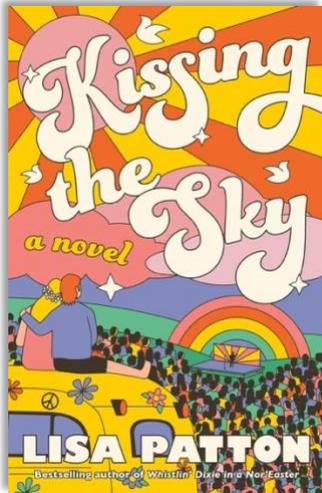


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“Magical...Patton’s novel hits all the high notes... Thematically the reminder is that humans need one another, that love for the people around us should unite, not divide. Patton’s outspoken reminiscence will be gobbled up by anyone interested in (or who participated in) the counter-culture movement.”  
—**HISTORICAL NOVEL SOCIETY, \*Editor’s Choice\***



# KISSING THE SKY

A Novel by Lisa Patton

On Sale March 1, 2026



Featuring “If Not For You,” an original song co-written and produced by five-time Grammy award winner and lead singer of the Doobie Brothers, **Michael McDonald**, with lead vocals by **Amy Holland**, background vocals by **Michael McDonald**, and instrumentation by members of the **Doobie Brothers**. Scan QR code to access the song.

## Praise for KISSING THE SKY

“Lisa Patton is a master storyteller, creating worlds for women, where they find their voices and learn to sing out loud. *Kissing the Sky* is her most emotional novel yet...A triumph!”  
—**Adriana Trigiani, New York Times bestselling author of *The View from Lake Como***

“*Kissing the Sky* is a story of Woodstock and war, of agency and astonishment. And in it, Lisa Patton is at her absolute best: funny, perceptive, romantic, and soul-stirring...An iconic novel set in the heart of an iconic weekend!”  
— **Ariel Lawhon, New York Times bestselling author of *The Frozen River***

“A bold, beautiful testament to the power of community, the transformative nature of true love, and the absolute necessity of following your heart, *Kissing the Sky* is the must-read novel we all need right now. Five golden, glittering (or, better yet, tie-dyed!) stars!”  
—**Kristy Woodson Harvey, New York Times bestselling author of *Beach House Rules***

“With pitch-perfect nostalgia, unforgettable characters, and a soundtrack that sings on every page, Patton captures the thunder of first love, the ache of loss, and the transcendent power of music to transform us. Lisa Patton created a chart-topping song of a novel, a hit record you’ll want to play on repeat long after the last page.”  
—**Patti Callahan Henry, New York Times bestselling author of *The Secret Book of Flora Lea***

“Lisa Patton has written a superb historical novel...A remarkable achievement!”  
—**Fannie Flagg, New York Times bestselling author of *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Café***

“In this delightful tale, taking place in the 60s when everything from religion to war was subject to scrutiny, we're reminded by our heroine, Suzannah, that social norms are just as often as not always going to be something we need to outwit and overcome on our lifelong journey of finding our better nature.”

—**Michael McDonald, five-time Grammy award winner & *New York Times* bestselling author of *What A Fool Believes***

“Patton's bildungsroman illuminates Woodstock...a journey to love, forgiveness, and self-discovery... a nostalgic look at the 1960s.”—***Booklist***

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The 1960s was a turbulent era of significant social and cultural change. Among the defining moments of the decade was Woodstock. Regarded as the pinnacle of 1960s youth culture, the music festival symbolized a generation's quest for peace, love, and social change. A nostalgic new novel from bestselling author **Lisa Patton** captures the power of music to unify, inspire, and liberate, **KISSING THE SKY** (Lake Union Publishing; March 1, 2026). Music-soaked and soul-stirring, the novel transports readers to the summer of '69, where the electrifying chaos of Woodstock collides with the quiet rebellion of a Southern girl finding her voice.\*

It's the summer of '69. While her peers revel in free love and rock and roll, Suzannah is home from college, sequestered inside her conservative Southern home. Her domineering father has condemned rock music, driven away her best friend, and forced her beloved brother to enlist in the Vietnam War. When her free-spirited best friend, Livy, resurfaces, urging Suzannah, a talented singer, to join her for *three days of peace and music* in upstate New York, she does the unthinkable and agrees to the road trip without her parents' knowledge. Miles from her sheltered upbringing, the electrifying bedlam of Woodstock jolts Suzannah into a journey of self-transformation. Over the course of three days she finds her voice as a musician and young woman, opens her mind, falls in love, contends with heartbreak, and wrestles with conflicting emotions for her best friend—whose erratic behavior leads to a startling revelation.

