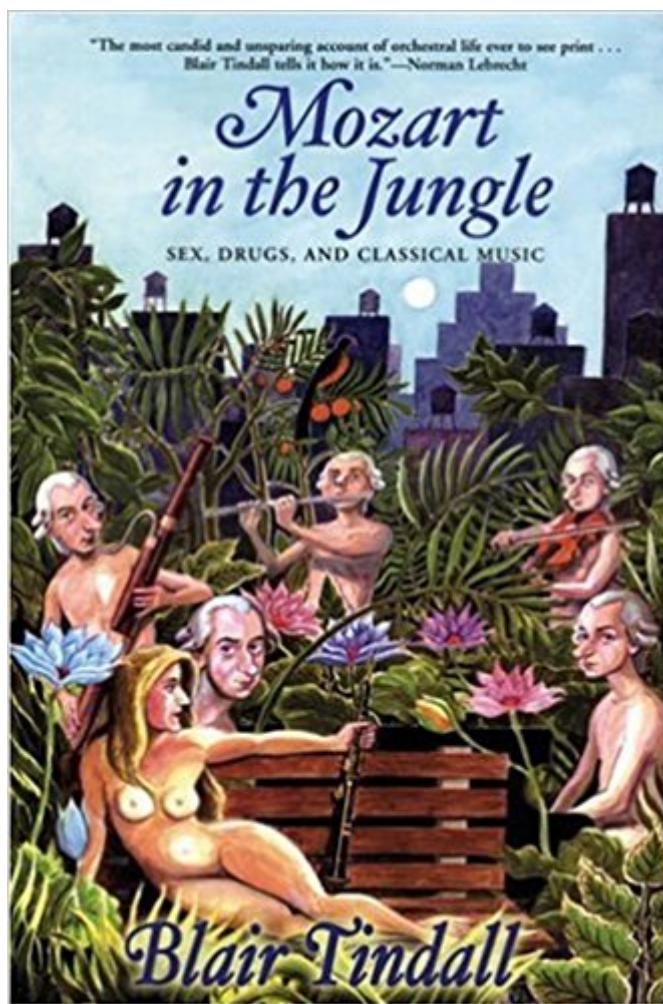


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# Mozart In The Jungle: Sex, Drugs, And Classical Music



## Synopsis

In the tradition of Anthony Bourdainâ™s *Kitchen Confidential* and Gelsey Kirklandâ™s *Dancing on My Grave*, *Mozart in the Jungle* delves into the lives of the musicians and conductors who inhabit the insular world of classical music. In a book that inspired the Original series starring Gael García Bernal and Malcolm McDowell, oboist Blair Tindall recounts her decades-long professional career as a classical musician; from the recitals and Broadway orchestra performances to the secret life of musicians who survive hand to mouth in the backbiting New York classical music scene, where musicians trade sexual favors for plum jobs and assignments in orchestras across the city. Tindall and her fellow journeymen musicians often play drunk, high, or hopelessly hungover, live in decrepit apartments, and perform in hazardous conditions; working-class musicians who schlep across the city between low-paying gigs, without health-care benefits or retirement plans, a stark contrast to the rarefied experiences of overpaid classical musician superstars. An incisive, no-holds-barred account, *Mozart in the Jungle* is the first true, behind-the-scenes look at what goes on backstage and in the Broadway pit.

## Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Grove Press; Reprint edition (June 8, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802142532

ISBN-13: 978-0802142535

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.9 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 283 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #102,531 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Classical #206 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Classical #231 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > History & Criticism

## Customer Reviews

By age 16, the author of this alternately piquant and morose memoir was dealing marijuana, bedding her instructors at a performing arts high school and studying the oboe. Later, her blossoming career as a freelance musician in New York introduced her to a classical music demimonde of cocaine parties and group sex that had her wondering why she "got hired for so many of my gigs in bed." But the vivace of the chapters on her bohemian salad days subsides to a

largo as she heads toward 40 and the sex and drugs recede along with dreams of stardom; the reality of a future in Broadway orchestra pits (where she reads magazines as she plays to stave off boredom) sets in. Tindall escaped to journalism, but her resentment of an industry that "squeezed me dry of spontaneity" and turns other musicians into hollow-eyed "galley slaves" is raw. She mounts a biting critique of the conservatories that churn out thousands of graduates each year to pursue a handful of jobs, the superstar conductors and soloists who lord it over orchestral peons and a fine arts establishment she depicts as bloated and ripe for downsizing. Tindall's bitterness over what might still strike many readers as a pretty great career is a bit overdone, but she offers a fresh, highly readable and caustic perspective on an overglamorized world. Photos. Agent, James Fitzgerald. (July) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

