

Rock & Roll Rip-Off



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Jason Duffy thought he had accepted a routine burglary case when a career studio musician hired him to recover a memorabilia collection featuring unusual treasures from some of the top performers in the music industry. But Jason quickly finds himself at the top of a hit list that has nothing to do with The Top 40 and everything to do with a table for one at the San Diego Coroners Office.

While the facts of the case point to an emo band that the victim was helping at the time of the theft, the lethal force that Jason encounters in his investigation feels more like death metal. He finds himself imperiled by a hitman known as The Heartbreaker, due to his signature of shooting his victims through the heart at close range. With danger also threatening his staff and girlfriend, Jason must continue to mend fences with his retired police detective father, in spite of a recent riff that caused a setback to their relationship.

Everyone thought The Tactile Tattoo was a cant miss band. The pre-release buzz for their first CD was tremendous. But a bad review from a key industry critic, who didnt care for their lyrics, left the album stillborn at record stores across the country.

The group soon learned that second chances in the current state of the music business are practically nonexistent. One band member discovered that money talks in an industry strapped for cash, and a bribe was entirely possible. However, funding that bribe meant getting involved with all of the wrong people.

The reader is treated to an insiders view of the music industry that captures the new obstacles that todays bands must overcome in order to succeed.

Rock & Roll Rip-Off is the second novel in RJ McDonnells Rock & Roll Mystery Series. Like the critically acclaimed Rock & Roll Homicide, McDonnell once again mixes humor, music, and a cast of unique characters to unfold a memorable mystery that shows Jason and a loved one knock, knock, knockin on heavens door.

Rock & Roll Rip-Off Details

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Author : R.J. McDonnell

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From Reader Review Rock & Roll Rip-Off for online ebook

Sheri says

Rock & Roll Rip Off is the second book in the Rock and Roll Mystery series by R.J. Mc McDonnell. Private investigator Jason Duffy is back. He is not an ordinary P.I., He has a psych degree and also was a musician in a Rock band. All his employees are ex patients of his which makes for interesting adventures.

Jeannine is his office worker, a bit OCD but very reliable. Corey his Photographer has Tourette's syndrome. His father is an ex cop and is always ready to help his son despite their differences. And who could forget Detective Shamansky, the fine food & lady loving cop who is ready to stick his neck out for his new found friend. Then there is Kelly, Jason's girl friend. She is devoted to Jason and willing to do what ever it takes to stay with the man she loves.

With the aide of these friends he takes on what he thinks is a simple case, a career musician who has a huge memorabilia collection. That collection gets stolen and Jason is on the scene. He finds that an "emo" band is somehow connected. Every band member has motive. Soon a murder occurs, enter drugs and a bribe and this book really takes off.

R.J. Mc Donnell's knowledge of music and the "band world" brings about a unique quality to these mysteries. Lovable characters, twists, turns, humor and suspense make this the perfect all night read. I highly recommend to murder/mystery lovers.

Michael Miller says

...a little bit mystery...a little bit rock and roll

Rock & Roll Rip-Off by RJ McDonnell is a well-crafted mystery/detective story with a rock music backdrop. When his multi-million dollar music memorabilia collection is stolen, studio musician Max Varner calls upon Private Investigator Jason Duffy to locate it. Suspicion begins to fall on the members of The Tactile Tattoo, the band with whom Max has been working, as they struggle to bounce back from their critically panned first album.

While the reader is drawn into the detective work in the story and the fascinating behind the scenes look at the rock music industry, the true strength of the novel lies in the characters that McDonnell paints. We engage with Jason Duffy as we are brought into his personal world, including his confrontational relationship with his retired police detective father, and the strain of his girlfriend Kelly moving in with him, adding several additonal layers of worry to his life. Add in the members of the band, Jason's OCD assistant, his Tourette's suffering photographer, and the colorful members of the San Diego police community, and you have an outstanding cast of characters.

