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The Penguin Jazz Guide: The History Of The Music In The 1001 Best Albums



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Synopsis

Richard Cook and Brian Morton’s Penguin Jazz Guide: The History of the Music in 1001 Best Albums is an indispensible guide to the recordings that every fan should know. Richard Cook and Brian Morton’s Penguin Guide to Jazz Recordings is firmly established as the world’s leading guide to the music. In this book, Brian Morton has picked out 1001 essential recordings from their acclaimed guide, adding new information, revising and reassessing each entry, and showing how these key pieces tell the history of the music - and with it the history of the twentieth century. These are the essential albums that that all true jazz fans should own, or - at the very least - have listened to, from Kind of Blue to lesser-known classics and more surprising choices. Full of fascinating updated biographical information, new quotes and interviews and, of course, highly opinionated and wittily trenchant critical reviews, the result is an endlessly browsable companion that will prove required reading for aficionados and jazz novices alike. ’One of the great books of recorded jazz; the other guides don’t come close’Ã Â Ã Â Irish Times ’It’s the kind of book that you’ll yank off the shelf to look up a quick fact and still be reading two hours later’ Ã Â Ã Â Fortune ’The leader in its field ... If you own only one book on jazz, it really should be this one’ Ã Â Ã Â International Record Review ’Indispensable and incomparable’ Ã Â Ã Â NME Brian Morton is a freelance writer and broadcaster who for many years presented Radio 3’s jazz magazine Impressions and In Tune. Richard Cook (1957-2007) was formerly editor of The Wire and edited Jazz Review. He contributed to many other publications, including the New Statesman and his books included Richard Cook’s Jazz Encyclopaedia and It’s About That Time: Miles Davis on Record.

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Customer Reviews

Brian Morton is a freelance writer and broadcaster who for many years presented Radio 3's jazz magazine Impressions and In Tune. He has also broadcasted extensively on BBC Radio Scotland. Richard Cook (1957 - 2007) was formerly editor of The Wire and edited Jazz Review. He contributed to many other publications, including the New Statesman and his books included Richard Cook's Jazz Encyclopaedia and It's About That Time: Miles Davis on Record.

The reviews here are more interesting to read and more insightful than the freebie album review sites: the more you read, the more your understanding of Jazz will grow. This book is very different in intent from the Penguin Guidebooks (this is entitled a History of Jazz, not a Guide to Jazz), it will appeal to anyone who has ever tried to organize their CD or vinyl collection by release date, instead of alphabetical. The Penguin Guidebooks contain about 14,000 reviews, including almost of the ones included here, so you may be more interested in those if you prefer a more comprehensive guide which is organized alphabetically.If you are just becoming interested in Jazz then with this guide - along with a subscription to Google Music or any streaming service that allows you to choose what to listen to - you'll be off to the races.

I am so glad Penguin published this briefer version of their classic tome. As someone who has fairly recently fallen in love with jazz, this book acts as an invaluable roadmap to discovering all the great recordings throughout jazz history. Although the format of the book can be slightly improved with the edition of an alphabetical index, I am a big fan of how the reviews themselves are formatted. I can understand the frustration of those who grew to depend on the older editions of the guide, but if you're new to jazz, or even these guides, then you'll probably find this book incredibly enjoyable.

This book really needs an index. It is arranged chronologically. Great for branching out, but if you like a performer, it is hard to find other recommended recordings with that artist.Unfortunately, many of the recommended recordings of early performers are on the no longer extant French Classics label. These are becoming increasingly harder to come by.What is there is in the great Morton - Cook tradition of the previous Penguin jazz recording guides. The arrangement (with a lack of index) and reference to many hard to get recordings is the reason for the 2 star rating.

Previos edition was way better.

This book is very frustrating. It is in no way an update of the 9th edition, which apparently will remain the ultimate in the series. Granted, it has become impossible to review every available jazz album(/cassette/CD) in a digital download age. But the organization of this book, by decade with no index, makes it impossible to track an artist or do anything much in an organized way. I own all 10 Penguin Jazz Guides, but this one will remain unread until someone develops an index for it.

Despite the title, the book is not a guide to the "best" 1001 recordings in jazz history (though a number of those are referenced) but rather the most representative. The author, given room to stretch out, provides a colorful account of what distinguishes the work of each of his artists from others in the field, and points the way to other worthy examples. He has had to deal with areas like Fusion which are of little interest to fans of the Penguin Guide series. Please give him a chance by reading the sample pages available on .

Received an older edition than the one I ordered. Very disappointed by that. Should have just advised they didn’t have the edition I wanted.

I decided to read this adjunct to several other books includingÃ Â The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, as I did not know a whole heck of a lot about the subject. And the book did not disappoint. Many popular jazz histories choose to focus on a few key figures, who are often on there because they are the author’s favorite artists and no other reason. This guide gives you EVERYBODY. The scope of the book is simply enormous, as it should be. The writing is pithy, engaging and informative. It was a great introduction overall and to the entire century, not just the so-called Golden Age of the teens, 20s and 30s.There are a couple of downsides. Space is limited as it would be in any comprehensive guide. Articles are unsigned, so you don’t know really who said what. The authors do not discuss the music specifically, only their reaction to it. It’s pretty ballsy of them to call this a history, when music is a lot more than just recordings, and they can’t cover any music made before the advent of recordings. And yes, there is no index. I’d hate to have to use this as a reference on a regularly basis just because finding a single artist would drive you nuts.But having said all that, the book is a great introduction to the subject, the people in it, and the music as it still exits on disk. I’d recommend it to anybody.

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