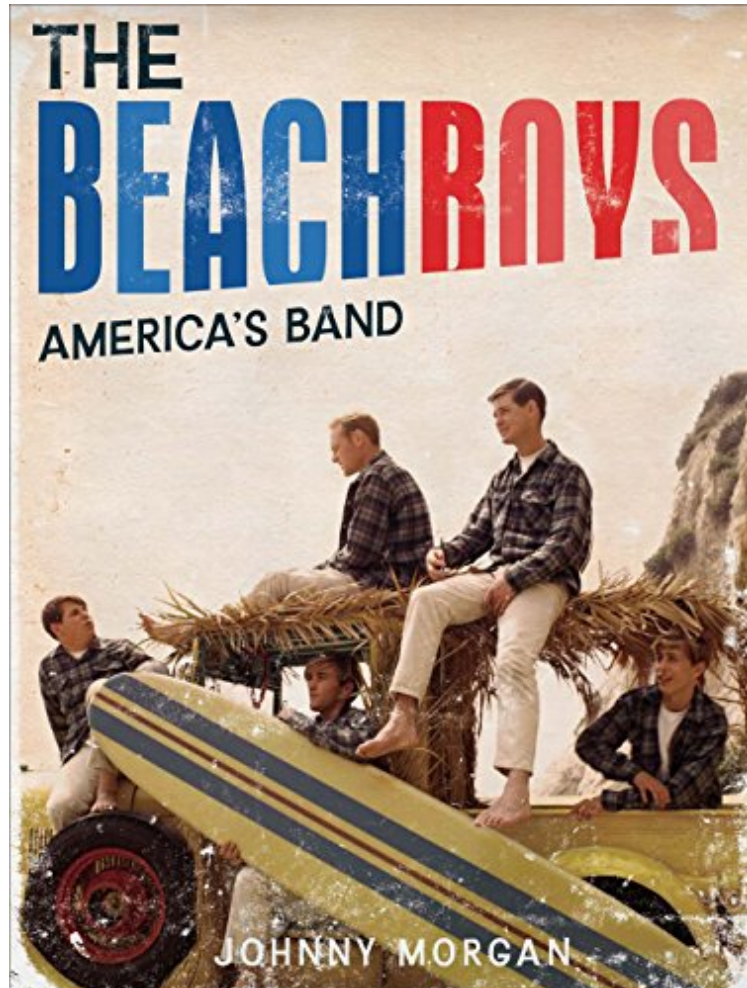


The Beach Boys: America's Band

Johnny Morgan

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Johnny Morgan : The Beach Boys: America's Band before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Beach Boys: America's Band:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. "MUSIC IS HIS WHOLE LIFE. THAT'S NUMBER ONE TO HIM". MARILYN WILSON.By Stuart Jefferson"I ran down the street screaming, 'Listen, we're on the radio!'" . Dennis Wilson on hearing "Surfin'". "We all lived this wonderful life with The Beach Boys." Mike Love."Brian thinks in six-part harmony instead of two or three-part." Murray Wilson."Musically speaking, we used to be totally reliant on Brian, but now we're branching out." Mike Love.Wow. This is a nice book--nicely printed, nice dust jacket, well laid out, nicely printed photos, and informative and interesting text. The contents are arranged chronologically beginning in "1942-1961 Surf (Don't Surf)" (Chapter 1), "1962-1964 Surfin' USA" (Chapter 2) and so on, and ends with "1996-2015 I Just Wasn't Made For These Times" (Chapter 8). Also included is a Discography but no Index which is usually helpful in finding something quickly--ah well. Also throughout the book are (mostly) full page sidebars which

