



The Archives of Let's Talk Dusty!

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You Set My Dreams To Music
'What if'...DWD had never been published?
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Author Topic

Sue
Little by little
★



United Kingdom
428 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 01:01:37

As a little extension of Carole R's excellent 'What If...?' thread, the burning question in my mind for the last few days is, what if 'Dancing With Demons' had never been published?

For 'new' fans like myself, this book was a huge shock. As Rosie points out in the proper 'What If' thread, we are dropped right in at the deep end as early as the prologue.

It's incredibly difficult to take an objective look at things, knowing how disgracefully the authors acted after Dusty's death in their eagerness to rush to the publishers. Was it too much, too soon? Are you, ultimately, glad you read it?

Sue xx

mssdusty
I've got a good thing
★★★★★



USA
5821 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 01:19:34

THAT'S A BIG NO FOR ME SUE

☺MARY☺



THE LOOK OF LOVE IS IN YOUR EYES!
Watch my video with Dusty on YouTube!

Baby Blue
Where am I going?
★★★



USA
3185 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 03:12:23

I've been a fan of Dusty's right from the start, Sue. I found out about her "demons" through various articles on the Internet and I was saddened, sickened and shocked by it all. After that I read DWD and I am one of the few that was glad I read it. However, I most definitely think it was too much and way too soon. I wish Dusty had an easier life and I could have been there to help her through some of her difficult times.

Marty

mssdusty
I've got a good thing
★★★★★



USA
5821 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 03:38:21

SO TRUE MARTY DON'T WE ALL HAVE THAT DREAM.

☺MARY☺



THE LOOK OF LOVE IS IN YOUR EYES!
Watch my video with Dusty on YouTube!

memphisinlondon Posted - 13/08/2009 : 03:43:58

Where am I going?



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

Hello Sue 😊

DWD was published in 2000, 9 years ago. It is an interesting snapshot of Vicki and Penny as well as Dusty. One of the things that it shows quite clearly is that Vicki and Penny didn't have the skills or senses to even make themselves look good. Vicki has been villified ever since in Dusty circles.

Vicki and Penny didn't seem to understand what they were telling us about in the book's more harrowing passages. I hope Vicki does now. Most of the time she and Penny are telling us that Dusty was seriously ill it's just that they never understood it that way at the time they wrote their book. They thought she was 'difficult' and willfully self destructive and so they portrayed Dusty in this way. This is what I find unforgiveable; the use of the symptoms of Dusty's illness or illnesses to make for a good read. I'm still shocked by the lack of compassion and what appears to be the trading of Dusty's suffering for money.

The book acted on me like an emotion filled thunder-bolt, like lightning. I was traumatised by it. The result was that I've loved Dusty and cared about her ever since; that urge to protect Dusty that we talk about sometimes. So, in a nutshell, it accelerated my Dusty fandom. But it also left me with a drive to know more about Dusty's journey; this is the fault of the huge gaps in the book and because 'we are dropped right in at the deep end'. Overall, I think this flawed book is important.

A lot of time has passed. Nowadays, I wouldn't mind having a cup of tea with Vicki and asking her 'Why?' and trying to understand her side of the story. She comes across to me now as someone who can now remember the good times and as someone who really did like Dusty in those good times but probably never had the capacity to understand her or appreciate her as an artist. I think she probably had a very fraught time with Dusty. Maybe she found she had chucked herself in the deep-end of a jacuzzi pool by signing up as Dusty's manager. In interviews I've heard over the past year she hasn't really put a foot wrong as far as I'm concerned. She's got over whatever it was that made her angry enough to write that book. And I've found I quite like her. It's taken nearly 9 years though!

Oh and at the time it was definitely far too much, far too soon. It was the wrong book. I'd have been very happy with a thoroughly updated, improved and expanded version of Lucy O'Brien's book.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 13/08/2009 04:10:33



Clive

I'll try anything



1455 Posts

Carole R.

Where am I going?



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 10:48:40



Well said Memphis, I agree completely.

