



Born to Play: The Ruby Braff Discography and Directory of Performances (Studies in Jazz)

Thomas P. Hustad

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Jazz trombonist Jack Teagarden once referred to Ruby Braff as the “Ivy League's Louis Armstrong.” That legacy of great trumpet performance and recording is brought to readers in Thomas Hustad’s *Born to Play: The Ruby Braff Discography and Directory of Performances*. Braff’s uncompromising standards, musical taste, and creative imagination informed his consummate artistry in creating music beautifully played. He achieved swiftly what few musicians accomplish in a lifetime by developing a unique and immediately recognizable style. For a reminder of that we need but play any of the more than 150 released recordings on which he appears. These records span a total of 54 years, from 1949 to 2002, a feat almost unmatched in jazz recording. This was five years longer than even Louis Armstrong.

Although prepared in discographical style, capturing information about both commercial recordings and previously undocumented performances, *Born to Play* serves as a biography of the artist, detailing the path he paved as a performer and featuring personal recollections of his musical career with commentary from other figures. Images over the course of his half century of playing fill out this comprehensive survey of Braff’s performing and recording career. This bio-discography of the man who jazz drumming legend Buddy Rich declared “one of my favorite trumpeters” and singing giant Tony Bennett described as “my great friend who now holds the reigning position of the best cornet player in the world” is sure to be of interest to jazz fans and scholars alike.

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