

## Mick Wall

Mick Wall is one of the world's best-known rock writers and broadcasters. Founding editor-in-chief of **Classic Rock**, founding father of **Kerrang!**, his work has also appeared in **The Times**, **Mojo**, **Rolling Stone** and numerous newspapers and magazines around the world. He has also presented and produced his own programmes for TV and radio: his documentary, **When Albums Ruled The World**, which he wrote and appeared in, was the most-watched music programme on BBC4 in 2014.

He has also worked as a high-profile PR, artist manager and record company executive.

Author of several internationally best-selling biographies, such as Led Zeppelin, **When Giants Walked The Earth**, which the **Sunday Times** named music book of year; The Doors, **Love Becomes A Funeral Pyre**, "the definitive work on the subject" according to the **Washington Post**, and last year's raucous comic memoir, **Getcha Rocks Off**, "the funniest music book you'll read all year", said **Mojo**, his current book is a biography of Motörhead frontman Lemmy, who Wall had been close friends with for 35 years prior to his tragic recent death.



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## Publications

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### Non-Fiction

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Publication Details	Notes
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**FOO FIGHTERS:  
LEARNING TO FLY**

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2015  
Orion

Everyone from Sir Paul McCartney and Jimmy Page to Queens of the Stone Age now relishes the chance to share a stage with Dave Grohl and his legendary Foo Fighters. The question is: why? Musical depth? Not really. Major success? Well, yes. Despite no longer shifting albums in the same quantity as they did twenty years ago, this band can still fill stadiums the world over (when Dave's not breaking his leg, of course). Long before Kurt Cobain blew his brains out in 1994, Dave Grohl was planning for a life after Nirvana. The unflinching bright sunlight to Cobain's permanent midnight darkness, Grohl had come from a similar broken home to his erstwhile band leader, but came out of the experience differently - brimming with positivity and a shrewd grasp of opportunities in the music industry. Did Grohl merely take the sonic blueprint of Nirvana and embellish it with a more life-affirming pop sheen? Of course he did. Every band in America that sold over a million records in the post-grunge 90s did the same. The difference was that Grohl had real credibility. And he knew it. With exclusive testimony from true insiders (including Krist Novoselic, Grohl's bass-playing partner in Nirvana, ex-girlfriends, record company executives, tour photographers and confidantes), this book is an exploration of the real story behind Grohl and the Foo Fighters - the only serious literary biography of the group and its leader, one of the most famous and critically bulletproof rock figures of the 21st century.

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**Lemmy: The  
Definitive Biography**

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2016  
Orion

Brutally frank, painfully funny, wincingly sad, and always beautifully told, LEMMY: THE DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY is the story of the only rock'n'roller never to sell his soul for silver and gold, while keeping the devil, as he put it, 'very close to my side'. From school days growing up in North Wales, to first finding fame in the mid-60s with the Rockin' Vicars ('We were very big up north, I had a Zephyr 6'); from being Jimi Hendrix's personal roadie ('I would score acid for him'), to leading Hawkwind to the top of the charts in 1972 with 'Silver Machine' ('I was fired for taking the wrong drugs'); from forming Motörhead ('I wanted to call the band Bastard but my manager wouldn't let me'), whose iconoclastic album NO SLEEP 'TIL HAMMERSMITH entered the UK charts at No. 1 - and its title into the lexicon of hip-speak. Based on Mick's original interviews with Lemmy conducted over numerous years, along with the insights of those who knew him best - former band mates, friends, managers, fellow artists and record business insiders - this is an unputdownable story of one of Britain's greatest characters.