About what you said about an expanded version of Lucy O'Brien's book, I was just thinking the same thing yesterday, I am sure she still has a wealth of interview material which was not used in her original book with so many fascinating interviewees, some of who are no longer with us.



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 14:28:32



I was always under the impression that Dusty hated the Lucy O' Brien book...

But don't ask me where/ why I got this impression. 😊😬

As for DWD.. It was shocking, it was negative, it was upsetting, but, it never for one moment, changed my feelings about Dusty and her music...In fact, it made me admire her even more.

No matter which way anyone spins it, Dusty conquered her demons in the end..

That was the most important part for me.

We could go on about VW,PV, and their motives forever, but the book must have been 'authorised' by *someone*...

CR xx

Edited by - Carole R. on 13/08/2009 15:13:56



**dancer8595**

Little by little



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 14:31:43



Sue - thank you so much for starting this thread. One of the things that I've been pondering recently is the extent to which Vicki Wickham has been redeemed by her rather meek and respectful appearance on the 'Just Dusty' DVD, and whether it will ever be considered possible or appropriate for her to be welcomed back into the fold.

DWD was the first Dusty book I read, when I didn't know very much about her, and when I didn't really understand who Vicki Wickham and Penny Valentine were. I think I read the whole thing with an expression of shock and confusion on my face; I was stunned and dismayed to read that Dusty had had such problems with drug and alcohol abuse and self-harm, and I remember having to stop reading on several occasions because it was just too much. The book is without even the remotest suggestion of weight or class or care: it's trashy and tabloidy and a naked, unashamed attempt to cash in on the surge of interest in Dusty following her death. You're spot on as usual, Memphis - we can analyse it and pick over it as much as we want but what it amounts to is two people *who were close to Dusty* making money out of her unhappiness. What it also doesn't do is anything like enough to make the other side of Dusty's character known - her humour, her warmth, her friendliness. Furthermore, the lack of care taken over the writing, the research and the facts about her music and career is simply breathtaking and beyond comprehension, even when you allow for the fact that it was obviously written in a hurry.

Since reading the book, the general impression of Vicki I've got is that she's a very blunt, straight-talking person. Of all the things she's said about Dusty in interviews, two things have made her come across to me as someone who's just a bit tactless and unkind:

'I think because she wasn't a good-looking girl, she looked in the mirror and thought, 'ok, what can I do about this?'

and

'She hated singing and she hated performing and she just did it for the money.'

She has an unfortunate and not terribly appealing way of expressing her opinions as though they are facts, and as a result she appears very unkind a lot of the time. I thought her interviews in 'Just Dusty' were a very deliberate effort to redeem herself as much as she could, and that she was taking care to come across in a certain way. I wouldn't say I warmed to her, but I felt that there were things about her I liked, and that maybe she shouldn't be completely cast out into the wilderness forever. I'm sure she must regret what she did. Ultimately, while I don't think she will ever be completely forgiven - and nor do I think she should - it's not entirely outside the realms of possibility that she could, at some point in the future, have a limited role to play in the activities of Dusty's fan community. I'm torn between thinking that she did something unpardonable and the normal human instinct to give someone a second chance.

I had a bit of an early night last night, by which I mean I turned off my computer well before eleven but then stayed up reading Lucy O'Brien's book (79p, thank you Amazon Marketplace) for three hours. Reading books on Dusty is a minefield because you never know how credible or authoritative they actually are and how much you should believe what they say (this is why I haven't read all the books yet), but I thought it was particularly good on South Africa and In Memphis. While it's a long

way from being the book I eventually hope we'll get, it talked about her relationships and her drug/alcohol problems in a way that was less sensationalist and disrespectful than DWD (although it's very difficult to talk about these things without sounding a little bit tabloidy. Among the people who might be able to are Lee Server and Meredith Daneman, who have written definitive and highly acclaimed biographies of Robert Mitchum and Margot Fonteyn respectively).

