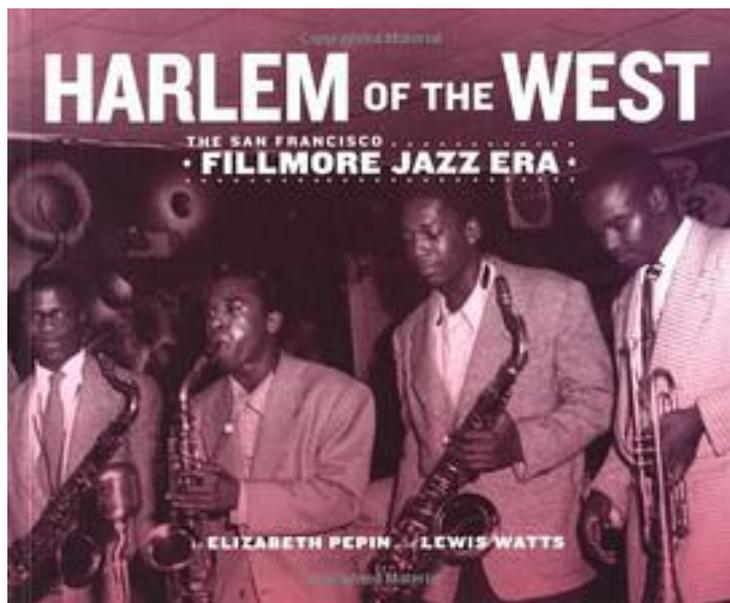


# Harlem of the West



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Billie Holiday singing at the New Orleans Swing Club. Dexter Gordon hanging out at Bop City. Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Parker, John Coltrane all swinging through for gigs. Was this slice of jazz history in New York or perhaps New Orleans? No, this was San Francisco's Fillmore District in its heyday. The Fillmore in the 1940's and 1950's was an eclectic, integrated and hopping neighborhood of streets full of restaurants, pool halls, theaters and stores - many minority-owned - and boasting two dozen active nightclubs and music joints within its one square mile. Although it has been commemorated in songs, poems and in Maya Angelou's, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, few people today know of the rich history of the Fillmore and its musical heyday because it vanished abruptly and so thoroughly due to redevelopment in the 1960's. Through dozens of archival photographs and oral accounts from the neighborhood residents and musicians who experienced it in its prime, Harlem of the

West celebrates this unique and rediscovered chapter in jazz history and the African-American experience on the West Coast.

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