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The Snow Clown: Cartwheels on Borders from Alaska to Nebraska By Jeff Raz

“Forget what you know about clowns. *The Snow Clown* brings to life a circus made to reflect, and reflect on, crossed borders. A thoroughly absorbing read.”— Zofia Burr, Dean of George Mason University Honors College; author of *Women, Poetry, and Power*.

GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED CIRQUE DU SOLEIL STAR, ACTOR, DIRECTOR, EDUCATOR, PLAYWRIGHT AND AUTHOR JEFF RAZ ANNOUNCES HIS SECOND BOOK

“*The Snow Clown: Cartwheels on Borders from Alaska to Nebraska*” takes readers on a thought-provoking adventure drawn from Raz’s ten tours to Southwest Alaska and his years as an Artist-in-Residence at the University of Nebraska Lincoln.

Internationally and nationally touring Cirque du Soleil performer, actor, director, educator, prolific playwright and author Jeff Raz announces his second book, *The Snow Clown: Cartwheels on Borders from Alaska to Nebraska*. Raz’s first book, *The Secret Life of Clowns: A backstage tour of Cirque du Soleil and the Clown Conservatory*, was launched at the Smithsonian in 2017.

The Snow Clown is an engrossing story about taking circus and theater out of its confines and into the frozen tundra and America’s Heartland. This “stranger in a strange land” tale reveals how art can connect us across cultural boundaries and examines the limits of empathy in the face of new and different human experiences. With his characteristic color, detail, humor and poignancy, Raz takes readers on a thought-provoking adventure drawn from his ten tours to Southwest Alaska and his years as an Artist-in-Residence at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. *The Snow Clown* also uses monologues from Raz’s critically acclaimed play, “*Father-Land*” (written with Jael Weisman), as well as sections based on scripts that he wrote with University of Nebraska-Lincoln students.

While many artists thrive by taking risks, exploring unknown territory and living on the edge, the title character in *The Snow Clown* takes this literally: flying tiny planes out to Eskimo villages in the dead of winter to create shows with kids who have never seen a circus. The unforgiving tundra and triple-digit wind chill are the least of his worries as he navigates a world where traditional Yup'ik culture is fighting off TV America and missionary teachers. In the frozen north, he finds love, torn ligaments, circus prodigies, hellish saunas and rancid seal oil. He also finds the limits of empathy and art on the border between cultures.

Years later, the Snow Clown finds himself in Nebraska, America's heartland, performing a solo comedy about the Holocaust and his father's suicide. *It doesn't go well*. He is a Jewish artist out on the plains where Jews are as rare as buffalo and burning crosses are not. Using skills he honed on the Yukon Delta, he writes plays with students that blow the lid off of "Nebraska Nice" and eventually get him run out of town.

The Snow Clown is a singular story: compelling, bittersweet and funny. Read an excerpt [here](#).

Reviews of *The Snow Clown: Cartwheels on Borders from Alaska to Nebraska*

"Forget what you know about clowns. *The Snow Clown* brings to life a circus made to reflect, and reflect on, crossed borders. A thoroughly absorbing read."

—Zofia Burr, Dean of George Mason University Honors College; author of *Women, Poetry, and Power*

"Raz writes with a keen eye, an open heart and a delicious sense of detail."—
Stephen Buescher, Head of Movement and Physical Theater, Tony Award-winning American Conservatory Theater

"The Snow Clown...is bittersweet and reminds me how many artists have done small bits of outreach in all sorts of out-of-the-way places that have touched the lives of bits of the population we never hear about....Looking at intercultural contact seems more important than ever. Above all, the book reflects (Jeff's) great humanity, compassion, and gifts as a 'healer.'" — Joan Schirle, actor, teacher, writer, director and co-founder of Dell'Arte International

“Raz captured two key, but often neglected features of the clown, wandering and being contrary. The clown sees the world differently than others, helping re-create a new world.”— David Carlyon, director, actor, ex-Ringling/Barnum clown, award-winning author of *Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You’ve Never Heard Of* and *Education of a Circus Clown*.



Author Bio

Jeff Raz has performed nationally and internationally for decades, starring in circuses (Cirque du Soleil, Pickle Family Circus and more) and plays, including Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* on Broadway.

Raz's first book, *The Secret Life of Clowns: A backstage tour of Cirque du Soleil and the Clown Conservatory*, was launched at the Smithsonian in 2017. A graduate of Dell'Arte International, Raz has written 15 plays, including *Father-Land* with Jael Weisman, and has directed dozens of circus, puppet and theater productions. He cofounded Vaudeville Nouveau in 1982,

the S.F. New Vaudeville Festival in 1985, The New Pickle Family Circus in 1993, The Clown Conservatory in 2000 and the Medical Clown Project in 2010. Jeff continues to write, perform, direct and teach as well as work globally as a communications consultant with Stand & Deliver. www.jeffraz.com

Publishing Facts:

Title: The Snow Clown

Subtitle: *Cartwheels on Borders from Alaska to Nebraska*

Author/Publisher: Jeff Raz

Previous works: *Secret Life of Clowns: A backstage tour of Cirque du Soleil and the Clown Conservatory* (2017) and fifteen plays including *Father-Land* (with Jael Weisman)

Editors: Douglas Cruickshank, Erfert Fenton

Formats: Print/Paperback

Publication date: September 2018

Pages: 202

Price: \$17.00

ISBN:978-0-9979048-2-6

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Jeff Raz Interviews and Events

Jeff Raz is available for interviews, covering such topics as: clowning, circus, circus history, Bay Area circus and theater, creating fiction from personal stories, medical clowning, teaching artists, community-based art, artists in remote communities, artist diversity programs and travel.

Jeff offers engaging interactive presentations, readings/signings, and thematic workshops around the Bay Area, Southern California and the country. To discuss a future event, contact him at: jeffraz@aol.com.

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