



The Words and Music of Prince (The Praeger Singer-Songwriter Collection)

James E. Perone

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Prince's early albums *Dirty Mind*, *1999*, and *Purple Rain*, established him as a major force in American pop music. His combination of rock and funk was unique, and drew both critical praise and commercial attention. The 1990s found Prince forming a new group, moving back in the direction of R&B, and eventually adopting an unpronounceable symbol as his moniker. By the end of the millennium, he was again exploring an eclectic collection of musical styles and enjoying a resurgence of interest in his well-known song 1999. Prince is one of the few artists of the entire rock era who successfully bridged the gap between traditional R&B and rock audiences with his musical eclecticism. He now stands among the best-selling pop musicians of the rock era. In this revealing study, author James Perone highlights the complexities and ambiguities of Prince's life work, while at the same time clarifying why it is that Prince remains such a widely popular figure in American music.

After a brief introductory biographical treatment, Perone goes on to analyze all of Prince's musical output—both as specific pieces, and as part of a larger body of work. Perone doesn't allow any of the elements of Prince's entertainment career (including his early contractual problems, his series of protégés, his name change, and his views on gender and race) to pass without reflection. As a result *The Words and Music of Prince* operates as a sort of creative biography for both the man and the artist. The work also includes six illustrations, a bibliography, a discography, and an index.

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