The Blues: A Very Short Introduction

Elijah Wald

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The Blues: A Very Short Introduction surveys a genre which lies at the heart of American culture. Blues is more of a broad musical tradition than a musical genre, with a constantly evolving pop culture. It explores its roots in work and praise songs, and its popularization by W. C. Handy. It follows its evolution from Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith to Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix; identifies the impact of rural field recordings of Blind Lemon Jefferson and Charley Patton; explores the influence of blues on country music and jazz; and looks at the rhythm and blues trends of the 1940s and 1950s, from T–Bone Walker to Muddy Waters.

Folk Music: A Very Short Introduction

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Folk Music: A Very Short Introduction explores a remarkably diverse musical genre. It considers folk musical traditions from across the globe, everything from music to accompany a Russian wedding near the Arctic Circle, to a group song in a small rainforest village in Brazil, and an Uzbek dance tune in Afghanistan. Three poignant songs from three widely separated regions — northern Afghanistan, Jewish Eastern Europe, and a ballad from the Anglo–American world — are living examples of the richness of this ever-changing musical genre. Musical notation and lyrics are included throughout.