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**GETCHA ROCKS  
OFF**

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2015  
Orion

Hanging out with rock stars, trying to steal their chicks, or throwing up over their guitars after launching into the hospitality a little too enthusiastically, Mick Wall spent much of the 1980s sprawled in limos and five-star hotels with the biggest rock bands in the world, including Led Zeppelin, Guns N' Roses, Metallica, Black Sabbath, Mötley Crüe, Thin Lizzy, Deep Purple, Alice Cooper, Van Halen, Motörhead and more. He was Kerrang! magazine's star writer and the presenter of Monsters of Rock, his own weekly show on Sky TV, and the decade passed in a blur of hard drugs, hot women, and some of the heaviest people your mother definitely would not like. Depicting a world where vague concepts like 'the future' are disdained in favour of nights that last a week and weeks that last forever, Getcha Rocks Off is a rock apocalypse Cider With Roadies, and a more frank and disturbing Apathy for the Devil. It is the kind of book you need to put on your leather jacket to read, open that bottle of Jack and reach for the Charlie. And let the good times roll...

**LOVE BECOMES A FUNERAL PYRE**

2014  
Orion

Think you know how Jim Morrison died? Think you know who wrote all their hits? Think you know why Morrison fled to Paris, never to return? Well now you will with the definitive biography, LOVE BECOMES A FUNERAL PYRE, of the legendary rock band and their iconic frontman Jim Morrison, written by Mick Wall, one of our most revered music writers and one of the last journalists to interview Ray Manzarek. The Doors have sold over 100 million albums. Inducted in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1993, they received a lifetime achievement at the 2007 Grammy Awards, and were the first American band to accumulate eight consecutive gold LPs. Yet the story of The Doors ended as badly as did the 1960s: a startling decade the music and story of The Doors both defined and helped vilify. Along with evoking the cultural milieu of Los Angeles, in LOVE BECOMES A FUNERAL PYRE Mick Wall captures the true spirit of that tarnished age with a brilliantly penetrating and contemporary investigation into the real story of The Doors.

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**PARANOID: THE UNEXPURGATED EDITION**

2014  
Kindle Direct  
Publishing

PARANOID - THE UNEXPURGATED EDITION with a new introduction by the author, Mick Wall.

'In his amoral, happy-go-lucky search for the next drink or expenses-paid trip, Wall fearlessly exposes much of the mediocrity and sheer hollowness that lies just beneath the surface glamour of life on the pop media-celebrity circuit... Dark, twisted and frequently hilarious.' THE TIMES

'This is the tale of a writer's travels in nihilism... Up one minute, down the next, Wall teeters on self-destruct.' MOJO

'A repulsively compelling account of life on the road and other rock'n'roll stories, the heroin scenes make Irvine Welsh look like the Teletubbies.' THE GUARDIAN

'Mick Wall will never work in the music industry again. Not if the men in the corridors of power learn about his utter contempt for [them].' UNCUT

Like all the greatest rock books ever written, this is not a book about rock music; it is a book about rock life. A hard-hitting, iconoclastic tour de force, written with affection, rudeness and wincing honesty, PARANOID proves that music can be an arena for moral choices - that it can quite literally change your life. Mick Wall was a teenage rock fan who, leaving school with no qualifications, somehow found himself working with Black Sabbath. They would help seal his fate forever. As he writes, 'It was never about what happened on stage, it was about what happened afterwards, when the crowd had gone and the bands could really start to play.' Written in prose that pulsates with rock's own rhythms, and featuring a remarkable cast of characters - including Sabbath and their notorious singer Ozzy Osbourne, Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, Kate Bush David Bowie, Guns & Roses, Stevie Nicks and many, many others - PARANOID is not just the story of one man, or even one band, but a remarkably frank inside look at the rock industry in all its tawdry, self-deluding glory. 'Far too slowly the truth dawned', writes Wall. 'For much of my life, I had been a desperate, hand to mouth junkie in a corrupt, multi-billion dollar industry that didn't give a fuck'.

This brand new eBook edition is the first time PARANOID has been published online. It comes with a brand new introduction from the author, outlining for the first time what the book was really all about, and with the manuscript in its original unexpurgated form.

