

1929



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著者:Turner, Frederick

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Paperback: 400 pages Publisher: Counterpoint Press (May 1, 2004) Language: English ISBN: 1582433097 Product Dimensions: 8.0 x 5.3 x 1.1 inches If the primary "function" of a historical novel is to completely transport readers back in time--and the more accurate and natural the transportation the better, of course--then this extraordinary first novel has to be accorded first-rate status within the genre. The world into which the reader is willingly, even lovingly, pulled is to some extent given away by the book's title: America in the late 1920s, when bootleg booze and red-hot jazz could be sought in almost any speakeasy in any burg big or small across the country. And that is exactly the smoky, syncopated environment Turner graphically and even elegiacally conjures in this fictional account of the life of Bix Beiderbecke, famous jazz coronet player. Bix, who was white, lived a short and burn-the-candle-at-both-ends life. But he is remembered by jazz aficionados--and is here remembered very distinctly by a man who knew him, Herman Weiss, the road manager of one of the bands with which Bix played. Herman ushers in the story of Bix as if playing the role of James Boswell to Bix's Samuel Johnson, but from the vantage point of "his [own] obscure life on the fringes of the Bix phenomenon." These years were the Roaring Twenties, of course, "crazy times, unprecedented times in which nobody knew what was going to happen next and few seemed to care." Al Capone and Bing Crosby make appearances here, as do many other actual figures, all of them anchoring Turner's beautifully styled narrative to real events. Bix's was a meteoric life, caught here in full flame.

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