



Beatles

Lars Saabye Christensen

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Beatles er en munter og vemodig roman om fire Beatles-frelste Oslo gutter av årgang 1951, fra de som syvendeklassinger står på spranget inn i voksenverdenen - "Vi tok framtida på forskudd, og den så sabla bra ut" - til 25. september 1972. Ingen går tørskodd når dønningene fra ungdomsopprøret ute i Europa skyller inn over dem og deres beskyttende tilværelse. Aftenleserne har talt: Ingen etterkrigsroman beskriver Oslo bedre enn Lars Saabye Christensens oppvekstskildring fra Frogner.

Beatles Details

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Author : Lars Saabye Christensen

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From Reader Review Beatles for online ebook

Roxana Tru?a says

I never wanted it to end. My heart still aches after reading the ending. Such a good book! Especially for someone who loves music and cares for friendship.

Julia Langnes says

Tror dette blir min første anmeldelse på Norsk, beklager for de som finner skrivefeilene. Denne boka her er helt utrolig, en skikkelig generasjonsroman. Dette har alltid vært favoritt boka til faren min, så jeg visste ikke helt hva jeg skulle forvente, men jeg skjønner det. Boka er fullstendig legendarisk. Skrivingen er fabelaktig, det er så grafisk og spesielt. Ganske likt som Ambjørnsen, men Christensen bruker mer tid på karakterskildringene, spesielt når det gjelder Kim. De blir virkelig levende, med hans sofistikerte skrift. Men det som virkelig er unikt er melankolien som følger deg gjennom hele boka. I begynnelsen er det bare i enkelte situasjoner, så er det ikke før slutten at man forstår at dette har vært der hele boka. Det blir skikkelig mørkt altså, men får en reel dybde. Det gjør også boka mer relevant, kontra bare ett humoristisk tulle historie. Var spesielt fint å få ett innblikk i måten foreldrene våres vokste opp på. Hadde vært interessant og se hvordan folk fra andre kulturer har reagert til boka. Anbefaler boka til alle, spesielt siden den lærer deg nye ord som "snerk"

???????? ?????????? says

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Filipe says

I remember seeing this book in my home since 2005, which the date of release of the portuguese translation. I've just decided to read it this summer, in late June, at the breaks of some study for the university exams. Sometimes, it was hard to stop reading to sleep a bit, and sometimes, without noticing it, it was already 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning. Now about the book, it was great, and one of the best things I have ever read in my life. A good and very well told story, moving in some parts, dramatic and romantic, hipster and almost 'beat' in many parts of the text, together with full detail of its time, the sixties, the Vietnam War, the cultural revolution, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, May 68 in France. And of course, music: The Beatles, The Stones, The Doors, The Animals, bands that I also love.

I loved reading it, and possibly some years from now, I will need to read it again, and try to feel once again the pleasure I have got in this last days. This has to be 5 stars :)

João Carlos says

Fotograma do filme "**Beatles**" realizado por Peter Flinth baseado no livro de **Lars Saabye Christensen**

“Beatles” – 1º livro de uma trilogia - de **Lars Saabye Christensen** (n. 1953) é a história do narrador Kim Karlsen e dos seus amigos Gunnar, Ola e Seb. Quatro adolescentes que crescem em Oslo no período em que Beatlemania invadiu a Europa e a Noruega e que adoptam os nomes dos quatro músicos – Paul, John, George e Ringo.

A narrativa inicia-se na Primavera de 1965 e termina no Verão/Outono de 1972, e cada capítulo tem o título de uma canção dos Beatles - mas o livro não é sobre os Beatles.

A acção de **“Beatles”** centra-se na história de quatro adolescentes e aborda de uma forma magistral o conflito de gerações entre pais e filhos, o activismo político dos vários quadrantes ideológicos e estratos sociais, os malefícios do álcool e da droga, dos colapsos nervosos e existenciais, mas onde o companheirismo e a verdadeira amizade permanecem imutáveis ao longo dos tempos.

