



## THE WITTMANN AGENCY

### Love Letters To Bookworms | Liebesbriefe an Bücherwürmer

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#### Global Online Marketing + Strategy For Modern Publishing Entrepreneurs

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Reading time 6 min 18 sec

## Hey, Claudia!

Hope you have a spare goody bag...

I know we're not supposed to miss the book fair goody bags, but TBH, I miss all of my wonderfully packed book fair goody bags. ;)

OK, you don't need a bag, but you should set up a new folder on your desktop and label it "Best Indie Books."

(Except you're seeing your biz as a commodity without proper branding nor unique voice. Then go to those who may represent in bulk and from major trade brands, and you'll be gladly swept under the rug — as my \*old\* clients said after calling me in to help them clean up the mess.)

And then, get ready to fill it. Because...

**If you're looking for an excellent book on music to inspire your readers, your own agency clients or just for yourself - you'll find it here.**

That's right! Instead of telling you, what New Year resolutions you should make or what stuff to buy (or not to buy), I've put together something bookish for YOU.

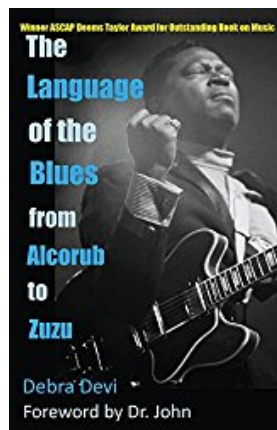
Not everyone's version of paradise – I know, but we're not everyone, are we, Claudia?

### THE LANGUAGE OF THE BLUES: From Alcorub to Zuzu

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- by Debra Devi (a.k.a. Debra DeSalvo) and which is being published by Billboard Books, USA and relaunched by True Nature Records and Books, USA and exclusively and worldwide represented by #TheWittmannAgency (WORLD RIGHTS, excluding ENGLISH WORLD RIGHTS, these are with the Proprietors and excluding rights sold (ROMANIA)).

Devi's book *The Language of the Blues: From Alcorub to Zuzu* (foreword by Dr John) received the **ASCAP Deems Taylor Award**.



## What's about

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*The Language of the Blues* defines and explores over 150 terms found in blues songs (like "mojo," "buffet flat," and "killing floor") with fresh insights and fascinating stories from author Debra Devi's in-depth interviews with such blues legends as Hubert Sumlin, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Henry Gray, Bob Margolin, Robben Ford, Jimmie Vaughan and more.

The book opens with a remarkable foreword by famed musician Dr. John and includes 40+ photos (17 in colour) of blues artists.

The result is a lively read Blues Revue deems "an essential purchase for scholars and fans." New York Times columnist Shelton Ivany adds."

## Unique elements of the book to stand out (USP) in press reviews

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"If you have any questions about songs, lyrics, musicians or events, chances are you will find your answers in this unparalleled publication." It is "invaluable."  
– Net Hentoff, The Wall Street Journal.

"One of the wittiest, bawdiest, most fascinating dictionaries ever."  
– Gary Hill, Reuters

"What a great resource – as fascinating as it is informative. Debra's passion for the blues shines through."  
– Bonnie Raitt, American blues singer, songwriter

"Debra's book will teach you what you really need to know about blues history and where the blues are coming from."  
– Joe Bonamassa, American blues-rock guitarist

"An important addition to the study of blues...an essential purchase for scholars and fans."  
– Blues Revue

"An unparalleled publication. If you have any questions about songs, lyrics, musicians or events, you will find your answers here."  
– Shelton Ivany, New York Times

"This book deserves a top spot on your shelf where it can be grabbed for reference or just sheer enjoyment."  
– Elmore

"Not a dour dictionary. Rather, it is a vibrant work of social commentary that you may well find yourself reading through in one sitting."  
– The Frustrated Writer

"This book is fascinating Take it to the bathroom and don't come out until you're done reading it."  
– Jimmy Vivino

"This is a beautiful book. After hearing 'Hellhound on My Trail' in high school I bought every vintage blues record available at the time. Upon receiving *The Language of the Blues* I discovered my knowledge only scratched the surface. Debra Devi has written an invaluable reference book. And it's also great fun to read."

– Hal Willner

"Congratulations to Debra Devi for *The Language of the Blues*. Its candour and witty honesty bring us into the world she describes so well with beautiful strength. This is a book that lovers of music and just plain old lovers will love to have in their collections."

– Ed Sanders

### [From Publishers Weekly](#)

"There have been several books published recently featuring the rich, colourful lexicon of the blues and its intriguing practitioners, but this volume by music journalist DeSalvo (a.k.a Debra Devi) goes them one better with a thoroughly researched dictionary of blues slang.

