



Blues Boy: The Life and Music of B. B. King (American Made Music)

Sebastian Danchin

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B B. King has never let up in his fight to become the living personification of the best of the blues for the whole world. He was indeed the first to introduce blues to Japanese, Russian, and Chinese audiences. Although he was born in the days of swing and big bands, his music has blossomed and prospered even as rhythm & blues, rock'n'roll, soul, funk, and rap have taken a turn at becoming the height of music fashion.

"I don't think there is a better blues guitarist in the world than B. B. King." This statement by Eric Clapton could have been made also by Buddy Guy, the Rolling Stones, or Ireland's U2. All of them, and many others, have said recurrently that the man they nickname "King of the Blues" was their true mentor.

By exploring all aspects of King's life and career, this book like none other before provides an objective description of the man and his music. A revision of the edition published in France in 1993 by `editions du Limon, it supplements B. B. King's moving autobiography *Blues All Around Me*. Whereas King's is a book of memories, this is an objective story with careful historical perspective and observations from key witnesses. It draws on many printed sources, from King's published interviews, and from the author's recurring encounters with King and his manager since 1977.

It shows how in some ways B. B. King's life has conformed to the commonly adopted image of the blues singer's early years of poverty and hardship in the American South, a backdrop of cottonfields and muddy waters of the Mississippi River, a musical apprenticeship in the big city (Memphis), and a career that reaches its peak under the spotlights of Las Vegas.

B. B. King's success is shown here as the result of his uncommon doggedness, of his constant attention to fashion and to African-American culture, and of his respect for his audiences and his roots. By exploring all aspects of blues music's leading figure, this book conveys a portrait of a creative genius who also is just a man.

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