



Lifting Shadows: The Authorized Biography of Dream Theater

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Author : Rich Wilson

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From Reader Review Lifting Shadows: The Authorized Biography of Dream Theater for online ebook

Janne Paananen says

Dream Theaterin virallinen bändihistoriikki on varsin kelvollista luettavaa. Wilson luottaa hyvin pitkälle bändin jäsenten kommentteihin ja haastatteluihin. Harvakseltaan tapahtumia kommentoi myös muita asianomaisia. Wilson kirjoittaa kronologisesti käyden läpi niin kiertueet kuin levytkin. Tyyli ja rakenne muistuttaa "kuivuudessaan" ja asiapainotteisuudessaan Mick Wallin kirjoittamia bändikirjoja. Bändin alkuaikojen kiistat ja levyjen tekemisen haasteet olivat erittäin mielenkiintoista luettavaa. Uran keskivaiheilla bändivelvollisuudet sujuivat seesteisemmin kunnes muutama vuosi sitten tuliin kovaan paikkaan alkuperäisrumpalin, Mike Portnoyn, erottua. Tätä olisikin voinut kertoa seikkaperäisemmin, mutta ehkäpä erosta on kulunut sen verran vähän vuosia, että rehellisempiä ja syvempiä mielipiteitä on ollut vaikea saada. Joka tapauksessa DT-fanille erittäin mieluista luettavaa ja muutenkin ihan toimiva musiikkihistoriikki.

Victoria says

In another instance of art mimicking life, Rich Wilson's "Lifting Shadows", much like Dream Theater's music, will only appeal to the already converted. The book is jam-packed with interviews from the band members themselves (including the taciturn John Myung!), crew members, producers, and collaborators for a panoramic view of the band's many trials and tribulations.

Indeed, there's much more drama to the Dream Theater story than one might initially expect from "the greatest band you've never heard of." Wilson is keenly aware of his niche audience, and as such, seeks to answer many of the questions fans have wondered about over the years. Aside from the interesting (and sometimes amusing) anecdotes of band interaction, the best parts of the book are the ones that give insight into the music industry. Wilson does a fine job of showcasing the band's perspectives, as well as conflicting perspectives from the record executives they struggled against.

Wilson is clearly quite familiar with Dream Theater's history, and "Lifting Shadows" is very much a book "for the fans, by a fan." Each chapter details the story of the band by album, and it's here that Wilson's music journalism background really shows through--sometimes to the book's benefit, other times to its detriment. Wilson coaxes great interviews from all his subjects, and his research is impeccable. However, there are times where he waxes on about each album as if he's writing a glowing music review when it's clear that anyone reading this book will already be quite familiar with Dream Theater's discography.

Finally, reading this book after Mike Portnoy's departure is both telling and quite sad. The book depicts an interesting picture of the drummer, who loves the band as much as he loves perfection and control over it. No one would be able to doubt Portnoy's dedication to the band, but it's interesting to see some of the threads that eventually led to his departure. Knowing that, the closing chapters of the book take on a bit of sadness as the reader knows how the band's expressed optimism turns out.

Fans of the band will love this book, and the DT fanatic would be remiss to miss Wilson's article in Classic Rock magazine detailing Portnoy's departure.

Laura Lynch says

Lifting Shadows - The Authorized Biography of Dream Theater (by Rich Wilson) opens with prog-rockers Dream Theater (James LaBrie-singer, John Myung-bass, John Petrucci-guitar, Mike Portnoy-drums and Jordan Rudess-keys) playing to 93,000 people at the Download Festival on June 14,2009. The book chronicles the group's arrival at this momentous occasion. The story starts with a brief look at each member's childhood and early musical influences. Many of the chapter titles reference Dream Theater (DT) songs and each charts their challenging career course in detailed fashion. Their many battles within the established music industry, and Dream Theater's continuing fight for musical integrity, provide the foundation on which the group's story is told.

