RECOMMENDED NON-FICTION

***Beethoven’s Skull: Dark, Strange, and Fascinating Tales from the World of Classical Music and Beyond* by Tim Rayborn**

An unusual and often humorous survey of the many strange happenings in the history of Western classical music. Proving that good music and shocking tabloid-style stories make excellent bedfellows, it presents tales of revenge, murder, curious accidents, and strange fates that span more than two thousand years.

***Born to Run* by Bruce Springsteen**

The critically acclaimed autobiography of American singer-songwriter Bruce Frederick Joseph Springsteen, known for his work with the E Street Band, and his brand of poetic lyrics - Americana, working class, sometimes political sentiments centered on his native New Jersey - his distinctive voice, and his lengthy and energetic stage performances.

***Cash: The Autobiography* by Johnny Cash**

He was the "Man in Black," a country music legend, and the quintessential American troubadour. He was an icon of rugged individualism who had been to hell and back, telling the tale as never before.

***Gold Dust Woman: The Biography of Stevie Nicks* by Stephen Davis**

Stevie Nicks is a legend of rock, but her energy and magnetism sparked new interest in this icon. At sixty-nine, she's one of the most glamorous creatures rock has known, and the rare woman who's a real rock ‘n' roller.

***The Greatest Music Stories Never Told: 100 Tales from Music History to Astonish, Bewilder, and Stupefy* by Rick Beyer**

Rick Beyer, author of the highly successful History Channel series The Greatest Stories Never Told returns with new historic tales from the world of music—ennobling, entrancing and inevitably surprising stories of soaring genius, tantalizing scandal, nefarious intrigue, and, above all, unbridled passion for music.

***The History of Music in Fifty Instruments* by Philip Wilkinson**

This book outlines musical history in well-written nuggets of information. Profiling one instrument at a time, it describes the history of music since the 1700s, when orchestras first took the formal shape familiar to us. The concise text explains the role of each instrument in the orchestra and its importance in the development of music in general.

***Junkyard Jam Band: DIY Musical Instruments and Noisemakers* by David Erik Nelson**

Making music doesn’t have to be about dropping big bucks in the guitar shop or endlessly fiddling with expensive software. You can make good noise out of bits of wood and wire, plastic and steel. When you build your own instruments, creating your own sound comes naturally. *Junkyard Jam Band* is a step-by-step guide to making a full array of complete musical projects—no previous carpentry or electronics experience required. Each build includes tips on how to coax the best sounds out of the instrument and encourages you to mod the project to fit your own style.

***Kansas City Jazz: From Ragtime to Bebop—A History* by Frank Driggs and Chuck Haddix**

This colorful history captures the golden age of Kansas City jazz, and bring us a colorful portrait of old Kaycee itself, back then a neon riot of bars, bambling dens, and taxi dance halls, all ruled over by Boss Tom Pendergast, who had transformed a dusty cowtown into the Paris of the Plains. The authors show how this wide-open, gin-soaked town gave birth to a music that was more basic and more viscerally exciting than other styles of jazz, its singers belting out a rough-and-tumble urban style of blues, its piano players pounding out a style later known as "boogie-woogie." We visit the great landmarks, like the Reno Club, the "Biggest Little Club in the World," where Lester Young and Count Basie made jazz history, and Charlie Parker began his musical education in the alley out back. The lives of the great musicians who made Kansas City swing are illuminated, with colorful profiles of jazz figures such as Mary Lou Williams, Big Joe Turner, Jimmy Rushing, and Andy Kirk.

***Kansas City Lightning: The Rise and Times of Charlie Parker* by Stanley Crouch**

Throughout his life, Charlie Parker personified the tortured American artist: a revolutionary performer who used his alto saxophone to create a new music known as bebop even as he wrestled with a drug addiction that would lead to his death at the age of thirty-four. Drawing on interviews with peers, collaborators, and family members, Kansas City Lightning recreates Parker’s Depression-era childhood; his early days navigating the Kansas City nightlife, inspired by lions like Lester Young and Count Basie; and on to New York, where he began to transcend the music he had mastered. Crouch reveals an ambitious young man torn between music and drugs, between his domineering mother and his impressionable young wife, whose teenage romance with Charlie lies at the bittersweet heart of this story.

***Sounds and Sweet Aires: The Forgotten Women of Classical Music* by Anna Beer**

This book reveals the hidden stories of eight remarkable composers, taking the reader on a journey from seventeenth-century Medici Florence to London in the Blitz. Exploring not just the lives and works of eight exceptional artists, historian Anna Beer also asks tough questions about the silencing of their legacy, which continues to this day. Why do we still not hear masterpieces such as Hensel’s piano work "The Year," Caccini’s arias and Boulanger’s setting of Psalm 130?