



Everybody's Heard about the Bird: The True Story of 1960s Rock 'n' Roll in Minnesota

Rick Shefchik

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If you didn't experience rock and roll in Minnesota in the 1960s, this book will make you wish you had. This behind-the-scenes, up-close-and-personal account relates how a handful of Minnesota rock bands erupted out of a small Midwest market and made it big. It was a brief, heady moment for the musicians who found themselves on a national stage, enjoying a level of success most bands only dream of.

In *Everybody's Heard about the Bird*, Rick Shefchik writes of that time in vivid detail. Interviews with many of the key musicians, combined with extensive research and a phenomenal cache of rare photographs, reveal how this monumental era of Minnesota rock music evolved. The chronicle begins with musicians from the 1950s and early 1960s, including Augie Garcia, Bobby Vee, the Fendermen, and Mike Waggoner and the Bops. Shefchik looks at how a local recording studio and record label, along with Minnesota radio stations, helped make their achievements possible and prepared the way for later bands to break out nationally.

Shefchik delves deeply into the Trashmen's emblematic rise to fame. A Minneapolis band that recorded a fluke novelty hit called "Surfin' Bird" at Kay Bank Studios, the Trashmen signed with Soma Records, topped the local charts in late 1963, and were poised to top the national charts in early 1964. Hundreds of Minnesota bands took inspiration from the Trashmen's success, as teen dances with live bands flourished in clubs, ballrooms, gyms, and halls across the Upper Midwest. Here are the stories of bands like the Gestures, the Castaways, and the Underbeats, and the triumphs—and tragedies—of the most prominent Minnesota-spawned bands of the late 1960s, including Gypsy, Crow, and the Litter.

For the baby boomers who remember it and everyone else who has felt its influence, the 1960s rock-and-roll scene in Minnesota was an extraordinary period both in musical history and popular culture, and now it's captured fully in print for the first time. *Everybody's Heard about the Bird* celebrates how these bands found their singular sound and played for their elated audiences from the golden era to today.

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