E tal como os verdadeiros Beatles os quatro jovens têm que encarar e trilhar vidas separadas, na procura da sua identidade, superando as crises existenciais próprias da adolescência, os desafios permanentes dos novos relacionamento e de um futuro profissional cheio de incertezas e indefinições.

Lars Saabye Christensen escreve de uma forma simples e fluída, mas brilhante na descrição de uma época e na criação de personagens inesquecíveis, com destaque para a interligação narrativa entre a acção e as músicas dos Beatles, criando um livro cheio de humor numa linguagem intemporal.

No final a amizade perdura para a vida...

Lars Saabye Christensen (n. 1953)

Joanna says

Wci?gaj?ca, cho? nie fabu??, (ale i ta dla lubi?cych powie?ci obyczajowe jest do docenienia). Wci?ga klimat lat 60/70, wci?ga Skandynawia, przyci?ga g?wny bohater, którego nie sposób nie lubi?. Po?kn??am dos?ownie w 3 (d?ugie) wieczory i ma?o mi...

Calzean says

Four boys growing up in Oslo from 1965 to 1972. They collect Beatles records first in awe of their brilliance then slowly more critical as their tastes and preference in music widen.

The narrator is Kim. He is quick with a quip and tells too many liars. He is a drifter and is not all that stable. His friends include a stutterer, a spiritualist and a protector. They play soccer and gradually find girlfriends. They smoke a bit which for some of them turn into hard drugs, they drink a lot. All come from a family of working class men.

The backdrop is the music scene, long hair, Vietnam War, street protests, street gangs, and a feeling of drifting. There is a strange bank robbery at Kim's father's bank, the death of a friend, abortion, and a lot of other storylines which could be read as metaphors and caricatures of the time.

At the end of the book Kim has a nervous breakdown and escapes to find his on and off first girlfriend Nina. It is a book that resonates of the revolutionary times.

Just? says

KNYGA. PATIKO. LABAI.

Kur? laik? negal?siu aprašyti šitos knygos. Gal kada nors v?liau. Susigul?jus viskam.

Gal dar ir ne visai susigul?jo, bet aprašysiu.

Su šia knyga keliavau laiku. Atgal ? paauglyst? 7 met? laikotarpiui. Tiesa, paauglyst? ne mano laik?, veikiau - mano t?v? kartos, bet d?l to buvo tik ?domiau. Susipažinai su keturiais bi?ais - Kimu, Sebu, ?la ir Gunaru. Kartu klausiausi Bitl?, dalyvavau j? žygiuose, s?d?jau mokyklos suole, svajojau apie meil? ir ateit?.

Išgyvenau kartu tas svarbias akimirkas, kupinas atradim?, ir praradim?, smagi? ir tragišk? brendimo pamok?. Tiesiog buvau kartu. Nes jie tokie gyvi ir tikri. Tikresni už kai kuriuos paž?stamus žmones. Va ?ia ir prasideda pagyros rašytojui. Tobulas charakteri? atskleidimas. Kažkuriamo Review parašyta, kad knyga rekomenduojama Hamsuno gerb?jams. Ir turiu pripažinti, kad tie, kurie m?gsta Hamsuno veik?jus - prieštaringo charakterio, klajoklius, "susiklusias" asmenybes, ?ia ras kažk? panašaus. Žmones - su savais privalumais ir tr?kumais, su pas?mone, prasiveržian?ia netik??iausiais poelgiais. Nat?ralu, kad tokie veik?jai paperka nuoširdumu, tampa labai artimi. D?l j? pergyveni ir džiaugiesi. Taigi, dešimt bal? už veik?jus. Tieki pat ir už geb?jim? atspind?ti to meto aktualijas, istorines aplinkybes. O man asmeniškai buvo labai ?dom?visokie "norvegizmai", smulkios detal?s, kurios nepaž?stant šalies gali praspr?sti pro akis, gali b?ti netgi ne?domios ar nesuprantamos, bet man jos - itin svarbios, padeda geriau pažinti aplink?, kurioje gyvenu. Bet tai tik smulkmenos, svarbiausia knygoje visai kas kita.

