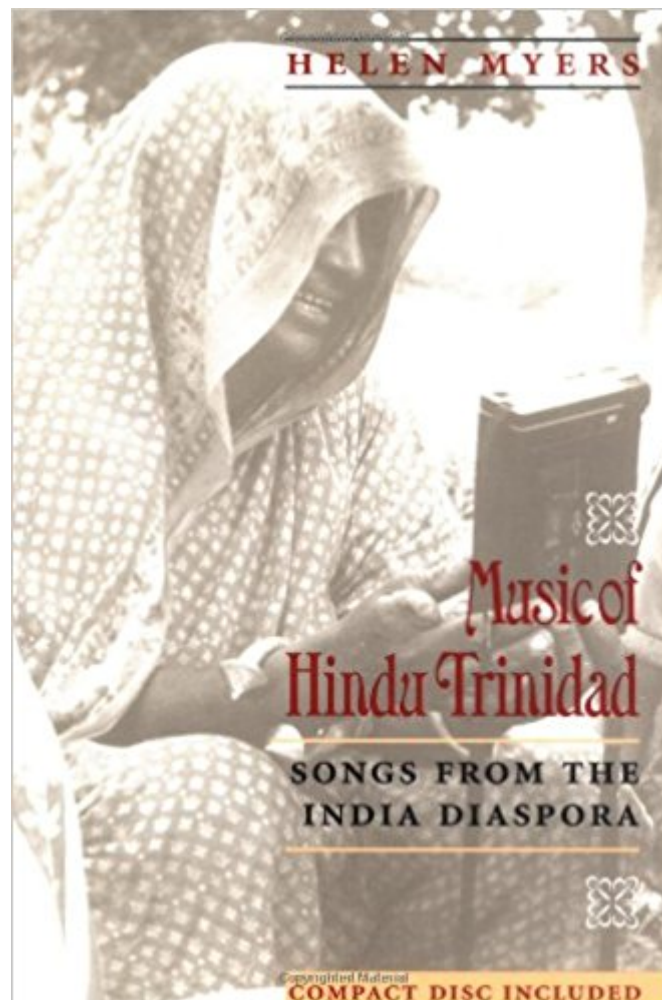


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Music Of Hindu Trinidad: Songs From The India Diaspora (Chicago Studies In Ethnomusicology)



Synopsis

Like many other small towns in Trinidad, Felicity is populated almost entirely by East Indians. In their Caribbean exile, the residents of Felicity have created and recreated the music of their Hindu ancestors. *Music of Hindu Trinidad* is a fascinating account of the history and cultural significance of Hindu music that explores its symbolic, aesthetic, and psychological aspects while asking the larger question of how this music has contributed to the formation of identity in the midst of their great diaspora. Myers details the musical repertory of Felicity, which is based largely on north Indian genres including the traditional Bhojpur folk songs and drumming styles brought by the first indentured laborers in 1845. In her engaging exploration of the fate of Indian classical music and new popular styles such as Hindi calypso, soca, and chutney, she even finds herself at the ancestral home of Trinidadian V. S. Naipaul in India. Copiously illustrated and accompanied by a compact disk, *Music of Hindu Trinidad* is a model ethnographic study.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An ethnomusicological study with heart, this loving history and portrait of the people and musical culture of the town of Felicity, an East Indian enclave in Trinidad, is scholarly, personal, packed with information about music that 19th-century North Indians brought to the promised sugarcane land of the British West Indies, and affirmative of the process of change. Myers (coauthor of *Indian Games and Dances with Native Songs*, Univ. of Nebraska, 1994) sojourns in both Felicity and India and

documents Felicity's "vitality of traditions in flux." To perform this music, Hindus in English-speaking Trinidad must sing in foreign languages and so must learn wedding songs, religious songs, love songs, etc., by rote, which Myers describes not as anti-intellectual but as "the bedrock of culture." A serious and, indeed, felicitous study; recommended for large music collections. ?Bonnie Jo Dopp, Univ. of Maryland Lib., Silver Spring Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This meticulously researched volume presents a portrait of Felicity, an East Indian village of Trinidad. Presented in loving and human terms the author captures the viewpoint of the villagers themselves as they explain their music and culture. Free from the troubling jargon that bedevils so many recent studies in ethnomusicology, Myers's work is a model study that deserves serious scholarly attention. Highly recommended for specialists as well as general readers, who will be interested in the extensive coverage on Nobel-prize-winning author V.S. Naipaul and his highly musical family.

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