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Playboy's Incredible Influence on the American Music Scene

The remarkable and historically accurate book *Playboy Swings: How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed the Face of Music*, author Patty Farmer explores the remarkable way Hugh Hefner's efforts resulted in a legacy that continues to influence the American music and entertainment landscape.

"The Playboy phenomenon was not just about sex and glamorous women, it was more about lifestyle and music," Farmer says. "The finest jazz, in particular, was a personal passion of Hefner.

Farmer, who was given access to Hefner's personal archives, created a well-documented and illustrated chronicles of the decades of musical events and performances with musicians and artists and people who became legends in our history.

Hugh Hefner and Playboy, the glossy magazine he published, may best known for introducing an entire generation to the beauty of the female anatomy.

But truth be told, one of the most lasting impressions and important impacts is his role and contributions to music in America.

For almost two decades, Playboy was the largest employer of entertainment—singers, musicians and comedians—in the country.

He supported and promoted jazz musicians from the very beginning in writing, on stage, and even with his own record label. The very first issue of Playboy, graced by the stunning Marilyn Monroe, also contained a detailed feature story about Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey. His emphasis on musicians transcended racial divisions and opened up social dialogue and discourse in ground-breaking ways.

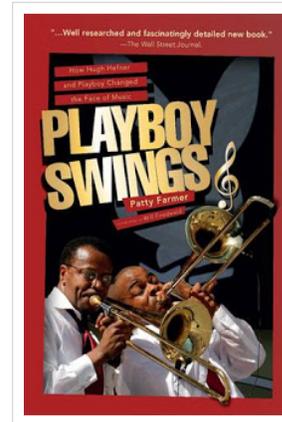
To celebrate Playboy's fifth anniversary in 1959, Hefner produced the first Playboy Jazz Festival in Chicago. His TV show, "Playboy's Penthouse" aired nationwide from 1959 to 1961, and "Playboy After Dark," from January 16, 1969 to 1970. In the 40 worldwide Playboy Clubs, he showcased jazz musicians and provided black entertainers invaluable exposure in a defiance of segregationist laws and attitudes of the time.

In 1962, Playboy published the first of the iconic Playboy interviews with Miles Davis (conducted by "Roots" author Alex Haley).

Aretha Franklin played piano and sang at the Chicago Playboy Club when just 18 years old. It was her first professional singing job outside of church.

Playboy's Penthouse broke all the rules with Hef's integration of races. Nat King Cole appearing and sitting on the couch with a white woman- Rona Jaffe--to discuss her new book was scandalous and resulted in both networks and sponsors dropping the show.

Farmer's insights into this amazing chapter of American cultural history is told through interviews with those involved present in the actual events, including Hugh Hefner, and his Playboy cohorts, and the cadre of jazz artists, performers, show business legends and entertainers who performed at the Playboy venues, and thereafter became well known around the world.



Sharon Tate and Roman Polanski enjoying opening night at the London Playboy Club. Photos courtesy of Playboy Swings.

The opening night crowd for the London Playboy Club, in 1966, was as famous and attractive, as one could imagine. A short list of the attendees included: Julie Christie, Ursula Andress, Roman Polanski, Michelangelo Antonioni, Sidney Poitier, Laurence Harvey, Peter Sellers, David Frost, Peter Cook, Kenneth Tynan, Rudolf Nureyev, Woody Allen, Lee Radziwill, and many, many others.

Playboy Swings: How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed the Face of Music

Patty Farmer

With contributions from Will Friedwald

Compiled through interviews with hundreds of people who were on the scene throughout Playboy's rise, fall, and on-going renaissance, *Playboy Swings* carries readers on a seductive journey through the history of the empire—all the while focusing on the musical entertainment that made it unique. Hef's personal passion for music—and his belief in it as a cornerstone of the Playboy ethos—has expressed itself in a wide range of media over Playboy's 60-year history, and all of it comes alive in these pages.

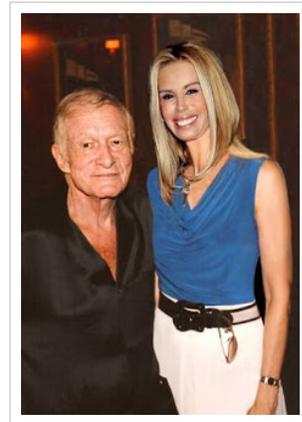
Famer takes the reader from the inception of the Playboy empire through the 1959 jazz festival, to the opening of club after club.

With approximately 60 black and white photos, and a complete Playboy music reference guide, readers will think of music, not just Bunnies, when thinking about Playboy.

Throughout the book, it is the artists who do most of the talking—and they have a lot to say about the golden era of Playboy entertainment.

For more information visit <http://patty-farmer.com/>

About the Authors



Patty Farmer is acknowledged as the leading expert on all things pertaining to music, entertainment—and the entertainers—of Playboy.

She's also a businesswoman and former model, and has followed the entertainment industry as an insider, as well as an avid fan and archivist all her life. Her work draws upon a lifetime of friendship and socializing among personalities and celebrities around the world.

In her previous book, *The Persian Room Presents*, she transported readers back to the halcyon days of New York City nightlife. Patty splits her time between New York, Texas, and France.

Will Friedwald writes about jazz and popular music for *The Wall Street Journal*, where he has written the weekly column *The Jazz Scene* since 2010.

He is the author of eight books on music and popular culture, has received ten Grammy Award nominations for album notes and production, and is internationally recognized as a leading authority on jazz and adult pop music, as well as Broadway shows, jazz and pop vocalists, big bands, and classic

American pop.

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