Lenkiu galv? prieš Lars Saabye Christensen, kuris neabejotinai turi pasakojimo talent?, skaitai ir m?gaujiesi

kiekvieni sakiniu, subtiliu humoru, gyva šnekam?ja kalba ir nori, kad tie 700 puslapi? niekada nesibaigt?.

Rafal says

Rewelacja. Zaczynam by? wielbicielem nie tylko pisarzy norweskich ale w ogóle norweskiej literatury. Knausgaard, Hamsun i teraz Christensen.

Lubi? ksi??ki, po zako?czeniu których wzrok zawisa na suficie i cz?owiek zaczyna si? zastanawia?.

W tym wypadku, po wielu stronach doskona?ej opowie?ci o dojrzewaniu, alkoholu, narkotykach,

m?odzie?czych pragnieniach, przyja?ni... nagle wszystko zako?czy?o si? jakim? skokiem w przepa??.

Zaniepokoi?o mnie to. Przez moment by?em nawet lekko zawiedziony - samym zako?czeniem w?a?nie.

A potem doszed?em do wniosku, ?e ta ksi??ka nie mog?a sko?czy? si? inaczej. ?e wszystkie ?cie?ki

prowadzi?y w?a?nie do takiego p?otwartego zako?czenia; ?e sygna?ów zapowiadaj?cych to zako?czenie a

nie jakie? inne - by?o wiele. Tylko ?e wcze?niej, czytaj?c, uwa?a?em je tylko za zabiegi stylistyczne.

Okaza?o si?, ?e one po prostu ilustrowa?y stan ducha i umys?u g?wnego bohatera. Bardzo fajne.

Bardzo fajny by? te? zabieg z potraktowaniem muzyki. Pomijaj?c fakt, ?e prawie wszystkie piosenki zna?em i lubi?em, to przyjemnie by?o sobie je przypomnie? i s?ucha? wraz z kolejnymi rozdzia?ami. Ta swoista multimedialno?? to kolejna zaleta tej ksi??ki. Dobra, gruba ksi??ka.

Jenny says

A wonderfully written coming of age story that I highly recommend to anyone. I would have given it five stars, but the I found the ending a bit off-putting.

metaphor says

And although I don't think about it, the reel behind my eyes stops at a particular frame, I hold it for a few seconds, freeze it, then let it roll, for I am all-powerful. I give it voices, sound, smell and light.

*

[...] time lay over us like a huge lid and we were a pot that had to explode at any minute.

*

Then we headed home. Talking about all the things we were going to do. [...] About summer, even though winter had barely begun. About all the summers of our lives. [...] We became effusive and beautiful birds flew out of our mouths. We had a sneak preview of the future and it looked damn good.

*

[...] it pained me, like water where there were no fish. And no waves and no wind.

Manny says

You know it ain't easy

What is this book about? I can see why most of the reviewers are having trouble. It's got laugh-out-loud

slapstick, heartbreaking tragedy, unforgettable characters, ridiculous stereotypes, breathtaking lyricism, flat ultrarealist prose... you see the problem. But one thing's clear. There's a whole lot about the Beatles.

So let me introduce to you

Kim Karlsen is 11 when *Love me do* comes out. He and his three friends are immediate converts, and identify with John, Paul, George and Ringo. (He's Paul). They see the world through Beatles-shaped glasses. The novel traces their varying fortunes from 1965 to 1972.

Norwegian wood

Like Jan Kjærstad, who's clearly paying homage to Christensen at times, the book is both quintessentially Norwegian and completely universal. Kim is Everyman - to be exact, Everyfuckedupteen - but he also happens to be an Everyman who lives in a specific part of Oslo and assumes you have an intimate knowledge of its geography, history and social structure. You know it makes sense. I mean, look at Dante, right?

Living is easy with eyes closed

Did I say fucked up? I had forgotten quite how fucked up people were in the 60s. So unbelievably blind to what was going on around them, to the most obvious and elementary facts of life. But, at the same time, occasionally so in touch with the most profound things.