**KISSING THE SKY** is a triumphant coming-of-age story and a love letter to Woodstock and the music and musicians of the 1960s, featuring lyrics from songs by Joni Mitchell, Crosby Stills Nash & Young, and the Hollies, among others. An entertainment industry veteran, Lisa Patton spent more than a decade working with Doobie Brother Michael McDonald, who, along with his wife, Amy, helped Lisa co-write and produce “If Not For You,” an original song for **KISSING THE SKY**, which will be available in the audiobook and can be streamed online.



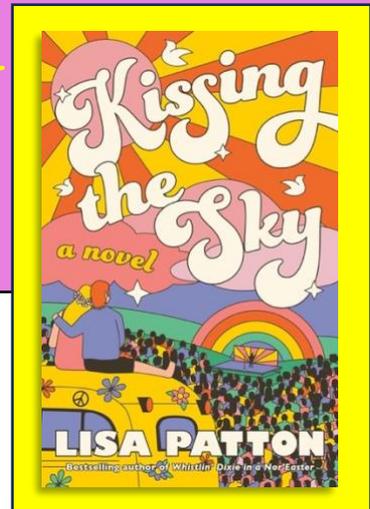
#### **About the Author**

Lisa Patton, the bestselling author of five novels, is a Memphis, Tennessee, native who spent time as a Vermont innkeeper until three subzero winters sent her speeding back down South. She has over twenty-five years of experience working in theater, radio, TV, and music, including a decade with Doobie Brother Michael McDonald, who, along with his wife Amy, helped Lisa cowrite and produce “If Not for You,” an original song for *Kissing the Sky*. A graduate of the University of Alabama, Lisa is the proud mother of two sons, eight bonus children, and twelve grandchildren. She and her husband live in the rolling hills of Nashville with their four-legged furry son named Handsome. Connect with Lisa on Instagram, @lisapattonbooks, and on Facebook, Lisa Patton.author.

**KISSING THE SKY by Lisa Patton**  
**Lake Union Publishing | March 1, 2026**  
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**Ebook | \$4.99 | B0FDLVDB93**  
**Audiobook | ASIN: B0FNRX3DN4**

# KISSING THE SKY

By LISA PATTON



## A Note on KISSING THE SKY

There's quite a bit of truth to the saying, *If you remember Woodstock you weren't really there*. When the idea for *Kissing the Sky* bloomed—while I was watching the 2019 TV coverage of the 50th Anniversary—little did I know writing a novel set at the granddaddy of all music festivals would be a much harder challenge than I had thought. Finding a sober someone to share details, like the exact running order of the bands or the timing of the torrential downpours or exactly when the food ran out, would be nearly impossible. But I've never been one to run from a challenge. Besides, Woodstock has always fascinated me.

Although I was too young to attend, I had often wondered what it would have been like to be one in a half a million at Yasgur's muddy dairy farm. I'd seen the Woodstock movie with my college roommate in '77. To say the least, it was quite the eye opener for this once sheltered Southern girl.

So I got to work, seeking out every Woodstock original I could find. A friend knew Michael Lang, the creator of the festival, and set me up with an interview. I had based much of my early research on his bestselling memoir, *The Road to Woodstock*, and like most Woodstock accounts, it had a few errors in terms of the timing of the performances. Nevertheless, Michael and I had a lively conversation. I feel fortunate to have spoken with him before he passed in 2022 at the age of seventy-seven. But to make the book accurate, I still needed to know what happened when. I interviewed Michael's Woodstock production assistant, Joyce Mitchell, before she passed away in 2024 at almost ninety-three. She gave me invaluable information but there were gaps in her memory as well.

Another friend introduced me to Melanie before she died in 2024 at the age of seventy-three. She spent hours on the phone giving me an accurate account of her time on stage in the rain. Incidentally, the Woodstockers were encouraged to light candles to create a special atmosphere during her performance, thereby inspiring Melanie to pen her song, "Lay Down (Candles in the Rain)." That was the impetus for holding up lights at concerts, the tradition that continues today.

