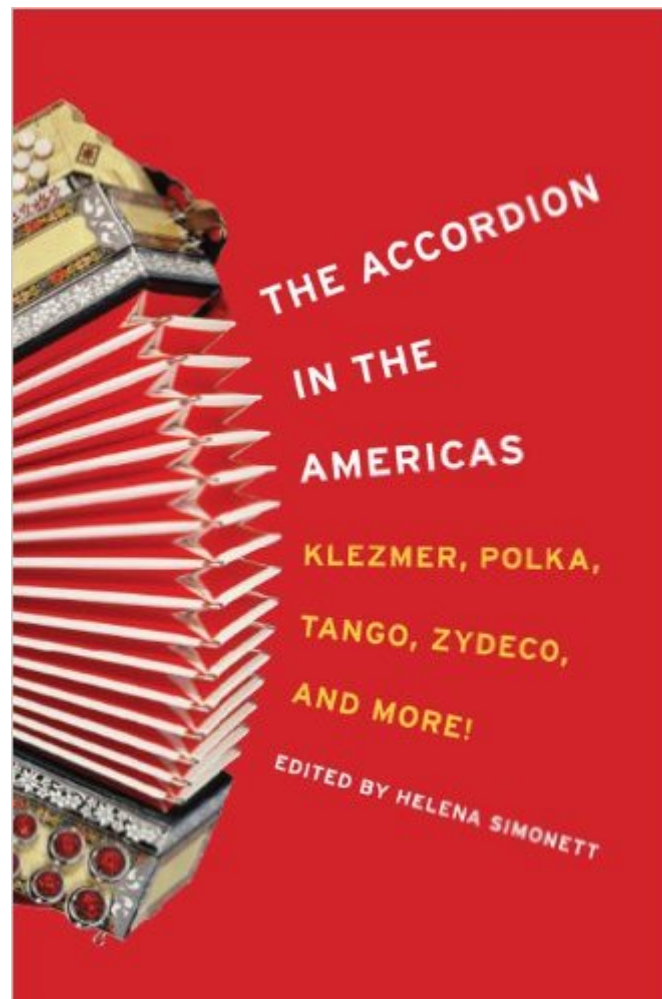


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The Accordion In The Americas: Klezmer, Polka, Tango, Zydeco, And More! (Music In American Life)



Synopsis

An invention of the Industrial Revolution, the accordion provided the less affluent with an inexpensive, loud, portable, and durable "one-man-orchestra" capable of producing melody, harmony, and bass all at once. Imported from Europe into the Americas, the accordion with its distinctive sound became a part of the aural landscape for millions of people but proved to be divisive: while the accordion formed an integral part of working-class musical expression, bourgeois commentators often derided it as vulgar and tasteless. This rich collection considers the accordion and its myriad forms, from the concertina, button accordion, and piano accordion familiar in European and North American music to the exotic-sounding South American bandoneón and the sanfoninha. Capturing the instrument's spread and adaptation to many different cultures in North and South America, contributors illuminate how the accordion factored into power struggles over aesthetic values between elites and working-class people who often were members of immigrant and/or marginalized ethnic communities. Specific histories and cultural contexts discussed include the accordion in Brazil, Argentine tango, accordion traditions in Colombia, cross-border accordion culture between Mexico and Texas, Cajun and Creole identity, working-class culture near Lake Superior, the virtuoso Italian-American and Klezmer accordions, Native American dance music, and American avant-garde. Contributors are María Susana Azzi, Egberto Bermúdez, Mark DeWitt, Joshua Horowitz, Sydney Hutchinson, Marion Jacobson, James P. Leary, Megwen Loveless, Richard March, Cathy Ragland, Helena Simonett, Jared Snyder, Janet L. Sturman, and Christine F. Zinni.

Book Information

Series: Music in American Life

Paperback: 344 pages

Publisher: University of Illinois Press; 1st Edition edition (September 28, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0252078713

ISBN-13: 978-0252078712

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.9 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (4 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #987,045 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #35 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Performing Arts > Dance > Tango #1466 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music

Customer Reviews

This was an in-depth and comprehensive history of one of my favorite musical instruments. The book covers how the instrument and music evolved throughout America. It is well written and enjoyable to read. I learned a great deal from the book and it also introduced me to some new musical styles that I had not listened to before. Highly recommended.

There is a wealth of information in this book; however, some of the information is of doubtful veracity and accuracy. I can't vouch for all of the contributing authors, but Marion Jacobson is an outstanding example of dubious, if not actually intentionally bad fact-checking. I'm not sure what she has against my father, but Ms. Jacobson certainly misread his intent when he wrote his article about playing Bach on the accordion as an "attack on the Stradella system." It was more of an explanation of why the free bass system was more suitable for Bach. And she can't seem to get the name of the accordion course he wrote straight. My father, Willard A. Palmer, Jr., was the author of the Palmer-Hughes Accordion Course, not "the Palmer method." The "Palmer Method" was a penmanship guide that had nothing to do with the accordion or my father. She also seems to think that my father was against the teaching of popular music, or that he felt that popular music on the accordion somehow damaged the value of the instrument. Nothing could be further from the truth. With people like Marion Jacobsen, who is nothing more than a sensationalist, writing articles for this book, how accurate can the rest of the information be?

This book is worth buying as an accordion lover. The author did a good job arranging the chapters and the contents within.

A mustie for the accordion academic world.

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