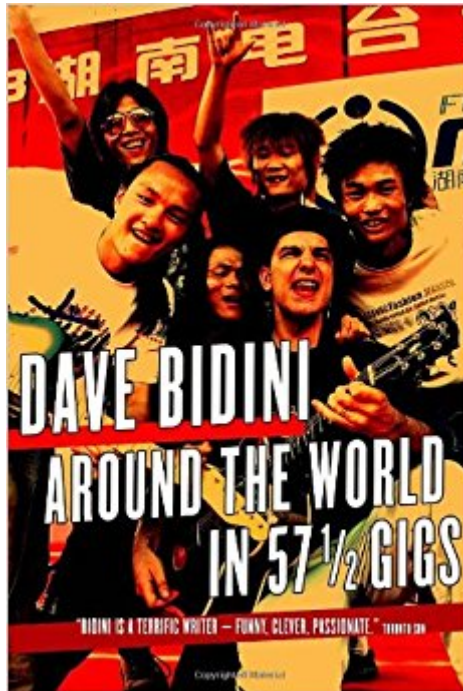




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Around The World In 57 1/2 Gigs



Synopsis

The strengths of Bidini's two best-loved books, *On a Cold Road* and *Tropic of Hockey*, music and travel to unlikely places, come together in this account of his search for rock & roll. When it looks as if the Rheostatics are breaking up after more than twenty years together, Dave Bidini is left feeling adrift from his moorings and decides to go on a very long road trip, playing solo and finding out about the state of rock & roll around the world. Accompanied much of the way by his friend Al, who also has a solo act, Bidini sets out for London, England, his springboard for travel to Finland, Russia, China, Sierra Leone, and Ghana, punctuated by trips to Newfoundland and Gananoque in Canada, and to New York City. What Bidini finds is that the rock & roll machine has not yet flattened the globe, as each place has taken what suits it from the West's dominant music and ignored the rest. Metal may have had its heyday in North America, but it still suits the quiet Finns just fine as a soundtrack for suicidal thoughts. In China, where Bidini plays with the Rheos-Not-Rheos as part of the Maple Rhythm Festival, he has to coach the crowd sitting quietly in plastic chairs how to clap rhythmically. In Russia, where live rock still lurks in hard-to-find places, the British band Smokie is far more popular than even the Rolling Stones, and the first Western band Mongolian audiences wanted to hear live was Boney M. In Africa, Bidini finds out just how far rock has wandered from its roots, and in Newfoundland, just how true it has stayed. Peopled with hosers, the über-hip, and the profoundly baffled, and brimming with tales of playing in strange venues to bemused locals and the odd drunk, *Around the World* takes readers on an unforgettable, ear-opening swing through the world of rock & roll.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“This man was made for touring. Dave Bidini’s willingness to see the unusual, to listen out for the noteworthy, even after months of dragging himself and his instrument of choice into far places previously untouched by Canadian rock and roll, makes this book a real treat. Bidini’s enthusiasm, his love of the music and the world, hop off the page. I loved this book.”
—Roddy Doyle

Dave Bidini has made a terrific name for himself as a writer with the success of his previous books, *The Best Game You Can Name*, *Baseballissimo*, *On a Cold Road*, and *Tropic of Hockey*. Bidini wrote and hosted the Gemini Award-winning small-screen adaptation of *Tropic of Hockey*, called *Hockey Nomad*, which was first broadcast in January 2003. He lives in Toronto with his wife, Janet, and their two children.

It is appropriate that I write this review on the anniversary of Mark Twain setting sail across the Atlantic to begin his trip which became his *Innocents Abroad* novel. Dave Bidini has the same laid-back humor, the same witty insights and the same heart and soul of a travel log as Twain did and what’s more, Bidini can play the guitar, too. This book does more than chronicle his impromptu world pub tour, it also gets into the mind of a man who has been around the world with three of his best friends and now retracing his steps solo. Like a modern minstrel, Bidini tells tales of the people and places in China, Russia, Canada and more in a poetic voice. When he tells a fan that the Rheostatics are breaking up, the fan optimistically replies, "Well, if you don’t break up, you can’t have a reunion, right?" That quote makes this coming September so special since the Rheostatics will be reining for three nights in Toronto. Buy this book. Read this book. And listen to the soundtrack of the book by BidiniBand.

Dave Bidini is a wonderful writer. I don’t know much about his music, but his books are a joy. I read most of this book one day while I was sitting at a tire shop getting new tires put on my vehicle, and I was snickering in a roomful of people. Particularly enjoyable to me was the part of the book about Finland. He was dead on about the Finns as I know them. If you wonder what life is like on the road for some of the people whose careers have been in rock music, this answers some of the questions. A good read.

If you are not a fan of the Rheostatics, you should be. If you are not a fan of Dave Bidini's writing, you really should be. In this, his most current work, Dave is travelling the world and sharing his experiences after he learns that his band, the wonderful Rheostatics, are calling it quits after 20+ years and, it seems, his musical career will be a solo venture from now on. Dave's writing is honest, engaging and, usually, funny as hell. Chalk full of stories of his adventures with tons of pop culture references thrown in as well, the book builds up the final chapter describing the Rheos farewell concert at storied Massey Hall in Toronto. The book was very powerful to me as I was lucky enough to be at that show and even got to talk to Dave afterwards. Lucky me! But again, even if you weren't at Massey Hall on March 30th, 2007 or have never heard of the Rheostatics, Dave Bidini's writing still makes the trip around the world with him a joyous literary adventure.

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