Carrying pictures of Chairman Mao

The left-wing politics. Comrades, I warn you that this part is toe-curlingly embarrassing, but he just delivers it with a straight face. You actually can't tell whether he's being ironic or not. An impressive piece of historical reconstruction.

Man, you've been a naughty girl

Love makes you stupid. Kim's in love with both Nina and Cecilie and he can't decide between them. I guess that makes him twice as stupid as most people? Or maybe he's just more upfront about it.

Very strange

There's magical realism too.

All the lonely people

Life is hard. Terrible things happen all the time, when we least expect them. The book is full of helpless, lost people: Dragen, Fred, Uncle Hubert, Jørgen, Kim himself. If you like Hamsun, Christensen is surely his greatest and most faithful disciple.

These are words that go together well

He has a wonderful feeling for the poetry of everyday language. It's like the Beatles (duh) or Huck Finn.

Yeah, yeah, yeah

I know, I say this too often, but the book is untranslatable. Looking at the other reviews, nearly all the Norwegians love it and nearly all the foreigners wonder what the fuss is about. Turning it around, would you expect *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* to be any good in Norwegian? But if you have even a passing acquaintance with the language (my own Norwegian isn't great), consider putting it on your list.

????? ???? says

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Sr?an Tomi? says

[they never listen to Let It Be and he sells all his Beatles records at the end... I mean, I understand why he had to sell them, but it just annoys me (hide spoiler)]

Eff says

I must admit, that I've borrowed this from the library just because of the title. But even if it was about "Beatles" it wasn't about them at all...and that was surprisingly the best thing about it. Bittersweet norwegian story from amazing era which went together with amazing music. You start to read it yesterday and then you suddenly realise it's tomorrow. Need a sixth star for this. Howgh

Gabriel?M says

Pra?jusio amžiaus 6-ojo dešimtme?io Norvegija, Oslas. 4 geriausi draugai - Kimas, Sebas, ?la, Gunaras - paaugliai, pasigardžiuodami geria ? save visk?: futbolo treniruotes ir rungtyni? išvykas, t?v? priekaištus už per ilgus plaukus, pirm?sias patirtis su merginomis, cigare?i? d?mus ir al?, bet svarbiausia - Bitl? muzik?. Kiekvienas skyrius prasideda šios grup?s dainos pavadinimais. B?tent sukamos plokštel?s drebina vaikin? pasaul??. Šie svajoja ?kurti savo grup? ir kelti sumaišt? taip, kaip daro Bitlai.

Iš tikr?j?, smalsu skaityti apie tuometin? paaugli? gyvenim? Norvegijoje, pažinti ne tik personažus, bet ir j? kult?r??. Nors at?mus skandinaviškus ypatumus ir laikmet?, supranti, kad paaugliai visur ir visada yra pana?šs.

Autorius stipriai papluš?jo ties veik?j? charakteriais - b?gant metams knygoje, šie tampa vis ryškesni, skirtingesni ir mylimesni. Kiekvienas BUM ir jauti, kaip jie vis ar?iau suaugusi?j? pasaulio. Jie tampa dalim tav?s, kažkur t?no ir su kiekvienu puslapiu tu vis labiau nenori su jais skirtis. J? nes?kmes ir nusivylimus pri?mi kaip savo. Dažnai signalizuojant pavojui mintyse r?ki: "nu k? tu, vaike, darai, ne ne NE!" ir tada s?di užsi?mus už galvos, nes post factum. Skaitai toliau, nes kitaip jau nebeišeina. O primena tave pa?i?, nors atrodo ir nebuval tokia maištinga paaugl?. :) Bet lygiai taip pat klydai, nes negimei žinodama visus teisingus sprendimus.

Pats geriausias dalykas knygoje - ta nenutraukiamą draugystę. Tokia, kurios pavydi kiekvienas. Stipri, kartais net nuožmi, bet visada tikra. Ir niekada nepasitraukianti.
„Bitlai” - 7 metus trukusi 4 paauglių mini evoliucija, kupina atradimą, praradimą, paklydimą ir išlikimo. Rekomenduoju!

