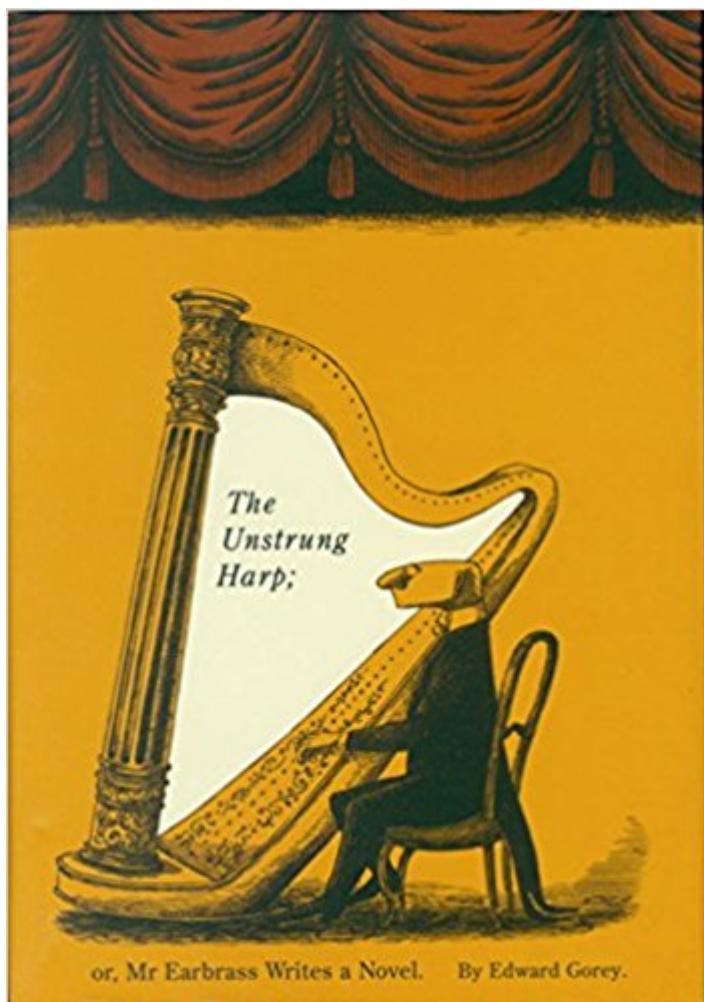


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The Unstrung Harp; Or, Mr. Earbrass Writes A Novel



Synopsis

On November 18th of alternate years Mr Earbrass begins writing 'his new novel.' Weeks ago he chose its title at random from a list of them he keeps in a little green note-book. It being tea-time of the 17th, he is alarmed not to have thought of a plot to which The Unstrung Harp might apply, but his mind will keep reverting to the last biscuit on the plate." So begins what the Times Literary Supplement called "a small masterpiece." TUH is a look at the literary life and its "attendant woes: isolation, writer's block, professional jealousy, and plain boredom." But, as with all of Edward Gorey's books, TUH is also about life in general, with its anguish, turnips, conjunctions, illness, defeat, string, parties, no parties, urns, desuetude, disaffection, claws, loss, trebizond, napkins, shame, stones, distance, fever, antipodes, mush, glaciers, incoherence, labels, miasma, amputation, tides, deceit, mourning, elsewhere. You get the point. Finally, TUH is about Edward Gorey the writer, about Edward Gorey writing The Unstrung Harp. It's a cracked mirror of a book, and it's dedicated to RDP or Real Dear Person.

Book Information

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 1st edition (May 18, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0151004358

ISBN-13: 978-0151004355

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 7.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 21 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #319,093 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #43 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Art of Comics and Manga #119 in Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Pen & Ink #316 in Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Cartooning

Customer Reviews

The clichs of English country-house fiction and the more generic ``unspeakable horror of the literary life" are memorably skewered in this urbane jeu first published in 1953 (and, scandalously, out of print ever since). Its protagonist, Mr. Earbrass, is a reclusive well-to-do bachelor author of middle years, with a profile (as seen in Gorey's serenely sinister accompanying drawings) rather resembling a benign croquet mallet and a neurasthenic sensibility hilariously vulnerable to every harrowing stage in the process of conceiving, completing, and publicizing his new novel. He himself,

we're surely to infer, is the unstrung harp and the deadpan tale of his inharmonious relations with the dangerous world of letters is both a caution to would-be writers and (to use a word utterly inappropriate to Mr. Earbrass's strangled gentility) a hoot. -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Praise for Edward Gorey
"A master of a genre of graphic storytelling [and] a brilliant draftsman."-The New York Times Book Review
"Edward Gorey's work is remarkable and mysterious. I find it fascinating."-Max Ernst

One of Gorey's wordiest books, it follows the narrative story of Mr. Earbrass, a writer, as he attempts to write a novel. Anyone who has gone through a creative process (such as writing or art) will recognize the entertaining (if not infuriating) stages that Mr. Earbrass experiences. States of procrastination, confusion and eventual satisfaction... If you like this style of book then you might also enjoy: The Stumps of Flattop Hill

This is the truest-- and most encouraging-- commentary I have ever read on the excitement, pain, embarrassment, distraction, disappointment and eventual repetition of writing a novel. I am revising a novel now, and I return over and over to look at Mr. Earbrass, sitting on the floor with scissors, glue and sherry to fortify himself for the process. It's funny, all right, but if you've ever been there with Mr. Earbrass, bored with your characters and sure that writing is a worthless endeavor, you may find the comedy somewhat smothered under the relief of fellow-feeling.

The Unstrung Harp, Or, Mr. Earbrass Writes a Novel is a book about writing a book. If you have ever written and published (or tried to publish) a book, you will think every word and picture in The Unstrung Harp is hilarious. Gorey perfectly captures every frustration an author faces as well as most of the odd character quirks every writer seems to share. If you are not a writer, this is still a funny book and will give you insight into the minds of (though I say so myself) a peculiar people.

Perfect. Arrived earlier than expected in great condition, thank you :)

Some of Edward Gorey's books can be dark but I found this one to be fun and as usual, his art work draws your attention so much that it's hard to concentrate on the story. So I went through the book twice - once for the story and once to study the drawings. I recommend the book.

A writer's everyday trials according to Gory, which means the story's rather lost in Gory's style.

Wonderful, particularly for writers!

It shows the agony that writers go through and as I have an aspiring writer grandson, I am giving him this book!

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