



Not Dead Yet: The Memoir

Phil Collins

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Phil Collins pulls no punches—about himself, his life, or the ecstasy and heartbreak that’s inspired his music. In his much-awaited memoir, *Not Dead Yet*, he tells the story of his epic career, with an auspicious debut at age 11 in a crowd shot from the Beatles’ legendary film *A Hard Day’s Night*. A drummer since almost before he could walk, Collins received on the job training in the seedy, thrilling bars and clubs of 1960s swinging London before finally landing the drum seat in Genesis. Soon, he would step into the spotlight on vocals after the departure of Peter Gabriel and begin to stockpile the songs that would rocket him to international fame with the release of *Face Value* and “In the Air Tonight.” Whether he’s recalling jamming with Eric Clapton and Robert Plant, pulling together a big band fronted by Tony Bennett, or writing the music for Disney’s smash-hit animated *Tarzan*, Collins’s storytelling chops never waver. And of course he answers the pressing question on everyone’s mind: just what *does* “Sussudio” mean?

Not Dead Yet is Phil Collins’s candid, witty, unvarnished story of the songs and shows, the hits and pans, his marriages and divorces, the ascents to the top of the charts and into the tabloid headlines. As one of only three musicians to sell 100 million records both in a group and as a solo artist, Collins breathes rare air, but has never lost his touch at crafting songs from the heart that touch listeners around the globe. That same touch is on magnificent display here, especially as he unfolds his harrowing descent into darkness after his “official” retirement in 2007, and the profound, enduring love that helped save him. This is Phil Collins as you’ve always known him, but also as you’ve never heard him before.

From the Hardcover edition.

Not Dead Yet: The Memoir Details

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From Reader Review Not Dead Yet: The Memoir for online ebook

Steve Aldous says

Phil Collins tells his life story as he would put it, “warts and all”. It is a fascinating, touching, funny and sad read showing how his dedication to his career resulted in domestic disharmony and ultimately psychological issues, alcoholism and failing health. A man who could do no wrong in the 1980s became pilloried in the 1990s, following what he terms as “Faxgate” – for which he puts the record straight here, and ultimately retreated into a form of semi-seclusion following his so-called “retirement”.

Collins has always been honest and forthright in his interviews and he is brutally honest here about his descent into depression and alcoholism over an 8-year period from 2005-2013. He is frank about how this affected those around him and he is big enough to lay the blame with no-one else but himself. He is riddled with guilt over how he put his career before his family and this is a constant theme throughout the book. It is sometimes hard to read as Collins lays bare his soul and his increased self-loathing, which obviously fuelled his near self-destruction. Fortunately he had people around him who cared enough, but it was a long hard and ugly road that has left many scars on himself and those close to him.

But the book is also balanced and is often very witty and funny. Collins tells of his adolescent years as a child actor and his early musical influences visiting clubs like the Marquee to watch his favourite bands; a strange tale of how, as a 19-year old star-struck percussionist, he was left off George Harrison’s first post-Beatles album *All Things Must Pass*; his audition and early touring years with Genesis then his ascension to group singer following Peter Gabriel’s departure in 1975. He describes 1987s four-night stint at Wembley Stadium (touring *Invisible Touch*) as the point where Genesis hit their peak and demonstrates great affection for all his former band mates.

His divorce from his first wife, Andy, set the tone for his song-writing inspiration and led to solo success and his elevation to the pop stratosphere. He becomes in demand from the musical good and the great (John Martyn, Eric Clapton, Robert Plant, Bob Geldof, et al) and flattered he finds it hard to refuse his friends. The result is a constant workload throughout the eighties that bred contempt from non-fans and music journalists. When his second marriage broke down in the early nineties – this time through his own infidelity – the press had a field day and this was the catalyst for Collins’ gradual withdrawal from the limelight.

Fans of Collins will likely be shocked as to how self-destructive he became in the 8-year period from 2005-2013, when he was out of the public limelight for long periods, excepting a brief Genesis reunion, work on a Broadway production of *Tarzan* and his Motown covers album *Going Back*. It’s incredible none of his issues became public at the time – although the press had probably moved on to other targets. Non-fans may find Collins’ humility refreshing and be prepared to re-assess their views of a likeable man who undoubtedly likes to be liked and is hurt by “unwarranted” criticism. But, he is ultimately harder on himself than any of his critics.

