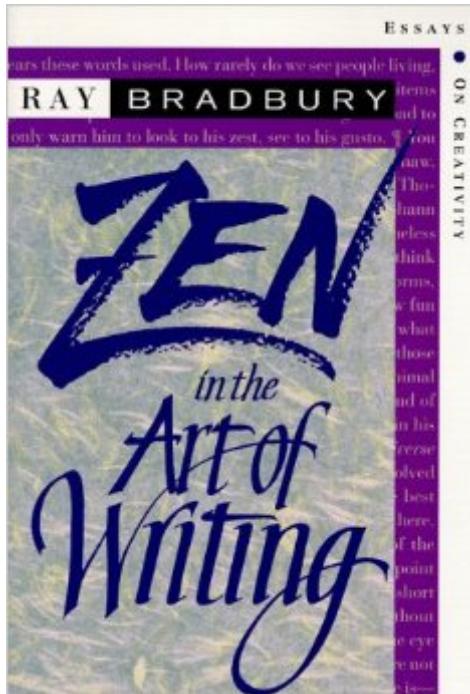


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Zen In The Art Of Writing: Essays On Creativity



Synopsis

"Bradbury, all charged up, drunk on life, joyous with writing, puts together nine past essays on writing and creativity and discharges every ounce of zest and gusto in him."--Kirkus Reviews
"Zen and the Art of Writing is purely and simply Bradbury's love song to his craft."--Los Angeles Times

Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Joshua Odell Editions (August 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1877741094

ISBN-13: 978-1877741098

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8 inches

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

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (97 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #21,491 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Literature > Literary Theory #29 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Publishing & Books > Authorship #54 in Books > Textbooks > Reference > Writing Skills

Customer Reviews

Ray Bradbury is my favorite author. So much so that I named my Scottish Fold cat "Bradbury" in honor of him. And it's all because of books like this. Zen in the Art of Writing is classic Bradbury: the crisp, short sentences, the vivid mental imagery, the amazing insights into his own writings -- all of it. This book uplifts me, moves me and fills me with awe. It is, without a doubt, the best book on writing I have ever read. Why? Because what he shares seems as pertinent to me as if he wrote it FOR me. Example: Page 17. One day, he discovered that his story titles were nothing more than a list of nouns, such as The Lake. The Night. The Monster. The Town Clock. The Carousel. The Crowd. Such simplicity. Yet, after reading this book I found myself creating my own mental list of titles the same way. Suddenly, just about anything seemed ripe for a story, and infused with some hidden, dark meaning. The Man on the Corner. The Empty Room. The Ten Foot Oak Tree. The Noise in the Basement. The Tea Leaf. The Knight and the Bishop. I don't know why it works for me, but it does. Each of those "titles" (that I just came up with as I'm writing this) could be fleshed out into a story. For some reason, when I see things as nouns, my imagination is uncorked and I begin

to feel the urge to explore the thoughts invoked. Try it sometime. Another example: The chapter "How to Keep and Feed a Muse." Priceless. Magical. He shares ways to awaken the sleeping giant within...and set pen to paper with stellar results. If you're a writer, you need this book. If you're a lover of Bradbury, you need this book. If you just want to know how one of the 20th century's most lauded authors achieved that status, you need this book.

This book is like getting a transfusion. Not of blood, but of Ray Bradbury's enthusiasm. His motto was "Exactly one-half terror, one-half exhilaration." Well, this book takes out the terror of writing, and leaves us with pure exhilaration. Even if you are not a writer, you may want to get this book just for Bradbury's zest. This book is a tight tapestry of several ideas. It is part autobiographical, with the story of him ripping up his Buck Rodger's comics because his friends (like Job's friends) mocked him. Later he ripped up his friends as he stood strong for his conations and returned to his true bliss. Bradbury also retells the story of his meeting Mr. Electrico at the carnival. Besides being the basis of "The Illustrated Man" and "Something Wicked This Way Comes," this meeting with the carne was Bradbury's equivalent of First Communion. He was never the same afterwards. He also has some "nuts and bolts" tips for writers.

1. Let yourself explode. There are two types of explosions. One is the IED (improvised explosive device), where you just go to pieces. But there is also the explosion of popcorn. Be popcorn. Drop your restraints and inhibitions.
2. Write 1,000 words a day. This is not a whole lot, the equivalent of one full .com review. Trust me it works--it gets the garbage out of system. Practice makes perfect.
3. Follow a weekly regimen. Monday write. The next few days rewrite what you have written. This is crap filtration. Saturday send off the manuscript. Wash, rinse, repeat.
4. Don't think. That is, don't over think. Listen to your subconscious--that shadowy figure in the back of your heart that keeps talking to you. She tells you what is right or wrong.

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