

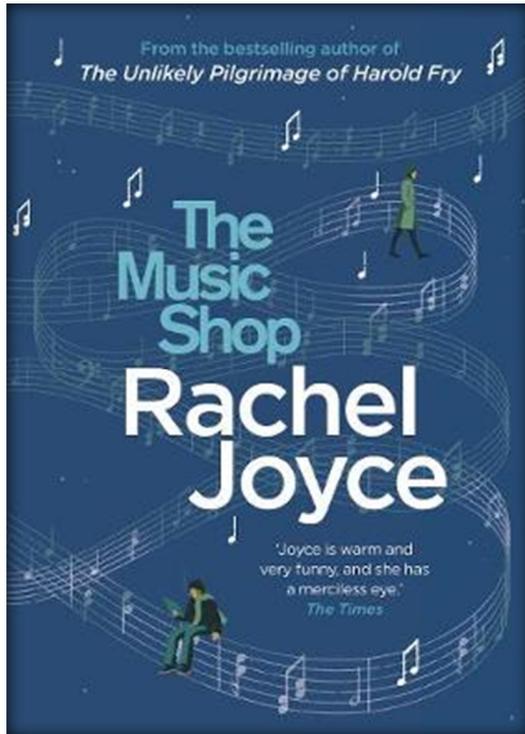


Helping you choose  
your next book



## LoveReading Reader reviews of **The Music Shop** by Rachel Joyce

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.



**Celia Cohen**

***A must read book for everybody even if you are not a music lover - you will be by the end of the book. What a wonderful book.***

*How refreshing to read about simple friendship, people helping each other, people surviving against all the odds and most of all never letting go of hope. Ms Joyce has a way of writing and forming characters so that by the end of the book they all seem like old friends. I've loved all her previous books and this one will be read again I know. I want more, more, more. All I can really say is Hallelujah! (You'll understand that when you read the book)*

**Catherine Lerner**

***The healing power of music, the strength of community, a belief in second chances, and characters as vivid and touching as Harold Fry. A wonderful book!***

*A heartbroken young man comes in looking for Chopin and leaves with a track by Aretha Franklin. The bank manager's wife, struggling with her new baby, is instructed to listen to Canticles and play 'Wild Thing' by The Troggs as a lullaby. Even a shoplifter with a Genesis album under his arm is pursued down the street so that he might be encouraged to listen to Mendelssohn instead.*

*Frank has a knack, a gift. He knows what his customers need to hear before they do. And, whether it's classical, jazz, punk or rock, his Music Shop will stock it – so long as it's on vinyl.*

*It's the 1980s, the CD, the shopping mall and the chain store are on the rise and*

*Frank and his small band of shopkeepers on the high street are struggling. But Frank is determined to stay true to his love of records and when he meets Ilse Brauchmann, a mysterious woman in a pea-green coat, Frank comes up with a new business plan and hope in his heart.*

*Everyone who delighted in meeting Harold Fry will love Frank and his friends. There's the tragedy of things left unsaid and the belief in second chances, the mix of humour and sadness, of regret and hope, of love and loss. We see the generosity of the human spirit, the power of friendship and the strength of community. And there's also the healing power of music, and the restorative touch when someone sees deep into a hurting soul and offers 'this will help'. It's wonderful!*

[www.catherinelarner.com](http://www.catherinelarner.com)

### **Helen Appleby**

*This is the first book by Rachel Joyce that I have read and I must say that I am impressed and will certainly be looking out for more of her books. 'The Music Shop' is set in 1998 and the main character is Frank who owns the music shop. He knows everything about music and always finds the right album the customers need. One day a mysterious woman walks into his life - German Ilse Brauchmann - and from then on everything in his world changes.*

*The book develops the imagery of how music can improve people's mood and make things seem a lot better for them by exploring how customers go into the shop lost and come out found, having discovered the right music for their troubles and feeling healed.*

*This book will appeal to music and non-music lovers alike and will perhaps change your perceptions of how you listen to music when you have finished reading the book. I found that I could relate to certain aspects of the book as I love listening to CD's not that I would mention that to Frank if I ever met him as he hates CD's and can relate to how certain lyrics and beats of certain songs can make you feel, and how some musicians can lift your mood whereas other leave you feel more sombre and less upbeat.*