I'd like to conclude by saying that I like Vicki Wickham a whole lot more than I like Lee Everett.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

Edited by - dancer8595 on 13/08/2009 14:36:16



**Clive**  
I'll try anything  
★★



1455 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 14:54:17

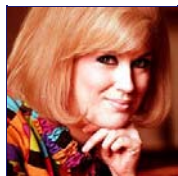
I think Vicki took almost all of the flak for the book while Penny Valentine, who as a journalist I expect actually wrote the book, gets very little criticism. All the controversy aside ,her work was very lazy full of factual mistakes.

On paper as one of Dusty's most sympathetic press contacts in the 60s she seemed the ideal person to write a good biography but I think she fell far short of what anyone might have hoped.

Edited by - Clive on 13/08/2009 14:58:04



**MercyMe**  
Little by little  
★



United Kingdom  
227 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 15:19:55

A very interesting thread, with a huge amount of Dusty-love in it. Having read some caustic comments on the internet about DWD, before I joined LTD, I decided to buy the book and see for myself. Yes, it is upsetting to read of Dusty's cry for help by various means of self-destruction, but she seemed to fight against medical help, particularly, she would attend a Psychiatrist on only one occasion and, after one visit, apparently she claimed "there, I managed to beat him". Many people, through the ages, have lead very precarious lives, teetering on the edge of mental instability.

I am pleased I read the book and, like others who have commented, it just makes me love her all the more.

Barbara x



**memphisinlondon**  
Where am I going?  
★★★



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 16:08:13

I agree with Clive about Penny.

I share Rosie's take on Vicki. She comes across to me as a 'pull yourself up by the boot-straps kind of person'. Some of her comments have made me flinch. For instance that Dusty was 'lazy' and even recently that Dusty 'mimicked' her favourite artists as if Dusty is just a copy of something more authentic. Vicki is not naturally sympathetic and I would guess that Vicki and Dusty had different and incompatible personalities.

I was never that impressed by Lucy O'Brien's book. It was one of Dusty's girlfriends that said Dusty hated that book. I thought this book was sloppy too but I hadn't read DWD yet! Lucy appreciates Dusty; she recently wrote a really good article on DIM for Mojo's 1969 special edition. She understands Dusty's place in music history and, importantly, Dusty's place as a woman in music history. Even now, if she were to re-visit her book (it would have to have a make-over rather than a couple of tweaks) I think she could do Dusty good justice.

Lastly, I have just sold my Lee Server Robert Mitchum biography because I never read it (I've kept his book on Ava Gardner though). It took a long time for Bob to get his due. I hope it doesn't take that long for Dusty to get hers.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 13/08/2009 16:09:22



**Clive**  
I'll try anything  
★★



1455 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 20:22:55



Yes I think Lucy O'Brien should do a complete overhaul of her book. So much time has now passed since the original and I think Dusty has definitely grown in stature and acclaim in that period.

As Lucy's area of expertise is the role of women artists in music she could re-write the book now bringing in all of her research in that area and in light of Dusty's influence on emerging artists.

Maybe at the time the book was originally written she or the publishers thought better of including more extensive interview material, just wanting a straightforward music bio, but now is the chance for the extra material to be used.



**dancer8595**  
Little by little  
★



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 20:23:43



I spent a little bit of time in the garden this afternoon with a cold beer, reading the last two chapters of Lucy O'Brien's book and crying a little bit behind my sunglasses. It was the story about her 'diving into a taxi' while in the middle of having her hair done to go and counsel Simon Bell over a relationship crisis that set me off a little bit. The book is not a definitive work but it's certainly underpinned by a genuine affection for Dusty and (as you say M) a developed understanding of the wider context she was working in. I just want to read the kind of beautiful prose that a seasoned (as in experienced, not sprinkled with herbs 😊) and heavyweight biographer would be able to produce, and I don't think Lucy's writing is quite that.

