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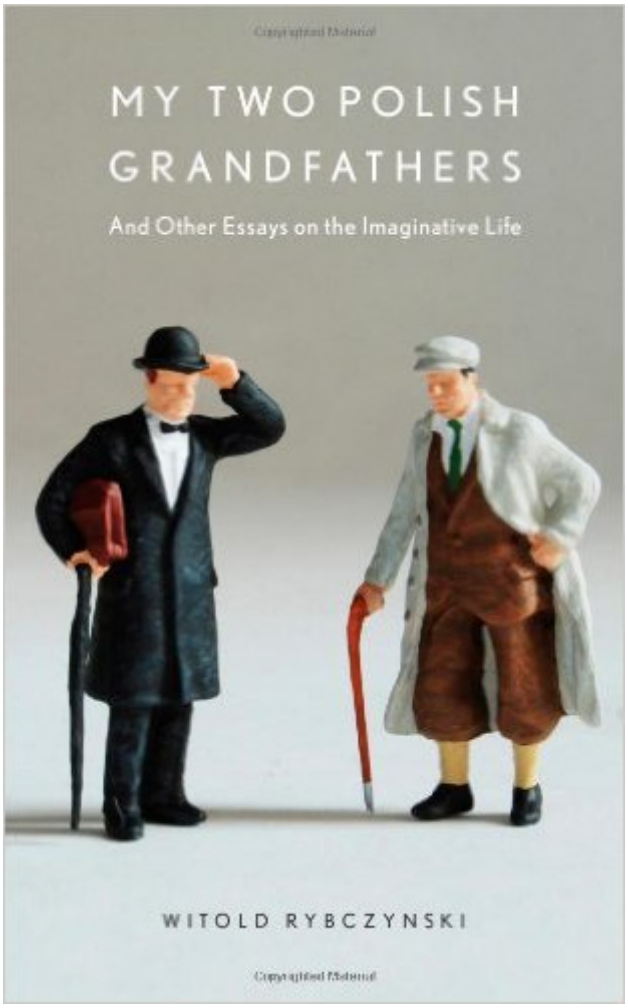
My Two Polish Grandfathers: And Other Essays On The Imaginative Life



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Synopsis

AWARD-WINNING AND CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED WRITER WITOLD RYBCZYNSKI DELIVERS A REVELATORY COLLECTION OF LINKED AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS -- PART MEMOIR, PART FAMILY HISTORY -- ABOUT THE UPHEAVALS OF EUROPEAN LIVES DURING WORLD WAR II, HIS OWN INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT, AND THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGES OF ART, MUSIC, AND ARCHITECTURE. Witold Rybczynski's parents and grandparents were a thriving, cultured family in prewar Warsaw, then a sophisticated European city. With the onset of war, their world fell apart. His mother and father made separate escapes, reuniting against many odds on a ship bound for Scotland from Marseilles. That people can lose everything, overcome stunning odds to survive, remake themselves in a foreign country, learn a new language and culture, and then do it again is extraordinary. My Two Polish Grandfathers is a testament to the boundaryless world of art, architecture, and music -- which can be transported from one country to another -- and clear affirmation of Rybczynski's own path toward becoming an architect and one of today's most original thinkers. Beautifully written, thoughtful, and extraordinarily subtle, this riveting work offers a rare glimpse into the development of Rybczynski's educated outsider's eye and is a tribute to a European generation that has helped to define postwar American culture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love the premise - a memoir in essay form - and the gentle, affectionate way the author uses to inform us about his background and speculate on his ultimate career in architecture. A well-examined life, to be sure. Being Polish outside Poland places his family in one of the many

’outsider’ tales that form some of the best literature. The book reminded me a tiny bit of Ewa Hoffman’s "Lost In Translation" though Rybczinski’s attitude is much more positive.He’s inspired me to take another look at my own Polish Grandpas ...and Grandmas too! Bardzo dobrze!Linda Ciulik Wisniewski, Author of Off Kilter: A Woman’s Journey to Peace with Scoliosis, Her Mother, and Her Polish Heritage

This was a nice essay on the author’s family background and how he came to chose his career path. There was a lot of interesting facts about everyday life for displaced refugees during WW2.

From the title I expected short stories, or essays, probably humorous. There are some interesting historical facts in the chapters, but I don’t feel the characters as I’d like too.

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