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### **The Kinks - Een oer-English Band, Dick van Veelen**

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A biography about The Kinks, didn't we already have one? Yes and no. There are dozens of different biographies written about this band, many in English and many that look suspiciously alike. However, this recently published biography written by Dick van Veelen is a particularly good detailed Dutch-language addition to the existing repertoire.

First of all, the book itself: a hefty hardback copy weighing almost nine hundred grams, 271 pages of nice smooth paper with hard covers, plenty of black-and-white and colour photos and a pleasantly readable font.

Before you can start the real reading, the foreword by Mart Smeets is a real treat. As a true Kinks fan he leads you into the sixties with humour, memories and a hint of nostalgia. This is followed by the author's introduction and justification; a part of a book that is easily skipped because the reader actually wants to start reading. Yet in this case, I advise you to save the best for later and read it anyway. Because together with the foreword by Mart Smeets, they create an atmosphere in which you will spend the next few days.

The order of the biography of The Kinks is divided in the years that they were with one of their three record companies, Pye, RCA and Arista, very logical. The rest of the book is dedicated to the last decade 1986 to 1996 and a complete Dutch discography of singles and albums, hit records of the originals and covers and finally the fan meetings in the Netherlands.

The biography is written in a fluent and easy-to-read way. Within the chapters, the author gives himself the freedom to go off the beaten track, which is a nice touch. Just like in a music documentary, other artists are interviewed in between, a certain situation is explained or we read a piece from an interview; it gives air to the sometimes very detailed information.

The Kinks have never been a boring band, if only because of the eternally bickering Davies brothers. And of course not to forget the management that was not allowed to have the name, the ego-tripping producers and certainly the record companies that sometimes excelled in incompetence. Like Decca, who after having dismissed The Beatles did the same to The Kinks. In fact, all bands suffered from these problems (and often still do, unfortunately).

Dick van Veelen's writing is exceptionally smooth. He takes you on a journey. Whether you are young and have just discovered this music or you are older or of a different generation and think you know everything. I won't go into the content here, discover it yourself, that's much more fun, I promise.

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