



People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm

Shawn Taylor

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One of the finest hip-hop albums ever made, A Tribe Called Quest's debut record (featuring stone-cold classics like "Can I Kick It?" and "Bonita Applebum") took the idea of the boasting hip-hop male and turned it on its head. For many listeners, when this non-traditional, surprisingly feminine album was released, it was like hearing an entirely new form of music.

In this book, Shawn Taylor explores the creation of the album as well as the impact it had on him at the time - a 17-year-old high-school geek who was equally into hip-hop, punk, new wave, skateboarding, and Dungeons & Dragons: all of a sudden, with this one album, the world made more sense. He has spent many years investigating this album, from the packaging to the song placement to each and every sample - Shawn Taylor knows this record like he knows his tattoos, and he's finally been able to write a fascinating and highly entertaining book about it.

People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm Details

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Author : Shawn Taylor

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From Reader Review People's Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm for online ebook

Matt Rabski says

This is exactly what I wanted about this series. It is mostly a personal recounting of Shawn Taylor's personal experience of the album and does just a bit of subjective review of the album. It's the passion and the way he writes about this album that makes me really enjoy this book. This is so well done that I feel it has made a significant way to how I enjoy music with Taylor's perspective on music in general.

Larry Gates says

Terrible. I look to this series for insight on how classic albums were made. Instead, Shawn Taylor spends nearly the entirety of the book reminiscing about the first time he heard it. He then attempts to contact the band (without success) and in the end manages to conduct an AIM "interview" with engineer Bob Power. For a sample-based, ground-breaking debut album there's very little useful information here. A true failure on Taylors part.

Justin says

Amongst the better of the 33 1/3 books. It's pretty similar to Colin Meloy's take on Let It Be - full of personal history, but not annoyingly so.

Robert says

Amazing. Shawn Taylor gives this album justice. Not only do us readers get a track by track analysis but Taylor goes around New York asking for the opinion of other people on this genre defining album, thus giving the book a fun edge.

Sheehan says

Having read a few of the very divergent reviews on Goodreads before diving in to the text, I was a bit nervous, people seemed to love or disrespect the book.

I can cosign the criticisms of the book as not really similar to others in the 33 1/3 series, with the deep dive into the production, origins and process of the album featured. This volume is much more a memoir of the the author's experiential context of the album in his life and a distinct historical period.

Lucky for the reader, Shawn Taylor, identifies an interesting angle for examining the album, juxtaposing his youthful documented sentiments of the album when it came out, against his fresh ears reflections 17 years

later as an adult. Utilizing the same "trials" methodology for both, the reader is treated to reflections on, not just the album, but how it plays for a listener over time.

I generally had similar feelings as the author when it came out. Given our mirrored demographic/age, I felt very much at home with the author's insights and impressed with his reflections of it as a mid-life adult.

This book is geared towards a self-selecting audience, and given the reader is interested in more than just the practical/logistical aspects of the album this volume stands up in an albeit different way to its other "33 1/3 series" volume peers.

Mike says

Another of those addictive 33.3 books. What's really interesting is how the author makes it a point to compare and contrast how his opinions about the album have evolved alongside his own personal evolution. And, yes, it did make me go back and re-evaluate the album. Even the author concedes this is not Tribe's best album, but certainly one worth the time and consideration.

Nathan says

This is probably one of the better books in the series, at least in the last few that I've read. It's got personality, especially in the beginning, and the use of listening trials is something real music geeks do, and if they don't, they now have a new way to spend their listening time.

Lisamarie says

I think this guy must have coined the term "wino frogger," which is what he used to have to play every day on his way home from school. I am really enjoying this -- other ones from the series have been a little "behind the music" but this one's different.

Brian says

More memoir than review, but enjoyable nonetheless. Made me appreciate how different ATCQ was from everyone else in hip hop--even the rest of the native Tongues family.

Marcell Leath says

One of my personal favorites of the 33 1/3 series really only because Shawn Taylor shows us the world the ATCQ posits. I also like the brief moment that he writes on the context with which ATCQ's music exists within the constantly changing world of Hip hop. For some of my age Tribe seems to blossom seemingly out of nowhere in the nineties along with the Native Tongues Posse but Taylor shows that hip hop's afrocentric

idea has been coming in and out of focus for some time before tribe started.

Bill Fuller says

I liked the idea of this book, but the execution was off. Taylor is very self-involved, which is fine in this case because he is able to astutely write about how he feels and how things affect him. So, we get a lot of insight into Taylor, but not much into A Tribe Called Quest. Also, there is an interview at the end of the book with the engineer of the album that is particularly useless. Overall, some interesting observations that would probably be better used in a fiction book.

Ian says

Love the album, semi on the book. When author, Taylor talks about his personal history and how that informed how much the album appealed to him when he was introduced to it, he was on pretty strong ground. But his analysis of the music came off as mostly pretty amateur and facile even the second time around as an adult (he shares his journals from when he first played the album as a teenager in the book). I just watched the movie, Fruitvale Station this weekend so the part near the end of the book where he shares his love of the album with a group of young MC's ciphering in a BART station and tells the tale of their encounter with a transit cop was extra poignant.

Jeff says

Loved this. A nice balance of cultural history, hip-hop theory, and personal experiences. The chapter where he replicates his "third trial" as an adult is deeply moving, too. And, of course, it made me want to listen to the album again.

Adam says

Nice concept, but the writing could be better.

Doug says

Interesting and fun to read in parts, made me listen to a few of the cuts again, but it was too much about one person's interpretation of the music, and really more about their EXPERIENCE rather than review. Maybe that's the point, I dunno....
