

We Owe You Nothing: The Collected Interviews of Robert Pollard

In the annals of rock and roll, few figures are as enigmatic and prolific as Robert Pollard. The frontman of Guided by Voices, Pollard has released over 100 albums since the band's inception in 1983, and his songs are characterized by their off-kilter melodies, stream-of-consciousness lyrics, and lo-fi production. Pollard is also known for his eccentric personality and his outspoken views on the music industry.



We Owe You Nothing: The Collected Interviews

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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In 2016, Guitar World editor Brad Tolinski sat down with Pollard for a two-hour conversation that became the centerpiece of the book, *We Owe You Nothing: The Collected Interviews of Robert Pollard*. The book collects over 20 years of conversations with Pollard, and it offers a fascinating glimpse into the mind of one of rock's most unique and challenging artists.

In the book's , Tolinski writes that Pollard is "a man of contradictions." He is both a brilliant songwriter and a self-destructive force. He is both a visionary and a crank. But above all, Pollard is a true original.

In the interviews, Pollard discusses his songwriting process, his influences, and his views on the music industry. He also talks about his struggles with mental illness and addiction. Pollard is a complex and often difficult person, but he is also a brilliant and gifted artist. *We Owe You Nothing* is a must-read for any fan of Guided by Voices or for anyone interested in the creative process behind one of rock's most unique and challenging artists.

Early Life and Influences

Robert Pollard was born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1957. He grew up in a musical household, and he began playing guitar at a young age. Pollard was influenced by a wide range of music, including the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the Velvet Underground. He also developed a love for outsider music, such as the work of Captain Beefheart and Roky Erickson.

Pollard formed his first band, Guided by Voices, in 1983. The band's early sound was influenced by Pollard's love of lo-fi and garage rock. Guided by Voices released their first album, *Devil Between My Toes*, in 1987. The album was a critical and commercial failure, but it helped to establish Pollard as a cult figure.

The Rise of Guided by Voices

In the 1990s, Guided by Voices began to gain a wider following. The band released a string of critically acclaimed albums, including *Bee Thousand* (1994), *Alien Lanes* (1995), and *Mag Earwhig!* (1996). Guided by Voices

also toured extensively, and they became known for their energetic live shows.

Pollard's songwriting became increasingly complex and ambitious during this period. He began to experiment with different genres, and he wrote songs that were both catchy and challenging. Pollard also became more outspoken in his lyrics, and he often wrote about his struggles with mental illness and addiction.

The Decline of Guided by Voices

In the late 1990s, Guided by Voices began to decline. The band's sound became more polished, and Pollard's songwriting became less adventurous. Guided by Voices also lost some of their key members, including guitarist Tobin Sprout and drummer Kevin Fennell.

Pollard continued to release albums with Guided by Voices, but the band never regained the popularity they had enjoyed in the 1990s. Pollard also began to struggle with his mental health, and he was hospitalized several times.

The Solo Years

In 2004, Pollard left Guided by Voices and began a solo career. He has released over 20 solo albums, and he has also collaborated with a wide range of artists, including Teenage Fanclub, the Flaming Lips, and Spoon.

Pollard's solo work is often more experimental than his work with Guided by Voices. He has released albums that range from folk to electronic to psychedelic rock. Pollard has also continued to write challenging and thought-provoking lyrics.

Legacy

Robert Pollard is one of the most prolific and challenging artists in rock and roll. His songs are characterized by their off-kilter melodies, stream-of-consciousness lyrics, and lo-fi production. Pollard is also known for his eccentric personality and his outspoken views on the music industry.

Pollard's work has influenced a generation of musicians, and he is considered one of the most important figures in indie rock. He has been praised by critics for his originality, his creativity, and his willingness to take risks.

Pollard is a true original, and his work will continue to be enjoyed by fans for years to come.

Interviews

The following is a selection of interviews with Robert Pollard that are included in the book *We Owe You Nothing*.

1994: Guitar World

In this interview, Pollard discusses his songwriting process, his influences, and his views on the music industry. He also talks about his struggles with mental illness and addiction.

1996: Magnet

In this interview, Pollard discusses the recording of Guided by Voices' album *Mag Earwhig!* He also talks about his relationship with his bandmates and his plans for the future.

2004: Pitchfork

In this interview, Pollard discusses his decision to leave Guided by Voices and begin a solo career. He also talks about his plans for the future and his hopes for his solo work.

2016: Guitar World

In this interview, Pollard discusses his career and his legacy. He also talks about his songwriting process and his influences. Pollard also gives his thoughts on the current state of the music industry.

Robert Pollard is a true original. He is a brilliant songwriter, a gifted artist, and a complex and often difficult person. *We Owe You Nothing* is a fascinating glimpse into the mind of one of rock's most unique and challenging artists.



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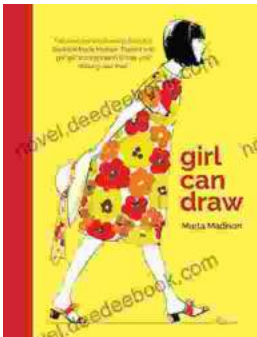
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