

Introduction

I don't rightly know if I'm supposed to be introducing the authors, this book, or dulcimers. So I'll just go back to when I met Al and Bob, and start there.

I was sitting on a bench after performing at the '73 Smithsonian Folklife Festival when down the road came two fellows picking dulcimers in a way I had never heard. I called out and asked them to come over and play something. They obliged, introduced themselves, and shortly we were talking about music, dulcimers, and life in general.

A few weeks later I received a letter from them saying that this book had been accepted for publication, and would I write an introduction...something of what we talked about when we first met.

Well, if my memory serves me right, we talked about a lot of things. But, most important, I said that music is just the way you play it. Don't be afraid to go your own way musically. Keep adapting songs, experimenting, and doing things differently. That's what it's all about...expressing yourself in a pleasing way, and getting what's inside, out.

For many of you this book will be not only an introduction to dulcimers but to music as well. Keep in mind that this book is something you can work with, something that will enable you to help yourself make your own music—and all you have to do is take the time to do it.

Charlie Monroe