

# Dalton changes his tune in book about Morrison

(AP) — David Dalton first met Jim Morrison and The Doors in 1967, at a New York City club just before the legendary Los Angeles band released its first album. He was less than impressed.

"I basically thought he was really fairly obnoxious," Dalton said of Morrison, the band's enigmatic singer. "He was really pleased with himself, he was extremely moody and arrogant."

Nearly a quarter-century later, Dalton has gotten to know the late Morrison better by writing a book about him. And his tune has changed.

"It was classic behavior we'd like to see everybody do," Dalton said of Morrison, known as a tortured poet who delved into the dark side of life with help from erie music, alcohol and drugs before his death at age 27 in 1971.

"It's not that I want to see people destroy themselves in a gladiatorial way right before my eyes," he said. "But even for his own time he was a wonderful maverick."

"The pure nuttiness of the guy — it's just very refreshing. They just don't make them like Jim anymore."

Hence the name for Dalton's book, released May 24 by St. Martin's Press of New York. Dalton, a contributing editor for Rolling Stone magazine, dubbed his book "Mr. Mojo Risin' — Jim Morrison: The Last Holy Fool."

"Mr. Mojo Risin'" comes from a title Morrison gave himself in his song "A. Woman" and, as the book reveals, an anagram for the name Jim Morrison. But the subtitle came from a more obscure reference — wanderers from the Middle Ages.

"HOLY FOOLS were inspired holy people who had visions. Before we knew it as mental illness," Dalton said, adding that artists Vincent Van Gogh and Jackson Pollack, poet Arthur Rimbaud and author Jack Kerouac fit the category.

"It's basically somebody who does very extreme and foolish things, but for an almost divine mission they feel they're on," Dalton said. "In order to pursue something endlessly, sometimes you have to make a fool of yourself."

But the Last Holy Fool?

"Basically, I think it sounded good and was sort of provocative," Dalton said. Dalton, who maintains an apartment in New York but spends most of his time 120 miles to the north in Delhi with wife Coco and son Toby, wasn't a Doors fan but was part of the '60s social change that was most dramatically captured in the music of the times.

He grew up in British Columbia and spent several years attending school in his parents' native England. There he fell in love with rhythm-and-blues and rock, which he called the music "God listened to when he was making the world. It changes your life. I'm still writing books about people in rock."

IT WASN'T until he graduated from Columbia University with a degree in classical languages and spent a couple of years pursuing art that he fell into music.

One day he decided to drop out of the art scene and picked up a camera. "That very instant the Beatles arrived, and the whole British invasion."

He began following bands around and took photos for posters, album covers and publicity. He sent photos to Jann Wenner, who in 1967 was starting a small maga-

zine called Rolling Stone, but Wenner told him he needed stories to go with them.

Dalton, who had worked with the Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds, the Dave Clark Five, James Brown and other notables, said he was tiring of musicians making obscene gestures at the camera half the time anyway, and when he lost his camera in an airport he decided to start a writing career.

Rolling Stone was the musical Bible of the '60s, with a left-wing political bent that echoed the rebellious nature of the music. Perhaps the three musicians most emblematic of the rise and fall of the '60s were Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin and Morrison.

WHAT KILLED all three at a young age, according to Dalton, was that they created strong images, and when the '70s came and the young, protesting crowd that had followed them began to dissipate, no one was left to hear them.

"You create this image for yourself and you can't eradicate it," Dalton said. "These people were suddenly left like fantastic zoological exhibits, like mutations."

But Morrison has lived on more than the other two. Dalton said The Doors' innovative, dark music has kept a freshness unlike the work of the other two. Also, Dalton said Morrison's persona was based upon a mystique that lasted through a Doors' revival in the early 1980s when the band's dramatic opus "The End" was featured in "Apocalypse Now," and another revival prompted by the recent Oliver Stone film "The Doors."

That mystique, promoted by Morrison's poetry, oblique titles such as "The Lizard King" and his legendary wanton life, put Dalton off in the '60s.

"For Jim Morrison to say he was a poet first and a rock star second, there's a deadly pretentiousness," Dalton said. "They were (UCLA) film students. There was nobody more pretentious than film students. They do look like a bunch of film students playing rock."

Dalton — whose book got a ringing endorsement on the back from Stone — wrote not of his own dealings with The Doors or even much on other people's lives with Morrison. Instead of telling a tale of Morrison's well-documented life, he approaches him from a psychological standpoint, in researched essay form rather than story form.

DALTON DIDN'T want a book like the Danny Sugerman-Jerry Hopkins book "No One Here Gets Out Alive," which presented Morrison in a fanish way during the early '80s Doors revival.

"It's not an inch-by-inch trench-warfare study of him," he said. "This clarifies some things and takes a look at him as a wonderfully obsessed character."

The photo-filled, 160-page paperback centers on Morrison as a mythic hero — part Michaelangelo's "David" (as in the famous Joel Brodsky shirtless photo), part tortured artist in the Rimbaud vein, part sex idol, part rebel.

That description also fits another American cultural icon about whom Dalton has written two books — James Dean.

"I'm basically interested in this whole post-War evolution of culture," Dalton said.

That may mean Dalton will be writing more books about his '60s generation.

"I spent the '70s writing about the '60s, then I had to figure out what to do next," Dalton said. "And here I am still writing about the '60s."

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