I wonder what DWD (I even hate the title. There's a biography of the ballet choreographer Jerome Robbins called 'Dance With Demons' - it's appropriate there, but not here) would have been like had Vicki and Penny come to a decision to write a book about Dusty some years after her death. If they'd had time to gauge the reaction to her passing and watch her towering status develop, they might have come to understand the consequences of writing an insensitive and careless hack job and taken some time and care over it. This book might have been quite good. Unfortunately that's not the one we have.

The kind of book that would do Dusty justice and stand as a definitive work for decades to come (think Peter Guralnick's staggering two-volume masterpiece on Elvis Presley) might take a joint effort: Paul and Annie, possibly. Although now that I've mentioned Peter Guralnick he might be the man to do it, although I think he's associated mostly with writing about American artists. It would mean banking on old interviews carried out by Lucy O'Brien and others being made available for research purposes, and it might need to be done soon, while there are still enough people around who worked with and knew Dusty from the beginning. There's nothing I wouldn't do for half a day in a room with Tom Springfield and a tape recorder; no biography of Dusty will have every blank space filled in unless he comes on board, and I know that he never will. I think that's right, however, and I respect it.

And the book should be hefty. I can't take any biography seriously unless it can also be used as a weapon in the event of a burglary.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



**daydreamer**

Moderator

United Kingdom  
5404 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 20:28:57

When I heard that Vicki Wickham and Penny Valentine were writing the book, I was pleased. A. because Vicki and Dusty had been close friends from the early sixties and B. because Penny wrote some of the best articles on Dusty during the sixties. I liked her style of writing. This never came across in the book and it was so, so sloppy. I have wondered if Penny was already ill when she was working on the book (she died in Jan 2003) and maybe that didn't help her journalistic instinct.

Perhaps those of us who were fans before DWD had already made up our minds about Dusty, and she was so ingrained into our consciousness that we were not going to change our thoughts on her post DWD. What it has done though is to make almost every article, programme, book etc since then, concentrate too much on her sexuality and self harm, and not always enough on her immense talent.

Carole x

"There's a part of you that's a part of me..."

Edited by - daydreamer on 13/08/2009 20:30:03

**dancer8595**

Little by little

United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 20:39:16

I was waiting to see what your contribution to this thread would be Carole. It's very interesting to know what you think. I knew that Penny had died but for some reason I thought it was more recently than 2003; maybe illness does account for the complete absence of what I would class as credible or decent journalism in the book. I can see that DWD's overwhelming concern with the problems in Dusty's personal life has done huge damage in terms of moving the focus away from her voice and her talent and her music.

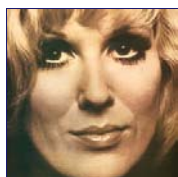
Thanks for your valuable insights.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?

United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 21:31:57

Rosie - it's so good to have you here. Of course I would say that. It's not just your lovely personality but because you often say the things I want to but edit out (yes, I do actually edit!).

Peter Guralnick's biography of Elvis comes in 2 volumes. Its 1047 pages long and that's without the notes and indexes. I think it may have been commissioned or partly commissioned by Elvis's estate but I'm not sure. Elvis has people looking after his legacy. That's their day job. If they did commission Peter that would be a sign of the excellent job they're doing.

A serious biography like Peter's or the one we've recently seen for Lennon is important legacy making business. If only Dusty's Estate had some money in it maybe the same could be done but her royalties are tied up in the deal she made with Prudential for a while yet I should think. It's like she's still totally alone and all by herself. She's got no family looking after her except some of the wonderful people she used to work with. The brand of Dusty is valuable though and someone ought to be looking after it and protecting Dusty's legacy.

I too am concerned that a book needs to be written quickly or research needs to be started quickly. I too am frustrated that Dusty has not yet attracted a high quality biographer that is given the time to get a biography right. Only Annie's book has read like it had some time and research time spent on it but it's not a biography.

I agree with Carole as far as the immediate aftermath is concerned and

I remember a trashy Daily Express article which we had here just this year which basically condensed DWD. But there are other more important articles which appear from time to time in the quality Press which are totally different and a joy to read. The Sunday Times article earlier this year and the DIM article in Mojo that I mentioned were both a joy to read.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...



