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Private Acts: The Acrobat Sublime



Synopsis

Photography collides with gravity-defying acts in this sensual and mesmerizing collection of photographs that capture the explosive energy and beauty of bodies. In this extraordinary suite of images by Acey Harper, the energy and beauty of nude female and male bodies—devoid of costumes, greasepaint, stage sets, and lighting—are photographed stripped bare (figuratively and literally), revealing the acrobats' art, craft, and emotions. The beautiful, well-trained, and highly flexible bodies are captured in settings from the natural (beaches in the Marin Headlands, forests in Vermont, the Black Rock Desert) to the gritty urban (a New Jersey steel mill, San Francisco streets, the New York subway). In three captivating essays, Harriet Heyman, well-schooled in trapeze arts, describes firsthand what it feels like to train as an acrobat and what motivates these dedicated artists.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Degas won well-deserved fame for his many studies of dancers - of women in motion, demonstrating grace and delicate power. Dancers continue to fascinate photographers and other artists, even after 150 years or more. Recent decades, however, have made more means of athletic expression available to women. All of the dancers' appeal endures, but can now express itself in more different kinds of physical display. Harper chooses to focus on acrobats, women (and some men) who stretch the definition of what human bodies can achieve. Many of his models appear slightly clothed, but their forms and exertions remain clearly visible even so. And what forms - bent,

contorted, suspended, or in some other way defying the laws of physics that bind the rest of us, these athletes create images that few of us will see in person, or only rarely. Harper has gone even farther, and found a natural or urban site ideally suited to each of these amazing people, and prepared it to show each one at her or his best. Although imagery dominates this collection, as it should, a bit of text enhances the photo essay. Harriet Heyman (an acrobat and aerialist herself) has added her thoughts, and a paragraph-long biography adds depth to each model's image. Viewers demanding prurience won't find much here, but that's their loss. I recommend this highly to anyone passionate about human, and especially feminine expressions of strength and beauty.--
wiredweird

This body of photographs is absolutely gorgeous! What vision. Each image captured at just the perfect second and in the most enticing environments. What a wonderful collaboration between photographer and his subject(s). It is obvious both photographer and his subject(s) were all working at their highest level and collaborating beautifully to create these precisely magical moments. The work just exudes confidence, beauty, energy, grace, trust, understanding, determination, pain (some of the poses-YIKES!), sensuality, vision, and just pure raw talent and love of the art form. What a remarkable book! I'd recommend it in a heart beat!

Photographer Acey Harper and veteran writer/acrobat Harriet Heyman have collaborated in creating an original and astonishingly beautiful book. The arcane world of acrobats and acrobatics has been brought to life in this book's stunning photographs and beautifully written essays. Harper has captured incredible artists/athletes performing their work in unexpected places. Heyman's essays provide the book's context, including first-hand knowledge of what it means both physically and mentally to be an acrobat and the discipline, talent, training, passion (and risk) it requires. If you love the beauty of the human body and its ability to push the limits, buy this book... truly a sensual and visual feast!

This book was incredible. The models were photographed really well. The pictures are clear. And these models (men and women) are doing the most amazing things with their bodies. For someone who needs inspiration to draw, this is a great book. Many art books concentrate on static poses. This one has people in action doing what only the most flexible bodies I have ever seen could do. I am totally pleased with it. Great inspiration!

Very disappointing, because the cover was badly crumpled upon arrival. The packaging style meant that it moved back and forth inside the box for the entire journey. The book itself is magnificent, with truly wonderful photos. Unfortunately, because of the damaged cover I was ashamed to present it as the gift that it was intended for.

I don't do gift giving well but have purchased seven for close friends. I will purchase more in the near future because for me it is the perfect present.

Acey's book incorporates so many creative angles showcasing talented people using the environment to highlight their abilities as well as capturing moments at their peak. This book should be looked at by anyone who enjoys photography as an example of is possible with portraits when you put your imagination to the challenge of freezing people at their highest potential. A must buy for any coffee table!!

Beautiful photographs. I was also very pleased that all of the locations were listed in the back. Looking through them, you're wondering where such beautiful places exist, then get to find out. Great gift for lovers of photography, dance or circus/acrobatics.

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