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Ralph J. Gleason

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Ralph J. Gleason : Conversations in Jazz: The Ralph J. Gleason Interviews before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Conversations in Jazz: The Ralph J. Gleason Interviews:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Bob LazrineDated, but if your a long time jazz lover, very informative and enjoyable.8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. RALPH J. GLEASON IS "A GOOD LISTENER." DUKE ELLINGTON.By Stuart JeffersonSadly, I think there are many people who don't know Ralph

Gleason's name. If you didn't come up in the '60s era (and especially if you're not a jazz fan) his name means nothing. And that's too bad because Gleason wrote about jazz and then the music that came out of S.F. in the late '60s like few did. The interviews included here were (except one) done in Gleason's living room. This book is the first time the complete interviews have been publicly available. Gleason wrote a long running newspaper column and was the jazz critic for the S.F. Chronicle. He understood and loved jazz and wrote about it with intelligence and insight. The interviews are from the years 1959-1961, and include a number of musicians who either had changed the sound of jazz (Bill Evans, Philly Joe Jones) or would do so in the near future (Coltrane, Rollins) to name just a few, along with a number of other well known musicians. Included are "back and forth" conversations (as opposed to a strict interview style) with people like Quincy Jones, John Lewis, Percy Heath, Horace Silver, Jon Hendricks, and other musicians who were passing through S.F. on tour. Gleason intended to use his interviews as information for his writing, and his ability to "get next to" his subjects shines through in these pieces. His writing style was always easy to digest and his observations and enthusiasm for the music gave readers more insight into the jazz genre. Deep jazz fans will want to check out this book. There's no photographs. This is a well made book, printed in America with archival paper used to preserve his writing. For me it's a good addition to my jazz library. Gleason was one of those people who both loved jazz and could put that feeling into his writing--no matter if he was writing his column, album liner notes, or a stand alone piece for a magazine. And if his writing intrigues you check out another book of his work (released at the same time as this book) on jazz, blues, rock, and other subjects, "Music In The Air", also published by Yale University Press. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Music Captured Though Moments in Time Through Soul-Baring Conversations By CS4.5 Stars Conversations in Jazz: The Ralph Gleason Interviews Ralph Gleason, co-founder of Rolling Stone magazine and co-founder of the Monterey Jazz Festival, discovered jazz when he was a youngster recuperating from the measles, and went on to write record reviews for his college newspaper at Columbia University. Gleason launched his own music publication, Jazz Information. The first issue was mimeographed and mailed on 8 September 1939 from the back room of the 52nd Street Commodore Music Shop; Jazz Information was one of the first magazines devoted to jazz in the US. Beginning the same week as WWII, it was also WWII that temporarily suspended Gleason's promotion of jazz. Relocating to the West Coast after WWII, Gleason began freelancing at the SF Chronicle until he was eventually hired full time in 1950. Over the years, he saw, heard, wrote reviews on numerous musicians, knew virtually everyone and was as at ease with everyone, making these conversations more like a visit with an old friend than an interview. In 1954 Gleason bought a small house on Ashby Avenue in Berkeley, California, which is where most of these recordings were made. These recordings, these interviews remind me of some of my father's old recorded conversations with some of his old flying buddies, they have that element of two guys, sitting around, maybe drinking a beer, smoking a cigar, just reminiscing. How music influenced their lives, and how their lives influenced their music. Some are longer than others, some were more interesting than others (to me), but all are worth reading. Included in this book are the transcripts of the recordings made by Gleason of his conversations with: John Coltrane, Quincy Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, John Lewis, Milt Jackson, Percy Heath, Connie Kay, Sonny Rollins, Philly Joe Jones, Bill Evans, Horace Silver, Duke Ellington, Les McCann, Jon Hendricks. You don't have to be a jazz enthusiast to get something out of this book; each of these stories is remarkable in their own way. Music captured though moments in time through soul-baring conversations. Many thanks to the Yale University Press, NetGalley and to Toby Gleason (Editor and also son of Ralph J. Gleason) for providing me with an advanced copy.

An extraordinary collection of revealing, personal interviews with fourteen jazz music legends. During his nearly forty years as a music journalist, Ralph J. Gleason recorded many in-depth interviews with some of the greatest jazz musicians of all time. These informal sessions, conducted mostly in Gleason's Berkeley, California, home, have never been transcribed and published in full until now. This remarkable volume, a must-read for any jazz fan, serious musician, or musicologist, reveals fascinating, little-known details about these gifted artists, their lives, their personas, and, of course, their music. Bill Evans discusses his battle with severe depression, while John Coltrane talks about McCoy Tyner's integral role in shaping the sound of the Coltrane quartet, praising the pianist enthusiastically. Included also are interviews with Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Quincy Jones, Jon Hendricks, and the immortal Duke Ellington, plus seven more of the most notable names in twentieth-century jazz.

"Fresh and defining anthologies of the writer." Will Hermes, Rolling Stone