Fans of the detective genre, and especially those with a bit of rock music in their veins, should grab themselves a copy of this book. And at just \$2.99 for the digital version, Rock & Roll Rip-Off is anything but.

Msjodi777 says

This turned out better than I had hoped

I read the first in this series several months ago and liked it, but had some reservations. Fortunately this one made up for everything and I will definitely be reading the rest in the series. Highly recommend this one, but start with the first one because this one builds on it. <><

Stuart says

RJ McDonnell is a wonderful writer who sweeps his readers into a world which he has created. As a fan of music and a lover of a good mystery, Rock & Roll Rip-Off is a book that I was looking forward to reading. I am very pleased I did.

From the opening chapter I was drawn to the main characters that were engaging and highly likeable. What follows are many twist and turns that you expect from a good mystery featuring the ever-present bad guys. I found that the author did a remarkable job of infusing humour throughout the cleverly written plot. This has left this reader with the utmost respect for, RJ McDonnell, and looking forward to reading many more books written by this author.

To sum it up, I am delighted to have read, Rock & Roll Rip-Off which I highly recommend to lovers of good mysteries.

Georgiann Hennelly says

Rock & Roll Ripoff is the second book in the series. P.I Jason Duffy is back. Not your ordinary P.I. he has a psych degree and was a musician with a rock band. Jeanine is his office worker she is a bit ocd but reliable all his employees were once his patients. The photographer Corey has Tourettes syndrome . And his dad an ex cop is always willing to help. His girlfriend Kelly is very devoted to him So with these friends help he takes on what he thinks will be a simple case a career musician with a huge memorabilia collection. When that collection is stolen Jason is on the scene. He finds an Emo band is somehow involved. Every band member has a motive . Enter drugs a bribe and a murder and this is one fantastic read.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Kira M for TeensReadToo.com

Jason is a former musician and private investigator. He's got a girlfriend named Kelly any guy would dream of dating, and a slightly dysfunctional family. His parents keep pestering him to settle down, but Jason is having commitment issues.

He finally agrees to have Kelly move into his apartment, but is still unsure about it. Can he stick with it or

will he pull out at the last minute?

When he accepts a seemingly routine burglary case from Max Varner, a famous musician and rock memorabilia collector, Jason begins thinking that this might be the case he needs to get over his issues. When a stakeout goes awry, however, and Jason gets shot, things start to turn ugly for him.

Whoever stole Max's collection doesn't want to be found and is willing to kill Jason to keep it that way. When a stakeout goes bad and an assassin called "The Heartbreaker" attacks the PI, the stakes increase. To make matters worse, he forgot to involve the police - and now they've pulled his protection.

With danger inevitable and an assassin who might come after him and Kelly, a happily-ever-after seems unlikely. Can Jason solve the case of the Rock & Roll Rip-off and still keep his relationship with Kelly?

A great mystery with lots of suspense and action for reluctant readers. The characters are intriguing and well-developed. The multiple points of view really add another dimension to the book that is appealing and eye-catching. The plot is well-done and complex. Those who like mystery, music, action, and suspense will enjoy trying to figure out where all the puzzle pieces fit in **ROCK & ROLL RIP-OFF**.

Robert Morrow says

There are no doubt some readers who would describe the events in **Rock & Roll Rip-Off** as completely implausible.

All I can say is, "You have to understand musicians."

Having been one for several years and hung out with more odd ducks than I can count, I found the events in **Rock & Roll Rip-Off** to be painfully realistic. It was like reading one of Shakespeare's tragedies and waiting for the fatal flaw to play itself out in the inevitable consequences of a series of appallingly dumb moves, relentlessly heading towards the conclusion, "What the hell were we thinking?"

Musicians, especially young musicians who muddle their love for music with their desire for recognition, do lots of really dumb things. The craving to hit the big time leads them to rationalizations of all kinds of weird behavior that would make no sense at all to the average person. They've entered a different space of consciousness and nothing can talk them out of whatever stupid thing they're about to do.