For the author, an oboist and journalist, a certain Upper West Side apartment building, long popular with musicians, is a metaphor for classical music in America today: a Beaux-Arts façade masking an increasingly decrepit infrastructure. Tindall's book, her first, is hardly free of false notes. Paragraphs full of dire predictions and alarming statistics jibe a little too conveniently with her tales of professional disappointment and sexual promiscuity. As Tindall sleeps her way to the bottom, we learn more than we probably need to about the sex lives of some more or less prominent American musicians. But Tindall's central complaintâ "that the classical-music world has created a crisis by training too many musicians and supporting a culture of exorbitant pay for a few fortunate starsâ "is difficult to refute. Copyright © 2005 The New Yorker --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I could almost give it a 5. The book is an interesting, realistic sounding autobiography about a life most of us imagine as more refined. While some reviewers say boring, the author's journey to what seems like success--but still insufficient to maintain a secure career--was interesting enough to turn it into a TV series (which has little relationship to the book). Readers might be referring to the shadow part of the book detailing the partial rise and fall of classical music in popular culture. The book would be better with tighter editing of the shadow part, along with some of the author's autobiography. Still, the book serves as a counterpoint to bromides to pursue your dreams and do what you love. Doing what you love is important, but considering reality for what will sustain you over a working life is at least as important.

Blair Tindall's biography is a window into the inner workings of classical music-making, sort of the sausage-making processes of this over-glamorized industry. Too many qualified applicants for too few job openings is one of the biggest takeaways of the book, followed by unjustified, bloated salaries of music executives, while the creators of these arts are the financial "bottom feeders." Much like greater society itself, actually. There's still plenty of the promised salacious sexual side of that world, for those who are looking for that. Great read.

An ingenue classical oboist gets an education about the underside of a music career and what it takes to become a member of a famous orchestra. It is an opera of egos, human frailties, sex, inspiration, and fundraising. I also like seeing the lives of the young hopefuls who flock to New York with big dreams and small bank accounts, and how they make the best of their situations while looking for love. I loved it and would recommend to anyone who has even the slightest interest in classical music and creativity.

I was blown away by 's TV show based on this book, and I loved the book. Blair Tindall is a wonderful writer and I was looking forward to enjoying an entire season of MOZART IN THE JUNGLE. However, the conclusions drawn by Tindall, about the state of Symphonic music, in this country, are NOT reflected in the TV show. The television show is a comedy that glamorizes the Classical Music "industry" and, I think, will tend to encourage young people to pursue careers playing classical music. Having said that; I look forward to watching the television show, but hopefully, the TV show will reflect more of the spirit and conclusions, drawn by Blair Tindall, in the book.

When i picked this book I thought it would be a light novel on which the series was based. I was most pleasantly surprised by a non-fiction story about the former oboist become writer, Blair Tindall, and real life of soloists, students and orchestra members. A must for classical music lovers.

Very entertaining look behind the world of classical music and the working orchestra musician. Humorous, sad and enjoyable. I really liked the author and her writing. I was especially interested to see the great disparity between the large number of trained classical musicians and the contrasting small number of jobs available. I would recommend this to anyone contemplating a career as a player in the music industry regardless of the musical style.

A very interesting book. I have grown up with classical music and even remember the way Lincoln Center was pitched on TV ads when I was a little girl. Yeah, there is the sex, and admittedly the classical crew put many undergrads of the 70s to shame. Some of the carrying on could fit with many a rock musician's fond memories of days gone by. Getting past that, the history of classical music performance, and especially the economics of classical music performance are the real eye openers here. This book should be read by every stage parent and aspiring young musician considering the classical concert hall for a career.

I have played the clarinet for over 30 years, and I play in two community bands, plus a local wind symphony (not a paying symphony). While I am not a classical musician, I was very interested in what life is like for classical musicians, especially after watching the show Mozart in the Jungle. The book did not disappoint. It was very interesting to read what she had to do to advance in her profession, and it was eye opening to see the challenges classical and Broadway musicians face.

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