

Giovanni Ippolito

ABOUT “100% AMERICAN”



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Preface to the edition in English of “100% American – La Classicità Del Rock Americano”  
(Giovanni Ippolito - 2017, Arcana)

About “100% American”

## Preface To The Edition In English

In 2012 an unplanned initiative, which would have not occurred without a mostly casual series of strange events happened in my life, mainly because of merely aleatoric factors, brought me to pursue a project that I had kept in my mind since when I was attending a professional course in Journalism and Musical Criticism about fifteen years before, that is to say writing a book about a kind of music I had always felt a special connection with, where I had the impression of “being at home”, when playing and singing it and while listening to it, and in which I could immediately recognize and even anticipate the form, from the musicological point of view, and establish an emotional relationship with the tracks and with the artists, from the sentimental perspective. At that time, my guess was that such particular feeling had to be the result of something universal, somehow “classical”, in this music and that it should depend on an everlasting and wherever existing *quid* of the roots it had grown upon, American folk and blues, other genres I had always perceived a special connection with, since immediately after the first listening to an album of Woody Guthrie or Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, for instance, just to mention a couple of well-known figures. [...]

[...] Anyway, about eight years ago, I decided to start writing the book and I finished it in a couple of months. Then, I thought to add a second volume to it, containing a first section devoted to the important outsiders deserving some credit for what they did in order to allow this music and the major artists to reach their peaks of art and popularity (producers, session men, members of the bands but even journalists, such as Jon Landau, for instance) and a second one with a very accurate and detailed list of recordings, publications, radio and TV appearances and other similar data having historical relevance with regards to the subject of the book, but, in the end, I didn't (it could be the major addition of an eventual further edition of the book in the future). As a matter of fact, I felt more than fine, in any sense, with what I had already written. In fact, it was amazing seeing my ideas and my writing flow quickly on the screen of my laptop; conceiving entire chapters during the nights when I was still awake in the darkness of my woman's bedroom while she was sleeping at my side in the bed and putting them into writing immediately after waking up in the morning (this is particularly the case of the chapter about African-America); listening again to all of the records by the artists I was talking about and, in many cases, writing at the same time the music came out of the speakers, directly inspiring the words, the sentences, the inner structure of what I was typing; working at the musicological analysis of the songs, by replicating with my guitar and voice what I heard in the records, by digging up into the linguistic aspects of the music and by putting them in relation with my knowledge of the artists and with the feelings I had for their work. [...]

[...] I wanted to be scientifically accurate, passionate and visionary at the same time, as if to give those artists and their music something back, a sort of thanksgiving and reward for what they gave me in my life, and I think I managed to do it. In particular, for HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED, which was the individual record that mostly opened the doors in my experience with music, since when I first bought and listened to it in my adolescent years, I really wanted to write something really making a “boom!!!” in the head of the reader. I leave it to others to judge if I was successful in achieving my goal but I am quite sure that there are true inspiration, culture and devotion in what I wrote about the record. [...]

[...] Making my book fit for a release in English has been a nice way to make these recent diseased (in any sense) times partially enjoyable. Music has always shown the way, opened the doors and torn down the walls. And so do I. In the new start this edition of the book is part of, I will tell those knowing very well that I am referring to them “how does it feel to be on your own?” and “I bid you farewell in the night and be gone”. Everybody should do it.

Giovanni Ippolito (Naples, 29/03/2020)