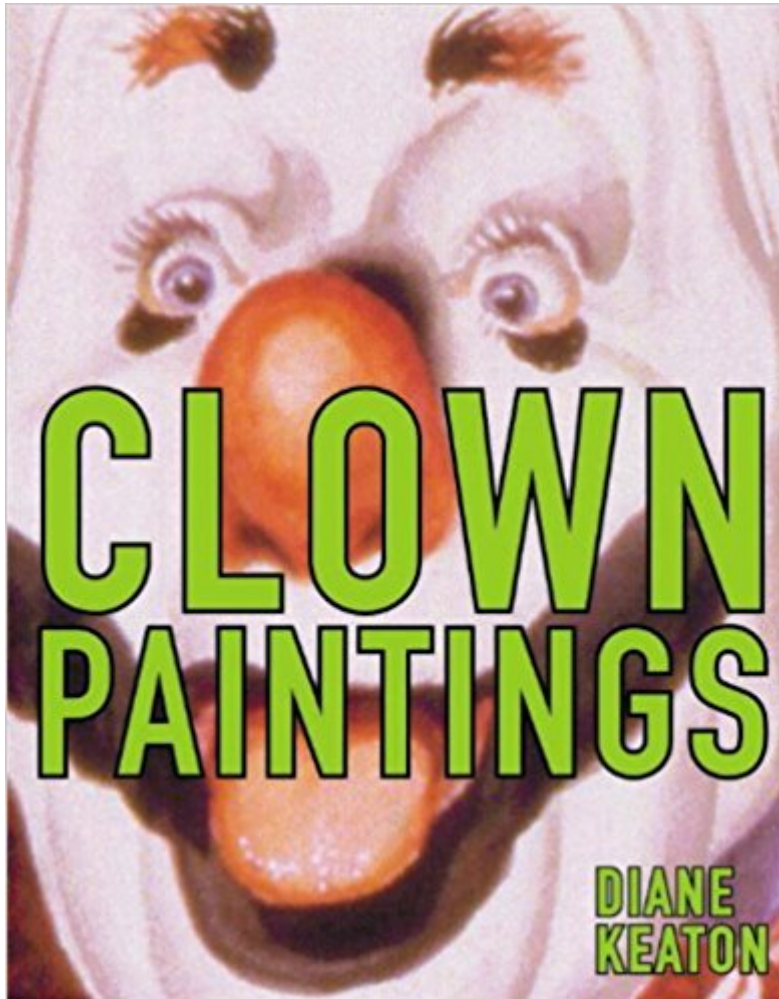




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Clown Paintings



Synopsis

The world needs its clowns. It's the clowns of society who make us laugh—sometimes—and who help us view our lives with greater clarity and perspective. Bigger than life, with their exaggerated features and makeup, dressed in their gaudily mismatched and hilariously oversized outfits, clowns refuse to be overlooked. And yet, the portrait of the clown has been all but ignored. Trained to respond respectfully to serious portraiture, we try to read meaning into their big mouths, prosthetic noses, and unruly tufts of hair. Ultimately, the paintings are mysteries: what did amateur artists, who lavished so much time on these iconic images, hope to capture and accomplish? *Clown Paintings* is a twisty little illustrated book that showcases 65 outrageous and compelling clown portraits, painted by amateurs and selected by actor-director Diane Keaton. By turns hilarious and heartfelt, joyful and mortifying, these artworks were collected over the years by Keaton, who found herself as mesmerized by their mute eloquence as she was by their bad taste. It's easy to see what drew Keaton to them. They embody contradiction; they're fabulous and horrible, hysterical and dignified, generic yet absolutely specific. And above all—in the grand clown tradition—way out there. The clowns, from whom we expect mischievous, out-of-control behavior, are painted as solemn and decorous subjects to contemplate. Instead of distracting us with brooms, squawking horns, rubber mallets, and slapstick humor, we get the chance to look at them carefully—and to consider how they not only make us laugh, but how they allow us to look more closely at ourselves. And to contemplate the abyss. PLUS! *Clown Paintings* includes commentary and observations from America's to comedians and clowns: Woody Allen, Carrol Burnett, Phyllis Diller, Whoopi Goldberg, Eric Idle, Lida Kudrow, Jay Leno, Jerry Lewis, Penny Marshall, Steve Martin, Martin Short, Ben Stiller, Dick Van Dyke, Robin Williams, and more!

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Customer Reviews

This odd book is as much a look into the dark heart of Hollywood narcissism and juice as it is an excellent introduction to a grim, fascinating artistic subgenre. Keaton writes in her introduction that she came across a Don Barclay clown painting at a Pasadena Rose Bowl Swap Meet and "had an epiphany.... All of us have begged for attention and cried out in loneliness. Each and every one of us has been surprised and hurt, over, and over, and over, again and again, just like the exhausting, repeated shock that is the life of a clown." She has been collecting clown paintings ever since, and has become a proselytizer for the unsung genre. Here Keaton has collected 66 wrenching, full-color reproductions along with the responses of fellow thespians to her collection (and the collection of L.A. gallery-owner Robert Berman), since clowns and actors have "all gone for the laugh, sold out on occasion, dressed for effect, and paraded our hearts on our sleeves." Beginning with Woody Allen, Dan Aykroyd and Roseanne Cherri Barr, Keaton's book includes reflections from Ben Stiller ("When someone says 'be funny' to me, I immediately want to hide, or punch that person in the mouth"), Steve Martin ("The Sex Life of Clowns") and Lisa Kudrow ("As a performer, I'm mostly associated with 'witless' characters. Maybe the disdain is for myself") among many other high-wattage names. This unlikely combination of clown paintings and 33 texts by mostly comedic actors yields irony levels reaching the heights of Larry David's *Curb Your Enthusiasm* (many comedians hate their close cousins the clowns, and particularly clown paintings)-and is every bit as entertaining and affecting. This "monstrous and hideous" (as David calls it in his contribution) collection should prove a surprise hit and justify Keaton's pounding the pavement in search of these much maligned painted faces. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Diane Keaton is one of Hollywood's leading ladies. Since her screen debut in *Lovers and Other Strangers*, Keaton has proven to be an extremely versatile actress, director and producer. Her acting career spans three decades, having appeared in over 25 films, including *The Godfather* trilogy, *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, *Annie Hall* (for which she received an Academy Award for best actress), *Father of the Bride*, and *The First Wives Club*. Keaton also received Academy Award nomination for her roles in the films *Reds* and *Marvin's Room*. She is the director of a number of

films including Heaven, Unstrung Heroes, and Hanging Up. Keaton most recently directed, as well as executive produced (along with Columbia Tri-Star and Brad Grey Entertainment) the TV pilot Pasadena. She is the acclaimed author of Mr. Salesman (Twin Palms), Local News (D.A.P.), Still Life (Calloway), and Reservations (Knopf). Keaton lives and works in Los Angeles.

I love this book. I put it out on the coffee table and my guest pick it up to look thru it - over and over as I do.

I love clowns

Great book in a very good condition. Very inspirational images.

very nice

This book is pure inspiration. I love the comments by the comedians as well as the images themselves. It is a comment on laughter and how we use it to explain our world.

Love this book.. Nice collection of clown Paintings

Very nice coffee table book, with a nice variety of clowns, some scary, some funny, all enjoyable to look at.

excellent

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