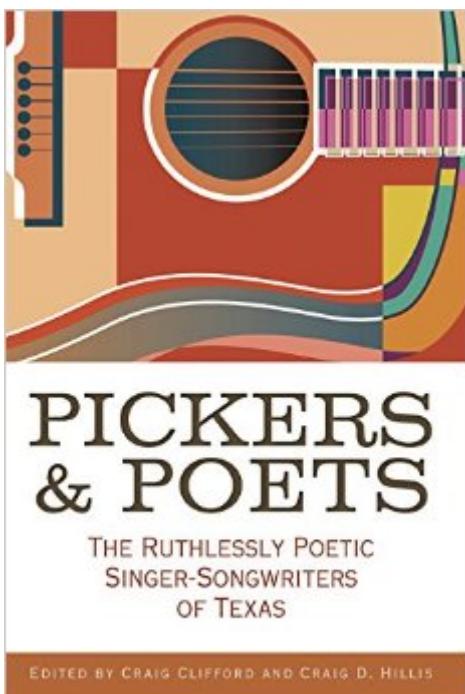


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Pickers And Poets: The Ruthlessly Poetic Singer-Songwriters Of Texas (John And Robin Dickson Series In Texas Music, Sponsored By The Center For Texas)



Synopsis

Many books and essays have addressed the broad sweep of Texas musicâ "its multicultural aspects, its wide array and blending of musical genres, its historical transformations, and its love/hate relationship with Nashville and other established music business centers. This book, however, focuses on an essential thread in this tapestry: the Texas singer-songwriters to whom the contributors refer as â œruthlessly poetic.â • All songs require good lyrics, but for these songwriters, the poetic quality and substance of the lyrics are front and center. Obvious candidates for this category would include Townes Van Zandt, Michael Martin Murphey, Guy Clark, Steve Fromholz, Terry Allen, Kris Kristofferson, Vince Bell, and David Rodriguez. In a sense, what these songwriters were doing in small, intimate live-music venues like the Jester Lounge in Houston, the Chequered Flag in Austin, and the Rubaiyat in Dallas was similar to what Bob Dylan was doing in Greenwich Village. In the language of the times, these were â œfolksingers.â • Unlike Dylan, however, these were folksingers writing songs about their own people and their own origins and singing in their own vernacular. This music, like most great poetry, is profoundly rooted. That rootedness, in fact, is reflected in the bookâ ™s emphasis on place and the powerful ways it shaped and continues to shape the poetry and music of Texas singer-songwriters. From the coffeehouses and folk clubs where many of the â œfoundersâ • got their start to the Texas-flavored festivals and concerts that nurtured both their fame and the rise of a new generation, the indelible stamp of origins is inseparable from the work of these troubadour-poets. Contents Introduction, by Craig Clifford and Craig D. Hillis | 1 Part One. The First Generation: Folksingers, Texas Style Too Weird for Kerrville: The Darker Side of Texas Music | 17 Craig Clifford Townes Van Zandt: The Anxiety, Artifice, and Audacity of Influence | 27 Robert Earl Hardy Vignetteâ "The Ballad of Willis Alan Ramsey | 36 Bob Livingston Guy Clark: Old School Poet of the World | 39 Tamara Saviano Kris Kristofferson: The Silver-Tongued Rhodes Scholar | 49 Peter Cooper Vignetteâ "Don Henley: Literature, Land, and Legacy | 59 Kathryn Jones Steven Fromholz, Michael Martin Murphey, and Jerry Jeff Walker: Poetic in Lyric, Message, and Musical Method | 61 Craig D. Hillis Vignetteâ "Kinky Friedman: The Mel Brooks of Texas Music | 83 Craig Clifford Billy Joe Shaver: Sin and Salvation Poet | 85 Joe Holley One Manâ ™s Music: Vince Bell | 92 Joe Nick Patoski Vignetteâ "Ray Wylie Hubbard: Grifter, Ruffian, Messenger | 101 Jenni Finlay The Great Progressive Country Scare of the 1970s | 103 Craig D. Hillis (interview with Gary P. Nunn) Plenty Else to Do: Lyrical Lubbock | 109 Andy Wilkinson Roots of Steel: The Poetic Grace of Women Texas Singer-Songwriters | 115 Kathryn Jones From Debauched Yin to Mellow Yang: A Circular Trip through the Texas Music Festival Scene | 136 Jeff Prince Vignetteâ "Bobby Bridger: â œHeal in the Wisdom,â • Creating a Classic |

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