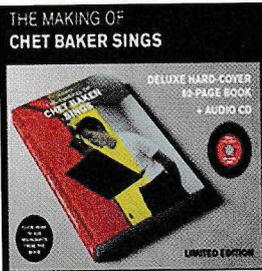


# Books



## The Making Of Chet Baker Sings

Brian Morton

★★★★

Jazz Images, £12.99,

ISBN 8435395503171, 80 pages

Iconic jazz album viewed in a new light

Reveled by most jazz critics but loved by the public, *Chet Baker Sings* proved to be not only the Oklahoma-born hornblower's most popular album but also, for some, his most problematic. Recorded in 1956, it was the first LP by the poster boy of West Coast cool jazz, where the focus shifted from his impeccable trumpet-playing to his less-than-perfect but distinctively languid vocal croon. But, as Brian Morton reveals in his illuminating examination of *Chet Baker Sings*, deep-seated prejudices in the jazz community, which valued instrumentalists over "mere" vocalists, viewed his transformation into a singer as a betrayal of his talent. Morton convincingly dismisses common arguments made against Baker's singing – that it lacked emotion, technique and improvisation – and lauds his androgynous, June Christy-inspired tone with its expression of vulnerability. Beautifully written, this limited edition short hardback book is much more than a robust defence of Baker's most controversial album and a riposte to its chorus of decriers among the jazz police; it's a highly persuasive re-evaluation of the trumpeter's abilities as a singer. Morton's eloquent prose is accompanied by a CD of the album as well as wonderfully evocative monochrome photographs of Baker before drugs blighted his good looks. *Charles Waring*

## Mike McCartney's Early Liverpool

Mike McCartney

★★★★

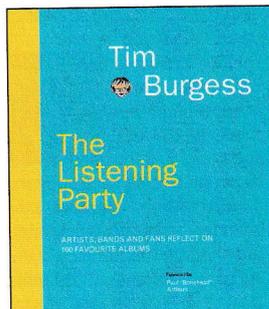
Genesis, £325-£695

ISBN 9781905662661

Fab lenswork from Macca's sibling

A recent-ish Paul McCartney song about his Beatles career was called, in slight wonder, *That Was Me*: his younger brother Mike could easily write a companion to it, *And I Was There*. Mike's musical career, as Scaffold member and solo artist Mike McGear, ran in

tandem and sometimes sidecar to Paul's, and Mike's photographic career inevitably covered important Beatle moments with an intimacy denied other photographers. *Early Liverpool* collects many of Mike's 60s images, which are of historical and artistic interest, from the first colour image of Paul, George and John playing together to images of other 60s icons, ranging from The Hollies to Paul's fiancée Jane Asher. And while being there for the moments is the reason this book is different to a collection of studio shots, the moment isn't the entire book: Mike McCartney's gift for framing these episodes gives this collection a real artistic coherence. These photos, combined with postcards, letters and drawings by Mike and others, combine to create a book whose occasional randomness replicates the reality of a family photo album, scattered souvenirs and images that add up to a valuable, and beautifully made archive of some extraordinary lives. *David Quantick*



## The Listening Party: Artists, Bands & Fans Reflect on 100 Greatest Albums

Tim Burgess

★★★★

Dorling Kindersley, £25

ISBN: 9780241514894, 304 pages

Pandemic sanity provider turned into essential reference book

Tim Burgess' Twitter Listening Parties were a Lockdown phenomenon. Inadvertently – and with only a little exaggeration – they became the Pandemic what *ITMA* was to the Second World War: a brief opportunity for people to enjoy a breather, a communal activity reminding you that good times would happen again.

The premise was simple: at a specific time each day, everybody would play the same album in their own homes, and then comment on it, track-by-track. And, boy, did it catch the imagination; soon, thanks to Twitter, many artists themselves were communicating directly with

their audiences in a way they had never done before. Tim Burgess guided them with his cheery, emotional intelligence – The Charlatans' frontman was a fan first and foremost, clearly revelling in the discussions. As a result, *The Listening Party* is a refreshingly different rock book, as it gained interviews that would never normally have been approved. Laid out with a short biographical intro, each album is explored with comments on each track. We glean nuggets such as Norman Cook still not knowing the identity of the person on the cover of *You've Come A Long Way Baby*, or Scritti Politti referring to *Cupid & Psyche* as "Stupid & Crikey". Often artists tweeted rare memorabilia, the best of which are replicated here. In years to come, when artefacts are gathered to represent the 20-21 Pandemic, *The Listening Party* will be in pride of place. *Daryl Easlea*

## The Best Of Jamming! Selections And Stories From The Fanzine That Grew Up, 1977-86

Tony Fletcher

★★★★

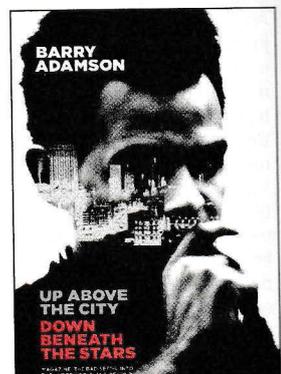
Omnibus Press, £25

ISBN 9781913172305, 288 pages

With foreword by Billy Bragg, highlights from one of the best fanzines

Staggering into the offices of *Zigzag*, the magazine I was editing, one late 70s afternoon, I couldn't help noticing the schoolkid in uniform touting his fanzine for distribution by our network. From there, *Jamming!* would become one of the era's most respected mags, successfully making the transition into newsgagents. Tony Fletcher has since grown up into a revered author and novelist. Here, he revisits *Jamming!* to present highlights from 36 issues that effectively mirrored the music and times they came out in. Paul Weller was a major supporter, Paul McCartney, Pete Townshend and U2 agreed to be interviewed, and pieces here include The Fall, Run DMC, Elvis Costello, the Smiths, The Clash, Cocteau Twins, R.E.M.: most interesting names, known or new, plus art, poetry, sport and the miners' strike. Memories come from former contributors along with Mike Scott, Alan McGee, Jim Thirlwell and others. The masterstroke is Fletcher providing insights and later-life reflections on each issue; justifiably proud of what he pulled off after starting a Jam fanzine called *In The City*

at 13. *Jamming!* set him on his life's path as a writer. For that alone we should be grateful, but his fanzine was a cut above. So's this compendium. *Kris Needs*



## Up Above The City, Down Beneath The Stars

Barry Adamson

★★★★★

Omnibus, £20

ISBN 97819113172251, 353 pages

Frank memoir from former Magazine man

Many rock autobiographies skimp on the author's early years but Barry Adamson – soundtrack composer and bassist for The Bad Seeds and Magazine – doesn't mess around: his memoir begins in the womb and doesn't let up



Barry Adamson: unflinching in a new memoir