

Music...

- * "When words fail...music speaks" - Hans Christian Anderson
- * "Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between the notes and curl my back to loneliness." - Maya Angelou
- * "Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, and life to everything.
It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form."
- *not* Plato (but we don't know who)

The music industry...

“The music business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side.”

-Hunter S. Thompson

Mood Machine



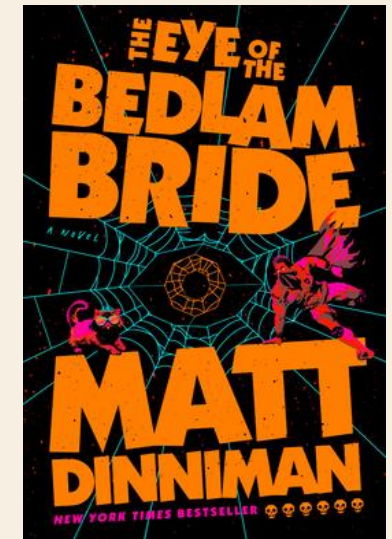
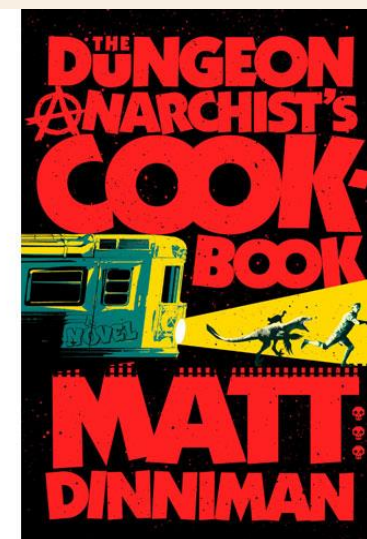
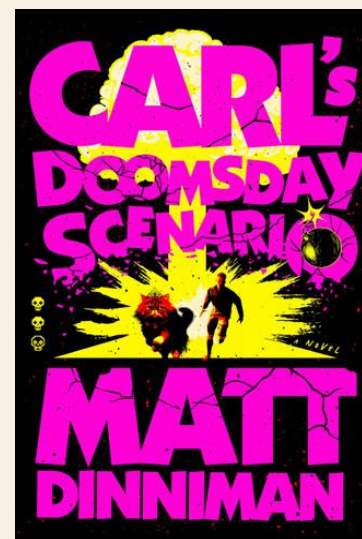
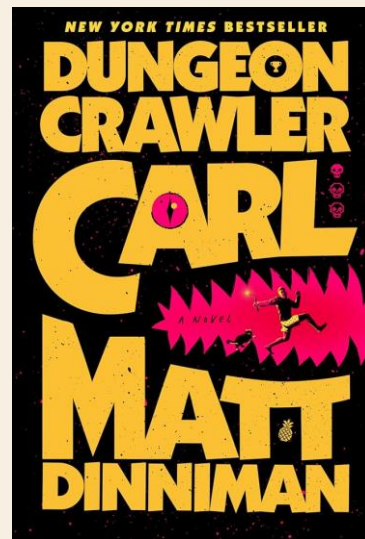
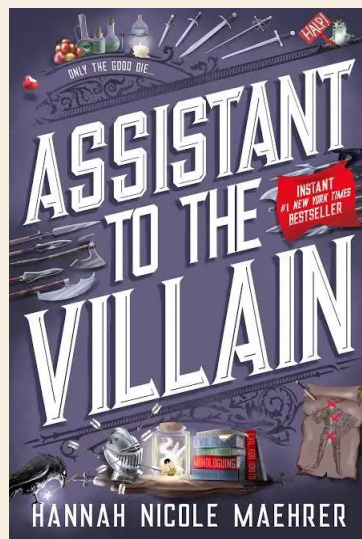
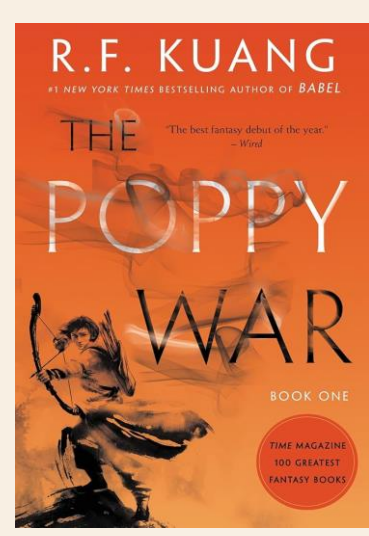
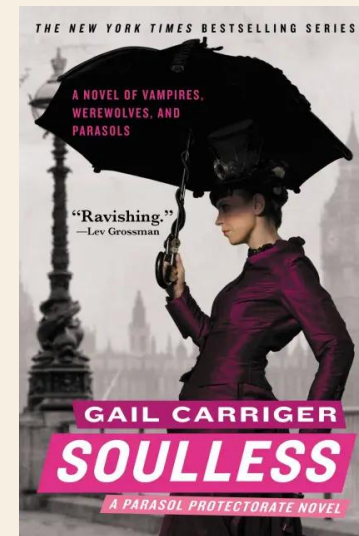
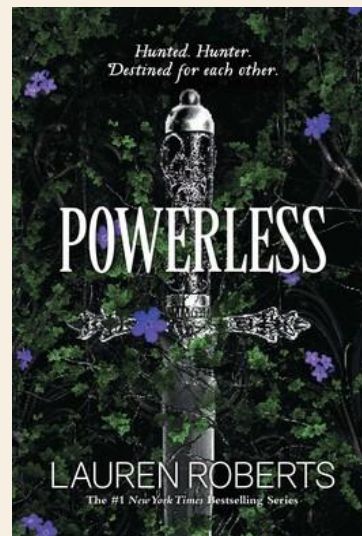
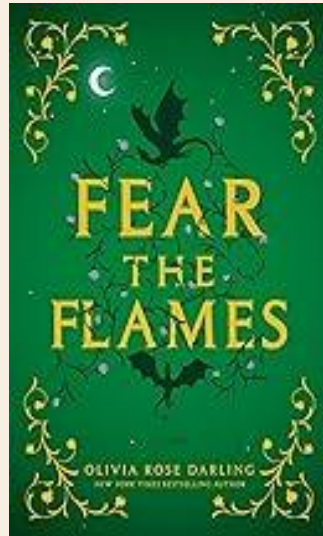
Liz
Pelly

