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Bob And Ray, Keener Than Most Persons



Synopsis

(Applause Books). By the established comedy conventions of their era, Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding were true game changers. Never playing to the balcony, Bob and Ray instead entertained each other. Because they believed in their nuanced characters and absurd premises, their audience did, too. Their parodies broadcasting about broadcasting existed in their own special universe. A complete absence of show-biz slickness set them apart from the very institution they were mocking, yet were still a part of. They resisted being called comedians and never considered themselves "an act." Bob and Ray, Keener Than Most Persons traces the origins and development of the pair's unique sensibility that defined their dozens of local and network radio and TV series, later motion picture roles, Carnegie Hall performances, and hit Broadway show Bob and Ray The Two and Only. Together for 43 years (longer than Laurel and Hardy, Burns and Allen, Abbott and Costello, and Martin and Lewis), the twosome deflected all intrusions into the personalities behind their many masks and the dynamics of their relationship, and rarely elaborated on their career trajectory or methodology. Now, with the full cooperation of Bob Elliott and of Ray Goulding's widow, Liz, together with insights from numerous colleagues, their craft and the culture that made them so relevant is explored in depth.

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Customer Reviews

The wait for Bob & Ray fans is over: Finally, in 2013, someone has published a book about their one-of-a-kind 44-year career! David Pollock provides a chronological overview both thorough and satisfying to the B&R fan. If you are a fan, or just someone who just sort of knows who these two

guys are and wondered what all the fuss was about, you want this book. Did you know that the pair got their start as broadcasters at a radio station so closely identified with Boston fishermen that its call letters were said to stand for "We Handle Dead Haddock?" Or that Bob was so able to mimic the voice of WHDH's station manager that he would call other DJs and make them change records in mid-song? Or that Bob and Ray's move to national radio in 1951 was nearly derailed when Bob crashed his Studebaker into a tree? I didn't know any of this stuff, or other items from throughout the pair's history which help make Pollock's book engaging. What I did know, of course, was how influential and unique they were in terms of broadcast comedy, creating some of the funniest bits and characters ever performed on radio or television and forming a massive root structure of artistic influence that connects them with nearly any comedian you can think of, including a few who are actual relations. What made them so special? Much of it was the writing, which Pollock takes pains to point out were not all theirs, crediting key contributors. Yet a great deal of the pair's success lay in their ability to develop a world uniquely their own, inhabited by characters you believed in because of how Bob or Ray portrayed them.

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