

the Groom. This was the apex of his career, for within a few years his style seemed antiquated in comparison with the more aggressive strains of rock and roll. Carmichael was now out of touch with popular taste. He never had another hit after 1951, and his film roles dwindled as well. His personal life also began to fall apart, as his eighteen-year marriage ended amidst rumors of drinking, affairs, and drug abuse. Carmichael found little credible work, and by the 1960s he seemed to be angry at a world that had passed him by. Hoagy Carmichael died in 1981, but not before he was recognized by a later generation as a preeminent songwriter of his time.

Stardust Melody is an informative and comprehensive examination of Carmichael and his world and will stand as the definitive biography. Sudhalter writes in a conversational style that makes the book easy to read, although at times his personal approach reveals his subjectivity. He dances around controversial topics, such as extramarital affairs, drinking, and conservative politics, that might make Carmichael less likeable. And since Sudhalter focuses on Carmichael, the larger context of his subject's life is less examined. Given what the author sets out to do in *Stardust Melody*, he is successful. Songwriters and performers should take note of this tale of a talented man who lost his audience before he was ready to retire.

KENNETH J. BINDAS is associate professor of history at Kent State University, Trumbull, Ohio. His *Swing, That Modern Music* (2001) explored the social and cultural underpinnings of the swing phenomenon.

99 Historic Homes of Indiana: A Look Inside. Photographs by Marsh Davis. Text by Bill Shaw. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002. Pp. xiv, 240. Illustrations, index. \$39.95.)

The premise of this book is excellent: provide brief portraits of a representative sample of home preservationists who illustrate a diversity of contexts (farm, village, and city homes from several socio-economic classes), a variety of motivations (aesthetic, historical, civic, familial, museological), and the richness of Indiana's architectural heritage.

There are noteworthy surprises, as Bill Shaw profiles individuals who, in the period from 1960 to 1990, had to fight battles to save their houses and often went on to found preservation districts or organizations in their towns. The authors, in an unspoken way, portray an America of individualists and voluntary associations, and their choices of people and locales suggest an Indiana much like the New England village Thornton Wilder created for *Our Town*. This is an Indiana where people live their whole lives in one locale; remain in the same house over three or four generations; or, in a simultaneous rejection and exploitation of professional mobility, they move back home to acquire the houses they admired as children. Both text and photos

communicate what much of contemporary American life denies: a profound need for personal, social, and historical rootedness.

The book's appearance suggests coffee-table vanities, although in fact its size serves the purposes of photographic clarity and completeness. Davis's matte photographs have neither the slickness nor the sense of privileged serenity that images in *Architectural Digest* promote. Davis's interiors register spatial depth and the warmth of premodern materials unusually well, and his points of view admirably capture the sophistication these houses possess.

While one is tempted to contemplate the photographs in isolation from the text—the lawns are always green, the sun is out, crack teams from Merry Maid have just departed the premises, all is silence and immobility—Shaw's text balances the cumulative impact of so many architectural images of buildings without people. His profiles animate the domestic spaces in the photos with the personalities of the homeowners.

The book, however, does have one major weakness. Although each of Shaw's profiles is engaging, over the course of ninety-nine of them his unvarying use of conventional newspaper portraiture reduces the owners to stock characters. His "just-folks" text unintentionally undercuts the courage, resourcefulness, and tenacity of people like Nellie Longworth, a fiery congressional lobbyist for preservation issues, and Stanley Lowe, a preservation advocate for several of Pittsburgh's black districts. Many of the people we meet in this book made it their business to (metaphorically) dump garbage on the steps of city hall when the sanitation department failed to pick it up in the neighborhoods. Only in this way did they get results. Their civic commitment deserves a treatment divorced from the genteel, aestheticized public image the preservation movement all too frequently creates for itself.

EDWARD W. WOLNER, professor of architecture at Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, is currently writing a book on "Skyscraper Romances from the Great War through the Great Depression."

The King of Steeltown: Hardball Politics in the Heartland. Produced and directed by Chris Sautter. VHS and DVD, 75 minutes. (Sautter Communications, 3623 Everett Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. \$30.00, plus \$5.00 shipping.)

In the spring of 1999, first-time documentary filmmaker Chris Sautter tracked the comings and goings of the candidates in the Democratic mayoral primary in East Chicago, Indiana. "The King of Steeltown" is a profile of the final days of this campaign, featuring its victor, Robert A. Pastrick, East Chicago's mayor since 1972. Apart from the sheer longevity of his tenure, Pastrick's claim to fame is the style of his leadership. More than once he has been described as the