*It would have been nice to find out a bit more about what happened to the characters over time, perhaps this could be explored as a possible sequel in the future?*

*In a nutshell this book was **an easy and delightful read and the perfect thing to read on a sunny afternoon in the garden, I read it in about***

*two days as once I was hooked I couldn't put it down.*

**Phyllippa Smithson**

***The last time I laughed out loud at the very best in irony, heart-lifting, identifiable and down-right brilliant writing was Joyce's previous writing. Brilliant author.***

*Frank had at best an unusual childhood, at worst, very strange. Peg, was not a maternal mother. She was there for him but he was incidental to her life. It was not for her to dictate the normal rules of parenting. So no home cooked food. No warm words of comfort. And no desire to answer when he called her Mother or needed one.*

*What she does bring him is an absolute and total commitment to the joy of music. From Classical, to Punk, to Jazz, to Gospel and so on and so on. He cannot play or read music. But he can identify with the words, the mood and the meaning. And in so doing he brings his skills to save a priest from alcoholism, a teenager from finding no purpose in his adult life, a tattooist from never finding the hope of love. This is Frank. He gives and speaks to others through his music. He takes nothing. He fears someone giving to him. He has never had it and fears what it might do to change who he is – even if it might be for the better.*

*Then Isla arrives. A German with a reluctance to share her story but she keeps coming back. And Isla slowly, subtly and delightfully threatens and then breaks the defensive barrier Frank has built around himself. But why Frank and, despite him falling in love with this mysterious woman, is he really ready to confront the hidden memories of his past.*

***Full of wonderful characters, brought to life through such joyful writing, this is a quite wonderful read.***

**Sharon Wood**

***A heart-warming tale of music and relationships. Another beautifully satisfying read from one of my favourite authors. Thoroughly recommended.***

*I have loved all Rachel Joyce's previous books and was very excited to receive this latest one. Nor was I disappointed as it is another heart-warming story, beautifully written and gently moving to a satisfying end.*

*Frank owns a record shop. It is the advent of the CD but Frank is sticking with what he knows - vinyl. He is single, alone now after the death of his mother, and, influenced by his past, afraid of letting anyone special into his life. However, he comes alive in his record shop, matching customers with exactly the right music for them, even though the area and world around him is rapidly changing.*

*Into his life come Ilse, a young German woman. Frank is immediately attracted to her, but she is engaged and he is far too afraid to let his feelings be known.....*

*Frank, Ilse and the other characters in the book are well described and believable and as usual, I found myself rooting for them, willing them on and holding my breath in places should things go awry. The passages about music history, composers and different songs are interesting and add to the flavour and message of the book.*

*Joyce's writing is ethereal but simply very effective. Altogether a lovely, satisfying read.*

## **Val Rowe**

***A gem of a novel that will remain imprinted in my mind for some time to come.***

*Having been introduced to it at an early stage in a way that would explode one's Senses, Frank certainly knows music. Set in 1988, he runs a quaint vinyl record shop, delighting others with his recommendations and refusing to stock cassette tapes and the soon to be launched CDs. His life is unexpectedly taken over by a visit from a mysterious woman, Ilse Brauchmann who eventually provides a link with his beloved music lover mother, Peggy.*

*Every now and then a novel comes along which completely draws me in and this was one of those novels.*

*Constructed in a seemingly simplistic style, Rachel Joyce has a magical way of painting her characters and getting to the heart of their being. I felt as if I knew Unity Street, its shops and people intimately, experiencing their joys and sorrows and longing to discover my own shop run by a man like Frank.*

*I absolutely fell in love with 'The Music Shop' and didn't want to finish reading it. However, when the ending came, it did not disappoint and I was left with that wonderfully satisfying feeling that only an excellent story teller can evoke.*

*Now to explore more of Rachel Joyce's previous novels! Thank you Lovereading for introducing her to me.*

