



Into the Mystic: The Visionary and Ecstatic Roots of 1960s Rock and Roll

Christopher Hill

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Christopher Hill links the ecstatic, trippy, profound music of the great performers of the 1960s to the mystical traditions of gospel, folklore, and esoteric religious groups, in *Into the Mystic*, which goes beyond love songs and far-out beats.

This is an incredibly detailed look at the unique music of the 1960s, weaving in the stories of musicians like Michael Brown. Brown, of the Left Banke, channeled Dante in "Walk Away Renee," with its story of unrequited, irredeemable love that nonetheless provided a deep source of inspiration.

Hill details how the Beatles and the Grateful Dead produced albums that mirrored the experiences of drug trips, and how the Rolling Stones were influenced by American gospel and the blues to produce technically brilliant music with spiritual roots.

The book will make lovers of '60s rock want to run to their record players to hear these albums again with fresh ears. Those who aren't as well versed in the era will be tempted to make playlists of the mentioned tracks to see if they can grasp the stories' threads.

Multiple, comprehensive explorations of albums and songs help as Hill makes his argument: the music of the 1960s was inextricably tied to storytelling traditions, spiritual journeying, and the kind of exploration that has always been essential to human communities.

SARAH WHITE (September/October 2017)

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