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Bill Drummond

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At the age of 45, Bill Drummond is less concerned with setting the record straight as making sure it revolves at the correct speed. Whether he's recording 'Justified and Ancient' with Tammy Wynette; contemplating the dull lunacy of the Turner prize; resisting the urge to paint landscapes; or glorying in the crapness of rock comebacks; he is consistently amusing and thought-provoking, and draws us into his world with the seductive enthusiasm of a born storyteller.

An artist with a singular approach to his work, Bill Drummond has paused to take stock of his life and a career that now spans over twenty-five eventful years. Famously enjoying international success with The KLF and inviting national controversy for burning a million quid with The K Foundation, these days Drummond spends much of his time writing profusely. He avoids and confronts issues, infuriates and inspires those around him, muses and confuses, creates and destroys. He has maintained a penchant for reckless schemes - all this while drinking endless pots of tea.

45 Details

Date : Published November 1st 2001 by Abacus (first published 2000)

ISBN : 9780349112893

Author : Bill Drummond

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Music, Biography, Nonfiction, Art, Autobiography, Memoir

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Ali Miremadi says

Funny, insightful, sporadically well-written collection of diary entries. Drummond himself, rereading his work in Aylesbury library, remarks, “on reading these stories one after the other I’m confronted with the incessant self-mythologising vanity of them all’. I suppose that is the point. And, despite the truth of Drummond’s observation, there is more to it.

Jonathan says

The quote on the cover of 45, taken from a Times review, sums up the book perfectly: “A wonderful memoir... wise, poignant and amusing.” Bill Drummond is a true maverick who documents his madcap schemes (he famously burned a million pounds of his own money) and with far more heart and intelligence than the typical rock star autobiography. Recommended whether or not you are a fan of KLF.

Molly says

I enjoyed this book a lot. Its style and content appeal to my personality and ethos, so your feelings about literary value may vary.

Amar Pai says

Idiosyncratic journalish musings from Bill Drummond, the former KLF frontman / art prankster / Scottish ex-nationalist / middle aged da'.

The pieces are written in a meandering, unbuttoned style, but Drummond can be quite charming if you're in the mood. There's something sympathetic about his failed art projects and compulsion to write.

He drives around the London orbital for 25 hours, builds a cube of 20,000 Tennants cans to distribute to the homeless, buys and destroys fine art, makes soup for 30, catalogs every sign seen in a day. There's talk bout football and fatherhood and the KLF (they left a dead sheep at the Brit Awards and burned a million pounds)

He takes long pointless walks that trace out the shape of his initials written into the local map. Man this guy loves to walk. He sees it as invisible graffiti.

Godzilla says

I seem to re-read this book more and more frequently. The words and ideas flow from Bill Drummond so easily it seems. He turns the mundane into something of interest and wonder.

I'm envious of the ability to spend time in such a free way, the ability to be self deprecating and open. Not all the essays work perfectly, but generally there's a kernel of something within each one which fires the synapses.

Re-reading this in my 45th year, it seems more than ever to speak to me, and has inspired me to be more creative and appreciative of everything around me, cheers Bill.

Robert says

I read this one after Julian Cope's autobiography Head On/ Repossessed.

Whether you think he is a tosser or not, Bill Drummond has always thought of ways to trick the public. Take for instance his stunts as THE KLF - not to mention his impact on the music industry: Inventing Chill Out, Bizarre promo tricks which can't be emulated and introducing Echo and The Bunnymen and The Teardrop Explodes to the world.

It's all documented here and in short bite sized chapters. At times the premise wears thin, just how many times are we going to read about his pranks, but it's a fun bio.

Mark Love says

What can I say about this book? As a long-term old-time fan of the KLF, JAMMS, etc this was the first of Bill Drummond's books (other than "The Manual") that I read, about 10 years ago. Since then I've read nearly everything he's written (even the virtually impenetrable "Wild Highway") and followed his many varied exploits as he has struggled to slough his Kingboy D persona and find his voice as both an author and artist (although I'm sure he would disagree with there being any distinction).