Meet the new boss...
...same as the old boss

This book is...

- * Well-researched
- * Important
- * Accurate
- * Frustrating
- * Challenging
- * Kind of a drag for long parts – even before you get to the AI-of-it-all
- * In the end, an inspiration to dream of something new

Books I have read since starting to read "Mood Machine"



That being said...

- * What is music?
- * Why do we make it? Why do we listen to it?
- * How much do we value those who make the music we love?
- * Would any music do?
- * Is it inevitable that musicians cannot make a living from their craft?
- * What is the value of a delivery platform?
- * Are delivery platforms neutral, and what does it matter what their values are – explicit or implied?
- * Does this *matter*? And what can we do anyway?
- * “Which is more musical, a truck passing by a factory or a truck passing by a music school? Are the people inside the school musical and the ones outside unmusical?” (John Cage, Silence: Lectures and Writings)

Liz Pelly

- * Liz Pelly is a writer based in New York. Her first book, *Mood Machine: The Rise of Spotify and the Costs of the Perfect Playlist*, was a finalist for the 2025 National Book Critics Circle Award. Her byline has appeared at The Baffler, Guardian, Harper's, NPR, Pioneer Works Broadcast, and many other outlets. She currently co-hosts the podcast Critical Listening. lizpelly.info
- * [On the Spotify-Netflix deal and the costs of distraction](#), Financial Times (2025)
- * [Spotify "Discovery Mode" investigation](#), The Guardian (2025)
- * [Spotify "Perfect Fit Content" investigation](#), Harper's (2024)
- * [Giant Sucking Sounds: Amazon's quest to bleed music dry](#), The Baffler (2023)
- * ["There's endless choice, but you're not listening": music fans quitting streaming](#), The Guardian (2022)

Have you ever wondered...

