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Canyon Of Dreams: The Magic And The Music Of Laurel Canyon



Synopsis

A lavishly illustrated insider's look at 80 years of music and culture in Laurel Canyon--a ZIP code with its own playlist. Sonny & Cher, the Doors, the Monkees, the Byrds, Buffalo Springfield, Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne; Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young; the Eagles, Carole King, and others cultivated their immortal sounds in this L.A.-based musical fraternity. Written by a long-time Canyon resident who knows them all, Canyon of Dreams traces the history of the community and its enduring legacy. Taking a deeply personal approach, it uses a multiple-voice narration based on exclusive interviews with the area's musical elite. Because of their close connection with Kumbia, some of these stars are speaking openly for the first time. New in paper.

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Customer Reviews

Hardcover, 368 pages, including index. This is a beautifully made, well thought out, well put together book. From the very substantial cover, to the end paper photographs and map, to the well written text, and the wonderfully evocative photographs--this is a book like "they used to make". Even the paper used is very thick, with a beautiful dull, satin finish, which only enhances the overall look and feel of this book. Ray Manzarek wrote the forward, with insight into Laurel Canyon and, of course, THE DOORS. This book is primarily concerned with Laurel Canyon--its history and the many people (almost all musicians of some form) who called it home. Starting in the era of Gene Autry and Tex Ritter in the early 1930's, this begins a time line of the Canyon and how it changed, through the sixties, with artists like Sonny and Cher, THE BYRDS, Joni Mitchell, Steve Stills, David Crosby, Neil

Young, and many more, into the early 21st century, with GUNS AND ROSES and other groups/people who inhabited the surrounding area, most notably, the close-by Sunset Strip. Along the way jazz artists of the fifties and sixties, who also lived in the area, are given some recognition by Gene Norman, who was famous for promoting the Sunset Strip and the many clubs up and down "the strip". As the decades change, so, too, did the people who came into this area. There is a good overview of musical legends, and how the clubs and radio, which were just beginning to play this "new" music, were so important to Laurel Canyon and the surrounding area. Where this book begins a more in depth look at this area, is the early sixties. People like Andrew Loog Oldham, Mark Volman (THE TURTLES), Henry Diltz, and many others from the music world, tell what it was like during this era. Every aspect of the Laurel Canyon/Sunset Strip area is given its due - from clubs and the bands playing in them, to the record companies so important in releasing the music, to the many radio stations that concentrated on local artists, to the exponential growth of the area in the sixties, to the area's demise and rebirth in the late seventies/early eighties. The photographs are fully half of the story here. They are very evocative of the time, and their visual impact can't be emphasized enough. Many of the photographs (most in color) have not been seen, either in the near past, or not at all. The images captured here, both of bands on and off the stage, sometimes posed, sometimes candid, give an inside look at this area and the many important musicians who called the canyon home. Towards the end of the book, the reader will have a good overview of the area and all the great musicians who call/called it home. Many of the people who lived in Laurel Canyon in the sixties, have moved on, either because of family obligations or having the realization that no one can stay young forever, locked into a certain time. In their place new people have started to call the area home, and are carving out their own history in Laurel Canyon. For those who liked Domenic Priore's "Riot On Sunset Strip (Rock and roll's last stand in Hollywood)", or Barney Hoskyn's "Waiting For The Sun, The Sound of Los Angeles", this is a book that can sit alongside both as a great companion piece. The insightful writing, the coverage of all musical topics related to the area, and the fine photography, make this a book to own by anyone interested in this time/area/music.