**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 21:51:13



Forgot to say I hate the DWD title too and the doctoring of the first cover photo and the use of the second. If I could get hold of that book company I'd give it some GoodFellas treatment!

Memphis  
Ever since we met...



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

**dancer8595**

Little by little



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 22:22:12



Oh, my dear Memphis, thank you. 😊 I'm very glad to be here and I'm pretty chuffed to bits that you're here too. As you will have gathered by now I think. 😊 I know you edit of course. It's another way in which you take such care over your posts ('posts' is the wrong word. Something much more substantial is required, surely).

I know I've read both volumes of Peter's Elvis biog but I seem to be only able to find one this evening - Careless Love (great title, and I seem to remember that the other one was also called something brilliant - something about a last train to Memphis?! Titles are so very important. 'Dancing With Demons' just sounds like something cheap and tacky and thrown together.)

The more I read about Dusty the more it becomes clear that she was out there on her own during her lifetime, and that she's out there on her own now. One of the things that Lucy's book makes plain is that the failure of her 70s albums can be partly attributed to the fact that she was pioneering and there was no model for her to follow - she was feeling her way in the dark. And now that she's gone there is no other female singer quite like her, so it's almost as though nobody knows quite how to define or pin down her legacy.

I remember giving that Daily Express article a cursory read and finding my general feelings towards the paper being absolutely confirmed. Ghastly rag. I've tried to find the Mojo article online tonight but have not yet succeeded. I'm glad, though, that some quality articles are still being written.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 22:39:39



I think that must be one of the gifts that Lucy gave to me. It's an important gift. The understanding of Dusty as a pioneering woman. She walked in her own foot-steps. Nobody else's. She broke the ground. That's why I have the utmost admiration for her and I always, always will.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

United Kingdom



**trek007**  
I'll try anything  
★★



United Kingdom  
1100 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 22:51:47

I agree about the title Dancing With Demons being a trashy title...it implies Dusty spent her whole life fighting demons!

It was the most negative book I've ever read about any artist and I've read a few.

There was no balance to it and very little time given to the recovery from the demons and subsequent career back in England..in fact very little regarding the 60's good times!

The research for it must have been hurried and consequently it was full of errors and on the whole poorly written.

I am glad that I read it though and glad I now know about the problems and struggles she had.

So yes it was written and published too soon.

As for the Lucy O'Brien book..I'm not too keen on that book, but it is better than DWD, and I agree about it being sloppy.

I agree with Carole about the concentration in the press etc about the bad times because of DWD and not enough about her talent...though perhaps that is now changing abit recently.

I have always appreciated the talent right from the early 60's and no book is going to change that.

I'm not adverse to books which inform the reader about private lives ..just so long as they give a balanced view and are well written and accurate something DWD was not.

Trek.  
often called Carole.



**memphisinlondon**  
Where am I going?  
★★★



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 23:11:25

Peter Guralnick's titles are:

Last Train To Memphis : The Rise of Elvis Presley  
Careless Love : The Unmaking of Elvis Presley

I'm an Elvis fan and I still have to read these volumes that are sitting on a bookshelf. I started reading the paper back 1st volume years ago but left it on a plane....

This is another Rosie moment. I'm very pleasantly astonished! 😄😄

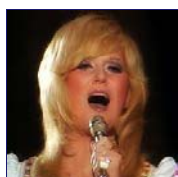
I agree with Carole R's succinct points. DWD is probably the worst and trashiest book I've ever read. Full stop.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 13/08/2009 23:12:57



**dancer8595**  
Little by little  
★



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 23:31:16

Memphis 😊

One of the many things I've come across when reading the archives (I'm trying to read everything. I'm getting there!) is your occasional 'thanks ever so' which I think must surely be a Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (in my top ten films) reference?! So is that another moment? 😊



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Just looking at my copy of Careless Love which advises me that I read it in October 2000 (I do this with all my books). This astounds me as it feels like I read it three or four years ago. And I can't find the other one anywhere. Very strange.