The book runs in order of events and gives insights behind the ideas and innovations of each album starting from When Dream And Day Unites through Black Clouds & Silver Linings. Although personal issues are touched upon, this treatise is more concerned with the career changes and inner workings of the group.

"I truly believe that the best is yet to come," is how the Dream Theater portion of the volume ends quoting James LaBrie's positive thoughts on the band's future. The last chapter is Dreaming Aside which talks about the extensive side projects that James, John, John, Mike and Jordan have been involved in over the years.

As a fan of the band I really enjoyed this book. A quick read, for fans of progressive rock and metal, and good for anyone starting out in the industry.

Jeff Koskinen says

I love the detail and honesty of this book. I am not a musician, but even just being a simple fan who loves their music I can hear and appreciate how complex it is and how ridiculously talented they are. To get an understanding of just how much went into this both from the musical training aspect (John P, John M and Mike P attended Berklee, Mike M taught at Berklee and Jordan was at Juilliard at one point) and from sheer perseverance was so interesting. Struggles with satisfying and melding together different personalities (Mike P's departure in particular), the challenge of staying true to their passion for their blend of progressive and metal music in the 90s (when it was not what the record companies were looking for), and the in-depth honest discussions of each of their albums gives the DT fan about everything you could want from a book. I loved it and as a bonus I am enjoying going back and listening to each album from a more informed perspective.

Alexis Vélez says

Dream Theater es una banda muy diferente a lo usual, su música es bien estructurada y son altamente perfeccionistas. Sus integrantes no son los clásicos rock stars que sucumben al sexo y a las drogas, son padres de familia desde casi los comienzos de la banda y así se han mantenido. Comencé a ser un fanático acérrimo desde el 1992 con el álbum Images and Words y desde ese día he digerido todas sus variantes en la música, que no han sido tantas en mi opinión. Este libro me lo disfruté completo. Está estructurado por

álbumes, el proceso de creación, explicación de las canciones y anécdotas de las giras, esto me permitió leerlo escuchando de fondo el álbum correspondiente. La única queja grande que tengo de esta edición es que para ser una biografía no tiene ni una simple foto y realmente hacen falta en un libro como este. En cuanto al contenido aparte de los álbumes, está bien completo y al fin pude entender varias cosas sobre ellos como por ejemplo la más que me inquietaba que era la fragilidad de la voz de James durante el período de Falling into Infinity hasta casi Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence, creando esto que desafinara muchas veces en muchas de las presentaciones. En resumen, una biografía bien hecha, recomendada.

Katie says

Very well written, and interesting even if you're not a huge Dream Theater fan. (OK, I could be a little biased.) However, I definitely felt that the book did them justice, and that is a big compliment to the author. A must read for all Dream Theater fans, but they already knew that. And they've already read it. Twice.

Cole says

A book about my favorite band...what's not to like? I learned a lot about DT.

Jeff McCormack says

I really enjoyed this book. Being a huge fan of Dream Theater's music for about 15 years now, I have pretty much just consumed anything and everything musically that I could find that involved the band, or any of the individual members.

Not being much of a follower of online chats, forums, discussions, news, gossip, etc. I was only really aware of their music and official news I had read. This book gave the whole behind-the-scene details for pretty much everything from their earliest days on through their latest album (2009's Black Clouds & Silver Linings), including details about all the various side projects each member has been involved in as a bonus.

I am amazed at the detail this went into, and how even some of the smallest characters in the story got covered and interviewed. Managers, record execs, singers who tried out, people they had crossed the path of, just about everyone got talked to. Very well written; very in-depth; very revealing; and kept me glued to the book.

I found it a bit odd when I read that Mike Portnoy had pretty much stated he was leaving the band years ago. The things that were said about how there is no way the band could conceive of going on without him, and fortunately he did not follow through and we have some of the most amazing albums to date that came afterwards. Now, here we are in 2001, and Mike did recently quit, and yet they are continuing on without him, and just released the info on their new drummer. I just found it funny in reading that section last week right around the time they announced their new drummer.

