



The Music Lesson

by Katharine Weber

Sep 21 & Oct 5

1:30p | Isabel Hall

Discussion Questions

1. Katharine Weber's first novel, **Objects in Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear**, considered appearance and reality, perception and perceptivity. How are those issues manifest in **The Music Lesson**?
2. There are many small and hidden spaces in this novel—fake compartments, hidden cupboards. What do they signify? There are also many characters who aren't what they seem. Can you identify all the characters whose identities shift in the course of the story?
3. This novel deals with the ideas of accomplices and couriers. In which way are we all accomplices and why do we become accomplices? In which way are we all couriers?
4. Discuss the idea that a representation can seem more beautiful than the real object.
5. What is the impact of the journal entries on the pace of the novel? What is the effect of the brevity of the novel, at only 192 pages? How does the spareness of the language control the flow and the tension of the novel?
6. Is Patricia's life better before the story begins or after the story ends?
7. Do you believe, by the book's end, that Mickey is really Patricia's cousin?
8. The age-old question applies here—do the ends justify the means in the novel?
9. **The Music Lesson** is a visual, tactile, sensory book. Music, color, texture, the natural world, the world of Dutch 17th-century painting...these are all addressed in the book, though not always overtly. Is the author "painting" the world from which Patricia has withdrawn? Does Patricia regain this world by the end of the novel?