Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival

Stephen Petrus, Ronald D. Cohen
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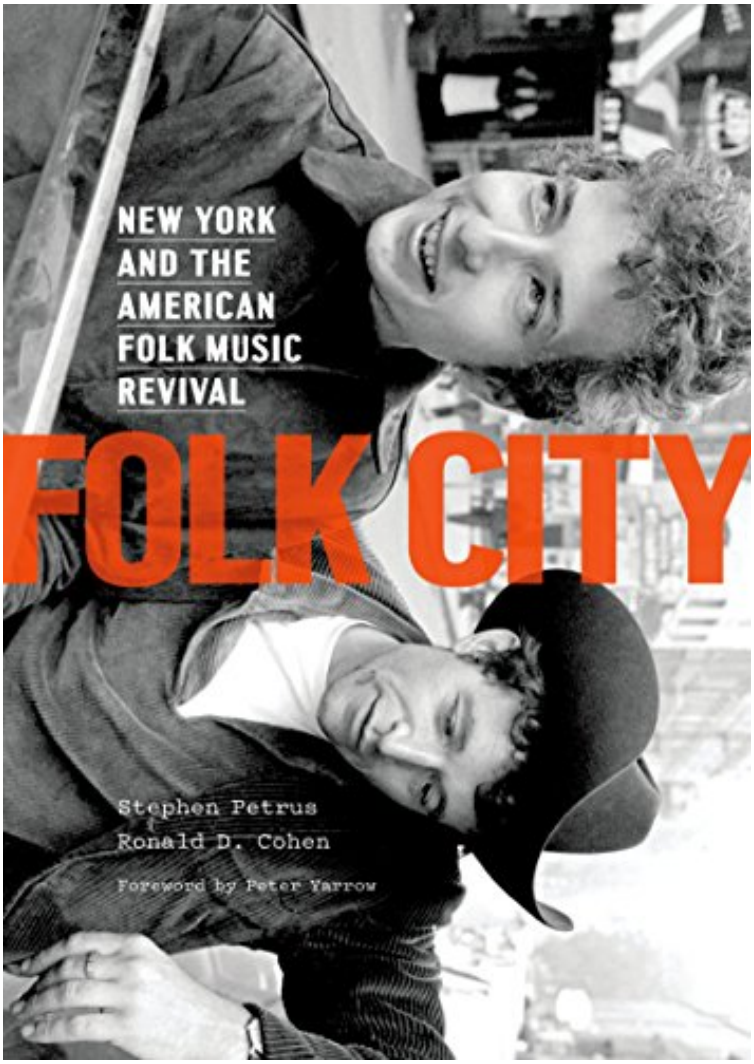

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Stephen Petrus, Ronald D. Cohen : Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A full Bodied History of Folk Music.By D. DomizioThis is an excellent, full bodied view of a lot of "FOLK STUFF" that came together over many years. It may be more than some want to know, but you come away feeling that you have at least a small handle on a huge episode in American Music and Culture. Taken along with "Greenwich Village: Music that Defined a Generation" (narrated by Susan Sarandon), and "The legends of Laurel Canyon", you cannot help but be transported.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A fond look back.By Big Mike 5As someone who lived and played thru this time and place, I still found new information and was delightfully reminded of good times. Well written and enjoyable. Thanks, Mike2 of 2 people

found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy D. DiazFantastic photos, very comprehensive

From Washington Square Park and the Gaslight Caf? to WNYC Radio and Folkways Records, New York City's cultural, artistic, and commercial assets helped to shape a distinctively urban breeding ground for the folk music revival of the 1950s and 60s. Folk City explores New York's central role in fueling the nationwide craze for folk music in postwar America. It involves the efforts of record company producers and executives, club owners, concert promoters, festival organizers, musicologists, agents and managers, editors and writers - and, of course, musicians and audiences.In Folk City, authors Stephen Petrus and Ron Cohen capture the exuberance of the times and introduce readers to a host of characters who brought a new style to the biggest audience in the history of popular music. Among the savvy New York entrepreneurs committed to promoting folk music were Izzy Young of the Folklore Center, Mike Porco of Gerde's Folk City, and John Hammond of Columbia Records. While these and other businessmen developed commercial networks for musicians, the performance venues provided the artists space to test their mettle. The authors portray Village coffee houses not simply as lively venues but as incubators of a burgeoning counterculture, where artists from diverse backgrounds honed their performance techniques and challenged social conventions. Accessible and engaging, fresh and provocative, rich in anecdotes and primary sources, Folk City is lavishly illustrated with images collected for the accompanying major exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York in 2015.

