

Tom Waits on Tom Waits: Interviews and Encounters (Musicians in Their Own Words)

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Tom Waits, even with his barnyard growl and urban hipster yawp, may just be what the *Daily Telegraph* calls him: “the greatest entertainer on Planet Earth.” Over a span of almost four decades, he has transformed his music and persona not to suit the times but his whims. But along with Bob Dylan, he stands as one of the last elder statesmen still capable of putting out music that matters.

Journalists intent upon cracking the code are more likely to come out of a Waits interview with anecdotes about the weather, insects, or medieval medicine. He is, in essence, the teacher we wished we had, dispensing insights such as: “Vocabulary is my main instrument;” “We all like music, but what we really want is for music to like us;” “Anything you absorb you will ultimately secrete;” “Growth is scary, because you’re a seed and you’re in the dark and you don’t know which way is up, and down might take you down further into a darker place . . .;” and “There is no such thing as nonfiction. . . . People who really know what happened aren’t talking. And the people who don’t have a clue, you can’t shut them up.”

Tom Waits on Tom Waits is a selection of over fifty interviews from the more than five hundred available. Here Waits delivers prose as crafted, poetic, potent, and haunting as the lyrics of his best songs.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book is filled with verbal fireworks and lyrical bon mots."—*American Songwriter Magazine*

"Absolutely required for Waits fans old and new, this pile of interviews is a magic mountain of weird."—*PopMatters.com*

"Recommended for all Tom Waits fans."—*Library Journal*

About the Author

Paul Maher Jr. is the author of *Jack Kerouac's American Journey* and *Kerouac: His Life and Work*, editor of Empty Phantoms, and coeditor (with Michael K. Dorr) of *Miles on Miles*.

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