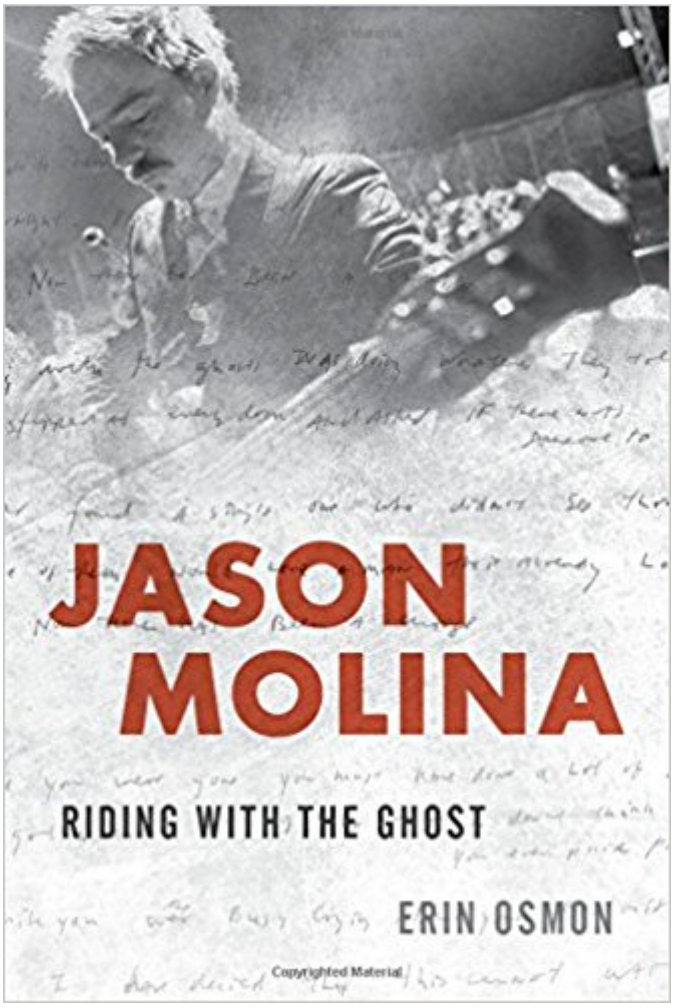
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Jason Molina: Riding With The Ghost



