



Nick Cave: Mercy on Me

Reinhard Kleist , Michael Waaler (Translator)

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Musician, novelist, poet, actor: Nick Cave (b. 1957) is a Renaissance man. His wide-ranging artistic output—always uncompromising, hypnotic, and intense—is defined by an extraordinary gift for storytelling. In *Nick Cave: Mercy on Me*, Reinhard Kleist employs a cast of characters drawn from Cave's music and writing to tell the story of a formidable artist and influencer. Kleist paints an expressive and enthralling portrait of Cave's childhood in Australia; his early years fronting The Birthday Party; the sublime highs of his success with The Bad Seeds; and the crippling lows of his battle with heroin. Capturing everything from Cave's frenzied performances in Berlin to the tender moments he spent with love and muse Anita Lane, Kleist's graphic biography, like Cave's songs, is by turns electrifying, sentimental, morbid, and comic—but always engrossing.

Nick Cave: Mercy on Me Details

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From Reader Review Nick Cave: Mercy on Me for online ebook

karen says

someday i will learn not to read biographies of people i admire. it's always kind of a letdown - you learn about all the times they were a jerk, or about all the ways in which they were dull, or about all the ways in which they were...byron. okay, that's an exception, because it's hard for byron to fall from grace when the bar is set so low. if anything, the bios i've read have made me realize he was *less* of a douche than his legacy.

but i figured this one would be cooler, because it's in graphic novel format, and it's a mixture of biography and fantasy, in which nick cave interacts with characters from his own songs and novels, many of which are (rightfully) displeased with what he's put them through. i don't know how much cave contributed to this project (other than a backcover blurb), or how much kleist made up or drew from the nick cave mythos, but the end result is kind of uneven.

it might be my own lack of interest in hagiography, which is just as bad to me as bios that tear down the heroic gauze. judging solely on the artwork, it's great, and had it just been a tale of nick cave being confronted by euchrid eucrow or elisa day etc, i think i would have loved it - mostly because kleist imagines euchrid to very closely resemble gollum, which is delightful.

if there's ever a graphic novel version of And the Ass Saw the Angel, i will for sure buy it

but there's just so mucha *this*

and this

all that teenage self-grandeur and "our music will change the world" and "oi punk rock fuck commercial rock and roll" and it's very...adolescent. which is fine and appropriate for depicting cave's rowdy reckless younger years, or during his addiction-clouded woolgathering, but in this book, he never quite seems to grow out of it. and that makes me squirm a little.

because i *like* nick cave - i like the boys next door, i like the birthday party, i like the bad seeds - he puts on a good show, his voice is equally skilled in "howling anguish" as "come hither to look at my etchings;" i'm a fan of his lyrics, his poems, and his novels; with And the Ass Saw the Angel being very close to my heart. his thematic blend of religion, violence, and poetry, appeals to the grit lit lover in me, and he's probably the artist that paved the way for my appreciation of that stuff during my formative years.

but world-changing? wholly original? nah. that's a fantasy of adolescence. nothing is truly original, music never changed the world, and there are musicians who scraped my soul closer than nick cave ever did, who were classy enough to acknowledge their predecessors. this book gives a begrudging nod to johnny cash, but cave and pals spend more time talking shit about commercial rock, which in this case means postpunk, a musical period i happen to enjoy very much. nick cave does *not* get to talk shit about bauhaus, the psych furs, or siouxsie. dude, seriously?

but that's fine - a lot of it is during cave's insufferable dostoyevsky-quoting youth, but the book kinds rushes the end. anita (lane) is all over the book and then just vanishes, even though they collaborated after their split,

pj harvey and kylie minogue get a single panel mention, and so much is just glossed over. in a breathless sentence, marriage and kids and stability are fact-dropped before moving on. some of cave's most interesting work is being done during this time, and it's just barreled through and over. because boatman's call is too mellow and mopey and piano-y? because there's no interest in all the excellent musicians who contributed to murder ballads? i, for one, would love to have seen a cartoon shane macgowan. which may be redundant.

this book covers nothing of cave's post-1999 work, and a lot of the book just feels like rotating hairstyles. it's pretty, but there's not enough meat to it. which is, i suppose, what you get when you pick up a biography made of pictures, but i was hoping for a little more oomph.

Diogenis Papadopoulos says

Η ζω?, οι στ?χοι και οι εμμον?ς του γνωστο? τροβαδο?ρους οπτικοποιο?νται απ? το πεν?κι του Reinhard Kleist. Η πορε?α απ? τη γεν?τειρα του χ?ρα στο Βερολ?νο, οι Birthday Party, οι Bad Seeds, οι εφι?λτες του, ?λα αρμονικ? δεμ?να σε ?να σουρεαλιστικ? ταξ?δι. Αν σας αρ?σουν τα κ?μιξ και λατρε?ετε την μουσικ? του Cave, τ?τε πρ?πει να το αποκτ?σετε.

