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Memories Of John Lennon

memories of
john lennon
edited and introduced by
Yoko Ono



Synopsis

John Lennon . . . as much a part of our world today as he ever was. He touched many lives in his brief forty years, and continues to move and inspire millions more to this day. Now, invited by Yoko Ono, friends, family, and fans from all walks of life— including some of the great artists of our day— reminisce about Lennon as a visionary and friend, musician and performer, husband and father, activist and jokester. In their own words and drawings, poems and photos, Lennon's life from his childhood through the Beatles years to the happiness and tragedy of his final days become stunningly vivid. Intimate glimpses gathered from musicians who knew John, such as Pete Townshend, Sir Elton John, Billy Preston, and Joan Baez; friends and relatives such as producer David Geffen, publicist Elliot Mintz, and cousin Mike Cadwallader; and artists who followed him such as Bono, Alicia Keys, Steve Earle, Jello Biafra, and Carlos Santana. And, for the first time, renowned photographer Annie Liebovitz presents every frame of the historic last session with John and Yoko. *Memories of John Lennon* is a rich and deeply felt appreciation of a truly great man.

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Customer Reviews

Memories Of John Lennon, "edited" and introduced by Yoko Ono. I put that word in quotes because

I'm skeptical that this book was edited at all. A real editor might have reminded contributor and onetime activist Tariq Ali that "Revolution" was a single, not an album. Ali also writes of the day Lennon died: "I think the tribute [John] would have loved was the spontaneous grief in Moscow as kids rushed to the Lenin hills and sang "Back in the U.S.S.R." Yes, if I were John Lennon, I'd love it if people grieved for me by singing a Paul McCartney song, too. Ali shares pride-of-place for ignorance with of all people, Ray Charles, who makes a similar mistake about "Yesterday." The book as a whole overflows with gushing, largely unearned sentiment. If it was just another one of those things it would be bad enough but it's also absolute psychic head for Yoko. Person after person: Yoko was the love of John's life; as an artist, Yoko was 30 years ahead of her time; the only possible reason one can be critical of Yoko is if one is racist or sexist or probably both. I'm not saying some of it isn't true. I'm not one of those people who thinks Yoko was the devil (it's just that she couldn't sing). I'm saying it's unseemly for someone to include all that stuff about themselves in a book. When they're not scrubbing clean The Perfect Story of John and Yoko, the contributors are rewriting their own personal history as well. Or staking their claims to their own part of The Lennon Story. Jann Wenner tells (again) the story of putting Lennon on the cover of the first Rolling Stone and conducting his lengthy interview with John.

I bought this book with happy anticipation. It seemed like a good idea: a collection of essays by different people, remembering John, published 25 years after his untimely death. I had seen a similar collection of statements many years ago, soon after John died, and that one was moving. But I overlooked one important thing: this book was edited by Yoko Ono. Why the 2 star rating? The book itself is good quality and has a few nice pictures. And some of the essays are nice such as the ones by Mick Jagger and Elliot Mintz. However too much of the material is of poor quality for different reasons. The book smacks of one of Yoko's popularist art projects. It appears as if she invited a bunch of people, some who never met John and who probably know little about him, to send in an essay so they can get their name in print. An essay by Alicia Keyes is nice, but she didn't know the man. How could she have a memory of John? As a result, several essays repeat the same unimaginative theme: we liked John because he wrote Imagine. We never met him but we like the song because he sang about brotherhood and peace. Other essays are so short as to be meaningless. Some contributors sent in amateur drawings or poetry. This may be fine for an elementary school project where a teacher tells her 7 year old students "write a poem or do a drawing about John Lennon" but, to me, this is not worthy of a hardcover book ostensibly published to honor John Lennon. Another problem with this book is the same problem mentioned by

critics of the Lennon Broadway show: the Yoko-fication of the Lennon legacy.

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