
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / BOOKSSee also: [books](#), [music and arts](#), [music books](#), [author interviews](#)

9 questions with Spanish music book author: Barry Kolman

January 20, 2015

4:16 PM MST

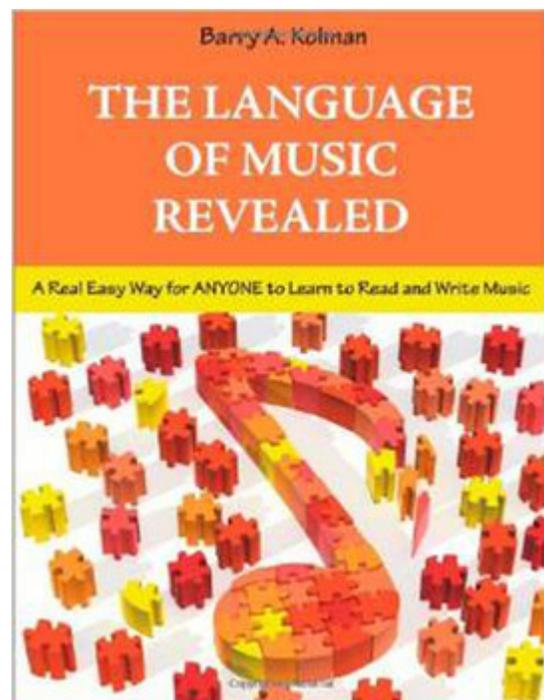
Barry Kolman, renowned conductor, author of " The Language of Music Revealed: A Real Easy Way for Anyone to Learn to Read and Write Music " and " El Lenguaje De La Música: Al Descubierta " answers 9 questions about the inspiration behind his writing and he discusses his passion for music.

1. Can you tell us a little about yourself and how long you've been writing?

Since the age of six I have always been involved with music. In Elementary school as well as high school, I performed in orchestras, bands, and small ensembles. Even before I was able to play an instrument, I would listen to recordings all the time when I was a kid. I think it was my mother who first thought I had to musical talent when she observed that every time I heard a song, I would keep time with the music with my foot as early as five years old. For almost 60 years, music has been an indelible part of who I am. When I was 12 years old I had an idea for a short story/book. My father encouraged me to write it showing me that there is really nothing a person can't do if you put your mind to it. He sent the manuscript over to Random House and after about 6 to 9 months I received my first rejection letter. I was pretty impressed by the whole process. From that moment on I have been fooling around with writing short stories and hoping one of these days my work would be published.

2. What was the inspiration behind your writing and was there a life changing event?

My inspiration for writing my first published book came about by my teaching a course in



Author Barry Kolman

music fundamentals to non music majors. This was my first exposure to academic nonfiction book. I was so fed up with the lack of interesting music theory books out there, that I decided to sit down one summer and just write my own. All I wanted to do is to make this class interesting and informative to a group of students who were taking the course just to receive three credits. Definitely a tough crowd. I was committing to make this class more than an academic requirement with this book.

3. What was your greatest challenge writing this book?

I remember sitting in my office with approximately 35 different music fundamentals books strewn all over the floor. How would I make this book any different than these 35 authors? They always tell you to write what you know and coming from Brooklyn,(New York I guess what I know the best was a touch of sarcasm and humor. So I had to balance the two. To write an academic book that could be used in or outside the classroom about a subject that can be drier than sandpaper and to incorporate some humor, some graphics, and an interesting way to keep the reader turning pages was indeed a challenge.

4. Tell us the kind of research involved in writing this book.

Much of the research was taken from my 25+ years experience of teaching music and from interviewing my students to receive some feedback about what would make for a more interesting music fundamentals book. I certainly didn't want to make the same mistakes those previous 35 authors made. I created an outline to make sure that while I was trying to make this humorous, I also wanted to make certain I covered all the necessary topics to make this a complete book on the introductory level.

5. From your experience what is the best method of marketing your book to date?

For an unknown author, marketing is very important in order to get your book out there. I learned quickly that publishing companies rarely assist in marketing a book unless you're a well-known author. Though I had some help from PR firms, I found self marketing to be the most effective, either through social media, Amazon, sending out review copies, and requiring students to buy it as part of your class. I also made several presentations around the country, specially when the book came out in it's Spanish translation. Local bookstores in my area also carry copies of both editions. Effective marketing is really up to your own creativity in getting your book known to your target audience. That is also important, to know your target audience.

6. Do you have another job besides writing?

My day job has been teaching at the local university and guest conductor orchestras around

the world.

7. Where are you born and where do you now live?

I am a proud native New Yorker born in Brooklyn and I now live somewhere in rural Virginia.

8. What's the most important message readers will get from reading your book?

The subtitle of the book is: A Real Easy Way To Read And Write Music. That's the most important message of this book. Learning to read and write music should not be a mystery and it should be fun. And anybody, even those with a tin ear, can learn to write music easily. For all those amateur piano players, guitar players, and fiddle players who can't read music, this is the book for you.

9. How does your book target the Spanish Community?

I was really appalled to find out that there are very few adult books written in Spanish. Even in Spain, most of the books that are published are for very young children. In the field of music, there's practically nothing written in Spanish. I was very pleased that this book is available in a Spanish translation and it is being sold all over the world. I hope this is just the beginning and I will see other authors writing nonfiction academic books in Spanish. Sadly, this is a woefully underserved audience. The Spanish translation of my book is selling on [Amazon](#).

Ask Barry Kolman questions by visiting his website at [BarryKolman.com](#)



Yvonne Wu
Buffalo Books Examiner