

Make 'Em Laugh: The Funny Business of America



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by Laurence Maslon

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

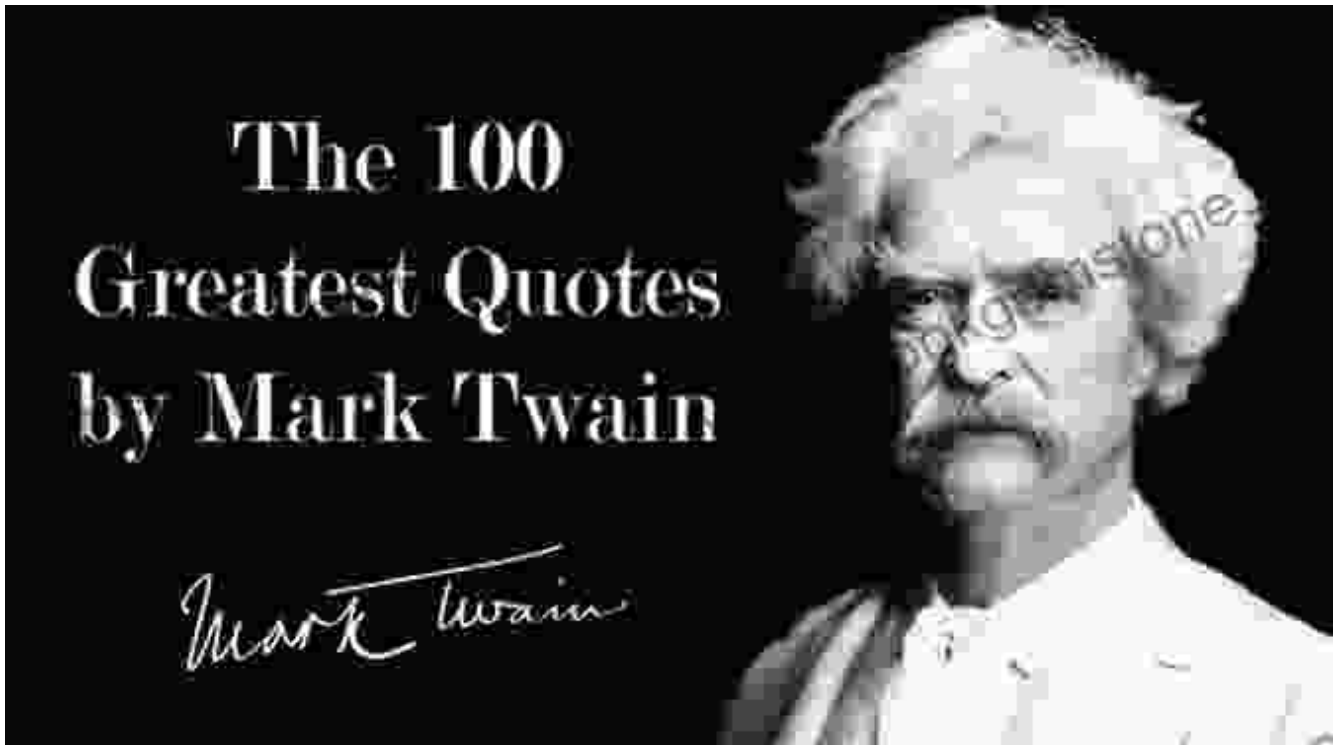
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Laughter is a powerful force that can bring people together, relieve stress, and even improve our health. In America, humor has a long and storied history, from the vaudeville stage to the silver screen to the stand-up comedy clubs of today. This article explores the funny business of America, from its humble beginnings to its present-day incarnations.

The Early Days of American Humor

The roots of American humor can be traced back to the colonial era. The Puritans, who were known for their strict religious beliefs, frowned upon laughter and frivolity. However, as the colonies grew and prospered, a more relaxed attitude towards humor began to develop. By the early 19th century, there were a number of popular humorists writing for newspapers and magazines. These humorists, such as Mark Twain and Artemus Ward, poked fun at everything from politics to religion to social customs.



In the mid-19th century, vaudeville became a popular form of entertainment. Vaudeville shows featured a variety of acts, including comedians, singers, dancers, and acrobats. Vaudeville comedians were known for their quick wit and their ability to get laughs from audiences of all ages. Some of the most famous vaudeville comedians include Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and the Marx Brothers.