highlight the band's albums ("Surfin'") in Chapter 2, "Surf's Up" in Chapter 6, and so on, and singles ("Sloop John B.") in Chapter 4. These pages have recording info, a color reproduction of the album/single cover, and a track list and a short piece on the music. But besides all the information found in this great book (like their first ever live performance at the Rendezvous Ballroom in 1961, with Dick Dale as the headliner, where the band played "Surfin'" and "Luau" during intermission and were paid \$10), there's a lot of very cool photos from throughout the band's life in both color and bw, and other period ephemera (like a poster advertising The Beach Boys and the Raiders at Portland Civic Auditorium from the late '60s) which are fully as important as the text. Check out the surf photos in the first chapter, or a very cool, moody photo of Dick Dale and his band on the set of Muscle Beach Party" from 1964, or the poster for the movie "Pacific Vibrations" from 1970, all of which bring back great memories if you were there--and if you weren't there you get a good idea of the times back then. There's also photos in the studio of the band and musicians like Glen Campbell, Don Randi, and Van Dyke Parks. The author, Johnny Morgan, has included information on the group's albums, select concert tours, and general information on how the band got it's initial sound with records about cars, surfing/the beach, and girls, into a different sound in the sixties and beyond. "We got so excited hearing it on the radio that Carl threw up." Dennis Wilson on hearing "Surfin'". In a nutshell--this book belongs on every Beach Boys bookshelf. No matter if you've been a longtime fan from their earliest days (like I was lucky enough to be beginning in the days of AM radio) or know their music only from records, this fine book is an in-depth look at the era, the band, the individual band members, their albums and concerts. Is there anything startling new here for longtime fans? Not really. But having the band's history in both text and photographs puts us closer to the band and that era when the Beach Boys were kings of the radio.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Lovely book
By nancy m
This is a beautifully-illustrated book that any Beach Boys fan will enjoy. More of a coffee-table book than an in-depth biography, the author nicely sets out the band's history against a backdrop of photographs. It is a great reference source that details each album and song list. The text is a pleasant summary of the band's career, compiled mainly from sources familiar to fans such as the 1971 Tom Nolan article in Rolling Stone and the excellent 2006 Peter Carlin biography of Brian Wilson, *Catch a Wave*. The photographs are clear and plentiful; I particularly got a laugh out of a tour poster advertising the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi with the Beach Boys as a side act. (Gotta love the 60s.) The reason it gets four stars from me rather than five is that I was hoping for some new anecdotes, some story about Dennis, Brian or Carl that I had not already read. So if you are looking for that, or more a traditional biography that goes below the surface, you may be disappointed. But that should not detract from what is a well-designed, informative book well worth every cent of the price.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not bad for a coffee table book.
By Samantha E.
Tons of beautiful photographs to document the band's career, but the writing itself was fairly shallow for a comprehensive history. Notably, the pages dedicated to Pet Sounds Smile are rather abbreviated, which isn't too much of a let-down considering there are other books with heavy emphasis on that period of The Beach Boys. The band's productivity in the '70s is also a fascinating one, but hardly covered in the book, and from that decade on, barely a dent is made delving into group dynamics, career trajectory, or music itself until wrapping things up with 'That's Why God Made the Radio'. Was able to read this cover-to-cover within a day, and it is now a cozy display piece in my living room. Not bad.

The Beach Boys pioneered the wildly popular "Surf Sound," selling more records than any other American band. And 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of their groundbreaking and hugely influential album *Pet Sounds* and its follow-up single, "Good Vibrations." This book offers the first fully illustrated, in-depth examination of the group's story, with a special emphasis on the creation of those two masterpieces and what came after. More than 150 images include classic and rarely published photographs, album artwork, and archive memorabilia. By examining the writing, recording and performance of the band's entire catalogue, the book presents a unique look at the making of the Beach Boys, both before and after their 1966 triumphs.

About the Author
Johnny Morgan is the coauthor of *The Greatest Album Covers of All Time*, *The Art of the LP*, and *Gaga* (all Sterling), among other titles. An editor, author, and journalist, he has contributed to a variety of popular music-based titles and written several music reference books. Johnny lives in London, UK.