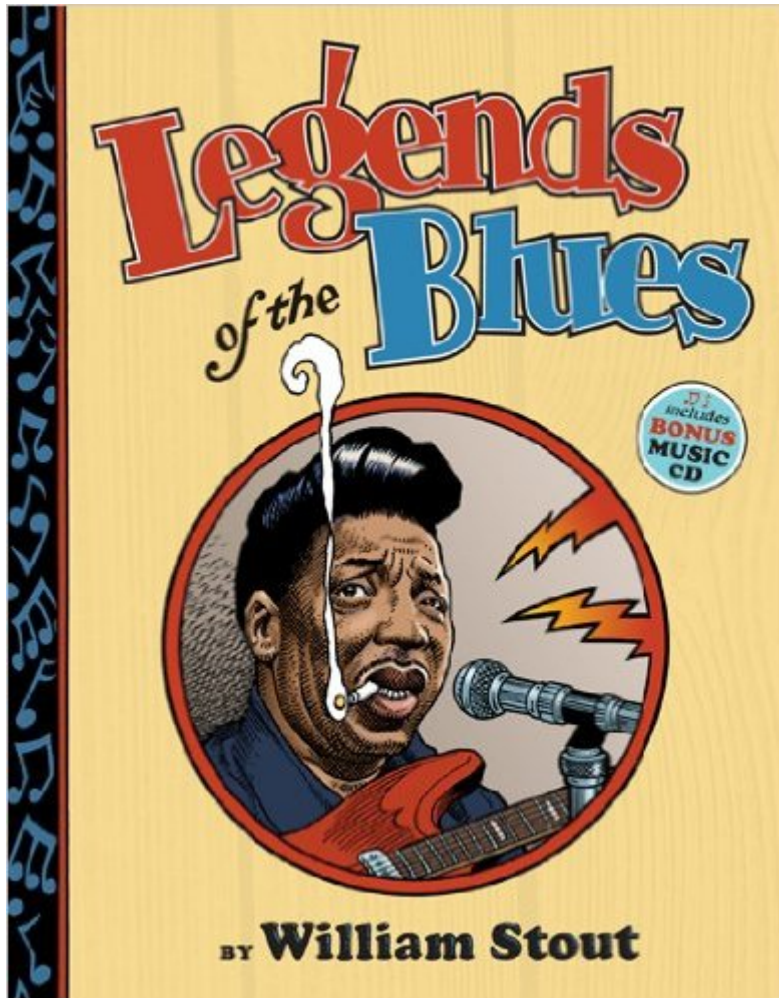


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Legends Of The Blues



Synopsis

Robert Johnson, Ma Rainey, Billie Holiday, Howlin' Wolf, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters; say their names out loud and you can just hear the blues. Now, acclaimed artist William Stout visualizes these artists and their music with 100 stunning portraits. This graphically powerful collection includes profiles of classic musicians drawn by a master illustrator. Stout beautifully captures the signature style of each blues legend and then adds authoritative biographical text with personal and humorous writing that brings it on home. Includes recommended playlists and an exclusive bonus music CD. Praise for Legends of the Blues: "So good, you'd think illustrator William Stout made a deal with the devil." Mother Jones.com "I could go on and on about how much I love Stout's detailed pen-and-ink work and pleasing watercolors." Boing Boing

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams; Har/Com II edition (May 7, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1419706861

ISBN-13: 978-1419706868

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 7.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (26 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

If you loved Robert Crumb's legendary "Heroes of the Blues" Trading Card Set issued in the early 1980s, then you will be very familiar with the look and the style of William Stout's "Legends of the Blues." A few of these images were designed by Stout for a SHOUT Records CD release. The intention was to mimic the format Crumb used after it became clear Crumb was not going to continue the series. Stout just kept going after creating the first few and ended up with 150, 100 of which are in this collection. It appears the images were originally supposed to be trading cards, but were published in book form instead. This is an outstanding little book for Blues aficionados. There

