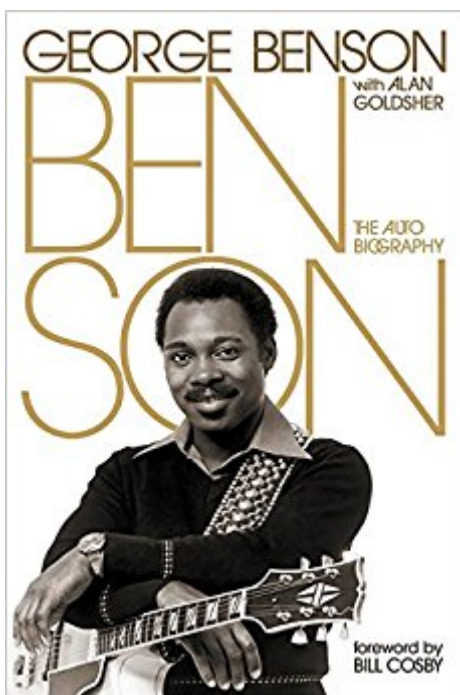


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# Benson: The Autobiography



## Synopsis

Over the span of his illustrious five-decade career, George Benson has sold millions of records, performed for hundreds of millions of fans, and cut some of the most beloved jazz and soul tunes in music history. But the guitarist/vocalist is much more than "This Masquerade," "On Broadway," "Turn Your Love Around," and "Give Me the Night." Benson is a flat-out inspiration, a multitalented artist who survived an impoverished childhood and molded himself into the first true "and truly successful" jazz/soul crossover artist. And now, on the heels of receiving the prestigious NEW Jazz Masters award, George has finally decided to tell his story. And what a story it is. *Benson: The Autobiography* follows George's remarkable rise from the ghettos of Pittsburgh to the stages of South Africa, and everywhere in between. George Benson is an unparalleled storyteller, and his tales of scuffling on the Chitlin Circuit with jazz legend Brother Jack McDuff, navigating his way through the recording studio with Miles Davis, and performing with the likes of Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, B.B. King, Quincy Jones, Benny Goodman, Rod Stewart, Chaka Khan, Count Basie, and Lou Rawls will enthrall devotees of both music history and pop culture. A treat for serious listeners, hardcore guitar aficionados, and casual music followers alike, George's long-awaited book allows readers to meet the man who is one of the most beloved, prolific, and bestselling musicians of his or any other era.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"George Benson has quite a story to tell, and I'm sure his life will be an inspiration to many. He's a

formidable talent as a guitarist and singer, and the stories surrounding his rise to fame are quite intriguing."#151;Herbie Hancock"For as long as I've known him#151;and we're talking over forty years#151;George Benson has demonstrated an uncanny ability to tell beautiful, exciting, interesting, musical stories with both his guitar and his singing, so it's no surprise that Benson: The Autobiography#151;a book that's been a long time coming#151;is full of beautiful, exciting, interesting, musical stories. To paraphrase George himself, this book will put you over the moon!"#151;Quincy Jones"Guitarist, vocalist, songwriter, entertainer: George Benson truly is a man of a thousand talents, each more wonderful than the last. And now you can add author to the list."#151;Al Jarreau"The funny, colorful stories in George's wonderful memoir made me want to go and play some guitar and bass songs with him, just like in the old days."#151;Ron CarterNo Echo#147;A perfect gift for the jazzbo in your life.â •The New York City Jazz Record, October 2014#147;This is a breezy tome that reads with the elegant ease and straightforward earnestness of one of its author's soulful guitar solos. Unsurprisingly, the jazz world's best-known crossover artist presents his life story in an accessible, conversational manner akin to the relaxed delivery of his many Grammy Award-garnering vocalizations#133;insightful#133;entertaining#133;. Benson: The Autobiography is fun from start to finish.â •Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 9/28/14#147;One might have expected Mr. Benson to focus primarily on his decades of stardom, touching only briefly on his roots. Fortunately for jazz and for Pittsburgh, it's the other way around.â •Record Collector, December 2014#147;An engaging read.â •Downbeat, December 2014#147;It's a breezy memoir#133;The book has a friendly, conversational tone throughout#133;fans who want to learn more about the career of one of jazz's most popular artists will enjoy the ride.â •BackstageAxxess, 12/18/14"Very well done and filled with amusing and informative anecdotes. Even if you don't know much about jazz, you'll come away with a greater sense and understanding of this important music.â •

George Benson, a ten-time Grammy Award-winner and National Endowment of the Arts Jazz Master, is one of the three bestselling jazz artists of all time. He lives in Arizona with his wife, Johnnie.[www.GeorgeBenson.com](http://www.GeorgeBenson.com)Twitter: @GBguitarFacebook:

