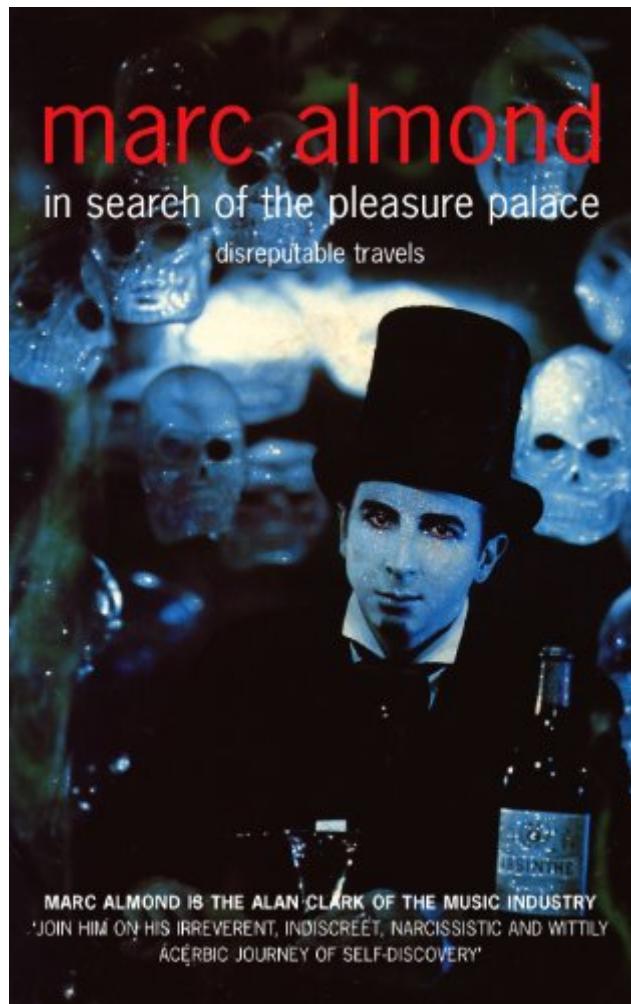


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In Search Of The Pleasure Palace



Synopsis

Candid, gossipy and shockingly indiscreet-take a hedonistic journey with Marc Almond. "What happens to people like me who were once 'pop' stars? Am I destined for a life of daytime television appearances, reunion tours and well-meaning strangers struggling to recognise me before hesitatingly asking 'didn't you used to be Marc Almond?'" Despite turning 45, a milestone age that can often result in some sort of mid-life crisis, Marc Almond, singer and songwriter, is not quite ready to take his place on the "they were once famous" line-up. In this rollercoaster journey, Marc goes in pursuit of the thrills, spills and bellyaches that made each day of his youth memorable and created an image of him that was decadent, outrageous and worryingly misunderstood. Almond's vivid and often wittily acerbic pen candidly records insights about his thoughts, the nature of being who he is, his often bizarre lifestyle and the places he visits as he attempts to navigate a course through mid-life. From swingers' nights in Croydon to the lost haunts of Barcelona, from Russia's surreal underbelly to the pre-Giuliani clean-up of New York, Marc is your observant guide to a world he was once part of and few of us have access to.

Book Information

File Size: 1509 KB

Print Length: 256 pages

Publisher: Macmillan; III edition (August 1, 2004)

Publication Date: August 1, 2004

Language: English

ASIN: B0073D0AZW

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #480,312 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #77
inÃ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Counseling & Psychology > Developmental Psychology > Adulthood & Aging #83 inÃ Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Dance #156 inÃ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Popular

Customer Reviews

Here is an intense mind blowing look at our times. Marc travels the world in search of the past glories of red light districts of famous cities. Some are intact and thriving, most are sanitized with Gulliani precision. Absolutely funny descriptions of Paris sex clubs, Vegas feeding frenzies, and everything L.A. I'm definitely headed for Hunter's bar in West Hollywood, 7511 Santa Monica Blvd. Leslie Jordan mentions Hunter's in his Pink Carpet book. Must be the coolest place on the planet. Lookin' forward to 20 inches of hot dogs to coat my throat. Also contained, a marvelously loving insight into modern day Russia (worthy of a film). PS Thank you Marc for letting us know on your website about the new oppression in St Peterburg. So sad! Don't they know that if you trample on the flowers you get weeds in their place. Spine-stinging, prickly, noxious weeds.

What an unexpected pleasure. I've been a fan of Marc Almond's vocal stylings for decades. To read his perspective on culture, aging, success, and returning to ones roots via his wonderfully candid and poignant travelogues was thoroughly enjoyable. Highly recommended!

I gotta tell you, I just fell in love with this book. Marc Almond, better known to Americans as half of the 80's group Soft Cell, whose one hit in the States was "Tainted Love", has really hit the nail on the head with this book. I picked up the book as a lark; I'm not a Soft Cell groupie, I'm not gay, and I haven't read any of Almond's other books. But I'm sure glad I bought this. It's simply tremendous. As Almond hits his mid-life crisis, he revisits places he'd been earlier (New York, Amsterdam, Paris, Barcelona, etc.), and offers his insights into life and love, now seen through none-too-nostalgic eyes. He's an admirer of the bizarre and the tacky, and sure knows how to look for it, but I think to his own dismay, the general seediness of it affects him differently than he expected. Still, it's an unflinching look at himself, reflected in his introspective observations (almost a Nietzschean "Wie man wird, was man ist" thing). I find myself agreeing not so much with his experiences as his reactions to them. One of the things I find most enjoyable is how I can understand how he feels; being at a kind of mid-life crisis myself, I share his sense of emptiness and disappointment. (But at least I'm happily married, not a gay fading recovered-drug-addict pop star.) Some parts of the book I can't relate to at all, especially his comments about gay-sex clubs, but I was a bachelor a long time, and I certainly had more than my share of empty experiences; when he writes in a what-was-I-thinking-then-and-what-are-these-people-thinking-now mode, boy, do I know what he's talking about. And when it comes to the tedium and mediocrity all around us, well, the less said the better. I have laughed myself silly at some of the passages, winced at others, and overall found the

book hypnotic; I can't put it down. Anyway, it's funny, sad (when talking about sex in the media, he uses the phrase that "explicit has replaced erotic," which sums it up), and insightful. Most amazingly, it's never dull. I can't remember the last time I thought that about any book (except my own, of course). Almond can't really write a coherent narrative to save his life, but he turns a clever phrase, and compared to the other stuff I've been reading lately (second-rate thrillers and sci-fi novels, all of which seem like they're written by a computer program, and I forget the instant I put them down) this is like Tolstoy. Well, okay, not that good. But pretty damn good.

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