The Canyon of Dreams, the Magic and Music of Laurel Canyon is an amazing history of Laurel Canyon that sits in the Hollywood Hills right above Sunset Boulevard and since the beginning of Hollywood, starting with The Garden of Allah, a hotel opened by one of the wives of Rudolph Valentino, it quickly garnered a reputation as a place for a hideaway for movie stars, musicians, and artists. Errol Flynn had trysts there, jazz musicians came there to score opium, big band leaders Tommy Dorsey and Kay Kyser had an argument there as to which was the more popular, Dorsey

won the argument by producing two naked women (who in the Rock `n` Roll era would be groupies), one of whom had a `T` shaved in her pubic hair and the other a `D`. Proving that sex and drugs and wild times existed before Rock `n` Roll and the farther into the future we go, the easier it is to touch the past. The book is formatted like a scrapbook full of pictures, quotes, and paraphernalia, such as, matchbook covers of famous night clubs, record jackets, restaurant menu's, one from a Chinese restaurant owned by Benson Fong's father, and another that lists a combination pizza at \$[...]! The chapters are easy to read and filled with amazing stories of residents and the adventures, misadventures, artistic pursuits, parties, trysts, or some combination of all of the above. The chapters cover different eras usually from the viewpoint of a Laurel Canyon resident who was present, and are divided into relevant tangents that give you a broader feel for everything that was going on at the time. For instance rock photographer Henry Diltz leads off the chapter that recounts the invasion of the Rock `n` Roll industry. Diltz recounts his own days as folk singer and how his career morphed into that of an iconic rock photographer. His most famous album cover probably being The Doors, Morrison Hotel. The section after Diltz's story tells of Robby Krieger and John Densmore moving into the canyon, followed by Jim Morrison and they recount their stories of the canyon, such as dinners at John Densmore's house, or Robby Krieger hanging out at Frank Zappa's house and Zappa's interest in producing The Doors. Doug Dragon, (brother of Daryl Dragon of Captain and Tennille fame), tells of their living in the canyon in the 50's. His father was a famous symphony conductor, Carmen Dragon and tells of his father playing at The Hollywood Bowl, and how the house they lived in was later bought by TV star Wally Cox, Peter Tork, Stephen Stills and was later used by the Rolling Stones to rehearse for a tour. So many famous and infamous people have lived in Laurel Canyon, H.B. Barnum, Harry Houdini, Frank Zappa, Tom Mix, Tex Ritter, Jackie DeShannon, Joni Mitchell, Van Dyke Parks, Robert Heinlein, Tim Buckley, Peter Tork, Mickey Dolenz, Billy James, Paul Rothchild, Dick Bock, Jackson Browne, and so many others I could list names for the entire length of the review and it would be a compelling reason to buy this book! There are other books about Laurel Canyon and it's residents, but they pale in comparison. This is a handsome coffee table book that you'll love to show people, and I think you'll be surprised by the new stories that are here. You'll meet new people, and read of events that only happen in L.A., there are stories here you haven't read before and you won't forget. The book itself is gorgeous, the pages are a creamy high quality paper that gives the book a luxurious feel, is probably the closest to vellum you can get. The book is a bargain with the wall to wall anecdotes, all the pictures, this is a book you'll want to read from front to back in one sitting, but I think it's best to enjoy the sections and breathe the atmosphere. However you choose to read it, it will be a satisfying experience.

this is a beautiful book for the price, nicely bound, GREAT pictures; (some never before seen!) etc. reviews i have read were crying that the book hops around a bit...there is a bit of truth to that, but i didn't have any problem with it. i truly enjoyed reading about the metamorphosis of the canyon from the very beginning until the 70's, where the magic of the canyon began to crumble, AND; it had gotten 'discovered'. naturally, all the real estate people got a "whiff of money" and prices zoomed to the moon, making living there out of sight for the ordinary struggling hobgoblin! -this is the point where the book gets a bit depressing...i, however; had heard of this legendary place for years and always longed for more 'dope' on it. the book doesn't disappoint, mr kubernik has done his research, quite staggeringly thorough!! i LOVE 'fly on the wall' accounts, and that is very much what one gets here, and the information is fascinating! -for one who has spent his life in the east, this apparently was one of the 'happening' places' in California. California always had hold of me as some kind of wonderland (i know better now!) nevertheless, i've been a 'scholar' of the san francisco 'school' of culture and music for years and always wondered how they operated in L.A., -Now i know!! -thanks to all the people who gave lengthy interviews, told stories, etc. i read the book inside of 18 hours, i couldn't put it down! it is a big book but goes fast! many pages are only half a page or so, because of pictures! -get this book!! you won't be sorry!! its' a 'coffee table' special!!

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