As she writes in the preface, "Blues artists—looking to steal from the best, like all songwriters—nicked words and phrases from the numbers runners, hookers, drag queens, thieves, junkies, pimps, moonshiners, hoodoo doctors, dealers, rounders, and con artists who made up the street set."

In explaining the familiar ("cool") and obscure ("honey dripper"), DeSalvo (a.k.a Debra Devi) gives not only the phrase's origins but its ongoing history and current applications.

Thus readers learn that the term "balling the jack" was originally a conductor's way of saying a train was moving at top speed; by the 1920s, it had come to signify "any wild, all-out-effort"; from there, it turned into a song by Chris Smith and James Henry Burris; then, Judy Garland and Gene Kelly performed "Balling the Jack" in the 1942 film *Me and My Gal*; etc.

The definitions are supported with a lively narrative and interviews with blues stalwarts including Little Milton, Bonnie Raitt, Hubert Sumlin and Jody Williams."

## Recommended for (Target Audience)

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An essential purchase for scholars and fans of blues and other forms of popular music.

## Available Options

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Full English manuscript available.

## What readers say

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### There're great anecdotes from musicians

I've been listening to blues music for over 40 years. There're many phrases and words in the lyrics that I did not understand. Debra not only defines the phrases. She outlines the etymology of the words. There're great anecdotes from musicians, explanations of alternate guitar tunings and more.

– Ray, *Goodreads, Reviewer (5 stars)*

### Great overview of terms used in Blues music lyrics

Great overview of terms used in Blues music lyrics. Dictionaries exist that are more comprehensive but this is an excellent place to start.

– Michael, *Goodreads, Reviewer (4 stars)*

### It's ONLY the Blues; ain't it?

Yeah, I know "the Blues is Dead," or "Every damn song starts 'Woke up this Morning,'" or "Old folks Music," or insert your pet peeves...At least that's what is said all too often. I bought "the Language of the Blues" by Debra DeSalvo, on a recommendation from Blues-L the mailing list, and am still going through the book. On every page, there are insights to who, what and or why many words were, and are, used in Blues, Blues/Rock and Rock & Roll; "The Blues had a Baby..." The only thing I find missing is 'Sand' or 'Raising Sand,' which I always took to mean digging a grave, but as I said I'm still reading.

This is one of those books that you can pick up and start reading from wherever the page opens. Miss DeSalvo once wrote for Blues Review magazine so the book is more than a scholarly explanation of terms; it is interesting! So unless you are an expert already, wait is there such a thing as 'Blues expert,' buy this book you won't be disappointed!

Also, the book has pictures by Dick Waterman, and others, and a forward by Dr John. The Blues is a lot more than 'Woke up this Morning' 3 chords and guitar solos. The Blues was an oppressed people saying things, in song, that would have got them jailed or hung. But that ain't all, much of the language also was about, shall we say sex? Yes, S. E. X. many of those subjects would've been sent a man, or woman, straight to Hell; unless they made a deal at "the Crossroads."

Afro-Americans enriched American English, with their music and language. Now next thing will be, in 50 years or so, "the Language of Rap or Hip-Hop" will come out. But of course, that won't be written until the "Rap is Dead" crowd has had a few years to say that. After the next "Hot, cool whatever, Musical genre." I'm sorry but 'genre;' isn't a word that has any meaning, to me at least, in music. Music is either Good or Bad!

– Willyblues, Amazon, US Reviewer (5 stars)

## About the author

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**Debra Devi** is an award-winning author, journalist and musician based in Jersey City NJ and singer/guitarist for the rock band DEVI.

She has co-authored numerous books with Steve Mariotti. Devi's book *The Language of the Blues: From Alcorub to Zuzu* (foreword by Dr. John) received the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award.

She is a former associate of *Blues Revue Magazine* and has written for *Investor's Daily*, *American Banker*, *Crain's New York*, *The Village Voice*, *RollingStone.com*, *Guitar World* and more.



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I really look forward to hearing from you very soon.

[Now, getting back to shoveling snow for the next 6 hours. :\)](#)

With enormous excitement and so much love 💕,

xoxo Claudia

**P.S.** One of my biggest joys is helping book-lovin' people find books that they love, so please, share this E-Mail with your friends, colleagues and everyone who loves music. They'll thank you for it!

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Lutherstrasse 23  
06886 Lutherstadt Wittenberg  
Deutschland | Germany  
contact@the-wittmann-agency.com  
[the-wittmann-agency](#)  
USt.-IdNr. / VAT-Nr. DE279052110