Casey At the Bat by Ernest L. Thayer

Wonderful Book, But Order The Right One!

Baseball fans of all ages will love a dramatically illustrated version of the classic 1888 poem that chronicles the joys and ultimate sorrows of Mudville and its star baseball player.

My Personal Review:
NOTE: This review is on the Raintree Childrens Books 1985 Edition.
Amazon, bless their hearts, has mixed up their Casey books and mixed all kinds of different reviews of different versions of this book. There is a very big difference you know!

This particular edition and rendition of the poem Casey at the Bat, first published in 1888 by Ernest Lawrence Thayer, has been illustrated by KEN BACHAUS. It is probably one of the finest versions of this poem or ballad in print. Most reading this review are probably quite familiar with the story as told in the poem, so needless to say, it is about as an American of a poem as you can get. It is one of those that have been memorized by school children for several generations now. Movies and cartoons have been made of it and the poem has been published in uncountable anthologies, as well as stands a lone works.

What makes this work so unique is the art work by Ken Bachaus. The artist has captured the mood of the poem perfectly. Facial expressions of players are an absolute delight as is the body language and background settings. Vivid watercolor like paintings fit the words to the text perfectly. Bachaus use of his brush to show motion is quite unique and perfectly executed. (this technique is actually quite difficult to pull off and the artist has mastered it). Details of uniforms, skin texture, equipment and, well, dirt, is rather amazing.

I cannot think of a better version of this beloved story to read to the young ones. Not only do they get the words of a wonderful, truly American poem, but they are exposed to some wonderful art work at the same time.
If you purchase this work, be sure you check it out closely as there seems to be a terrible mix up here. Note that Publishers Weekly has gotten it wrong (no surprise here), and School Library Journal is even further off. They don't even address the correct artist. And while I am at it; where on earth did they come up with Aristotelian catharsis on a review for a book like this? I sat through over a dozen classes in classical literature in college, and for the life of me never made the connection between Aristotle and Casey...Duh on me, I suppose. Anyway, I think it is suppose to be (Thank you for allowing me to rant)

Don Blankenship
The Ozarks

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