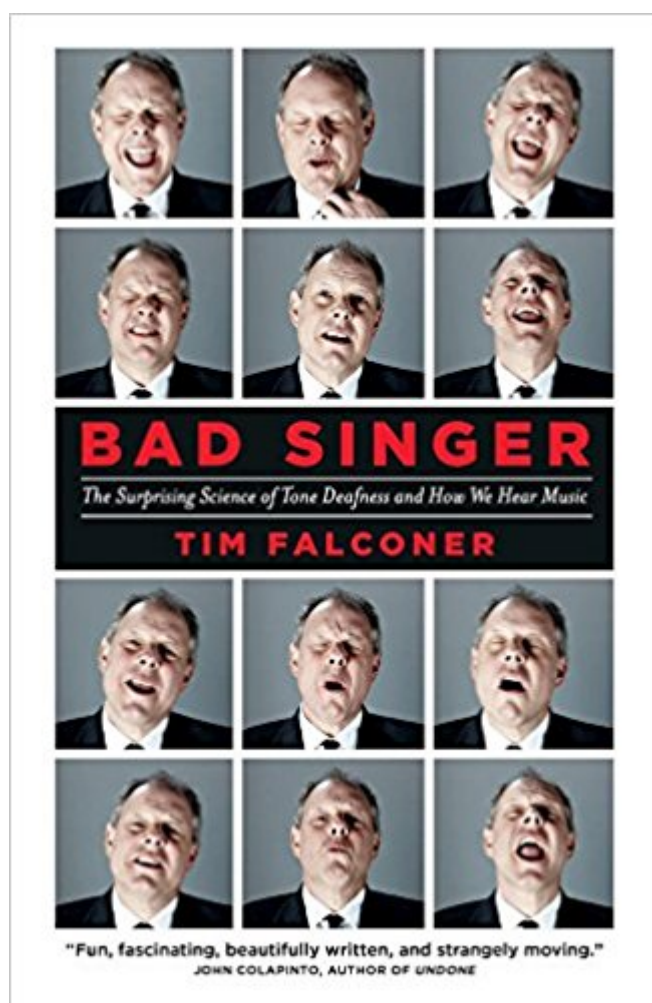


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# Bad Singer: The Surprising Science Of Tone Deafness And How We Hear Music



## Synopsis

Author and journalist Tim Falconer is a self-confessed "bad singer" and is one of only 2.5 percent of the population that has been afflicted with amusia, ie: he is scientifically tone-deaf. *Bad Singer* chronicles his quest to understand the brain science behind tone-deafness and to search for ways to retrain the adult brain. He is tested by numerous scientists who are as fascinated with him as he is with them. He also investigates why we love music and deconstructs what we are really hearing when we listen to it. Throughout this journey of scientific and psychological discovery, he puts theory to practice by taking voice and breathing lessons with a voice coach in order to achieve his personal goal: a public display of his singing abilities. A work of scientific discovery, musicology, and personal odyssey, *Bad Singer* is a fascinating, insightful, and highly entertaining account from an award-winning journalist and author.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In his journey to understand why, exactly, he can't hold a tune while having the ears and taste to appreciate great singing and songwriting Tim Falconer takes us on a deeply absorbing journey into the worlds of brain science, singing coaches, music psychologists, ethnomusicologists, and into his own keening, music-loving heart. *Bad Singer* is a fun, fascinating, beautifully written, and strangely moving tale of a melodically-challenged man who yearned to sing. And it has much to say about the mystery of how music moves all of us, good and bad singers alike." — John Colapinto, author of *Undone* "Bad Singer deftly combines a memoir of

Falconer's personal musical history with a scientific look into how humans hear music." [Maclean's](#) "an engaging, step-by-step look into how scientists study tone deafness... an essential tale about how human beings, even those of us with tin ears, can't help but be drawn to music... Over the last decade there have been a number of books published about the science of music - such as Daniel Levitan's *This Is Your Brain on Music*, Oliver Sacks's *Musicophilia*, and David Byrne's *How Music Works* - and *Bad Singer* is a doubly successful effort because it doesn't retread the same ground of these books, with Falconer couching his subject in a personal journey that's enjoyable to follow" [National Post](#) A spirited, even adventurous look at the mysteries of how the human brain perceives and processes sound [and even, on occasion, manages to make beautiful music.](#) [Kirkus Reviews](#) A remarkable story of dogged determination to prove his own body wrong and, as such, is one of the more illuminating cultural studies of modern times. [The Globe and Mail](#)

PRAISE FOR TIM FALCONER AND BAD SINGER: ["Bad Singer deftly combines a memoir of Falconer's personal musical history with a scientific look into how humans hear music.](#) [Maclean's](#) ["A remarkable story of dogged determination to prove his own body wrong and, as such, is one of the more illuminating cultural studies of modern times.](#) [Globe and Mail](#) ["An engaging, step-by-step look into how scientists study tone deafness . . . an essential tale about how human beings, even those of us with tin ears, can't help but be drawn to music . . . Over the last decade there have been a number of books published about the science of music - such as Daniel Levitan's \*This Is Your Brain on Music\*, Oliver Sacks's \*Musicophilia\*, and David Byrne's \*How Music Works\* - and \*Bad Singer\* is a doubly successful effort because it doesn't retread the same ground of these books, with Falconer couching his subject in a personal journey that's enjoyable to follow.](#) [National Post](#) ["In his journey to understand why, exactly, he can't hold a tune while having the ears and taste to appreciate great singing and songwriting - Tim Falconer takes us on a deeply absorbing journey into the worlds of brain science, singing coaches, music psychologists, ethnomusicologists, and into his own keening, music-loving heart. \*Bad Singer\* is a fun, fascinating, beautifully written, and strangely moving tale of a melodically-challenged man who yearned to sing. And it has much to say about the mystery of how music moves all of us, good and bad singers alike.](#) [John Colapinto, author of \*Undone\*](#) ["Falconer's self-deprecating humour keeps \*Bad Singer\*'s tone lighthearted and as entertaining as the photos of him hamming it up as a](#)

singer on the book cover. Lines like “I’m a bad singer. And deep down, it matters, produce an undercurrent of sorrow, but far more pronounced are his curiosity, vulnerability, and perseverance. It’s a deeply human book, and his most personal.”

• Quill & Quire “An engaging tale.”

• Winnipeg Free Press “Falconer is old school in his traditional approach to journalism. He conducts lengthy interviews and fluidly articulates complex scientific concepts. He’s the protagonist yet he doesn’t digress into self-indulgence. The result is fresh, intelligent prose. While he may be a bad singer, he’s a thorough researcher and gifted raconteur. What Falconer lacks in pitch he makes up for in curiosity and passion.”

• Toronto Star “As a reader you can’t help but empathize with Falconer as he struggles through his singing lessons, learning to control his voice even though he can’t always hit the pitches. And you cheer him on when, at the end of his quest, not exactly cured of amusia, he finally faces his audience and the music.”

• Montreal Centre-Ville Magazine “A fascinating read that combines personal narrative with scientific and cultural research.”

• Chart Attack --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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