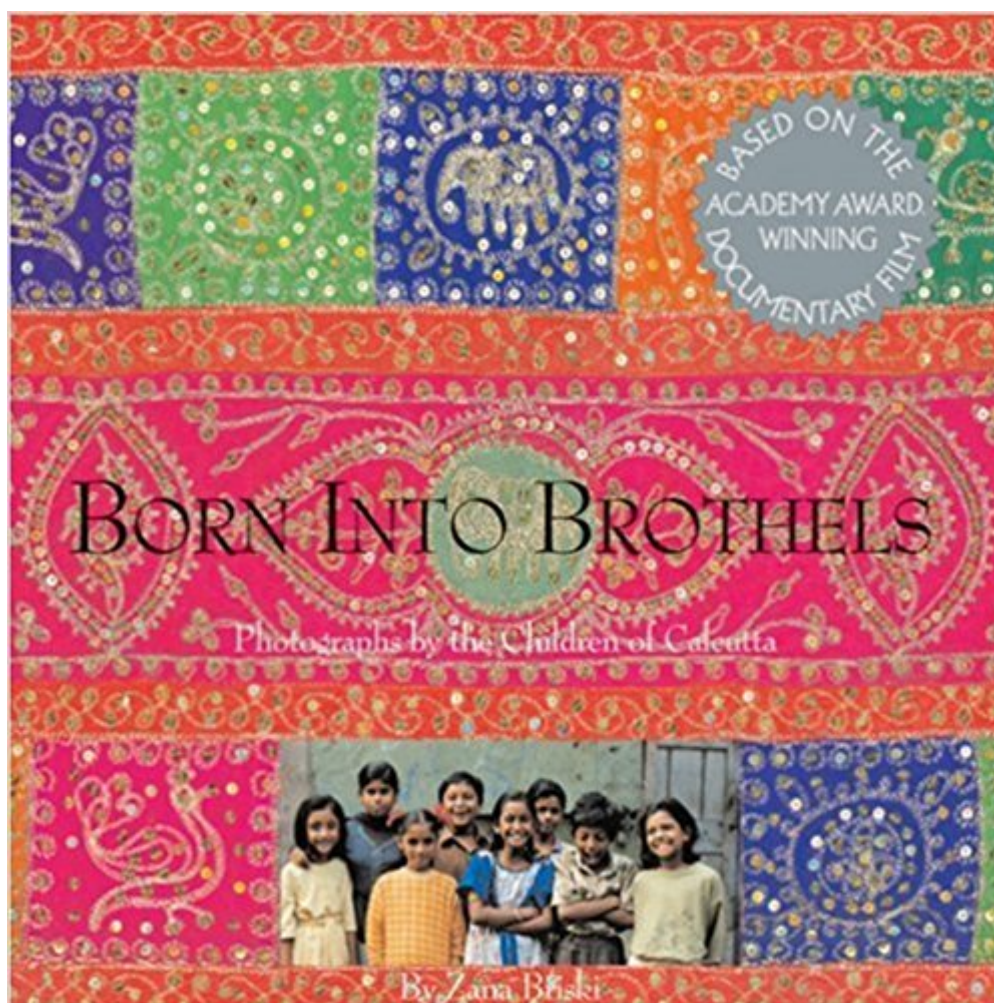


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Born Into Brothels: Photographs By The Children Of Calcutta



Synopsis

A powerful story that unfolds in the red-light district of Calcutta: a photographer that becomes a teacher and the extraordinary children she meets who learn to dream with cameras in their hands. Accompanies an Academy Award-winning documentary.

