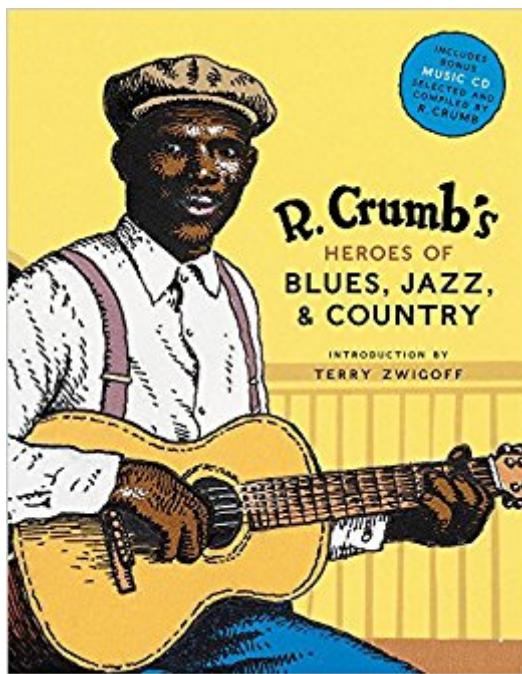


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# R. Crumb's Heroes Of Blues, Jazz & Country



## Synopsis

Anyone who knows R. Crumb's work as an illustrator knows of his passion for music. And all those who collect his work prize the Heroes of the Blues, Early Jazz Greats, and Pioneers of Country Music trading card sets he created in the early to- mid-1980s. Now they are packaged together for the first time in book form, along with an exclusive 21-track CD of music selected and compiled by Crumb himself (featuring original recordings by Charley Patton, "Dock"; Boggs, "Jelly Roll"; Morton, and others). A bio of each musician is provided, along with a full-color original illustration by the cartoonist. A characteristically idiosyncratic tribute by an underground icon to the musical innovators who helped inspire him, R. Crumb's Heroes of Blues, Jazz & Country is a must-have collection for Crumb aficionados, comics fans, and music lovers alike.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

R. Crumb is the leading cartoonist in the American "underground comix" movement. He is the creator of Mr. Natural, the iconic "Keep on Truckin'" T-shirt image, and Fritz the Cat. His book The R. Crumb Handbook was a Booksense bestseller. He lives in France. Terry Zwigoff is the award-winning director of the documentary Crumb. Stephen Calt, the author of two acclaimed musical biographies, lives in New York City. David Jasen is the director of the Popular Music Archive at the C. W. Post Campus of Long Island University.

Wow! Every so often you run across something that knocks your socks off. R. Crumb's *Heroes of Blues, Jazz, & Country* left me barefooted. In the 1980s, Robert Crumb, whom Robert Hughes appropriately once called the "Breughel of the 20th century," created sets of trading cards featuring some of his favorite blues, jazz, and country musicians. (The plan was to include one card per LP sold by innovative record firm Yazoo.) This collection, edited by Terry Zwigoff, the same guy who directed the documentary "Crumb," pulls together the illustrations from all three sets. They're wonderful. The blues and country illustrations are drawn, and are vintage Crumb: crosshatched, brooding characters. The jazz illustrations are water-colored. They're identifiably Crumb, but have a definitely different feel to them. Crumb is a fascinating genius. Although his art and comics tend to be avant-garde (a term he might well disdain) and iconoclastic, Crumb also has a real affinity for late 19th and early 20th century American culture. Part of this love for an earlier time, no doubt, stems from his intense dislike of the fast-paced, loud, and garish American culture he eventually fled in the 1990s (Crumb now lives in France). But part of it is that he thinks the music produced in the early 20th century represents folk art at its finest and purest, before music became an industry. Crumb began collecting old 78s when he was still a teenager, and his love for the older music has never waned. And so to the piece de resistance of this book: the accompanying 21 cut CD. Crumb personally chose the pieces, and they're absolutely fantastic. Except for a couple of the blues and jazz musicians, all of the artists are virtually unknown except to the aficionado. But man oh man, are they wonderful. Skip James' rendering of "Hard Time Killin' Floor Blues" is a heart-breaker. Dock Boggs' "Sugar Baby" and Burnett & Rutherford's "All Night Long Blues" are haunting in their strange but beautiful ways. And no matter how bad things get, Bennie Moten's Kansas City Orchestra's "Kater Street Rag" will pick you up. My son and I have listened to the CD over and over and over, and we never get tired of it. He prefers the blues and jazz, I'm in love with the hillbilly blue grass cuts. But the whole CD--well, it just knocks your socks off. Wow. \_\_\_\_\_ \* From R. Crumb's essay "To Be Interested in Old Music is To Be a Social Outcast!", *The R. Crumb Coffee Table Art Book*, p. 191. "You play old records for most people, and, if they listen at all, after the record's over they turn to you and say, 'So what is it you like ab out that old music?' You just want to throw up your hands."

This is an excellent deal. The recordings are certainly esoteric, but I must be in the correct demographic (or something.) I like just about all of the music. I'm a kind of old-time music dilettante, so it's a great way for someone like me to check out some more obscure stuff. As for the book... hard cover, heavy paper and just the right size to carry around (if so desired.) Of course the main

selling point of this book is the drawings. They are uniformly excellent. Someone with an obsessive personality may wish to collect the actual trading cards which are reproduced in this book, but this is a far more economical and practical means of collecting these drawings. There is mention of Crumb's decision to use a different coloring technique for the jazz trading card set in the book's introduction. This means that some of Crumb's trademark cross-hatch shading is obscured by the overlay of color. Rather than being a detriment to the jazz drawings, it actually helps to give them a distinct character. Anyway, buy this book. It's worth double the price.

It's a beautiful book filled with R. Crumb's portraits and histories of his heroes. In a way, it's kind of a departure from his usual comic book style even though all the portraits are hand drawn by him. You would recognize his signature style anywhere. I recommend this book just for the musical history. That it's drawn by Crumb is a bonus. I rate it as good as or better than the fictional work documented in the book of blues music, *Been Here And Gone...*

The book, with its stories and write-ups on various performers and their color picture cards collection is a great presentation. A bonus included a CD of blues music to listen to while looking at that particular performers picture card & write-up. An excellent 3 in 1 buy. P.S.-make sure when ordering that the CD is included. It took me 2 orders effort to get one with the CD music.

It's a great book, and nice CD. Crumb he's a wonderfull artist. The size of this book, it's ..."more or less". I will like, a more big size.

Showed me music that would have been lost for ever, on my play list and still absorbing it.

This is a wonderful book, one that in my opinion should be in every home for children to discover and treasure. Crumb has the sure gift of capturing the souls of people in his seemingly simple cartoons. These musicians were the living source of all that came after: rock & roll, r & b, soul, country, electric blues, modern folk, etc. Far too children of the last few generations even knew of these incredible artists, much less their music, some wonderful examples of which may be heard on the accompanying cd. A coffee table book to be shared and to share the wisdom of our common musical roots.

The book is okay but be sure to study about it before you buy. It's basically just enlargements of R

Crumbs drawings of old musicians with little explanations to go with them. There isn't any story and you don't get a sense of the big picture of the blues and jazz.

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