



The Principles of Uncertainty

By Maira Kalman

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The Principles of Uncertainty By Maira Kalman

Maira Kalman paints her highly personal worldview in an inimitable combination of image and text.

The Principles of Uncertainty is an irresistible invitation to experience life through the psyche of Maira Kalman, one of this country's most beloved artists. The result is a book that is part personal narrative, part documentary, part travelogue, part chapbook, and all Kalman. Her brilliant, whimsical paintings, ideas, and images—which initially appear random—ultimately form an intricately interconnected worldview, an idiosyncratic inner monologue. Kalman contends with some existential questions—What is identity? What is happiness? Why do we fight wars? And then, of course, death, love, and candy (not necessarily in that order).

The tremendous success of Kalman's 2005 illustrated edition of Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* established her as an original, inspirational voice, and the quirky, hilarious, heartbreaking style of *The Principles of Uncertainty* reveals Maira Kalman for what she truly is: a national treasure.

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The Principles of Uncertainty By Maira Kalman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #91124 in Books
- Brand: Kalman, Maira
- Published on: 2007-10-18
- Released on: 2007-10-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.44" h x 1.03" w x 6.44" l, 1.94 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best of the Month, October 2007: In 2005 Maira Kalman brought a fresh vision to Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, filling the pages of the reference classic with her whimsical illustrations. And much like its multi-talented creator--who has illustrated children's books and *New Yorker* covers and collaborated on fashion projects with Kate Spade and Isaac Mizrahi--her new book, *The Principles of Uncertainty*, defies easy classification. Is it philosophy? Art? Memoir? Travel? Sociology? The answer is All of the Above (and more). This charming collection of text, paintings, and photography presents a "profusely illustrated" year in a life, with illustrated musings that range from a young Nabokov "sitting innocently and elegantly in a red chair" to two stuffed rabbits in the window at Paris's Deyrolles taxidermy to Kitty Carlisle Hart at home in her "pearly pink palace." Delightful, inspiring, and often very moving, this little charmer is a book you might find nestled on Wes Anderson's coffee table. --*Brad Thomas Parsons*

From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Reviewers were not faint in their praise of *The Principles of Uncertainty*, even if they spent most of their energy attempting to describe it. And no wonder: the list of items that Maira Kalman describes in the book could almost fill a book itself, even without her illustrations. Readers who are unfamiliar with Kalman's work but respond to even a few items on that list should probably take a look at *Principles*. Those who know her children's books or illustrations will be excited to see her take on a broader range of topics, including the images and confusion of the dreamworld [that] linger in our waking hours and create deep emotion and consciousness from her art (*New York Times Book Review*). But as with any book, the most important question will be whether the images here, mostly visual, affect the reader's own perceptions of the world.

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Review

“Sublime... Kalman’s elegantly witty and at times melancholy narrative runs arm in arm with her unmistakable paintings on a serendipitous romp through the history of the world.”—***Vanity Fair***

“Wildly original...there’s nothing else even remotely like it... This hilarious, wise, and deeply moving volume [is] the ultimate picture book for grown-ups.”—***O Magazine***

“An odd treasure.”—**Ariel Levy, *The New York Times Book Review***

“Within this work, as much literary as artistic, one finds the assurance (the certainty!) that the human condition is inescapable but not insurmountable.”—***The New York Observer***

“In her distinctive, muscularly whimsical paintings with sad-funny handwritten annotations, Kalman encounters, well, everything...More personal than much of her previous work, the book is simultaneously idiosyncratic and universal. And utterly lovable.”—***Culture + Travel***

“This is a unique, warmly intelligent book for the enjoyment of artists, writers and anyone who delights in works of genuine imagination.”—**L.K. Hanson, *Minnesota Star Tribune***

“My absolute favorite book of recent memory: an exquisite and delightful and peculiarly illustrated memoir about...well, the search for the meaning of life. I will be giving this book to everyone I know.”—**Elizabeth**

Gilbert, author of *Eat, Pray, Love*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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