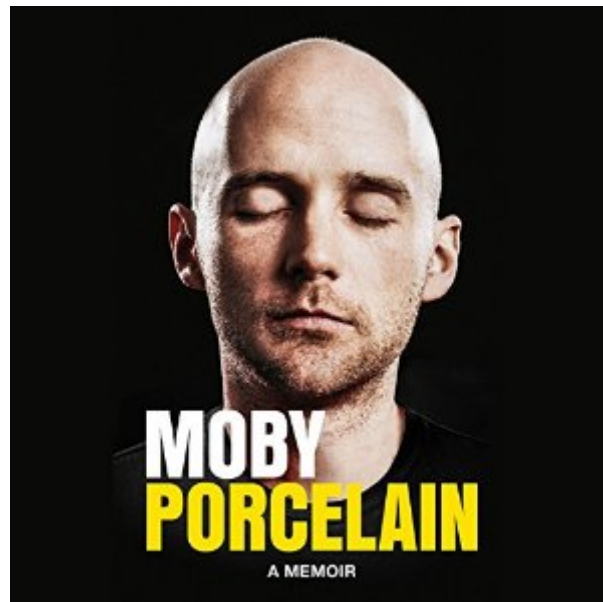


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# Porcelain: A Memoir



## Synopsis

From one of the most interesting and iconic musicians of our time, a piercingly tender, funny, and harrowing account of the path from suburban poverty and alienation to a life of beauty, squalor, and unlikely success out of the NYC club scene of the late '80s and '90s. There were many reasons Moby was never going to make it as a DJ and musician in the New York club scene. This was the New York of Palladium; of Mars, Limelight, and Twilo; of unchecked, drug-fueled hedonism in pumping clubs where dance music was still largely underground, popular chiefly among working-class African Americans and Latinos. And then there was Moby - not just a poor, skinny white kid from Connecticut but a devout Christian, a vegan, and a teetotaler. He would learn what it was to be spat on, to live on almost nothing. But it was perhaps the last good time for an artist to live on nothing in New York City: the age of AIDS and crack but also of a defiantly festive cultural underworld. Not without drama, he found his way. But success was not uncomplicated; it led to wretched, if in hindsight sometimes hilarious, excess and proved all too fleeting. And so by the end of the decade, Moby contemplated an end in his career and elsewhere in his life and put that emotion into what he assumed would be his swan song, his good-bye to all that, the album that would in fact be the beginning of an astonishing new phase: the multimillion-selling *Play*. At once bighearted and remorseless in its excavation of a lost world, *Porcelain* is both a chronicle of a city and a time and a deeply intimate exploration of finding one's place during the most gloriously anxious period in life, when you're on your own, betting on yourself, but have no idea how the story ends, and so you live with the honest dread that you're one false step from being thrown out on your face. Moby's voice resonates with honesty, wit, and above all an unshakable passion for his music that steered him through some very rough seas. *Porcelain* is about making it, losing it, loving it, and hating it. It's about finding your people, your place, thinking you've lost them both, and then somehow, when you think it's over, from a place of well-earned despair, creating a masterpiece. As a portrait of the young artist, *Porcelain* is a masterpiece in its own right, fit for the short list of musicians' memoirs that capture not just a scene but an age and something timeless about the human condition. Push "play".

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Achingly sublime one moment; gritty, messy and raw the next. When Moby leaves us an unfinished piece at the end, it's because he himself "like his music" is an evolving work in progress. Up to that point, we are introduced to a young man who continually [and hilariously] begs forgiveness of every sin of the flesh by an easily offended ticked-off Christian God who made him annoyingly imperfect. Next we meet a DJ who learns to navigate New York at its most artistically creative, and at its most devastating due to the AIDS crisis. Seems there's always a homeless guy, a street hustler, a poor dog and rich symbolism lurking in the background of almost every scene. Moby wants to belong but is cursed with acute self awareness of being different. Some may say those differences separate the artist on stage from the rest of us, even if Moby is a self-deprecating, funny, and somewhat reluctant artist "he does seem blessed both in music and now in storytelling by the very god he feared he may have offended at the start.

