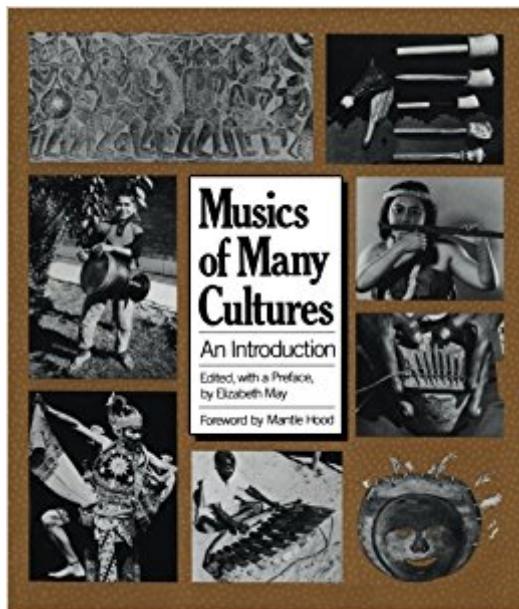


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Musics Of Many Cultures: An Introduction



Synopsis

From the rear cover of this 434 page book: "The foremost authorities in the field of music from around the world have contributed twenty original essays for this volume, edited by Elizabeth May. Only European musics have been omitted, except insofar as they affect other musics discussed here. North American music is represented by musics of Native Americans and the Alaskan Eskimos. The essays are profusely illustrated with maps, drawings, diagrams, photographs, and music examples. There are extensive glossaries, bibliographies, and annotated film lists. This book is directed to readers seriously interested in acquainting themselves with musics beyond the confines of Western musicology." Some of the contributors include: Bruno Netti, Kuo-huang Han, Lindy Li Mark, Kang-sook Lee, William P. Malm, David Morton, Bonnie C. Wade, Margaret J. Kartomi, Adrienne L. Kaeppler, Trevor A. Jones, Atta Annan Mensah, John Blacking, Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo, Kobla Ladzekpo, Cynthia Tse Kimerlin, Josef M. Pacholczyk, Ella Zonis, Abraham A. Schwadron, David P. McAllester, Lorraine D. Koranda, and Dale A. Olsen.

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Customer Reviews

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Elizabeth May received her Ph.D. from the Department of Music at UCLA, and taught at UCLA, Davis, Washington, Maryland, Michigan, and San Jose State.

While very informative, the writing styles vary greatly from each author. Some are easy to read others are very tedious. It's a required textbook for a university class.

great! thank you !

Nicely done... as expected.

That this 1980 book is still available 33 years later must speak for its usefulness as a college introductory survey, though its discography and filmography and bibliography are far away dated and, as far as the field is concerned, stagnated musically and probably obsolete in some ways theoretically. Take John Blacking's chapter on Trends in the Black Music of South Africa, 1959-1969, which serves only as a history, a time capsule, as so much has changed in music and its relationships with that nation's politics over the decades. A college freshman would scratch her head about its inclusion today. It and Yehudi Menuhin's The Music of Man were the first such books in my library, though I was interested in world music since the late 1950s. Like any edited anthology, the quality varies with the essay author, despite editorial guidance. The numerous illustrations of instruments and maps and photographs are helpful, as example scores. The book does have good features and it could very well encourage further studies of the field at large or of a particular culture.

This book is, I think, basically designed to be a college text on non-European music. If you're like me, you've been out of college quite a while, but I think you'll find this to be a useful reference

volume if you're interested in alternative musical traditions. Perhaps it's my imagination or simply my idiosyncratic point of perspective, but I believe that there has been an increase of interest in non-western music over the last couple of decades. My perspective is that I'm too old for the top 40, not interested in listening to the music I grew up with (it was bad enough listening to some of that stuff the first time!) and find that the classical station gets more banal each day. This book will help you to understand the subtleties of non-Western traditions, whether it be types of Indian ragas to use at different times of day, the normal arrangement of pieces in a traditional Arab presentation or the significance of variations in musical style in Japanese court music as opposed to the Kabuki theatre. Three stars, of course, is lukewarm praise, and there were various features of the book that I was not thrilled with, although some of them were unavoidable. The book is an edited collection of essays by various academics, and the quality is uneven. Some of them seem to almost be too thorough, and get bogged down in detail (Iranian, Japanese). Some are too sketchy (West African, Peruvian). Some just aren't there (other Native American). A couple seem to have provided an opportunity for the writer to air his or her pet projects (Chinese). Perhaps out of a jealousy to guard their preserves, most of the articles studiously avoided talking about cross-cultural influences (e.g., Arabic music on Iranian - or is it the other way round?), regarding which I would have appreciated some comment. I also think that it would not have been out of place to discuss some of the lesser known traditions with links to the West, such as gypsy music. Also, in general most (but not all) of the articles avoid discussing modern trends. Well, I suppose that there are limitations to what you can include between the covers of one book. This book does cover a lot of turf, and it has an extensive bibliography if you want to look into any one subject in more depth. Recommended if like me you want to have this kind of information in one volume on your bookshelf.

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