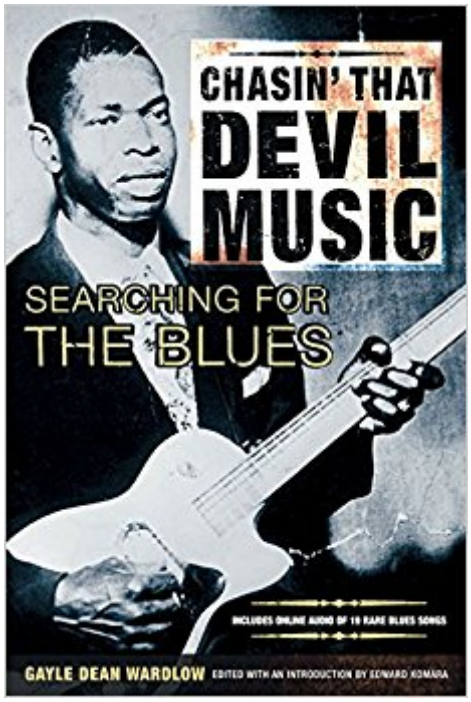
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Chasin' That Devil's Music, Searching For The Blues



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Synopsis

(Book). Chasin' That Devil Music Searching for the Blues presents the results of extensive research by a blues scholar who has researched the artists on old 78 RPM records to uncover their stories. Includes rare interviews and the actual songs which available online using the unique code printed inside each book.

Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Backbeat Books; Pap/Com edition (1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0879305525

ISBN-13: 978-0879305529

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #452,892 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #110 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Soul #172 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Blues #285 inÃ Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Songbooks > Jazz

Customer Reviews

Chasin' That Devil Music has the feel of a documentary about the making of a thrilling motion picture. The main focus is on the Delta blues singers of the early 20th century--artists such as Charley Patton, Tommy Johnson, Son House, and Blind Lemon Jefferson who've achieved near-mythic status in blues circles. In addition, many of the articles gathered in this splendidly illustrated volume capture the process and people involved in tracking long-lost recordings nearly as elusive as the performers who made them. Here, for example, is the story of author/blues scholar Gayle Dean Wardlow's three-year hunt for the death certificate of Robert Johnson, the celebrated Mississippi bluesman and a figure whose legend has grown greater with each year since his much-debated death in 1938. The text here is nearly as raw in spots as the music that sparked it, but, as with those sounds (which can be heard on a terrific CD sampler included with the book), enthusiasts will find Chasin' That Devil Music riveting. --Steven Stolder

A beautiful piece of research...essential reading.-- Jazzbeat, Spring 1999 A special book. I highly recommend this work for anyone who wants to know more or better understand our music.Jazz

Educators Journal, May 1999 Clarifies information or solves mysteries regarding dozens of lesser-known musicians...a resonant breath of the real people whose lives came and went, leaving behind performances of beauty and power. The accompanying audio is a generous batch of rare recordings with interview excerpts interspersed. Tower Records Epulse website, December 7, 1998 Essential reading for anyone interested in the history of Delta blues. Blues Revue, April 1999 --Book News, December 1998Wardlow amply deserves the description 'legendary blues sleuth'...the book makes a fascinating read... --Juke BluesWardlow is a virtual Sherlock Holmes of the blues. --The Rylander

I use this as a skim through bathroom book. A lot of the style of writing in this book is of a documentary style. And not like the Spinal Tap variety. Some parts are just not captivating for my desire. However it is well done and very much a good look at the struggles some went through to track down pioneers of blues music.

Wardlow paints a vivid picture of what it was like for him as a young man seeking out the "lost" blues recordings of the Mississippi Delta. Readers are introduced to a variety of characters who, each in their own way, helped keep this classic music alive for the next generation to discover. It includes a CD of some of Wardlow's discoveries and that alone is worth the price of the book. Highly recommended for lovers of the blues or music history in general.

Was elated to learn of this book & was very interested in a bit of history, not only of Robert Johnson, but a bit of family history since H. C. Speir was my father's uncle.

