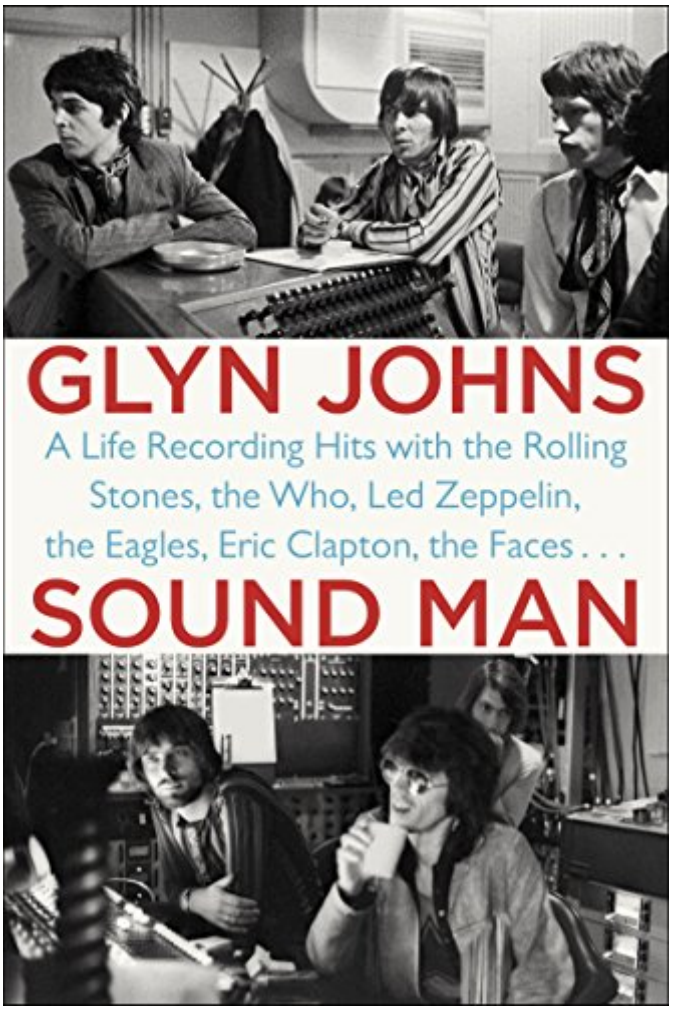
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Synopsis

Born just outside London in 1942, Glyn Johns was sixteen years old at the dawn of rock and roll. His big break as a producer came on the Steve Miller BandÃ¢â ¬â„¢s debut album, Children of the Future, and he went on to engineer or produce iconic albums for the best in the business: Abbey Road with the Beatles, Led ZeppelinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s and the EaglesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ debuts, WhoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Next by the Who, and many others. Even more impressive, Johns was perhaps the only person on a given day in the studio who was entirely sober, and so he is one of the most reliable and clear-eyed insiders to tell these stories today.In this entertaining and observant memoir, Johns takes us on a tour of his world during the heady years of the sixties, with beguiling stories that will delight music fans the world over: he remembers helping to get the Steve Miller Band released from jail shortly after their arrival in London, he recalls his impressions of John and Yoko during the Let It Be sessions, and he recounts running into Bob Dylan at JFK and being askedÃ Â to work on a collaborative album with him, the Stones, and the Beatles, which never came to pass. Johns was there during some of the most iconic moments in rock history, including the StonesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ first European tour, Jimi HendrixÃ¢â ¬â„¢s appearance at Albert Hall in London, and the BeatlesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ final performance on the roof of their Savile Row recording studio.JohnsÃ¢â ¬â„¢s career has been long and prolific, and heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s still at itÃ¢â ¬â •over the last two decades he has worked with Crosby, Stills & Nash; Emmylou Harris; Linda Ronstadt; Band of Horses; and, most recently, Ryan Adams. Sound Man provides a firsthand glimpse into the art of making music and reveals how the industryÃ¢â ¬â •like musicians themselvesÃ¢â ¬â •has changed since those freewheeling first years of rock and roll.

