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Really The Blues

Mezz Mezzrow, Bernard Wolfe

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"Really The Blues" is the story of a white kid who fell in love with black culture, learning to blow clarinet in the reform schools, brothels and honky-tonks of his youth. Drawn by the revelation of the blues, he followed the music along the jazz avenues of Chicago, New Orleans, and New York, and into the heart of America's soul. Told in the jive lingo of the underground's inner circle, this classic is an unforgettable chronicle of street life, smoky clubs, roadhouse dances, and reefer culture.

First published in 1946, Really the Blues was a rousing wake-up call to alienated young whites to explore black culture and the world of jazz, the first music America could call its own. Their spiritual godfather was Mezzrow, jazz cat, bootlegger, and peddler of the finest gauge in Harlem. Above all, Mezz championed the abandon available to those willing to lose their blues.

Citadel Underground's edition of Really the Blues features a new introduction by Barry Gifford, author of the novel Wild at Heart and co-author of Jack's Book: An Oral Biography of Jack's Kerouac.

"Really the Blues, read at the counter of the counter of the Columbia U Bookstore in mid-forties, was for me the first signal into white culture of the underground black, hip culture that preexisted before ny own generation". -- Allen Ginsberg

"Milton Mezzrow was, is and shall always be the single most important figure in the history of marijuana in America. Like Leary, the Mezz turned on a new generation to a new drug...Mezzrow was 1) the first white Negro, 2) the Johnny Apleseed of weed, 3) the author of a great American autobiography, Really the Blues, the finest eyewitness account of American counterculture everpublished. The book is, likewise, the master-piece of the counterculture's most characteristics literary medium: the slang-laced, jazz-enrhythmed, long-breathed and rhapsodic street rap and rave-up". -- Albert Goldman

"Really the Blues appeared at a fundamental moment in American history, wh

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