And Carole Trek - you are right that nothing that you read about Dusty makes you change your mind about her. DVD made me love her more, both out of tremendous sympathy and sadness for what she went through when she was alive, and out of anger that she's been treated this way after her death.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 23:39:10

Blimey! Rosie!

I got goosebumps just then. 🤔 Yes. Gentlemen Prefer Blondes!

And I nearly mentioned MM in this thread 🤔 - the fact that she attracted real writers, poets, artists including most importantly great photographers. Of course there are trashy books about her too but her image has, in the main, been constructed/reconstructed and preserved by artists.

We're going to have to meet sooner rather than later. You're amazing! 😄😄

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

Edited by - memphisinlondon on 13/08/2009 23:41:55



**Sue**

Little by little



Posted - 13/08/2009 : 23:49:26

Thank you everybody, for your thoughts on this so far.

Just as my obsession with Dusty was beginning to take hold, i couldn't wait to get to the Library and see what books they had about her. DVD was the only one available at the time. I knew a little of her struggles with drink and drugs, however i had absolutely NO IDEA about her self harming.

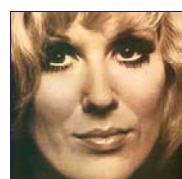
Memphis, i agree with much of what you say, she was treated as difficult and willfully self destructive. It certainly comes across as unsympathetic, as if they were dealing with an unruly teenager, rather than a grown woman with serious problems.

Rosie, i too, thought that Vicki was trying to redeem herself on the 'Just Dusty' DVD. Perhaps she was told beforehand that it was to be an affectionate portrayal of Dusty. And yes, she does come across as blunt and straight talking, nothing wrong with that, but, she doesn't seem to think about what she going to say, before she says it.

Clive, it does seem as though Vicki took all the criticism while Penny got very little. It makes me wonder who's idea the book was in the first place. If it was Vicki, did she enlist the help of Penny as a way of fast tracking the book through the publishers because of her contacts? And why the rush? Could it be that they were worried that Lucy O'Brien would get there before them with her updated version?

Carole, it's true that there are very few articles, programmes etc, that don't mention Dusty without mentioning her sexuality. In the prologue of DVD there is a short piece about Vicki discussing her own sexuality in an interview with the 'Guardian'.

Quote: 'it has taken Vicki, who is not a star and not in the public eye, until her late fifties to say anything publicly about her sexuality. Although she'd been interviewed many times over the years, Vicki



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts



United Kingdom  
428 Posts

never felt it 'appropriate' to talk about it: "mainly i was always talking about someone or something else all the time and anyway, who the hell cares about what i do?" But for Dusty to have come out in the press, she says, would have been a different matter, "it would always have been too risky, she would have had everything defined by that."

So, not much empathy there, then. Perhaps, in a few years time, like many other people, i might actually be glad i read this book, and like many others, it has made me more protective of Dusty and increased my love for her even more. What i find particularly bad is Vicki's behaviour. She was there on the day that Dusty was diagnosed with cancer, she was there, or somewhere in the background, as the illness took a grip, she was there at the funeral and probably with the £ and \$ signs flashing before her eyes. No consideration whatsoever, had been given to Dusty's existing family, be they aunts/ uncles etc, but especially not her brother Tom. If only they had waited a couple of years, taken their time, researched more carefully, we could have had a much better book.

Sue xx



dancer8595

Little by little



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 13/08/2009 : 23:54:45

quote:

*Originally posted by memphisinlondon*

Blimey! Rosie!

I got goosebumps just then 😳 Yes. Gentlemen Prefer Blondes!

And I nearly mentioned MM in this thread 😳 - the fact that she attracted real writers, poets, artists including most importantly great photographers. Of course there are trashy books about her too but her image has, in the main, been constructed/reconstructed and preserved by artists.