I really enjoyed certain aspects of this book. Moby's stories well-written and engaging. The problem is that he chooses to gloss over (or completely leave out) many of the interesting aspects of his life and career. The book begins strong, it tells the story of how he came up during his teenage years and he goes into great descriptive detail about his early club days as a DJ. Then, oddly, once he begins to have real success the subject matter changes and becomes mostly stories and anecdotes about hanging out with his friends, backstage on tour, drinking, and random hookups. Overall the book kept me entertained and engaged, but I can't help but feel like there was such a missed opportunity here. He spends the briefest of time talking about his music and early albums. His first album, 1992's self-titled, isn't even mentioned once. He discusses writing two songs from Everything Is Wrong and covers a couple of days during the recording of Animal Rights. The

soundtrack compilation *I Like To Score* is mentioned in passing, and the book ends abruptly during the writing process of *Play*. *Play* was the album that turned everything around for him, that brought him back from the brink after the disastrous reception to *Animal Rights*. It would have been nice to have a few more chapters that discussed his musical redemption. As it is, it feels like the last quarter of the book is missing.

Went to the book signing in NYC. Moby read an excerpt about feeling like a real New Yorker since moving back from Connecticut (I went through a similar experience). Reminiscing about pre corporate rave and party days was awesome. You don't know what he went through until reading this!

Moby is probably the most unassuming pop/rock star you might ever meet. To date, he is his own PR spokesperson who handles his own social networks and blogs all by himself, without any corporate / label filters – that's a rarity in a world of prefab pop stars controlled by big entertainment conglomerates. The artist and the person are never far apart. But there was a time where Moby could have just faded into oblivion in the 90's – that's where this book focuses on: Moby's own anecdotal life and musical memories mainly set between the late 1980s with his first DJ gigs, and up to the late '90s right before striking it big with his supposedly 'last' album, *Play*. We get to read in full, raw details, about his lifetime living on an abandoned factory in Connecticut, on drug- and crime-ridden late 80's New York, his early becoming of a vegan, his odd relationships with Christianity, his own family, alcohol and girlfriends, and his personal struggles to make it in the music business, along with many moments that verge on the funny and surreal, in his usual, often self-deprecating yet lighthearted narrative. If you are already a Moby fan and follow him on social networks, this book will fit hand in glove, making a pleasant read and feeling deep sympathy for the man, or sadness, or both at the same time, while encouraging you to rediscover his music – this time with new ears. This book will undoubtedly appeal to anyone who lived through the rave/techno scene of the 1990s as a partygoer or just as a fan of the music, to which Moby of course contributed many anthems that keep being popular to this day.

I highly encourage you to get the audio edition of Moby's memoir, *Porcelain!* • Moby's inaugural book, brilliantly narrated by Moby, is a seminal work that gives the listener a rare glimpse into the brilliant mind-set of a musical composing genius! Listeners will be transported back to the late 80s through 90s by way of Moby's vivid memories that made me cry, chuckle and even

laugh uncontrollably. Listening to Moby's memoir makes you smile and celebrate the in-between moments that make up one's existence as a human being like nothing else I've ever experienced! Moby is a living legend who gives listeners open access to the true authentic and unfiltered lifestyle of a rock star. The book is very inspirational because Moby shares the focus and dedication it truly takes to become an iconic DJ and musician. Even in the darkest most anxiety filled moments of Moby's life he finds joy and splendor and motivation and pours them into his magical melodic music compositions and listeners are granted special front row access to his creative process along the way! I was not able to hit pause while listening because the journey Moby takes the listener on is one that you just don't want to end. I eventually did hit pause to hit play on his album titled Play cause I just had to hear some of my favorite Moby compositions. Listening to Moby's music again made me realize that even though I thought I loved his music with an intensity unimaginable, knowing now the fascinating back story, motivation and meaning behind his magical music made the sound even that much more vibrant and beautiful in my mind's eye. SO no matter where you are right now or what you are doing I highly recommend you hit pause on that and hit play on Moby's master piece of a memoir!

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