"Folk City is a magical token back to a clattering, incandescent New York, where Popular Front hootenannies gave way to the fretted hip of Gerde's, the Gaslight, and the Folklore Center. Stephen Petrus and Ronald Cohen have written the best history yet of the city's influential folk music culture, packed with astonishing photos that finally see the light of day." --Sean Wilentz, author of Bob Dylan in America"Yes, dear readers, there was a time not so long ago when urban troubadours sang of flowers more powerful than guns; a time when ideals put to song helped transform a culture. With compelling artistry, Stephen Petrus and Ronald Cohen capture the history behind that special moment and how New York's diverse creative class made it happen." --Thomas Kessner, Distinguished Professor of History, City University of New York Graduate School"Folk City is beautifully written and illustrated, a mesmerizing history of one of the great moments in New York cultural history. The prose fairly sings off the page, and the photos and old poster and song sheets are fascinating. This will make you wish you were there." --Kevin Baker, author of The Big Crowd"This handsome book, which includes rarely seen photographs, reminiscences of participants and a lively narrative . . . The authors do a fine job of presenting the various facets of the folk revival, including its impact on the city and its role in changing the larger culture." --The New York Times"Fourteen years ago, author David Hajdu crafted a superb, perhaps definitive, portrait of Greenwich Village at the height of the folk-music revival . . . yet in [FOLK CITY'S] winningly plain-spoken way, provides a far more comprehensive appreciation of one of the most colourful chapters in American music." -- Maclean's"[A] fresh, colorful, thoroughly illustrated portrait of the scene, from its origins to today . . . [FOLK CITY] is particularly compelling in chronicling, from original documents and firsthand testimony, how the critical mass for the folk revival congregated in the city." -- Wall Street Journal"Petrus (curatorial fellow, Museum of the City of New York) and Cohen (emer., history, Indiana Univ. Northwest) have produced a wonderful overview of the influential folk music scene that revolved around New York City's Greenwich Village and Washington Square during the 1950s and 1960s."--Choice"Reading Folk City is almost like watching a film documentary (of which there have been a few) of that time. But in its balanced yet passionate story it helps one recreate memories, re-think thoughts, laugh at some of the foolishness, and weep for some of the tragedies...[it] will bring you as close as you can get to a very wonderful time that is still re-creating itself in the guitar strummers of today."--The Bridge"Straightforward and engaging, breezily fresh and poignant, rich in reminiscences and primary as well as secondary sources, Folk City: New York and the American Folk Music Revival is the inviting companion publication to the Museum of the City of New York's similarly titled exhibit."--Sing Out!About the AuthorStephen Petrus is an Andrew W. Mellon Research Fellow at the New-York Historical Society, where he is working on his second book, a political and cultural history of Greenwich Village in the 1950s and 60s. At the Museum of the City of New York, he curated the exhibition Folk City, on view until January 10th, 2016, and was co-author of the show's accompanying book, with historian Ronald D. Cohen. Petrus has published essays on twentieth-century U.S. urban and cultural history. He received his Ph.D. in history from the City University Graduate Center and taught at Lehman College in the Bronx. He currently lives in Brooklyn.Ronald D. Cohen is Emeritus Professor of History at Indiana University Northwest in Gary, Indiana. He is the author of numerous books on the history of folk music including The Pete Seeger Reader (OUP, 2014) and was the co-producer/writer of the 10-CD boxed set Songs for Political Action: Folk Music, Topical Songs and the American Left, 1926-1954 (1996).