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The White Stripes: Sweethearts Of The Blues



Synopsis

This engrossing book tells the tale of the Detroit duo who shook up the music world with their "candy-colored, gothic-coated world of melody, rhythm and storytelling." These unlikely-looking saviors reinvigorated the blues and blues-rock for a new generation. Writer Denise Sullivan relates The White Stripes' story with a keen eye for detail, a music lover's ear for influences and references, a fan's appreciation of the layers and subtleties, and a journalist's nose for a good story, with all its twists and curves, half-truths, and elaborate theories. Includes dozens of rare photographs, a full discography, and a song concordance. 7-1/4 x 9-1/4, 176 pages

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Customer Reviews

I read this book right through in a handful of hours over a two night span. This is the second book about the White Stripes I've read and I enjoyed this book immensely. Being from a suburb of Windsor, right across from Detroit all my life one would think I'd have a clear understanding of the music there and how being from Detroit impacts local artists. After reading *Sweethearts of the Blues*, I realized that I should have, could have and would have to delve more deeply into the music that impacted Jack and Meg White. I was quite surprised to find myself learning even more about the big city I can see from my window...The book is a heartfelt tribute to the band, especially to Jack and a very entertaining read. I'm in my 30s with four children that all love the White Stripes and this is on my teen's "to-read" list also. The author approached her subject with warmth and heart and put many pieces of the Stripes puzzle together in a fast-paced joyful manner. There is a strong coherent

understanding of the power of the White Stripes' magic in this book. The undercurrent of appreciation for Jack and Meg shines through and it is a respectful, happy read. It's a must for the Stripes' collectors and those who have a soft spot for Jack and Meg's work. I recommend this book most especially to fans who have just been turned on to the White Stripes and want to know more. My thanks to Ms. Sullivan for putting together a book that reveals a love for the music and the magic of Jack and Meg.

I bought this book because I didn't know much about the White Stripes and wanted to know more (including, to some extent, what the big deal is). I got a lot more than I was looking for, and am very glad I read it. In addition to the expected details of their biography, I had the unexpected pleasure of discovering our shared love of their influences. I have to say that understanding the links to their predecessors really helped me develop a lot more respect and understanding for the White Stripes. The book also provides an intimate history of Meg and Jack as well and the "scene" they matured in. Unlike many rock biographies, this book doesn't feel like an attempt to cash in on a band's popularity or shore up their celebrity mythology. Instead it is an honest analysis of individuals and their music by someone who clearly loves them - but is still capable of being objective when necessary.

I love the White Stripes. I hated this book. I gave it two stars simply because it's about the White Stripes and has a few cute pictures of Meg. This entire book reads like someone you know trying to show off about how much she knows about the music industry. After about page 50, you just want to scream, "I get it already! You know a lot about music. Please talk about the White Stripes now!" I got the feeling that the author didn't care about the band so much as just showing off her knowledge to a large audience. This is perfectly illustrated on page 85 when she is talking about the liner notes on *De Stijl* and closes a paragraph with the sentence, "I could elaborate, but I won't." It is the equivalent of a kid on the playground running around yelling, "I've got a secret," and refusing to tell anyone. The entire book seems like it was written because Sullivan wanted attention and for others to envy her knowledge of the Detroit music scene. The White Stripes seem to have little to do with it.

The first time I heard The White Stripes, alone in my car, I said aloud to no one, "Well. Where did that come from?" And now, thanks to Denise Sullivan's great, fun, reverent read, we know. Part documentary, part love letter, part Memo To All Music Fans, "Sweethearts of The Blues" is a meticulously researched delight for those of us scrounging for actual roots in today's fallow musical

field of all things derivative. Loaded with anecdotes and starry-eyed peer praise, everyone from White's fifth grade pals to Ben Swank to Holly Golightly checks in, creating an intimate mix of recollection, speculation and appropriate adulation. A dissertation-worthy analysis of Dylan's influence on The White Stripes is a must-ponder for anyone who wants to walk their White Stripes talk at cocktail parties. Sullivan separates fact from lore, and adds fascinating historical perspective, but leaves room for theories of alchemy and magic. I have given this book as a gift twice, and received gushing thanks from both parties. Chock-full of candid photos, "Sweethearts" makes a once-discovered-hard-to-put-down addition to any coffee table, and confirms the consensus, "The White Stripes are about the music...and the story-telling." And so is this book.

As a native Detroiter, now living in Los Angeles, I was happy to stumble upon this great book about the White Stripes. Though I've never been a fan of the duo myself, as a Detroiter I felt I needed to understand what it was about them that everyone was so hyped up about. I'm usually very "Go Team" about any music that comes out of my fair city, but was never able to fall in love with them the way I was with Seger, Nugent and - to a degree - Eminem. So I went out and bought two CDs and this book. I must say that this book did more to endear them to me than their CDs did. It was informative, well-written and easy to follow. Buy this book, it's a good read. If you're a fan, you'll learn a lot that you didn't know. And if you're a casual observer as I was, it's a great introduction to this colorful act. I can only hope that Denise Sullivan will soon pen a book about Detroit's other favorite son - Kid Rock!

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