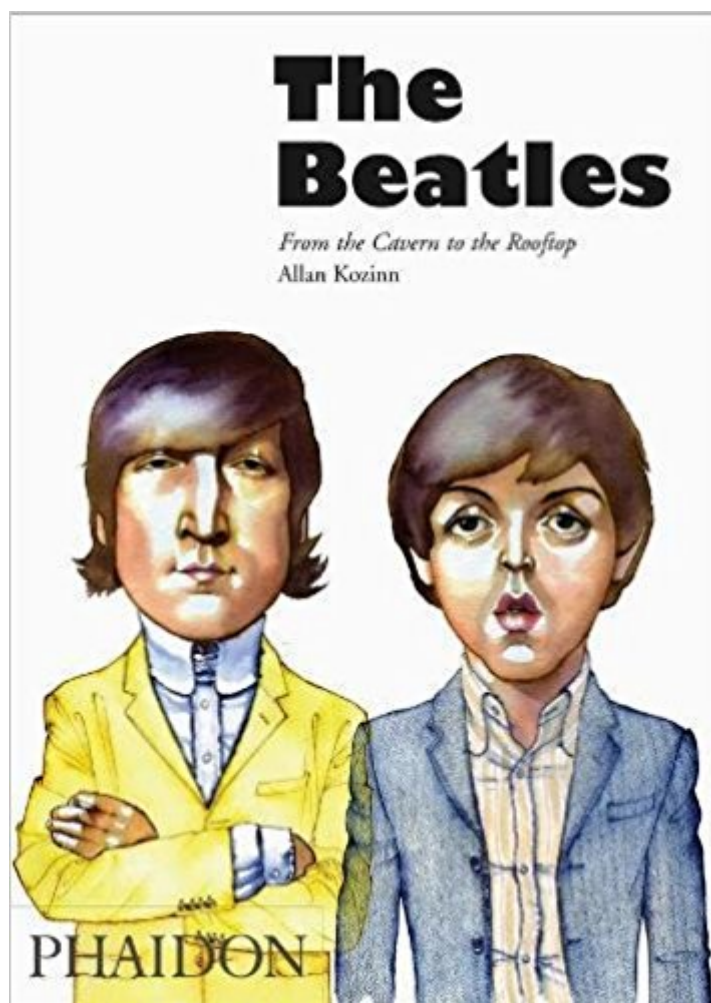


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The Beatles: From The Cavern To The Rooftop



Synopsis

The Beatles follows the extraordinary development of four self-taught musicians from Liverpool, from their beginnings, until the break-up in 1970. This biography sets the group's evolution against the backdrop of a popular culture explosion in the 1960s. A serious study of the Beatles' music is expanded here by consideration not only of the group's commercially released disks but also of rare working tapes which both shed light on the compositional process and reveal how many of their milestone recordings took shape in the studio. It also examines why the innovative music of the Beatles - created, at least initially, as ephemera - has remained so durable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Do John Lennon and Paul McCartney really belong up there in the Serious Music pantheon with the likes of Alban Berg, Igor Stravinsky, and Richard Strauss? The editors of the Phaidon 20th-Century Composers series obviously think so. What's more, author Allan Kozinn makes a strong scholarly case for the Beatles, who in a stunningly short time moved from fairly basic, four-chord ditties to musically sophisticated compositions that hold up well to the present day. Kozinn, a classical music critic for the New York Times, is also a long-time Beatles aficionado who knows the difference between the stereo and monophonic versions (sometimes an extra "woo" creeps in) of the early songs. He appreciates them both as pop phenomenon and musical pathfinders, and his writing is consistently top-notch. As with all the Phaidon books in this series, there are no musical examples given, but Kozinn does a superb job within the restrictions of the series' format. Beatles fans will

want to own this one, and classical music lovers interested in understanding the phenomenon might also give it a try. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

What? Another book about the Fab Four? Kozinn, a classical music critic for the New York Times and author of *Mischa Elman and the Romantic Style*, avoids another repetition of facts already known about John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr by focusing more on the music and less on the personalities. Yes, there is the history?the group's Liverpool roots, and the long hours spent at all-night Hamburg dives?but Kozinn gives real insight into the influences of Chuck Berry, Roy Orbison and skiffle bands. While Kozinn notes that the Beatles generated "a perfectly balanced, freakishly rare form of musical and personal chemistry," he also shows how Lennon, McCartney and Harrison grew farther and farther apart as composers, each developing his own voice, each making his own experiments. Kozinn is also master of the small details. Abbey Road was supposed to be called Everest; the original lyrics to "Yesterday" were "Scrambled eggs/ oh lady, how I love your legs." Most important is the author's descriptions of the songs. The Beatles released about 10 hours of music, the author says, with nary a loser in the lot. Kozinn is a thorough, persuasive guide through the Beatles' musical bridges, crescendos, odd bars and dialogue loops?for the most part without the snappy, shallow patter of too many rock critics. Photos.