This book covers the time frame all the way through their latest album, so it covers very modern times. And now that Mike has quit the band, this book basically encapsulates the entire Mike Portnoy era of the band.

Renato says

This is a must read for Dream Theater fans. It is great to hear the stories behind all the albums, the recording sessions, the members selection processes, the perfectionism that the band holds to this day...it is amazing to realize how much effort they put into their songwriting, being all this for the fans and for themselves. Not going mainstream - and not caring about that - is what all their fans want: that DT continues to be the ProgMetal force that they have always been.

Andri says

Sambil menunggu album terbaru DT, Black Clouds and Silver Linings yang akan rilis 22 Juni nanti, sekaligus menaikkan kembali passion membaca gw yg tengah drop.. buku ini gw baca ulang.

Sambil menunggu kelanjutan The 12 Step Saga, meneruskan The Glass Prison (6DOIT), This Dying Soul (TOT), The Root of All Evil (Octavarium) dan Repentance (SC), yang oleh Portnoy diberi judul The Shattered Fortress.. paling enak emang terus mendengarkan ulang lagu komposisi ini.

Sebuah komposisi yang "indah", berisi berbagai curahan tentang bagaimana menyikapi sebuah kesalahan, dan kembali ke jalan yang semestinya. Dalam. Penuh inspirasi.

-andri-

Bukan lantaran nama gw tertera di buku ini lalu kemudian gw memberi buku ini 5 bintang. Juga bukan karena gw cinta mati sama dream theater lalu gw beri buku ini jd 5 bintang. Tapi karena bukunya memang layak untuk dibaptis sebagai an authorized biography of dream theater, yang sangat memuaskan bagi para DT die hard fans.

Terbagi dalam 2 buku, Images : berisi gambar-gambar perjalanan Dream Theater dalam berbagai era, dan Words : berisi kisah perjalanan musicalitas dan kehidupan Dream Theater, yang banyak berisi kisah-kisah menarik tentang persahabatan, saling pengertian, mengejar impian, kejatuhan, kebangkitan, dan semangat untuk menjalani hidup sejalan dengan pilihan yang diyakini.

Dilengkapi dengan 1 cd bonus yang berisi lagu-lagu yang selama ini jarang didengar, membuat buku ini sangat-sangat layak dan menjadi wajib hukumnya bagi mereka yang mengaku sebagai pecinta DT.

Tambahan info, ternyata yang edisi susulan, tidak berisi nama-nama devoted fans.

-andri-

Phil Simon says

Great story of a great band. This is not a "Behind the Music" type of expose. Rather, it's a balanced account on how "the biggest band you never heard of" came to be. I couldn't put this down.

Kevin Krajewski says

Being a huge fan of Dream Theater I was very excited to get my hands on this book, and now having read it I am very glad I did. Having spent most of their career with a small but highly devoted fan base and really no mainstream exposer its hard to find any information about their beginnings. Thankfully this book helps shed light on those beginnings, devoting a third of its text chronicling those early years.

After discussing their rotation of early singers until they found current singer James LaBrie, the book changes gears and basically gives one chapter to each album and following tour. These chapters are interesting and give a good insight into the writing process of the band as well as shines the light on the meanings behind a lot their lyrics.

This being an updated edition it covers the departure of founding member Mike Portnoy and follows the band as they searched for a drummer and finishes with the recording of "A dramatic turn of events" which was their latest album until their self titled album "Dream Theater" was released this past September.

I enjoyed this book immensely and would definitely recommend it to anyone who enjoys Dream Theater and wants to know more about the band behind the music. For those that have never listened to Dream Theater I feel this book wouldn't have much to offer, but a must read for the Dream Theater die hard.

