



Fireworks : A History and Celebration

By George Plimpton

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Fireworks : A History and Celebration By George Plimpton

Fireworks mean celebration in any language. They herald coronations, inaugurations, royal weddings, jubilees, and glorious beginnings. There is something magical about the explosion of color and sound against a night sky, for it never fails to exhilarate anyone who is young - or young at heart. Literary lion, George Plimpton, set off his first "snake in the grass" at age ten. He has been beguiled by skyrockets, girandoles, Roman candles, pinwheels, sparklers, and maroons ever since. *Fireworks*, illustrated with over one hundred color and black-and-white photographs, is a lavish, entertaining, and fact-filled exultation of his lifelong fascination with man's rivals to the stars. Anyone with a predilection for pyrotechnics will enjoy George Plimpton's lively account of its history, its legendary aficionados - Louis XIV, Peter the Great, Charles V - and his engaging profiles of the families who dominate the fireworks field today, like New York's Grucci clan and Japan's Ogatsu dynasty. At a convention of "basement bombers", the industry's nickname for amateurs, we meet a marvelous assortment of enthusiasts, including a Lutheran minister dubbed the "Blaster Pastor" who punctuates her sermons with homemade fireworks. From Minnesota to Monte Carlo, George Plimpton describes every major fireworks festival. And, for those who do not know a cherry bomb from a Catherine wheel, he provides a glossary of terms. George Plimpton's eloquence and urbane wit are surpassed only by his enthusiasm; twice he has tried to launch the world's largest firework. Such exuberance is infectious. *Fireworks* will keep you in a holiday mood all year round. George Ames Plimpton (1927 - 2003) was an American journalist, writer, literary editor, actor, and occasional amateur sportsman. He is widely known for his sports writing and for helping to found *The Paris Review*.

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