I exchanged emails with David Crosby and was planning to fly to California to interview him face-to-face when COVID-19 hit and the world shut down. Sadly, you know the rest of his story from 2023. Finding Chip Monck, the original Woodstock announcer, took time. He was living in Australia, and it took him a few months to answer my email. When we finally talked, he was incredibly generous, spending hours both on the phone and through email with me. He even shared his personal photographs of the weekend. But the exact running order of the bands or the timing of his iconic announcements about the brown acid and such was still unknown—until I discovered Andy Zax. Andy is the producer of *Woodstock—Back to the Garden: 50th Anniversary Experience*, an exquisite photography book and compilation of every single recording at Woodstock including the iconic announcements. The original Woodstock audiotapes had been in storage for thirty-five years at the Atlantic Records facility in New York City but moved in 2005 to a Warner Music facility

in North Hollywood. It was there that Andy encountered the tapes on a “new arrivals” shelf. Finally, any speculation about the timing of the bands or exactly what was said during each announcement was put to rest.

Okay, great, I had the Woodstock facts down pat, but what about the story? Suzannah, my twenty-year-old protagonist, introduced herself to me one night while listening to my favorite Beatles song, “I’ve Just Seen a Face.” I heard her voice instead of Paul’s, and it was rich and achingly beautiful.

My imagination went wild. What was her backstory and why was she singing a Beatles song? What if she had been one of the teenagers who had grown up in a conservative Southern home, had fallen head over heels for Paul—like millions of other girls—and after John declared The Beatles more popular than Jesus, her father had made her burn her records? What if she had tickets to see The Beatles in Memphis on their last tour in 1966, and her father had made her protest them instead? I was eight when my mother took my sister and me to that concert. It was the start of my lifelong love of their music. I’ll never forget the high-pitched screams from the teenagers and not being able to hear a single note the lads sang.

How much harder would it be for Suzannah if her father was a hardcore army colonel? And what if that army colonel demanded that his eighteen-year-old son, Ron—Suzannah’s only sibling and hardly the soldier type—enlist in the Vietnam War “to make him a man?”

Although I was too young to know any young men who had fought in Vietnam, I remember watching the first televised draft lottery in 1969, as random birthdays were pulled out of capsules and pinned on a foreboding bulletin board. I remember watching the newscasts that broadcast the devastation from the war-torn front lines. My husband, whose draft number was 323, didn’t have to serve. In horror the two of us watched all eighteen hours of Ken Burns’s ten-part documentary on Vietnam. Considering the tragedies that Mr. Burns so aptly depicts, it is no surprise that there were hundreds of thousands of war resisters and deserters.

Since *Kissing the Sky* is chock-full of music from the sixties, I thought it would be cool to quote a few lyrics. Again, I underestimated the time it would take to secure them, not to mention the expense. After much ado, I was thrilled to secure permission from Richie Havens’s estate, Country Joe McDonald, Joni Mitchell, CSN&Y, and the Hollies to quote song lyrics. I contacted the Jimi Hendrix estate in the hope of securing permission to quote a few of his lyrics, most importantly “Purple Haze,” but was told they don’t grant permission for any of his songs to be used in a work that contains references to alcohol or drug use or has sexual content. I’ll just say I find that interesting.

To make the book complete, I felt Suzannah needed her own song. I had worked with Michael McDonald as his right-hand person for years, and he and his wife Amy are dear friends. I approached them about cowriting an original song for the book. Once our schedules finally merged, Suzannah’s ballad, “If Not for You” was written in under two hours. Michael agreed to produce, and the result is better than I could have dreamed. Amy’s lead vocal is rich and beautiful, and Michael’s background vocal is, as always, distinctive and sublime. Among the instruments you’ll hear are Michael’s piano and organ, and only he could talk some of his Doobie Brothers pals into rounding out the rest of the instrumentation. The best part is my editor agreed the song was good enough to insert inside the audio version of *Kissing The Sky* and upon publication, “If Not for You” will be available on all streaming platforms.

Woodstock, as *they* say, shaped a generation. It is my hope that no matter what generation you come from, you may turn the last page and think, *I’ve just been to Woodstock.*

*Peace & Love,  
Lisa Patton*