



Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus

By Krin Gabbard

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Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus By Krin Gabbard

Charles Mingus is one of the most important—and most mythologized—composers and performers in jazz history. Classically trained and of mixed race, he was an outspoken innovator as well as a bandleader, composer, producer, and record-label owner. His vivid autobiography, *Beneath the Underdog*, has done much to shape the image of Mingus as something of a wild man: idiosyncratic musical genius with a penchant for skirt-chasing and violent outbursts. But, as the autobiography reveals, he was also a hopeless romantic. After exploring the most important events in Mingus's life, Krin Gabbard takes a careful look at Mingus as a writer as well as a composer and musician. He digs into how and why Mingus chose to do so much self-analysis, how he worked to craft his racial identity in a world that saw him simply as “black,” and how his mental and physical health problems shaped his career. Gabbard sets aside the myth-making and convincingly argues that Charles Mingus created a unique language of emotions—and not just in music. Capturing many essential moments in jazz history anew, *Better Git It in Your Soul* will fascinate anyone who cares about jazz, African American history, and the artist's life.

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Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus By Krin Gabbard Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #324400 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2016-02-08
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.00" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Will likely long stand as the definitive account of the genius, and enigma, that was this great bassist, bandleader, and composer. Certainly no one has heretofore delved as deeply and thoroughly into what made him tick."

(*W. Royal Stokes Blog* 2016-01-31)

"*Better Git It In Your Soul* draws the reader to listening to its subject's productions. If already familiar with Mingus' music, a reader may return to favorites with fresh ears and deeper insights. . . . Gabbard's greatest personal contribution to understanding Mingus is his contextualization of events through his own broad, well-informed perspective."

(*DownBeat* 2016-04-01)

"Offers several lenses through which to view Mingus and his music—the milieu in which he lived, wrote and played; literary life; closest musical associations; and as a coda his experience in film. . . . There is much in *Better Git It In Your Soul* to limn one's understanding of and approach to Mingus' tremendous body of work as well as the challenges he faced and orchestrated as a black artist in America."

(*The New York City Jazz Record* 2016-03-01)

"This is a wonderful book! This book completely absorbed me. . . . You really took me in with your own emotional palette."

(*NPR/On Point with Tom Ashbrook* 2016-02-26)

"An important contribution to not only the study of Charles Mingus but also of the evolution of postwar jazz."—STARRED REVIEW

(*Library Journal* 2016-03-01)

"A solid addition to the literature of jazz."

(*Booklist* 2016-03-03)

"This isn't simply a new telling of Mingus' life story, although Gabbard does an excellent job of that in just under 100 concise and nicely paced pages. Gabbard also takes a deep dive into specific aspects of Mingus' output. Most notably, he performs forensic work in exploring how *Beneath the Underdog* came to be."

(*PopMatters* 2016-04-25)

"Gabbard examines the musical career of one of the giants of Jazz, Charles Mingus, offering a look at the man beyond his sensationalized musical career and personal mythology."

(*Publishers Weekly* 2015-11-27)

"Krin Gabbard uses his own unique perspective to illustrate the famous musician's life and genius."

(Darcy Peters *Smooth Jazz News* 2016-09-01)

"14 of the Best Gifts for a Music Snob Who's Heard Everything: Krin Gabbard's bio is as idiosyncratic as the great jazz bassist and composer that is its subject. There aren't many places you can go to read comparisons between Mingus and Philip Roth as well as detailed musical analysis of his epochal and hard-swinging compositions."

(*New York Magazine*, *The Strategist* 2016-12-15)

From the Inside Flap

"Krin Gabbard is one of the finest stylists writing about jazz today, and *Better Git It In Your Soul* finds him at the top of his game. The writing is crisp, charming, and funny, a pleasure to read. The author's love of this immensely rich body of music comes through on every page."—Thomas Brothers, author of *Louis Armstrong: Master of Modernism*

"One of the reasons that the great musician Charles Mingus is not better known is that the raw complexity of his life and the scale and sweep of his work seem to demand a whole team of artists and scholars to fathom and explain his importance in several different arts. Finally, Krin Gabbard—biographer, musician, film scholar, and literary critic—steps in with a book worthy of this twentieth-century master, and one that will surprise even those familiar with his legacy."—John Szwed, author of *Billie Holiday: The Musician and the Myth*

"Gabbard conveys the complexity of Mingus's life and his changing representation in an engaging and accessible book. A fascinating and thought-provoking read, this book is a must for anyone interested in jazz."—Tony Whyton, author of *Beyond "A Love Supreme"* and *Jazz Icons*

About the Author

Krin Gabbard retired after thirty-three years of teaching at Stony Brook University, and he now teaches in the jazz studies program at Columbia University. His previous books include *Hotter than That: The Trumpet, Jazz, and American Culture* and *Jammin' at the Margins: Jazz and the American Cinema*. He lives in New York City with his wife, Paula, and he is busy playing his trumpet and writing a memoir about his parents.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Totten:

This *Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus* book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get data which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. That *Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus* without we know teach the one who studying it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't always be worry *Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus* can bring when you are and not make your handbag space or bookshelves' turn out to be full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This *Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus* having very good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

Hattie Booth:

A lot of people always spent their own free time to vacation or go to the outside with their friends and family or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity that is look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a e-book. The book Better Git It in Your Soul: An Interpretive Biography of Charles Mingus it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

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