That Collins has retained his sense of humour is encouraging and this book will undoubtedly have acted as a release for him. It is a sobering parable of how a single-minded dedication to your career will ultimately lead to unhappiness and loneliness. But there is always the hope of redemption if you are willing to see past the psychological wall and admit your failings. Collins is loved by all his children and is on good terms with two of his three ex-wives. An unwritten postscript to the book is that Collins is now reunited with Orianne, his third wife, and living a family life again. He has also come out of retirement to tour again – on his own terms – with his son, Nic, on drums.

When I finished the book there was a sense of a story incomplete. Maybe there will be a happy ending for Collins after all – his music is being re-appraised and many modern artists have come out to say he was an influence. His fans have not deserted him and the tour sold out instantly. So, there may be a few more twists to the tale. Collins says at the outset the book is his story as he remembers it and no-one can deny it is a compelling and cautionary tale.

Gayle says

Full review at:

Phil Collins came out with his memoir, *Not Dead Yet*, this fall, joining a crop of rock bios that have been getting a lot of attention recently. I was a big Genesis/Phil Collins fan back in the 80s, so I was excited to get my hands on *Not Dead Yet*.

It opens with his early days in suburban London and tracks his family life and his childhood/early adulthood obsession with music. From there, the juggernaut of Collins' career kicks in: joining Genesis, touring larger and larger venues, taking over frontman status from Peter Gabriel, more Genesis albums, his explosive solo career, more Genesis albums, Disney soundtracks, hit movie songs, and on and on. There is a reason Phil Collins seemed ubiquitous in the 80s and 90s – he was. He was also a workaholic who couldn't say no to any opportunity – to sing, to compose, to produce, to collaborate. He would travel the globe while on world tours, and then return to his home base where he would jump immediately into the next project without stopping.

This lifestyle took a toll on his personal life, which Collins does not gloss over. Three marriages, three divorces, long distance relationships with his five kids – these all weigh on Collins, and he perseverates on them throughout the book. He takes the blame for the failure of his marriages, though he manages to make himself look OK at the same time. Collins was criticized by the media when all of this was going on, particularly his delivering his request for a divorce from wife #2 via fax, and his affair with a woman half his age while on tour. Collins takes the blows here, for sure, but it's clear that he is relieved to finally be telling his story.

He also shines a light on some other personal stuff, like his obsession with the Alamo and the physical ailments that plagued his later career, like an ear stroke that caused him to lose his hearing in one ear and the hand and back issues that put an end to his prolific drumming. The toughest section comes at the end, when Collins describes in painstaking detail his slide into alcoholism in the early 2010s and the terrible toll it took on his body and his family.

I thoroughly enjoyed *Not Dead Yet*, especially the behind-the-scenes look at the music, the bands and the touring. On many occasions, I called up a song on Spotify or a video on YouTube, which definitely enhanced my enjoyment of the book. I am addicted to 80s nostalgia, and *Not Dead Yet* did not disappoint. If you were even a casual Genesis or Phil fan, I think you'll enjoy this book.

Collins is apologetic about his ubiquity – almost overly so. He suggests that his transatlantic dual performances on Live Aid in 1985 were almost accidental, and he distances himself from the coincidence of having hit songs with two bands on the charts at the same time. He basically says, "I get it – I was sick of me too." (Sometimes this is a little too much.)

Collins is clearly an emotional, complicated guy, and Not Dead Yet shows him in the most flattering light possible. I'm sure there are other sides to a lot of his stories (and in fact I heard a few of them at Thanksgiving dinner from someone who knows him), but I liked hearing (and believing) Phil's version for 10 hours. I mean, that's the point of a rock memoir, right? To clean up the reputation?

Collins' albums have all been recently remastered, and if you listen to them on Spotify you get a new cover, a closeup of Phil's sixtysomething face instead of the thirtysomething faces I remembered from the original covers. It's kind of creepy, but it's reality – our rock gods are aging. Not Dead Yet at least gave me glimpses of that younger guy, and for that I am grateful.

