



American Musicians: 56 Portraits in Jazz

Whitney Balliett

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American Musicians, Whitney Balliett's long-awaited "big book," contains a wealth of jazz profiles he has written for *The New Yorker* during the past twenty-seven years. He gives us, in this spectacular volume, his famous early portraits of Pee Wee Russell, Red Allen, Earl Hines, and Mary Lou Williams, written in their brilliant twilight years; his reconstructions of the lives of such legends as Sidney Bechet, Coleman Hawkins, Jack Teagarden, Zoot Sims, and Sidney Catlett; his brief but indelible glimpses into the daily (or nocturnal) lives of Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus; and his vivid depictions of such on-the-scene masters as Jim Hall, Ornette Coleman, Stéphane Grappelli, Elvin Jones, Art Farmer, the Modern Jazz Quartet, and Tommy Flanagan. He also includes his thoughts on such lesser known but invaluable players as Art Hodes, Jabbo Smith, Joe Wilder, Warne Marsh, Gene Bertocini, and Joe Bushkin.

American Musicians is at once a history of jazz, a biographical encyclopedia of many of its most important performers, and a model of American prose.

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