Kalina says

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Nina says

En av de beste bokene jeg har lest. Jeg likte at denne boka innholder bare ikke Kim's eventyrene, men også de andre problemer av de '60 årene, som kapitalismen og innflytelsen av kommunismen over det norske samfunnet. Eskapadene til de fire vennene (Kim, Seb, Gunnar og Ola) var veldig interessante og de holdte leseren i spenning. Jeg synes denne boka inneholder mange temaer, inkludert kjærlighet, krigen, musikk, vennskap og så videre. Hvis jeg bør si hva gripet meg, det var kraftigheten til vennskap og kjærlighet. Etter min mening, den er definitivt en anbefaling for alle mennesker.

Lorenzo Berardi says

Reading 'Beatles' was another long walk I took down Memory Lane.
Bless Lars Saabye Christensen for setting another novel in that specific area of Oslo I remember so fondly!

The English edition I owe boasts that 'Beatles' is 'The International Bestseller' and in fact this is the book that made Mr Christensen famous in Norway and abroad.

Not to mention that a few months ago I spotted a hoodie eagerly leafing through this same book at a bus stop in the sleepy English town of Hereford (just don't ask me how I ended up there!). Actually this single readerspotting would be enough to confirm that 'Beatles' did indeed become a bestseller. I guess the title helped, though.

Published in 1984, when its author was only 33, this novel has been translated into 16 languages, sold hundreds of thousands of copies and - surprise surprise! - is going to become a major Norwegian movie that will have its premiere on February 2014. Apparently the chief reason why it took so long to bring 'Beatles' onto the big screen is that the prerequisite to have the movie made was to ensure that the Fab Four songs would have been in it. And it took ages (and money) to get that.

Putting its International Bestseller reputation aside, as I wrote above, 'Beatles' is one of those books having a very personal meaning to me.

Just like it happened with 'The Half Brother' - the first novel by Christensen that I read - most of the action here is set in a two mile radius from Majorstua, one of the main intersections in West Oslo. Call me weird, but spotting toponyms such as Blindern, Bygdøy Allé, Solli Plass, Slemdalsveien, Chateau Neuf and Uranienborg Park made me actually happier than the countless references to The Beatles themselves.

With a plot taking place between 1965 and 1972 and with every chapter titled after a Beatles' song (plus a couple of McCartney and Lennon solo career singles), Christensen wrote a wistful and clever novel.

The four protagonists - Kim, Gunnar, Seb and Ola - idolize the Fab Four to the point they identify themselves with them thus becoming Paul, John, George and Ringo.

Even though their own dream of making a band called The Snafus is perpetually postponed due to the lack of music instruments, the four Oslo kids grow up listening in almost religious awe to each and every Beatles LP and EP. As it happens, their tastes in music do evolve over the course of the years leading them to 'discover' Bob Dylan, The Doors, The Mothers of Invention, and the blues. But the Beatles stay untouchable and every rumour implying that the Fab Four are on their way to split up is returned to sender by the boys in disbelief.

Aged only 14 at the beginning of the novel, Kim, Gunnar, Seb and Ola are 21 at its end. As you might wonder, not only their favourite records have changed but also their passions and interests switching from football, skiing and fishing to girls, alcohol, drugs and politics. That's why topics such as the Vietnam War, marijuana planting, the involvement in the ranks of the Young Socialists and the Norwegian European Communities membership referendum in 1972 take the floor.

Gradually what had begun as the story of four easy and semi-idyllic childhoods turn into a gloomy and disillusioned tale with the odd funny moment. One by one all of the four boys fail at some stage of their young lives. Some of them fall deep into an abyss of either drug addiction, alcoholic stupour or nervous breakdown but somehow manage to come up for air, at least for a while. Just like The Beatles themselves, if you like.

And it's with this bleak atmosphere that the novel ends up.

