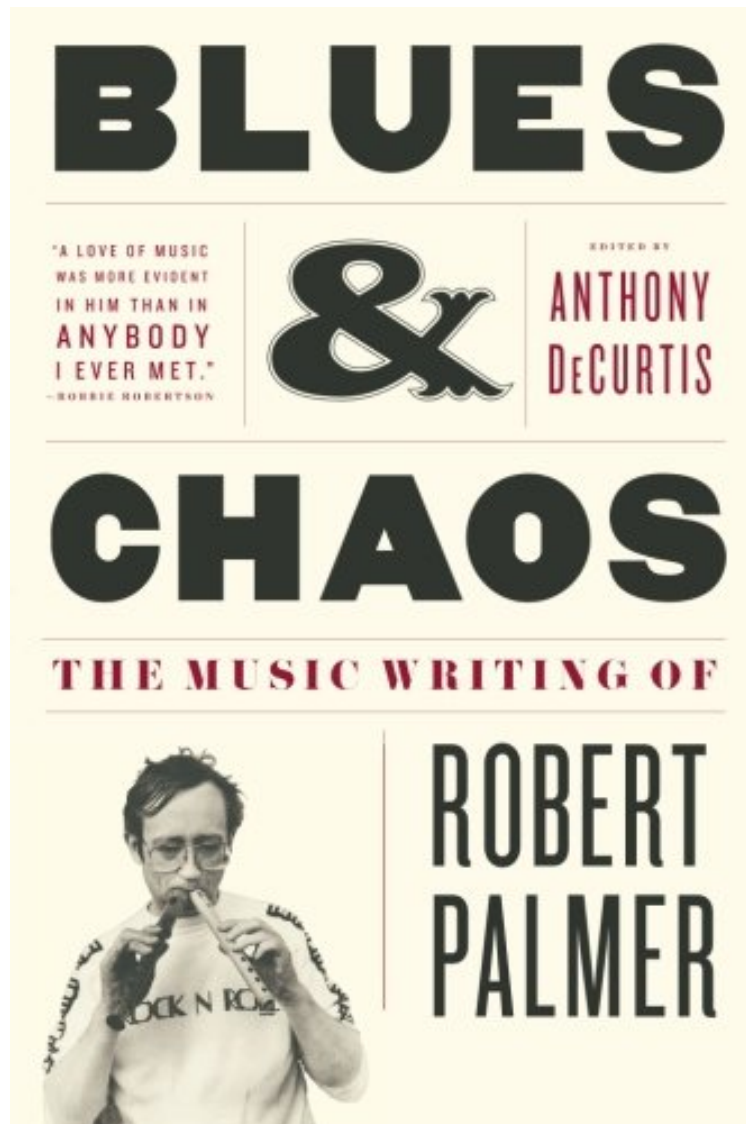


(Read free ebook) Blues Chaos: The Music Writing of Robert Palmer

Blues Chaos: The Music Writing of Robert Palmer

Robert Palmer M.D.

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Robert Palmer M.D. : Blues Chaos: The Music Writing of Robert Palmer before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Blues Chaos: The Music Writing of Robert Palmer:

20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. GREAT COLLECTION OF WRITING ON MUSIC By Stuart Jefferson Hardcover-432 pages of text. There is an index, and a sixteen page introduction written by Anthony DeCurtis, giving a short look into (the late) Robert Palmer's writing on music. There are no photographs accompanying the text. The various essays/interviews are grouped-such as "Jazz", "The Blues", "The Originators", "Soul and RB", "Classic Rock", "World Music", "Punk and Beyond", etc., instead of in chronological order of writing. There are

