FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Whole Lotta Led Zeppelin: The Illustrated History of the Heaviest Band of All Times
Jon Bream
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In 2007 and 2008 Robert Plant toured with bluegrass darling Alison Krauss, supporting the Grammy-winning album of duets, *Raising Sand*. But he used to run with another band who did pretty well for themselves. John Bream, music guru for the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune*, is the guiding force behind this aesthetically beautiful and factually complete record of Led Zeppelin, the only artists to score in the top ten in the United States on all their studio albums. Beginning with the prolific session work of guitarist, producer, and primary songwriter Jimmy Page in the early 1960s, then coming quickly to the rise of the new band from the Yardbirds' remnants, the coverage is thorough. Though the tone vacillates between criticism and hero wor-ship, Bream should please the populace with his refusal to grind any particular ax.

Among the contributors are music writers like Chicago-based Greg Kot and *Rolling Stone* 's David Fricke and Cameron Crowe. Rock icons Ann and Nancy Wilson, Paul Rodgers, and numerous other peers or disciples specify exactly what each group member did. The most amusing pieces present points of view from individuals including supreme groupie Pamela Des Barres and beat novelist William S. Burroughs, who showed up at a Zeppelin concert when far from young, and found intellectual common ground with Jimmy Page.

Page, Plant, Bonham, and Jones were debauchers who launched televisions from hotel balconies and evicted few groupies untouched during their astonishingly successful early years. When the group's manager Peter Grant proudly told Bob Dylan who he was responsible for, Dylan quipped back, "Hey I don't come to you with my problems, do I?" Also true: they were technically skilled musicians who set the bar for blues-rock and hard-rock innovation. Led Zeppelin changed the balance of payments between bands and concert promoters for the benefit of artists who followed.

This attractive coffee table book reflects good graphic design decisions. The easiest quibble is a weak one—Bream was too generous with full-color ink; he doesn't seem to miss one poster or concert stub that ever bore the band's name. The account rings truer than many earlier books, because of the broad approach and the lack of a grudge (fired tour manager

Richard Cole is especially maligned on that account, yet he's also a contributor). Dirt seekers may be disappointed that unflattering incidents related by Bream and associates only confirm accounts of events already reported in the media.

By the book's end, after Zeppelin has played a successful reunion concert in 2007, the old friends and occasional rivals are just happy to be together, but the greatest satisfaction belongs to Jason Bonham, the forty-something drummer who stepped in for his deceased father, practiced end-lessly, and came through when it counted, earning the respect of the familiar legends he's been chasing all his life, the men he calls his uncles.

Todd Mercer