



Hymns to the Silence: Inside the Words and Music of Van Morrison

Peter Mills

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Hymns to the Silence is a thoroughly informed and enlightened study of the art of a pop music maverick that will delight fans the world over. In 1991, Van Morrison said, Music is spiritual, the music business isn't. Peter Mills' groundbreaking book investigates the oppositions and harmonies within the work of Van Morrison, proceeding from this identified starting point. *Hymns to the Silence* is a detailed investigative study of Morrison as singer, performer, lyricist, musician and writer with particular attention paid throughout to the contradictions and tensions that are central to any understanding of his work as a whole. The book takes several intriguing angles. It looks at Morrison as a writer, specifically as an Irish writer who has recorded musical settings of Yeats poems, collaborated with Seamus Heaney, Paul Durcan and Gerald Dawe, and who regularly drops quotes from James Joyce and Samuel Beckett into his live performances. It looks at him as a singer, at how he uses his voice as an interpretive instrument. And there are chapters on his use of mythology, on his stage performances, and on his continuing fascination with America and its musical forms.

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