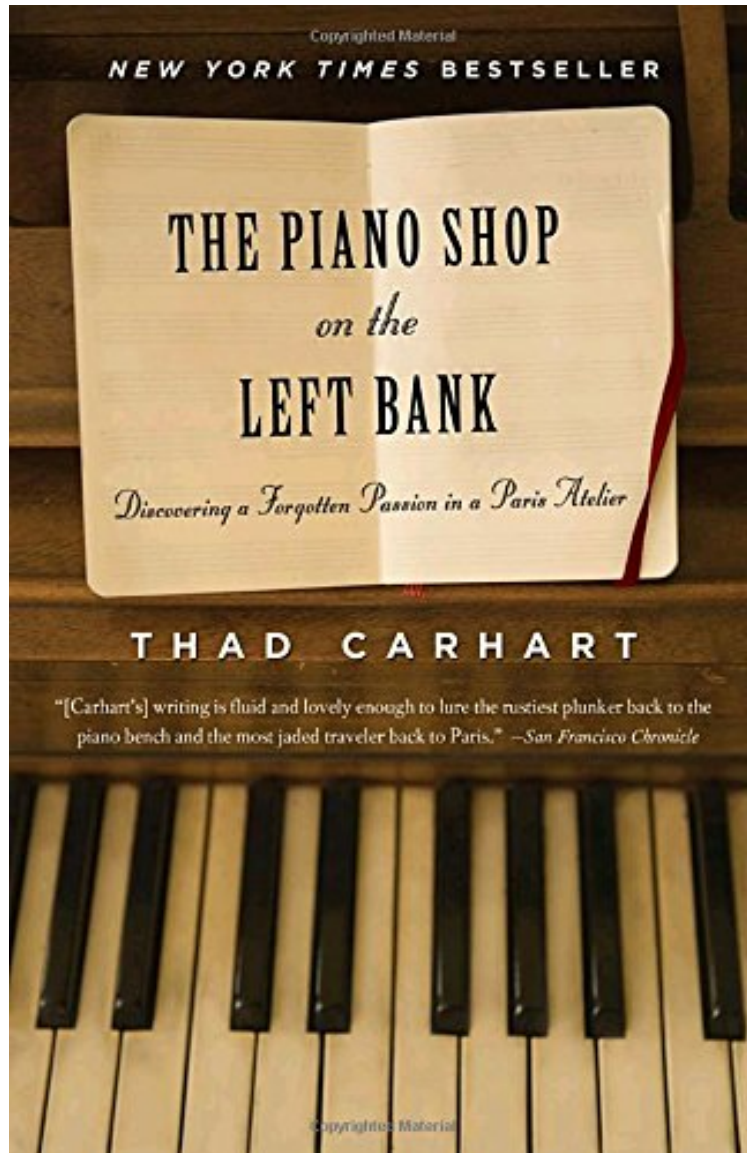


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## The Piano Shop on the Left Bank: Discovering a Forgotten Passion in a Paris Atelier

Thad Carhart

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#111354 in Books Random House Trade Paperbacks 2002-03-12 2002-03-12 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.96 x .60 x 5.13l, .49 #File Name: 0375758623304 pages Great product! | File size: 24.Mb

**Thad Carhart : The Piano Shop on the Left Bank: Discovering a Forgotten Passion in a Paris Atelier** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Piano Shop on the Left Bank: Discovering a Forgotten Passion in a Paris Atelier:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Worth the Time to Read By BarbA beautifully written book which

marries the joy of music (specially the piano) and the author's other love--writing with brilliance and clarity. I would have given 5 stars, but it's a little slow in places due to the historical accounts rather than a pure narrative of finding his love of piano once again...on his terms. All in all, a wonderful read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lovely, quirky story about a man, a piano, an obsession and Paris By Joanna D. This book may be less meaningful to you if you are not a piano player. But Thad Carhart includes so much atmosphere and quirky French character in his memoir "The Piano Shop" that if you like memoirs, especially about life in France, you will be as charmed as I was whether you know one note from another or not. Andre Watts, the great American pianist, once remarked that he is unable to walk in a room with a piano without going up to it and touching it. This urge is not unusual with piano lovers--most of us are pulled into any piano shop, compelled by the same love of the instrument, each one of which is as individual as a person. And this individuality is despite the fact that pianos, as Carhart points out, were one of the first mass-produced items in modern industrial society. Carhart, too, is irresistibly drawn into a mostly-shuttered piano shop in his quartier of Paris. It seems unlikely the shop is merely a piano repair studio--do they, perhaps, sell secondhand instruments? Carhart, who loves to play as an amateur, decides to find an instrument. The crusty owner will hardly divulge information. Slowly, Carhart penetrates the mysterious, very private and French world of the piano shop, and it becomes a part of his life. The shop owner Luc, his drunken tuner Jos, and all the other characters are well drawn and interesting, even tragic sometimes. The book ends up being about a lot more than pianos. This is a real treat of a book to curl up with in an armchair, perhaps with a glass of wine or a cup of tea and find yourself lost in a twisty Parisian alley, peering into dusty windows and wondering how what goes on behind the shutters of a dark Paris atelier. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good for History Buffs By Annie Reader I had heard great things about this little book from friends for quite some time. Frankly, I was disappointed. The story line is very thin. However, the saving grace is that it provides a really good history of the piano and piano-building. Anyone interested in such a history will probably like this book more than I did.

