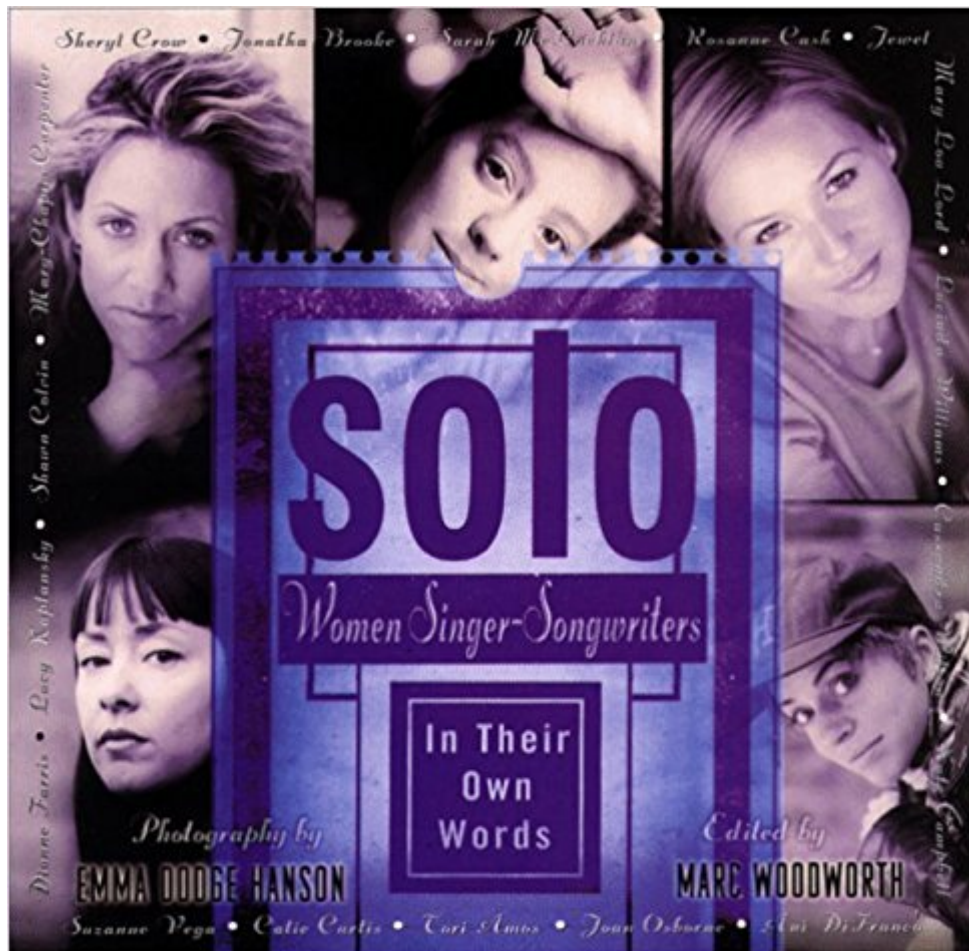




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Solo: Women Singer-Songwriters In Their Own Words



Synopsis

This first-of-its-kind collection vibrates with the high-voltage energy of today's most exciting female singer-songwriters as they speak out, look inside, and reveal their lives. Sarah McLachlan: "When I sang and played I'd get completely lost in what I was doing.Â Â During that time, I was no longer this stupid, useless little ten-year-old who didn't have any friends.Â Â I was someplace else, where none of that could touch me." Jewel: "Fame exists in other people's minds.Â Â I can't experience my own fame at all but I experience it in other people's eyes when I look at them and see that they're scared." Shawn Colvin: "Giving up addiction was the springboard into adult thinking.Â Â I realized that everything was a choice.Â Â The world was an open book.Â Â Nothing was the same after that." Sheryl Crow: "I always pictured myself as a loner off living like a Jack Kerouac character or, worse, someone out of a Charles Bukowski book, one of those down-and-outers who works at a gas station and has no one and no family." Lucinda Williams: "I don't want to offend anyone, but I like to push people's buttons.Â Â While I want to appeal to people in all walks of life, I also want to get a response, make them think."

Book Information

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History & Criticism

Customer Reviews

The 19 musicians interviewed for this collection span a wide range of musical styles and socio-economic backgrounds, but there is a strong thread linking them, not only to each other but to anyone attempting to live a creative life. From Rosanne Cash, who has been performing for over two decades, to relative newcomers like Rosanne Raneri and Mary Lou Lord, these women have all

thought long and hard about why they do what they do and how to remain true to themselves while navigating the world of popular music. Many of them have had doubts about their talents, fears of performing and problems with repression and addiction, yet at some point they decided to stake it all on their passion for music. For example, Cash and Sarah McLachlan describe the struggle to go beyond previous achievements and delve deeper into their own experiences for new material. Ani DiFranco and Cassandra Wilson talk about the strength required to break through sexual and racial stereotypes, while Jonatha Brooke and Lucinda Williams discuss their commitment to more literary lyrics, even when that has limited their commercial success. Other topics discussed include religion, society's expectations of women (obsessions with body weight and trying to be the good daughter come up frequently) and the need for solitude in order to write, even when that means feeling lonely and isolated. These women's candid views shed light on issues confronting artists of every sort and will encourage any one who has been discouraged along the way. 170 original b&w photos by Emma Dodge Hanson. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Jonatha Brooke * Kate Campbell * Mary-Chapin Carpenter * Rosanne Cash * Shawn Colvin * Sheryl Crow * Catie Curtis * Ani DiFranco * Dionne Farris * Jewel * Lucy Kaplansky * Mary Lou Lord * Sarah McLachlan * Joan Osborne * Holly Palmer * Rosanne Raneri * Suzanne Vega * Lucinda Williams * Cassandra Wilson

