

Niemi, Patti**Sticking it Out: From Juilliard to the Orchestra Pit, a Percussionist's Memoir (2016)**

A fascinating, entertaining memoir about the percussionist's world and the process of getting a seat in a professional orchestra. Read this and learn what a percussionist has to worry about. Rochester-area author!

Sachs, Harvey**Toscanini: Musician of Conscience (2017)**

Sachs delivers a comprehensive, meticulously researched biography of the legendary conductor Arturo Toscanini (1867-1957). Gifted with prodigious musical ability which manifested itself at an early age, Toscanini led a remarkable life: early fame, dissent with rising fascism in Italy (and subsequent emigration to the U.S.), an illustrious career conducting the NBC Symphony in NYC during the 1940s, and triumphant return to his home stage of La Scala in Milan in 1946. (Available on audio).

Simon, Carly**Boys in the Trees: a Memoir (2015)**

Simon discusses her life, early performances with her sister in Greenwich Village, and a solo career that made her the first artist in history to win a Grammy, an Academy Award, and a Golden Globe Award. (Available on audio).

**Smith, Patti****M Train (2015)**

Patti Smith's most recent essay collection reads like a dream. The musician turned poet ruminates on artists and authors, lost possessions, beachfront cafes, and her late husband Fred Sonic Smith, while traveling the globe for speaking arrangements, a secret society meeting, and the graves of Genet, Plath, Rimbaud and Mishima. Black coffee, brown toast, and serial crime dramas are Smith's constant companions. Black and white Polaroids taken by the author enhance the print edition; the audio is narrated by Smith in her signature scratchy voice. (Available on audio).

Southall, Brian**Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (2017)**

This is a compilation of excellent photography transporting the readers to a special time in their lives; a time of youth with the magic of their favorite music and performers. There are articles, excerpts, and exposés but the images are what's most intoxicating.

Related Titles:

Who Shot Rock and Roll: A Photographic History, 1955-Present (2009); Gail Buckland
50 Years of Rolling Stone: The Music, Politics and People that Changed Our Culture (2017); Jann Wenner

Springsteen, Bruce**Born to Run (2016)**

Easy and fun to read, Springsteen writes about his life and his struggle for success. He starts with his childhood and chronologically tells his story of how he finally made it. (Available on audio).



Books about MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

All fiction and nonfiction titles listed are available at libraries in the Monroe County Library System.



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FICTION

Ishiguro, Kazuo

Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall (2009)

Each story focuses on music and musicians, and the close of day. All of the stories have unfulfilled potential as a linking theme, tinged with elements of regret. (Available on audio).

Kunzru, Hari

White Tears by Hari Kunzru (2017)

Two twenty-something New Yorkers who have an obsession with old blues recordings find that strange things start happening to them when they record an unknown singer in the park and post it online as a “lost recording” that they “rediscovered.” This story has a lot of different elements to keep your attention, including a dual timeline road trip, a ghost story that may be more than just a story, and big questions about how race and class interactions have impacted the music industry as well as our nation’s history.

Picoult, Jodi

Sing You Home (2011)

Published with an audio cd, the reader should listen to songs before the accompanying chapter. Each song is sung in the voice of the main character, Zoe, who is a music therapist. After struggling to have a baby through IVF five times, Zoe and her husband Max get a divorce. The story starts here and so do the legal issues that Picoult is so good at writing. The book on cd is paired seamlessly with the audio CD.

Ryan, Jennifer

The Chilbury Ladies’ Choir (2017)

The year is 1940, and with the men off to war, the vicar has closed down the choir in the English village of Chilbury. Follow the lives of the women on the home front as they carry on, forming their own choir, enriching those near to them through their music.

Ryan, Pam Munoz

Echo (2015)

This Newbery Honor novel is fairytale-like and centers around music and the threads of a magical harmonica that interconnect all of its central characters in each different story via a different musically gifted child living in a different historical time period. The author reads the audiobook and it is not to be missed.

NON-FICTION

Adams, Noah

Piano Lessons: Music, Love, & True Adventures (1997)

A captivating story filled with dreams, self-doubt and persistence as a man learns to play the piano. Tales of eccentric geniuses, everyday people and many musical tidbits, add humorous glimpses into the multi-layered worlds of pianists.

Brownstein, Carrie

Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl (2015)

The guitarist for greatest rock band, Sleater-Kinney, as well as noted NPR commentator and co-creator of the TV show Portlandia in a memoir about becoming a musician in the Pacific Northwest and just plain growing up.

Byrne, David

How Music Works (2012)

Byrne explores how profoundly music is shaped by its time and place, and he explains how the advent of recording technology in the twentieth century forever changed our relationship to playing, performing, and listening to music.

Edwards, Julie Andrews

Home: A Memoir of My Early Years (2008)

Julie Andrews recounts her childhood and early theater career with frank honesty and lots of detail. Though her childhood had painful events, she found strength in being able to use her marvelous voice to help support her family. After beginning her performing career in vaudeville and radio, Julie then moved to New York with a contract to perform on Broadway. There her success continued to grow as she worked with many industry greats, culminating in an offer from Walt Disney himself to move to Hollywood and begin her film career with the iconic Mary Poppins. Definitely a great read for any fan who wants to learn more about Julie’s early years and her path to stardom. (Available on audio).

Gordon, Kim

Kim Gordon Girl in a Band (2015)

In this memoir, Kim Gordon of the alternative rock band Sonic Youth, offers an insightful read on the life of a post-punk icon. Gordon introduces us to an array of equally influential artists and musicians who crossed her path including Yoko Ono, Courtney Love and Chris Corsano. Giving clear insight into what it was like to be a female rocker, Gordon gives a candid description of both her life and her rock career.

Lopez, Steve

The Soloist : a Lost dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music (2008)

Lopez, a Los Angeles Times columnist, tells the true story of Nathaniel Ayers, a brilliant cellist who becomes schizophrenic and homeless. Lopez, develops a friendship with Ayers after discovering him living on the street and brings his story to national prominence in his columns. (Available on audio).

Marcus, Griel

Real Life Rock: The Complete Top Ten Columns, 1986-2014 (2015)

A collection of lists from the noted rock critic published in places as far afield as the Village Voice and the Believer. Marcus covers more than just music; he ties movies, books and current events into the zeitgeist and examines the vast landscape of popular culture.

Margolick, David

Strange Fruit: Billie Holiday, Café Society, and An Early Cry for Civil Rights (2000)

An illumination of the lives of singer and jazz legend, Billie Holiday, and poet, Abel Meeropol, aka Lewis Allan. In 1930, after he saw a photo of the horrific lynching of two black men, Allan wrote the chilling lyrics of the song, “Strange Fruit.” It is considered to be one of the most significant songs of the civil rights movement and was a direct musical description and indictment of lynching. Billie Holiday recorded the song in 1939, and bearing witness, often closed her concerts with it. “Strange Fruit” continues to be performed today.