

[PDF] The Letters Of Noel Coward

Noel Coward, Barry Day - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Letters of Noel Coward
Author: Noel Coward, Barry Day
Released: 2007-11-13
Language:
Pages: 800
ISBN: 0375423036
ISBN13: 978-0375423031
ASIN: 0375423036

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pdf, mobi, epub, azw, kindle

Description:

From Publishers Weekly Writers labor to come up with lines half as good as those Noël Coward dropped into the mailbox every day—I felt that some sort of scene was necessary to celebrate my first entrance into America, so I said, 'Little lamb, who made thee,' to a customs official. The playwright, actor and songwriter is in fine form in these missives, telegrams and poems (he would rhyme almost anything, even communications to his business manager), presented along with return mail from friends and luminaries. Day (*Coward on Film: The Cinema of Noel Coward*) arranges the well-chosen selections in roughly chronological order with some unobtrusive narrative context; at times he spotlights a lifelong correspondence with a single person to flesh out Coward's relationships, such as with Gertrude Lawrence. Coward's voice is charming, whimsical, sharp-eyed

and canny, often alternating, in the showbiz way, between effusive warmth (letter to Tallulah Bankhead: Thank you very much, darling, for all your sweetness and your insane generosity) and cutting putdown (letter about Tallulah Bankhead: a conceited slut). A true intellectual of the stage, his comments on the nitty-gritty of writing, pacing, character and acting technique are incisive. Fans of Coward's plays and students of 20th-century theater will be fascinated, but casual readers will also find an entertaining browse. Photos. (Nov. 16)

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Review Coward was a genius [and] as we see here, a letter writer extraordinaire...What we get is much more than Coward's letters, however delectable...We also get letters to Coward, many of them as entertaining as [his] for he corresponded with many of the mightiest pens in literature and show business...The result is a first class biography."

-John Simon, *The New York Times Book Review*

"Barry Day has done a superb job with the collection...it is a feast..."

- Edward Herrmann, *The Wall Street Journal*

"(It) glitters with the multi-gifted playwright's claws-out bitchiness, tremendous charm, and creative genius..."

- *Vanity Fair*

"Evocative...addressed to an astonishing array of people..."

- Hedy Weiss, *Chicago Sun-Times*

"Delightful, absorbing, skillfully-shaped; this collection enables the reader to be part of Coward's extended family."

- Robert Kimball

"Thanks to Noel and Barry, 'I feel I've been to a marvelous party.' What a treat!"

- Rosemary Harris

"The sheen of the Coward legacy is further polished with this fascinating document of an important era in our collective cultural history. Sir Noel continues to be impertinently pertinent!"

- Michael Feinstein

"Noel Coward's letters are everything one would expect: witty, sentimental, peevish, touching. They are wonderful to read. What astounds me, however, is Barry Day's brilliant, imaginatively edited commentary. He sets the letters up with care and intelligence; Noel Coward comes to life because the letters have been placed in such an informed and vivid context."

- Andre Bishop, Artistic Director, Lincoln Center Theater

“Noel Coward is my number one hero. As far as I’m concerned, the British have a monopoly on humor, and our beloved Noel has a monopoly within a monopoly.”

- Hugh Martin

“A sumptuous banquet! Bringing Coward’s world so vividly to life that I keep expecting him to walk through the door.”

- Lynn Redgrave

“So many letters from his friends makes the telling of Noel’s life so much deeper and well-rounded. All in all, a rich book with a remarkably protean hero who both shapes and reflects his times.”

- Margot Peters

“Master had a singular impact on so many of our lives and Barry Day’s perceptive analysis of his correspondence is both illuminating and irresistible. Noel’s renowned wit, his unfailing generosity, his acute sense of contemporary history is here for everyone to enjoy.”

- Richard Attenborough

“Precise, Witty, remarkably observed, and gloriously English.”

- Judi Dench

“Thirty years after his death, it seems increasingly obvious that Noël Coward is the most enduring English playwright of the mid twentieth century. This meticulously edited collection of his letters will excite and amuse anyone interested in him, the theatre and his staggeringly wide circle of correspondents.”

- Nicholas Hytner, Artistic Director at the National Theatre

“A uniquely charming and enticing journey through a remarkable life. Coward’s own record is made all the more delightful by the wise and helpful interpolations of Barry Day, the soundest authority on the Master that there is.”

- Stephen Fry

“Here you get the truly private Noël...what really matters is the insight we get from these letters into a far more complex, thoughtful and kindly figure than the one we thought we knew.”

- Sheridan Morley

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