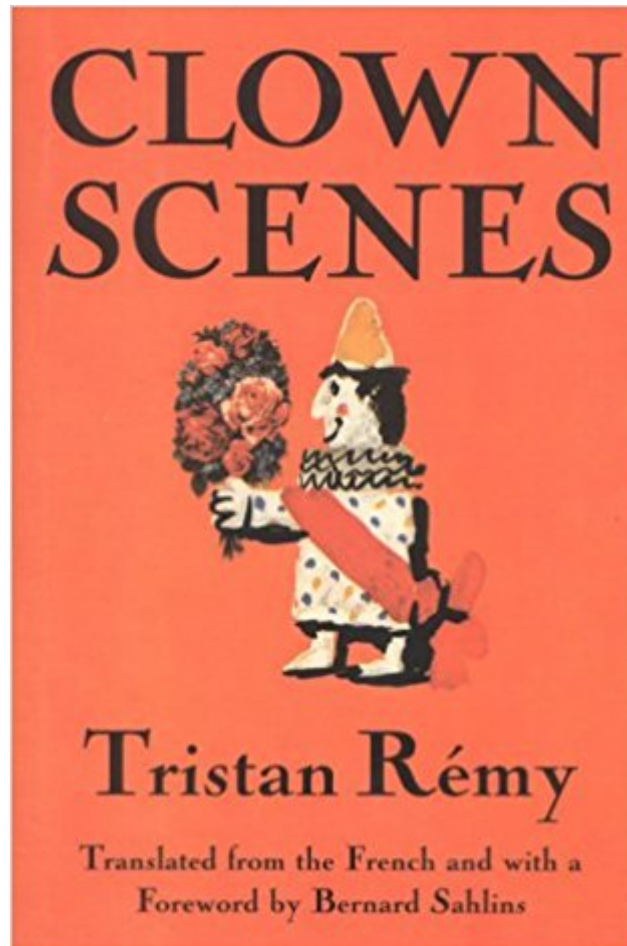




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Clown Scenes



Synopsis

The intimacy of the one-ring circus produced the classic clown routines that flourished until the mid-twentieth century and then disappeared with the rise of the grand circus. They have been lost until now. By seeking out the little band of surviving clowns who worked in the old tradition and setting down their scenes, Tristan Rémy, the eminent circus historian, has rescued a theatrical treasure. Thanks to Rémy's persistence, the forty-eight scenes presented here contain not only the spoken words but the manner of line delivery and the physical turns. So they remain superbly suitable for performance. Most of them are written for just three actors – the white-faced clown, August the stooge, and the supercilious ringmaster. Sets are unnecessary. And their combination of the verbal with the physical has timeless appeal. Bernard Sahlins's translation is masterfully attuned to present-day audiences. In his foreword, Mr. Sahlins notes that these scenes have been continually remounted in Europe, attesting to their fundamental vitality and universality. “Clearly there is a debt, witting and unwitting, owed to the clown of the ring by the great comedians of our century. With this book these scenes and the clowns who invented and played them now take their honored place in our theatrical legacy.”

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A welcomed translation...a fascinating perspective on the world of clowns. (Joel Schechter Theater Magazine) Admirable and essential. (Don Stacey World's Fair)

Text: English (translation) Original Language: French

It did not meet my expectations. I was looking for "open ended" scenes with concepts that could create several different clown-like scenarios. Pretty much every scene in this book is very much reliant on specific wordplay. I am giving it two stars because it provides decent sketch material for those that need it, but right now I have no use for extracting material as I prefer to create my own.

very good!!!

As much as this book lives up to it's description of an anthology of classic circus clown routines, it is most certainly not worth the \$30 (including shipping) that I had to pay for it. This is not a bad book of lousy out of date routines but I don't think I will ever use again.

The Golden Age of Clowning was in Paris from the late 1890's through the 1920's. At that time, there were a dozen or more permanent circus buildings throughout Paris, and every week thousands of people flocked to the circus to see what new acts the clowns were going to perform. During this time, clowns actually spoke during their routines, and performed scenes with one another. Everybody knew the names of the clowns-- Charlie Rivel, Footit et Chocolat, Toto, Coco, and Marceline, to name a few. Tristan Remy, famous French circus historian, has taken 48 of the best clown routines and written them down in a fascinating document. And while they are primarily historical scenes, they are also blue-prints for proven comedy scenarios. I don't love the translation, but these are great tools for the working clown. Use them for good and not for evil.

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