



The Emperor of Sound: A Memoir

Timbaland

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The long-anticipated inside look at the extraordinary career of the man who brought Sexy Back, the legendary producer in the pantheon of music greats as influential and groundbreaking as Motown's Berry Gordy and a memoir of the creative process.

Hailed by the *New Yorker* as "the eminence grise behind half of what is great in the Top Forty these days," world-renowned producer Timbaland has been a fixture on the pop charts, with more top-ten hits than Elvis or the Beatles. An artist whose fans are multi-racial and multi-generational, Timbaland works with the hottest artists, from Mariah Carey and Missy Elliott to Justin Timberlake, Nelly Furtado, Madonna, and his childhood friend, Pharrell Williams. Yet this celebrity is a uniquely private man who shuns parties, stays out of gossip columns, and rarely gives interviews. Deliberately choosing to tour by bus and conspicuously bling-free, he maintains a low-key lifestyle. If he's not at the recording studio, he is at home with his family.

In *The Emperor of Sound*, Timbaland offers fans an unprecedented look into his life and work. Completely uncensored and totally honest, he reveals the magic behind the music, sharing the various creative impulses that arise while he's producing, and the layering of sounds that have created dozens of number one hits. Cinematically written, full of revealing anecdotes and reflections from today's most popular music icons, *The Emperor of Sound* showcases this master's artistry and offers an extraordinary glimpse inside this great musical mind.

The Emperor of Sound: A Memoir Details

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From Reader Review The Emperor of Sound: A Memoir for online ebook

Tim says

Timbaland is one of the greatest producers of all-time. His body of work speaks for itself. When I was in the library and saw this book on the shelf it jumped out at me. I wanted to know more of what made him tick, and the story behind how he got to be who he is.

The book starts with his upbringing. His parents didn't have much but they supported his love for music. It was fun seeing him connect with music luminaries like Pharrell and Missy. It was even more interesting (and intense) to find out about his relationship with Jodeci's DeVante Swing. This is where the good stuff in the book lies. There is a connection with this beginning that speaks to you. That tells you that Timbaland still has feelings about that toxic environment.

My main issue with the book is once we get toward Timbaland's successful times we are just breezing through. There is no connection to the work, or what it meant to him. It loses feeling even when he is telling about the bad times. There is nothing to grab onto that feels real. It also glosses over much of his life. I know it is hard to get an entire life into 220 pages but it feels like this book was done for a check and that's it. I can't be mad at him for it. Just glad I got some entertainment from it.

Darren McGill says

While it was interesting to read more about the producing icon who has been so omnipresent in R&B music of the last 20 years, it was not a very revealing or surprising read. The use of a co-writer is a bit heavy handed throughout. The anecdotes throughout his life have a forced sense of inspiration at times. Much of the book focuses on his struggles early in his career while working under DeVante Swing, but at the same time I did not feel I learned anything or gained any revealing insight through this portion of the book. While some major musical accomplishments in his career are briefly touched on, far too many are overlooked. An easy read, but overall fairly disappointing. Maybe I expected too much from a producer I have worshipped for decades now.

Jak Krumholtz says

Enjoyed it but long been a fan. Probably three stars if you're unfamiliar with him. Surprised how his early career unfolded. Also forgot how young Aaliyah had been, would love to see where she would be now.

La'Tonya Rease Miles says

This book was very entertaining. Of course, it helps that Tim worked with two of my all-time favorite artists (Aaliyah and Justin Timberlake) and was inspired by Prince. But I also appreciate hearing his first hand accounts of some of the most popular music made in the late 90s-early 2000s. I expected all of the (platonic) love he has for Missy Elliott, but I was completely unaware of his experience with Davante Swing from

Jodeci. There are at least three chapters devoted to what can only be described as pure trauma and abuse. I was literally gripping the pages! Poor, poor Tim.

On the down side, certain chapters feel rushed, especially at the end.

crystAlex says

This book really resonated with me, but I'm having a hard time explaining why.

It's a very short one. Tim can recall a talk in amazing detail, before making a huge leap, not mentioning a whole bunch of albums, and barely mentioning he became a father.

Somehow still, the entire flow of the book makes sense, and whoever edited this, really did make his voice come through.

What gets me is the humble and grounded undertone in Tim's words throughout the book. You feel his experience, his pain, his background, and backbone, and it's a real joy to read his thoughts on the workings of music. For 200 pages, you're just having a very intimate talk, with a mastermind producer, and just a fellow lover of not just music, but sound in general. Somehow who's success is probably grounded not only in remaining hungry, but in remaining curious.

Thanks for that talk!

Monica Pierce says

I enjoyed DJ Timmy Tim's book. I think it's cool that he's known what he wanted to do pretty much his whole life. I really like his thought at the end of the book with regard to his kid's dreams. Sometimes parents want their children to have practical dreams, so they inadvertently "kill" a dream that doesn't fit that mold. This was a quick read, but it felt a little inspiring as well. Things didn't always go well for Timbaland, especially at the beginning of his career, but he managed to get through the dark and even tragic days to share his musical genius with the world. It was nice to get an insight into his how he makes the decisions to use non-traditional sound effects and beats on his tracks. The myriad of artists he's been able to work with is just crazy. This was a good read.

Daniel says

Timbaland's *The Emperor of Sound: A Memoir* is a time warp through contemporary music, and a book that's hard to put down, even though you'd want to read it slowly to have it keep the inspiration up as long as possible. The mastermind producer captures a good deal of his life-changing moments and lifetime periods, sectioned, concise, without losing track of what was important in his music career.

