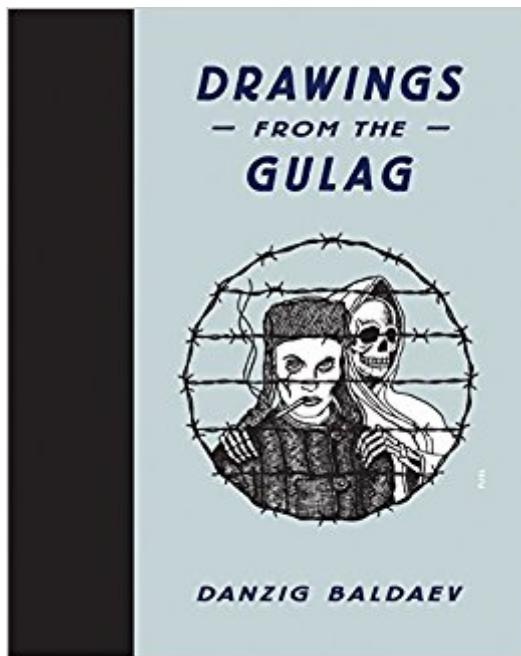


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Danzig Baldaev: Drawings From The Gulag



Synopsis

Drawings from the Gulag consists of 130 drawings by Danzig Baldaev (author of the acclaimed Russian Criminal Tattoo Encyclopaedia series), describing the history, horror and peculiarities of the Gulag system from its inception in 1918. Baldaev's father, a respected ethnographer, taught him techniques to record the tattoos of criminals in St. Petersburg's notorious Kresty prison, where Danzig worked as a guard. He was reported to the K.G.B. who unexpectedly offered support for his work, allowing him the opportunity to travel across the former U.S.S.R. Witnessing scenes of everyday life in the Gulag, he chronicled this previously closed world from both sides of the wire. With every vignette, Baldaev brings the characters he depicts to vivid life: from the lowest "zek" (inmate) to the most violent tattooed "vor" (thief), all the practices and inhabitants of the Gulag system are depicted here in incredible and often shocking detail. In documenting the attitude of the authorities to those imprisoned, and the transformation of these citizens into survivors or victims of the Gulag system, this graphic novel vividly depicts methods of torture and mass murder undertaken by the administration, as well as the atrocities committed by criminals upon their fellow inmates. Danzig Baldaev was born in 1925 in Ulan-Ude, Buryatiya, Russia. In 1948, after serving in the army in World War II, he was ordered by the N.K.V.D. to work as a warden in the infamous Leningrad prison, Kresty, where he started drawing the tattoos of criminals. His collection of drawings, which he made in different reformatory settlements for criminals all over the former U.S.S.R. over a period of more than 50 years, have been published by Fuel in three volumes, in the bestselling Russian Criminal Tattoo Encyclopaedia series.

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Customer Reviews

Drawings show us revolting images and scenarios that could only be dreamed up by the most sadistic horror authors. This is coupled with background information and references to other literature covering the era. Strongly recommended to all interested in 20th century European history.

Images of the Soviet Worker's Utopia is what this book should be called and anybody who thinks there is any difference Communism and Nazism and the Soviet Union was a noble social experiment aimed at creating a wonderful society whose collapse is to be mourned should be compelled to read this book along with David Olere's WITNESS Image of Auschwitz. Where Olere was an inmate of the Auschwitz Death Camp Baldaev was a gulag guard and his images are just as graphic and horrific. So many horrible things in common in both the KZ and the Gulag, inmates worked to death, women inmates sexually abused, mass slaughter of innocent people though mass shootings of inmates was common in both the Nazis gassed most of their victims but the Soviets even used a few gas chambers of their own to kill along with horrific medical experiments on inmates add to that the NKVD//KGB had horrors of their own they inflicted upon their victims. Anyone interested in the history of this period should read these books but I warn them to have a hard stomach for the contents of both are quite ugly. To help avoid History repeating itself I would urge this book along with Olere's be required reading in our schools.

I found this book at one of Paris' bouquinists - those book stalls along the River Seine. I've not heard of it before. The book is a wonderful source book for students or researchers of Russia's communist years. Each drawing is clearly explained. Great work!

Extremely interesting, beautiful artwork and great illustrated history book. The subject matter might be a little rough to digest but it is a truly gripping and engrossing book. Haven't put it down since it arrived!

Disturbing series of drawings depicting cruelty inside the gulags of Soviet Russia drawn by a prison guard. The original Russian text is translated, and notes are added to explain or verify incidents depicted. Not for the squeamish.

It would be easy to say that Danzig Baldaev's drawings are not the work of a polished Academic Draughtsman, yes they are more like that of a Trade School student or a self taught artist. A critic like this would miss the real point, which is that Baldaev was a true humanist operating in a grim and horrible time and place working in great difficulty. He had an encyclopaedic mind which drove him to cover all aspects and departments of the Gulag horror. In this he was successful through hard work to show the Stalinist and Soviet reality in all its bleakness. Baldaev did what Jacques Callot in France in the early 17th century and what Francisco Goya did in Spain two hundred years later, record insane and tragic periods of history. George Grosz and Otto Dix did the same thing in their lifetimes in Germany.

Graphic representations of the horrors perpetrated by prisoners upon other prisoners! NOT for the faint of heart, not a happy fun coloring book either. It's shocking and that only scratches the surface.... I would recommend it, but then that makes me sound like one warped S.O.B.

This book is full of fake stories including pictures. The same like you would imagine in Russia bears drink vodka and play on balalaika everywhere. Despite of GULAG had a lot of violence it was not even close to how this book describes it. The book is full of stamps, cliches, and grotesques and does not reflect the real world at all and can be considered as western propaganda.

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