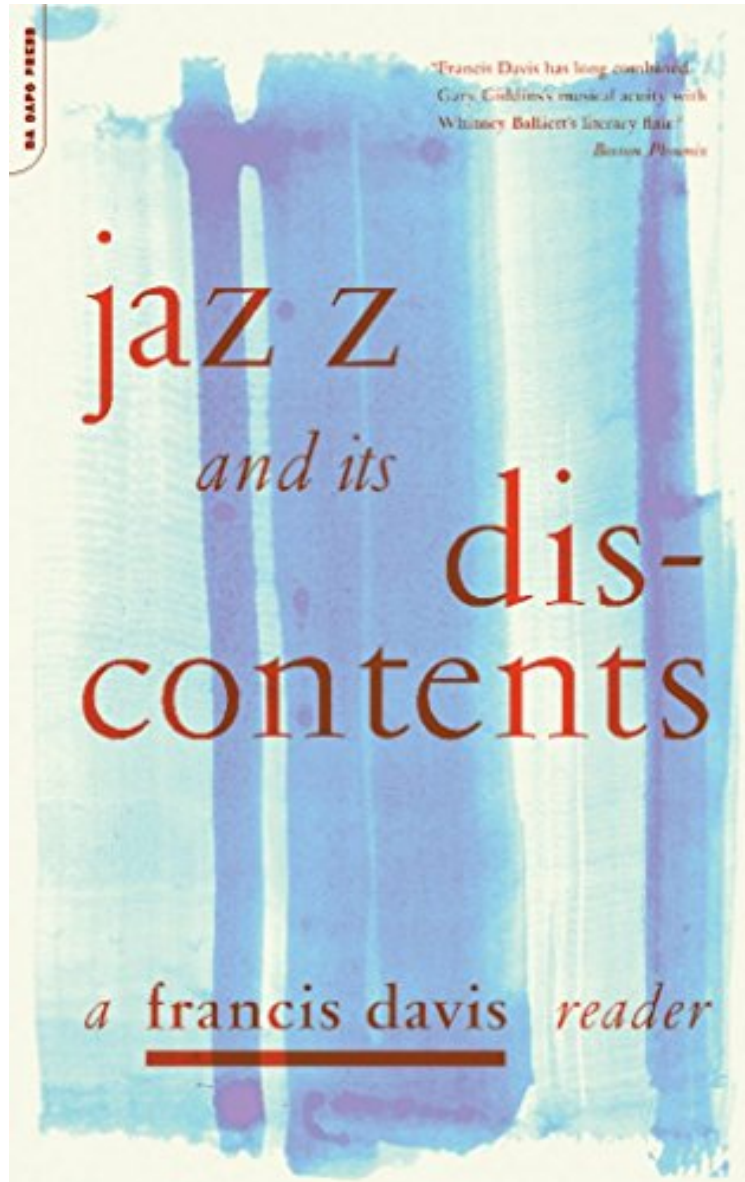


(Free) Jazz And Its Discontents: A Francis Davis Reader

Jazz And Its Discontents: A Francis Davis Reader

Francis Davis

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Francis Davis : Jazz And Its Discontents: A Francis Davis Reader before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jazz And Its Discontents: A Francis Davis Reader:

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Real Gem By R. J. Marsella This collection of portraits of jazz artists both famous and obscure as well as some commentary regarding music, movies and even Seinfeld is a treasure chest of wonderful insights and anecdotal material. I found myself paging through and reading selections at random and thoroughly enjoying every minute spent with this book. Francis Davis really appreciates jazz and his writing is

reflective of his love of the music and his respect for the men and women who create it. 6 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A recommended addition to personal reading lists By Midwest Book Review Jazz And Its Discontents: A Francis Davis Reader is a collection of columnist and jazz expert Francis Davis best writing on diverse musicians who have made American jazz a universal artform. From Wynton Marsalis and Duke Ellington, to Jack Kerouac to Sun Ra, Jazz And Its Discontents provides an insightful analysis of the alienation of musicians and their contributions in the form of profiles and commentaries that are as brilliantly written and presented as they are informed and informative. Jazz And Its Discontents is a welcome and recommended addition to personal reading lists, as well as academic, and community library Music History reference collections.

From Frank Sinatra to Sun Ra, from the jazz age to middle age, with thoughts on everything in-between, Francis Davis has been writing about American music and American culture for more than twenty years. His essays have appeared in The Atlantic Monthly, The New Yorker, and the Village Voice among countless other publications from coast to coast. And now, for the first time, here are his most important writings of his impressive career--the quintessential Davis on everything from why Rent set musicals back two decades, to what Ken Burns should have filmed. And Davis's writing is as enjoyable as the music of which he writes. The New York Times Book Review has compared Davis's work to "a well-blown solo."

From Booklist Jazz critics of two generations weigh in with a career retrospective from the younger one, a collection of recent pieces by the older. Davis says the 25 years he has been writing about jazz have been a period of artistic and popular decline that he blames on "the entrenched tastes of the jazz faithful"--a statement the first part of which will draw the ire of young avant-garde enthusiasts while the second rouses the wrath of the elders whose patronage keeps mainstream jazz alive. Davis obviously isn't afraid to make waves but deserves to be read because, like the late Martin Williams, he writes about music for nonmusicians without substituting purple prose for audibly verifiable description and because, like venerable New Yorker jazz writer Whitney Balliett, he communicates musicians' personalities pungently and believably. In this collection, he does both for the music and the persons of figures ranging from old Sonny Rollins to young Don Byron, from young traditionalist Wynton Marsalis to old avant-gardist Charles Gayle. His critical acumen shines brightly, too, in the three pieces on musical theater and the commentaries on movies and comedians that conclude the book. Before becoming everybody's favorite civil libertarian, Hentoff was a jazz critic, whose *Jazz Life* (1961) introduced the music to many baby boomers. Lately proclaimed the first nonmusician jazz master by the National Endowment for the Arts, he now writes on jazz not for erstwhile haunts *Down Beat* and the *Village Voice* but, judging from the provenances of most of his new book's contents, for the *Wall Street Journal*. In line with the *Journal's* status as a newspaper, these pieces are news-story short and, in line with the *Journal's* market orientation, contain consumer guidance to recordings, books, and music organizations. Most focus on particular musicians, though some are topic driven, such as "Testosterone Is Not a Musical Instrument," on the continuing resistance to women in jazz except as singers and pianists. Unfaithful followers of Hentoff on music may be surprised, but very pleasantly, by the pieces on his other "American Music" passion, hard country--by the likes of Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard, and Delbert McClinton. Ray Olson Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "Francis Davis has long combined Gary Giddin's musical acuity with Whitney Balliett's literary flair." About the Author Francis Davis is a contributing editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and writes regularly for the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker*. He is the author of the acclaimed books *Outcats* and *History of the Blues* and a biography of John Coltrane (Knopf). He lives in Philadelphia.