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Seeing the Light: Inside the Velvet Underground

Rob Jovanovic

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With exclusive new interviews from the band, this is a captivating account of one of the most influential groups in rock history.

Brian Eno famously said "the first Velvet Underground album only sold 10,000 copies, but everyone who bought it formed a band." Perhaps no other musicians can claim such limited chart success and so enduring a musical legacy as The Velvet Underground. Artists including David Bowie, The Sex Pistols, Joy Division, Roxy Music, Nirvana, U2, R.E.M., and even dissident Czech playwright and eventual president Václav Havel have cited the Velvets as a major influence.

Seeing the Light presents the untold story of the band. Formed by the mercurial Lou Reed and classically trained Welshman John Cale in the mid-1960s, the band first gained notoriety after being adopted by Andy Warhol. Warhol's patronage allowed the group to chart unexplored regions of rock 'n' roll, producing unforgettable and unsettling music that veered from droning, avant-garde experimentalism to folk-infused pop, offering taboo-busting tales of drug addiction, prostitution, and sexual deviance. Creative tensions and frustrated ambition eventually saw both Cale and Reed leave the band, to its ignominious end.

In the decades since, The Velvet Underground's music has attained classic status, revered alongside The Beatles and The Beach Boys as one of the sources of modern pop. With exclusive new interviews from members Moe Tucker and Doug Yule, as well as the widow of their bandmate Sterling Morrison, journalist Rob Jovanovic peels back the mystique of one of the most important bands in rock history.

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