

Shadow Music

By Helaine Mario

Book Club Questions

Of course you will have your own questions for discussion after reading *Shadow Music*. But here are a few questions that have been asked of me recently, that I found particularly intriguing or insightful, and sure to initiate a good discussion. 😊

- The author has described *Shadow Music* as a ‘Genre-Blend’ of Suspense, Mystery, WW2 History, Romance, International Settings, Humor, Music and Art. How would you describe it? Do you think any genre conventions are challenged by this book?
- Readers either love or hate Prologues. Helaine always begins with a Prologue because she is fascinated by decades-old choices that ripple over generations, like a stone thrown into water. And oh, the questions they raise. Did the Prologue propel you to keep reading?

About the Characters...

The author has said she is ‘all about character, character, character.’

- Who was your favorite character? Why?
- Maggie O’Shea is in her late 40s—a young grandmother with a grown son. How do you feel about a character of this age, whose experiences will be quite different from those of a younger heroine?
- All of the main women characters in *Shadow Music*—Maggie, Donata, Rose, and Amelie—are faced with huge life-changing and sometimes life-threatening decisions. Did you find yourself asking, “What would I have done?”
- How did you feel about Dov, the new foster-care teen with a devastating secret? Did his character help to illuminate another side of Colonel Beckett’s character as well? Did he add humanity, and humor?
- How are these characters shaped by their pasts?
- Woven into the suspense and action scenes are the unfurling of smaller, every day moments. Did this add to the story for you, to the characters? How?
- Did you have a favorite chapter or scene?

- What were the most pivotal moments in the story for you?
- How do you feel animals as pivotal characters, such as Shiloh the Golden and Lady in Black? What did they bring to this story?
- Was there anything new you discovered, or that surprised or shocked you, when you read this book?
- Several authors have incorporated the Pandemic into their recent novels, others have not. Would you have preferred to see Covid-19 realistically included in this story to impact the characters' lives? Why, or why not?
- Do you feel that Classical Music tells a story and, in this book, mirrored Maggie's journey? Did you want to listen to some of Maggie's favorite pieces?
- Think about the challenges of writing a series for a moment. Do you think this series should be read from the beginning? Why?
- And finally... What do you think will happen in the next chapter of Maggie's story?