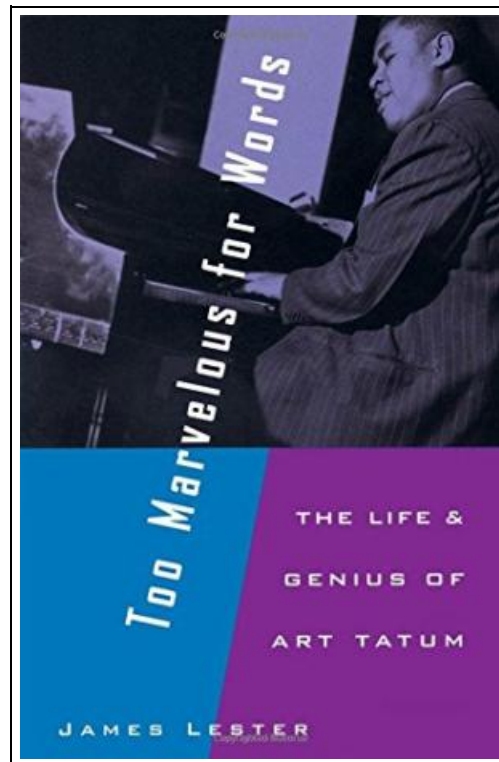


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TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS: THE LIFE AND GENIUS OF ART TATUM (PAPERBACK)



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Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 1995. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Art Tatum defined the limits of the possible in jazz piano. Gunther Schuller called Tatum's playing a marvel of perfection. His deep-in-the-keys full piano sonority, the tone and touch control in pyrotechnical passages, are miracles of performance. Whitney Balliett wrote no pianist has ever hit notes more beautifully. Each one—no matter how fast the tempo—was light and complete and resonant, like the letters on a finely printed page. His famous runs have been compared to the arc left against the night sky by a Fourth-of-July sparkler. And to have heard him play, one musician said, was as awe-inspiring as to have seen the Grand Canyon or Halley's Comet. Now, in *Too Marvelous For Words*, James Lester provides the first full-length biography of the greatest virtuoso performer in the history of jazz. Before this volume, little was known about Tatum, even among jazz aficionados. What were his origins, who taught him and who provided early pianistic influences, how did he break into the jazz field, what role did he play in the development of other jazz players, and what was he like when he wasn't playing? To answer these questions, Lester has conducted almost a hundred interviews for this book, with surviving family, childhood friends, school teachers, and the famous jazz musicians who played with him or knew him. Lester creates a memorable portrait of this unique musician and of the vibrant jazz world of the 1930s and 1940s, capturing the complexity and vitality of this remarkable performer. Tatum, who was virtually blind, suffering between 70 and 90 visual impairment, emerges as cheerful, fun-loving, energetic and out-going, with none of the demonic self-destructiveness that seemed to haunt such jazz...



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