



Sex, Drums, Rock 'n' Roll! The Hardest Hitting Man in Show Business

Kenny Aronoff

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What makes the book work are the same things that propel Aronoff's music: a steady beat, impeccable timing, and always hitting hard.

Kenny Aronoff shares his inspirational, cautionary, and captivating story of reaching the highest levels of the music business in his autobiography *Sex, Drums, Rock 'n' Roll!*

Aronoff may not have the name recognition of some rock stars, but he's immensely respected within the industry as a rock drummer *par excellence*. Aronoff discusses his childhood, formal musical training, and his first big break with John Mellencamp, which eventually led to work with other artists in the musical who's who.

As one might expect, Aronoff has a few crazy, sordid tales to tell about life on the road, but *Sex, Drums, Rock 'n' Roll!* succeeds because he also shows a thoughtful, reflective side. Aronoff tries to portray personality conflicts fairly and from all sides, and his technique of including brief comments by the people in question is highly effective.

Aronoff displays a striking and relentless drive to achieve his goals. From his early classical studies to competing with other drummers for work, he never gives up, always pushing himself to practice harder and do better. This aspect transcends drumming and becomes an overriding theme in his life.

Of course, there's a price to one's personal relationships that goes along with flying around the country at a breakneck pace, and Aronoff is not shy about detailing his difficulties in this respect. He's blunt and honest about his own shortcomings, and about applying the same effort to improving his family life as he does to his drumming.

The book consciously does not drift too far into drummer-speak; while there are a few descriptions of "triple flam-a-diddles," a "one-hand press roll," and the like, *Sex, Drums, Rock 'n' Roll!* is always more about Aronoff's personal journey.

Rock-and-roll fans will enjoy reading about Aronoff's adventures with Mellencamp, John Fogerty, Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney, and other big names, but in the end, what makes the book work are the same things that propel Aronoff's music: a steady beat, impeccable timing, and always hitting hard.

PETER DABBENE (Winter 2017)

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