Philip says

An incredibly thorough, enthralling book for the diehard Dream Theater fan. It doesn't matter how long you've been a fan for, or how much you've read up on the band online, there will be facts in here you've never read. With the exception of John Purcell (RIP) and Kevin Moore (wasn't interested in contributing), everybody who had something to do with Dream Theater at some point is interviewed in-depth. Even the singers who were in the band for just two months and David Prater (who describes Mike Portnoy's drumming as sounding "like faeces") got interview spots. Every studio anecdote or memorable gig story gets a mention. No stone is left unturned!

Which, for someone who is a great fan of the band (or has a strong interest in their history), is fantastic. Rich Wilson has clearly poured hundreds of hours of research and interviewing time into writing this book.

But for more casual fans, this book's extreme depth will make it a drag. Personally, my biggest interest is in the band's early days, and their "classic" albums. I like their more recent material but in my opinion it doesn't compare to the likes of Awake. So from my perspective this raises two issues with the book.

The first is that, while the first half of their career is filled with conflict and turmoil, and makes for a thrilling read, the second half is much more plain. For Six Degrees... through to Black Clouds... there are few interesting anecdotes from the studio, no conflicts with producers or record labels. It all goes swimmingly.

Yet Wilson insists on making these later chapters just as big and chunky as the early ones. Although I'll admit this may just be due to personal bias, the second half of the book is much less engaging than the first half.

The second issue, again, may be affected by personal bias. I don't think their more recent albums are that great. In all honesty, I think that by Six Degrees... the band had a fixed style, and each album then on was only a variation on that style rather than a genuine progression. Again, this might just be me, but Wilson's constant gushing about how amazing each album is gets tiresome after a while. Even on the albums which are regarded less well, he tries to use some angle which makes it seem brilliant. I know this is a biography of Dream Theater, so is likely to be a bit biased, but it does get cringeworthy after a while.

Perhaps another flaw in the book is the absence of any new interviews with Kevin Moore, who declined for reasons which aren't entirely clear. Regardless of your opinion as to whether his contributions were actually the best in the band, or whether he merely helped lay the groundwork for later releases, you cannot deny he wasn't part of the creative core of the band. A lot of the time when reading the book you don't notice (most of the interviews are with Mike Portnoy and John Petrucci anyway), but there are some parts of the book, particularly the parts discussing Moore's departure from the band, which feel very awkward given his absence. Some past interviews from magazines and websites are occasionally used, but these don't nearly help plug the gap left by his refusal to contribute to the book. A real shame.

A nice "bonus" comes in the form of the sixty-odd page appendix, detailing each current band member's side projects. Particularly in-depth are the sections on Liquid Tension Experiment and Transatlantic. The section on OSI again suffers from a lack of contribution from Moore, and inevitably this leads to a bias. There's a definite bias in favour of Portnoy (in summary: the album with little to no creative input from Portnoy is written off by Wilson as just not being as good as the first album - something I personally disagree with). It's a pity that space is only given to discuss current Dream Theater members' projects: nothing on Dominici, Planet X or Chroma Key. But if all these projects and solo careers were featured, the book would probably have been brought close to the 500 page mark.

Having said that, all in all this is a great read for anybody who wants a deeper and fuller history of Dream Theater. If you've read the Wikipedia pages on Dream Theater and scoured the net for band interviews, but still hungered for more information on Dream Theater, I cannot recommend this book highly enough.

lita says

harus punya! harus punya!

Brent says

It really is a must read for any fan of Dream Theater. I loved reading about their early days before "Images and Words" came out. I especially loved any time James LaBrie was describing something. He's intelligent, motivated, and really speaks his mind.

I only wish that the author had included more statements from the other members of the band. The book tends to center around Portnoy a bit too much. While it's interesting to hear him tell about the 90's and his

perspective, he really comes across as loving the spotlight. Jordan Rudess and John Petrucci come across as down-to-earth, and some more in-depth questions and conversations with them would have balanced out Portnoy's bluster.

But still, a great read.