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Synopsis

Erin Osmon presents a detailed, human account of the Rust BeltÃ¢â ¬â œborn musician Jason MolinaÃ¢â ¬â •a visionary, prolific, and at times cantankerous singer-songwriter with an autodidactic style that captivated his devoted fans. The songwriting giant behind the bands Songs: Ohia and Magnolia Electric Co. had a knack for spinning tales, from the many personal myths he cultivated throughout his life to the poems and ballads he penned and performed. As with too many great musicians, MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s complicated relationship with the truth, combined with a secretive relationship with the bottle, ultimately claimed his life.Jason Molina: Riding with the Ghost details MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s personal trials and triumphs and reveals for the first time the true story of MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s last months and works, including an unpublished album unknown to many of his fans. Offering unfettered access to the mind and artistry of Molina through exclusive interviews with family, friends, and collaborators, the book also explores the Midwest music underground and the development of Bloomington, IndianaÃ¢â ¬â œbased label Secretly Canadian.As the first authorized and detailed account of this prolific songwriter and self-mythologizer, Jason Molina provides readers with unparalleled insight into MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s tormented life and the fascinating Midwest musical underground that birthed him. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a story for the ages that speaks volumes to the triumphs and trials of the artistic spirit while exploring the meaningful music that MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s creative genius left behind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The anecdotal details from Jason Molina: Riding with the Ghost are what ring most vividly, exposing a side of Molina that rarely came through in his melancholic music.... Riding with the Ghost also enriches his songs, illuminating their characters in their own words and supplying context to the places they were set. (MTV)Among Riding with the GhostÃ¢â ¬â„¢s most memorable passages are instances of MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s fandom, from his unconditional love for Sade and his evangelizing of Kraftwerk to Damien Jurado, to his edict to bandmates to study Neil YoungÃ¢â ¬â„¢s After the Gold Rush. MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s passion rings through these pages, nowhere more distinctly than in the retelling of the fateful interaction that launched his career while studying at Oberlin College (where he was known as 'Sparky'). (Pitchfork Media Inc.)Jason Molina: Riding with the Ghost delves into each period of the artistÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life: from his first high school punk band Chronic Insanity, to his last days with heralded alt-country act Magnolia Electric Co., and the numerous iterations of his beloved folk-leaning band Songs: Ohia, as well as solo material and unreleased demos unkown to fans. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a fascinating look at one of the last pre-internet indie successes and the underground music scene that supported his meteoric rise. The book also examines the origin story of Bloomington, IN-based Secretly Canadian, and how the record label and Molina became inexorably linked in a nearly 17-year run as label and artist, despite major ideological and technological shifts in the landscape of independent music. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a book not just for Molina fans, but for music fans Ã¢â ¬â • a story for the ages that explores the triumphs and pitfalls of a very pure artistic spirit. (Glide Magazine)Jason Molina: Riding With the Ghost absolutely communicates just what MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life meant to family, friends, collaborators and fans.... Osmon does an excellent job of painting a nuanced portrait of a complex human being.... Her interviews with former band members and those involved with the production process yield a lot of wonderful insight into MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s singular and demanding creative process and his prolificacy.... It was already clear from his immense output that there is endless meaning to be gleaned from Jason MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s body of work, but Osmon takes the story of his short, bright time on Earth, warts and all Ã¢â ¬â • just like a Songs: Ohia record, 'no overdubs!' Ã¢â ¬â • and puts it in the context of a real human life. And that unveils depths to his music that weÃ¢â ¬â„¢re only now able to explore. (Winnipeg Free Press)Osmon's biography is a must read for anyone who has more than a casual relationship with Molina's work; which, in my guess, would be anyone who has heard Molina's work.... Osmon pulls back the curtain and shows us Molina the man. (37 FLOOD)Never short on details, itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a ravenous fanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s dream.... Osmon provides the deepest of glimpses into MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s worlds. All the trinket-filled mysteries left behind by one of the greatest songwriters who ever wrote a note are

captured here.... Thanks ... Osmon for a guided tour of MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s mythological palette, warts and all. (Popmatters)If Jason Molina has ever been important to you, then you need to read the book, because Osmon did a magnificent job detailing MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s life, struggles, music, and demise. So many lingering questions are answered, and questions youÃ¢â ¬â„¢d never considered are answered as well. Read it. Now. (Third Coast Review)In her new book, Riding With the Ghost, writer Erin Osmon accomplishes a tricky feat regarding the late Jason Molina... She presents Molina, whose work can so often mythic, as if carved from ancient stone, fully as a person, with faults, desires, humors, and failings. She doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t strip his songs of their mystery or allure, but rather illustrates the idiosyncratic and personal details that led to his remarkable words and melodies. In doing so, she gives us the gift of more fully knowing Molina, as well as his companions and friends, those who traveled alongside him through life. (Aquarium Drunkard)Riding With The Ghost...captures the heaviness and levity that coexisted in MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s personality, and it enriches a moving and inexhaustible artistic legacy. (Decoder Magazine)Erin Osmon paints an empathetic and deeply human portrait of Jason Molina, both the artist and the man. A biography that's as beautifully haunting as one of his songs. (Bob Mehr, author, "Trouble Boys: The True Story of the Replacements")In Jason Molina: Riding with the Ghost, Erin Osmon gives us a riveting biography not only of a great musician whose work deserves to be much wider known, but a well-rounded portrait of a fascinating human being, as well as a glimpse into the creative process. It's a ride well worth taking. (Jim DeRogatis, co-host, "Sound Opinions," and author, Let It Blurt: The Life and Times of Lester Bangs)During his all-too-short lifetime, Jason Molina created some of the most emotionally stirring, soul-enriching, and thought-provoking rock this side of Neil Young, Lou Reed, and Nick Drake. First time author Erin Osmon has crafted a meticulously researched biography infused with both passion and a keen analytic eye. During his lifetime, Molina was criminally under recognized. In a perfect world, OsmonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s loving tribute will play its part in rectifying this. (Rob Bowman, Grammy AwardÃ¢â ¬â œwinning author, Soulsville U.S.A.: The Story of Stax Records)Jason Molina: Riding with the Ghost accomplishes a tremendous featÃ¢â ¬â •an examination of Molina's life and work as rich, complex, and fearless as the music he made. Erin Osmon unpacks the mythology and gives us a portrait that is human, tangible, and deeply moving. (Jessica Hopper, author, The First Collection of Criticism by a Living Female Rock Critic)