Book Information

Hardcover: 104 pages

Publisher: Umbrage Editions; 2nd edition (July 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1884167454

ISBN-13: 978-1884167454

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 0.5 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #376,009 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 in [Books > Arts &](#)

[Photography > Photography & Video > Children](#) #399 in [Books > Arts & Photography >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Eight children, all raised in brothels in Calcutta's red light district, display their work-colorful photographs of the family members and strangers who populate their lives and of the streets and homes which they inhabit-in this companion volume to the Academy Award nominated documentary *Born into Brothels*. While the poverty that these children experience is always present in the images, the photographs diverge from the expected sordid scenes; instead they capture a wide variety of moods and circumstances. The images-from a shot of a young girl apathetically stretched out on a car to a sweeping panorama of the rooftops of Calcutta to a close-up self-portrait of an exuberant girl yelling at the camera at dusk-appear impressively professional. The children capture the textures surrounding them beautifully, often with a seemingly intuitive sense of composition. The film the book accompanies follows the story of Briski's attempts to teach photography to these children, who, she says, have "little possibility of escaping their mother's fate or for creating another type of life," and this volume includes writing by both Briski and the film's co-director, as well as stills from the documentary. Demonstrating the way in which photography can be a means of hope and an "immensely liberating and empowering force," the book gives these children, the "most stigmatized

people in Calcutta's red light district," a means to share their often ignored perspectives, while also allowing readers a glimpse into the emotional depths of their lives. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Zana Briski studied documentary photography at the International Center of Photography, New York. In 1995 Briski made her first trip to India, producing a story on female infanticide, and returned in 1997 to begin a project on the prostitutes of Calcutta's red-light district. She has received numerous fellowships, including an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, and awards, including the first prize at the World Press Photo contest. She has conducted a series of photographic workshops with children of prostitutes in Calcutta since 2000. The children's photographs were auctioned at Sotheby's in New York in 2001 and presented in Amnesty International's 2003 calendar. In 2002 Briski and codirector Ross Kauffman received grants from the Sundance Institute, the Jerome Foundation, and the New York State Council on the Arts for their documentary film on the children of Calcutta's prostitutes, *Born Into Brothels*. Briski is the found of Kids with Cameras, a nonprofit organization formed to empower marginalized children worldwide through learning the art of photography. She lives in New York. Kids with Cameras is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering children through photography. The organization changes children's lives by teaching them the art and skills of photography on an individual basis, and provides support for their general education.

A stunning 'coffee table' type book with very serious content. This book makes a solid 'companion' piece to the documentary *Born into Brothels*. I will use both for a college course on gender. I would suggest viewing the documentary first, but I believe this book will also stand on its own.

Beautiful book. Watched the documentary and then bought 8 of these books as gifts for my socially conscious friends.

Good book and came in a timely manner!

Born into Brothels shows what can happen when children in desperate circumstances are given the opportunity to talk about their lives by making pictures. The pictures that the young people make provide evidence that a camera in the hands of a child can be an empowering device that provide the voice that they might otherwise not have. A powerful testament to the power of photographs and

the power of pictures.

If you have seen the movie, you'll love seeing the images in print. If you haven't seen the movie, rent it or buy it and you'll get the whole incredible story of these kids.

An interesting book, interesting idea....if you have something to do with India, or brothels, this might be worth looking into.

I bought this because I wanted to preserve my impressions after viewing the DVD. The DVD was exceptional as is the story of these children and how quick they were to pick up a camera and be able to do something with it. I'm still working on that. This is a nice companion to the DVD but if I had it to do over again I would probably pass.

Zana Briski came up with a unique idea. Give the children in Calcutta's red-light district their own cameras and let them take pictures of their lives. The result was a documentary of extraordinary children born into the most wretched of circumstances where the girls were destined to enter their mother's trade of prostitution and the boys would join related criminal enterprises. The award-winning film documentary has now produced a unique and extraordinary coffee-table book of photography showcasing Zana Briski's own work in collaboration with these children's photography over a period of seven years. This is also the story of how Briski began holding photography workshops to instruct these children in the basics of photography from lighting and composition to editing and narrative sequencing. Some of these children became so skilled and adept that their developed and developing photography skills could eventually be the source of their emancipation from the lowest rung of Calcutta social and cultural ladder. Highly recommended reading, "Born Into Brothels" would make a stellar addition to academic and community library Photography collections, Indian Studies reference shelves, and Women's Studies supplemental reading lists.

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