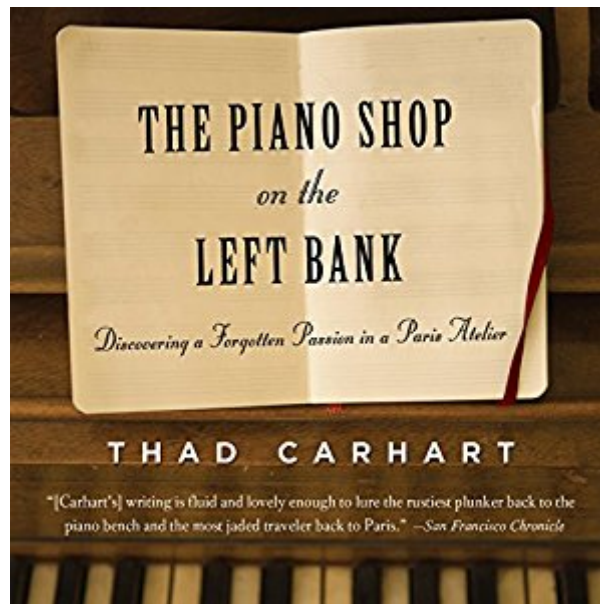


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The Piano Shop On The Left Bank: Discovering A Forgotten Passion In A Paris Atelier



Synopsis

Thad Carhart never realized there was a gap in his life until he happened upon Desforges Pianos, a demure little shopfront in his Paris neighborhood that seemed to want to hide rather than advertise its wares. Like Alice in Wonderland, he found his attempts to gain entry rebuffed at every turn. An accidental introduction finally opened the door to the quartier's oddest hangout, where locals - from university professors to pipefitters - gather on Friday evenings to discuss music, love, and life over glasses of wine. Luc, the atelier's master, proves an excellent guide to the history of this most gloriously impractical of instruments. A bewildering variety passes through his restorer's hands: delicate ancient pianofortes, one perhaps the onetime possession of Beethoven. Great hulking beasts of thunderous voice. And the modest piano "with the heart of a lion" that was to become Thad's own. What emerges is a warm and intuitive portrait of the secret Paris - one closed to all but a knowing few. The Piano Shop on the Left Bank is the perfect audiobook for music lovers or for anyone who longs to recapture a lost passion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I can't even begin to express in words what a joy it was to read this book. Thad Carhart has written a book that should appeal to a broad spectrum of readers that includes musicians, piano lovers, novices and professionals alike. Yes, even those who think a piano is just a piece of furniture will learn a lot, and probably be shamed into getting back to practicing once again. If you already own a piano, wish to own one, or just want to know more about pianos & their history this book is an excellent source of information. Did you know that "Fazioli" concert grand pianos costs well over

one hundred thousand dollars, and that only sixty are made each year, and there are fewer than one thousand "Fazioli" pianos in existence, and each are essentially handmade? This book is chuck full of information that is so interesting, especially about the 16th and 17th century pianos. There is also a lot of technical information about how piano's work, that explains everything about the instrument, strings, sounding board, etc. Wait, I can't stop yet. Not only is this book full of history and excellent information about pianos, there is a story, too. Thad passes a little piano storefront in his Paris neighborhood each day while taking his two children to their school. One day he decides to enter the shop to check it out, meets the grumpy owner & is rebuffed, but eventually gets the right introduction, (you have to be referred by an established customer) and the shop then becomes a daily part of his life. Here he learns from Luc, the atelier's master, the history and art of piano's. Luc becomes a valuable friend. He helps Thad find a piano for himself that he loves, a Stigl baby grand from Vienna.

A beautiful musical instrument can be compared to a great vintage wine; one does not need to know all its subtleties in order to appreciate its fine texture, bouquet, and unique taste. Familiarity with art, for example, bolsters one's appreciation of its many forms, and puts one in a frame of mind never to take it for granted. In ~The Piano Shop on the Left Bank~ we are permitted entry into the world of the connoisseur of fine pianos and the magic of superior music. This book describes a re-acquaintance with a love affair of pianos, against the backdrop of romantic Paris and the diverse and unusual characters that make-up this world. An American living in Paris comes across a little piano repair shop that lies almost hidden from the frantic vagaries of modern life. Something about the little shop captures his attention - a spell is cast, and with some persistence, he gains admittance into a secret world for the initiated only - and his journey begins into that predominately guarded artisan society in Paris which the general, foreign public believe only exists in 19th century novels. This elegant text is written with thoughtful care and attention that displays an attitude of mind that is quite rare. Because Carhart is honest about his love affair with the piano and the Classic and Romantic music that we associate with the instrument, Chopin, Mozart, Beethoven and Scarlatte, the reader cannot help but remember personal associations with this world. While reading the text, images from my own past concerning music and the piano rose to consciousness - lying at my mother's feet while she played Chopin, being facinated by the movement of her feet as she depressed the foot pedals and the distinct fragrance of the wood. This beguiling book captures many such images and much more.

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