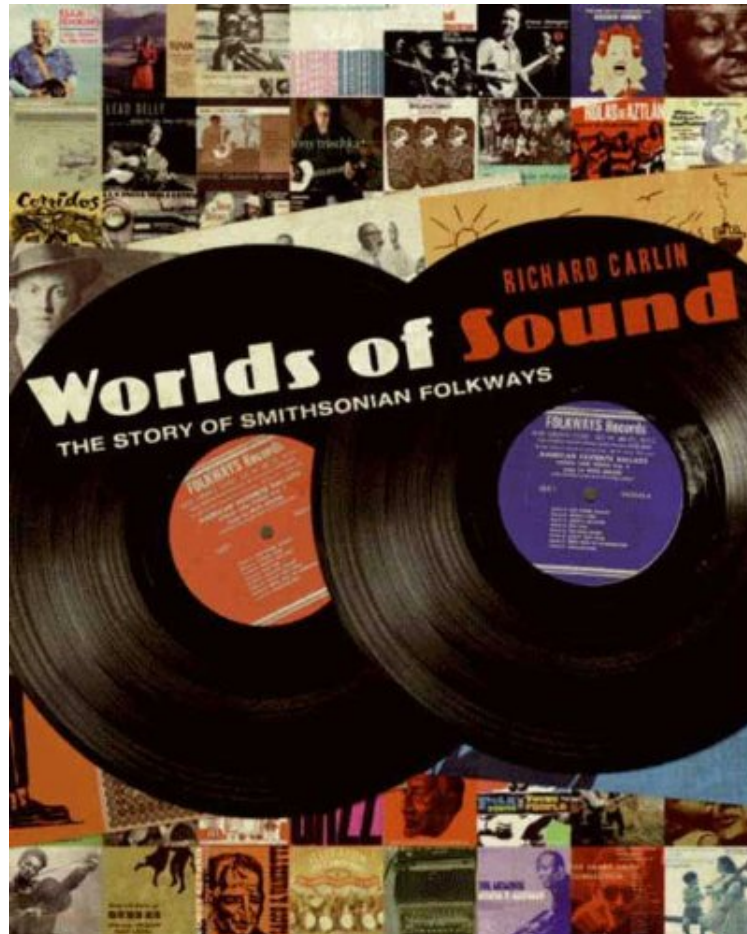


(Download free pdf) Worlds of Sound: The Story of Smithsonian Folkways

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Richard Carlin

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Richard Carlin : Worlds of Sound: The Story of Smithsonian Folkways before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Worlds of Sound: The Story of Smithsonian Folkways:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Evoking the soundtrack of a midcentury American childhood
By Marcia Brubeck
This elegant, beautifully written book will delight anyone interested in the history of music in the twentieth century. The story of Folkways and Moses Asch traces the rise of jazz, folk music, and a general awareness of sound as a vital part of human culture. Here are tales of Lead Belly, Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and many more musicians whose names have become household words, all brought together by the inspired and idealistic but difficult Asch. Carlin's account will resonate especially with readers like me, for whom tunes like "Good Night, Irene" and "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" were part of the soundtrack of childhood. Once again in my mind's eye I see my father, balding in his thirties, his Martin guitar across his knees, serenading me with songs of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Folkways: the Unlabel Label
By Allen Jones
The Folkways story is a fascinating history of the label that approached recording and issuing records based solely on the uniqueness of the music itself. The Harry Smith Anthology alone would elevate the

Folkways brand, but there was so much more. Insider recollections on how some of the iconic recordings were made (eg. Lightning Hopkins' 1959 record) are priceless. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Key Part of the Folk Revival By NRL It's almost a simplification to say that Folkways Records was a key part of the folk revival. The label, founded by Moses Asch, was documenting national and world folk music, jazz and a small bit of experimental classical music before the revival began, and since it was sold to the Smithsonian Institution well after the revival ended. Folkways was and is a treasure house of music by Pete, Mike and Peggy Seeger (and their family), Ewan MacColl, Doc Watson, Jean Ritchie, Leadbelly and Big Bill Broonzy among many others, and it has also purchased and kept in print other small labels, most significantly the series Richard Dyer Bennet made of his own work. Richard Carlin's book is a coffee-table overview of this rich legacy. It's very readable, and the coffee table format works because Folkways was also known for its album cover art, often done by well known artists such as Ben Shahn. Many of these covers are reproduced in this book, though I think in too small size. I'd love to see a volume of full-page reproductions of Folkways albums. That said, this book is an excellent tribute to an important artistic resource; it will be a good introduction for novices and an enjoyable romp through memories for those who already know and love the label.

A man, a microphone, and a dream When he opened his tiny recording studio in New York in 1940, Moses Asch had a larger-than-life dream: To document and record all the sounds of his time. He created Folkways Records to achieve his goal, not just a record label but a statement that all sounds are equal and every voice deserves to be heard. The Folkways catalog grew to include a myriad of voices, from world- and roots-music to political speeches; the voices of contemporary poets and steam engines; folk singers Lead Belly and Woody Guthrie and jazz pianists Mary Lou Williams and James P. Johnson; Haitian vodoun singers and Javanese court musicians; deep-sea sounds and sounds from the outer ring of Earth's atmosphere. Until his death in 1986, Asch, with the help of collaborators ranging from the eccentric visionary Harry Smith to academic musicologists, created more than 2000 albums, a soundscape of the contemporary world still unequalled in breadth and scope. *Worlds of Sound* documents this improbable journey. Along the way you'll meet: A young Pete Seeger, revolutionizing the world with his five-string banjo The amazing vocal ensembles of the Ituri Pygmies North American tree frogs Ella Jenkins's children's music Lead Belly singing "The Midnight Special" The nueva cancion of Suni Paz. Folkways became a part of the Smithsonian Institution's collections shortly after Asch's death. Today Smithsonian Folkways continues to make the "worlds of sound" Moe Asch first dreamed of 60 years ago available to all. The Folkways vision is expansive and all-inclusive, and *Worlds of Sound* advances its rich and lively spirit.

Worlds of Sound tells a tale that sings, drums, plays, chirps, rings, trills, and thrums. Thank you, Richard Carlin, for telling the Folkways story—one of the most vibrant, exciting tales of all time. *Worlds of Sound* is a monumental study that captures the vision of Moses "Moe" Asch and his lifelong effort to preserve folk music in the 20th century. Richard Carlin eloquently captures Asch's life and his recordings in a book that features stunning photography and artwork. "The book is breezy but insightful and informative, with the chapters covering different aspects of the label and its history, so it's easy to skip around, and it's laid out with lots of pictures of album covers, recording sessions, and documents for the label's history." "Carlin's book -- richly illustrated, and with a world-ranging CD sampler as a lagniappe -- is a welcome, long-overdue celebration of the musical entrepreneur and his singular idea."