Great book to enhance anyones knowledge on the legend Robert Johnson. For those interested in music and it's history and for musicians too.

Gayle Dean Wardlow is one of the leading researchers into the history of Delta blues. He started researching the blues in the early 1960s as a college thesis, going so far as to get a job as an exterminator in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1960s as a way of gaining entry into African-American neighbourhods (Wardlow is white) to pursue to his research and to seek out copies of old 78s of forgotten blues artists.Wardlow's later research included uncovering Robert Johnson's death certificate In Leflore County, Mississippi.This book consists of a number of articles (some previously published in other journals and magazines, others first published in this book) on a

number of Delta blues artists, promoters, talent scouts, Wardlow’s research and general music history. It’s all interesting and worthwhile material.If you’re interested in Delta blues history, anything by Gayle Dean Wardlow is worth reading and this book is no exception. I have no problem recommending this book to any Delta blues fan.But be sure to buy a new copy rather than a used copy. The new version includes a CD with some 1920s and 1930s blues songs and some interesting interviews. The CD is worth having but it’s typically not found with used copies since previous owners retain the CD when they sell the book.

This book IS a reprint of previously published articles, not all of them written by Wardlow (for instance, an interview with Wardlow by other reporters is included), but apparently most of these articles have never appeared in book form. They are fascinating for a reader interested in learning more about how people like Charley Patton and Robert Johnson, long dead, are more celebrated today than would have been imaginable, let alone possible, in their own times. Wardlow was one of the early "investigators" who unearthed obscure recordings and salient information about the musicians who made them. This book is largely an account of that difficult process. Now, when it’s relatively easy to hear the complete recorded works of Son House, Blind Willie Johnson, et. al., it’s hard to imagine what blues fans had to go through to hear this music 40 years ago. Wardlow’s book is a revelation and an inspiration also. The "free" CD is wonderful, too, and worth the price of the book itself.

Gayle Dean Wardlow has compiled this excellent collection from many of his articles and essays of first-hand research, orignally written for monthly publications such as 78 Quarterly and Blues Unlimited.In the early 1960’s, collectors like himself had just started to introduce this fabulous music (Afro-American country blues) to a wider audience. The book specifies that as Wardlow was growing up in Mississippi, he admired the music of country singer Roy Acuff; as a result, he began to collect "race-music" country blues 78’s only for the purpose of trading them for other country and hillbilly 78’s. His job as an exterminator at the time, allowed him to canvas the neighbourhoods in Mississippi where he was working for rare blues and country records.Not surprisingly, his interest in country blues records that had been issued in the 20’s and 30’s, was heightened considerably as he began to trade with other collectors. Wardlow was able to interview many friends, relatives, and aquaintances of some of the early blues greats like Charley Patton, Son House, Willie Brown, Bukka White, Tommy Johnson, and of course, Robert Johnson.While these artists are certainly the better known ones, the author drills deep into the history of the blues and finds out much about some of

the lesser known, but no less interesting ones like, King Solomon Hill (Joe Holmes), Garfield Akers, the Huff Brothers, and Blind Joe Reynolds to name a few.Along the way, Wardlow also managed to locate and interview H.C. Speir, the guy who discovered many of the artists, acted as their agent, and got them into a recording studio. Another bonus is an interview with Ishman Bracey who was a partner of Tommy Johnson for a while, and who it seems, knew just about everybody else in the South who was playing blues in the 1920's.Readers will find some interesting notes where Wardlow helps to dispell some of the silly myths perpetuated about the blues (I sold my soul to the Devil on a dirt road in exchange for talent; Charley Patton was murdered).Anyone who has the least interest in country blues will enjoy this book and its accompanying CD containing rare recordings and interviews by the artists and promoters discussed in the book. While the book is now out of print, it's historical importance is likely to ensure that it will be republished in the near future.This is one of the most interesting and scholarly books ever written on the subject of country blues. If you want it from the source, this book and the one published by Alex van der Tuuk "Paramount's Rise and Fall" (Mainspring Press) are about as close as you are going to get to the source of this great music.

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