



# A Dreamer Of Pictures: Neil Young: The Man And His Music

*David Downing*

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Neil Young is arguably the only rock performer and songwriter whose work has retained the respect of a large following while gaining the allegiance of new generations. He has demonstrated a unique ability to combine commercial success with a willful experimentation. His music has encompassed almost every American popular style, from folk to metal, from rockabilly to punk, from rhythm and blues to country; and it is his restless pursuit of new challenges that has led on the one hand to his recognition as one of the few stars who refuses to "sell out," and on the other hand to his being sued by his record company for making albums that were not "characteristic of Neil Young." In *A Dreamer of Pictures*, David Downing paints an illuminating and entertaining portrait of this contradictory and enigmatic figure. Here we see his childhood in Canada and his first forays into musicmaking; his ups and downs with Buffalo Springfield, Crosby, Stills, and Nash, and Crazy Horse; the privations and excesses of life on the road; his unconventional filmmaking and fundraising ventures; his often absurd political pronouncements; his two marriages; his involvement with his younger son's therapy to combat cerebral palsy; and his continuing musical evolution. Neil Young has taken rock beyond generational boundaries and has helped to establish it as a unique art form; *A Dreamer of Pictures* is thus a portrait not only of Young, but of rock itself.

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