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GREAT BOOK COVERS HISTORY OF BLUES IN ST. LOUIS

Devil At The Confluence
KEVIN BELFORD

We all know the story of W.C.Handy picking up at least some of his most successful song from a guy on the levee.

St.Louis artist Kevin Belford just authored and published the definitive book on blues in St.Louis prior to World War II. After an enlightening forward by Paul Garon (author of the book on Peetie Wheatstraw), Kevin begins with a view of St.Louis before the turn of the old century, including the ragtime era, Frankie & Johnny, Staggerlee, etc. and carries his history forward to include Little Milton.

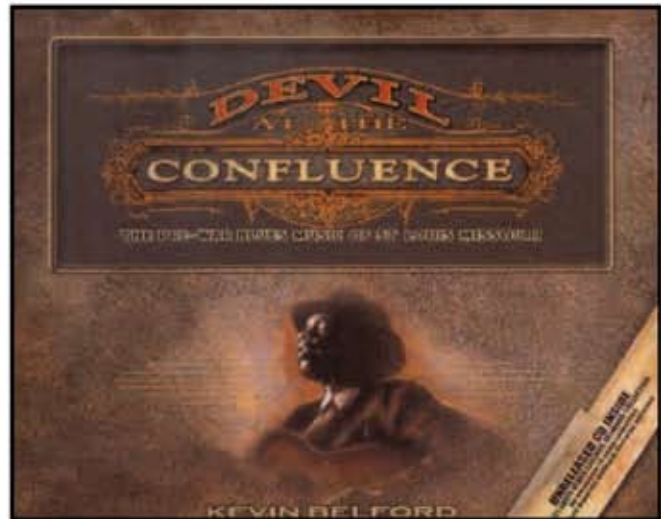
It's loaded with original art by Belford and extensive research from the surviving artists and a gleaning of blues magazine articles and books. It shows that St. Louis had infinitely more importance in blues history than one W.C. Handy song.

But of course you want to know the contents. I could not think of any St.Louis blues artists of that era that are not covered in this book. In fact, I learned that many singers I had listened to were, in fact St.Louisans. Some very talented but unrecorded people such as the late Bennie Smith and (still living) Silver Cloud were also from St. Louis.

I like Belford's approach - he doesn't try to build a wall between blues and jazz. There are lots of references to St.Louis jazzmen such as Charles Creath, Dewey Jackson, Singleton Palmer and both Miles Davis's (one a 20's pianist).

Amid Belford's splendid art, are photos of record labels and memorabilia providing richness to the St.Louis' blues story. Kevin's art has graced several Delmark albums: Biddle Street Barrelhousin' (#739), Cowboy Roy Brown (#790), the entire 50th Anniversary box set and it's jazz and blues components, and Barrelhouse Buck McFarland (#788) for which he also wrote the liner notes.

Get this book. \$39.95



- Bob Koester