This is a wonderful book for those of us who have enjoyed the talents of some or all of the artists presented in this book, through CD's, concerts, or television appearances, and have wanted to know more about who these women are and how they came to be. In their own words, and not in 10 second soundbites, we hear from musicians like Shawn Colvin, Jewel, Lucy Kaplansky, Lucinda Williams, and many more. Their stories, accompanied by superb photos taken by Emma Dodge Hanson in a collaborative effort with editor Mark Woodworth, are informative, interesting, touching, and amusing. It's a book that can be read one singer/songwriter at a time and returned to, or from cover to cover. The photos seem natural and revealing. I recommend this book to those who are familiar with these women singer/songwriters, and to those who aren't.

This book is not for people looking for a glamorous "inside edition" type of experience. The women in this beautifully-done paperback and affordable edition are real people who have the courage to "follow their bliss" and make a living creatively, thereby giving the world the gift of their talent. The stories they tell are stories of "everywoman" and those of us who happen to be female are lucky to

get a double whammy. You poor guys simply get a profound glimpse of the artistic mind at work. The photographs are stunningly done in their simplicity and "realness" (these women look like me!). This book is on my Christmas list for all the women that I know and all the men that matter.

SOLO is real people telling their stories, sharing their feelings. Each one is human, with hopes and fears. The stories do not come from the hand of a publicist. They are not authorized biographies "as told to. . ." The photos are real, too, not staged for marketing. SOLO is about the creative process, its pain and its satisfaction.

SOLO: Women Singer-Songwriters In Their Own Words is just that: a compilation of 'collected wisdom' from some of today's female singer-songwriters. Each piece is accompanied by striking black and white photographs by Emma Dodge Hanson, and the essays themselves are written in a laid-back conversational style that makes it easy to curl up on the couch on a cold winter's day and read the book. Editor Marc Woodworth has done a fine job of presenting these outstanding women as intelligent and wise -- or perhaps it could be said that they didn't need any help from Woodworth to come across that way? Woodworth has given each songwriter a clean slate to talk about themselves and their work, and each artist shines. The end product is a compendium of "selected wisdom", if you will, that flows fluidly from the pages. To the reader, it feels as though one were listening to each artist chat about life, over a coffee at the local cafe. Gone are the cliched phrases and anecdotes that all too often mar books about artists in the music industry. The remarkable thing that Woodworth has managed to accomplish is to present these women as human beings, not just as songwriters. While they talk about their craft a great deal, each comes across as being very experienced (or embattled!) in matters of the heart. Very often a given artist chats about her upbringing, how they got into music, and their various influences, topics that I found very interesting. Each artist is very honest about mistakes they have made, not only on a practical level but on an emotional one as well, information that I suspect would be difficult to glean from male singers! Because the book reads like a "book of conversations", and not a "book of discussions about each artist's individual style", I found even the writings of artists I don't like to be very interesting. For example, I'm not a huge fan of Mary Chapin Carpenter, but she had some very intelligent things to say. Someone else who I don't recognize writes that "I realized it's okay to feel multiple ways about a certain thing," a concept that struck me as being very true and very human. The book is full of these little observations about life and human behaviour. Overall, I was very impressed with the content of the book and the way in which it was assembled. The layout is very

aesthetically pleasing and the photos are beautifully done. Thanks to Marc and Emma on a job well done.

When I picked up SOLO I had no idea what to expect. All I knew was that I had finally discovered a book with some of my favorite artists displayed. I was beyond thrilled for every artist in it is amazingly talented and deserves all the recognition in the world that some of today's tireless acts are receiving. Wow is all I can really say. I curled up on my couch hour after hour reading the struggles, the triumphs and the roads every woman featured went through. It truly was like sitting down with a group of women and recounting the past and telling dreams of the future. The amazing thing about books is being immersed into them and while reading SOLO, I felt like I was no longer in my world, but a world with a group of people that I admire and who inspire me. I felt like Sarah or Holly or anyone of those artist's were right beside me, confiding in me. Emma Dodge Hanson and Marc Woodworth chose a very diverse group of women, appealing to every type of music lover. The photos are priceless, conveying each artist's emotions and the writing is terrific, detailing each woman's life and portraying them both as talented and also human beings...and that's not easy to come by these days. Another thing that I enjoyed was the "trend" of women artists being addressed. It's not a trend, folks, women are just finally getting the recognition they deserve. Women have been around for a long time and SOLO acknowledges that women will be here forever. My opinion? It's about damn time.

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