### **Sharon McKinlay**

*Enjoyable, moving story about Frank & his record store. **A very enjoyable & moving story about Frank who runs a record store. Interesting mix of characters that all added to the enjoyment of the story.***

### **Alfred Nobile**

***I found this a beautiful, refreshing and simple read with a deep message.***

*The main characters are Frank; who runs a record store that only stocks vinyl. Frank seems too weighed down by his past but he believes in the therapeutic value of music and brings this to his customers. Also Isle a German lady with problems of her own. Other characters Kit, Maud and Father Anthony are so well drawn and you can engage with them all fully. All these people mix together and form a great story that builds and swirls to a satisfying conclusion.*

*I recommend you to read this book and invest in these characters.*

*I will say it again, a beautiful refreshing and simple read with a deep message.*

*Thanks to Rachel, publishers and Lovereading for the ARC.*

### **Angie Rhodes**

***Feeling sad, lost, scared, and unsure? I know what you need, you need to come with me, to The Music Shop. An unsuspecting little shop but in that shop you will find Frank and Frank is the one to help you.***

*Frank sells Vinyl, and though it is 1988, Frank will not sell CDs, only vinyls. Everything from Classical to punk and everything in between. It is crammed packed full of music and day after day. Frank finds customer's music, not what they go in for, but what he feels they need, and he is never wrong!*

*He knows what music everyone wants that enters his shop, until Ilse Brauchman walks in. Ilse with the pea green coat, and Franks life is about to be turned upside down!*

*This is not just a book, it is a book that breaths music, and is one that had me listening to music that I would never have listened to before, buying it and thanking in my head Frank The Music Man from The Music Shop!! Oh yes tes, one last thing? You will need tissues to wipe the tears.*

## **Ruth**

***'The Music Shop' is a beautiful story so much more than just a love story between people, it's a love story of music.***

*'The Music Shop' is a beautiful story about a love of music and neighbourhood. Frank owns a small music shop in the late 1980's. He only stocks Vinyl and refuses to "move with the times". He has a gift, one that brings people to his shop. He "reads" his customers and can find the correct music for them even if they don't expect it e.g. The Man Who Loved Chopin in Chapter One ends up with Aretha Franklin and this helps him get through a personal crisis, not just giving him music to listen to.*

*The records are stacked, not according to genre but the way they "speak" to Frank. The small row of shops and owners are an eclectic bunch, who have formed close friendships. Their backstories and personalities unfold slowly. Each person, in their own unique way, lovable and worth reading on for.*

*One day a mysterious and beautiful lady faints in the shop. Everyone rallies round and once she leaves all fear she may not return. She does though, with the same mysterious aura that surrounds her. A love secretly develops between this stranger and Frank, a secret from themselves but not those around them. She employs Frank to teach her about music, he teaches her how to listen and love all types of music.*

*As they fall in in love their enthusiasm for the music draws the reader in. I have to admit to keeping my phone beside me and listening to each track as it is described from Classical to Heavy Metal. Absorbing descriptions of the music and historical background to the composers' lives is a completely different angle making this novel more than just a love story between people, it's a love story of music. I thoroughly recommend this book.*

### **Victoria Goldman**

***'The Music Shop' is a heartwarming character-driven novel with rhythmic writing, descriptive prose and gentle humour. It's a quirky and nostalgic book about change, with a love story at its heart.***

*Set in the late 1980s, it prompted me to reminisce about the music and culture of my teenage years. This was a great time of change, with the housing boom and property development, and within music itself, with the rise of shiny CDs and synthetic pop bands. Yet Frank, the key character in The Music Shop, doesn't like change. Instead, he loves his old vinyls and the other small high street shops. He has a gift for choosing music to suit his customers' needs, yet he ignores his own.*

*The Music Shop has a love story at its heart, but not just between Frank and the mysterious Ilse. It's about loving yourself, your community and the changing world. This is a book about dealing with change, whether it's sticking to your principles or accepting that the world is moving on around you - and that you'll be lost if you don't take the plunge yourself.*

*The ending is a bit 'cheesy' and maybe a little rushed. But overall, this relaxing read provides much food for thought.*

