

## **BOOK CLUB GUIDE TO *MOZART'S STARLING***

- Did *Mozart's Starling* change your view of starlings?
- Do you find that the natural music around you (birdsong, wing, rain) affects your daily mood? In what ways?
- Starlings are one of the most ubiquitous birds in North America, yet the majority of people cannot identify them accurately. What common things in the natural world around your home do you think you regularly overlook or know nothing about? How might you cultivate deeper attention?
- Were you surprised to learn about Mozart's "potty mouth" and overt sex-talk? Does it affect your opinion of him as a composer?
- Haupt dispels the myths that Mozart received a "pauper's funeral." Did you have any other myths or preconceptions about the composer overturned by this book?
- This book is a work of "creative nonfiction," bringing literary language to topics like biology, linguistics, and biography that are normally treated with a more traditional nonfiction approach. How does the writing style affect the way you respond to factual information?
- Should birdsong be called music? Should avian vocalizations that demonstrate use/recognition of syntax be called language? Or should the words "music" and "language" be limited to human experience?
- Do you resonate with the author's sense that all animals can be called relations, or "kin?" If so, how does this kinship affect your daily life? Your politics? If not, where do you draw the line, and why?
- Of course, most wild animals should not be kept indoors or domesticated. But just for fun: If you could live with any wild animal in your home, what would it be, and why? What might you learn from the experience?
- What are the personal gifts that you feel most called to "sing back to the world?"