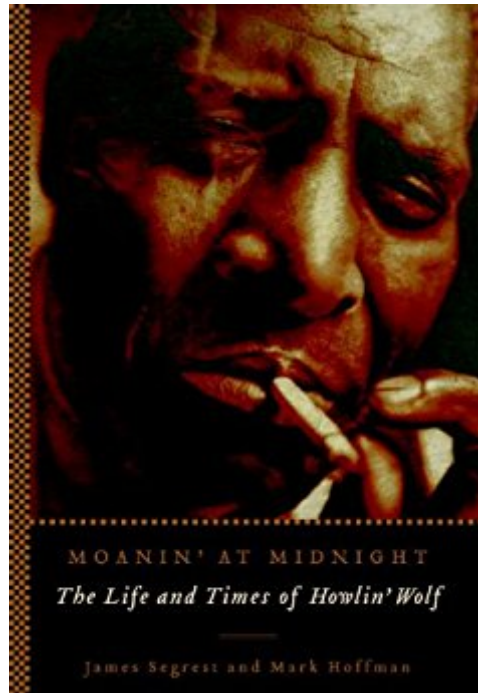


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Moanin' At Midnight: The Life And Times Of Howlin' Wolf



Synopsis

Howlin' Wolf was a musical giant in every way. He stood six foot three, weighed almost three hundred pounds, wore size sixteen shoes, and poured out his darkest sorrows onstage in a voice like a raging chainsaw. Half a century after his first hits, his sound still terrifies and inspires. Born Chester Burnett in 1910, the Wolf survived a grim childhood and hardscrabble youth as a sharecropper in Mississippi. He began his career playing and singing with the first Delta blues stars for two decades in perilous juke joints. He was present at the birth of rock & roll in Memphis, where Sam Phillips—who also discovered Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, and Jerry Lee Lewis—called Wolf his “greatest discovery.” He helped develop the sound of electric blues and vied with rival Muddy Waters for the title of king of Chicago blues. He ended his career performing and recording with the world's most famous rock stars. His passion for music kept him performing despite devastating physical problems right up to his death in 1976. There's never been a comprehensive biography of the Wolf until now. *Moanin' at Midnight* is full of startling information about his mysterious early years, surprising and entertaining stories about his decades at the top, and never-before-seen photographs. It strips away all the myths to reveal at long last the real-life triumphs and tragedies of this blues titan.

Book Information

File Size: 7998 KB

Print Length: 416 pages

Publisher: Pantheon (November 28, 2012)

Publication Date: November 28, 2012

Sold by: Amazon Random House LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00A5MRGLE

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #223,743 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #14

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Customer Reviews

If BB King's autobiography is engaging, this is well and truly the next level in terms of detail and research. The people consulted included the most intimate connections of the wolf from his wife and daughters to Hubert Sumlin, a unique member of the Wolf's band who saw Wolf like a father figure. He had a very tough life, like most early Blues musicians but sported a very strong personality and a band management approach that bordered on mice management. That said, in retrospect every band member had fond memories of him simply because despite being strict to the bone, he paid well and arranged for end of service benefits for his band members. The context behind a very large number of his songs is detailed very well here, from the inspiration behind the lyrics to when and where it was recorded. This is a dream come true for a Blues fan and is augmented with a detailed discography of the Wolf at the very end. He was a true Bluesman who played until his last breath, absolutely loved putting on a show for the crowd and would ruthlessly fine band members who showed up late to gigs. Wolf was bold, scaring but also a very wary character who was prudent with his money and words. The number of people he acted as a father figure to is overwhelmingly large and that's just the people mentioned in this book. His voice thundered in every song and almost felt like something piercing your chest like a wild animal's growl heard from up close, his music was the simple, twelve-bar blues popular at the time and he left the world a very blue place when he died. As an ardent fan of the Blues and Wolf's work, I obviously know that died back in 1976 and of what, yet reading about his death at the end of the book sent a part of me to the Killing Floor.

I loved this book. It gave so much information about the life of Wolf. There were many things I learned about his childhood and life that I found fascinating. I have always loved his music, but after reading the book I have a much deeper appreciation of the man he was. A true gentleman and keen band leader. If you love the Blues, and love Howlin' Wolf's music, you must read, "Moanin' At Midnight". The reason for the 4 stars instead of 5 were only because much of what I learned in the book was repeated several times in different chapters. I found that a little bothersome, but that is only my opinion. Enjoy the book.

A wonderfully written biography of the great Howlin' Wolf. Provides a nice mix of the historical progression of his career along with discussion of the music (for example, not just recording dates). All in a very readable form. As I think others have said it is certainly one of the most readable musician biographies I have read. Learned a lot and it was an easy read.

I enjoyed this book. It felt evocative of a particular time, location(s), and an American musical subculture. A lot of interesting stories about Howlin' Wolf, Hubert Sumlin, and the rest of Wolf's band. And a lot of information on other blues musicians who were either Wolf's mentors, friends, or rivals. And a lot of interesting information as to how people thought 100 years ago to 40 years ago which is in some ways the same, and in some ways different than how people think today.

If you are a Blues fan, or a Jazz fan that dabble in Blues (like me), this book is a great read! Interesting and insightful. I'm glad I have it in my music library.

Without a doubt one of the best. It is filled with great interviews from people who knew the Wolf. There is a section in the book where Wolf predicted that after his death maybe he would one day receive his just due. Unfortunately he was right...I would most definitely recommend this book if you are a Howlin' Wolf fan, music without his influence would be vastly different.... Rip

Terrific book. I started it as my nonfiction, read-in-between-fiction book. Kept putting the fiction down and going back to this one. Finally gave up and just immersed myself in this book. Lots of history, lots of stories in there. It's hard to imagine (before reading it) that anyone could put so many stories and information in one book without getting boring and repetitious. However, it works and I recommend it highly.

This was an excellent account of the life and times of an wonderful blues player, Howlin' Wolf. This was a man who actually learned the blues from , not only living them, but also from playing with all the legends - Charley Patton, Robert Johnson, Son House, Sonny Boy Williamson, Muddy Waters, and the list goes on. This man was a major influence on many of the seminal rock bands and players. A very interesting read in that many books and movies portray Wolf as a mean man when this paints him as a gentle giant who was capable of standing his own ground. READ THIS BOOK!!!

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