R. J. McDonnell has perfectly captured this mode of thinking and combined it with another feature of life as a musician: you do meet strange, sometimes unsavory people you would not meet in "normal" life. I've met the studio musicians and the self-important players he describes, so I know they somehow manage to exist in the real world. This makes for a very engaging piece of writing supported by a plot that moves at a good, strong pace.

For me, though, the strength of the book lies in the achingly familiar characterizations of the musicians, who are too often people relegated to the fringes of society unless they are lucky enough to get the big break, a very rare occurrence indeed. Looking at the book from that perspective, the book is also a commentary on the society that ignores its budding artists and sets the stage for them to do all the stupid things they think they have to do to reach the top.

Darcia Helle says

Nonstop, edge-of-your-seat action! Rock & Roll Rip-Off is the second book in McDonnell's Rock & Roll Mystery Series. Jason Duffy is a P.I.-ex-musician, with a psyche degree and experience as a mental health counselor. His employees are past patients. His clients are from the world of rock & roll. The characters draw you into their world and the plot keeps you turning pages.

McDonnell's writing is full of suspense, mystery, and humor. A unique and fun series that had me hooked from the start!

Susan Gottfried says

Originally posted at <http://rockread.westofmars.com>

I was a huge fan of RJ McDonnell's first book, Rock and Roll Homicide. It's a definite West of Mars recommended read; there's so much great stuff happening in it.

So I was excited when I was told by friends that RJ's second book, Rock and Roll Rip-Off was even better.

The plot certainly was. It's clever: our friend Jason Duffy is hired to recover a stolen memorabilia collection. That's not so clever, maybe, although it most certainly is unique (and I love unique). It's the details -- and in McDonnell's world, it is ALL about the details -- that set this story apart. The collector is a good guy who relied on his collections, culled from friends he's made over the years, to make up for his paltry salary as a studio musician. He's got college tuition to pay for; he'd been relying on being able to sell off certain items to make the payments. His friends who help supply his collection know what the score is. They support him, making this a refreshing turn in an age of celebrities who won't sign autographs lest they show up on eBay.

The folk behind the heist aren't your ordinary bad guys, either. In fact, the one main character, a woman, introduces one heck of a moral story: how far will you go for someone you love? To what end will you go to realize your dreams?

To McDonnell's credit, he doesn't dwell on these moral issues. Good thing; he's too busy letting Jason, Jeannine, and Shamansky -- along with Dad Jim (oy, the names that start with the same letter... including in this book, a John) -- do their thing. When this team gets going (complete with Tourette's sufferer Cory), there's nothing that will stand in their way. Even assassins can't get one over on Jason; he's just too slick.

One of the strengths of this series is each character's particular quirks. Jason's the most sane of the lot; he's our steady influence. Shamansky's a foodie hiding behind a gruff cop exterior, Dad Jim is possibly the only likeable bigot on the planet, Jeannine is locked into a world defined by Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. Each of these characters lives and breathes.

In short, McDonnell is a master at creating characters. He's got great plot ideas, and no one can doubt he knows his rock and roll world.

So why isn't this guy a household name? He should be. He's solid in all these areas, including plot tension and the need to know what comes next. Really. What's the issue?

I mentioned some rough editing when I reviewed Rock and Roll Homicide. In Rip-Off, it got worse. Oh, the cymbals are still symbols, and the one character drives a Camero. Those are annoying, of course. But in this book, the major problem is a tendency to slip into present tense. It is almost as if McDonnell were leaving notes for himself -- notes he forgot to incorporate into the prose.

This is where I go nuts. McDonnell's got the story. He's got the bad guys, some of whom are truly awful and some who are likeable. In Rip-Off, these characters prove my oft-repeated mantra that desperate people do dumb things. It's fun to watch them mess up, even as we're rooting for them to come clean and make right by the victim.

Best of all, because they are so real, Jason and company linger beyond the end of the story. I'm anxious to read a third book featuring them. I love the twists and turns, the way McDonnell escalates the action and the ante for his core characters. I love the well-placed harmonica and how real it is when Jason needles his father and makes his mother play peacemaker. I love the music world and how McDonnell incorporates it and brings us inside it.

