



The Jazz Ear: Conversations over Music

Ben Ratliff

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"*The Jazz Ear* will be a permanent part of learning how to listen inside the musicians playing." Nat Hentoff, *Jazz Times*

Jazz is conducted almost wordlessly: John Coltrane rarely told his quartet what to do, and Miles Davis famously gave his group only the barest instructions before recording his masterpiece *Kind of Blue*. Musicians often avoid discussing their craft for fear of destroying its improvisational essence, rendering jazz among the most ephemeral and least transparent of the performing arts.

In *The Jazz Ear*, acclaimed music critic Ben Ratliff discusses with jazz greats the recordings that most influenced them and skillfully coaxes out a profound understanding of the men and women themselves, the context of their work, and how jazz—from horn blare to drum riff—is conceptualized. Ratliff speaks with Sonny Rollins, Ornette Coleman, Branford Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Wayne Shorter, Joshua Redman, and others about the subtle variations in generation and attitude that define their music.

Playful and keenly insightful, *The Jazz Ear* is a revelatory exploration of a unique way of making and hearing music.

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