



And They All Sang: Adventures of an Eclectic Disc Jockey

Studs Terkel , Anthony DeCurtis (Foreword by)

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Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, Studs Terkel hosted a legendary daily radio show in Chicago, presenting listeners with his inimitable take on an eclectic range of music, from classical, opera, and jazz to gospel, blues, folk, and rock. *And They All Sang* is nothing less than “a tribute to music’s universality and power” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), featuring more than forty of Terkel’s unforgettable conversations with some of the greatest musicians of the past century—including Louis Armstrong, Leonard Bernstein, Big Bill Broonzy, Bob Dylan, Dizzy Gillespie, Mahalia Jackson, Janis Joplin, Rosa Raisa, Pete Seeger, and many others.

As the esteemed music critic Anthony DeCurtis wrote in the *Chicago Tribune*, “the terms ‘interview’ or ‘oral history’ don’t begin to do justice to what Terkel achieves in these conversations, which are at once wildly ambitious and as casual as can be.” Whether discussing Enrico Caruso’s nervousness on stage with opera diva Edith Mason or the Beatles’ 1966 encounter in London with revered Indian sitar player Ravi Shankar, “Terkel’s singular gift for bringing his subjects to life in their own words should strike a chord with any music fan old enough to have replaced a worn-out record needle” (*The New York Times*).

And They All Sang: Adventures of an Eclectic Disc Jockey Details

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Andrew says

What stands out in this book is how well Terkel was prepared for any guest. He knows and incredible amount about them (contrasted to annoying radio types who will do an interview and even admit, "I haven't read the book".)

Aaron Copeland, interviewed in 1961:

"Composers have very bad reputations as conductors. They're known to be generally inadequate on the podium. It's understandable, because after all, composing and conducting are two very different activities ... You might know, and most composers would know, how they want their music to go. But you might not have the technical ability to indicate to an orchestra how that should happen. Koussevitsky used to say to me, even when the composer doesn't technically conduct as well as a professional conductor, he nevertheless gives to the music some quality that no conductor could quite give, and I think there's some truth to that. You have a great advantage as a composer, and that is that the orchestral musician is willing to admit that you really ought to know how this piece should go."

"I think that young composers today are living in a rather difficult time. It's because music is in a great state of turmoil, much more of a turmoil than the great public at large knows about. The very basic structural principles of music are in question now ... Everyone says the one universal language is music. Theoretically it should be, but actually, when I was in Japan I heard kinds of music that seemed very strange to me, so that when you think about it more specifically, and not in that overall sense, then it's obvious that people do create kinds of music that other people might not understand."

Includes interview with Lil Armstrong, Louis Armstrong's wife.

lee says

i didn't like this as much as other studs books, but i think maybe it was because i really struggled to relate to the first half to two-thirds, because it was solely about opera. opera... well, i find it pleasurable to listen to, but i don't have the background or context to read much about it, especially in the familiar style studs is so good at.

Ronald says

Studs is still here, folks. This is a compilation of interviews on his radio program that are priceless and document not only where Studs was in his own life, but the subjects as well. They come off in a wonderfully

elegant stream-of-consciousness way. Great and quick read.

Hapzydeco says

Leonard Bernstein said it best, "In the olden days, everybody sang. You were expected to sing as well as talk. It was the mark of a cultured man to sing, to know music."

Crowey says

An interesting read by legendary DJ (and author) Studs Terkel - it concentrated way too much on opera singers for my liking, but it did have interviews with people like Lil Armstrong, Dizzie Gillespie, Pete Seeger, Earl Hines, etc so it wasn't a complete loss. Though, having said that, I have to admit that I generally found something of interest in every interview, and I plowed through it very quickly - generally a good sign. Not really my cup of tea, but if you can pick it up cheap (as I did, as an academic remainder) its worth having in your library.

Patrick Fiorill says

Great historical record

Megan says

Classic Studs Terkel. Fascinating from start to finish, inspiring and informative. Will make you wish you could hear all of the interviews. It certainly gave me a list of albums to check out from the library. Terkel is a gift for American history--I always feel closer to an understanding of my nation and her experiences and the people who have come before us. Lovely.

Chris says

You don't know music like Studs knows music.

Oh, you may *think* you know, but you don't. Studs Terkel has spent most of his adult life talking to people, and most of those people have been musicians. In his long and storied career, he has interviewed some of the greatest names in music. This is a collection of a few of them.

In this book, he talks to opera stars, blues singers, concert pianists, jazz trumpeters, scat musicians and folk song bards. They tell Studs about their relationship with music - what got them into it, and what they get out of it - and what struck me is that most of them come from the point of view that they make music because they can't imagine doing anything else. For some it's a craft, for others it's freedom, but for all of them it's a look into what makes them sing.

If you have a musician on your Christmas list, this'll be a good buy....

Patti says

It took me awhile to get into this book because the first section consisted of interviews with classical artists and those from the opera. Sadly my musical knowledge in those areas is lacking.

Once I reached the musicians I was familiar with, the book was a gift! Songs played in my head as they were mentioned and their synthesis described. Many of the artists have since passed away, so it was wonderful to remember them and learn more about them in their own words. The ones that really resonated with me were interviews with Alan Lomax, Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Mahalia Jackson, Ravi Shankar, Lil Armstrong, and Leonard Bernstein.

Studs Terkel was a master at allowing people the space to speak their mind and lay out who they are and what is important to them. His interviews form a legacy that is gift to us all.

David Ward says

And They All Sang: Adventures of and Eclectic Disc Jockey by Studs Terkel (The New Press 2005) (780.92) is typical Terkel; it's a series of forty interviews with "musical figures of our time." The book is a little outdated; the most contemporary of the interviewees are Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan (from 1962) and Ravi Shankar. Also of interest to me were interviews with the Rev. Thomas Dorsey (writer of "Precious Lord Take My Hand" aka "the Black National Anthem," Woody Guthrie, and Pete Seeger. Note: I was lucky enough to find a hardcover copy of this book with dust jacket in pristine condition at a local used book store for seventy-five cents! My rating: 7/10, finished 3/6/11.

A.H. Haar says

If you've ever seen an interview with this darling man, you'll know why I fell so madly in love with him. I'll admit, though, that I read only the interviews of the musicians I already knew and admired. But I look forward to discovering the rest.

Elizabeth R says

Irreplaceable interviews with musicians of the 20th century, by one of the great cultural historians of the 20th century. He runs the gamut from John Jacob Niles to Bob Dylan, and everyone in between.

Vinnie says

A great series of interviews with prominent 20th-century musicians, done by one of our greatest journalists.

Half the book is focused on classical music (a good portion of that is opera, which doesn't interest me), but the other half is jazz, folk, and other idioms. A great read!

Mason says

This is probably the most inspiring book I've read about music. Or anything.

Beth says

Conversations with some of the greatest musicians (Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie Louis Armstrong, Janice Joplin, Leonard Bernstein, and lots more) by the late, great Studs Terkel.
