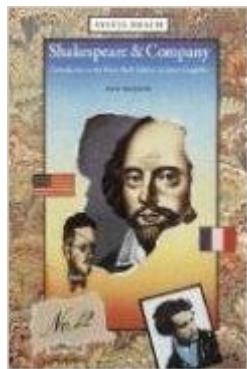


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Shakespeare And Company



Synopsis

Sylvia Beach was intimately acquainted with the expatriate and visiting writers of the Lost Generation, a label that she never accepted. Like moths of great promise, they were drawn to her well-lighted bookstore and warm hearth on the Left Bank. Shakespeare and Company evokes the zeitgeist of an era through its revealing glimpses of James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Andre Gide, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, D. H. Lawrence, and others already famous or soon to be. In his introduction to this new edition, James Laughlin recalls his friendship with Sylvia Beach. Like her bookstore, his publishing house, New Directions, is considered a cultural touchstone.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (27 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This, a book about books, is one of my favorites. In just 220 pages, bookshop owner Sylvia Beach, owner of the bookstore "Shakespeare and Company," paints a vivid portrait of the social, cultural, and especially, in Paris. The store opened in November 1919, offering works of T.S. Elliot, Joyce, Chaucer, and others, a variety of literary reviews, and photographs of Wilde and Whitman. It ran first as kind of lending library, and almost immediately the many native and expatriate writers of Europe were borrowing books--and giving her their own new writings. Very early customers included Gide, Maurois, American poet Robert McAlmon, "Mr. and Mrs. Pound, " and the following couple: "Not long after I opened my bookshop, two women came walking down the rue Dupuytren. One of them, with a very fine face, was stout, wore a long robe, and, on her head, a most becoming top of a

basket. She was accompanied by a slim, dark whimsical woman: she reminded me of a gypsy. They were Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas."Sylvia Beach writes clearly, candidly, and fondly of her many visitors and friends in prewar Europe, especially the 1920's (she and her friends dismantled the shop when the Nazis threatened to confiscate her books in 1941). She evokes an entire era though richly told and plentiful anecdotes. She writes of encounters and friendships with such notables as Sherwood Anderson, Katherine Anne Porter, Satie, Bryher, H.D., Paul Valery, Valery Larbaud, D. H. Lawrence, and Hemingway (at the end of the book, Hemingway liberates "the wine cellar at the Ritz" (Hemingway's words) as he and his company try to rid the Rue l'Odeon of the remaining German snipers.

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