

The Handbook of Texas Music



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Texas Music was born at the crossroads of America. And it has reached out from there to touch the world. Texas has been a remarkably fertile seedbed for music coming from every point of the compass, and few places on any continent have produced musical styles and musicians whose artistic and cultural impact have been so profound on a national and international scale. Name virtually any style of music and there is a Texas musician whose popularity and influence have been enormous and pivotal in that genre--from the ragtime of Scott Joplin to the Tejano music of Selena, the electrifying blues guitar of T-Bone Walker to the distinctive country vocal styling of Willie Nelson, the bluesy wail of rocker Janis Joplin to the frantic rockabilly drive of Buddy Holly and the subtle piano jazz of Teddy Wilson. The Handbook of Texas Music documents all of these and many more. It is a comprehensive, authoritative source on Texas music--an encyclopedia and biographical dictionary that covers all aspects of Texas music, including over 125 striking illustrations of performers and musical artifacts. For centuries Texas has been a musical and cultural crossroads, and The Handbook of Texas Music carefully documents the complex convergence of numerous musical and cultural traditions in this state where east meets west, southern plantations meet high plains ranches, and where an ethnically diverse American culture shares an international border with Mexico. The music of American Indians,

Anglo-Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and numerous immigrant groups--Germans, Czechs, and Cajuns, among many others--was brought to Texas from every direction. These groups crossed paths, and for centuries have been swapping songs and styles ranging from ancient fiddle tunes to lively polkas and boogie-woogie piano stomps. The stories of Texas music are as powerful as the music itself, and The Handbook of Texas Music tells those stories well.

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