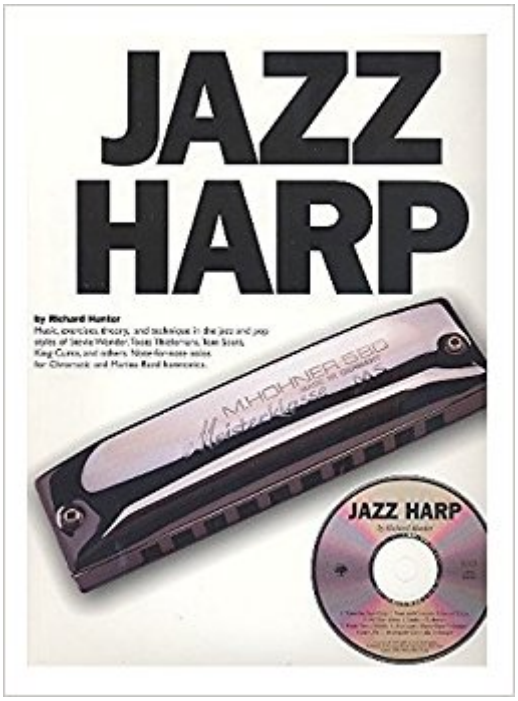
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Jazz Harp



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Synopsis

(Music Sales America). Until recently, jazz has been an idiom largely neglected by harp players, for several reasons. First, there haven’t been many players with the technical ability needed to play modern jazz, and until very recently, most people with that ability were interested exclusively in classical styles. In addition, the harp itself is not designed in a way that makes jazz easy to play. Jazz requires a smooth, legato attack, and accents in a jazz line can fall on any part of the beat. It’s hard to play the harp legato because of constant breath shifts, and even harder to accent freely. That’s why some very skilled harp players have said that they doubt that it’s possible to play jazz on the harp. Richard Hunter doesn’t agree. He majored in music at Harvard University before working with a variety of jazz and rock bands. He says of Jazz Harp : "It was meant to inspire harmonica players to reach for the same goals as their counterparts on other instruments." Music, exercises, theory, and technique in the jazz and pop styles of Stevie Wonder, Toots Thielemans, Tom Scott, King Curtis, and others are included in this book/CD pack, along with note-for-note solos for chromatic and marine band harmonica.

Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages
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Language: English
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Customer Reviews

I liked Richard Hunters Jazz harp book for the most part. I thought there was to much Diatonic material in it. I already know how to play the Diatonic quit well and wasn’t buying a book on that. So less of what wasn’t advertised and more what it was suppose to be would have been better!The record that goes along with the book is absolutly terrible! I can’t think of a redeming qaulity!The

recording left me very dissapionted!I do like the book though and if your able to think for yourself and expand on some of the stuff in the book. It is worth it. It has pointed me in a direction that I am enjoying!

great value. looking forward to using it!

This is a terrible, but not worthless item. You get an 18 minute CD which is a single track copied from the original 1978 cassette. (yes, this is a very old book and recording). Besides having to be stuck with a single track, the original instruction couldn't even manage to fill both sides of a cassette, which could easily have been 30 minutes per side, with some cassettes holding an hour on each side--so space was never an issue. There are no recordings, or even discussion for most of the transcriptions in the book, which is disappointing because there are some good transcriptions, like Miles Davis's "So What". I would have liked to hear that played by a harmonica ace, and there was plenty of space on that 60 minute cassette to do so. Since Oak Publishing had already obtained the copyright to print the sheet music, I don't think playing all the pieces would have been a problem, and if so, then pick other pieces to demonstrate!! About halfway through the recording, about 3-1/2 minutes are wasted playing a recording of a folk ballad in which Mike Turk plays harmonica for a few seconds. Certainly a better, more succinct example could have been used instead of one that takes up about 20% of the meager 18 minutes that we're allowed. Near the end, Hunter plays "Golden Mel", for which he has no transcription--I think it's his piece. How hard could it have been to include the sheet music? Besides that, it is a DeFord Bailey styled tune that has no place in a book on jazz harp. It seems to have been a convenient way to eat up recording time. On Hunter's own composition "Winter Sun at Nobska" the sheet music doesn't exactly follow what he plays and he doesn't even play the entire written music. His excuse for this is that he says that pieces may be shortened and altered according to the player's discretion. What sort of cop-out is this? This is an instruction book and the author should play the piece exactly as written, unless improvisation is being demonstrated. His tips on overblowing are good, though he doesn't discuss tuning a harp to make this easier. In fact, overblowing may be impossible unless your harp has been tightened up with gapping and embossing. I could go on, but I think you get the point--the book is terribly flawed in many ways.There are a few good written and oral tips on jazz playing if you are already an advanced player, but the book has little value for beginning and intermediate players. I can except the fact that recording is on one track--that can be easily dealt with, but the original 1978 effort was poorly done, and that can only be fixed by a complete rewrite. Not a big seller, so the financial

incentive to rewrite a 30+ year old book isn’t there--don’t hold your breath.

Richard Hunter is an excellent harmonica player and his contributions to the harmonica community are well received. Jazz Harp was published in 1980, it comes complete 6 cuts which are used with practical examples through out the book - BUT, the cuts are on Vinal, so be warned. This book is written for BOTH chromatic & diatonic harmonica.Richard starts with a light practical primer on Jazz theory, enough to get going, followed by chapters using a number of popular pieces of music over a wide range of 11 Jazz artists & their style - ordered by difficulty, and discusses how to approach them on the harmonica. Each music example is transcribed in music notation and harmonica tab. Each example finishes with additional discographys, so Richard has done his homework. Its a good practical approach to getting up and running with Jazz styles on the harmonica. The last part of the book covers a number of points regarding playing techniques on the harmonica including a quick description of how to "overbend" the diatonic harmonica to get some missing notes. There is an Exercises chapter which can also be used in part as a reference to chords & scales. Its music notation with tab for diatonic harmonica. And at the ending is an interview of Toots Theilsman, arguably the best Chromatic Harp Jazz player to date. Its a nice touch.I’d recommend purchasing additional good music theory book &jazz theory book for seriously indepth music theory studies. Richard also recommends finding teachers, and asks that you find the tracks given in each chapter so that you can follow his explicit references.This is a good book, well written and presented. If you are starting to learn Jazz on the harmonica: this is the one.

Bought this book expecting a purely jazz oriented instructional book and was very disappointed. Not only that, I was unhappy with the way the book was written, a lot of fluff and not a lot of meat. Audio quality of the cd was extremely poor, and the tracks were not even numbered. What a pain when you want to hear an example over and over without having to go through the boring narratives!

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