also excerpts from his writings on Morocco and an excerpt from an interview with William Burroughs. This great collection finally brings together many of Palmer's best writing concerning music and the people who make it, thanks to another noted music writer, Anthony DeCurtis. Palmer is mostly known for his wonderful book, "Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History of the Mississippi Delta" (which should be in every blues listener's library), and others such as "The Rolling Stones", "Rock and Roll: An Unruly History", and "Baby, That Was Rock and Roll: The Legendary Leiber and Stroller". Palmer wasn't an authority on just one style of music—he seemed to have an innate sense of what makes for good music, no matter what type. While this collection isn't all of his best writing (there is still a great deal of it out there), what this great book does is bring into sharp focus a number of his best pieces, over many years and different musical subjects. Besides the above books, Palmer wrote many reviews/articles for "Rolling Stone Magazine", back when that magazine (and others) was still important musically, and he was the first person to hold the title of chief pop critic for "The New York Times". One other important point—Palmer was himself a musician (I still play his two albums when he was in the band THE INSECT TRUST), which gave him an extra feel and insight into music-making. What elevated Palmer's writing above most of the others of the time was his obvious enthusiasm for his subjects. No matter what genre of music, if Palmer thought it had value he wrote about it with great insight and excitement. He was widely quoted and looked to for his opinion in many areas of music. His writing brought support to many musicians/bands who sometimes needed a boost into the public eye. Just some of the people/scenes he passionately wrote about included Philip Glass, Steve Reich, THE ROLLING STONES, the punk music scene, Charles Mingus, a number of blues artists, and THE VELVET UNDERGROUND. This book collects all that and much more. His way of drawing readers into his essays/reviews was second to none. At times, in the interviews, you get an almost "you are there" feel from his writing. His essays will make you think. His way of combining entertaining prose with extraordinary knowledge, and an excitement for his subject, made you want to go out and hear all this incredible music that you somehow had missed, or maybe needed to hear again with Palmer's insights. Palmer has the innate knack for both observing and getting to the heart of what music is. His opinions are usually grounded in the historical past—music (whatever genre) is based on something (blues, gospel, etc.) that came before. His writings will make you stop and think about the music you're listening to. On reading his opinions on rock roll as opposed to "rock", or the blues, for example, Palmer brings to light ideas and opinions that seem to get inside the very heart of what music was, is, and maybe might become. He uses examples (Springsteen, ROLLING STONES, Presley, for instance) to get his point(s) across as to just what it really is. On the subject of jazz innovators/innovation, Palmer argues that (to paraphrase), blacks (as they were known in the 70's), such as Armstrong, Ellington, and Parker for instance, have been the ones who have formulated and pushed every major movement in the genre. And that white musicians, while popular (Keith Jarrett, WEATHER REPORT as examples) have done relatively little, if anything to advance jazz. Palmer writes that it is because black culture is imbued with another form of music, the blues, which has been endemic to their culture for so long, while white jazz players' ideas are steeped in European movements. Whether you agree completely or partially, or not at all, Palmer brings up ideas that needed (and still need) to be aired. This is why on reading his essays, you will more than likely come away listening to your favorite music with more insight and appreciation. With this book listeners of many genres of music can once again, or for the first time (I envy you), revel in Palmer's style of making his subjects and ideas come alive on the page as few writers can. I can vividly remember reading (usually in "Rolling Stone Magazine") his reviews/thoughts on blues (especially) and jazz artists (Sun Ra), and other areas of music I was not, at the time, familiar with (Moroccan trance music for example), and wanting to go out and purchase the music he so excitedly and passionately wrote about. Now, with this wonderful collection spanning a number of years and several genres, many more music listeners will get the chance to read Palmer's insights into the heart of what makes good music.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. See where it leads you. By Misterpicker A great collection of Robert Palmer's newspaper articles, magazine pieces, and liner notes. Worth reading if only as a guide to steer you towards some brilliant music you may not be deeply familiar with, like the 5 Royales, early Little Richard, Beefheart, Terry Riley, etc. Of course Palmer was also worth reading on many of the major artists of his era, like the Stones and Van Morrison. This was an era in which critics, and Palmer may have been one of the most influential, were still focused on "authenticity" in music, its fidelity to roots in blues, r b, whatever. Not sure that that matters so much any more, but Palmer is long gone, so unfortunately, we won't get his take on where things are now. Get Blues Chaos, and see where it leads you.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Fine Critic By Carter Grice A broad compendium of a great popular music critic, Blues and Chaos does a real service to fans of music writing. Palmer wrote for dozens of publications making a gathering together such as this a real boon. All types of popular music are covered in the form of reviews, CD annotations, interviews, and magazine profiles. I didn't put it down for a week.

