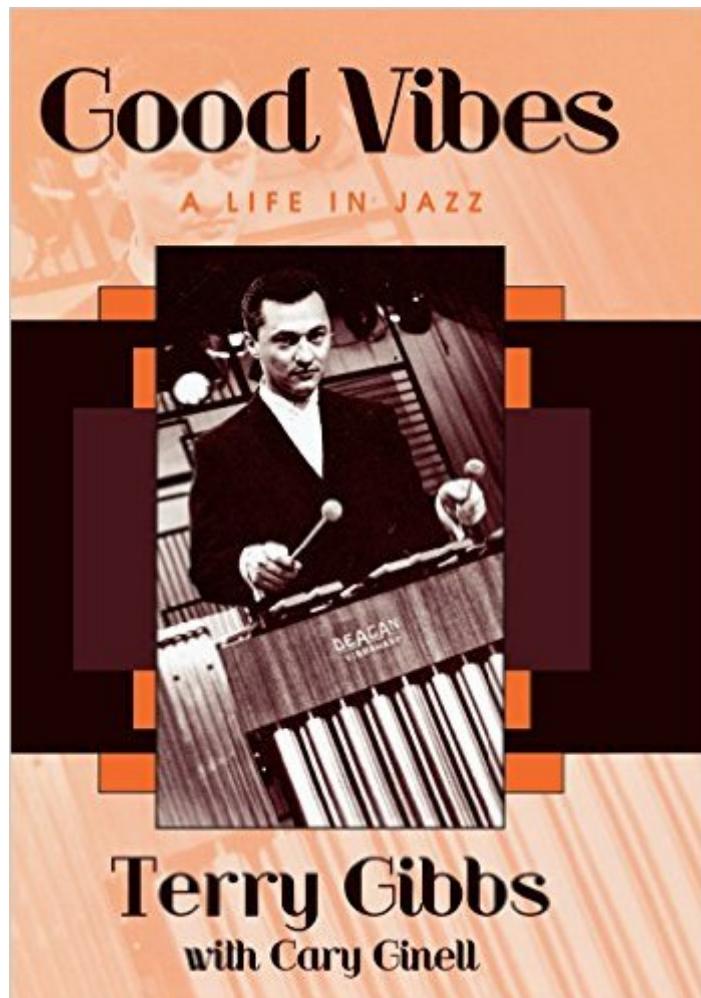


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Good Vibes: A Life In Jazz (Studies In Jazz)



Synopsis

Terry Gibbs, legendary jazz vibraphonist and bandleader, was 12 years old when he kicked off his career as a professional musician, winning first place in an amateur performance. Born and raised in the heart of Brooklyn and possessing tremendous musical talent, Gibbs learned the ins and outs of bebop from pioneers like Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Bud Powell. In 1959 his ensemble, later dubbed The Dream Band, became the toast of Hollywood. Four decades, 65 albums, and 300 compositions later, his story is one of great substance-his footâ taping music, revolutionary. Good Vibes is a rollicking autobiography that tracks jazz from the turbulent post-war years through the rise of bebop, traversing its changes through the eyes of one of its greatest practitioners. Gibbs's hilarious, poignant, and always fascinating anecdotes reveal little-known attributes and quirks about legendary personalities such as Benny Goodman, Buddy Rich, Steve Allen, Frank Sinatra, Don Rickles, Billie Holiday, and many more. A foreword by Chubby Jackson, a discography, and an index round out this work.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I really liked this book! Aside from being a jazz player myself, I got a kick out of the stories Terry tells about the people he's worked with, the adventures he's had, his particularly touching story about Buddy Rich giving his drums to Terry's son, Gerry. I mean, we've all heard the stories about Buddy Rich's meanness, but here's the other side of one of the greatest drummers of all time. The

same with Benny Goodman--we've heard about "the ray," but Terry gives another perspective on Benny--a brilliant musician who was so out of it he couldn't remember the name of a white pianist in his group on a tv broadcast (though they'd been rehearsing together all week) and referred to him as "Teddy Wilson," whom everyone knew was African American. The book has all kinds of anecdotes that give the reader an insight into what it's like to be on the road, trying to play the best, most swinging jazz you can with the best musicians you can hire, despite the racial prejudices that relegated great African American players like Terry Pollard to near invisibility off the stand. Also, great passing anecdotes about Bird, Dizzie Gillespie, Woody Herman and his band, and others. A great read--hard for me to put down. Terry Gibbs is as funny and engaging a narrator as he is in person. If you're at all interested in the history of jazz told from the perspective of the people who played it, this book should be on your shelves.

Some people see the world as a minefield, and some see it as a merry go round. Terry Gibbs sees life as a fun filled playland, doing what he was born to do almost from birth. Son of a Brooklyn band leader who performed at weddings and bar mitzvahs, Terry learned his craft with his dad, and went on to perform with Benny Goodman, and every major jazz artist from 1940 on. He was stopped in his tracks by only one man. A man many of us see as not only the inventor of modern jazz (1943 on) but as an almost religious figure, Charlie Parker. Hearing Parker's playing, for the first time, was such a major event, that I heard Terry say in an interview, he literally was knocked for a loop by the Parker, Gillespie bebop revolution, and had to re-think his position as a player of jazz. For some strange reason, while almost every one around him was addicted, or fooling around with heroin in the fifties, Terry never succumbed to drugs. It can't be because he was a "nice Jewish boy", because other "nice Jewish boys" got wasted, like Serge Chaloff, Red Rodney, Stan Getz, and Stan Levey, among others. I guess Terry was high on life. This book tells it "like it was". What it meant to be a jazz star on planet earth, cica 1940 to the present, with wit, humanity, and a love of life. The cat is still swingin'. Don't deny yourself the treat of this opus.

I have been fortunate to have seen Terry in various musical settings--with small groups and his fabulous big band, and I have never seen Terry give less than 100% on the bandstand. His communication with the audience is always an added bonus. I have also had the pleasure of conversing with Terry on several occasions over the years--including a radio interview I did with him in the 1980s when I was working in Las Vegas and Terry was appearing at the Sahara with a quintet he co-led with Buddy DeFranco. This book reads just like a conversation with Terry. It has humor,

jazz history, great stories about jazz musicians, Terry's thoughts on the music business and a sincere honesty about the events in his own personal life over the years. The enthusiasm and intensity that Terry exudes on the bandstand comes through loud and clear on every page of this book. Thank you Terry for this book and for your many years of playing and presenting uncompromised modern jazz at the highest level!

This is a "slam-dunk" review of a book that I know for a certainty will be a terrific read. I have my copy & have just starting reading it, & look forward to many hours of pleasure in completing it. Last night it was my delightful pleasure to attend a local "Tribute to Benny Goodman" which featured Terry leading a wonderful sextet playing some of the best jazz I've ever heard. Terry & I are the same age, & I am a huge fan of the kind of jazz the existed in the 40's, much of it played by those wonderful "big bands", such as Goodman, Herman, & Shaw. Terry is now 84, so I was blown away when I heard him play his vibes like he hadn't lost a step. He remains one of the very best, & it's obvious that he still totally enjoys his craft. His very humorous reminiscing between songs created a great connection with his audience, adding a lot to an evening of great jazz. Definitely five stars.

I felt like I was living through the years with Terry Gibbs reading this book. A Best read!!!!

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