I've recently had the privilege of working with The Man on a project (<http://collectivedischarge.blogspot.c...>) and found him to be every bit as good as his word. It was in that context that I recently decided to re-read 45, as for my money (although not a million pounds of it) it is his finest work.

This collection of short 'stories' (mainly autobiographical reflections and musings) is hard to describe - in the same down to earth manner he describes his domestic routines, artistic quests, pranks and anything else that comes to mind.

Brilliant, endearing, provoking and testimony to his "anyone can do it" attitude, this is essential reading for fans and newcomers alike.

Daniel says

I have a huge soft spot for Bill's former band The KLF / Justified Ancients of Mu Mu / The Timelords and

all of their strange antics. The story involving cow corpses in this, for want of a better word, 'autobiography' was a bit off-putting and made me feel slightly ill, but on the whole Drummond's thoughts and stories about the music industry and the art world are hugely entertaining and, despite his predisposition towards self-mythologising, he comes across as an extremely likeable narrator.

Mark Farley says

One half of the most influential English dance music acts in this country, Bill Drummond and Jimmy Cauty were The KLF. Their art terrorism and anti capitalist ideas assaulted the music industry for a couple of years that brought us mu-mu land, ice cream vans, dead sheep and the burning of a million pounds. They also produced the most punk rock moment of the punk starved 90's when he opened fire on the crowd of movers, shakers and luminaries of the 1992 Brit Awards with an M16 full of blanks, whilst reconstituting their hit with a thrash metal band from Ipswich. Brilliant.

Neal Alexander says

Bill Drummond probably wouldn't mind the assertion that his music (KLF etc) was rubbish but what mattered was the way he did it. Here we have an assortment of memories from managing Echo and the Bunnymen in Liverpool to being a regular at a Buckinghamshire public library, via a slew of imaginary bands, and what would be recognised as installations and performance art if they'd been done by someone interested in presenting them as such.

On the contemporary art scene: "Very little of this discussion promotes what is essentially important about contemporary art. What gets promoted is fame, names to know, behind-the-scenes movers and shakers and, of course, prices. But worse than all this is that contemporary art is made safe, unchallenging, boxed off, neutered and summarised. This prevents it from performing its most vital function: helping us to see, feel, understand, celebrate, challenge and wonder at the world we are living in right now, in ways never before known."

Mr Disco says

One of the most exquisitely-written books I've ever read. Incredibly poignant and essential if you are a fan of The Justified Ancients Of Mu Mu, pop music, or you are a man.

P says

"These modern groups are all banging away at about 134 bpm -- we're still stuck at 120. I mean, we still think it's hip to pretend to be into jungle and threaten to make records at 170 bpm. We had no idea 134 was where it was at." -- June 1997, during the recording sessions for 2K's "Fuck the Millennium" one-off single. My, how things change. Currently, Drummond is proclaiming recorded music has "run its course." 2017: *What the Fuck Happened?*

Tom says

he's a funny guy, very secretive, with a great history in pop - Echo & The Bunnymen/Teardrop Explodes/KLF

but this is a shallow collection of articles/ chapters/ self-mythologising but very little self-analysis I would have liked more on the madness that led the KLF to burn a million pounds, and more articulation of why he hates (some) modern art so much.

even for an autobiography, this is self-indulgent tosh.

A says

An interesting collection of writings by one of the art/music world's most eccentric minds. At times, equally hilarious and introspective, he goes on long-form rambles about modern life, nationalism, art buying, pop music and disillusionment. Some of the stories go a bit off the rails and had me skimming the pages, but I really enjoy his ability to take some of life's most mundane moments and reframe them in an absurdist context.

Mike says

So much between the lines writing. So much stuck in being some sort of particularly manly man but not. I think guys in their early 40s will find commonalities with these essays, I think artists will find some as well.

I'm not sure I'd recommend it, even though I enjoyed reading it.
