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A Devil to Play: One Man's Year-Long Quest to Master the Orchestra's Most Difficult Instrument

Jasper Rees

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Jasper Rees : A Devil to Play: One Man's Year-Long Quest to Master the Orchestra's Most Difficult Instrument before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Devil to Play: One Man's Year-Long Quest to Master the Orchestra's Most Difficult Instrument:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. THE ABSOLUTE BEST BOOK I READ IN 2015By S. EnglishThis book is wonderfully funny, insightful, and educational. The hilarious story of a French horn player who had not played for years, working through relearning the instrument, connecting with talented players, learning the horn's history, and becoming able to play the Mozart horn concerto he had hoped to. This is a spectacularly entertaining accounting of his adventures, insecurities, and successes, interspersed with tidbits of knowledge that many a horn player still does not

know. I have played horn for 30 years and learned many new facts, while simultaneously laughing aloud at some of the inside horn jokes. This story is appealing in and of itself, you don't have to be a hornist to appreciate the tale. But as a fellow horn player, I also loved hearing the Mozart horn pieces he was referring to as he wrote about them and as he wrote about playing through them. I earmarked pages, quotes, pieces I wanted to look up and buy, Tuckwell quotes I wanted to remember. I loved this book. I am an avid reader, and this was by far the most memorable and enjoyable book I read last year. Bravo! And thank you for the pleasure of reading it. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ever Wondered About that Funny Horn? By Poe It's hard for me not to love anything about the French Horn or a book written about it. Both my son and grandson are horn players and, thankfully, I love the mellow beautiful sound they make. They are terribly difficult to play, though. This book is a funny, impossible book about a really impossible goal....to play a solo on the horn at a premier annual convention of British horn players. It takes years to be an accomplished player, and this man managed to be accepted to play at this, his dream venue, in a year. The author tells a delightful tale of his adventures/misadventures on the way to the stage. He does it with humor and pathos. I alternately cringed at his attempts and machinations, laughed at his faux pas, and shed a tear at his embarrassing moments. The horn can be an awkward and embarrassing instrument at any time. it's full of nasty surprises and glorious moments. He told it well. I'd recommend the book to anyone interested in more in-depth knowledge about this instrument, a funny tale well-told or a peek into the world of musicians. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great read for a horn playing history buff with a ... By K J. Great read for a horn playing history buff with a good sense of humor. I may even go so far as to say trombone players might enjoy it if for nothing else than a place on which to set their drinks. A horn player that is not much of a history buff, and everyone else that's plays/played a musical instrument that is not a horn, will find the start and finish very amusing, but the middle, with all its horn lore, may seem a little tedious. I felt proud reading about my horn heritage, and would especially recommend this book to others getting back into playing after a long hiatus.

A charming and deeply funny memoir of musical obsession, *A Devil to Play* is the story of Jasper Rees, a man who unearths his childhood French horn, and begins a quixotic but obsessively serious challenge: to play a Mozart concertomdash;alonemdash;for a paying audience within one year's time. It's an endearing, inspiring tale of perseverance and achievement, relayed masterfully, one side-splittingly off-key note at a time.