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The Fountains Of Bellagio



Synopsis

Introduction According to the laws of physics, water occurs in three states—liquid, solid (ice) and gas (mist or fog). But watching the Fountains of Bellagio™, it is quickly apparent that science occasionally must give way to poetry, even when describing the physical aspects of water. Here water exists as music, swaying like a dancer's arms, rising in a gasp of towering columns or sudden staccato bursts. Here water is a lattice of light, it wreathes the air, shimmies playfully as a showgirl and fans out as a wall of white like the sails of a tall ship blown suddenly full and fast. Here water requires words usually more often associated with mood and personality: majestic, flirtatious, romantic, regretful, and stately even witty. The fountain is inevitably used as a metaphor for joy. Leaping waters, currents that cascade and dance, these images are as close as many of us come to seeing what is more often felt—the surge of exultation, the flutter of love, the geyser of sudden joy. Yet it is not in the molecular nature of water to leap or dance; it is heavier than air and inanimate. To achieve movement, it must be acted upon by an outside source greater than itself—gravity, or the tug of the moon, heat or a sudden rush of air. The Fountains of Bellagio were designed to be superlative, and not just in size. The people creating them wanted to bring sophistication and stateliness to a place better known for glitz, to embody the full spectrum of culture, from Technicolor musicals to Italian opera. They wanted to embody music that over the years has burrowed deep into the collective imagination, the collective heart. So leaving things up to gravity, or even the prevailing water jet technology, wasn't going to do it. The basis of the work was elemental—water, air, sound and light. But everything else had to be coaxed into existence. Many forces mustered to act upon these waters—fountain designers, engineers and dancers, computer geeks, composers and musicians, scientists and divers, all focused on figuring out how to move the fountains so they, in turn, would move you. Water is not the only thing at work in a fountain; like joy, it requires a confluence of many things: patience, hard work, a lot of luck and a little magic.

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Customer Reviews

This book is the closest you can come to the "real thing" without really being there. With a true insight to the make-up of The Fountains of Bellagio, the book provides the intimate details to this magnificent artistic production. The photos in the book (most of which are color) are stunning and highlight the parts we like the best in the show. The detailed information, along with the trivia makes us feel like we are privy to the inner workings of something incredible. Nothing can compare to the emotion we feel viewing the actual fountains, but this is a great second!

There are fountain geeks in the world, those who are impressed by the ages-old attempts of mankind to harness this amazing substance that has been regarded as an element by many cultures. The fountains of Bellagio raised the bar for the potential of water as an art form to a level heretofore unknown. It's unfortunate the authors of this book didn't trust readers enough to appreciate the underlying technological efforts that went into answering the question "Is this vision possible?" with a resounding "Yes!". Nice photos, basic narration, but not enough. If you are a gearhead, the superficial treatment this book provides regarding the amazing technologies underlying the Bellagio fountains will be a disappointment. The stories of the various technological challenges overcome by Fuller and crew on the way to the most advanced fountain in the world are few or nonexistent in the book. It's unfortunate, given the amount of groundbreaking engineering that went into this system. You'll want to glean the details from engineering magazines, not from this book, so don't expect it to express to your family and friends "But look what they overcame, look what they DID!" with this marvel of hydrology.

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