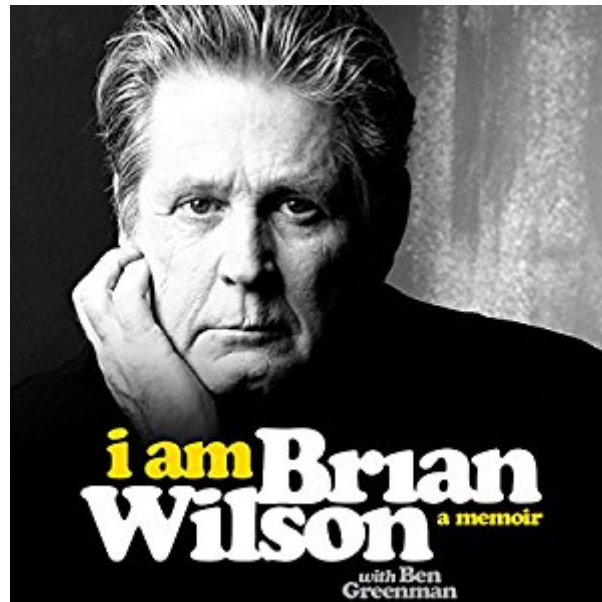




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I Am Brian Wilson



Synopsis

They say there are no second acts in American lives, and third acts are almost unheard of. That's part of what makes Brian Wilson's story so astonishing. As a cofounding member of the Beach Boys in the 1960s, Wilson created some of the most groundbreaking and timeless popular music ever recorded. With intricate harmonies, symphonic structures, and wide-eyed lyrics that explored life's most transcendent joys and deepest sorrows, songs like "In My Room", "God Only Knows", and "Good Vibrations" forever expanded the possibilities of pop songwriting. Derailed in the 1970s by mental illness, drug use, and the shifting fortunes of the band, Wilson came back again and again over the next few decades, surviving and - finally - thriving. Now, for the first time, he weighs in on the sources of his creative inspiration and on his struggles, the exhilarating highs and the debilitating lows. *I Am Brian Wilson* reveals as never before the man who fought his way back to stability and creative relevance, who became a mesmerizing live artist, who forced himself to reckon with his own complex legacy and completed *Smile*, the legendary unfinished Beach Boys record that had become synonymous with both his genius and its destabilization. Today Brian Wilson is older, calmer, and filled with perspective and forgiveness. Whether he's talking about his childhood, his bandmates, or his own inner demons, Wilson's story, told in his own voice and in his own way, unforgettably illuminates the man behind the music, working through the turbulence and discord to achieve, at last, a new harmony.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the most moving autobiographies that I have ever read. Brian Wilson, who is one of

music's geniuses has finally written HIS story. I've read several books on him before this. Brian verifies many of the stories that I have read or heard, but clarifies others. And he does it with a kind and loving heart. His story is given in an honest light. Was he perfect? No. Did he make mistakes? Of course. But, he is quick to praise others who have heaped abuse on him throughout his life. The three who are often highly criticized in his life have been his father Murry Wilson, Mike Love and Dr. Eugene Landry. Brian doesn't sugarcoat his treatment by any of them (although he has surprisingly little animosity against Mike Love). He even gives Dr. Landry some credit for helping him initially in the mid-70's. And, he is quick to give credit to his father for giving him the background he had in music as well as the drive to succeed. He credits Mike Love in many ways, including the high energy he gives The Beach Boys live shows, and as a collaborator on many songs. Brian Wilson is a towering figure in the history of Rock and Roll. But, he has suffered for 50 years from mental illness. In this book he makes it clear that he is vitally interested in assisting people to understand the importance of mental illness, and in properly treating the disease. I highly recommend this book for any reader.

The man, his music, and his triumph...despite so many obstacles. Written by Ben Greenman, yet obviously in Brian Wilson's own words - a masterful piece of book writing that manages to capture the many hours of interviews with Brian, turning his thoughts and recollections into a fireside chat of sorts. Knowing the history of the Beach Boys - and more importantly, the Wilson brothers, it's obvious that Brian is being completely honest about his life. Although he suffered abuse from his father, his cousin Mike Love (in the form of mental bullying), and Eugene Landy, he goes easy on them (especially his father) - but there's enough here to validate the many instances of such abuse that has previously been reported. But what really shines through is Brian's music, and the times his gift to create such beautiful music shone through the abuse and mental illness. The reader is treated to various accounts of some of his best music production days - throughout multiple decades. Told in a non-linear fashion, the book comes across as a long talk with a close friend. In the end, a heartwarming story of some great friends and a wonderful wife in Melinda Wilson.

As a life long Brian Wilson fan, I have waited for this book for a very long time, and it does not disappoint! It reads like an intimate conversation with Brian. The details of his past are revealed not in chronological order, but as part of an overall discussion about his thoughts, fears, observations, and day-to-day life since completing SMiLE in 2004. I am a trained trial attorney and have read the book with a critical eye. I was impressed that Brian did not attempt to rewrite his prior autobiography

or otherwise comment on what others have written about his past. Rather, he gives what appears to be a sincere accounting of his life as best as he can remember, taking into account gaps in his memory, his unwillingness to revisit certain painful events, and the overall state of his mental health. This book provides valuable insight into the way in which Brian Wilson presently views his life and his past, and it is a "must read" for all true fans.

I grew up listening to the beach boys and am one of their biggest fans. I really enjoyed this book. I knew Brian had some tough years, but after seeing Love and mercy and reading this book I had no idea how bad it was. It is a wonder he is still alive. It is great to know he has a wife that cares about him and takes care of him as well as his kids. I can not stand to think of the torture that Landy put him through. While Landy helped him in some ways, he was a sick person himself and should have been called off long before he was. I saw the pet sounds 50th anniversary tour a few months ago and am going to see it again--really glad to see that Brian can still perform and sound great. The book jumps around quite a bit, but this did not alter the fact that I loved the book--I think that is probably how a conversation with Brian would be. A great read IMO.

This probably is the duller celebrity bio ever written, with Brian and/or his ghostwriter seeming to assume that the reader already knows the facts of his life, career and mental state and only wants the book as a kind of discography. A discography that, unfortunately, isn't even complete. Like Brian Wilson, the real memoir seems hidden away in the bedroom instead of entertaining and moving us on the printed page.

I was looking forward to this book but was very disappointed w/it I was anxious to finally here Brian's story told by him but it seems like all he does is ramble on, I did read the whole book but found it hard to remain interested. I don't know how much there's left to say about Brian that we don't already know. Yes a lot of it is the truth a lot is lies, I'm sure there's a lot Brian chooses not to share, but unfortunately due to the years of heavy drug use/abuse there is a lot he can't remember. Just like Mike's book I don't think we find out anything we didn't already know.

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