Danny says

Very well balanced look at Phil Collins professional and personal life. My favorite stories were: how Phil became the singer of Genesis, Phil making the albums he wanted to make with seemingly little label pressure and having tons of hits in the 1980's, Phil's loyalty to Genesis and workaholic personality, his Live Aid story, Phil Collins shocking bout with alcoholism and the severity and recency of it (hard to believe and relieving that this occurred at the height of social media and he was able to maintain his privacy). This was an easy read, I love music bios but don't consider myself a Phil Collins fan. I remember listening to my Dad's cassette of Abacab and getting blown away, but I feel like a bigger fan than ever after reading this book.

James Hartley says

This is a great read by a musician and actor who's seen it all over the course of his career. The story is nicely told - streaked, like the man himself, with self-doubt and insecurity. It goes to prove that we're all prisoners of our personalities, which is both sad and comforting.

Phil Collins has, obviously, long become a whipping boy for coolio music journalists and their followers - but, like it or not, he's played with John Martyn, Eric Clapton, Earth, Wind and Fire, Led Zeppelin, Holland-Dozier-Holland, Anni-Frid Lyngstad of Abba and Sting - among many others - as well as having a decades-long career with Genesis and multi-platinum success as a solo artist. He's also been in a couple of successful feature films and written the music to a well-loved Disney film. There are Oscars and Grammy's in there too, plus plenty of partying, and, frankly, the hipsters can put all that in their bitter and choke on it.

As well as some good stories - Live Aid is gripping, particularly the Zeppelin "reunion" - the story of Collins' personal life is well-told - the big shock coming for me with his descent into the bottle very late on. He hit it and hit it hard - managing to be holiday neighbours with Keith Richards yet still being the one to disturb the peace.

All in all, this a good, Christmassy, read-in-a-couple-of--sittings bio. It's written in the present tense, which is sometimes surprising, but the glue holding it all together is the personality of the main character. He's oddly detached, can't take it all seriously, sees bad luck and missed opportunities when he's at the height of his success, is an everything-a-holic but ploughs on, often knowing that what he's doing is not good for him or those around him. Some kind of deep-rooted insecurity, a kind of self-loathing, is at the bottom of all this - perhaps the feeling that his dad didn't and wouldn't have approved of what he was doing - that being a musician was not a real job.

Claire says

My review should be read with the understanding that I'm not Phil Collins fan. I don't dislike him, but I'm definitely not an enthusiast. While I found some of the stories Collins told interesting; I found that this memoir was quite a superficial narrative. It reads as a chronicle of events; lacking the reflection and deeper analysis which might have made it more engaging. I often found myself skimming. Interesting but not well executed.

Julie says

Not Dead Yet by Phil Collins is a 2016 Crown Archetype publication.

My luck with rock memoirs this year has been lukewarm at best. I've been disappointed, or unimpressed or bored to tears for the most part, with only one or two exceptions.

So, being a huge fan of Genesis and Phil Collins, I was a little wary about reading this one, but noticed the book has had a very favorable response from readers, so I decided to give it a try.

Well, this one wins best rock/music memoir of 2016 award from me!

Phil told his story with so much humor and honesty!! This is a very refreshing approach to take with a memoir and Phil is incredibly personable and despite his fame, he seems to have a self-deprecating manner, especially when speaking of his foibles. Only once or twice was there a hint of snark, but it was so light it hardly counted.

My favorite segment of this book was about 'Live Aid'. This was a crazy adventure for Phil, who participated in both shows, with mixed success. I ended up laughing out loud about some of the absurdities of that day.

Once the nineties rolled around and Phil left Genesis, I lost track of him, except for the scandal involving his divorce from his second wife. But, here in America, I don't recall it being such a big thing, but, apparently, it was a pretty big deal in the British tabloids. His reputation took a big hit and his career started to slow down during this time as well, which led to a slow downward spiral.

He did, while describing this tumultuous period, did do a little whining, and of course I did not approve of his decisions, but he doesn't gloss over his misdeeds or make excuses either. He was a cad and he knew it, and owned up to it, for the most part.

I was lucky enough to have attended a Genesis concert, as well one of Phil's solo performances. Both shows were outstanding and I am thankful I got to experience the wonderful musicianship and talent Phil brought to the table. Reading this memoir brought back so many wonderful memories and reminded me of the wealth of material Phil was involved with. I've been revisiting a lot of this wonderful music while reading this memoir, and am amazed by the quality of work, the immense talent, and depth much of this music showcases,

whether with Genesis or with his solo work. His music really is iconic.

