

Recommended Reading List: *The Music in Life*

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Fiction

***The Music of Bees* / Eileen Garvin 2021**

Following three lonely strangers in a rural Oregon town, each working through grief and life's curveballs, who are brought together by happenstance on a local honeybee farm where they find surprising friendship, healing--and maybe even a second chance--just when they least expect it.

***When the Music Stopped* / Beryl Matthews 2017**

London, 1912. Twins Lester and Lillia Holdsworth are destined for the stage. Lester is a brilliant pianist; Lillia a magnificent opera singer. But their cruel father has other ideas for their future. Lester is sent to a military academy, while Lillia must marry Lord Dalton - a self righteous, pompous friend of her father's looking for a young wife to give him an heir. Yet their plans to defy their father's wishes are put on hold when war breaks out in 1914. Suddenly Lester is flying planes for the RFC and Lillia trains as a nurse to help those wounded at home, and then abroad. For both twins, the fighting brings hardships and difficult choices. They wait in hope, like the rest of Europe, for the war to end and the music to start again.

***Music and Freedom* / Zoë Morrison 2016**

Alice Haywood is born on an orange farm in country New South Wales. She begins playing the piano when she is three, taught by her English mother who is unhappy in Australia and in a desolate, violent marriage. When Alice is seven, her mother, desperate for her daughter to leave if she can't, sends her to boarding school in the bleak north of England, and there Alice stays for the next ten years. Then she's offered a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London. That year, on a summer school in Oxford, she meets Edward, an economics professor, who sweeps her off her feet. But underneath his suave demeanor, Edward is a damaged man. He traps her into marriage and Alice is stuck, oppressed by his cruelty, in the Oxford home he has bought for her. After a disastrous recital of Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto, she stops playing and her dreams of becoming a concert pianist evaporate. Alice and Edward have a son, Richard, whom she adores. He too is a talented musician. But as Richard grows up he becomes more and more distant, and ultimately Alice can't find it in herself to carry on. Then she starts to hear the most beautiful music coming from the walls of her house.

***The Sisters' Song* / Louise Allan 2018**

As children, Ida loves looking after her younger sister, Nora, but when their beloved father dies in 1927, everything changes. The two girls move in with their grandmother who is particularly encouraging of Nora's musical talent. In Nora, she sees herself, the artist she was never allowed to be. As Nora follows her dream of a brilliant musical career, Ida takes a job as a nanny and their lives become quite separate. The two sisters are reunited as Nora's life takes an unwelcome direction and she finds herself isolated in the Tasmanian bush saddled with a husband and children. Embittered and resentful about her lost chances, Nora welcomes Ida's help with her chaotic household. When Ida marries Len, a reliable and good man, she hopes her dreams of a family of her own will be fulfilled. Unfortunately it becomes clear that this is never likely to happen. In Ida's eyes, Nora possesses everything in life that could possibly matter yet she values none of it. Set in rural Tasmania over a span of seventy years, the strengths and flaws of motherhood are revealed through the mercurial relationship of these two very different sisters, Ida and Nora. *The Sisters' Song* speaks of dreams, children and family, all entwined with a musical thread that binds them together.

***Rain Music* / Di Morrissey 2015**

Di writes about the Australia she knows, she loves, she's explored. *Rain Music* is inspired by her adventures in far north Queensland - its characters, its forgotten history, its modern dilemmas. A brother and sister, Ned and Bella Chisholm, are struggling with a family tragedy that has set them on opposite paths. After Ned takes off to pursue his musical dreams in far north Queensland, he disappears. When Bella goes in search of her brother, she ends up in remote Cooktown and both their lives are dramatically changed in the isolated, little-known far north of Australia. One story through two sets of eyes.

***Water Music* / Margie Orford 2013**

A terrified, frozen child is found close to death on an icy Cape Town mountainside. But no-one reported her missing. Where does she come from? Who does she belong to? Profiler Dr Clare Hart is baffled - but when a young woman disappears, Clare sees a frightening pattern beginning to emerge. Rosa is a gifted but troubled young cellist, and her grandfather is at his wits end. Why did she walk out of her music school that day? Where has she gone now? As winter tightens its grip, Clare must find Rosa and unravel her secrets...all the while carrying a secret of her own.