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First, you should be aware that this book is a reprint of Mr. Kozinn's earlier book called simply "The Beatles," so don't make the mistake I almost did of buying this if you already own the pervious one. Now on to the review...I am a professor of music and teach a course on the music of the Beatles. This book was my first choice for the course textbook, but unfortunately it was out of print and we couldn't get enough copies for my students. So I am delighted that it is again available and I can use it for my class. I have read dozens of books on the Beatles, and this is one of my very favorites. It is not the book to read for someone looking for a recreational overview of the Beatles. There is enough biography to give the reader a good timeline of their career together, but it is not as in depth as in other books. That is not its intent. It is meant as a piece of serious music criticism, and in that regard it is excellent. Only MacDonald and Riley can compete in insightful observations about the music (although he does not attempt to address every single song as the former do). But Kozinn beats both of them with his engaging writing style. His prose is a pleasure to read!Kozinn brings his years of experience as a classical music critic for the New York Times to the task. His broad historical knowledge of music, and his demand for the highest aesthetic standards from the artists

he reviews, is something that is sadly lacking in most rock criticism. He demands the same artistry from the Beatles as he does from the best classical composers or the finest symphony orchestras. Some readers might be put off by this (see some of the other reviews posted here), but it is ultimately a sign of respect; the best rock music deserves no less than to be measured by the yardstick with which other great art is measured. This book accomplishes that as well or better than any other to date.

This is the book to read if you're looking for a sober analysis of The Beatles life and music. Kozinn's biographical accounts are almost never whimsical; they are used to explain the musical development of the group. There's also the right balance between high-level analysis of the songs, albums, studio recording techniques and lyrics. If you don't know much about The Beatles story, this is your book. If you do, it will bring your knowledge into focus, with great insights on individual songs. My big complaint is the ending: the author seems to rush through it, and his approach of the last two albums -- "Let it be" and "Abbey Road" -- is much more superficial than what you'd expect from the rest of the book. One gets the feeling Kozinn got tired and just wanted to be done with it. He redeems himself in the Epilogue, with a great fast-forward chronicle of The Beatles' post-breakup careers. It is an overall great analysis and biography of The Beatles as a group and the contribution of each member to their incredible musical development throughout their short career.

This is a serious look at the development of Beatles music and what influenced it, currently being used in college (Beatles) courses that include NYU, written by Allan Kozinn, Culture Reporter and Beatles specialist of the New York Times (for over 35 years). Few Beatles scholars surpass Kozinn in knowledge and experience regarding the topic. Uniformed readers have suggested Kozinn did not accurately address the cause of the Beatles break up in this work. This book is not intended to be a sensationalistic look at the Beatles, but an academic look at the development of their music, and what influenced it. Kozinn is a serious Beatles collector and historian who few Beatles scholars equal. He has interviewed Paul McCartney numerous times, Ringo, Yoko, George Martin and numerous people in the Beatles' small circles. He has unreleased audios and full manuscripts of these interviews. What he knows of their break-up, comes from unchallengeable sources. A second critical view claiming Kozinn's preference of McCartney to Lennon, as indicated by the choice of cover art (written by a man who did not like something Kozinn wrote of him in a review of his work for the Times), is wrong on two counts: Kozinn does not alter the facts, nor does he prefer Lennon

to McCartney. He never hesitates to credit Paul where credit is due -- in addition to his musical talent -- for being the impetus for their success, the driving force behind their productivity, his social and media savvy, his winsome personality and kindness toward the press when interviewed, etc. This book, regarding the way the music branched off, into the more avant garde, is credited largely to Lennon. Paul himself, says it -- he even credits Yoko for her influence in moving them toward more daring projects. And for the record, the cover art (for both printings) was chosen by the publisher, not the writer.

Great book depicting their story all the way through. Fun to read.

This book is a great read. The book came on time and the book was in perfect condition, just like it was described as. Thank You!

A serious look at the development of Beatles music and what influenced it. Currently being used in college (Beatles) courses that include NYU. Written by Allan Kozinn, Culture Reporter and Beatles specialist of the New York Times. Few Beatles scholars surpass Kozinn in knowledge and experience regarding the topic.

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