



Mellencamp: American Troubadour

David Masciotra

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Throughout his prolific career, John Mellencamp has performed more than twenty Top 40 hits, has been nominated for thirteen Grammy Awards, and has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Hits like "Jack and Diane," "Small Town," and "Cherry Bomb" are iconic American songs that have played an important role in defining midwestern music and developing the rock genre. Despite his critical and commercial success, however, the rough guy from a small town writing songs about everything he "learned about living" is often omitted from the ranks of America's songwriting elite.

In *Mellencamp*, David Masciotra explores the life and career of one of America's most important and underrated songwriters, persuasively arguing that he deserves to be celebrated alongside artists like Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young, and Bob Dylan. Beginning with his modest beginnings in Seymour, Indiana, Masciotra details Mellencamp's road to fame, examining his struggles with the music industry and his persistent dedication to his midwestern roots. Shaking off the shortsighted "regionalist" stereotype and dismissing his assumed pop-star persona, Mellencamp found success by remaining true to where he came from.

This thoughtful analysis highlights four decades of the artist's music, which has consistently elevated the dignity of everyday people and honored the quiet heroism of raising families and working hard. This first serious biography of the legendary musician will charm fans and music enthusiasts who are interested in the development of roots rock and Americana music.

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