***Dirt Music*/ Tim Winton 2001**

Georgie Jutland is a mess. At 40, with her career in ruins, she finds herself stranded in White Point with a fisherman she doesn't love and two kids whose dead mother she can never replace. Then a dangerous element enters her life - Luther Fox. Their unlikely alliance is set in Western Australia.

***The High Notes* / Danielle Steel 2022**

Iris Cooper has been singing ever since she can remember, hitting the high notes like no one else. When she is twelve, her father convinces the owner of a bar in Lake City, Texas, to let her perform, and she stuns the audience. In the ensuing years, never staying anywhere for long, father and daughter move from one dusty town to the next, her passion for music growing every time she takes the mike in another roadhouse. But it is not an easy life for Iris with her father in charge and using her income to pay for gambling, women, and booze. When she starts to tour at age eighteen, she takes on a real manager. Yet he exploits her too, and the singers and musicians she tours with are really the only family she has. It is they who give Iris the courage to finally fly free, leave the tour, and follow her dreams. After years of enduring the hardships of the road, exploitation, and abuse to do what she loves, Iris's big chance comes as her talent soars. But at the top at last, Iris still has to fight every step of the way.

***Butterfly Song* / Terri Janke 2005**

This novel opens in 1992, the year of the High Court's decision on Indigenous land rights in Australia. Tarena Palson has just finished her law degree at Sydney University and although she doesn't have her results yet, she's already been thrown into her first case. Her family, who hail from the Torres Strait, are claiming ownership of an exquisite and valuable pearl shell, for sale as part of the deceased estate of a white doctor. But Tarena isn't sure she wants to be a lawyer after all. What place does a black lawyer have in a white legal system? Does she really want to live in Sydney? She loves the buzz of city life, but is it her? Does everyone have this much trouble keeping up with life?

***Every Note Played* / Lisa Genova 2018**

A once accomplished concert pianist, Richard now has ALS. As he becomes increasingly paralyzed and is no longer able to live on his own, Karina, his divorced wife, becomes his reluctant caretaker. As Richard's muscles, voice, and breath fade, both he and Karina try to reconcile their past before it's too late. This is a masterful exploration of redemption and what it means to find peace inside of forgiveness.

Non Fiction

Cadence / Emma Ayres 2014

In her provocative, intelligent, surprising and funny memoir, Emma cycles her way from England to Hong Kong with a violin she calls Aurelia strapped to her back. But it is also a journey through the keys, and the music that inspired, shaped and provided refuge for Emma throughout her travels with music.

Landscapes of Indigenous Performance : music, song and dance of the Torres Strait and Arnhem Land / edited by Fiona Magowan and Karl Neuenfeldt 2005

Both indigenous and non-indigenous contributors demonstrate how local music and dance genres have been subjected to missionary, institutional, popular and global influences. They provide a cultural background and history of Torres Strait music, and how contemporary Christian music & dance in Arnhem Land incorporates traditional.

Don't Die With the Music in You / Wayne Bennett 2002

"Writes on everything from mateship to the business and politics of sport, from the importance of loyalty and team spirit to the value of self-confidence and being honest with yourself."

Songspirals : sharing women's wisdom of country through songlines / Gay'wu group of women 2019

Gay'wu Group of Women is the 'dilly bag women's group', a deep collaboration between five Yolngu women and three non-Aboriginal women over a decade - all co-authors of two other books.

Aboriginal Australian cultures are the oldest living cultures on earth and at the heart of Aboriginal cultures is song. These ancient narratives of landscape have often been described as a means of navigating across vast distances without a map, but they are much, much more than this. Songspirals are sung by Aboriginal people to awaken Country, to make and remake the life-giving connections between people and place. Songspirals are radically different ways of understanding the relationship people can have with the landscape. For Yolngu people from North East Arnhem Land, women and men play different roles in bringing songlines to life, yet the vast majority of what has been published is about men's place in songlines. Songspirals is a rare opportunity for outsiders to experience Aboriginal women's role in crying the songlines in a very authentic and direct form.

