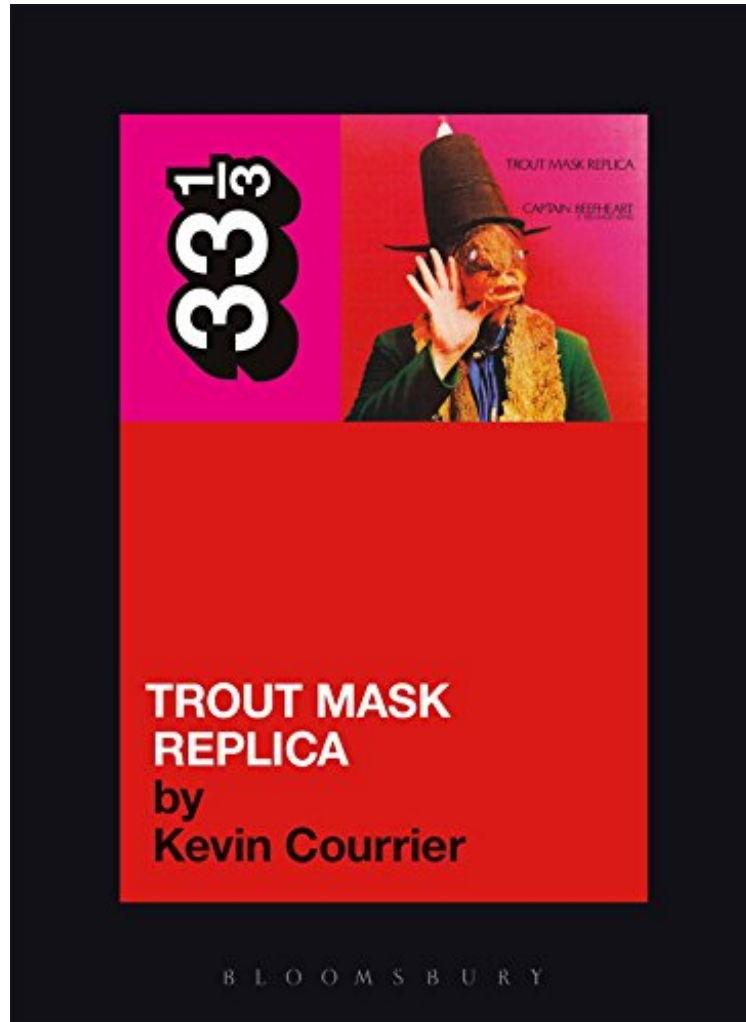


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Captain Beefheart's Trout Mask Replica (33 1/3)

Kevin Courrier

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Kevin Courrier : Captain Beefheart's Trout Mask Replica (33 1/3) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Captain Beefheart's Trout Mask Replica (33 1/3):

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A review about a book about an album...By GoughyI certainly wouldn't qualify as an expert on Captain Beefheart but his music and mythology has intrigued me ever since I can remember knowing of his existence. I had listened to Trout Mask Replica while I was in college but I distinctly recall not enjoying it enough to pursue it or pick it up for my own library until about two years ago when I stumbled onto a slightly tattered used vinyl copy in a record store and bought it for twenty dollars. I've listened to it regularly ever since, usually weekend afternoons while painting. It does not sound like the revolting noise I had heard when I was twenty anymore but has transformed into a burlesque circus of poetry, art, music and surrealism. I've heard it can take

a while to connect with this album, perhaps the reason I never gave up on it completely, always wondering about it, wanting to like it, maybe even needing to but taking my time to reintroduce myself to it as if it held a special power that one had to earn. Trout Mask Replica is magic that way, a kind of experience that grows inside a person after they first encounter it's ceremony. It becomes, to the devout, a puzzle to unravel, an exotic pleasure achieved through patience. Buying into the religion only aids in its glorification, although even without all the kneeling it still swings in a frighteningly curious manner. But then comes a day when you have to ask the gospel singer what it all really means because we all have that undeniable urge to know about the little old man behind the curtain working the levers. So for me, already owning several 33 1/3 books, Kevin Courrier's offering in the series was a great embarking point. Courrier begins the book by relating his own memorable introduction to the album, one of which is just haunting enough to give another layer of mystique to the album. I felt satisfied with the brief history Courrier gives to Don Van Vliet although I didn't know much to start with so most of what he had written was as informative as anything written on him. If a reader is beefed up on their Beefheart this might not be a selling point but because Van Vliet was such a polarizing and eccentric man I don't think it would be a detraction either. Courrier documents the recording of the album very effectively, using quotes from participants to achieve a sense of authenticity. Throughout, he also peppers interesting side stories about Van Vliet's influences such as Blind Willie Johnson and chronicles his relationship with Frank Zappa who himself gets a welcomed subplot. Overall this 33 1/3 addition is a success and is instantly one of my favorites (I would say top three in the series out of the ones I've read). I get a sense Courrier is a skilled writer, his direction from beginning to end precise even with the detours of which were always fascinating in their own right. The book never has one of those lags that a lot of the series' volumes encounters along the way to dissecting their respective albums and I found myself excited to return to the book. For any fan of this book series I would definitely recommend Trout Mask Replica. To hardcore Beefheart fan's, Courrier himself mentions in the beginning, that this will not hold any new revealing information. To novice fans or fans just coming to discover Captain Beefheart this book, like I said, is a quick and fulfilling read. I came away thinking I knew a lot more about one of my newest favorite albums of all time without having to spend months doing research. From its influences to it's creator's vision, Kevin Courrier covers it all. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. EXCELLENT COMPANION PIECE TO THE ALBUM! By Dos Passos This is a great exploration of TMR. Although I have a few quibbles with Mr. Courrier on various points, his book is a mini-epic that can stand proudly alongside Beefheart and the Magic Band's tour de force. Courrier creates a nice balance between the geek minutiae of the record and the larger picture (pop music history, Zappa's influence, etc). The writer knew he had a challenge ahead of him and he tackles it with honesty and modesty. No hipster posturing at all...very refreshing. This is easily the best 33 1/3 book I've read so far. My second fave in the series is the one on Neutral Milk Hotel's "In the Aeroplane...", another cult record worth checking out. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and Insightful History By wshirer Before reading the book, I knew very little about Beefheart other than he was strange and associated with Zappa and that TMR was a difficult album to understand. This book explains all, and explains why TMR is a very important piece of music. I now have an appreciation for TMR that I never would have had if I'd not read the book. The book was organized well and the author provided many insights that were intriguing.

In the spring of 1969, the inauspicious release of Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band's Trout Mask Replica, a double-album featuring 28 stream-of-consciousness songs filled with abstract rhythms and guttural bellows, dramatically altered the pop landscape. Yet even if the album did cast its radical vision over the future of music, much of the record's artistic strength is actually drawn from the past. This book examines how Beefheart's incomparable opus, an album that divided (rather than) united a pop audience, is informed by a variety of diverse sources. Trout Mask Replica is a hybrid of poetic declarations inspired by both Walt Whitman and the beat poets, the field hollers of the Delta Blues, the urban blues of Howlin' Wolf, the gospel blues of Blind Willie Johnson, and the free jazz of Ornette Coleman. This book illustrates how Trout Mask Replica was not so much an arcane specimen of the avant-garde, but rather a defiantly original declaration of the American imagination.

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