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The Invention of Hugo Cabret

By Brian Selznick



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The Invention of Hugo Cabret By Brian Selznick

Selznick's Caldecott Medal winner and #1 NY Times bestseller is now available in ebook form! Exquisitely produced, it offers a reading experience so unique, you'll want both the print and ebook editions!

Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. But when his world suddenly interlocks -- like the gears of the clock he keeps -- with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, Hugo's undercover life and his most precious secret are put in jeopardy. A cryptic drawing, a treasured notebook, a stolen key, a mechanical man, and a hidden message from Hugo's dead father form the backbone of this intricate, tender, and spellbinding mystery.

With 284 pages of original drawings, and combining elements of picture book, graphic novel, and film, Brian Selznick breaks open the novel form to create an entirely new reading experience. Here is a stunning, cinematic tour de force from a boldly innovative storyteller, artist, and bookmaker.



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The Invention of Hugo Cabret By Brian Selznick Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Book Description:

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A Letter from Brian Selznick



Dear readers,

When I was a kid, two of my favorite books were by an amazing man named Remy Charlip. *Fortunately* and *Thirteen* fascinated me in part because, in both books, the very act of turning the pages plays a pivotal role in telling the story. Each turn reveals something new in a way that builds on the image on the previous page. Now that I'm an illustrator myself, I've often thought about this dramatic storytelling device and all of its creative possibilities.

My new book, *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, is a 550 page novel in words and pictures. But unlike most novels, the images in my new book don't just illustrate the story; they help tell it. I've used the lessons I learned from Remy Charlip and other masters of the picture book to create something that is not exactly a novel, not quite a picture book, not really a graphic novel, or a flip book or a movie, but a combination of all these things.

I began thinking about this book ten years ago after seeing some of the magical films of Georges Méliès, the father of science-fiction movies. But it wasn't until I read a book called *Edison's Eve: The Quest for Mechanical Life* by Gaby Woods that my story began to come into focus. I discovered that Méliès had a collection of mechanical, wind-up figures (called automata) that were donated to a museum, but which were later destroyed and thrown away. Instantly, I imagined a boy discovering these broken, rusty machines in the garbage, stealing one and attempting to fix it. At that moment, Hugo Cabret was born.

A few years ago, I had the honor of meeting Remy Charlip, and I'm proud to say that we've become friends. Last December he was asking me what I was working on, and as I was describing this book to him, I realized that Remy looks exactly like Georges Méliès. I excitedly asked him to pose as the character in my book, and fortunately, he said yes. So every time you see Méliès in *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, the person you are really looking at is my dear friend Remy Charlip, who continues to inspire everyone who has the great pleasure of knowing him or seeing his work.

Paris in the 1930's, a thief, a broken machine, a strange girl, a mean old man, and the secrets that tie them all together... Welcome to *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*.

Yours,

Brian Selznick

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Brian Selznick on a "Deleted Scene"

from *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*

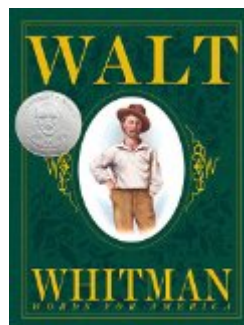
This is a finished drawing that I had to cut from *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. I was still rewriting the book when I had to begin the final art. There was originally a scene in the story where this character, Etienne, is working in a camera shop. On one of my research trips to Paris I spent an entire day visiting old camera shops and photographing cameras from the 1930's and earlier, as well as the facades of the shops themselves. I researched original French camera posters and made sure that the counter and the shelves were accurate to the time period. I did all the drawings in the book at 1/4 scale, so they were very small and I often had to use a magnifying glass to help me see what I was drawing. After I finished this drawing I continued to rewrite, and for various reasons I realized that I needed to move this scene from the camera shop to the French Film Academy, which meant that I had to cut this picture. I tried really hard to find ANOTHER moment when I could have Etienne in a camera shop, but, as painful as it was, I knew the picture had to go. I'm glad to see it up on the Amazon website because otherwise no one would have ever seen all those tiny cameras I researched and drew so carefully!

--Brian Selznick

More from Brian Selznick



The Houdini Box



Walt Whitman: Words for America



The Boy of a Thousand Faces

Starred Review. Here is a true masterpiece—an artful blending of narrative, illustration and cinematic technique, for a story as tantalizing as it is touching. Twelve-year-old orphan Hugo lives in the walls of a Paris train station at the turn of the 20th century, where he tends to the clocks and filches what he needs to survive. Hugo's recently deceased father, a clockmaker, worked in a museum where he discovered an automaton: a human-like figure seated at a desk, pen in hand, as if ready to deliver a message. After his father showed Hugo the robot, the boy became just as obsessed with getting the automaton to function as his father had been, and the man gave his son one of the notebooks he used to record the automaton's inner workings. The plot grows as intricate as the robot's gears and mechanisms [...] To Selznick's credit, the coincidences all feel carefully orchestrated; epiphany after epiphany occurs before the book comes to its sumptuous, glorious end. Selznick hints at the toymaker's hidden identity [...] through impressive use of meticulous charcoal drawings that grow or shrink against black backdrops, in pages-long sequences. They display the same item in increasingly tight focus or pan across scenes the way a camera might. The plot ultimately has much to do with the history of the movies, and Selznick's genius lies in his expert use of such a visual style to spotlight the role of this highly visual media. A standout achievement. Ages 9-12. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 4–9—With characteristic intelligence, exquisite images, and a breathtaking design, Selznick shatters conventions related to the art of bookmaking in this magical mystery set in 1930s Paris. He employs wordless sequential pictures and distinct pages of text to let the cinematic story unfold, and the artwork, rendered in pencil and bordered in black, contains elements of a flip book, a graphic novel, and film. It opens with a small square depicting a full moon centered on a black spread. As readers flip the pages, the image grows and the moon recedes. A boy on the run slips through a grate to take refuge inside the walls of a train station—home for this orphaned, apprentice clock keeper. As Hugo seeks to accomplish his mission, his life intersects with a cantankerous toyshop owner and a feisty girl who won't be ignored. Each character possesses secrets and something of great value to the other. With deft foreshadowing, sensitively wrought characters, and heart-pounding suspense, the author engineers the elements of his complex plot: speeding trains, clocks, footsteps, dreams, and movies—especially those by Georges Méliès, the French pioneer of science-fiction cinema. Movie stills are cleverly interspersed. Selznick's art ranges from evocative, shadowy spreads of Parisian streets to penetrating character close-ups. Leaving much to ponder about loss, time, family, and the creative impulse, the book closes with a waning moon, a diminishing square, and informative credits. This is a masterful narrative that readers can literally manipulate.—Wendy Lukehart, Washington DC Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ernie Swisher:

Do you certainly one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this specific aren't like that. This The Invention of Hugo Cabret book is readable by you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the info here are arrange for enjoyable reading experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to give to you. The writer of The Invention of Hugo Cabret content conveys thinking easily to understand by lots of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different available as it. So , do you even now thinking The Invention of Hugo Cabret is not loveable to be your top collection reading book?

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