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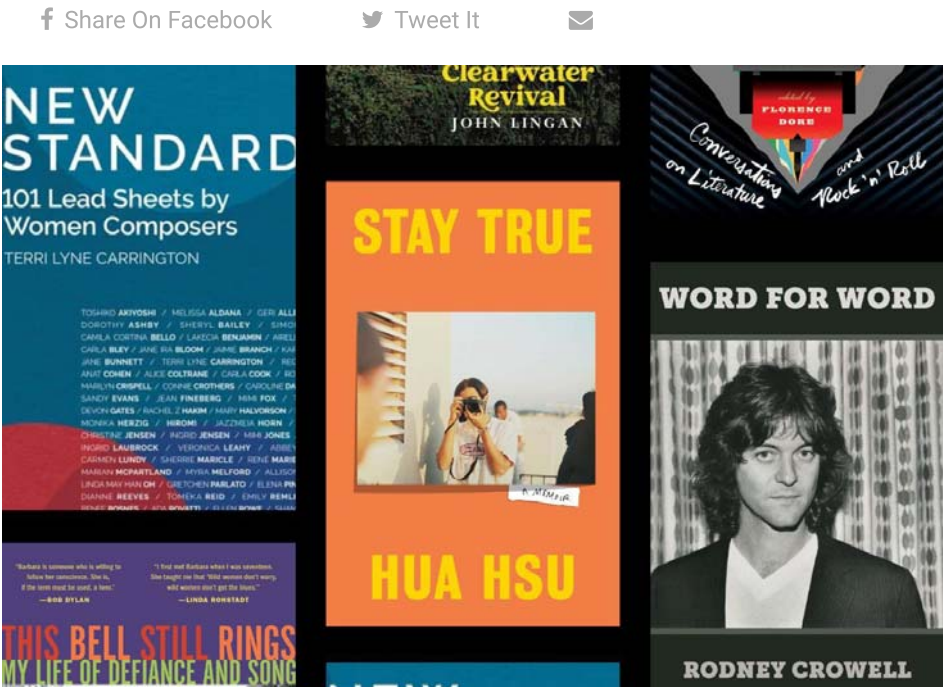
NEWSLETTER

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THE READING ROOM: Music Books We're Thankful For

Henry Carrigan

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 24, 2022



Amid the rush and bustle of the upcoming holidays, it's nice to take a few moments to

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Rodney Crowell, *Word for Word* (BMG) — This lavishly illustrated book is a real treat for Crowell's fans, roots music fans, and songwriters wishing to watch a masterful songwriter at work. Crowell shares excerpts from his notebooks, personal photographs, and correspondence, along with lyrics to nearly 150 songs. It's perfect for perusing stretched out in front of a warm fire or reading while listening to Crowell's records, and it's a perfect holiday gift.

Barbara Dane, *This Bell Still Rings: My Life of Defiance and Song* (Heyday) — Singer, songwriter, and activist Dane's clarion memoir rings with her typical candor and passion. She tells her story from her days of singing at union halls and factory gates in Detroit in World War II to her days as a blues and jazz singer and her prominence as a folk musician participating in civil rights and peace demonstrations. As Dane writes of her life and work and the importance of music: "Looking back over all the years of raising my voice, raising my children, raising some eyebrows, and raising hell wherever possible, I have no regrets. You have only one life to live, so make it count. And remember to sing!"

Florence Dore, *The Ink in the Grooves: Conversations on Literature and Rock 'n' Roll* (Cornell) — Dore teaches literature at the University of North Carolina, but at night she straps on her guitar to play rock and roll. Her earlier book, *Novel Sounds: Southern Fiction in the Age of Rock and Roll*, explored the deep links between writers such as William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor and the music of Bessie Smith and Lead Belly, among others. In her new book she brings together music writers, musicians, and novelists — including Lucinda Williams, Steve Earle, Amy Helm, Peter Guralnick, Colson Whitehead, and Jonathan Lethem — to explore, as she writes, "the vitality that writers draw from a three-minute blast of guitars and the poetic insights that musicians find in literary works from Shakespeare to Southern Gothic."

Hua Hsu, *Stay True* (Doubleday) — A deeply moving memoir by *New Yorker* staff writer Hsu that chronicles his coming-of-age through his deep love of music and literature. He and his friend Ken hang out in record shops in the Bay Area and take long drives along the California coast with *Pet Sounds* and Pavement blaring. When Ken is killed in a carjacking, Hsu turns to writing and music to help him move through his grief.

John Lingan, *A Song for Everyone: The Story of Creedence Clearwater Revival* A part of the Fresh Grass Foundation.

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University of Iowa, tells a harrowing and riveting story of his journey toward sobriety. The book's opening sentence fixes on us like the Ancient Mariner's voice and compels us to keep reading: "The flashlight shot through my stupor like a laser beam to the skull, sparking the first faint glimmers of consciousness. Above me, a male voice, with calm authority, asked, 'Are you all right, sir?'" Yet, McLeese admits that he never intended to quit drinking. "My life worked well," he writes. "Until it didn't. Freedom from drinking has enriched my life in ways I'd never imagined." His book, he tells us, is "about how the worst day of my life turned out to be one of the best." Once you start this book, you won't put it down until the final words.

Paul Steinbeck, *Sound Experiments: The Music of the AACM* (Chicago) — Musician and Washington University, St. Louis music professor Steinbeck provides a stimulating history of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) founded on Chicago's South Side in 1965. He offers in-depth explorations of innovative performances by members of the organization, from Anthony Braxton's *Composition 76* to Wadada Leo Smith's *The Freedom Summers* and Nicole Mitchell's *Mandorla Awakening II: Emerging Worlds*. He demonstrates the ways these pieces contributed singular approaches to notation, instrumentation, and musical form, creating fresh sounds to contemporary music.

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Billy Strings
- 2 Can Chaser
Emily Nenni
- 3 Georgia Off My Mind
Larkin Poe
- 4 Nobody's Sweetheart
Caitlin Rose
- 5 Soul Searching
Ruthie Foster
- 6 Ace Of Spades
Angela Strehli
- 7 Bia Chances

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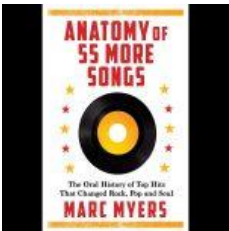
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