- * How do musicians earn money?
- * How does Spotify make money? What is its product? Who are its customers?
- * The context from which Spotify emerged
 - Countering piracy, “Saving the music industry”
 - Sweden and music – education and culture
- * The way Spotify works and continues to evolve
- * How Spotify shapes how music is made (and experienced)
- * Data, surveillance. Who knows what? And to what degree of accuracy?
- * “What is a stream worth?”

"Our only competitor is silence"

- * Selling Lean-Back listening - the results of needing to grow
- * Not selling music, not providing music - filling people's time
- * Playlisting – discovery and sharing versus the infinite stream
- * Muzak (est. 1934)
- * Ghost artists for hire and “Perfect Fit Content” (PFC)
- * Then we get to AI...

Artist as customer AND as product

- * An app for a boss - creator team
- * Spotify for Artists
- * Individual artists, selling the myth: bootstrapping, solo entrepreneur
- * Payola (1930s) and "Discovery Mode"
- * What is music, and who is a professional?
- * How can you make educated decisions without all the information?

Extracting value

“The music industry’s focus on stamping out individual scammers can often seem like merely an attempt to distract from the systemic grift of it all – of streaming, of platform capitalism, but also the oligopoly of the recorded music business, period, and how it constantly finds new ways to extract more and more from musicians and listeners.” p.311

[Spoiler Alert]

The way that music has been reimagined by streaming is grim—but these problems are ultimately manifestations of a music industry that has been failing artists and the public for generations.

To address the root causes of our ailing music culture, we need to have deeper conversations about why music matters, why universal access to music matters, and what systemic political and economic realities currently prevent so many people from engaging deeply with music. It is always worth remembering that our shared music cultures would be so much more compelling and diverse if so many did not need to abandon the arts for jobs with health insurance.

Ultimately, we can't just think about changing music, or changing music technology.

That's not enough.

We need to think about the world we want to live in, and where music fits into that vision.

thelocalsoundcollaborative.org



A music and arts based **nonprofit organization** in Rochester, NY.

Our mission is to redefine the culture of what music can provide our world by creating an ecosystem that invests in musicians of all levels.

Rochester Broadcast

- * "Spatial Symphony" by Lisa Bielawa
- * April 18th, noon and 2pm at Parcel 5
- * SOTA, Eastman, Rochester Medical Orchestra, Klezmer Band, and more



Public libraries and public radio and our whole wonderful local music scene

- * Hoopla, ukuleles, and more
- * Music radio in Rochester!
 - WXXI Classical
 - 88.5 The Route
 - Jazz 90.1
 - WAYO
 - Rochester Free Radio
 - WITR
 - WBER

What if...

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AAMPS

INTRODUCING



AAMPS

ann arbor music & performance server

HIGHLIGHTS

Local Labels & Artists: 400+ Albums

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[RECORDED 7 YRS AGO THIS SPRING >](#)

Ghostly International

[EXPLORE GHOSTLY RELEASES >](#)

Quite Scientific

[EXPLORE QUISCI RELEASES >](#)

Youth Owned Records

[EXPLORE YOR RELEASES >](#)

Music at Community High

[A PROJECT IN PROGRESS >](#)

About AAMPS

Hey! You've found your way to the Ann Arbor Music & Performance Server (AAMPS), an initiative to build upon the collection of local music we've been amassing over the last few years. Sure, you've long been able to check out CDs by local musicians, but Ann Arbor's music culture is ever-evolving. Limiting things to one format seems short-sighted. We've linked up with a few locally-based labels for a jump start, and we're excited to start adding more direct downloads and streaming to the mix in 2018! Interested in adding your own music? Have a suggestion for a local act that would be a great fit? Email us at aamps@aadl.org

**SATURDAY LOOKS
GOOD TO ME**

**FREE CONCERT
AT ANN ARBOR DISTRICT
LIBRARY**

**MONDAY APRIL 22
7 PM**



LET'S CONNECT!