Walking his two young children to school every morning, Thad Carhart passes an unassuming little storefront in his Paris neighborhood. Intrigued by its simple sign Desforges Pianos he enters, only to have his way barred by the shop's imperious owner. Unable to stifle his curiosity, he finally lands the proper introduction, and a world previously hidden is brought into view. Luc, the atelier's master, proves an indispensable guide to the history and art of the piano. Intertwined with the story of a musical friendship are reflections on how pianos work, their glorious history, and stories of the people who care for them, from amateur pianists to the craftsmen who make the mechanism sing. The Piano Shop on the Left Bank is at once a beguiling portrait of a Paris not found on any map and a tender account of the awakening of a lost childhood passion. Praise for *The Piano Shop on the Left Bank*: [Carhart's] writing is fluid and lovely enough to lure the rustiest plunker back to the piano bench and the most jaded traveler back to Paris. San Francisco Chronicle Captivating . . . [Carhart] joins the tiny company of foreigners who have written of the French as verbs. . . . What he tries to capture is not the sight of them, but what they see. The New York Times Thoroughly engaging . . . In part it is a book about that most unpredictable and pleasurable of human experiences, serendipity. . . . The book is also about something more difficult to pin down, friendship and community. The Washington Post Carhart writes with a sensuousness enhanced by patience and grounded by the humble acquisition of new insight into music, his childhood, and his relationship to the city of Paris. The New Yorker NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD

From Publishers Weekly In this engaging memoir, an American writer living in Paris recounts his experiences in a piano shop tucked into an out-of-the-way street on the rive gauche. Because the elderly proprietor refuses to admit strangers to the atelier where he repairs, rebuilds and sells used pianos to select customers, Carhart does not at first get in. But with an introduction from another client and the help of the owner's younger assistant and heir apparent, Luc, Carhart is finally welcomed into a magical space crowded with pianos of all makes and vintages. Soon he becomes one of the favored insiders who stop by nearly every day to gossip and talk about pianos with Luc. Luc's love of pianos is so infectious that Carhart's own childhood passion for the instrument is rekindled. He starts to take lessons again and buys a piano for his small apartment, a purchase that takes some time, for Luc, who regards a piano as a member of a family, prides himself on finding instruments compatible with his customers. Caught up in Luc's zeal, Carhart immerses himself in the history and mechanics of the piano, and he includes chapters on the craft of piano making, the instrument's development over the centuries and the fine points of tuning. In his renewed fascination, he reflects on piano teachers, those of his childhood as well as several renowned teachers of today. Carhart conveys his affection for Luc, the atelier and the piano with such enthusiasm that readers might be inspired to return to their own childhood instrument. At the very least, they will enjoy this warmhearted, intelligent insight into a private Paris. (Apr. 20) Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Carhart's life as an American expatriate in Paris provides the setting for this witty and fascinating account of finding a piano to purchase and relearning how to play. His familiarity with French customs aids in his dealings with and subsequent acceptance as a friend by Luc, the proprietor of Desforges Pianos. A piano restoration workshop by day, it turns into an exclusive local hangout Friday

nights. Gracefully shifting from the present day to his youth, Carhart, a freelance writer, provides both technical explanations about the workings of the piano and a history of the instrument. This background information helps place his studies and the remarks of various piano teachers, technicians, and aficionados in context. Similar to Noah Adams's fine *Piano Lessons* (LJ 3/15/96) with a continental flavor, Carhart's book will be of special interest to patrons with an affection for pianos or experience traveling in France. Warmly recommended for all libraries. Barry Zaslow, Miami Univ. Libs., Oxford, OH Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *The New Yorker* When Carhart, an American living in Paris, decides to buy a used piano, he meets Luc, a modest local piano dealer and repairman, who not only sells him one but becomes something of a mentor. As the author's passion for playing is reawakened, he falls in love with the instrument itself: its history, the rigor and idiosyncrasies of piano design and tuning, the unique feel and sound that attend each individual model. Carhart writes with a sensuousness enhanced by patience and grounded by the humble acquisition of new insights into music, his childhood, and his relationship to the city of Paris. Copyright 2005 *The New Yorker*