in almost any order and don't have to worry too much about what page you left off at. What he has to say is interesting and written intelligently. It didn't meet my expectations because I was hoping for a story.

Duke tells us about his life, music and friends in one of the best autobiographies I have ever read. As a gentleman that he was he talks about most of the performers of the age pointing out their qualities. Besides being the great artist he is known for he was also an entrepreneur and a true leader of men... A great candidate for a TED talk!

This book was a gift for a die hard jazz enthusiast. He is halfway thru the book already and love, loves, loves it. The condition of the book was just as described and the price was perfect.

Denise Wilson

Pictures, stories, back stories, musical notations, it's all here in the Duke's voice. Still the coolest, superbly talented, charismatic man ever.

interesting book, slow and cumbersome to read.

I am a Professor of Jazz at a Community College and I highly recommend this treasure of a book about America's best composer.

I had this book once before and gave it away. I kept remembering Ellington's comments about people he had worked with and known and I wanted to keep this.

Classic. If you consider the classic elegance of Edward Kennedy Ellington, it should come as no surprise that his prose is as lyrical and poetic as his music. This is a wonderful collection of writings. It is in effect an arrangement of essays and short pieces written with what I suspect is love about the love of his life-jazz, or music itself, if you will. The book contains many short pieces-impersonistic sketches and characters of persons that Duke Ellington knew-musicians, friends, acquaintances, public figures. But it also has a variety of essays-longer subjects interwoven with themes and counterpoint. Ellington's is exquisitely musical prose-again, not to be surprised. The organization is

chronological, narrative, more or less. Duke organizes with autobiographical passages followed by short portraits-Dramatis Felidae-that demonstrate the concreteness through brief descriptions of the persons that he knew with anecdotes that define them. The book covers a life filled with friends and experience. The variety is tremendous, and the life and the career are masterpieces. The themes and subjects are multifaceted. This is Duke Ellington's poetic literary suite posing as prose, and it should not be missed. Really-it's great poetry and a terrific compendium of jazz history and experience.

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