I know that Christensen wrote two sequels but it looks like they have not yet been translated into English. All in all I'm not entirely sure I'd like to read the sequels. On the one hand I prefer to leave Kim, Gunnar, Seb and Ola where they are, at the young age of 21. On the other hand I remember too well the disappointment I felt when reading 'The Closed Circle' by Jonathan Coe whose excellent 'The Rotters' Club' bears many a similitude with 'Beatles' (four teenagers, the 1960s turning into the 1970s, music, politics, petting).

If these translations see the light, I hope that a better translator than Don Bartlett will be given the job. Nothing personal, Don, but it's the second time that your work doesn't convince me at all after what you did to 'Child Wonder' by Roy Jacobsen.

Tacky mistakes aside (in the English edition Kim comes back to Iceland and tells his crosswords maniac dad he was in a 'cold place, six letters' as the seven lettered 'Iceland' is spelled 'Island' - six letters - in Norwegian), Mr Bartlett here seems to enjoy leaving the reader in the dark. The examples of this sadistic pleasure of the translator are countless, but I will mention a couple which give you a general idea of what I mean.

Page 503. The years is 1972. Kim gets a university loan. Don meekly translates: 'Four Ibsens and the basic grant'. Any idea of what that means? You need to Google 'Ibsen banknote 1970' to find out. Which is four 1,000 Norwegian crowns (kroner) banknotes with the face of Henrik Ibsen on them.

Page 493. Kim is in Iceland visiting a former girlfriend of his. First-person narrative. All in a sudden in the

middle of a dialogue, Don switches to the third-person narrative ('she told him').

And then there is the issue with Norwegian addresses and cultural references. To translate them or not to translate them? - Mr Bartlett might have pondered. The problem is that he didn't make his mind up. So it happens that the magazine 'Nå' ('Now') and the newspaper 'Aftenposten' ('The Evening Post') keep their Norwegian names while the leftist newspaper 'Klassekampen' becomes 'Class Conflict' and the public television NRK becomes the 'Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation'. I wonder why.

Another problem comes up with the translation of nouns. Now Norwegian (both Bokmål and Nynorsk) adds up suffixes so that, say, 'Storting' (the National Parliament) becomes 'det Stortinget'. But the name of the Parliament is Storting and not Storting-et. Now, go and tell this to Don Bartlett for whom it's 'the Stortinget'.

I am sorry, I am really sorry to spoil my review by taking the piss out of the translator but I believe that 'Beatles' would have deserved a better treatment.

Teresa says

Wavering between **3.5** and **4** ...

Notice the absence of the *The* in the title: there are The Beatles and then there are Gunnar, Kim, Seb and Ola -- four good-hearted, The Beatles-loving teenagers growing up in Oslo in the mid-60s. But what might seem like a mischievous comic romp of a novel turns deadly serious as politics, police brutality and drugs become a part of the boys' lives into the very early 70s.

I loved the concept and greatly enjoyed the Oslo setting (as I'd recently been there); but what bothered me, along with a couple of pet peeves near the end, was the length. For what it is -- a coming-of-age story -- it's kind of long and somewhat repetitive. (Such wordiness being the only issue I remember having with LSC's *The Half Brother*.)

Remember in *Middlesex* (a novel I loved) when Cal flees to San Francisco and you think: *What? Why have we left Detroit? Isn't it about time to wrap up this book?* Well, that's what it feels like when three of the lads hitchhike to Paris to rescue George, excuse me, Seb. When Kim (Paul) uses his study loan to impulsively buy a flight to Iceland, I felt like I did watching the movie *Titanic* when Rose jumped out of the lifeboat and I screamed to myself: *Wait. What? This movie's not almost over!??* ... Never mind, it isn't nearly as bad as that.

LSC is a good writer and, especially in the beginning, I loved the insights of his narrator, Kim. A parallel between Munch's *The Scream* (the one in Oslo's National Gallery) and a photograph from Vietnam that Kim recalls while viewing the painting is impressive, even more so as it continues as an extended metaphor. LSC plots well, drawing you into wondering why Kim is in the family summer house in autumn and what in the world happened to him to get him there. When you find out, it feels right.
