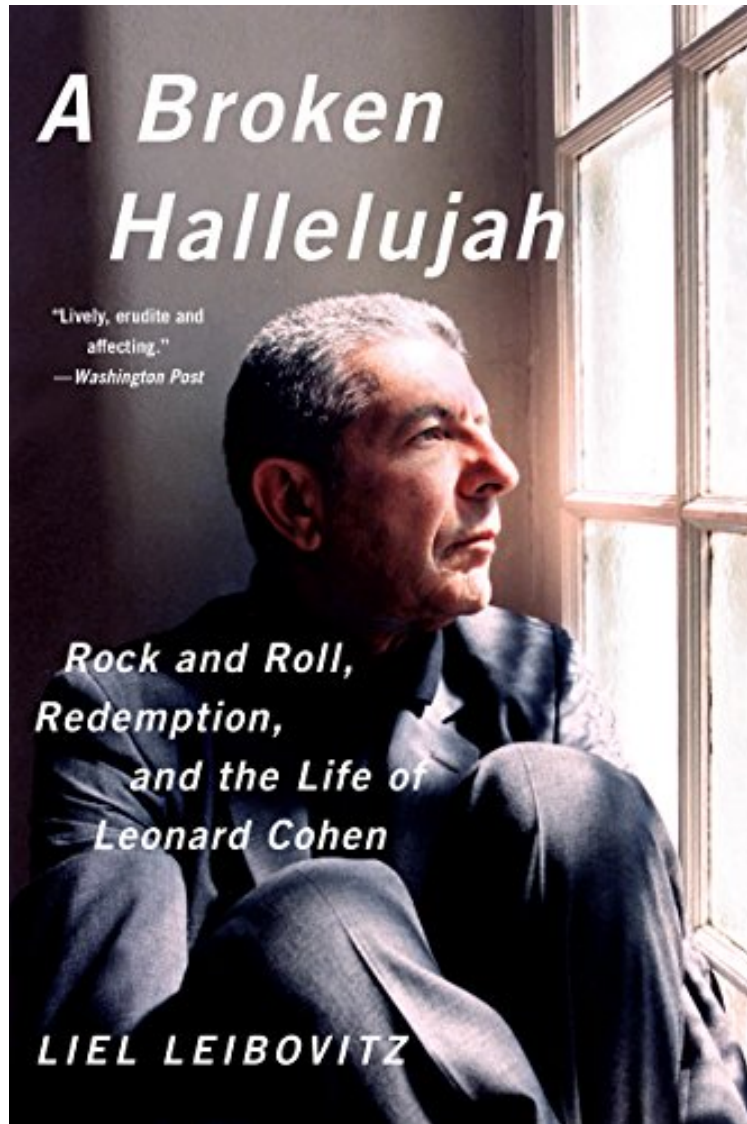


A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen

Liel Leibovitz

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Liel Leibovitz : A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen:

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someplaces.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy jeneal sanderswonderful fine delivery

Brings to life a passionate poet-turned-musician and what compels him and his work. Why is it that Leonard Cohen receives the sort of reverence we reserve for a precious few living artists? Why are his songs, three or four decades after their original release, suddenly gracing the charts, blockbuster movie sound tracks, and television singing competitions? And why is it that while most of his contemporaries are either long dead or engaged in uninspired nostalgia tours, Cohen is at the peak of his powers and popularity? These are the questions at the heart of *A Broken Hallelujah*, a meditation on the singer, his music, and the ideas and beliefs at its core. Granted extraordinary access to Cohen's personal papers, Liel Leibovitz examines the intricacies of the man whose performing career began with a crippling bout of stage fright, yet who, only a few years later, tamed a rowdy crowd on the Isle of Wight, preventing further violence; the artist who had gone from a successful world tour and a movie star girlfriend to a long residency in a remote Zen retreat; and the rare spiritual seeker for whom the principles of traditional Judaism, the tenets of Zen Buddhism, and the iconography of Christianity all align. The portrait that emerges is that of an artist attuned to notions of justice, lust, longing, loneliness, and redemption, and possessing the sort of voice and vision commonly reserved only for the prophets. More than just an account of Cohen's life, *A Broken Hallelujah* is an intimate look at the artist that is as emotionally astute as it is philosophically observant. Delving into the sources and meaning of Cohen's work, Leibovitz beautifully illuminates what Cohen is telling us and why we listen so intensely.

From Booklist*Starred * Leibovitz presents a thoughtful examination of the music of Leonard Cohen, the elegant Canadian wordsmith and musician, through a strong Jewish perspective. Tellingly, Leibovitz calls Cohen a prophet. He examines the musician's life and work through the angles of Jewish eschatology, Zen Buddhism, Canadian poetry, and American rock and roll, as well as "lust and lucre." Yes, there are biographical details here, but *A Broken Hallelujah* offers something else: a finely etched musical portrait of a complicated man—both highly spiritual and sensual—and the often exquisite music that he has created over many decades, austere and melancholy songs that dare to find beauty amid ugliness. Leibovitz himself has a distinctive voice and approach to Cohen's work as he looks at the influence two Jewish scholars had on Cohen, the Canadian poets Irving Layton and A. M. Klein. He explores the evolution of Cohen's public persona as the Poet, and states that the one theme that has consistently preoccupied Cohen is redemption, which he describes as "a discretely Jewish affair," "a wholly Canadian affliction," and unquestionably universal. "It was more than enough for a lifetime of work," he concludes. A sparkling and psychologically insightful perspective on a unique artist. --June Sawyers
"In *A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll, Redemption, and the Life of Leonard Cohen*, Liel Leibovitz neatly limns the spiritual quest that underpins most of Cohen's work, from Montreal to Tel Aviv and beyond. Less about Suzanne than "Suzanne," Leibovitz's book highlights the novelist behind the songwriter, the poet behind the novelist, and the would-be prophet looming over them all." - Marc Dolan, author of *Bruce Springsteen and the Promise of Rock*
"This is a wise book, and it asks poignant and incisive questions... The time is right for an elegant examination of the man's work: his passions, his fears, his poetry, his anger, his loneliness, his redemption. The time is right for Leibovitz's *A Broken Hallelujah*." - Alan W. Petrucelli, *Examiner*
"Absolutely outstanding." - Naomi Tropp, Jewish Book Council
About the Author
Liel Leibovitz is a senior writer for *Tablet* magazine and teaches at New York University. He is the coauthor of *Fortunate Sons*, *Lili Marlene*, and *The Chosen Peoples*. He lives in New York City.