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**LOU REED: THE LIFE**

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2013  
Orion

Lou Reed wrote songs about drugs, squalor, transgressive sexuality, honourable prostitutes, visionary gutter queens and dollar-hustlers. He also wrote some of the most moving love songs of the era, from 'Pale Blue Eyes' to 'Perfect Day'. Always a generation ahead, he would never receive his due until later, when it was almost too late. The Velvet Underground, the group he led under the tutelage of Andy Warhol, were despised in their lifetime. Yet all his greatest solo albums - from Transformer to Berlin to his last, the Metallica-collaboration, Lulu - were considered meagre reflections of his best work with the Velvets. The story of Lou Reed is full of such contradictions. From the ECT treatment that scarred him at 17, to the 'thoughtful, meditative' figure Bono now recalls. From his three marriages, to his polysexual relationship with various New York characters, most especially Rachel: a transsexual to whom he dedicated 'Coney Island Baby'.

'He was a master,' said David Bowie, in the wake of Reed's death, on 27 October, 2013. In his lifetime he was called, variously, the Godfather of Punk, the High Priest of Glam, and all sorts of similarly tremble-tremble sobriquets. The truth is, Lou Reed began where rock left off. Before him, it was about entertainment. After him, rock was literary, dark, and above all, disquietingly honest. His work belongs not in the same safe place as The Beatles and the Stones, but next to William S. Burroughs, Hubert Selby Jr, Andy Warhol, and Reed's personal mentor, Delmore Schwartz.

Now acclaimed biographer Mick Wall, a lifelong Lou Reed and Velvet Underground fan, brings you the story of the most misunderstood genius in rock.

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**Black Sabbath**

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2013  
Orion

Way back in the mists of time, in the days when rock giants walked the earth, the name Ozzy Osbourne was synonymous with subversive and dark. Back then, Ozzy was the singer in Black Sabbath, and they meant business. In an era when it seemed possible to measure a band's musical prowess by how 'heavy' they were, they didn't come any weightier than Black Sabbath. There were, it's probably fair to say, none-more-black.

A four-piece formed from the ashes of two locally well-known groups called The Rare Breed (Ozzy and bassist Geezer Butler) and Mythology (guitarist Tony Iommi and drummer Bill Ward), all four founding members of the original Black Sabbath grew up within half-a-mile of each other, in the same narrow, grey streets of Aston, a tiny Birmingham suburb then struggling to come to terms with the mess Hitler's bombs had made of it. Though they all shared a deep love of music - The Beatles for Ozzy, the Mothers Of Invention for Geezer, the Shadows and Chet Atkins for Iommi, and Gene Kruppa for Ward - they all saw the opportunity to form a successful group, Ozzy would tell me, 'as the quickest way out of the slums.'

This biography tells the story of how they made that dream come true - and how it then turned into a nightmare for all of them. How at the height of their fame, Sabbath discovered they had been so badly ripped off by their managers they did not even own their own songs. How they looked for salvation from Don Arden - an even more notorious gangster figure, who resurrected their career but still left them indebted to him, financially and personally. And how it finally came to a head when in 1979 they sacked Ozzy: 'For being too out of control - even for us,' as Bill Ward put it.

Of course the story does not end there. The next 15 years would see a war break out between the two camps: the post-Ozzy Sabbath and Ozzy himself, whose solo career overshadowed Sabbath to the point where, when he offered them the chance to reform around him again, it was entirely on his terms. Or rather, that of his wife and manager - and, to add a further bitter twist to the tale for Sabbath, daughter of Don Arden - Sharon Osbourne.

**[AC/DC: HELL  
AINT A BAD  
PLACE TO BE](#)**

2012  
Orion

AC/DC moved to Britain from Sydney in 1975, and soon set up a residency at London's Marquee Club. Their short hair (including the odd mullet), loud rock and attitude chimed well with the lingering pub rock and soon-to-be punk crowd. They weren't really a band for guitar solos, and singer Bon Scott was the original bike-riding, speed-snorting, fighting man. An ex-convict he lived life fast and short; he died in February 1980, just before BACK IN BLACK, their huge-selling album, took off, and the second period of AC/DC (with Brian Johnson as lead vocalist) was ushered in. BACK IN BLACK has gone on to sell 45 million copies worldwide, and as the band have become a global phenomenon so their reclusiveness has increased. Mick Wall, the don of heavy metal writing, seeks to penetrate the wall around the Young brothers, and write the first authoritative, in-depth critical account of AC/DC.