The details he provided about the physical torment drummers can go through, especially on tour, was riveting. I never imagined the toll it takes on the drummer's hands and body, and the extreme measures they go through to make it through a tour. Not only that, Phil had to preserve his voice too, which was another struggle altogether.

Phil has led an interesting and colorful life and I so enjoyed hearing him tell his story in his own words, and appreciated his mesmerizing way with words that made me feel as though he were speaking to me directly and personally.

It is sad to hear his health has been so bad recently, and that he's suffered through a great deal of pain, both physically and emotionally.

However, he's back now.... Like he never went away.

This is one of the very best memoirs I've read, and is an absolute must for Phil's fans. But, even if you aren't a huge fan, you will probably find his story to be a fascinating read, will enjoy his humor and respect his candor.

5 stars

Colin Murtagh says

I was never a huge fan of Collins, although I enjoyed his work with Genesis, his solo work never really did much for me. Along with that, he was so ubiquitous in the 80s that it did sort of turn me off him. This book changed my mind entirely. Starting with his first drum kit, made for him at 3 year old, through up to his final retirement, this is a searingly honest look at his life. He admits his faults, is honest about his issues, yet at the same time his love for music comes shining through.

For a man with so much success he manages to be incredibly lacking in self confidence. He appears to be thinking that it will all stop soon, so he better get as much done as he could. At the same time though, he is getting offers to work with idols of his, such as Clapton and Plant. How could he turn that down.

I enjoyed this much more than I thought I would, and it's made me go back and revisit my record collection, which is never a bad idea.

Brett Rohlwing says

It's good to see Phil's not dead yet. You may be surprised, however, by how many times he came close to it. As a singer generally relegated to yer mom's CD collection, the man who appears as a smirking, affable chap in his music videos has suffered some major ups and downs in his personal life. Not so much in his professional life, though, as his career grew far beyond the band where his career truly took off, Genesis. Mr. Collins gives us a rough-and-tumble tour of his insanely successful music life and the personal toll it took on

his family and his own body. Anyone who's seen him perform knows how much charm he has, and that comes through in his book.

Scott Wilson says

By now, I've lost track of any simple explanation for how PC got to be my all-time No. 1 — how Genesis (both eras) and Collins as a solo act have dominated my listening for more than 30 years. And it isn't as though the rest of my Nick Hornby daybook of lists is, like, Chris DeBurgh and Night Ranger; there's a rich lode of unimpeachable, loved-by-all-thinking-persons stuff in my 4,000 albums, some expected and much obscure.

The "picnic, lightning" version: school bus trip, my Walkman, friend pushing a tape with "In the Air Tonight" and "Mama," primordial drums, unhinged voice, revelation at age 13. This was the spring of 1985, which turned out to be precisely the moment when anointing oneself a PC fan became not just convenient but (all too) obvious.

And then, over time, it all became rather less obvious. For the hypocrites, I mean. I stayed true.

Not Dead Yet is, at least in the PC-read audiobook that I mainlined in the car over the past two weeks, a gentle rebuke to those who fell away. The elements of his songwriting that made him, as he himself puts it, inescapable in the mid-1980s were then, and exist anew in this memoir, basic but undeniable: He writes catchy music, and he conveys primary-color emotions in affecting ways, with relatable self-effacement. That never changed. Perhaps the problem became that the humility of his songwriting voice and public persona became harder to believe as he became obviously wealthier and fully A-list. Some of us missed the overalls and the wristbands and were puzzled by the hair-slicking phase. Though some of us still bought anything he sang, played on or produced.

The book summons that old humility, that old self-effacement, that old middle-class wit. Especially in its first third, which recalls postwar London and austerity-Britain family life before peaking with a terrific set of sketches depicting the Marquee Club and the swinging '60s. Hearing Collins talk about his beloved Action, along with the Who and various other players of the time, is as satisfying as discovering some buried 1982 demo of his. He sounds animated and sharp, and he is excellent company.

And that's the book overall as an audio experience: Collins remains very good company, even when his life story takes turns toward defensiveness (a lighter grade than others who have suffered such critical abuse might have indulged) and the self-pity of the too-often-absent father who has missed too much. The late-life alcoholism that was discussed in the publicity run-up to the book's release is more harrowing than the interviews suggested. It's remarkable that he survived himself, and one of the book's aftertastes is the anxiety that his sobriety is still so new, so potentially fragile.