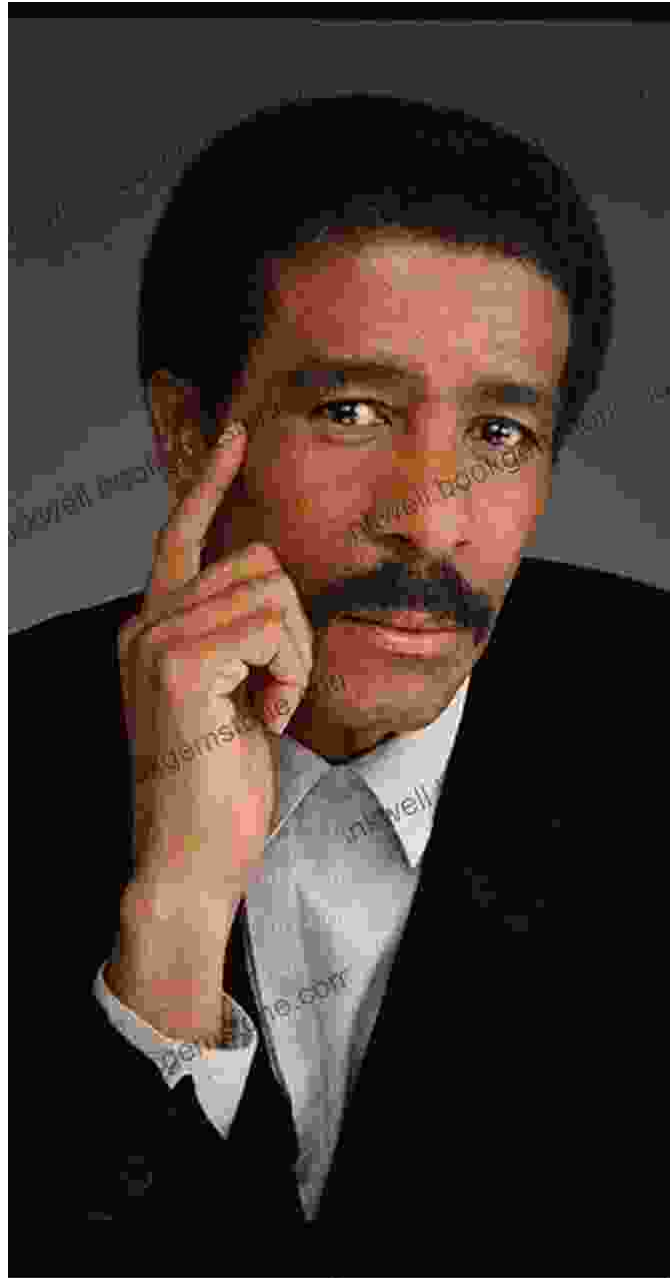
The Golden Age of Hollywood

The early decades of the 20th century saw the rise of the American film industry. Hollywood studios quickly realized that comedy was a popular genre with audiences. Some of the most famous Hollywood comedies of the era include "The General" (1926), "Duck Soup" (1933), and "Bringing Up Baby" (1938). These films starred some of the biggest names in Hollywood, such as Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and the Marx Brothers.



The Rise of Stand-Up Comedy

In the post-World War II era, stand-up comedy began to emerge as a popular form of entertainment. Stand-up comedians perform live in front of an audience, using humor to entertain and make people laugh. Some of the most famous stand-up comedians include Richard Pryor, George Carlin, and Jerry Seinfeld.



American Humor Today

Today, American humor is more diverse and accessible than ever before. There are comedy clubs in every major city, and there are countless comedians performing on television, radio, and the internet. American humor continues to evolve and change, but one thing remains the same: it

is a powerful force that can bring people together, relieve stress, and even improve our health.

The Benefits of Laughter

Laughter has a number of benefits for our physical and mental health. It can help to reduce stress, improve our mood, and boost our immune system. Laughter can also help us to connect with others and build relationships. So next time you need a good laugh, don't be afraid to let go and enjoy yourself.

American humor is a rich and diverse tradition that has been entertaining audiences for centuries. From the vaudeville stage to the silver screen to the stand-up comedy clubs of today, American humor has always been there to make us laugh. So next time you need a good laugh, turn on a comedy show, read a funny book, or go see a stand-up comedian. You won't regret it.



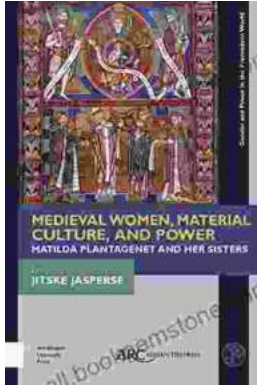
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