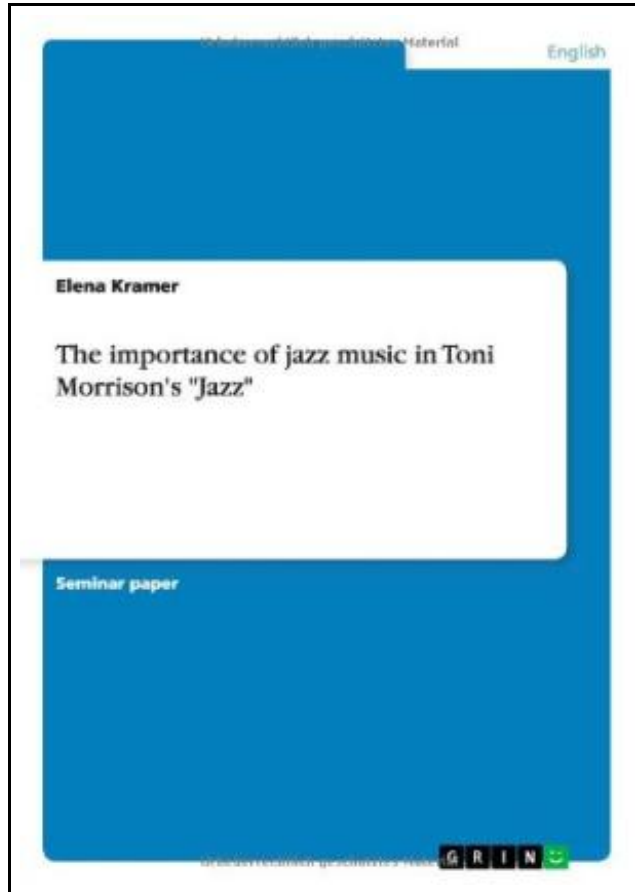


The Importance of Jazz Music in Toni Morrisons Jazz



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GRIN Verlag. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 60 pages. Dimensions: 8.3in. x 5.8in. x 0.4in. Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1, 3, University of Kassel, language: English, abstract: The first reading of Toni Morrisons novel made me wonder why the author chose the title Jazz. It describes the difficulties various African Americans have in integrating themselves into the urban context of the North. The origin of this dilemma lies in unsolved problems, unprocessed experiences and in an incomplete reappraisal of the past. Identity, as it seems, needs to reconcile history and present. Blacks in northern cities at the beginning of the 20th century still suffered from the reverberations of slavery; the Great Migration out of the Old South and into the industrialized North with its promising opportunities had not settled these problems. In this paper, I want to examine jazz music and its function within the thematic frame of the story. Since history is of great importance in the novel, it is necessary to comprehensively outline the historical background of the story, which reaches from the late years of slavery up to the artistic blossom during the Harlem Renaissance. The development of the jazz culture then serves as a starting point for the analysis of musical elements in the novel. This embraces structural as well as stylistic parallels and also comments on the function of the unconventional narrator. The focus then turns to the main characters of the story, Joe and Violet Trace, to the problems they have with themselves and their marriage and the solution the author offers. Toni Morrison suggests that the problems of alienation and loss of identity result from a missing connection of past and present. A stable identity must be rooted in history, so the denial of...

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