Now in paperback, the definitive anthology from a writer who set the standard for newspaper pop-music criticism (The Philadelphia Inquirer), the New York Times first chief pop music critic and Rolling Stone contributor Robert Palmer. Robert Palmer's extraordinary knowledge and boundless love of music were evident in all his writing. He was an authority on rock roll, blues, jazz, punk, avant-garde, and world music often discovering new artists and trends years

(even decades) before they hit the mainstream. Noted music writer Anthony DeCurtis has compiled the best pieces from Palmer's oeuvre and presents them here, in one compelling volume. A member of the elite group of the defining rock critics who emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, Palmer possessed a vision so complete that, as DeCurtis writes, it almost as if, if you read Bob, you didn't need to read anyone else. *Blues Chaos* features some of his most memorable pieces about John Lennon, Led Zeppelin, Moroccan trance music, Miles Davis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Philip Glass, and Muddy Waters. Wonderfully entertaining, infused with passion, and deeply inspiring, *Blues Chaos* is a must for music fans everywhere.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Throughout his career as a critic and journalist for the *New York Times*, *Rolling Stone* and other publications (as well as books like *Deep Blues*), Palmer (1945-1997) strove for a unifying perspective that could cover all strains of American music, a set of procedures that will allow us to evaluate Charles Ives and James Brown as he wrote in a seminal 1979 essay. The breadth of his journalism is outstanding: he was one of the first writers to interview Sam Phillips, the head of Elvis Presley's first music label; soon after, he was alerting *Times* readers to the developing world music movement, and the year after that he was hanging out in the recording studio with John Lennon and Yoko Ono. He could write reviews of comprehensive box sets or write the liner notes for them, and either way the result would be an engaging, insightful essay crammed with historical details. One key test of any retrospective anthology of this sort is whether the reviews and essays are as relevant today as when they were first published, and on that front, Palmer scores an absolute success--his work . . . sets a standard for a critical appreciation of American culture. (Nov.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "There's so much good writing here."--A.V. Club "A posthumous collection of music writing that single-handedly justifies Palmer's inclusion into the pantheon of Essential Music Writers. . . . For the uninitiated, a revelation."--Oxford American "The breadth of genres and artists covered in *Blues Chaos* can be astonishing."--Memphis Flyer "Eloquent and calmly authoritative prose"--The *New York Times* "One key test of any retrospective anthology of this sort is whether the reviews and essays are as relevant today as when they were first published, and on that front, Palmer scores an absolute success--his work . . . sets a standard for a critical appreciation of American culture."--Publishers Weekly "Judiciously whittles down Palmer's writings--incisive, clever reviews, vivid, chatty profiles and more."--The *New York Times* "Reading *Blues Chaos*, a dazzling collection of writing . . . is to be reminded of [Robert Palmer's] singular talent, his range of interests and passions. . . . Editor Anthony DeCurtis has chosen wonderfully in this collection, which showcases Palmer's gifts as an informed enthusiast and brilliant chronicler of musical moments."--Times-Picayune "If you're a junkie for great music writing, you owe it to yourself to pick up *Blues Chaos*. Lovingly edited and assembled . . . this anthology does much to highlight Palmer's curiosity and enthusiasm as well as his scholarship."--The Patriot Ledger (Quincy, MA) "Remarkable"--Buffalo News "Palmer . . . set the standard for newspaper pop-music criticism for years."--Philadelphia Inquirer Bob was a kind of uber-tutor. Hanging around with him was like doing a PhD in whatever subject he was interested in. I was a fan, and I feel lucky to have met him. Bono About the Author Robert Palmer was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1945, and graduated from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 1964. He began writing for *Rolling Stone* in the early '70s -- and continued to do so as a contributing editor throughout his life. From 1981 until 1988, he was the chief pop music critic at The *New York Times*, the first person to hold that title, and he continued to write for the *Times* after that. He is the author of *Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History of the Mississippi Delta* (1981); *Baby That Was Rock and Roll: The Legendary Leiber and Stoller* (1978); *A Tale of Two Cities: Memphis Rock and New Orleans Roll* (1979); *Jerry Lee Lewis Rocks!* (1981); *The Rolling Stones* (1983); and *Rock Roll: An Unruly History* (1995). He wrote liner notes for dozens of releases, and his work appeared in virtually every music magazine published during his time, including *Downbeat*, *Crawdaddy*, *Guitar World*, and *Musician*. Palmer died in 1997. Anthony DeCurtis is a contributing editor at *Rolling Stone*, where his work has appeared since 1980. He has written for numerous music and entertainment magazines and newspapers. A former on-air correspondent and editorial director at VH1, he has contributed to a myriad of television specials and programs. DeCurtis holds a Ph.D. in American literature from Indiana University and he teaches at the University of Pennsylvania and the Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York. Anthony DeCurtis is a contributing editor at *Rolling Stone*, where his work has appeared since 1980. He has written for numerous music and entertainment magazines and newspapers. A former on-air correspondent and editorial director at VH1, he has contributed to a myriad of television specials and programs. DeCurtis holds a Ph.D. in American literature from Indiana University and he teaches at the University of Pennsylvania and the Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York.