But don't approach even these chapters as an addiction memoir. There's very little self-insight about how drink took him over, beyond his having been a workaholic (a word he is at pains to dismiss) who thought it was time to take it easy and found that this was a big mistake. The reason to spend time with Phil is simply to hear him talk, over the equivalent of a lengthy road trip. There are no major untold anecdotes or revelations from the high-visibility center of his career; rather, he captures his childhood and adolescence, and the hungry couple of years between going pro and joining Genesis, with infectious delight before, in the back half, providing a certain caution that there sometimes is no failure quite like massive success.

Throughout, the writing is often lively and always sounds true to the voice reciting it. The momentum from the early part of the book propels the rest enough that the weaker moments — inevitably, the parts in which the star is a star — go by easily, with minimal eye-rolling and steady helpings of compensatory laughs.

It's not really a four-star book, if we're talking memoir, literature, insight, whatever. By any such measure, it's a somewhat wobbly three. But you know what? If there's a metric for how much one dreads the pitfalls of a memoir by a cultural figure who has been so intensely key to one's life, and then how much said memoir brings first relief and then happiness, this thing is five stars, easy. I spent its 12 hours basically writing a fan letter in my mind, a letter of gratitude (with a few questions about details held aside by the narrator) for a lot of music for which neither maker nor avid consumer need ever have apologized.

Jonathan Kent says

When it came to music, I think I was quite a late bloomer. I was 14 when I first heard a piece of music that pricked my interest. I also know the exact place. It was late summer 1987, we were returning from a family holiday in Majorca (my parents, my elder sister and younger brother). I can't remember too much of the actual holiday, but what I can remember is disembarking the Monarch airways plane at Gatwick airport. As we exited the plane an epic piece of music was playing over the planes speakers. Apart from 'that sounds cool' I thought no more of it. Then about a week later the same piece of music seeped its way upstairs from our lounge stereo. I rushed downstairs and my dad was playing a cassette tape recorded from the radio of Genesis live at Wembley stadium (including radio presenter interruptions - the done thing in the day). The song was 'The Brazilian' an instrumental track from their last album 'Invisible Touch'. My dad wasn't particularly enamoured but I was hooked.

Over the next few months I set about finding out more about this band and brought every album I could find in the local second hand music shops. Be it Phil Collins era or Peter Gabriel era, it didn't matter. I had found a BAND, and for me it has always been THE BAND. I followed all of the band members solo careers and have read every book written on them. I also have a clear memory of buying their final album We can't dance (not including 1998's Calling all Stations - also excellent) and the single 'No son of mine' receiving regular airplay on Radio 1! Those were the days...

So it was with a mixture of excitement and trepidation that I approached this biography from Phil Collins. I pretty much knew the history of the band and his solo career and the majority of the first half of the book follow the familiar story threads I knew; Joined an established band as a young drummer; took over as lead singer when Peter Gabriel left; Genesis got bigger; solo career launched after 'Face Value'; got really big; sold out stadiums; won an Oscar and then popularity waned during the 1990's. All of that is here and described in a cheery breezy manner. There is some great nostalgia - especially for his band mates Mike Rutherford and Tony Banks - and some very frank memories of his failed relationships.

This is where I started to struggle. The whole book is written with the same breezy, cheeky chappie nature which is fine for the rose tinted memories of his music and career. But when he talks about his broken marriages, alcoholism and the effects this all has on his children, it is still with this breezy tone. As if to say 'this is me, this is what happened, get over it'. He does take the time to apologise for these actions, but for me these passages on his personal life begin to grate and after finishing I am left with a sour taste in the mouth. It will never take away the enjoyment I have of the music, but rather than setting the record straight, it kind of confirms a lot of the bad press he had during the late 1990's.

There are some great funny moments, and these usually revolve around his attempts at a film career. Be it left on the cutting room floor on 'A hard days night' and 'Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang', or a clearly ego driven Dustin Hoffman cutting his scene in 'Hook' to barely a few seconds.

