



## **The Bill Monroe Reader (Music in American Life series (MAL))**

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"Tell 'em I'm a farmer with a mandolin and a high tenor voice", Bill Monroe said. Known as the "Father of Bluegrass", Monroe pioneered a whole new genre of music and inspired generations of musicians and fans. Yet from his founding of the original bluegrass band through six decades of performing, he remained an enigmatic figure, a mixture of fierce intensity, homespun modesty, and musical integrity. Determined to play the mandolin in a way it had never been played before, Bill Monroe distinguished himself in the mid-1930s with the Monroe Brothers, then began forming his own band, the Blue Grass Boys, in 1938. By the mid-1940s other bands had begun copying his sound, and a new style, bluegrass music, was born. While country music moved toward electrification, Monroe maintained his acoustic ensemble and developed his "high, lonesome sound", performing nearly up to his death in 1996. Lively, heartfelt, and informative, "The Bill Monroe Reader" is a fitting tribute to the man and the musician who transformed the traditional music of western Kentucky into an international sensation. In this eclectic and richly illustrated reader, former Blue Grass Boy Tom Ewing gathers the most significant and illuminating of the many articles that have been written about Monroe. Through the writings of nearly sixty observers, interviewers, admirers, folklorists, and other scholars, along with Ewing's own astute commentary, "The Bill Monroe Reader" offers a multifaceted view of one of the most influential musicians of the twentieth century.

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