



# Jazz in American Culture (American Ways Series)

*Burton W. Peretti*

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## **Jazz in American Culture (American Ways Series) Burton W. Peretti**

This history of jazz, spanning the twentieth century, is the first to place it within the broad context of American culture. Burton Peretti argues persuasively that this distinctive American music has been a key thread in the tapestry of the nation's culture. The music itself, its players and its audience, and the critical debates it has prompted, tell us much about changes in American life since 1910. Mr. Peretti traces the emergence of jazz out of ragtime during a time of tumultuous growth of cities and industries. In the 1920s jazz flourished and symbolized the cultural struggle between modernists and traditionalists. As American sought reassurance and self-esteem during the Great Depression, jazz reached new levels of sophistication in the Swing Era. World War II encouraged rapid changes in popular tastes, and in the postwar decades jazz became both a voice of a globally dominant America and an avant-garde music reflecting social and political turmoil. Today, Mr. Peretti concludes, jazz symbolizes important cultural trends and enjoys a new prestige in a complex musical scene. *Jazz in American Culture* tells a peculiarly American story, evaluating the music as well as those who created it, and opening new perspectives on our cultural history.

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