<http://off-the-shelfbooks.blogspot.co.uk>

### **Jane Brown**

***Beautiful and nostalgic although for some reviewers this appears like it was yesterday lovely romance.***

*I was asked to review this by Lovereading.co.uk*

*Beautiful book. So nostalgic although for me the late 80s seems like yesterday.*

*Frank with his record shop – remember these well and before CD and I pods. He is resisting CD and who would not as this was a dying age of the record. He can find music to suit the customer but what does Frank need then in walks Ilse Brauchmann then a story that the reader does not expect.*

*It portrays life then and is tinged with humour also*

*Lovely read and is due for publication July 2017 – so just in time for the great sun bed read expect a lot of sun tan cream on the pages and up there in the top ten shelf.*

<http://browniebookworld.blogspot.co.uk>

## **Alexandra Harper-Williams**

***One of the most magical and inspiring books I have read in a while - truly beautiful.***

*It's 1988 and Frank is the owner of a music shop who knows exactly what type of music his customers need. One day a German lady called Ilse Brauchmann walks into his life and soon his life is turned upside down by this mysterious woman.*

*A truly inspirational books which urges you to look inside and slow down to reconnect with emotions and to feel the sheer joy of life brought out by music.*

*I couldn't put this book down and look forward to reading many more novels by this brilliant author.*

## **Victoria Emerson**

***Another delightful, heart-warming tale from Rachel Joyce.***

*I adored this book. It's a very light, great for summer read.*

*A beautiful tale of Frank, a record shop owner and his unexpected relationship with a German Lady, Ilse Brauchmann.*

*Well worth a read.*

## **Kathryn Eastman**

***In her latest novel, Rachel Joyce's writing is pitch perfect and every bit as healing as the tracks that Frank selects as prescribed listening for his customers in The Music Shop.***

*If you've ever played sad songs to make you feel better when you're blue, if you've ever heard a song on the radio that makes you realise you're not alone in how you feel, if a piece of music brings back memories of a person, a place or a time in your life or you can't help starting to sway, dance or even sing along when the first chords of a track start, then you need to read The Music Shop.*

*Rachel Joyce creates a real community around Frank and his titular music shop, with his customers and assistant Kit, the other shopkeepers in the parade and residents of Unity Street. She shows how it comes together but also how it's under pressure to change: record reps want Frank to start selling CDs like the Woolworths in the High Street and unscrupulous property developers are circling.*

*Rachel Joyce's writing may seem gentle, deceptively so, but there's real drama here too; her true range reflected in the music Frank chooses, and how she orchestrates the cast of characters. (I couldn't help assigning each one a different musical instrument.)*

*Rachel Joyce's words heal every bit as much as Frank's musical prescriptions. 'The Music Shop' is an incredibly moving novel about the power and importance of music in our lives, helping us to connect with our feelings. It's also a rather beautiful love story in which music brings two damaged people closer together.*

### **Kathryn Whitfield**

***Fantastic!! I beautiful story about love, friendship and music. I adored this story it was fantastic.***

*I love Rachel Joyce's writing it is just so easy and I glided from page to page. I loved all her characters who were funny and real and their story was so heart-warming. It was such a delightful read. I love stories set in the past and this story was set in 1988 in a music shop owned by Frank who won't move with the times and stock cd's which were just getting popular. Frank knows lots about music and is able to find the right music for his customers when they come to him for help. One day a woman turns up and changes Frank's world. I didn't want the story to end and I look forward to reading more from Rachel Joyce.*

You can follow Kathryn on Twitter: @kathreenieA

### **Edel Waugh**

*This is an absolutely gorgeous story about a man , a street , and a love of music*

*Frank is one of those characters who you almost instantly fall in love with , his empathy and big heart make him an irresistible lead character who just so happens to have a talent for knowing the perfect music for any person to suit their own situation no matter what it is . This gives him an almost central role in the group of misfits who also have businesses on the same street as him , people that seem a bit lost in life seem to find their way to him and one in particular puts a sparkle back in his eyes . **I loved every page of this book , it's filled with great music titles and loveable quirky characters and a lovely nostalgic love of vinyl . Read this immediately folks , you won't be disappointed.***

