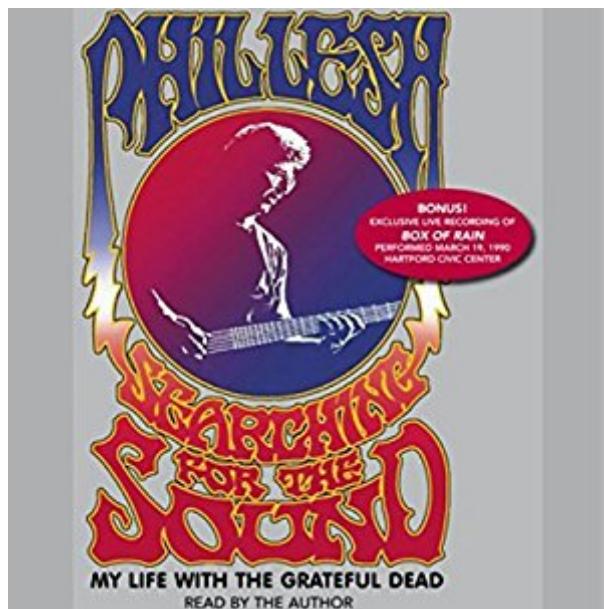


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Searching For The Sound: My Life With The Grateful Dead



Synopsis

In this ruthlessly honest bestseller, the bass player for the greatest improvisational band in American history tells the full, true story of his life, Jerry Garcia, and the Grateful Dead. of photos.
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hoursÂ Â andÂ Â 33 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 11, 2005

Language: English

ASIN: B0009GV1KI

Best Sellers Rank: #102 inÂ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Arts & Entertainment > Music

#195 inÂ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Artists, Writers & Musicians

#302 inÂ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Entertainers & Celebrities

Customer Reviews

An intimate autobiography of the author's life focusing on the birth and evolution of the Grateful Dead and his relationship with other band members, especially Jerry Garcia. In describing his development as a musician, composer and performer, Lesh writes intellectually in a technological style that was at times difficult for this musical layman to follow. However this book is a very rewarding read, especially for anyone wishing to learn about or to relive the phantasmagorical events that occurred in and around the 1960's San Francisco psychedelic rock scene and beyond. A must read for Deadheads and wannabes, Lesh's incredible attention to detail leaves the reader gratified and craving for more.

When this book was first published in hardcover I read it in one sitting. Lesh is my favorite member of the Dead, with Pigpen and Jerry being tied for second. I feel that this book is very well written, fascinating and informative. What especially stands out for me is the actual TONE of Phil's writing; he comes across as compassionate and caring. Even when being critical of a person or group of people, he does so in a very kind manner(in contrast to the tone of Bill Kreutzmann's recently published autobiography, of which I will be posting a review soon). Our son Phillip is named after

him(my best DeadHead friend at the time and I didn't really give my wife any choice in the matter!).

I've been a bit of a Dead fan since I first heard Workingman's Dead, not that long after it was released. I've not that much of a musical ear and was originally engaged by one element of the music -- Robert Hunter's lyrics. Phil Lesh spends about the first 2/3 of the book talking about the music, explaining the Dead's innovative approach to concerts and to recording, and showing me a side to the Dead's creative process I just hadn't thought much about. That 2/3 of the book, chronologically taking us past the European tour and Pigpen McKernon's death, is great. That portion of the book lives up to the book's very apt title. There are moments when Lesh manages to communicate something of the magic, the mystery and the 'cosmic consciousness' to be glimpsed in the sound. The last third of the book, taking us through Jerry Garcia's death and, quite briefly, up to date, is significantly weaker. The book becomes more an account of the band's ups and downs and less a delving into the sense and spirit of the music. The band did produce some good, new songs in those later years (I'll particularly note Hunter and Garcia's "Black Muddy River"), but Lesh has far less to say about those later touring years than the early experimental ones. Perhaps there just is less worth saying about being an anachronistic 'hippie' band in the '80s than standing in the middle of the brief cultural flowering of the late '60s. I was particularly impressed that the book really was Lesh's story -- no ghostwriter, no tell-tale tracks of either a publicist or an outsider's voice. He's written a good, honest book. The book isn't about being a star, nor is it about the lifestyle. The book is about making music, just as the band was about making music. Read it for the music.

I've read several biographies/autobiographies about 1960s/70s era musicians in recent years, and I must say that I enjoyed this one most of all. As the saying goes, once I got started, I couldn't put it down. It's very well written, and includes lots of interesting details about the Grateful Dead (the people, the places, the songs, the composing and recording process) as well as the broader cultural context in which the band developed.

I enjoyed reading Phil Lesh's take on the forming of Greatful Dead. And I appreciate that he didn't slam anyone for their behavior while in the band. Seems each member remembers facts, times and places differently, but Phil told great stories about some of their more famous concerts and a bit about the personal lives of friends and members of the band. Fun Read, couldn't put it down, sad when it was finished.

I put this book on my Kindle. My age is going to make a difference in this review. I am 49. Yet I've read everything that Jack Kerouac wrote, and most of what Neal Cassady wrote...Oh to have been in my early 20's in Berkley, in the early 60's. Phil Lesh was the bass guitar player and original member for the Grateful Dead, and is the bass guitar player in the band Further. This is his autobiography, and I can't put down my Kindle. Mr. Lesh was there, during the Beat era. And I am completely bought into this time, and Mr. Lesh explains it well. It's during this phenomenal time that he meets Jerry Garcia, the rest, to write a cliche, is history. I'm not done with the book, and I hope that allows for updates. Mr. Lesh's book is a part of the history of the Grateful Dead, even the Beat era, as other books written about the Beat era, and the music during this time. Lesh writes it as it happened, no excuses, no blame, just as it happened, and explains it well. Be prepared, if you start reading this book, you'll not want to put it down. 5 stars, if there was a 10 star choice, I'd give this book 10 stars.

Good book

If you like the Dead, then you have to read any autobiography from any of the members. Phil shows he's a very pedantic person. I had to look up a lot of the more fancier words he drops here. This is not as exciting as Bill Kreutzman's book - Billy's book is like an old friend telling you stories over a couple of beers. Very conversational.

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