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The Art Of The Puppet



Synopsis

With color photographs throughout; a history of puppeteering throughout the world. A heavy volume. Not price-clipped. In protective mylar. 251 pp. including index. [Publisher: Bonanza Books, New York, 1973]

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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I was very pleased with this book. As I'm preparing a children's TV show featuring puppets (The Cartoonville Studio Show), I thought I needed to re-visit this art form from the ground up.

Previously my knowledge of puppetry was from *The Art of the Muppets: A Retrospective Look at Twenty-Five Years of Muppet Magic*, another great book that obviously focuses on Jim Henson's legacy. But I wanted to view a wider variety of these classic characters we call puppets. Bill Baird provides this, along with a wealth of photography and historical overviews of puppets from the Old World to America, starting with the tribal meanings of puppetry and masked features, forward to marionettes and hand puppets like Punch and Judy. Well worth the money!

Bill Baird's book is a lushly illustrated overview of the art of puppetry. While hardly scholarly on the historical view of puppetry, it does manage to make one look twice at something that too often is

dismissed as "kid stuff". A must have for someone who loves the wide variety of the world's performing arts.

This is a well documented and written book on the history of puppetry. Thanks to the illustrations and photos this book will be a treasured resource for me.

Great photos! Puppets have quite a history.

A Master Piece !!!

It arrived on time and was an excellent product.

This book is great. Bill Baird proves that not only was he the greatest puppet maker of 20th century, but that he could also write a superb history/appreciation of them as well. It has been pointed out many times that Baird was to puppetry just what Walt Disney was to animation. (If you don't remember him, he did the puppets in 'Sound of Music', as well as many other projects during the first half of 20th century.) The man loved puppets, both he and his wife did, & it showed in the puppets they created (after he died those puppets brought in a fortune at auction in New York.) But he loved their history too, and he shared that history in this fine book, which has many color illustrations & other drawings from throughout history, from the beginnings of civilization, up thru medieval, right on up to the great Shari Lewis & Lamb Chop. (Baird doesn't concern himself much with ventriloquists and their dummies, fortunately for my own tastes, and I was happy also that the book was completed just before the emergence of Muppets, though Jim Henson is mentioned. The muppets took puppets in a whole different direction, a direction that made some people look at the classic puppets as being old fashioned, at least most kids did. I always hated muppets; Sesame Street, Cookie Monster- whatever. Whenever I see fuzz on a puppet, or hear that high-pitched nasal drone of Kermit the Frog, my skin crawls. But that's me. And honestly, I think it's only because they seemed to take over so completely, that if you wanted to do puppets after the muppets, people wanted only to see something like that, cuddly and inoffensive, and funny only to a four year old. It was the MacDonald's restaurant commercials that were even more successful in making that trend so popular, and how could you fight something like that, something that has the power to keep half the nation's children fat & unhealthy? Hamburglar my ass!) I think the book goes up to 1964-'65 (which was at the time when Baird & his troupe were famously performing at the New York World's Fair),

and so Bairds 'Sound of Music' puppets didn't make it. But 'Punch & Judy' sure did, and everything else that was really great about puppetry did, much that will probably have been unknown to you till now, all of it awesome. (I mean, wait till you read Bairds account of 'Papa' Agrippino Manteo and his wonderfull, ever-growing family of puppeteers and Puppets, who operated a theater on Manhattans little Italy in the early 1900s, giving performances of histories greatest puppet-plays to generations of immigrants and theater lovers, keeping the stories of the Constitine plays, or the Palidin cycle, Don Quixote, etc etc, as alive & fresh for our time as they had been in their own. Bairds love for these different troupes and styles is felt throughout the entire book) I really love this book. It reminded me how much, and why, I loved puppets. There is no 'art' to muppets, and as a kid I had lost interest in puppets since the muppets became so overwhelmingly popular. That was a shame because I was really into them before that, and if you can relate with that, you should definately get this book. You can get it cheap used too, I got a perfect hardbound copy for \$3!!!

I wanted to get this book to give to a very special lady in my life for Christmas and it didn't disappoint! It arrived safe and in quick order--I'd buy from this seller again!

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