[www.facebook.com/GeorgeBenson](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgeBenson)Alan Goldsher is a music and culture writer and the author of eleven books. His music journalism has appeared in Bass Player and Guitar Player, and his sportswriting has been featured in ESPN The Magazine, ESPN.com, NBA.com, and ChicagoBulls.com. He lives in Chicago.[www.AlanGoldsher.com](http://www.AlanGoldsher.com)

I eagerly awaited the release of George's autobiography, and it was an enjoyable read. Why only three stars? At just over two hundred pages (with fairly large type), it is simply too brief. George is a good storyteller, and sixty percent of the narrative concerns his career from 1963 through 1979, the part of his story that I was most interested in learning more about. He could have easily doubled the number of pages devoted to it. So while I recommend this book, I do have to say that I went away wanting much more. Also, this is the story of George Benson's musical life, not his personal one. If you want to read about many of the baaaaad cats he has played with, you will find it here. If you are more interested in his family life, etcetera, you won't.

I am enjoying reading this book. It gives this view that there is a lot of hard work involved in becoming undoubtedly one of the most copied guitarist. I especially liked that I have learned that hard work and sticktoitiveness is a vital component of any worthwhile undertaking and that you will undoubtedly take your hits along the way. As the name say it is an autobiography, and it does that well from George Benson's early years as a lad growing up impoverished and not realizing that he was impoverished. A scenario that a lot of us can identify with. The book also gave me a perspective on other musicians that are met along the way and how many of them contributed, some in major ways, others just positive, others negative, but all contributions that have let to the outcome in George Benson that we enjoy very much today and have been enjoying for many years. In the book he refers to a Gibson super 400 CES that he had bought for a thousand dollars and because of hard times had to pawn it for \$72. He referred to it there as his boss Guitar and I wonder if that was the guitar that he had used on the album(CD) "The New Boss Guitar of George Benson". On the book cover he is seen holding a Gibson Super 400 CES, the name Gibson appears to have been dogged(Photoshopped) out of the picture, I wonder why that was done. Since the guitar was new, the name would have been clearly seen. We meet many of the greats even in passing in this book, very enjoyable reading.

I had the pleasure of meeting George when he played the Wendover, Utah Peppermill Concert Hall. Met him poolside and spent several hours conversing with him and learning about his past and his present activities other than performing. I found George to be a marvelous and very intriguing person who was more interested in my girlfriend and me instead of himself. There has to be an ego to accomplish all he has accomplished but it is totally under control. The book is truly enjoyable and shows the struggles of a poor kid, Little Georgie, growing up in the poorer area of Pittsburgh. You might think he had a lot of lucky breaks, but as a businessman and founder of several companies, I

know that the only lucky breaks that exist are those that you create. It is an intriguing and amazing story about how George rose from a little kid with a hand made guitar to become one of the world's greatest guitarists. Enjoyable to read. Written as it would have delivered verbally by George. All in all, very enjoyable. His book is as intriguing as the man himself and I can say nothing other than "read it", particularly if you have aspirations to do something more in the future than you're doing at present. Ongoing drive and reaching for higher goals is defined in the book and are the basic rules of success. Thanks for inviting us backstage and the added pleasure of meeting your son and the rest of your crew. Thanks George for achieving the success you've achieved and bringing us music we've enjoyed for years and will continue to enjoy. Ray & Roxane

I've probably been to as many George Benson concerts as George himself. Beginning when I 15 yrs old and seeing him live for the first time. There was a jazz club in my neighborhood called the York club. There were probably only seven people total in the club that night. George, his organist and drummer; me, my sister and a buddy of mine; and the bar tender. That was it. But George Benson played like he was at Carnegie Hall with a full house. He played so much guitar I can still see and hear it in my mind today 45 yrs later. He even let my buddy and I get on stage during intermission and play a tune on his guitar and organ. A few years later just before Breezin hit he performed at a club in Hermosa Beach Ca. I got there early and was sitting by the door waiting. George walks up with his equipment and asked me if I would watch it for him so he could go get something to eat. I said sure and he left. I felt the greatest privilege and honor had been given me. The opportunity to watch the great George Benson's guitar and amp. The story doesn't end there (I guess I should write my own GB book). When he returned, he asked if I had a car because he needed a ride to his hotel that was close by. I said sure. I took him there, waited and returned him to the club. I was on cloud nine...thousand! My idol riding in my (raggedy) car. He played the concert and of course tore the place apart.

This was an awesome book! Great stories about the music business and about his career. There are only two things wrong with this book: one, we're told almost nothing about his current family life (we hear an anecdote about a domestic problem with his wife at the start of his career, but it's not clear if he left her, if his current wife is this same woman or what; and two, he doesn't tell you how he gained his formidable technique. He did, however, drop a million dollar idea while he was talking (as he did in his instructional videotape). He's one of those people, like Oprah, that I'd like to hang out with for a weekend and just listen to him talk because he will eventually, like Oprah and others,

casually hand you a million dollar idea (drop a jewel).

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