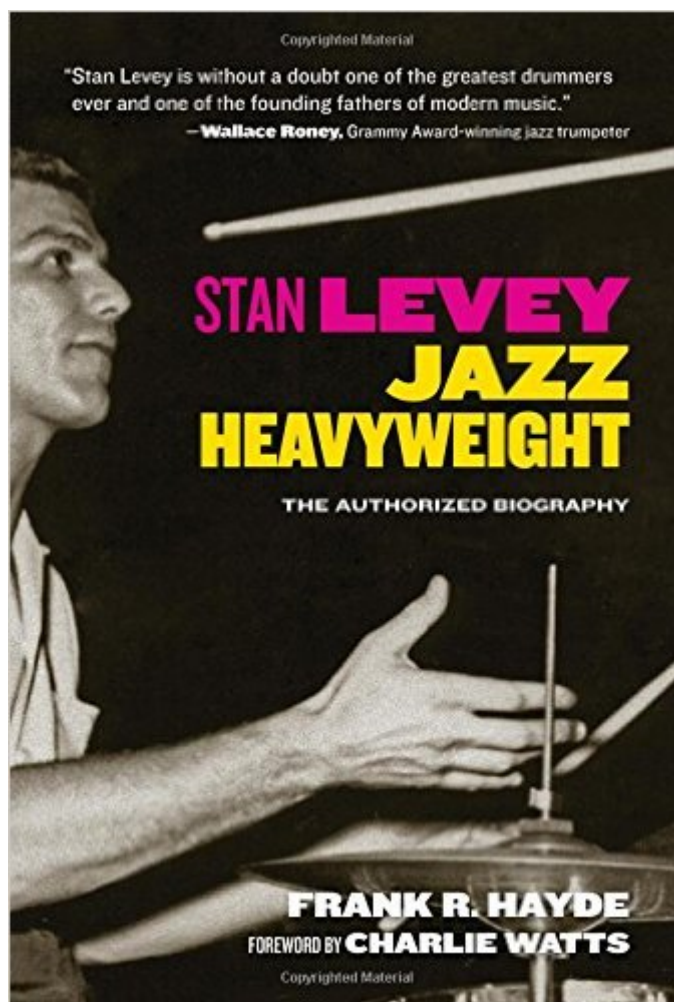


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# Stan Levey: Jazz Heavyweight



## Synopsis

Stan Levey is one of the most influential drummers in the history of modern jazz. During his extraordinary career, the self-taught Levey played alongside a who's who of twentieth century jazz artists: Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Stan Getz, Coleman Hawkins, Art Tatum, Ben Webster, Dexter Gordon, Lester Young, Thelonius Monk, Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, Ella Fitzgerald . . . the remarkable list goes on and on, and includes dozens of the most distinguished names in the annals of jazz and popular music. *Jazz Heavyweight* follows Levey's prolific and colorful life, from his childhood days in rough-and-tumble North Philadelphia, to his first gig as a drummer for Dizzy Gillespie at the tender age of sixteen, to his meteoric rise as one of the most sought after sidemen in the world of bebop, to his membership in the Lighthouse All-Stars. Jazz aficionados will relish *Jazz Heavyweight* for its new, never-before-published information about such hugely influential musicians as Parker, Gillespie, and Davis, while jazz neophytes will find a fast-paced, colorful encapsulation of the entire history of modern jazz. This book is essential reading for anyone seeking an up-close-and-personal look at jazz in the latter half of the twentieth century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I picked this up the night it arrived and didn't put it down until I had read every last word and footnote. It is a fabulous read. There was a lot about Stan Levey that I had known about but when you see the record set straight, often in his own words, the big picture comes together. One great thing about this book is that you get a general chronology, starting at the roots and flowering into a

career in full blossom. As the title suggests, Stan was also a boxing champion and the way the narrative weaves together his drumming and his boxing is enthralling. Finally, all the dots are connected in such a way -- it's beautifully written -- that the reader is left edified with a deeper understanding of Stan Levey and his contributions, but also of the times and characters (Bird, Miles, Feldman, Stitt, etc.) that inform us today. Love it! Buy it!

Frank Hayde writes with the clear style that made his previous works so engaging. Learning about Levey's life makes mine fuller, and I'm grateful for that knowledge. Years ago I spent a day learning rhythm from Tito Puente, and I wish I could have done the same with Stan. Maybe I'll settle with learning to write from Frank.

I didn't know much about Stan Levey before reading this book and walked away with great respect for him as both a drum hero deserving more recognition and as an exceptional human being who had to overcome a lot of adversity in his life. An engaging read that should appeal to a wide audience beyond the drumming/jazz enthusiast community.

Interesting and informative account of a seminal figure around the birth of bop, this book describes Stan Levey's interactions with the musicians of the era. The war on drugs, and its pervasive disastrous effects on fragile musicians trying to make a living playing jazz, is another theme in Mr. Levey's book. A highly recommended book for those interested in the forgotten heroes of the bebop era.

Quite interesting biography of one of the true be-bop heroes-Levey was much more than a former Kenton drummer. His story sheds new light on his playing and his early life as a boxer. It is quite a story; Stan's importance to the music finally receives his due!

I thoroughly enjoyed this bio. Like the Stan Levey DVD "The Original Original" (which I think is one of the best jazz bio DVDs) the focus is on the music. While neither the book or the DVD explain how Levey could develop and adapt his playing so readily, Levey's career is well-chronicled. And the biggest news, which may be a spoiler of sorts: Stan Levey was not left-handed.

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