We're going to have to meet sooner rather than later. You're amazing! 😄😄

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

We are indeed, and I must say I think you're bloomin' amazing too Memphis! 😄🙌😄

Just dug out my Marilyn biogs: Barbara Leaming (very good, also wrote an enthralling one on Jackie Kennedy) and Donald H. Wolfe (entertaining but more than a hint of the National Enquirer about it - conspiracy theory stuff). I'm sure I've got one or two more but some excavation might be required to retrieve them - my books are out of control. 😊

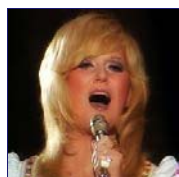
Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



dancer8595

Little by little



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 16:53:54

Oh and lovely Sue - I meant to say that I'd been thinking, 'right, we've written loads, where's our illustrious thread author to tell us what she thinks!' So it's great to hear your thoughts 😊

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



ErgoFergo

I'll try anything



Posted - 14/08/2009 : 18:25:10



United Kingdom  
1047 Posts

I wouldn't say I came to the book cold, but I too read DWD very early on in my Dusty fanhood. I think I'd just had my lighting bolt revelation, I'd bought DIM and AGCD and then I tentatively ordered DWD after reading the reviews on Amazon. It fell onto my doormat on a Saturday morning and I'd devoured it by the Sunday afternoon.

I can only reiterate what others have said. It's a very raw book, in many senses of the word, hastily put together and quite shocking in its bluntness at times. I had wanted to read a celebration of Dusty's life (even if it was warts and all), but this was a much darker read than I'd expected. At times, I felt like a voyeur and the pseudo psychobabble made me cringe.

But did it make me love Dusty any less? Certainly not. It propelled me to find out more - to listen more.

Vicki Wickham is extraordinarily blunt and harsh, but I agree with Memphis: this does say more about her than it does about Dusty. Even at the time I read it, I thought that her quotes about Dusty's laziness and her "hating singing" seemed to be at total odds with what appears elsewhere in the book. And Dusty's warmth, and sense of humour, and altogether specialness shine through in spite of this.

quote:

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*Originally posted by Sue*

And why the rush? Could it be that they were worried that Lucy O'Brien would get there before them with her updated version?

Sue xx

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I was going to say that Vicki Wickham has argued that the book was quickly published to pre-empt any scurrilous stories that may have been sold to the press. However, I can't for the life of me find any quotes from VW to back this up. I'm sure I've read it somewhere - I think it was on Dusty Devotedly as a response to the many comments in reaction to DWD.

If this was her defence (and I'm not imagining things), would the door have been left wide open to muck-raking if DWD hadn't been published? I seriously don't think so. I certainly don't think that DWD closed the door to further tabloid exposés. But the fact that none have come to light since then (to my knowledge) simply proves the love and affection - and respect - that Dusty engendered among the majority of those who became close to her.

Vicky  
x

Edited by - ErgoFergo on 14/08/2009 18:29:35



**dancer8595**

Little by little



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 19:01:02

Ah, Vicky, splendidly eloquent and elegant prose as ever (you've just really made me laugh over in the 'A bit slow?' post as well, because that's exactly what I thought. My relief when I returned home to find that LTD had been restored was immense).

It's the things Vicky (how dare she have the same name as you, when it's such a fine name? She's not worthy of it. I'm grateful for the small spelling difference. 😊) said about Dusty hating singing and performing that I really can't forgive her for. I'm sure she got tired and fed up with the travelling and the workload from time to time, but you only have to watch A SINGLE ONE of her performances from her BBC TV series to see that music was in her blood and her heart and her soul and all the fibres of her being, and that it was she was put here to do. For someone to be approached to contribute to a documentary on a music legend, and then to imply in said documentary that the music legend hated singing and performing...it's just inexcusable and undignified and entirely without merit. It's the kind of thing that could have seriously diminished Dusty's reputation in the eyes of the less knowledgeable fan

who might have taken her remarks seriously.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



**Sue**

Little by little



United Kingdom  
428 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 19:05:29

Just briefly 'cos i've got a night shift tonight.

