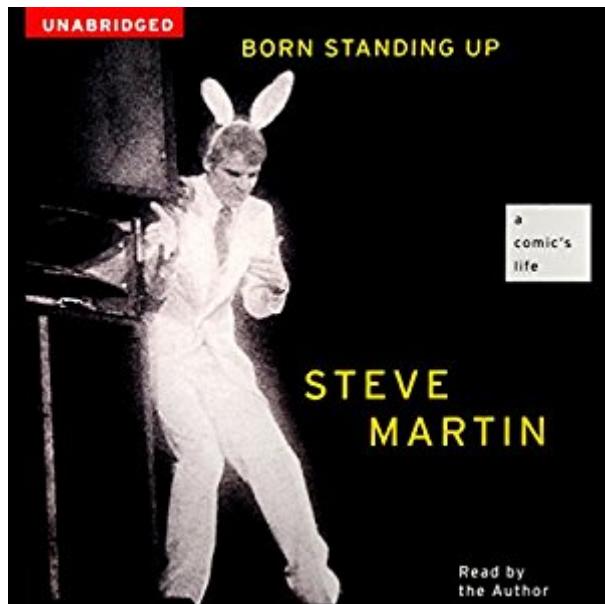


The book was found

Born Standing Up: A Comic's Life



Synopsis

In the midseventies, Steve Martin exploded onto the comedy scene. By 1978 he was the biggest concert draw in the history of stand-up. In 1981 he quit forever. This book is, in his own words, the story of "why I did stand-up and why I walked away." Emmy and Grammy Award winner, author of the acclaimed New York Times bestsellers *Shopgirl* and *The Pleasure of My Company*, and a regular contributor to *The New Yorker*, Martin has always been a writer. His memoir of his years in stand-up is candid, spectacularly amusing, and beautifully written. At age ten Martin started his career at Disneyland, selling guidebooks in the newly opened theme park. In the decade that followed, he worked in the Disney magic shop and the Bird Cage Theatre at Knott's Berry Farm, performing his first magic/comedy act a dozen times a week. The story of these years, during which he practiced and honed his craft, is moving and revelatory. The dedication to excellence and innovation is formed at an astonishingly early age and never wavers or wanes. Martin illuminates the sacrifice, discipline, and originality that made him an icon and informs his work to this day. To be this good, to perform so frequently, was isolating and lonely. It took Martin decades to reconnect with his parents and sister, and he tells that story with great tenderness. Martin also paints a portrait of his times -- the era of free love and protests against the war in Vietnam, the heady irreverence of *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* in the late sixties, and the transformative new voice of *Saturday Night Live* in the seventies. Throughout the text, Martin has placed photographs, many never seen before. *Born Standing Up* is a superb testament to the sheer tenacity, focus, and daring of one of the greatest and most iconoclastic comedians of all time. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought the audio version with the e-version and it felt as if he was speaking specifically to me. It gave it a much more intimate feel. I highly recommend the professional reading addition. The book itself is a collection of stand-up memories and developmental notes on how Mr. Martin began his professional career as an onstage performer. It goes through a bit of the highs and lows without going for the cheap "tell all" trash of sex, drugs, and back room deals that seems more like a low class ploy to sell books. What little there is of that in the book is quickly and quietly glossed over. He speaks of his career and gives his nuances on how he moved from an unknown to having more fame and less privacy. The professional reading is also punctuated with mini banjo solos. He does not go much into his movies beyond "The Jerk." Most of his private life is still very much private, although he does go a bit into his relationship with his immediate family. There is not a lot of mentions of other famous people beyond a few tiny mentions here and there. It really is merely focusing on career development without throwing any of his past coworker under the proverbial bus. For me, he came off as a hard-working professional with a lonely somewhat secluded life that makes me want to reach out and be his friend. However at the same time, it made me know that since his fame that he has erected a wall between his public persona and his private life. I do not see him as capable to have a friendship with the "common" folk anymore, as he will always be unable to trust anyone without expecting ulterior motive, which is a shame.

It's kind of depressing, actually. Which isn't necessarily a bad thing; who was it that explained that most good comedy comes not from light-hearted people, but is a weapon aimed at the powerful rather than a tool to amuse them; to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable"? Martin's book brings the dark, but not so much the anger; more sadness. What he does a pretty good job of is showing that, while he landed by an accident of birth in a charmed place and time, he was plagued with the same dysfunctional family relationships as people whose lives are less charmed. But what I found the most interesting is that he's somewhat candid about the conceit behind his most-lucrative period of "new comedy" -- that it was aimed at creating the impression that you had to be smart to understand it, that something important was being said that you needed desperately to be a part of, something that the yapping masses wanted to "be hip to," and that you didn't dare let on that you didn't find it funny for fear of letting people know how uncool you truly were. You had to get the

inside joke, or pretend you did, to avoid being mocked. And in that sense, his comedy was actually a microcosm of much of the culture of the seventies, (and '80s) specifically -- phoniness, full-blown artifice. That's what Madison Avenue, when it co-opted the hippie culture, created; it morphed the sixties' culture into its polar opposite while retaining the superficial trappings.

One of the best autobiographies I've read. Though seemingly a shorter read than some, every word is woven into an intensely interesting, honest and heart warming story. With a self-made and brilliant career as a back-drop, Martin entices the reader into his life and takes you along for the ride. His revelations about his relationship with his parents will bring you to tears as well. I remember his famous phrases from his comedy routines being repeated at work. His and Dan Ackroyd's Czech "wild and crazy" guys skit is one SNL's funniest of all time. You will enjoy this book immensely and will read it in record time.

I can hardly believe it's been two years since I purchased this book and just now read it! Life takes us on a strange journey sometimes when we think we have found our calling (mine being comedy), yet life had different plans. I had been doing Hospice care as a volunteer for a few years when I took a break, thinking this will be my time to learn comedy again! Well, my sister became deathly ill and needed three brain surgeries so I was back doing bedside service! I'm not complaining at all, in fact, I'm greatly appreciative that I wasn't working at the time so I could help her. I'm now taking a Master Class on Comedy, by Steve Martin, which reminded me of this book. So I read it! What does this have to do with Steve Martin's book? Comedy is born out of life's tragedies and trauma; they force us to become stronger and more resilient, and over time - look at things - in a sometimes disturbing humorous light. Steve's book was enlightening and uplifting, from learning about his triumphs and struggles- in all that he endured to become the comic, and man he is today. I admire him greatly! The biggest obstacle and accomplishment when reading this, and I'd think he'd agree, was after obtaining a certain amount of respect, fame, and fortune, and having written "Lapin Agile" a play set in 1905 about the hypothetical meeting of Picasso and Einstein. He returned home. He earned the respect of love of his father, and basked in the love of his mother and sister; taking delight in their stories of forgotten anecdotes. There isn't any greater gift in life than that! If you desire to be a comic/entertainer I highly recommend reading this book. It

will not only inspire you, but offer you an introspective look at what and why you wish to be a comic. Comedy is a journey - such is life, and what better way to view it than in this humorous biography, *Born Standing Up*.

GREAT book! I read this book as leisure. This made me have a lot more respect for Steve knowing how hard he worked to get to where he is (which explains why he put fatherhood off until 69). What makes the book so great is not that his story is so unique or profound, but he's very good with how he tells the story. He makes it very poignant . If more writers were as honest, personal, and eloquent with words as he is in this book, more people would read.

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