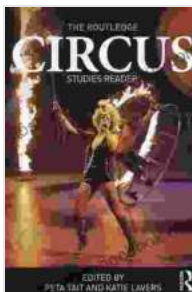


The Routledge Circus Studies Reader: A Comprehensive Exploration of Circus Arts and Culture

The circus is a fascinating and complex world, full of history, tradition, and spectacle. The Routledge Circus Studies Reader is the most comprehensive collection of essays on the circus ever assembled. With contributions from leading scholars and practitioners, this volume provides a rich and nuanced understanding of the history, performance, and cultural significance of the circus.



The Routledge Circus Studies Reader by Hubert Haensel

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 20446 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 652 pages



The book is divided into three parts. The first part, "History and Historiography," provides an overview of the history of the circus, from its origins in ancient Greece to its present-day incarnation. The second part, "Performance and Aesthetics," examines the different types of circus performance, from acrobatics to clowning, and explores the aesthetics of the circus. The third part, "Culture and Society," looks at the circus as a

cultural phenomenon, exploring its relationship to other forms of entertainment, its role in society, and its impact on popular culture.

The Routledge Circus Studies Reader is an essential resource for anyone interested in the circus. Whether you are a scholar, a performer, or simply a fan of the circus, this book will provide you with a deeper understanding of this unique and captivating art form.

History and Historiography

The history of the circus can be traced back to ancient Greece, where acrobats and jugglers performed for the entertainment of the wealthy. In the Roman Empire, gladiators fought in circuses, and chariot races were a popular form of entertainment. The circus as we know it today emerged in the 18th century, when equestrian performers began to combine their acts with acrobats, clowns, and other performers. The circus quickly became a popular form of entertainment throughout Europe and North America.

The first circuses in the United States were established in the early 19th century. These circuses were often small and itinerant, traveling from town to town by wagon. In the late 19th century, a number of large, permanent circuses were established, including the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. These circuses traveled by train and featured elaborate performances with hundreds of performers.

The circus reached its peak of popularity in the early 20th century. However, the advent of television and other forms of entertainment led to a decline in circus attendance. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in the circus, and a number of new circuses have been established.

Performance and Aesthetics

The circus is a unique art form that combines acrobatics, juggling, clowning, and other performance disciplines. Circus performers must be highly skilled and athletic, and they must be able to work together as a team. The circus is also a visual art form, and the performers' costumes, makeup, and props are all carefully designed to create a sense of spectacle.

There are many different types of circus performance. Some of the most popular include:

- **Acrobatics:** Acrobats perform feats of strength, balance, and agility. They may work on the ground, on a trampoline, or on a high wire.
- **Juggling:** Jugglers manipulate objects in the air, using their hands, feet, or other body parts. They may juggle balls, clubs, rings, or other objects.
- **Clowning:** Clowns use humor and physical comedy to entertain the audience. They may tell jokes, sing songs, or perform stunts.
- **Animal training:** Animal trainers work with animals to perform tricks and stunts. They may train lions, tigers, elephants, or other animals.

The circus is a highly visual art form, and the performers' costumes, makeup, and props are all carefully designed to create a sense of spectacle. The circus ring is often decorated with colorful lights, banners, and other decorations. The performers' costumes are often elaborate and eye-catching, and they may wear makeup to enhance their appearance.

Culture and Society

The circus is a cultural phenomenon that has had a profound impact on society. The circus has been a source of entertainment for people of all ages and from all walks of life. It has also been a source of inspiration for artists, writers, and musicians.

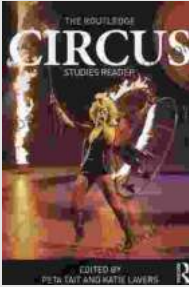
The circus has a long and complex relationship with other forms of entertainment. In the early days of the circus, it was often seen as a lower form of entertainment, compared to theater or opera. However, the circus eventually gained respectability, and it is now considered to be one of the most popular forms of entertainment in the world.

The circus has also played a significant role in society. In the 19th century, the circus was a major source of news and information for people in rural areas. The circus also helped to spread American culture to other parts of the world.

The circus has had a positive impact on popular culture. The circus has been a major influence on the development of film, television, and other forms of popular entertainment. The circus has also been a source of inspiration for many artists, writers, and musicians.

The circus is a unique and captivating art form that has a long and rich history. The Routledge Circus Studies Reader is the most comprehensive collection of essays on the circus ever assembled, and it provides a rich and nuanced understanding of the history, performance, and cultural significance of the circus. This book is an essential resource for anyone interested in the circus, whether you are a scholar, a performer, or simply a fan.

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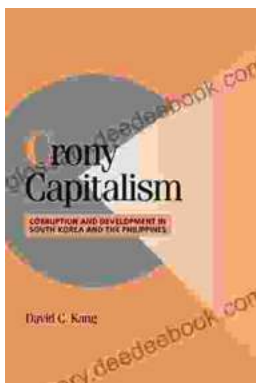
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