Loud / Tana Douglas 2020

At just sixteen, Tana Douglas ran away to the circus that was rock 'n' roll in the 1970s, taking a job with a young and upcoming band called AC/DC. While still a teenager she went on to work for Santana, Neil Diamond and Suzi Quatro, before heading to the UK then the US, working for a who's who of bands and artists, including Status Quo, Iggy Pop, Patti Smith, Elton John, Ozzy Osbourne, The Police, INXS, The Who, The Runaways, Lenny Kravitz, Red Hot Chilli Peppers, Pearl Jam, Ice-T and Ice Cube, eventually moving from lighting and stage production into tour management and logistics. Funny, poignant, reflective and revealing, *Loud* is rock n roll like you've never seen it before, written in her own words by the woman recognised as the first female roadie in the world.

Something to Believe in / Andrew Stafford 2019

Set to the soundtrack of music that has shaped a generation, *Something To Believe In* will resonate with anyone whose life has been saved by rock 'n' roll. Born in Melbourne's outer suburbs in the 1970s, Andrew Stafford grew up in a time when music was a way out and a way up. His passion for rock 'n' roll led him to a career as a journalist and music critic, but along the way his battles with family illness, mental health and destructive relationships threatened to take him down. Andrew Stafford delves bravely and deeply into a life that has been shaped and saved by music's beat.

***Hey True Blue / John Williamson* 2014**

Williamson takes us through his life, from growing up on the land in the Mallee and Moree in a family of five boys, to being the voice of Australia. John got a lucky break that kickstarted his music career with *Old Man Emu*, which he wrote and performed on *New Faces* in 1970. After huge initial success, his music career floundered for a decade until he reinvented himself by chronicling the subjects and issues that are close to his heart. John's songs are all about Australia, he expresses his love of our land, his outrage at environmental destruction, his pride in the Australian character and spirit and captures our sense of humour. His life story is also all about Australia, his love of the land, the importance of family, and what it really means to be true blue. He has performed at huge public events, ranging from the Sydney Olympics, to the NRL grand finals and Steve Irwin's funeral. Beyond the songs, John has revealed barely anything about his private life in his forty-year career. He opens up here, talking about the tough times, the great times and what matters to him. In his distinctive Australian accent, he tells it like it is.

***Harlem Nights : the secret history of Australia's Jazz age / Deirdre O'Connell* 2021**

The untold story of race and power in Australia's Jazz Age The 1920s were a time of wonder and flux, when Australians sensed a world growing smaller, turning faster-and, for some, skittering off balance. American movies, music and dance brought together what racial lines kept apart. A spirit of youthful rebellion collided with the promise of racial perfectibility, stirring deep anxieties in white nationalists and moral reformers. African-American jazz represented the type of modernism that cosmopolitan Australians craved-and the champions of White Australia feared. Enter Sonny Clay's Colored Idea. Snuck in under the wire by an astute promoter, the Harlem-style revue broke from the usual blackface minstrel fare, delivering sophisticated, liberating rhythms. The story of their Australian tour is a tale of conspiracy-a secret plan to kick out and keep out 'undesirable' expressions of modernism, music and race. From the wild jazz clubs of Prohibition-era LA to Indigenous women discovering a new world of black resistance, this anatomy of a scandal-fuelled frame-up brings into focus a vibrant cast of characters from Australia's Jazz Age.

***And the Band Played On / Robert Holden* 2014**

A beautiful and interesting investigation on how the ANZACs survived the horrors of WWI drawing on music and song, perfect for history and military history fans alike. Cast aside all thoughts of computer-age technology and its resources for entertainment and try to imagine Australian life back in the first decade of the 20th century. At that time the country was still enjoying its infancy as the world's youngest nation. This was a society in which families provided much of their own amusement: anyone who could play an instrument, or who had a passable voice, or could recite, was valued, as well as expected to entertain. And so, when the men of this young Australia marched off to war a typical call was, "Are you a singing man? Can you elocute? Can you spin a funny yarn? Can you play a mouth organ, concertina... or any other instrument?" Those who answered this second call to arms became the morale boosters of the First World War. Impromptu entertainments, sing-alongs, yarns and story-telling and recitations were all part of a homespun repertoire which accompanied these men to war. *And The Band Played On* seeks to re-create and pay homage to that camaraderie and to that innocent enjoyment and spontaneous entertainment which lifted the spirits of the ANZACs whether they were under the shadow of the pyramids, in the trenches of the Western Front, on board battleships, recuperating in hospitals or even in POW camps.