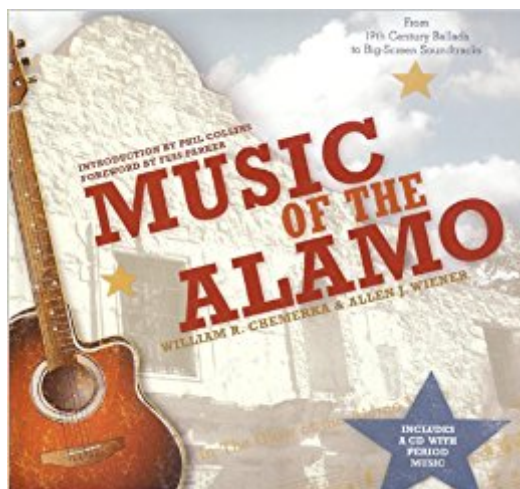


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Music Of The Alamo (Incredible Journey Books) [includes Cd]



Synopsis

Interpreting the famous siege and battle that has inspired art for more than 170 years, this unique resource traces the musical history of the Alamo and offers the only complete discography and list of songs about the legendary battle. Chapters cover the many and varied musical interpretations of the Alamo and its heroes, illuminating various periods of American musical history throughout. From nineteenth-century folk ballads, minstrel show tunes, and orchestral marches, to recent pop chart hits, children's songs, theatrical productions, and big-screen film scores, all are gathered in this complete compendium, helping to remember the Alamo. Also included is a thirty-minute audio CD of music representative of the Alamo.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"If you're an Alamo buff, this is a must-have book. It traces the history of Alamo music from the early 19th century through today." — San Angelo Standard-Times "It's a remarkable trove . . . [Chemerka and Wiener have] delivered an entertaining labor of love, stippled with remarkable historical illustrations and wonderful facts." — American History Magazine "This is an accessible, engaging, entertaining work that anyone with an interest in Texas history and culture would find rewarding . . . impressive in terms of scholarship." — Southwestern Historical Quarterly

William R. Chemerka is the founder of the Alamo Society, the editor of The Alamo Journal, and the

author of *Alamo Anthology*. He has appeared on the History Channel as an on-camera consultant in a number of productions including *The Real West: The Battle of the Alamo*, and *Wild West Tech: The Alamo*. Allen J. Wiener is co-author of *David Crockett in Congress: The Rise and Fall of the Poor Man's Friend*, which won the 2010 Independent Publisher Book Award for Best Regional Non-Fiction. He also is the author of *The Beatles: The Ultimate Recording Guide* and has written for *The Washington Post*, *People*, *Musician*, *American History*, *Wild West History Association Journal*, *The Alamo Review*, *Alamo Journal*, and other publications. He has appeared on C-Span's *Book TV*, *Good Day San Antonio*, NPR's *All Things Considered* and other interview programs.

I've been a long-time Alamo buff, so when I saw this title I was intrigued but thought "Well, seriously, outside of the classic 'King of the Wild Frontier' theme and maybe a couple of movie soundtracks, how much Alamo music can there be?" WOW! Did I ever receive an education from this book! It's an astounding achievement upon a topic that has never been covered, to my knowledge. In truth it's almost TOO MUCH information to absorb, and would probably be of interest only to an avid Alamo fan or perhaps students of American Folk/Roots music; because it is a jaw-dropping full-scope study of not only the history of these songs, but the ever-changing social attitudes, perspectives, and personal agendas that fueled both their creation as well as their popularity in their respective eras. As a result, this book is far more historically significant and valuable than I would ever have imagined, and the authors have done an exhaustively thorough job. Outside of their own updates to this volume over the coming years, I cannot imagine that this subject will ever be presented as well. It is an essential volume that belongs on the shelf of every Alamo enthusiast or Folk/Roots music fan.

William Chemerka and Allen Wiener's *"Music of the Alamo"* is an expansive illustrated study of Alamo related songs from the 19th through the 21st centuries. A narrative history forms the first two-thirds of the book, with a meticulously researched discography rounding things out nicely. Full color illustrations throughout make for a beautiful presentation. This is a book that should hold great appeal for Alamo enthusiasts and music aficionados alike. Highly recommended!

This book is quite an achievement, a scholarly review of instrumental and vocal music from the 1830's until 2007 or so that might have been played at the Alamo, or mentioned the Alamo, or was about some of the defenders or attackers at the Alamo. By necessity, the authors also have to tell

us which songs with "Alamo" in the title are NOT about the actual battle. Unfortunately for the writers, the main appeal of the book will be to people like me (I am now 70) who got hooked on Davy Crockett because of the mid-1950's Disney TV show and Fess Parker's wonderful performance as Crockett. That happened when I was 10 and I've never gotten over it. And I love Alamo-related songs, & Alamo films good and bad. I've now been to the Alamo twice and have read a dozen or more books on the battle, etc. etc. There are lots of guys like me, but we are aging and some of us can't afford to buy our Alamo books (thank goodness for free public libraries and inter-library loans.) On the other hand, every library in Texas should have bought this, and every good library elsewhere in the nation. While the research-heavy prose can get dense in some of the chapters, the authors do a bang-up job of demonstrating the enduring power of that old TV show's anthem, "The Ballad of Davy Crockett." For the five months after the show was broadcast, four different versions of the song made the top 20 of the hit parade: Fess Parker's rendition, Bill Hayes' version, Tennessee Ernie Ford's, and a choral arrangement by the Walter Schumann Voices. The authors also give recording information on nearly 100 other recordings of the song, including those by Louis Armstrong, Diana Ross, Lawrence Welk, and a 1970's folk group featuring the now-famous actress Sissy Spacek. As one of the two writers of the ballad noted "When I sang the lyrics for my family as the TV show was coming together, they laughed at me. A few months later, when the song royalties paid for new cars for my wife and daughter, they were not laughing anymore." If you are not old enough to have been in school when the Crockett/Alamo craze hit, think about when the Beatles came in 1964: The Disney version of Davy's life was THAT big, and Elvis big (his year was '56-'57.) There are nice photos here of old album covers and 45-rpm singles, and the book comes with a CD of lesser-known Alamo songs that only lasts 25 minutes but has some great stuff. I now live in Fess Parker's hometown and my mother-in-law was one of his very good friends in high school and beyond. I never intended for this outcome, but to end up in a place dear to the first Hollywood actor I ever really developed an interest in is a nice coincidence.

I had no idea that this much music had been written about the Alamo and its participants. This book was obviously a labor of love for both William Chemerka and Allen Wiener. You know both of these men had coonskin caps when they were young. Ed McMann might say "everything you ever wanted to know" about music dealing with the Alamo. The amount of research that had to go into this book is mind boggling. You think you know about "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" because you sang it a thousand times when you were young, think again. I had no idea that there were three recordings of the song on the top twenty charts AT THE SAME TIME! The authors not only note every tune that

has ever been written on the subject, but they include notes about each song that give the impression that they researched each song individually! The book is full of wonderful color illustrations and a C.D. of Alamo music is included as well. Add to this a forward by Fess Parker himself, and an introduction by Phil Collins, well I guess you can tell that I like the book. If you are even reading this, then you will like it too. Get this book!

Wonderful survey of all the music that's been written about the Alamo, its most important figures, and motivations of the composers. Covers all eras, from the songs written about Davy Crockett during his own lifetime, to the most recent movie soundtrack recordings, here. Heavily illustrated with period sheet music, album covers, record labels, many in color. Icing on the cake is a free CD with representative music from various eras. A steal at \$21.86.

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