are 100 artists presented. Some are well known, others less so. Each page has a biography on the left side including full name, instruments played, recommended tracks, interesting covers and trivia. The biographies are about 300 words long and very comprehensive often citing notable associations with other performers and life events. They are very interesting and good, informative reading. On the right side of the page is Stout's portrait of that particular artist. His art style is intentionally similar to Robert Crumb's work on his trading card set. The drawings are excellent and very expressive and the colors and backgrounds are fantastic. A great addition to this collection is a CD which is a compilation from SHOUT Records representing some of the finest work by several of the Blues artists in the book. I have heard many of the songs before, but there were also some very obscure ones. The CD is definitely a great value when added to the book. In the back of the book you can also find an outstanding bibliography for those who would like to read further. The only thing I wish was different about the book is it's size. The book is about 5.5" x 7," in proportion to a typical trading card enlarged around 200%. Unfortunately the small size creates the need for very small, hard to read text. I wonder if this book would not have been even better if it was less dedicated to preserving Crumb's trading card format and been larger, maybe 8" x 10," like the average graphic novel. I think the art work would have been cooler on the larger format pages and perhaps even more information could have been included in the biographies including some album covers (if they existed) and photos. However, this was not the intention of the artist, it's merely my thoughts, so I certainly won't deduct any points for it. I highly recommend this book for fans of Blues and also for fans of artists like Robert Crumb and Drew Friedman.

Blues fans--get this book. If you'd like a cool little book filled with great ink and watercolor portraits of blues artists--male and female--plus a succinct biography of each--this is another book to put in your library--next to R. Crumb's original book on blues artists. I say another book because it's very similar to Crumb's book of blues artists from a few years ago--same publisher, same format, same art style, a CD of blues music--pretty much the same everything. And that's a good thing. Being a longtime fan ("Mr. Natural"--yeah!) I wished that Crumb would do a second volume because the combination of his style and the subject matter combines to catch each bluesman's/woman's personality--even taking into account Crumb's hard-to-define watercolor style. But now William Stout has stepped up and continued along the same path--and for all intents and purposes this is volume two. This new book includes many well known blues artists--but to his credit Stout also included quite a few lesser known (but great) artists too. Am I getting spoiled by asking for a third volume? And in case you missed it--look for Crumb's (LP-sized) book of album covers/drawing/etc. from a while back. Very,

very cool.

I bought this for my wife who grew up in Mississippi and is a Blues fanatic. While she normally can't be bothered with books, she absolutely loved this one. In fact, she had to show me every single drawing and give me the Mississippi-insider's take on each of the legendary Bluesmen. Like my wife, I too am a big Blues fan, and although I lack the Mississippi-insider's perspective, I found it to be an awesome compilation. Note that I have long been a William Stout fan and have a number of his convention sketch books and even a few original sketches. As such, it was great to find that he also shared our love of the Blues and my wife and I both look forward to follow-up collections. Note: 's packaging was less than stellar. Still giving this book 5 stars since this a review of the book, not 's packaging and shipping department.

I had not been so lucky as to be introduced to Blues when I was growing up. Only had the vague knowledge that I would probably like it, many of my favorite musicians claimed to have been inspired by it. Some are mentioned as "interesting covers" such as, Elvis (of course!), Chuck Berry, Cream, Fleetwood Mac, Led Zeppelin and many more. Mr. Stout researched each singer, reported the good and the bad of their lives, such as the tragic tale of Billie Holiday's life. I had no idea this woman, one I had been familiar with, lead such a horrible life. The women had reason to sing the Blues. The stories are short, all limited to a page. But it could be a launching pad to discovering more about each one. Each performer has a picture al a R. Crumb but never a full caricature, but a style Mr Stout perfected to bring the personality of each artist to life. My favorite is Robert Johnson, the one Blues singer I knew due to the supernatural mythology which was reflected perfectly in his portrait. I would recommend this book for everyone who loves music, and those who are curious about the Blues. Did I mention it also comes with a great CD, which has songs maybe not as polished as music we are use to, but if played loud puts you into another place, an era where this music was born. There is something for everyone , wonderful original art, concise bios, recommended tracks, covers and even a little music. This is an amazing book.

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