



Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times (and What the Neighbors Thought)

By Kathleen Krull

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It's no secret that Beethoven went deaf, that Mozart had constant money problems, and that Gilbert and Sullivan wrote musicals. But what were these people--and other famous musicians--*really* like? What did they eat? What did they wear? How did they spend their time? And--possibly most interesting of all--what did their neighbors think?

Discover the fascinating and often humorous stories of twenty famous musicians--people of all shapes, sizes, temperaments, and lifestyles, from various countries and historical periods. Beginning with Vivaldi and ending with Woodie Guthrie, *Lives of the Musicians* brings musical history to life!

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Red was Mozart's favorite color. Beethoven was a slob. Clara Schumann's concerts were so popular that police had to be called in for crowd control. In this enthralling work, Krull dishes 16 of the movers and shakers in musical history--from Vivaldi and the "three B's" (Bach, Beethoven and Brahms) to Gilbert and Sullivan, Woody Guthrie and Scott Joplin (early critics of his ragtime accused it of causing permanent brain damage and ruining people's morals). Readers who thrive on offbeat information will be delighted by the splendid array of fun facts lurking in these informative and accurate snapshot biographies. Krull masterfully distills the essentials of each musician's life into snappy prose, an attitude echoed in the book's lively, playful design (the introductory page for each musician, for example, contains not only pertinent information but tantalizing, often cryptic "kickers" as well--the one above Brahms's name alludes to his checked underwear, which audiences occasionally glimpsed when the absent-minded conductor forgot to fasten his suspenders). Hewitt's caricatures feature full-sized heads on tiny bodies--a slant that plays up the quirky presentation. She, too, has an eye for detail, pulling out appropriate visual tidbits from the text--Bach's prized silver coffeepots, for example, grace a page corner. Even those only remotely interested in music will be hooked by these living, breathing anecdotes--the stuff of which the best biography is made. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-8-- Bravo! A collective biography that is informative and fun to read. Krull has compiled an enjoyable assortment of sketches on 16 famous musical giants that will have readers rushing to the stereo. In three or four pages each, such masters as Vivaldi, Mozart, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky; popular composers such as Gilbert & Sullivan, Joplin, and Gershwin; and even folk hero Woody Guthrie are profiled. Gossipy, nitty-gritty personal habits and quirks are presented, along with a sense of appreciation for the musicians' lives and times. Hewitt's full-page caricatures are surrounded by important details. In subdued but striking colors, she captures the personality and temperament of these composers. This is a humorous, delightful, appreciative treat. While it doesn't have enough information for reports, it's a fine, personalized way to introduce children to the creators of great works that are a part of every music curriculum. The book has a helpful list of musical terms, an index, and an excellent bibliography. It belongs in every library and on every music teacher's desk. --Beth Tegart, Oneida City Schools, NY

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From Kirkus Reviews

A collection of anecdotes about 19 musicians from Vivaldi to Woody Guthrie that's offered ``as a way of getting closer to the musicians--and the music"--but that may only distance readers from traditional music by portraying it as an incomprehensible milieu populated by odd characters. Apparently chosen with more regard for the picturesque (Chopin's cherished silver goblet of earth from his native Poland, Clara Schumann's penchant for wearing a different white dress every night) or the bizarre (the full chamber pot under Beethoven's piano, Chopin's deathbed request that his body be cut open before burial) than for authenticity, a number of the incidents related are apocryphal; several have long since been called into serious question or specifically refuted by responsible scholarship. Although the attention given to 20th-century figures (six entries) is laudable, the selection is eccentric: Stephen Foster but not Schubert, Gilbert and Sullivan but not Wagner, Satie but not Debussy. An attractive volume with eye-catching full-page watercolor caricatures, but the information is too inconsequential and too unreliable to be of much use. Glossary; name index; bibliography. (Biography. 8-12) -- *Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Harry Nelson:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book entitled Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times (and What the Neighbors Thought)? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can better than before. Do you agree with their opinion or you have various other opinion?

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Christine Smith:

Often the book Lives of the Musicians: Good Times, Bad Times (and What the Neighbors Thought) has a lot associated with on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was published by the very famous author. Mcdougal makes some research just before write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you can find the point easily after looking over this book.

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