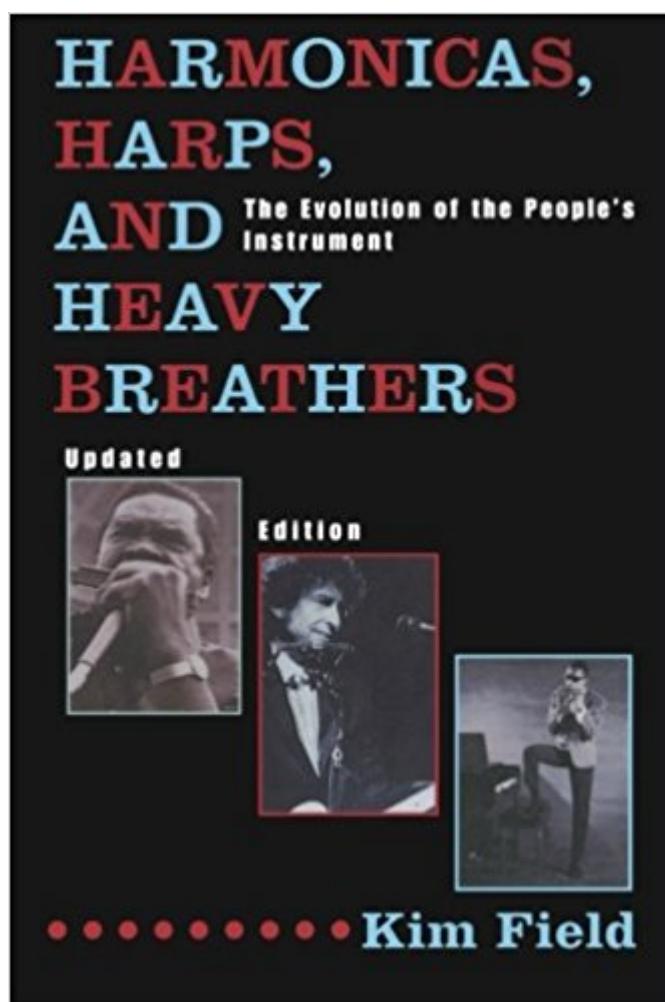


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Harmonicas, Harps And Heavy Breathers: The Evolution Of The People's Instrument



Synopsis

The harmonica is one of the most important, yet overlooked, instruments in music. This definitive volume celebrates the history of the world's most popular musical device, its impact on various forms of music, folk, country, blues, rock, jazz and classical music. The author traces the development of the harmonica from the ancient Chinese sheng to futuristic harmonica synthesizers. Nearly seventy harmonica masters are profiled including Stevie Wonder, Little Walter, Bob Dylan, Jimmy Reed, Charlie McCoy, Sonny Terry, and John Popper. This updated edition includes an extensive new afterword, an expanded discography of the finest harmonica recordings, and a listing of the best harmonica resources on the internet.

Book Information

Paperback: 370 pages

Publisher: Cooper Square Press; Updated edition (February 16, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0815410204

ISBN-13: 978-0815410201

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.8 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 32 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #790,955 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Instruments > Woodwinds > Harmonicas #2094 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Forms & Genres > Popular #2516 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > History & Criticism

Customer Reviews

The Encyclopaedia Britannica of the harmonica (Larry Adler)An unassuming and unexpectedly delightful as potent blues rising suddenly from a pair of cracked, cupped hands....A loving celebration both of the players and of their instrument (Billboard)Highly enjoyable and informative....Well-written. (Living Blues)Interesting and thoroughly researched....An essential volume for players, scholars, and fans alike. Field's writing style provides an easy read and his command of the field is unparalleled. (Blues Review Quarterly)The first book to qualify as a definitive history of the harmonica and its place in American music....Excellent. (Country Music Magazine)

East Meets West chapter one West's musical instruments go, the harmonica is a new thing. Its bicentennial is still decades away. We have the Germans to thank for it (as for the bassoon, the flute, and the clarinet).

This book is a fascinating read for anyone who's interested in life stories, and history. It will definitely hold your interest, and keep you coming back for reference each time you hear one of the players or songs covered in its pages. The author's extensive knowledge of, and love for, his topic is infectious. If you like Blues, Folk, Jazz (even Classical) music, that features the harmonica, then you will LOVE this book. I bought my first copy in the early 1990's, and I still appreciate the ability to pick it up today. The new copies contain audio, which is a dream come true, as you can read about, and then hear, the players and styles that the author describes with such passion. A must have for anyone who enjoys the sound of the harmonica, and a very good book for anyone who just likes to read. Kim Field is a writer who's style is akin to having a friend (in book form) chatting with you in your living room. He's written something truly unique and enjoyable. Like the harmonica itself, this book is a fun, and lively thing to own. A treasure!

As a harmonica dabbler for most of my life -- and a more serious player for the last five years or so -- this book was a revelation, from the Asian roots of the instrument to the flood of German instruments to this country in the late 1800s and the early 1900s. I vaguely remember the Harmonicats-type groups from the Ed Sullivan-era variety shows of my youth. Now there's a context for them. I found more than I'd ever known about players I've known about forever (Sonny Terry, Stevie Wonder, Toots, etc.) at one end of the scale, and learned about lots of players previously unknown to me (Rhythm Willie!!!!). The prose is serviceable, nothing more, and there's nothing transcendent about the book to make it worth the time of anyone NOT keenly interested in the subject matter. On the other hand, it's not overly technical. If you're familiar with a diatonic harp and have some idea of what "positions" are, you'll be fine. I can't say it's the best book of its kind, or the only book of its kind, but I'm glad I found it.

Kim Field is always hard at work informing folks about the joys of the harmonica. There are few harmonica reference books in this sense and Kim is always a great read. Buyers should check out the Little Walter story Kim collaborated in to, called Blues With A Feeling.

An excellent history of the instrument. I was particularly interested in Jerry Murad and the

Harmonicats, whose first hit 'Peg O'My Heart' was recorded by my boss, Bill Putnam, at his studio Universal Recording in Chicago.

My grandfather is an avid harmonica player since his childhood days. He appreciates this a lot! Definitely recommend to the harmonica lovers!

I had been considering buying this book for a number of years... I saw it here on bought, read, learned some history about the instruments and people that enjoy playing for a living...

Very cool and noteworthy book. Covers everything harmonica. All the blues greats are in there. Has a ton of mini-bios. Good read.

An excellent review of major harmonica players, although it does not include the current crop.....

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