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Legends Of The Blues



Synopsis

Robert Johnson, Ma Rainey, Billie Holiday, Howlin' Wolf, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters; say their names out loud and you can just hear the blues. Now, acclaimed artist William Stout visualizes these artists and their music with 100 stunning portraits. This graphically powerful collection includes profiles of classic musicians drawn by a master illustrator. Stout beautifully captures the signature style of each blues legend and then adds authoritative biographical text with personal and humorous writing that brings it on home. Includes recommended playlists and an exclusive bonus music CD. Praise for Legends of the Blues: "So good, you'd think illustrator William Stout made a deal with the devil." Mother Jones.com "I could go on and on about how much I love Stout's detailed pen-and-ink work and pleasing watercolors." Boing Boing

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For decades, fans have unsuccessfully importuned R. Crumb to expand his card-set, Heroes of the Blues. In his stead, mainstream comics artist and blues fan Stout has leaped into the breach. A book proved more feasible than cards, though, and here are the first results of Stout's labors. The drawings, stylistically modeled on Crumb's, are unimpeachable, the faces based on photographs while the backdrops refer, when possible, to the subjects legends. So, for instance, Friday 13 looms behind guitarist-singer Albert King, conjuring his hit, Born under a Bad Sign. A biographical sketch faces each portrait and includes Stout's choices of Recommended Tracks

and Interesting Covers, and more often than not a bit of Trivia is appended. Stout reprises only two of Crumb's subjects (Skip James, Blind Willie Johnson) and features the electric bluesmen Crumb deliberately excluded, such as Howlin Wolf and T-Bone Walker, and musical-genre-straddlers like Chuck Berry and Dinah Washington. Nice stuff. --Ray Olson

William Stout is an award-winning artist and writer who has worked for over 45 years in various media, including comics (Tarzan and Little Annie Fanny, with Harvey Kurtzman); film (with Monty Python, Jim Henson, Steven Spielberg, Guillermo del Toro, and Disney); the record industry; magazine illustration; and public murals at museums across the country, including the San Diego Natural History Museum and the Houston Museum of Natural Science. He lives in Pasadena, California.

Blues fans--get this book.If you'd like a cool little book filled with great ink and watercolor portraits of blues artists--male and female--plus a succinct biography of each--this is another book to put in your library--next to R. Crumb's original book on blues artists.I say another book because it's very similar to Crumb's book of blues artists from a few years ago--same publisher, same format, same art style, a CD of blues music--pretty much the same everything.And that's a good thing.Being a longtime fan ("Mr. Natural"--yeah!) I wished that Crumb would do a second volume because the combination of his style and the subject matter combines to catch each bluesman's/woman's personality--even taking into account Crumb's hard-to-define watercolor style.But now William Stout has stepped up and continued along the same path--and for all intents and purposes this is volume two.This new book includes many well known blues artists--but to his credit Stout also included quite a few lesser known (but great) artists too.Am I getting spoiled by asking for a third volume?And in case you missed it--look for Crumb's (LP-sized) book of album covers/drawing/etc. from a while back. Very, very cool.

I bought this for my wife who grew up in Mississippi and is a Blues fanatic. While she normally can't be bothered with books, she absolutely loved this one. In fact, she had to show me every single drawing and give me the Mississippi-insider's take on each of the legendary Bluesmen.Like my wife, I too am a big Blues fan, and although I lack the Mississippi-insider's perspective, I found it to be an awesome compilation.Note that I have long been a William Stout fan and have a number of his convention sketch books and even a few original sketches. As such, it was great to find that he also shared our love of the Blues and my wife and I both look forward to follow-up collections.Note: 's

packaging was less than stellar. Still giving this book 5 stars since this a review of the book, not 's packaging and shipping department.

I am an R. Crumb fan, as well as a blues fan, and ordered this book after reading a review in the August 8, 2013, "Minneapolis Star Tribune," which noted the similarity of William Stout's illustrated portraits to those of R. Crumb's 1980s "Heroes of Blues, Jazz and Country" trading cards. The format is easy to peruse, with text on the left page and a portrait on the right page. The portrait of Screamin' Jay Hawkins is in itself worth the purchase. I was so pleased with "Legends of the Blues" that I purchased a gift copy for a friend. In noting Screamin' Jay Hawkins, she recalled seeing him years ago performing "Constipation Blues" with a toilet on stage. A bit of trivia not in the book...

Great reference to the Blues and fantastic illustrations of its musicians to complement Robert Crumb's work on the subject. My favorite, the portrait of Robert Johnson is powerful stuff.

A great book -great read-If you love the Blues,Bukowski,Crumb you will love this book.Peace,Alex

I uploaded this book to my kindle. The letters are about the size of a pinhead and the book wasn't formatted in a way that would allow me change the size of the font. Forgetaboutit!

Very compressed. I read it twice.Especially valuable were the comments about the originator of many songs and the more popular cover artist: Ida Red became Maybelline, and similar. More than I expected.I also read Gioia's Delta Blues. They are just two different kinds of books, each valuable.

I bought this as a gift for my musician son. He was overjoyed with it and is savoring the bios as well as the great little charactures of the Blues giants, those well-known and those not so. Having the bios, the pictures AND a music CD of the originals is a terrific combo, and at this price it's a true bargain.

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