What does also come across is the great warmth he has for his close musical friends; Eric Clapton, Robert Plant, Sting, George Harrison and the singer he replaced in Genesis, Peter Gabriel. Unashamedly he admits to being a complete workaholic - moving from album to tour to producer with barely a break in between. It does show the stark reality of what it takes to maintain a high profile career and the impact it has on your friends and family.

It is a good book and it does shed some more light on parts of his life I wasn't so familiar with. The music was (and will continue to be) great. But unfortunately the sour taste still remains.

Angel Gelique says

Be it known by one and all that I'm a HUGE fan!!! :-)

"Music made me, but it also unmade me."

Santa Claus gives a three-year-old Phillip David Charles Collins (better known as the amazingly talented Phil Collins) a toy drum set. The rest is history!

This book offers a nice glimpse of Phil Collins' life from childhood through the present day. The legendary musician reveals plenty of details from both his personal and professional life. It is very well-written and makes you feel as though you've taken the journey with him. I was pleased to see the great assortment of photos, too. They enabled me to visualize the people Collins referred to throughout the book.

It is abundantly clear that Phil Collins is a brilliant musician who worked extremely hard to achieve success. He is passionate about music and it shows within his performances, both as a drummer and a singer.

This book comes across as an honest reflection of Collins' life--with both the ups and downs of his career and personal life objectively presented to readers. I have to admit, I'm not the biggest fan of memoirs, but this one was so very fascinating, I didn't want it to end. It's great to know how some of my favorite songs from the late eighties and nineties came into existence. And now I know what "Sussudio" is (and I'm not telling--go read the book)!

I'll also admit that I was a bit disheartened to learn that Collins was unfaithful to his second wife, who stood by him through thick and thin. I know he's only human and we all make mistakes, but he seemed like such a good, honest, loyal and trustworthy man prior to that. Don't get me wrong, I still think he's an extraordinary, decent man. It's just that learning how that extramarital affair began really shocked me. Even Collins, himself, admits that he was somewhat "stalker-ish" in pursuing his then soon-to-be third wife, Orianne, the young woman who was half his age.

Likewise, I was dismayed by Collins' alcoholism. He seemed to be such an intelligent, rational man. I'm surprised that he was unable to control his drinking and let it get to the point of jeopardizing his life. Though

I'm not judging him in the least, mind you. I can't begin to understand the pressures and stresses he must have felt to lead him down such a treacherous path.

I give him great credit for being so forthcoming about his mistakes and imperfections. This isn't a book that boasts about his many achievements with little more than that afterglow of success. This book is sincere and heartfelt--the good and the bad--presented to the world in one engrossing, humorous, poignant, detailed package.

Faults and all, Phil Collins is an amazing man. Even at the height of his fame, he never lost his sense of modesty. *"I've always hated stuffiness and snobbery..."* he writes, and based upon his interactions with people, whether fellow musicians or those hired for services, I believe that he is a kind, caring, friendly man who treats everyone equitably. Moreover, he is a family man at heart, which I greatly respect and admire. I absolutely love the fact that he considers his first wife's daughter, Joely, to be his own daughter though they are not biologically related.

"I'm her dad, she's my daughter, that's it."

That's it and that's awesome.

I could go on and on with words of praise for one of my all-time favorite musicians, but I will just add that I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I truly savored it and was sad when it ended. There's just one thing I dislike about it: The title. "Not Dead Yet." It is far too depressing because it evokes thoughts of his mortality and the mere thought of a world without the legendary Phil Collins is simply too heartbreaking to bear. Really.

If you're a Genesis and/or Phil Collins fan, then you're sure to enjoy this incredible memoir.

On a personal note, I especially *love* *In the Air Tonight*, *"Tonight, Tonight, Tonight,"* *"Land of Confusion"* and his songs from *Brother Bear*, my favorite Disney movie.

Hugh Mullan says

I'm a Genesis fanatic; I absolutely love them in all their iterations. I also liked Phil's solo work and thought the movie *Buster* was great. So I had very high expectations for this book and thankfully I wasn't let down. I highly recommend this book.

As expected, he addresses all the famous and infamous moments of his career. As he was omnipresent (as he admits) during the 80's and 90's I thought I knew all the stories but here we get Collins' perspective. And fair play to him, he's brutally honest about his own conduct at times.

I didn't know much about his most recent years, so it was fascinating to see what became of him after the Genesis reunion tour.

