



The Road Show

Gary Jennings

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The epic of Spangle takes us on a grand tour of two continents, from an embittered post-Civil War South, to the glittering and decadent capitals of Europe. In The Road Show we meet Zachary Edge, a Confederate soldier, on his way home at the war's close. He stumbles upon a traveling troupe, a chance encounter that is the start of an unforgettable odyssey. Edge hits the road with bawdy showgirls, roguish tricksters, and a host of colorful characters. He soon finds himself in the arms of Autumn Auburn, the lithesome artiste known for her breathtaking sensuality.

The Road Show Details

Date : Published February 1st 1999 by Forge Books

ISBN : 9780812564716

Author : Gary Jennings

Format : Mass Market Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Adventure

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From Reader Review The Road Show for online ebook

Stephanie says

Now here is a Circus book. Good stuff.

I just re-read it to remind me why I was comparing the currently popular "Water for Elephants" to this (I think Spangle was better). It's been umpteen years since I read it, but it always stood out in my cluttered memory.

Michael says

A series about a circus after the Civil War. Two books follow this one. Historical fiction, but this writer is one of a kind. The circus starts as a "mud show" and travels the country, slowly growing and having a mighty adventure as they tour the post Civil War US.

Eventually, in the second and third books the circus has sailed across the Atlantic and become the toast of Europe. GJ travelled with circuses all over the world for ten years to write the story. The detail and research underlying the awesome plot are staggering.

Each of Gary Jennings's books are among my favorites. He died not too long ago, and is a heinous loss.

Kenneth says

THE great writer of historical adventure fiction. Not only does Gary Jennings take you back in time to meet unforgettable characters, but he makes every moment count with mounting tension and action.

Dockery says

I'm currently reading the anthology of the three "Spangle" books. Spangle: Gary Jennings Which unfortunately does not have an English description on GR.

These books are an example of historical fiction that happens to be somewhat historically accurate. The books follows a group of vagabonds that get caught in the middle of international relations. There is tension as the circus has to "change it's flags" roaming from one nation to the next. While coping with the relations of the nations, they are dealing with the relations among the troupe, and their rivals.

For the Circus lovers.: You will be pleased that the book goes into some detail about the nuances of circus life in the past. However, only enough detail is given to allow the reader to understand the importance. So if you want to read explicit details of rigging, this is not the book. There is at least one passage that describes the Tabernacle in detail from the gumshoe to the canvas.

I have read that the author traveled with a circus to research these books. But I'm not certain if that article was true.

Beth says

I wonder if this book has such a high ranking because the reviewers have already finished the series. I didn't think it was awful, but it was certainly not very exciting. I'm going to guess it is mainly exposition. I'll probably read the other two eventually.

Peter Ackerman says

I just finished this book 1 of 3 from the original work "Spangle" by Gary Jennings. Though the book begins slow and clinical (including a 100 page description of a typical circus performance), I found that, by then, I was invested and felt like I knew the characters thus what happened to them mattered and I was then further drawn into the story. By book's end I did not want it to be over. I will soon pick up the next installment.

L. says

Jennings's books are always informative as well as entertaining, and this book is no exception. You'll learn a lot about circus/sideshow history. The settings are well researched and the post civil war imagery springs to life with Jennings's detailed descriptive language.

Jennings tells a wonderful story with some funny lines thrown in. Here's one:

"Florian told me that we must never let ourselves be bound by propriety, precedent, convention or morality, those things are recipes for banality." What a perfect description of a character. You can almost hear him saying, "Step right up, I've got a deal for you."

Alicia says

I had never much been a person fascinated by circuses. I believe I picked this book up on a complete whim, as I found a paperback with the shiny gold cover and thought I would try something completely different.

Spangle: The Road Show won me over.

Truly, I have detested historical fiction about the Civil War ever since elementary school when we had to study it in great detail each year. The teachers would get so focused that we would run out of school year for anything past the very beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Not to mention the fact, as a Northerner, some Southern Culture can be lost entirely on me.

Somehow Gary Jennings managed to start weaving a yarn that captured me. I am not certain how I became so fascinated by all of the characters as they were introduced- somehow I needed to know what would happen next.

The dialog is interesting, complete with well researched terms. Kudos to setting the scene without making it

obvious!

My only real pet peeve was how the book sort of just chops off at the end. Not so much the fault of the author, but the fault of the editor when Spangle itself was split into a trilogy.

Richard says

First read in 10 years - still a fine piece of fiction