If I could take an author along with me on my rock and roll journey, it would most likely be McDonnell. He's got the right blend that I'm looking for -- making the people who inhabit this often-seeming glamorous world into ordinary folk. He brings them down to a human level, and he avoids the usual cliches as he does so.

This, folks, is what rock and roll fiction ought to be about. Focus on that, ignore the typos that make this ex-copy editor wish she could take a pass through the next Jason Duffy book, and have yourself some rockin' fun.

Carolyn says

Good book with a lot of action. Deals with bands and musicians so might not be for everyone. I would recommend to anyone that likes action/mysteries.

William Bentrim says

Rock & Roll Rip-Off by R. J. McDonnell

An ex-rocker, turned mental health professional (seems oxymoronic) turned, hard nose private eye finds himself dodging bullets while trying to run down a collection of music memorabilia.

Jason Duffy, the main protagonist, is likeable in multiple areas. He is intuitive and creative which aids his detecting. Personally, I thought his strong suite was his compassion and acceptance for his former mental health clients. He pulled them into his life and provided them with a safe haven and occasionally

employment. I did think his goal to protect Kelly was a bit overprotective but he did evolve through the book.

The characterizations were marvelous! I really enjoyed the variety of interesting people who populate the book. The story was suitably complex while the major mystery was explained in the first six chapters the ancillary action took the rest of the book to a satisfying conclusion.

I look forward to reading more from R.J. as the premise of his stories leads to a wealth of possible scenarios that promise to be entertaining.

I recommend it.

Tim Chamberlain says

Written for the KAZI Book Review (<http://kazibookreview.wordpress.com/>):

RJ McDonnell combines a well-plotted mystery with a music-industry backdrop to create a book that should appeal to mystery fans and music fans alike. The interesting part is that he doesn't leave much to be mysterious: you are introduced to the crime and the criminals before you ever meet Jason Duffy, the musician turned private investigator that gets the case. By keeping his characters and locations moving, McDonnell turns the interest to finding out when and how Duffy and the robbers will meet.

The second book in McDonnell's Rock & Roll Mystery series concerns the theft of a rather valuable music memorabilia collection. While Jason assumes it is a routine burglary, he quickly finds that the situation has put him in more danger than he bargained for. The ensuing story follows both his attempts to find the collection and to keep himself and those near him safe.

Rock & Roll Rip-Off provides a few twists along the way, and McDonnell writes a mystery that is interesting while remaining relatively plausible. This book should be especially enjoyable to anyone that has been connected with the music business at some point. The author's obvious insight into the music scene is a central part of the story and serves as a framework for the mystery.

The relationship between Jason and his girlfriend Kelly adds a comforting and realistic side to the detective tale. Kelly acts as a reasonable woman that happens to be in love with a musician turned PI. She doesn't completely capitulate herself to Jason's job, but she also makes a point with Jason that she understands his line of work. It serves as a bit of a counterpoint to Jason's work on the case, more relationship-centered sections that set up the next round of action.

The small cast of characters that work at Jason's agency are enjoyable as well. Cory, a young man with Tourette's syndrome, is Jason's stakeout photographer whose profane outbursts are only described by McDonnell, adding humor by leaving something to the imagination. The other employee of the agency is Jason's assistant Jeannine, tall, blonde, beautiful and nearly crippled by obsessive-compulsive disorder. The two are both more than competent, and they also serve as comic foils throughout.

The book, true to its genre, picks up tremendously in the final third. The story moves in a few unexpected directions, and the action happens at a faster pace. McDonnell uses this part of the book to pull the rug out

from under the reader, changing paths when least expected. He also provides laughs along the way, and it is a hard-hearted reader indeed that doesn't enjoy the final chapter. Mystery lovers and music lovers should both find something to enjoy about Rock & Roll Rip-Off.
