

The Guitar in America

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Synopsis

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The Guitar in America offers a history of the instrument from America's late Victorian period to the Jazz Age. The narrative traces America's BMG (banjo, mandolin, and guitar) community, a late 19th-century musical and commercial movement dedicated to introducing these instruments into America's elite musical establishments. Using surviving BMG magazines, the author details an almost unknown history of the guitar during the movement's heyday, tracing the guitar's transformation from a refined parlor instrument to a mainstay in jazz and popular music. In the process, he not only introduces musicians (including numerous women guitarists) who led the movement, but also examines new techniques and instruments. Chapters consider the BMG movement's impact on jazz and popular music, the use of the guitar to promote attitudes toward women and minorities, and the challenges foreign guitarists such as Miguel Llobet and Andres Segovia presented to America's musicians. This volume opens a new chapter on the guitar in America, considering its cultivated past and documenting how banjoists and mandolinists aligned their instruments to it in an effort to raise social and cultural standing. At the same time, the audiobook considers the BMG community within America's larger musical scene, examining its efforts as manifestations of this country's uneasy coupling of musical art and commerce.

Reader's comments

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