**[Enter Night:  
Metallica, The  
Biography](#)**

2012  
Orion

Alongside contemporaries Slayer, Megadeath and Anthrax, Metallica came to prominence in the eighties as one of the 'big four' of thrash metal. Metallica were to thrash, though, what the Sex Pistols were to punk. Nearly thirty years on, their tale is one of alcohol, rule breaking and tragically early death. But allied to that are colossal sales figures for their records -- they are the fifth-highest selling recording artists of all time - and members with backgrounds that touch on jazz and classical music. Metallica, in fact, have garnered more critical acclaim than any heavy rock band since Led Zeppelin.

Fresh from the critical and commercial success of WHEN GIANTS WALKED THE EARTH, Mick Wall takes a similar informed look at the band, a group he has known on and off since their formation in 1981.

**[Appetite for  
Destruction](#)**

2010  
Orion

Whether it's hanging around with Marillion's Fish in Berlin, seeing Whitesnake fail to ignite 1985's Rock in Rio, talking through old times with Jimmy Page in his Berkshire pile or following Ozzy Osbourne to Moscow, there isn't a rock luminary that Wall hasn't cross-examined or kept the flame burning with at some point over the last thirty years. Here, amongst several pieces, he catches Lars Ullrich just on the cusp of world domination; has dinner with Ritchie Blackmore on the eve of a Deep Purple comeback; and is up all night in LA with W. Axl Rose. Appetite for Destruction gathers together Wall's journalism for Kerrang!, for whom he was the star writer in their eighties heyday. It also features brand-new introductions to all the pieces, written with maybe less hair but also the benefit of twenty years' hindsight.

**[When Giants  
Walked the Earth:  
A Biography Of  
Led Zeppelin](#)**

2009  
Orion

They were 'the last great band of the sixties; the first great band of the seventies'; they rose, somewhat unpromisingly, from the ashes of the Yardbirds to become one of the biggest-selling rock bands of all time. Mick Wall, respected rock writer and former confidant of both Page and Plant, unflinchingly tells the story of the band that wrote the rulebook for on-the-road excess - and eventually paid the price for it, with disaster, drug addiction and death.

**[W. Axl Rose: The  
Unauthorized  
Biography](#)**

2008  
Pan

Axl Rose is one of rock's most colourful figures and yet his story has never been properly told until now. Mick Wall knew the original line up of Guns N' Roses before they were famous and has interviewed them many times. Drawing on exclusive unpublished material he has written a no-holds barred study of the turbulent life and career of the group's singer and leader.

**[Bono: In the  
Name of Love](#)**

2006  
Andre Deutsch Ltd

What other rock star has the numbers for both Nelson Mandela and George W Bush on his speed-dial? Who else could have convinced the US to return \$435 million in cancelled Third World debt last year? In this fully updated paperback edition of "Bono: In the Name of Love", acclaimed music writer Mick Wall presents an engaging and detailed portrait of the most unique and inspiring figure in popular music today.

**John Peel. A Tribute to  
the Much-Loved DJ and  
Broadcaster**

A tribute biography of the hugely popular DJ and broadcaster John Peel.

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2004  
Orion

**Mr. Big: Ozzy, Sharon and  
My Life as the Godfather  
of Rock**

In a career that spanned 60 years, Don Arden managed some of the biggest names in music, including Little Richard, the Animals, the Small Faces, ELO and Black Sabbath. This title tells his story, including his Mafia links and 20-year rift with daughter Sharon after her marriage to Ozzy Osbourne.

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2004  
Robson Books