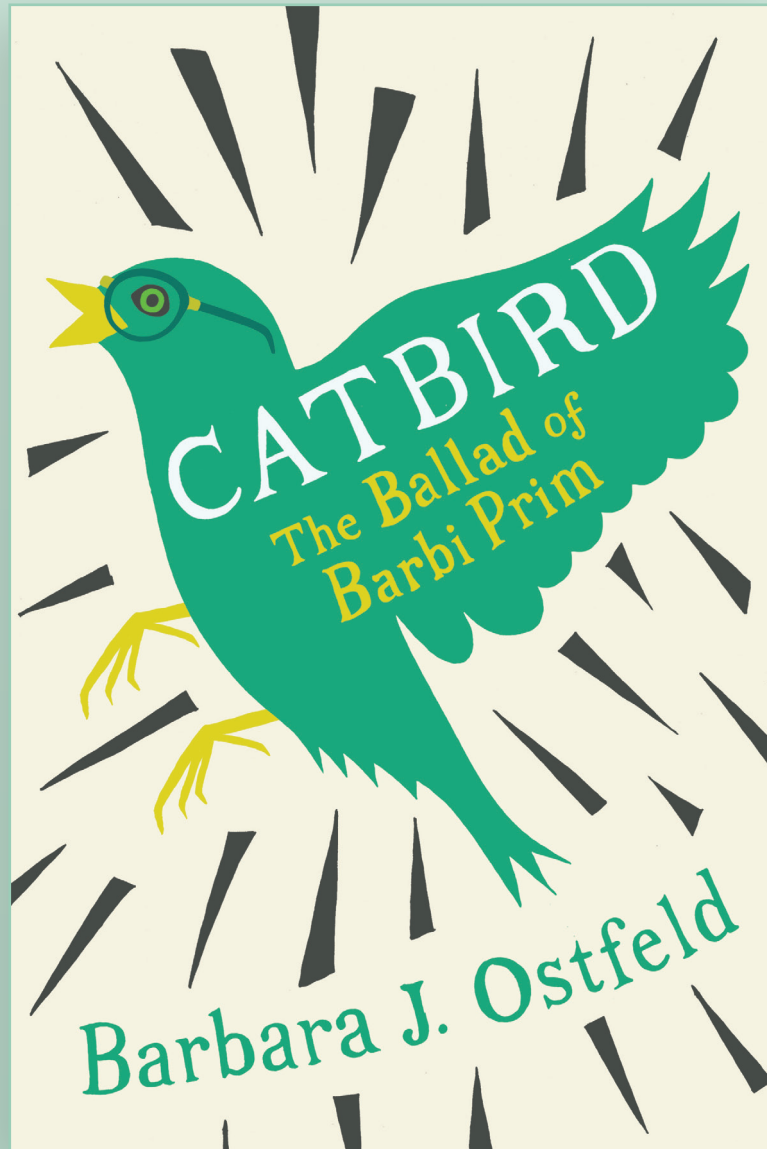


A Reading Guide for Musicians & Music Lovers

CATBIRD *The Ballad of Barbi Prim*



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Questions

1. Barbara remembers “Once in Love with Amy” from her toddler years. What is the first song you remember from childhood? What does it mean to you?
2. Barbara had both good and bad memories of childhood singing. (Sometimes she received compliments, but sometimes she was teased.) Do you remember singing or playing an instrument in elementary school? What emotions come to mind?
3. As a child, Barbara was troubled by songs she disliked, such as “99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall.” Have you had similar reactions?
4. When she was fifteen, Barbara was mad about Renaissance music. Did you ever listen obsessively to music as an adolescent? What did you listen to? What was its appeal for you at the time?
5. Is there a particular piece of music that soothed you in childhood? How would you describe that piece? Is there a different piece now? How do they compare?
6. Barbara particularly enjoys singing with other singers and musicians. Do you enjoy solo or ensemble experiences more, or do you enjoy them equally? How are they different for you?
7. Barbara soothes her elderly mother, a former musician, with familiar songs. Have you observed music’s comforting or therapeutic effects?
8. Barbara loves ballads and carols and tight harmony. What sorts of songs/music instantly appeal to you?
9. Protest songs from the ’60s remind Barbara of marching against the Vietnam War. Do certain songs or pieces give you especially vivid memories of past events? What made that music and those events so meaningful for you?
10. Barbara is “in the moment” and mindful when she sings, paints, or plays with her grandchildren. How would you describe your state of mind when you are engaged in music?
11. Barbara continues to take voice lessons and improves aspects of her singing well into her sixties. Does music influence your personal growth and affect your sense of self too?

Thoughts

