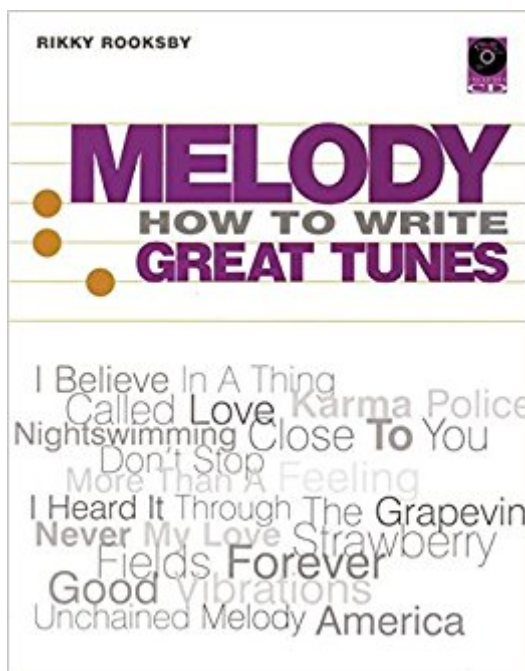


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Melody: How To Write Great Tunes



Synopsis

Melody is the true heart of music, often inspired by nothing more than the songwriter's muse. Yet melody can be learned. This book teaches the art of melody and how to write effective tunes. Starting from basics, it covers the essentials — rhythm, intervals, scales, and harmony - and builds to offer a wealth of advanced techniques and tricks. Every musical example in the book is also on the CD, allowing musicians to increase their awareness of melody through both sight and sound.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I got this book because I am weak on music theory. This book doesn't assume any music theory knowledge. It starts at the most basic concepts and then starts to explain how different styles of music apply these concepts, and then at the end of the book shows how some popular artists apply these concepts and how it defines their signature sounds. This is a must have if you want to write your own music.

Then again...Considering the state of popular music...I guess I can...I used to play/sing/compose by ear and didn't understand alot of aspects of music theory, but this book breaks it down using (Couldn't be better...) examples ranging from the melody styles of The Beatles, The Smiths, Radiohead, Van Morrison, etc. that makes it fun to learn...and everything clicked!The first read was Greek, second time I learned how to love my favorite songs in new ways and continue to every day

since reading this book!! couldn't be more excited about the EP I'm preparing to put out. Other musician friends have noticed the vast improvements in my composing... And I'm just getting warmed up! Yeah... This reads like an info-commercial, but it's the God honest truth! To quote Sinatra... "You can't cheat the notes!" This book will teach you how to own the notes instead the notes owning you. Thanx Rikky! Paul

I thought I reviewed this almost a decade ago, but I don't see my review. Rikky Rooksby is a great author. All of his other books are really, really useful. This is his worst book. Every single example on the CD is annoying-sounding, and there's a tempo glitch when the melody first comes in... you hear it stutter a bit almost on every single track (and it seems like all the melodies come in on the downbeat of 1, which isn't what a lot of pop vocals do, commonly). The sound he uses for the melody (they're all midi tracks) is a clarinet, which I find obnoxious to listen to... it's all piano chords underneath, and a clarinet (or similar woodwind instrument) as the "lead vocal." Nearly all of the melodies just don't sound good. They're kind of boring, meandering, etc. I get what he's trying to explain, theoretically, but I believe the examples could have been a LOT better and more interesting. Furthermore, he should have written some basic lyrics and hired a singer to actually sing the examples. If you're looking for a good melody book... get the Berklee "Songwriter's Workshop: Melody" book by Jimmy Kachulis. It, along with its companion book "Harmony", are two of the best guides I have ever seen when it comes to fully understanding melody, and how it ties in with rhythm (and harmony-- the chords underneath). Skip this book completely.

I have been playing guitar for 25 years and studying theory more than 15 years. Unless you are a professional musician or music theorician, you would not want to dwell into music theory so much, that sometimes; it can be very hard to find an answer even to an easy question. ie; it took my years to find why i need to use some special chords, why i have to use some out of key notes in particular scales/progressions etc. Somehow this book answers those kind of questions too. When i saw that some of such answers are even in the early chapters and very simply explained, I hate myself not reading this book before the other dozens of music theory books i had read. Mr. Rooksby knows how to simplify things and make small bits to chew. And about the melody writing, As author himself mentions too, you can not write a great melody just reading a book. You need an initial inspiration. The theory is then needed for perfecting that inspiration. What this book gives is that theory. Although book has several chapters, it progresses like exercise 1, ex.2 So you can progress page by page or jump to any chapter you need. I recommend you to read from start to

finish. Book starts with the very very basic example. Choose your key, play one of the notes from that key four times in every bar, harmonize it with the chord that has the same name with the note you use in that bar (not exactly in these words of course). In next exercise, exactly the same notes with a small variation; change one of the four notes in the bars with another note of the key. etc. etc. Yes, it does not sound creative so far. After going through all exercises, you end up with the same backbone but definitely much better piece. The difference (at least the concept) is like, nursery rhyme *twinkle, twinkle little star* and *Mozart's 12 variations* to it. There are few downsides too. In exercises, he explains one thing and gives a few examples but not the whole list¹; in scales he mentions *mixolydian*, *dorian* and gives the notes of this scales but not the other scales. (BTW, by reading his other books, I start to think that he hates, minor scales :=))²; He mentions chord inversions, replacements but not all applicable chords etc. It is not a problem for me but it can be hard for the beginners to find out themselves. I understand that it would be frightening and waste of space to list all when ever they were mentioned. At least there should have been some kind of summary charts at the end of the book for future reference. As his other books, he refers to some songs which it may be hard for the reader to find. He keeps referring to bars, saying "look for the variation between bar 8 and 11". But the bars are not numbered that you have to count everytime. Numbering the bars is a small detail but time saving and a good habit of good musicians. As he already mentioned in the book, the audio CD is not arranged as a regular songs but only includes the melody and the chord/rhythm tracks to allow readers to concentrate on how melody develops. That's OK. What I did not like about the CD examples are, most of the tracks are created with synth sounds (or at least I hear so). If he was to use real instruments, the differences between the examples would be more pronounced and we could grasp the note/interval/harmony relations better. Besides it would sound less boring. The examples only play once. For people like me who hates to set their players to shuffle mode or replay mode it becomes annoying to stop the track and rewind to hear twice.

SUMMARY You can not separate music as melody, harmony, rhythm and lyrics especially when you try to explain the theory behind it. So even though this book concentrates on melody, as I mentioned in the header, it gives quite a lot in other components, too. The details for melody is satisfactory. It can be useful for any level of musicians. If you do not have any kind of music theory, start with this one before trying to learn from dedicated theory books. It does not include everything but it will definitely help you understand the dedicated books with ease.

I have several of Rooksby's books, the best being in my opinion "How to write songs on guitar" I am 60 pages into this book and am having a hard time keeping my attention. The first 30 pages or so is

nothing anyone would ever sing and he even says that. Its a good book for knowing your options when writing a melody, but i don't hear any creative input really. Maybe it will get better towards the end, if i can stomach it that long. He's going into all these different time signatures for what reason i can't understand unless he is catering to the off the beaten path styles, ie jazz, waltz, etc. I was looking for a book focusing on popular music, this book goes in all directions

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