

MUSIC AS A MAP TO HAPPINESS

Minneapolis musician Mark Mallman's memoir chronicles the 'Happiness Playlist' he listened to in the wake of his mother's death

By Christa Lawler
clawler@duluthnews.com

Mark Mallman first feels a contender for his happiness playlist in his body — a technique he uses in mixing his own music in addition to, recently, deciding that Lizzo's "Good As Hell" is a good song to listen to over and over and over again.

"They speak to my body before they speak to my mind," Mallman said in a phone interview from Minneapolis, where he had taken a break from composing music.

It's in his back and shoulders, he said. If it loosens up, he knows.

Mallman's compilation of upbeat songs was the starting point for his self-help/music memoir "The Happiness Playlist: The True Story of Healing My Heart With Feel-Good Music." While grieving the sudden death of his mother, Mallman turns to music as a "map to safe harbor." He chronicles three seasons of his life during this period — the tacos, the twice-daily conversations with his father and the perfect New Year's Eve spent with an ex-turned-friend.

And in the background: the music.

Van Morrison's "And it Stoned Me," Sting's "Fields of Gold," Mariah Carey's "Fantasy."

Mallman, a longtime figure in the Minneapolis music scene, will give a reading and sign books at 5:30 p.m. Friday at the Bookstore at Fitgers. He will return to perform June 8 at The Red Herring Lounge.

First, the playlist

Mallman's grief was delayed, but when it finally struck, it struck hard. His story opens with a never-ending panic attack that has him afraid to sleep and afraid to be awake.

Music had always been his thing, but suddenly Joy Division and Patti Smith were too bleak. He shed old favorites in favor of a growing list of upbeat tunes: a 3-plus hour playlist with the likes of Bob Marley's "One Love," Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow," Whitney Houston's "I Want to Dance With Somebody."

Whether it's in his life as a touring musician or in creating an album or DJing an event, he said, music has had a practical application. Making the playlist was different.

"It was probably the first time since my teens that I approached music entirely as a listener," Mallman said.

MALLMAN: Page C4



Photo by Wilson Webb

Mark Mallman will read from "The Happiness Playlist" (pictured below) on Friday at the Bookstore at Fitgers.



"The Happiness Playlist: The True Story of Healing My Heart with Feel-Good Music"

Author: Mark Mallman
Publisher: Think Piece Publishing
Pages: 146
Price: \$14.95

IF YOU GO

What: Mark Mallman book signing for "The Happiness Playlist"
When: 5:30 p.m. Friday
Where: The Bookstore at Fitger's, 600 E. Superior St.
Online: Mallman's playlist is on Spotify



Helen Sloan/HBO
Emilia Clarke as Daenerys Targaryen in "Game of Thrones."

With two episodes left, who will win?

By Verne Gay
Newsday

Who will win "Game of Thrones?"

With two weeks to go, we all have our theories but only one will count. And so, as we approach the end, let's sort out some possibilities, in ascending order:

10. A baby Lannister/Targaryen. There's something a bit facile and unsatisfying about this popular theory — a convenient way for "GoT" to either sidestep a commitment, or resolve as some sort of real-world parable (we must clean up our mess before we hand it off to the next generation!) We've come this far. We want someone we actually know to win.

9. A Greyjoy. Euron has made himself indispensable to Cersei as master and commander of the Iron Fleet but it also would appear he may have put all his eggs in the wrong basket. A victorious Cersei would dispose of him, knowing he would lay claim to the throne himself. Meanwhile, it's hard to envision a scenario with Euron's niece Jara as queen, although she does have a role yet to play (If Cersei doesn't get to Euron first, will Jara finish the job?)

8. Bran Stark. As three-eyed Raven, he knows all, sees all, both the past and the future. His "warging" (into Hodor, or as the Raven or as direwolf Summer) has conferred omniscience or even changed history. But does anyone really want Bran as King — Bran least of all?

7. Cersei Lannister. If we accept the rough theory that "Game of Thrones" is a parallel to the War of the Roses — that entangled dynastic struggle betwixt the Lancastrians (Lannisters) and Yorkists (Starks) in 15th century England — then Cersei is Margaret of Anjou, who took over leadership from her enfeebled husband (Henry VII), then proceeded to make matters much worse. Margaret had great success, but was ultimately captured by the Yorkists and exiled. Unlike Margaret, Cersei does have a path to ultimate victory, but only if she kills everyone else on that path first.

THRONES: Page C4

Jonah Hill's 'Mid90s' packs nostalgia with a punch

As an actor, Jonah Hill easily moves through comedies like "21 Jump Street" to Oscar nods in dramas like "The Wolf of Wall Street" and "Moneyball." As a filmmaker making his debut, he mixes both sensibilities in "Mid90s."

Stevie (Sunny Suljic) is ready to shed his Ninja Turtle and Hulk Hogan bedroom wares. Searching for who he's gonna be, he rifles through his big brother Ian's room at the risk of a severe beating — which can happen for any reason, at any time. (The film starts with an intense, impressively sound-edited altercation between brothers.)

It's when Stevie witnesses a fearless group of skateboarders led by actors Na-kel Smith and Olan Prenatt that he knows where he wants to go.

In his directorial debut, Hill mixes it up with widely framed hallways, character close-ups and a moving lens that surveys a party and a skate-trick drop. And Hill romanticizes Stevie's homosocial bonding with the crew in a shot of the boys skating down a busy highway median to "Dedicated To The One I Love," a California skyline behind them.

INDIEWATCH: Page C4



MELINDA LAVINE
Indiewatch



Sunny Suljic and Na-kel Smith star in "Mid90s," available on streaming.

"Mid90s"

Starring: Sunny Suljic, Katherine Waterston, Lucas Hedges

Director: Jonah Hill

Writer: Jonah Hill

Time: 1:25

Rating: R for pervasive language, sexual content, drug and alcohol use, some violent behavior/disturbing images — all involving minors

Available: Amazon Prime, Google Play, VUDU

imdb.com