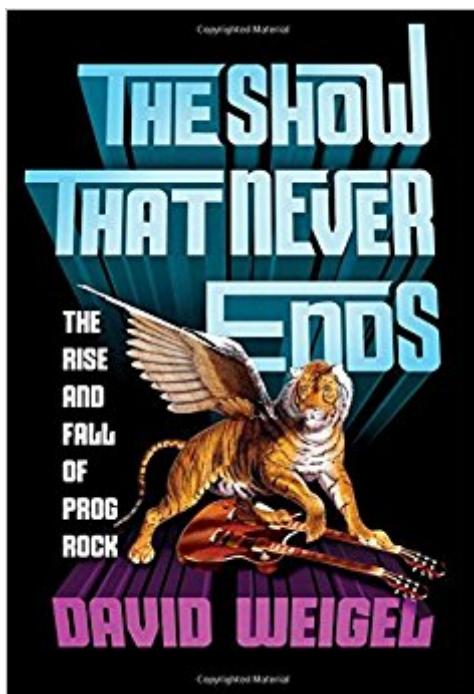


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The Show That Never Ends: The Rise And Fall Of Prog Rock



Synopsis

The wildly entertaining story of progressive rock, the music that ruled the 1970s charts—and has divided listeners ever since. *The Show That Never Ends* is the definitive story of the extraordinary rise and fall of progressive (“prog”) rock. Epitomized by such classic, chart-topping bands as Yes, Genesis, Pink Floyd, Jethro Tull, and Emerson Lake & Palmer, along with such successors as Rush, Marillion, Asia, Styx, and Porcupine Tree, prog sold hundreds of millions of records. It brought into the mainstream concept albums, spaced-out cover art, crazy time signatures, multitrack recording, and stagecraft so bombastic it was spoofed in the classic movie *This Is Spinal Tap*. With a vast knowledge of what Rolling Stone has called “the deliciously decadent genre that the punks failed to kill,” access to key people who made the music, and the passion of a true enthusiast, Washington Post national reporter David Weigel tells the story of prog in all its pomp, creativity, and excess. Weigel explains exactly what was “progressive” about prog rock and how its complexity and experimentalism arose from such precursors as the Beach Boys’ *Pet Sounds* and the Beatles’ *Sgt. Pepper*. He traces prog’s popularity from the massive success of Procol Harum’s “Whiter Shade of Pale” and the Moody Blues’ “Nights in White Satin” in 1967. He reveals how prog’s best-selling, epochal albums were made, including *The Dark Side of the Moon*, *Thick as a Brick*, and *Tubular Bells*. And he explores the rise of new instruments into the prog mix, such as the synthesizer, flute, mellotron, and—famously—the double-neck guitar. *The Show That Never Ends* is filled with the candid reminiscences of prog’s celebrated musicians. It also features memorable portraits of the vital contributions of producers, empresarios, and technicians such as Richard Branson, Brian Eno, Ahmet Ertegun, and Bob Moog. Ultimately, Weigel defends prog from the enormous derision it has received for a generation, and he reveals the new critical respect and popularity it has achieved in its contemporary resurgence. 8 pages of illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“A new history of [prog] written by an ardent, straight-faced defender who also understands what is most outlandishly entertaining about it.” - John Williams, New York Times Book Review

“Savvy . . . [and] too short.” - Kelefa Sanneh, The New Yorker

“Weigel weaves the stories of platinum-selling bands like Pink Floyd and Rush into a broader portrait of a rapidly shifting musical landscape. His training as a journalist is everywhere, from the crisp reporting to the deeply researched quotes. His knack for lean, efficient music analysis is refreshing . . . and his obvious passion for the music elevates the narrative.” - Jason Heller, NPR

“As is only appropriate, given the ambition, audacity, and now and then lifestyle of the musicians whose fondness for 10/8 time signatures and tritone chords have found a deft and sympathetic chronicler in Dave Weigel, I loved this book excessively.” - Michael Chabon

“A diligently researched chronicle [that] aims to grant the much-maligned genre something that has eluded it for decades: respect.” - Ryan Dombal, Pitchfork

“Weigel’s detailed, gossipy coverage . . . is a very good thing.” - Anthony Mostrum, Los Angeles Review of Books

“[The Show That Never Ends] tells a story of interest to both fans [of prog rock] and readers interested in the business of popular culture. . . . Weigel delivers a fun, compulsively readable account.” - Rob Salkowitz, Forbes

“A well-researched, informative, and entertaining chronicle of the music’s emergence, golden era, and eventual transition from rock’s future to its past.” - Phil Freeman, The Wire

David Weigel is a national reporter for the Washington Post. He has written for Bloomberg Businessweek, Slate, Reason, GQ, Esquire, USA Today, Rolling Stone, Politico, and many other journals. He lives in Washington, DC.

A good overview of a long derided sub genre of modern music.

Should be 4.5. Very well researched and baked up for everything prior to 1990. Learned a lot

reading it. He has some inaccuracies about the newer bands he talks about.

An excellent survey of the Progressive Rock genre. Not a great deal of new information for existing fans, but nevertheless fun to read. Be ready to take notes of which music to look up.

If you like prog at ALL, this is a fun and interesting read. There are great stories, it is well researched and well written, packed with all kinds of factoids that surprised me (Daryl Hall and Robert Fripp were great friends and made two albums together?!? [both shelved by the record company]). Because of this book I am exploring new music in a genre I thought I knew well. There is always more to explore of course, and IMHO, he missed a couple of good ones, but that is only opinion. (The Flower Kings, OSI, Paul M. Grove, RPWL, Riverside, Symphony X, Transatlantic, What Man Was...). Top marks, thanks for writing it!

My husband loved it - he's always been a big fan of "prog rock", particularly Yes

A totallt fun romp thru the Prog age, anyone who lived it will love this book!

Not horrible, but not great either.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's progressive rock was on the rise. It didn't last long. By the late 1970's "prog" was virtually dead. Of course I was excited about this book-this was my music. The author covers some of my fave bands from the period, Yes (with Jon Anderson) King Crimson (with Greg Lake) Genesis (with Peter Gabriel) Emerson, Lake and Palmer, The Moody Blues, etc. He tracks how much of the music was created. How lineup shifts changed the music. And ultimately, we find out what killed "prog." If you are a musician you'll probably love the way he dissects the music on particular cuts. The infighting between band members and the politics of groups involves just as much of intrigue as you could expect. Robert Fripp, Brian Eno, Peter Gabriel, all are especially weird geniuses. There are well known bands (as previously cited) and lots of obscure also-rans like Soft Machine. I was there. I loved it. I miss it. This is a fan book written for fans. It can be a bit scattershot shifting between group histories. There are artists who get lots of biographical space and others who are barely there on the page. It is what it is. It was what it was. Lots of this music still sounds ground-breaking. Even today.

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