



Jazz in Its Time

Martin Williams

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From record album liner notes to serious academic pieces, Martin Williams has been perceptively chronicling the development of jazz for over three decades. In this, his newest collection of jazz writings, Williams brings together many of his best pieces and covers new ground, with short columns on Teddy Wilson and George Winston and a longer article, "How Long Has This Been Going On?," examining the current state of jazz. In this last work, Williams notes that jazz is experiencing a period of "stylistic retrenchment or, if you will, a period of conservatism," and questions the fusion of jazz with rock. Williams cites the opinion of Wynton Marsalis and a number of other musicians, who "seem to see the whole fusion thing as a kind of commercial opportunism and artistic blind alley, maybe even a betrayal of the music." Arranged roughly according to the form of the writing (music reviews, profiles, etc.) the pieces included here examine the musicianship of jazz greats from Sidney Bechet to Ornette Coleman, including Lionel Hampton, Lee Konitz, Art Farmer, and others. There are also thought pieces on the development and direction of jazz and jazz scholarship. Together, these works provide an insightful overview of the development of jazz over the past twenty years.

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