Υ.Γ. Θα ?ταν πλεονασμ?ς να αναφ?ρω με τη μουσικ? υπ?κρουση μπορε? να γ?νει η αν?γνωση του Nick Cave: Mercy on Me.

Kaila says

4.25/5 stars

This has to be the most **creatively outstanding** book that I've read for a while. Never have I imagined that a life story could be twisted into something as **grand, powerful and emotive** as this book. Not only is the biography told in graphic novel format, but Nick Cave's music and characters are intertwined with his life to fully bring this story off the page. The illustrations perfectly match the mood of Nick Cave's music and persona and help to **bring the story to life**. I think the graphic format really helped tell parts of the story in a way that words just couldn't. The pain, passion and raw emotions portrayed throughout the illustrations just **blew me away**. I was drawn into the world of the novel, be it be the world of his songs or that of his actual life, more than I ever have in a biography or non-fiction (although this isn't exactly a non-fiction novel). I

feel like there is a sort of stigma around biographies that they're boring and droll, and I think this biography completely smashes that perception.

As I've already read a biography of this artist, I already understood and knew about type events that were portrayed. I think this was very helpful as they were not told in great detail or necessarily in order, but this slightly altered storytelling matched the progression of the novel. I just had such a great time reading this grand, dramatised and **greatly emotive** biography. If you want a day by day retelling of Nick Cave's life and discography, this isn't the right book. But if you're looking for an insight into the wild, mysterious mind of this artist and **the heart behind his music**, this is definitely it. I also think this book could be read by people who aren't a fan of Nick Cave's work as it is equally a portrayal of wild, undaltered passion, obsession and creativity. I still think that fans will get the most out of this book because the tone and overall feeling of it really complements Nick's music.

Eva says

I love Nick Cave and was interested in reading a graphic biography. But somehow this was not much too my taste. The storyline is chaotic and confusing. I can imagine that in order to draw a biography you have to make difficult decisions on what part you are drawing. I think the artist could have made a better choice maybe. The style of drawings is a bit over the top for this book. It makes it really dark. Somehow it beffited the Johnny Cash biography better, also by Kleist.

Ti Emme Rock says

A beautiful and magical journey into Nick Cave's art. It shows that creating is a painful process and I really like the idea of an artist confronting with his own characters. I didn't give it 5 stars because I think drawings should have been more accurate.

Makis Dionis says

Τα ακριβντα που πλλονται αινια κη διξοδος της λατρωσης...

Can't remember anything at all,
driving my car down to Geneva!!

Solistas says

?ψογο πορτρ?το του Αρχηγο?, απαρα?τητο για ?σους θ?λουν να διατηρ?σουν στη μν?μη τους για ?σο το δυνατ?v πιο πολ? την καλ?τερη του συναυλ?α στην Αθ?να τα τελευτα?α 15-20 χρ?νια

Fábio Martins says

Não tenho a mínima possibilidade de saber como será que este livro resulta para os não indefectíveis. Quanto a mim, resultou perfeitamente. Uma hábil teia de ficção/biografia e mito, colocada numa perspectiva muito apelativa. Capítulos que são independentes mas se entrecruzam, e com estrutura cronológica que é, no geral, a natural, mas que não hesita em saltar no tempo, sem respeito particular ao bosão de Higgs. Canta-se tanto quanto se lê, e isso, neste caso, é extraordinário.

Não sendo uma biografia de Nick Cave (e eu já li algumas) é a imersão mais completa que já vi no seu universo emocional e criativo.

Luke says

So let's get this out of the way first: I am a Nick Cave fan. Not a rabid one, no - I don't believe he excretes perfect songs into the world, and almost every album he's associated with could do with having about a third chopped off it - but I like him well enough. I've seen him play a couple of times, and have most of the records. Hell, I've even read his books a couple of times. (Well, not the *Bunny Munro* one.)

But there's something important to know: I like him while disliking him. And this kind of informs my take on Reinhard Kleist's book, because though it's an interesting conceit and it's done pretty well, it buys into the sort of worshipful treatment of the guy that is part of what I dislike the most about how he's cultivated these days.

I'm kind of fine with the idea of the man firming up his legend for the future, even if it's something the award-rejecting "my muse may spook!" guy of earlier years would've pissed on. I can get that band members come and go and some may be treated shabbily or not. I just find it weird that he's gone from being part of a thrilling, occasionally dangerous band to being some kind of goth poet laureate, placed beyond middle-aged criticism, with his fans collaborators in firming up the myth of Aussie genius when it's more a case of Faulkner plus Berlin plus drugs plus Jebus. (Let's face it, the crowds back home were the reason Cave et al fucked off in the first place.)

(Actually, this piece by Anwen Crawford covers my concerns in a much more elegant way than I could muster.)

ANYWAY. The point is that I find that Cave is often considered beyond criticism, and I often wonder how much of this is tied in with him being the soundtrack to the youth (or the cooler older siblings) for a lot of those that call the critical shots, or who want to be convinced that their investment in same was worth it. I understand this, and I'm sure I'm guilty of it with bands. But Kleist's work here, I think, falls into the trap of uncritically lauding the bloke when it could've been a bit more nuanced.