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Customer Reviews

Glyn Johns has had as distinguished a career as an engineer and producer as anyone in the music business, but, as many reviewers have already noted, he could have used some help writing this memoir. His writing style is mostly competent and readable, but somewhat random, and he seems to leave out as much interesting material as possible. Inevitably, there are some good studio and concert anecdotes, but surprisingly few. Some of Johns' own opinions creep in, but for the most part the professionalism which served Johns so well in recording studios all those years has left him shy about saying much of anything now. He rides roughshod over a thousand topics with a cursory mention such as "And then I recorded the Beatles for part of the _Abbey Road_ album at Olympic." Yeaahhhh.....? Aaannnd....????! What songs did you record with them? How did the songs change over time? How did you achieve the sounds we all know? What were their interactions like in the studio with you, with each other, with Yoko, with, hell, the tea boy? The whole book is frustrating in this fashion. What were the Rolling Stones like as people, or as musicians? What did they say or do, to you, to each other, and why? What innovative recording ideas were tried? Can you remember any particular Stones tracks at all, or ones that were fun to work on, and why? What was it like recording Led Zeppelin? And so on... sigh. For contrast, read the excellent "Here There and Everywhere" which Beatles engineer Geoff Emerick (very wisely) did with writer Howard Massey. In that well-organized book, one feels like a fly-on-the-wall at real sessions, gathering Emerick's detailed memories and perceptions of the Beatles and the specific songs and recordings being worked on in actual chronological order. Now, to be fair, perhaps a lot of detail is hard to remember; Johns has done an awful lot of sessions, many of them a long time ago. Indeed, he understandably seems to remember more and more as the book goes on and gets closer to the present time. But surely he can recall more than he writes about here. Look at another good book by a sound engineer, the one by Ken Scott. Scott says upfront that he doesn't recall the level of detail that Geoff Emerick apparently does, and yet he still manages to write an engaging and fairly detailed account

of some sessions. As for this book by Glyn Johns, you can breeze through its short chapters in a couple of evenings, and learn one or two things you might not have heard before, but that is (disappointingly) all.

A great book by a wonderful man that rode a wave of musical history and contributed greatly to making if that sound wave.Johns has lots of great stories to tell from his humble beginnings as a choir boy to his work with the Stones, Zeppelin, and many other bands to that likeness to how he became tied in with some many great Pop stars.This is a very nice book that you will find an easy read. I highly recommend it.Enjoy!

If you’re even vaguely interested in ’60s/’70s music and the various biographies/autobiographies that have come out in the last few years ... the behind-the-scenes accounts from the main players and anecdotes about the inspirations or recordings of iconic songs ... then "Sound Man" will sit very comfortably in your collection. I had only a basic knowledge of Glyn’s role during that period, mainly from his connection to the Beatles’ "Get Back/Let It Be" project, but this book has opened my eyes to his extraordinary achievements long before 1969 as well as for many years afterwards. In fact I’ve found myself searching for (and then purchasing) at least four other CDs Glyn speaks about in the book ... simply because his background insights are so fascinating that I had to experience the full recordings. Many of Glyn’s other recordings are actually in my CD/LP library already, but I hadn’t realised his involvement. It’s a fabulous journey that presents very familiar music and personnel from an entirely new perspective. Well worth buying.

In contrast to some others who’ve reviewed this book I found it to be a delightful read. I’m a big fan of bios/memoirs of rock musicians and am always interested to gain the perspective of those "behind the scenes" who were instrumental in getting their art out to the public. Glyn Johns doesn’t get hung up in describing ad nauseum the technical end of things but focuses more on the personalities and quirks of the people he worked with. I also appreciate that he was humble enough to admit he was sometimes wrong or that he’s changed his mind about a particular person over the years. It’s so refreshing to hear stories told from an honest point of view instead of one that’s always concerned with making oneself seem smarter than everyone else around them. Highly recommended.

I just finished reading this book. It starts as a straight autobiography but morphs more into a series

of anecdotes from Johns' professional life. This is where it gets really good. Johns tells numerous interesting, sometimes funny stories about artists and industry pros he has encountered. He was witness to several important moments in rock and roll history.The chapters and many but short, making for an easy read.My only complaint would be that he has much more to tell, but seems to leave certain stories out to maintain confidentiality. For example, he doesn't relay some important (to fans) conversations between the Beatles during the volatile "Let It Be" sessions, or why he abruptly left sessions for McCartney's "Red Rose Speedway" album after only two weeks. Though possibly disappointing to the reader, these omissions speak highly of Johns' character.

While the Man was there, his writing style is very cold and factual, with little emotion or analysis. In most cases he is complimentary to a fault. At this point in his career, he could have let loose and more deeply ripped or richly embroidered about the people he worked with

Lots of good anecdotal material here, and I learned a lot about both Glyn Johns and the artists whose work he engineered and/or produced. But at about the two thirds mark, it seems Mr. Johns started losing the head of steam that made earlier parts of the book so enjoyable. In rapid order he skims over work that he did, moving from one artist to another so quickly, one session to another in just the broadest of strokes that I couldn't help but think he wanted to get this project over with.

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