Intriguing are also a number of inspirational quotes and song lyrics that add to the riches of a great narration. From his childhood days via his teenage days Timbaland takes the reader on a journey to his involvement in the television drama *Empire* and inspires not only lovers of music with a humble, focused, passionate, and grateful approach that shows, after all, how music is just another form of expression, another form of being human. *The Emperor of Sound: A Memoir* becomes therefore the voice of a voice that resonates beyond the dimension of sound - a must read for all musicians and dreamers, but readable joy for the "regular" reader as well.

Marissa says

Started reading, couldn't finish. If you're going to use a co-writer, I'd hope they'd push the subject to dig a little deeper than this.

Naeemah Huggins says

I think I enjoyed this more because I love music and I've loved Timmy's music before I knew there was a Timmy to love. I've read reviews that said it was an inconsistent read and they are right. It jumps around a little and its rushed and incomplete in parts but I felt like I was having a conversation with music's Teddy Bear. If you like underdog stories, rags to riches stories, dreams come true stories then this is for you. If you like stories, this is for you. I felt like a kid sitting at his feet listening to him talk of the olden days, when he met Missy, their instant "sister from another mister" connection. I felt him lose Baby Girl Aaliyah, his 'little sister' to a plane crash, I felt his depression and his weight gain and his doubt when Missy needed to spread her wings and fly elsewhere for new production value. Except for some detail about how Missy really took off with Supa Dupa Fly and what happened with Magoo, he told it all. I found it all fascinating, he brought down the fourth wall to the music we Millenials grew up on: Pony by Ginuwine, Cry Me A River by Justin Timberlake, Jay-Z's Big Pimpin' and Dirt off your Shoulders, Missy's first four albums and a couple songs from the Cook Book, 4 minutes by Madonna, Bubba Sparxx's Dark Days Bright Nights, Aaliyah's Are you that somebody and Try again. I just loved hearing how those beats were born. Most surprising thing I learned: how close Timmy and Missy were to Aaliyah and how affected he was by her sudden passing, oh yeah and that he is responsible for the tv show Empire's growing catalog of hits.

I loved this expose and I love the man behind the music even more. Keep doing the damn thing Timmy. Quincy Jones status is within reach ;)

Adriano Ariganello says

Though there's a lot of retroactive prognostication ("The second I saw *blank*, I know they would be a star"), which I tend to loathe in other biographies, I enjoyed the story of Timbaland's rise to power.

It's refreshing to read a story where no excuses are made for situations he found himself in. He had parents who supported him and, though he lived in a rough neighbourhood, he did what he could to make the best of his situation. Even though trouble found him in the some of the most unfair ways, he never used that as an excuse.

The chapter about Empire is brief and feels more like sales pitch than biography, but everything before it is very engaging.

Natasha says

It was nice to get an inside peek of Timbaland's life leading up to his start in the music industry and

throughout. It was also refreshing of how down to earth he seems. I got to learn how some things come together when making an album and also I wasn't aware of his beginning with DeVante of Jodeci. It seems that everyone in the industry gets a little burned some where along the way. I'll keep my eyes open for lil Miss Reign to make her debut on the scene.

Claudio Arato says

this is one of those books that an iconic public figure writes. It is simply too much of a whitewash to be interesting. His feelings about well known connections to Jay Z, Missy Elliot, Aaliyah and Timberlake dominate the book but other than the Bassment period, the book has no desperation or insights beyond a shell; no soul from a DJ that can bring it. Maybe it's the success, or fear of something else, but this book reveals nothing of the man beyond the corporatespeak top 10 list at the end. Opportunity lost. Hope he reads Keith Richards before putting out Vol2.

Winter Sophia Rose says

Fascinating, Inspiring, Compelling, Refreshing, Eye Opening, Page Turner! A Great Read! I Loved It!

Shahine Ardeshir says

This is easily the best book I have read this year. It's no exaggeration to say I loved every page of it, and was so sorry to see it end so quickly.

What did I love about it? It was quick, to begin with – a series of short chapters, preventing the tone from ever becoming too indulgent, but allowing enough space for Timbaland's story to come to life. It was well-written – Timbaland has story-telling skill, and he holds your attention through a heady combination of honesty, wit and wisdom.

But the reason it was so delicious, above all else, was the constant references to all manners of music. I found myself pausing every few pages to find a song on Apple Music and listen to it, find what he was referring to, and then going back to the book. I learned, for instance, that one of my favourite songs of all time, California Love, sampled two other tunes to build into what it was. Or that the original rendition of 'I Can't Stand the Rain' was by Anne Peebles (I'd only know the Tina Turner version). It's a trove of knowledge, trivia and education, if you love music.

Needless to say, Timbaland has worked with more artists than I realized and he has a lot of interesting stories to relay. But at the heart of it, he's relaying his philosophy, his outlook on life, and that's what stayed with me, page after page, and made me love this book. I'd strongly, strongly recommend a read!

Debbie Colon says

Really enjoyed reading about this talented dude. It was nice reminiscing about all the music he has helped create along side Missy and Aaliyah or as he called her Baby Girl. I'm glad he wrote this because I really love almost all the music he helped create. I kept stopping my reading to get on Spotify and listen to the music he talked about lol I was surprised that he produced OneRepublic's Apologize I love that song. He also produced for Madonna and wrote for Sir Elton John. And all the shit he went through with DeVante while he was a part of Da Basement, heartbreaking! This was a great read I recommend to all music lovers.