The work is a mixture of fact, fantasy and what happens when song characters leak into the world. Parts of the story take place in the framework of songs - we see the prisoner from 'The Mercy Seat', we experience a drive to CERN, we hang out by a river with a soon-to-be-dead Elisa Day, and we watch Jangling Jack fuck up his trip to the big smoke, amongst others. These sections are effective to varying degrees, and I like the idea that the man's creations are aware of him and desire some kind of reckoning, even though it's a bit too

on-the-nose close to being an take on 'We Call Upon the Author'.

The historical parts are interesting if you know the history of Cave's bands. I found it enjoyable to see Pew et co drinking their way through half-fucked gigs, and was rather taken with the fact that both Mick Harvey and Blixa Bargeld's hair is *spectacular* whenever they're pictured in the work.

(The illustration style in the book - lots of marker? - is a mixed bag. When it's good, it is *great*, and Kleist is great at salting scene-setting details through the frame, and uses a lot of darkness to solid effect. But when it's bad, it seems pretty dire, especially when illustrating real people. I'm willing to forgive the shonky illustration of fictional characters, as I suspect that's an editorial choice rather than a fault in execution, but still it often drew me out of what was going on.)

I just find the book presents its story in a very positive way, even the fucked parts. Sure, the Cave presented here is a bit of an arsehole: he fucks up bathrooms while off his tits, he's a junkie and a cheater and uncompromising and truculent as fuck. But it's all sort of filtered through the lens of viewing the work as being all-time great in total. Which, in some cases it is (fuck me, but 'Tupelo' is one for the ages, and to be fair he and his band *have* written more than a couple of classics) but it's not the entire story.

I'm not sure how privy Cave was to the creation of the book: he's thanked in it, and offers a fairly good quote for the back cover. I don't know if he collaborated on the book particularly much, but I imagine it's a fairly positive portrait overall, so he'd not be that unhappy.

I'm glad I read the book; I am. I just find that as I get older, Cave brings up more issues for me. I can't be as uncritically worshipful as I was when I was younger (and yes, hadn't read any Faulkner). I know a bunch about the guy, and Kleist's work provides some nice portraits of some of that - the move to Brazil, the recording of *Tender Prey*, the trips to rehab and the frenetic typing - but I felt overall it was a little too worshipful of the subject. That's on me. But fervent fans will absolutely love it.

I didn't love it, but I do appreciate the work, and I did enjoy my time with the book. It's worth a look if you've been into the guy at some point, whether it was in the artist's big-hair or porno-mo phases.

Tijana says

Ovo je dosta zanimljivo ako volite Kejva, a posebno ako niste ljubitelji klasi?nih "biopika" koji prate životni put od klevke pa do groba: jer je dobrim delom u pitanju slobodno fantaziranje o razgovorima koje Kejvovi likovi vode s njim, upore?uju se, prebacuju mu i zakeraju što im nije makar izmislio bolja kola kad je ve? morao da ih ubije na ovakav ili onakav na?in.

David Schaafsma says

Musician, novelist, poet, actor Nick Cave was born and raised in Australia, fronted the band The Birthday Party and got famous with The Bad Seeds. He struggled with heroin but was all along inspired and supported by his lover and muse Anita Lane. Kleist's graphic biography draws on a lot of Cave's lyrics.

I was not particularly a fan of Cave, but I am a fan of Kleist, who captures the spirit of Cave and that wild

hard rock life in sort of punk musical pen and ink expressive drawing, wild and dark to match its subject. Feels like some of the darker work of Nate Powell (*Swallow Me Whole*). I really like the work of Kleist, best known for comics biographies such as *Johnny Cash: I See Darkness*; *The Boxer* (the story of concentration camp boxer Harry Haft); *An Olympic Dream: The Story of Samia Yusuf Omar*, and others. If you love Cave you might like this a lot--it is at this writing the highest rated of Kleist's work here on Goodreads--or you might like it less, as Goodreads friend Karen opined. The art and storytelling here are strong.

Thomas says

Βαθμολογία: ★★★

Να καμία για το ργο του Nick Cave, που δυστυχίσαπενθνεται μνο σε σους εναί εξοικειωμνοι με το ργο του. Το περμενα πιο προσβσιμο. Μπρβο, πντως στον Reinhard Kleist που για ακμη μια φορφανεται να χει κνει εξαιρετικδουλει?

Bettie? says

Reinhard Kleist's graphic biography is full of visual delights, but the musician's wit – crucial foil to his own myth-mongering – is less apparent

Nasia says

Δεν χω λγια να εκφρσω πσο με γμισε αντ το graphic novel. Σωσττερη ωδ στον βρδο ονματι Nick Cave δεν μπορε να υπρξει. Ολσωστο σχδιο, καταπληκτικσυνθσεις, πολωρααεπιλογκαρκαι στχων τραγουδιν, ανατριχιαστικ?

Thomas says

#readathon17 - [11/26]

<να κμικς>
