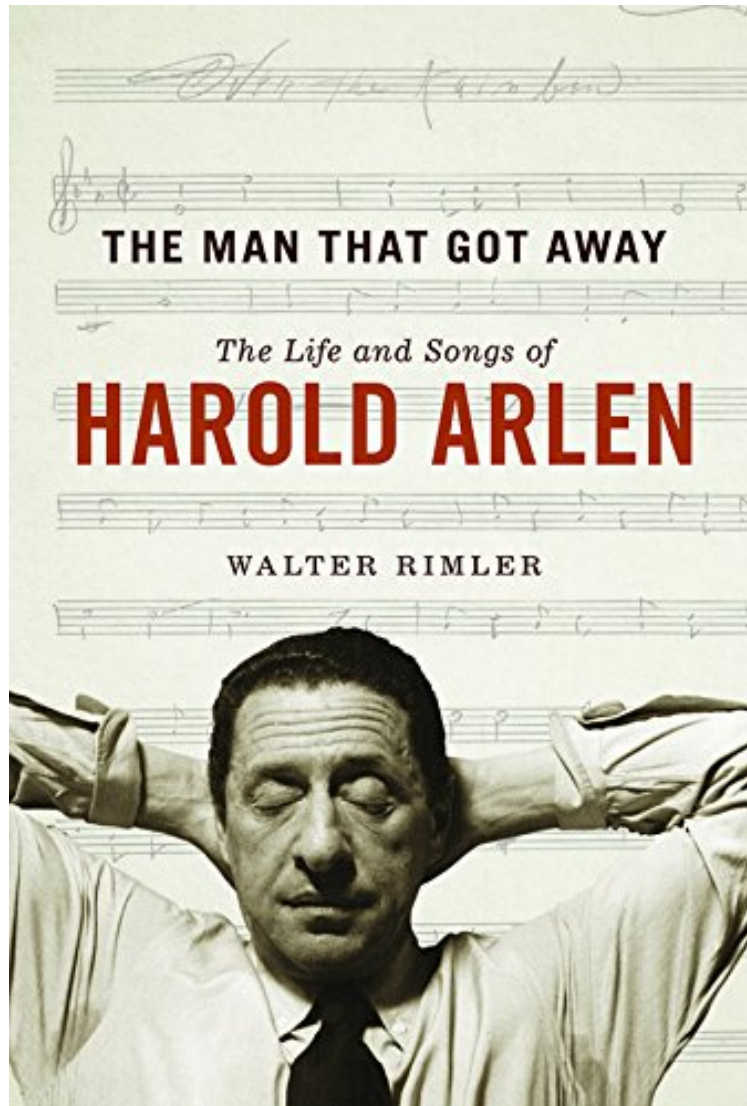


The Man That Got Away: The Life and Songs of Harold Arlen (Music in American Life)

Walter Rimler

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Walter Rimler : The Man That Got Away: The Life and Songs of Harold Arlen (Music in American Life) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Man That Got Away: The Life and Songs of Harold Arlen (Music in American Life):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful read. Recommended. By DavidRRimler accomplishes what many biographers aim for but seldom achieve: a chronicle of facts and milestones that is both moving and compelling. Meticulously researched but with an engaging style that kept me turning the pages. Who knew that Harold Arlen, the composer of "Over the Rainbow," had written so many other famous songs? All the players of the times are

here: Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart and of course the Gershwins. Both Irving Berlin and George Gershwin thought Arlen was better than they were. Rimler also beautifully captures the general tenor of the times in which Arlen developed his craft: the twenties with its jazz and speakeasies, the thirties with its depression and the movies; the war years (Second World of course) and the fifties with its prosperity and its rock and roll. I guess it's obvious, I loved this book.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. " Of the great composers of the Golden Age of American SongBy Thomas L. HarrisThe book is well titled. Harold Arlen is "The Man That Got Away." Of the great composers of the Golden Age of American Song, Harold Arlen is probably the least remembered and possibly the greatest of them all except for the towering genius of his good pal George Gershwin. Maybe his near obscurity can be explained by the fact that he worked with so many different talented lyricists. His greatest compositions for the movies "Over the Rainbow" was written with Yip Harburg and "The Man That Got Away" with Ira Gershwin. The string of classics with Johnny Mercer that everybody of a certain age remember and can sing include "One for My Baby," "Blues in the Night" and "Accentuate the Positive." What a partnership!! A wealthy aristocrat from Savannah and the son of a cantor from Buffalo, both lovers of black jazz, made beautiful jazzy music together. Rimler's book is a lovely account of the life of a man that everyone of his contemporaries and the great performers from Judy Garland to Barbra Streisand to Tony Bennett loved.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great readBy Jean E. GeorgakopoulosA fascinating read. Rimler catches the vibrancy of the man and the times. By simply reporting detail, he brings Arlen into the living room for a warm and cozy get-together. His style is easy to read, crisp and tight but fluent (a considerable achievement). The book reads like a novel. When I reached the end of it, I was reluctant to let Arlen and his fellow songwriters go.

Over the Rainbow, "Stormy Weather," and "One for My Baby" are just a few of Harold Arlen's well-loved compositions. Yet his name is hardly known--except to the musicians who venerate him. At a gathering of songwriters George Gershwin called him "the best of us." Irving Berlin agreed. Paul McCartney sent him a fan letter and became his publisher. Bob Dylan wrote of his fascination with Arlen's "bittersweet, lonely world." A cantor's son, Arlen believed his music was from a place outside himself, a place that also sent tragedy. When his wife became mentally ill and was institutionalized he turned to alcohol. It nearly killed him. But the beautiful songs kept coming: "Blues in the Night," "My Shining Hour," "Come Rain or Come Shine," and "The Man That Got Away." Walter Rimler drew on interviews with friends and associates of Arlen and on newly available archives to write this intimate portrait of a genius whose work is a pillar of the Great American Songbook.

"Mr. Rimler tells an important story, and he presents musical analysis of Arlen's compositional style in nonacademic terms, so that all readers can grasp how inventive Arlen really was."--Wall Street Journal "Rimler's study ensures that Arlen's story and his contributions to music will not be forgotten."--Publishers Weekly