

[Free and download] The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told: Amazing Stories of Life Under the Big Top

The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told: Amazing Stories of Life Under the Big Top

From Brand: Lyons Press

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From Brand: Lyons Press : The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told: Amazing Stories of Life Under the Big Top before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told: Amazing Stories of Life Under the Big Top:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Jan Biggerstaff Most interesting - enjoyed it very much 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told By Stephen Balbach The Greatest Circus Stories Ever Told (2005) is an anthology of 13 essays and book excerpts from sources first published between about 1900 and 1926 (two are from 1955 and 1972). The editor is Stephen Brennan, a former circus clown, who provides an introduction to each piece with a little background about the author and facet of circus life. Since most of the pieces are old, they mostly discuss the circus silver age (golden age?) between about post-Civil War to WWI. However the age of the pieces should not deter readership as they are all well written, engrossing and capture a more romantic time in America. In addition I love anthologies like this because they reveal obscure but neglected authors and works I never would have heard of otherwise. Of the 13 pieces I found 8 to be stand-outs. Two of these are excerpts from novels which I am now reading in full: James Otis' Toby Tyler, or Ten Weeks with a Circus (1881) and Edward Hoagland's Cat Man: A Novel (1955) and for that reason alone, discovering these novels, the anthology has been well worth it. The other six favorites include an essay by Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard Of; two essays by Courtney Ryley Cooper who is new to me but endlessly entertaining and sadly obscure today (see

his Wikipedia profile); an essay by another obscure ex-clown with a talent for writing Robert Edmund Sherwood. *Water for Elephants*, a modern novel about old circuses, has been in in the best seller list for years now. In comparison, reading about real life experiences from people who actually lived it, in short approachable extracts, vetted by an old hand, is an authentic and rewarding experience. While the crowds ohh and ahh their attention on the center best-seller ring, reading this book is like being out back of the tent, hanging with the circus people as they tell stories around a campfire: old retired clowns, the skeleton man and his wife the Fat lady, the romantic tight-rope walker, canvas men on the run, rummies - memorable stuff. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Lynn A Sparks
great

Book by

From the Back Cover
Everyone loves a circus. Whether it's the Big Top or one of the earliest mud shows, the performances are as amusing as they are mysterious. This anthology allows the reader to peek behind the curtain at circuses from as long ago as the 1800s through modern times. This collection is filled with colorful personalities, from clowns to acrobats, tightrope walkers to lion tamers. The circus offers something spectacular for everyone. It is the world in miniature. Some people may visit the show to gawk and stare, while others are seduced by the drama and mystique of the carefully choreographed, yet death-defying performances. Whatever the reason for going to the circus, everyone leaves in awe. Stephen Vincent Brennan, with his unique firsthand viewpoint, carefully selected each story in this enthralling collection. Included are works from Dan Rice, the ringmaster of one of the first circuses ever formed; Philippe Petit, author of *On the High Wire*; Edward Hoagland from his book *Catman*; and many more. So whether your dream is to step right up or sit back and enjoy the show, you'll be mesmerized by this fascinating compilation.