



Thriving on a Riff: Jazz & Blues Influences in African American Literature and Film

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From the Harlem Renaissance to the present, African American writers have drawn on the rich heritage of jazz and blues, transforming musical forms into the written word. In this companion volume to *The Hearing Eye*, distinguished contributors ranging from Bertram Ashe to Steven C. Tracy explore the musical influence on such writers as Sterling Brown, J.J. Phillips, Paul Beatty, and Nathaniel Mackey. Here, too, are Graham Lock's engaging interviews with contemporary poets Michael S. Harper and Jayne Cortez, along with studies of the performing self, in Krin Gabbard's account of Miles Davis and John Gennari's investigation of fictional and factual versions of Charlie Parker. The book also looks at African Americans in and on film, from blackface minstrelsy to the efforts of Duke Ellington and John Lewis to rescue jazz from its stereotyping in Hollywood film scores as a signal for sleaze and criminality. Concluding with a proposal by Michael Jarrett for a new model of artistic influence, *Thriving on a Riff* makes the case for the seminal cross-cultural role of jazz and blues.

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