

the new grove dictionary of jazz

The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz: Your Ultimate Guide to the Genre's History and Stars

Are you a jazz aficionado, a budding musician, or simply someone curious about the rich tapestry of jazz music? Then you've come to the right place! This comprehensive guide dives deep into The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, exploring its content, value, and why it remains an indispensable resource for anyone serious about understanding the history and evolution of this iconic genre. We'll cover its scope, key features, and how it can enhance your appreciation and knowledge of jazz, ultimately answering the question: why should you own this monumental work?

What is The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz?

The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz isn't just another book about jazz; it's a meticulously researched and expertly written encyclopedia encompassing virtually every facet of the genre. Think of it as the definitive reference point, a treasure trove of information covering musicians, styles, instruments, venues, record labels, and even the socio-political contexts that shaped the music. Published by Oxford University Press, the Grove dictionaries are renowned for their academic rigor and comprehensive approach, and the jazz edition is no exception. Forget skimming Wikipedia – this is the real deal.

Beyond the Basics: The Scope and Depth of Grove's Jazz Dictionary

Unlike many introductory jazz books, The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz isn't content with simply listing names and dates. It delves into the nuances of individual artists' careers, exploring their stylistic evolution, influences, and impact on subsequent generations of musicians. For instance, you won't just find a brief biography of Miles Davis; you'll find detailed analyses of his groundbreaking albums, his collaborations, and his constant reinvention of his own sound. The same depth of coverage extends to every aspect of jazz, from early New Orleans styles to the most contemporary experimental forms.

More Than Just Musicians: Exploring the Broader Context

The dictionary's brilliance lies in its holistic approach. It doesn't just focus on the musicians themselves; it also explores the crucial supporting

elements of the jazz world. This includes comprehensive entries on:

Instruments: Detailed explanations of the unique characteristics and history of jazz instruments, including their evolution and use within different styles.

Record Labels: In-depth looks at the crucial role record companies played in shaping the jazz landscape, their impact on artists' careers, and the evolution of recording technology.

Venues: Exploration of the legendary clubs and concert halls that served as incubators for jazz innovation, detailing their atmosphere, significance, and their role in the development of various jazz scenes.

Styles and Subgenres: Detailed analysis of various jazz styles, such as bebop, swing, cool jazz, free jazz, and fusion, outlining their key characteristics, prominent musicians, and historical contexts.

Why You Need The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz on Your Shelf

This isn't just a book for academics; it's a vital resource for anyone who wants to genuinely understand and appreciate jazz. Its value lies in:

Authoritative Scholarship: The entries are written by leading jazz scholars and musicians, guaranteeing accuracy and insightful analysis.

Comprehensive Coverage: It covers a vast range of artists, styles, and historical periods, making it an invaluable resource for both beginners and seasoned experts.

Unrivaled Depth: The level of detail provided is unparalleled, allowing you to delve as deep as you want into specific aspects of the genre.

Enhanced Listening Experience: Understanding the historical and musical contexts of a piece of music dramatically enhances your listening experience.

Navigating the Dictionary: Tips for Effective Use

The sheer size of The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz might seem daunting at first. However, its well-structured format and comprehensive index make navigation surprisingly easy. Use the index to locate specific artists or topics, and then delve into the detailed entries. Don't be afraid to browse—you'll often stumble upon fascinating connections and unexpected insights. The cross-referencing within the entries is also incredibly useful, leading you down fascinating rabbit holes of musical discovery.

The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz: A Lasting Investment

In a digital age where information is readily available online, it's easy to overlook the value of a comprehensive printed resource. However, The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz offers something that online resources often lack:

the authority, depth, and curated perspective of expert scholarship. It's an investment that will reward you with years of insightful reading and a deeper appreciation for the art form. It's more than just a dictionary; it's a journey through the history and soul of jazz.

Conclusion

The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz stands as a monumental achievement in jazz scholarship. Its comprehensive coverage, authoritative entries, and insightful analysis make it an indispensable resource for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of this vibrant and ever-evolving musical genre. Whether you're a casual listener or a dedicated scholar, this dictionary is an invaluable addition to any jazz enthusiast's library.

FAQs

1. Is The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz only for academics? No, while it's a scholarly work, its clear writing style and detailed cross-referencing make it accessible to anyone with an interest in jazz, regardless of their academic background.
1. Is there an online version of The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz? While there isn't a fully online, searchable version mirroring the print edition's comprehensiveness, some information may be available online through Oxford Music Online, but the complete print set remains the most comprehensive resource.
1. How is The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz different from other jazz books? Its sheer scope and depth distinguish it. Other books may focus on specific periods, styles, or musicians, whereas The New Grove aims for encyclopedic coverage of the entire genre.
1. Can I find information on contemporary jazz artists in The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz? While focused primarily on the history of jazz, later editions do include entries for many contemporary artists and styles, reflecting the evolution of the genre.
1. Is it worth buying the physical copies or is a digital version

sufficient? The print edition provides a complete and easily browsable experience. While some digital resources may offer some overlapping information, the complete depth of the print edition remains unmatched. Consider your personal preferences for researching and reading when making your decision.

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