Erin Osmon is a music writer based in Chicago. Her work has appeared in dozens of newspapers, magazines, websites, and journals dealing with music and culture. She also writes long-form liner

notes for reissues of historic albums. A native of Evansville, Indiana, Ms. Osmon grew up in the Midwest underground music scene. She discovered Jason MolinaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s music in 1998 after the song Ã¢â ¬Å“VanquisherÃ¢â ¬Â• from the first Songs: Ohia LP made rounds on a mix tape among her high school friends. This is her first book.

I knew how this book would end before I purchased it. This story is heart breaking and revealing. I became a fan of the music of Jason Molina about a year after he died and the more I listened to his music, the more I wanted to know about his life. This book does that. Thank you.

A very moving story

I started this book at 11pm, thinking I'd read for an hour or so before bed. Before I knew it, I'd reached the end of the book and it was 4am. Jason Molina has been my all-time favorite musician since I first discovered him in 2005. I knew all the words to all the songs, and I'd derived my own meanings for them, but I often wondered what the circumstances were that caused them to be written. This well-researched book answered many of the questions that I had. Osmon breaks down several song lyrics and ties them to individual events in his life, which is just what I'd always been curious to know.Jason's work was largely autobiographical, but this book is a welcome insight from the other side of the story. To hear from the objects of his love songs was especially a treat. I finished this book with an incredible respect for Darcie Schoenmann. Having listened to his body of work, seen a couple of his performances, and briefly met the man, I'd gotten the impression that he was an intense personality. Through reading Osmon's book, I was able to learn exactly how intense of a personality Molina was and through that I was able to develop a new understanding of his life and work and a respect for the people who loved him.There are a few typos and some issues that could have been resolved in another round of editing, perhaps, but it doesn't detract from the work in any way. Osmon has a great control of pacing and ability to construct a timeline, which makes the book very easy to read.

This is truly a beautifully written book.

What Beautiful words

As a huge Jason Molina fan, I had high expectations of this book but ended up being disappointed.

First, this book needed a real editor at the helm. Aside from the typos, misused words, etc., there's a lot of repetition of both phrasing and information, which really interrupts the flow, and just plain clunky writing. I was splashing mental red ink on every page as I read. But my real problem with the book is that it is so consumed with the facts of Jason Molina's life that it never really gets at motives, meanings, and the music itself. And even the facts are often wanting, as when Osmon tells us that Jason bought a vintage Gibson. Any guitar player, like me, is surely left thinking, "A Gibson WHAT?" I learned a lot from this book, but I don't feel as if I have a deeper understanding of the music that Jason left behind or of the man himself. I think the book needed to be twice as long, with more discussions of Jason's songwriting, musicianship, and what his dark vision, tinged with hope, ultimately meant.

I've been excited about this book since I first heard it was being written over a year ago. I've been telling friends about it, some of whom wonder "Is there really a story to tell?" Well, yes there is. This book is deeply moving and really demonstrates the author's commitment to telling Jason's story. Her connection with his music is obvious, and her approach to its subject is both compelling and complete, pulling no punches while also giving Molina a respectful bio. The details are fascinating, and the thread that ties his whole life story together is rather impressive. I can't imagine a fan, or even someone interested in how a creative mind blossoms, struggles, and captivates all at once. Highly recommended

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