

# BOOK ★ REVIEWS

FIFTY SIDES OF THE BEACH BOYS • BY MARK DILLON  
ECW PRESS, 2012 • 315 PAGES

If this year feels a little like 2012 going on 1962, that's probably because the Beach Boys are on tour again. Not lead singer Mike Love's solo Beach Boys act, or guitarist-vocalist Al Jardine's Family & Friends Beach Band, but the real deal with the real Boys – at least, the ones who are still alive (RIP Dennis and Carl Wilson). Probably the biggest surprise of the Beach Boys 50th anniversary reunion is the presence of musical savant Brian Wilson, the key composer behind many of the group's biggest hits. Without Wilson's signature vocal arrangements and ambitious song writing, the Beach Boys may have been relegated to the millennial oldies circuit years ago instead of embarking on one of the most anticipated tours of the last decade. Don't take my word for it, though – check out the new book by Mark Dillion, *Fifty Sides of the Beach Boys* - an authoritative look at “the songs that tell their story”. As a lover of Beach Boys music, as well as related memoirs and musicological texts, I can assure fellow fans that this modest volume contains substantive data on the songs that made the band great, rather than the salacious details of their past personal lives. The inspiration and biographical context for 50 beloved Beach Boys tunes is explored, and readers have an opportunity to learn about other musicians who participated in creating the tracks, on stage and in the studio. Critics and audiences used to accuse the Boys of being chronically unhip, but the tide has turned in the band's favor. This is one book definitely made for these times.

