



Reflections and Shadows

Saul Steinberg, Aldo Buzzi

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We all grew up in Saul Steinberg's America, a place he envisioned for us in his drawings and cartoons for The New Yorker—none more famous than his iconic image of a New Yorker's view of the world. In this eccentric and unpredictable memoir, one of the twentieth century's most intellectually nimble artists shares his view of the world, of America and his place in it.

A Romanian by birth, restless by inclination, Steinberg lived a peripatetic existence. In Reflections and Shadows, he introduces us to his family—his uncle Moritz, a sign painter, and his father (also Moritz), a bookbinder whose small factory produced cardboard boxes and ribbons for funeral wreaths. He tells us how he dodged the police in fascist Italy in 1940 and how he came to America, where he became a citizen, an officer in the U.S. Navy, and the foremost visionary satirist of his time.

No one has depicted America with all its strengths and foibles more enduringly than Saul Steinberg. In this playful meditation, based on a series of interviews with Aldo Buzzi that has never before been published in English, and interwoven with more than a dozen drawings, Steinberg delivers a laconic hymn to America: its baseball, its diners, and its exhibitionism. "It is stinginess," Steinberg writes, speaking of his art and method, "that holds us back." But he had none of that: the personality that emerges from these pages is capacious, acutely discriminating, full of serendipitous curiosities, and consistently engaging.



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