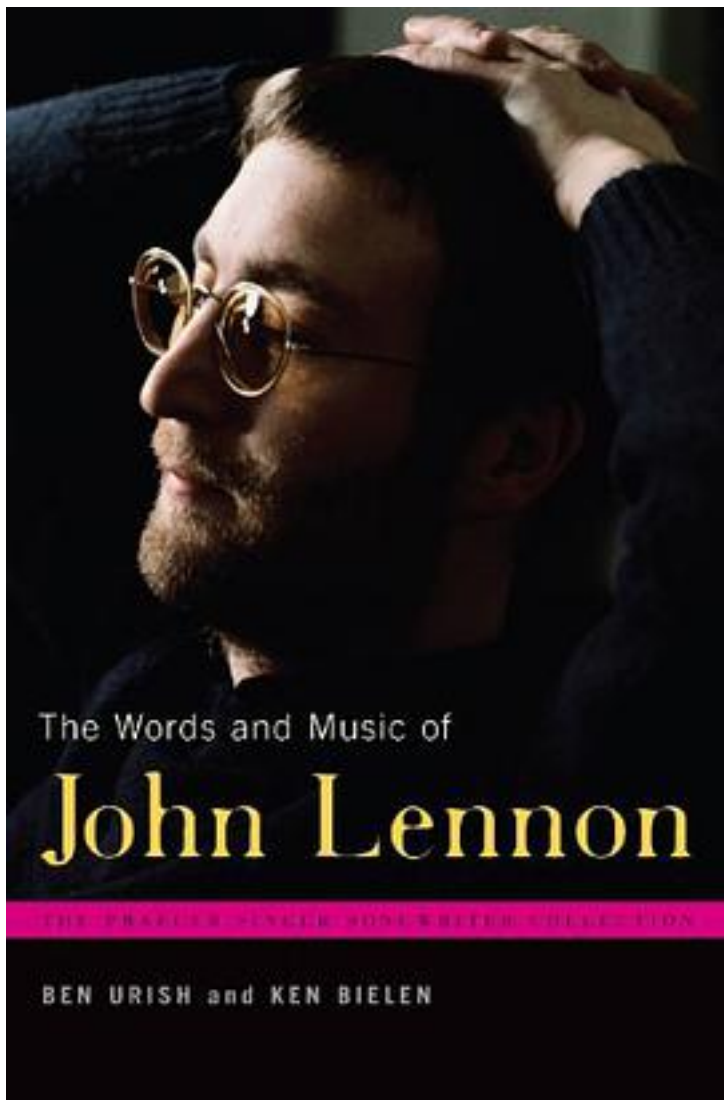


The Words and Music of John Lennon



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著者:Ben Urish

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Despite John Lennon's immense popularity, little attention has been paid to his work as an independent artist apart from the Beatles. John Lennon's solo artistry not only illuminates what he gave to the Beatles (and what the Beatles experience gave to him), but also constitutes a significant contribution to popular music in general. Lennon was able to fuse experiments in technology, instrumentation, lyrics, and musical form into artistically and commercially successful recordings. And whether expressing emotions, explaining philosophies, protesting social situations, or ruminating on the joys and pains of personal entanglements, few singer-songwriters have been John Lennon's equal. The authors argue that, although he is often lauded as a spokesperson for his generation, this praise is far too limiting. Lennon was able to transform the intensely personal into the deeply universal (as well as the reverse), often with humour and pointed insight. At their core, Lennon's songs are simultaneously humanistic and transcendent. They were written about the human condition, and always strove to improve it. And as such, they - and he - continue to be relevant, and will certainly remain a valuable part of our cultural heritage for a long time to come.

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