



Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues

By Elijah Wald

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The life of blues legend Robert Johnson becomes the centerpiece for this innovative look at what many consider to be America's deepest and most influential music genre. Pivotal are the questions surrounding why Johnson was ignored by the core black audience of his time yet now celebrated as the greatest figure in blues history.

Trying to separate myth from reality, biographer Elijah Wald studies the blues from the inside -- not only examining recordings but also the recollections of the musicians themselves, the African-American press, as well as examining original research. What emerges is a new appreciation for the blues and the movement of its artists from the shadows of the 1930s Mississippi Delta to the mainstream venues frequented by today's loyal blues fans.

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Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues By Elijah Wald Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #121753 in Books
- Brand: Wald, Elijah
- Published on: 2004-12-14
- Released on: 2004-12-14
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .92" w x 6.00" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 368 pages



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