

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR ***DANGEROUS RHYTHMS***

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"With *Dangerous Rhythms*, T. J. English once again demonstrates that he is not only our premier chronicler of modern criminal organizations in the U.S.A. and beyond, but also a seductive storyteller, masterfully folding memorable anecdote after anecdote into this diligently researched account of the intersection of jazz and the mob over the last century."

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AUTHOR OF *AMERICAN MOONSHOT***

FROM T. J. ENGLISH, THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF HAVANA NOCTURNE, COMES THE EPIC, SCINTILLATING NARRATIVE OF THE INTERCONNECTED WORLDS OF JAZZ AND ORGANIZED CRIME IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

 *Dangerous Rhythms* tells the symbiotic story of jazz and the underworld: a relationship fostered in some of twentieth-century America's most notorious vice districts, where the mobster-owned clubs determined who played and who got paid. For the first half of the century, mobsters and musicians enjoyed a mutually beneficial partnership by offering artists like Louis Armstrong, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, and Ella Fitzgerald a prominent stage. The mob, including major players like Al Capone, Meyer Lansky, Charlie "Lucky" Luciano, and Mickey Cohen, provided opportunities that would not otherwise have existed. The resulting racial diversity of the clubs and speakeasies paved the way for some of America's greatest artists to find their voice.

Even so, at the heart of this relationship was a festering racial inequity. The musicians were mostly African American, and the clubs were owned by white men. It was a glorified plantation system that, over time, would find itself out of tune with an emerging civil rights movement.

Gangsterism was prevalent in the clubs. Some artists, including Louis Armstrong, wanted to play in "protected" joints, believing they were safer and more likely to be paid fairly if they worked in them. Others believed that playing in venues outside mob rule would make it easier to earn a higher wage and have more freedom—meaning control over their careers. The mob also used the "cabaret card" license to hold sway over numerous performers—including Charlie Parker,

Billie Holiday, and Thelonious Monk—who were denied employment following drug violations, in some cases at the very height of their careers.

Through English's detailed research and firsthand accounts from jazz veterans, *Dangerous Rhythms* reveals this deeply fascinating slice of American history in all its sordid glory.



T. J. ENGLISH is a noted journalist, screenwriter, and author of the *New York Times* best-sellers *Havana Nocturne*, *Paddy Whacked*, *The Savage City*, and *Where the Bodies Were Buried*. He also authored *The Westies*, a national bestseller, *Born to Kill*, which was nominated for an Edgar Award, and *The Corporation*. His journalism has appeared in *Esquire*, *Playboy*, and *New York* magazine, among other publications. His screenwriting credits include episodes for the television dramas *NYPD Blue* and *Homicide*, for which he was awarded the Humanitas Prize. He lives in New York City.

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