LOL, Rosie, i'm not so sure about the 'illustrious' bit 🙄. Perhaps if i hadn't bought that blouse.....?

Vicky, you've said what i've been trying to say. I didn't want to just read a celebration of Dusty's life, i wanted to know how it all started, what motivated her, i knew it would be warts n all, but it was much darker and voyeuristic than i expected it to be. As for Vicki's excuses, especially regards 'scurrilous' stories and 'muck raking'.....well, perhaps she could have explained then, why they had the book serialised in the highly homophobic 'Daily Mail'?

Sue xx



**dancer8595**

Little by little



United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 19:14:02

Hey, Sue! 🙄

I don't let the Daily Mail in the house. If I'm ever on Room 101 it's the first thing I'm putting in.

Hope your night shift is ok!

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."



**memphisinlondon**

Where am I going?



United Kingdom  
3565 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 19:16:38

Great post Vicky.

I too felt like a voyeur. What an awful feeling to have when you're reading about someone you admire. It's because the book observes without trying to understand. It's down to the reader to fill in those gaps and add some compassion. I think that helps explain why the book makes some readers love Dusty more.

I've noted too that this book does seem to have acted as a block to other books in this style about Dusty. The books that have been published since have a completely different tone.

But I was thinking about Carole Pope's chapter today although I didn't re-read it. That was probably a chapter I didn't need to read and wish I hadn't. I don't think I felt that way about DWD. Pope's chapter left me with no illusions about the Dusty of the 80s. And then I listened to White Heat and it was all there too. Like DWD the chapter reflects badly on its author. But Dusty chose people like Vicki and Carole as her friends so she must be reflected in them too.

Dusty is very complex and she had flaws that were probably maximised by her different drug abuses. I don't think many people nowadays will care two hoots about Dusty's sexuality. Some people are gay - get over it. But it's the apparent fracturing of her lovely personality that I find most tragic and it's this, more than anything else, that has to be treated with tremendous compassion and understanding by someone with intelligence that can actually write.

Memphis  
Ever since we met...

**dancer8595**

Little by little

United Kingdom  
690 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 19:33:02

It's Dusty's flaws that make us all love her, and that make her so appealing and so compelling as a personality. She's fascinating precisely because she was complex and complicated and experienced soaring highs and terrible lows. One of her fatal flaws was a tendency to be sometimes drawn to people who in the long run wouldn't be good for her (although let's not forget that she also had long associations with people who were only a positive influence).

Stars that come across as just pleasant and level-headed just don't grab our attention in the same way. I remember reading something years ago about how psychologists have identified that the behavioural patterns behind supreme artistic talent and a predisposition towards addiction (to drugs, alcohol, etc) were more or less the same. People who are highly creative and artistic are more likely to experience these kinds of problems.

I don't accept a lot of things that Vicki has said about Dusty but I do accept that she was probably maddening sometimes. Nothing, however, will ever sway me from being completely convinced that despite her problems and dark moments Dusty was a lovely person. To me this comes across with complete clarity.

Rosie x

"she's a sweetheart except when she's moody/it's hard to get through to her then..."

**ErgoFergo**

I'll try anything

United Kingdom  
1047 Posts

Posted - 14/08/2009 : 22:22:02

quote:

*Originally posted by Sue*

As for Vicki's excuses, especially regards 'scurrilous' stories and 'muck raking'.....well, perhaps she could have explained then, why they had the book serialised in the highly homophobic 'Daily Mail'?

Sue xx

Exactly. What did she expect? I don't believe she was naive enough to think that its editors wouldn't select the most headline-grabbing elements (which, abridged or not, do exist in the book).

quote:

"It's the things Vicki (how dare she have the same name as you, when it's such a fine name? She's not worthy of it. I'm grateful for the small spelling difference.)"

Well, quite, Rosie! I think there's a lesson to be learnt here. Always be wary of a Victoria who messes with the conventional spelling of her shortened name. 😊

Vicky  
x