He has a deft touch and a nice turn of his phrase, essentially he can spin a good story but then again as a songwriter that's to be expected. It was incredible to read about just how many awards and numbers ones he's accumulated over the years and the famous people he's knocked about with.

It's also a very personal book and it's very touching at times; he was a guy who said yes to everything, leaving no time for his own family life and leading to long term and severe illness in later life.

One slight bugbear was that he didn't expand on certain eras and moments of his life, for example he glides through the Genesis days whilst writing a good deal more about his childhood and whilst the latter was interesting, I was reading it for the former.

But it was nice to see Phil's side of the story after being much maligned by the press for years. Essentially he seems like a good guy and the way he speaks about his family and friends (especially Peter Gabriel, Tony Banks and Mike Rutherford) makes him all the more likeable to me.

9/10.

Jeff Wetherington says

Thoroughly enjoyed the story of Phil Collins' life thus far. While extremely talented in the musical arts he was less so in the area of romantic relationships, something he admits with regret and honesty. That's something a lot of us can probably identify with. He takes you through all the highs and the lows of his life and the near-death experience that would seem to have given him a new lease on life at the age of 65.

Something I did that made this a unique reading was that I did not confine myself to reading. It occurred to me that I had most of his songs in my iTunes library or could listen to them on YouTube, so whenever he mentioned a song title I would stop and pull it up to listen and enjoy. It made the reading take a bit longer, but it was fun to do and added to the story, for me.

Laurie • The Baking Bookworm says

I was a big fan of Phil Collins' in the 80's and 90's, even seeing him perform in Toronto three times (an awesome performer, in case you're wondering). I still enjoy his older music but I admit that I had lost track of what he'd been up to over the past decade or so.

With Not Dead Yet Collins' has written a no holds barred look at his life. He starts with his beginnings in England with his family and goes into great detail about his early connections with some famous stars (which totally shocked me), his desire to be on stage and shows his readers where his fear of letting people down stems from. He takes his readers through his early years on stage and in music - both as a child performer and later as part of Genesis and as a solo artist.

The book also focuses a lot on his marriages and most especially his children. Going into this book I really didn't know much about his personal life except that he's the father of actress Lily Collins. What I got from this book is a look at a man trying to be a devoted father. While he is often absent from his children's daily lives due to his hectic professional schedule, for the most part, he is quite successful as a dad of five. As a husband? Not so much.

As a songwriter Collins' has proven he has the chops to hold his own with the big dogs of music so it should come to no one's surprise that he can write a mean autobiography too. His cheekiness comes through every so often in his writing (which goes hand-in-hand with his awesome cover picture) and readers will get a real

feel for Collins as a person. However, as much as it pains me to say this there is, at times, a whiff of conceitedness on his part. He's done a lot, he knows a lot of people so I'm not sure how he could have written this book without being 'showy' but I wanted to acknowledge the wee bit of arrogance that peeks through at times.

And perhaps that's part and parcel with Collin's brutal honesty with himself and his fans. Throughout the book he opens up about some weighty issues as well as theories surrounding his life. I admit that I went into this book looking for the back story involving his song "In the Air Tonight" and a better look into his personal life. I found this book enlightening regarding his recent personal and professional struggles (of which I knew next to nothing about). And yes, he even sheds some light on the inspirational catalyst of In the Air Tonight.

For mega fans of 80's/90's music they'll love the stories involving Genesis and other big name groups of the time. Personally, I found it a little heavy in the naming of 'who played what, on which track and with whom' at times. I was in it for more of the personal look into his life and not who played bass for which recording of a specific song. But that's a personal preference and doesn't influence my rating.

Collins' talent as a song writer, percussionist and eventually as a lead singer is known the world over but it was nice to be reminded of all that he has accomplished and struggled with personally as well. He has had some huge moments in his life, with others being more infamous in nature, but he uses this book to tell his story with blatant honesty and heart. He lays everything out for his readers to witness - his sometimes poor decisions, his monumental successes and rise to fame, his regrets and his love for his family. If you're wanting to get to know Phil better, both on and off stage, you'll want to pick up this book.

Disclaimer: My sincere thanks to Crown Archetype Books for providing me with a complimentary paperback copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Jennifer ~ TarHeelReader says

I'll come back to this one...I was listening to the audio and found myself avoiding it, so I'll wait for a different time.
