



Century Girl: 100 Years in the Life of Doris Eaton Travis, Last Living Star of the Ziegfeld Follies

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Lauren Redniss, acclaimed author of the brilliant biography-in-collage *Radioactive*, delivers a stunning visual journey through the life of the last Ziegfeld girl, Doris Eaton Travis. Now in paperback for the first time, *Century Girl* spans the brightest moments in early show business, the major historical landmarks of the 20th century, and the intimate milestones of one woman's long life. Incorporating hundreds of archival photos and personal clippings with inventive line drawings and a compelling, hand-written narrative, *Century Girl* is a more than a biography, more than a graphic novel, and more than an art book—it is a singularly original and major work of art that *Slate* magazine calls “a visually dazzling mélange . . . unlike anything . . . ever seen before” (Best Books of 2006).

Century Girl: 100 Years in the Life of Doris Eaton Travis, Last Living Star of the Ziegfeld Follies Details

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Author : Lauren Redniss

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From Reader Review *Century Girl: 100 Years in the Life of Doris Eaton Travis, Last Living Star of the Ziegfeld Follies* for online ebook

Amy says

Another stunning tour de force from Lauren Redniss. Through a montage of photographs, newspaper articles and drawings, Redniss captures the life of a truly remarkable woman, Doris Eaton. Not many people can say they lived an entire century and even fewer can claim the life of glamour and intrigue that characterizes Doris Eaton's glory days. As a member of the Ziegfeld Follies, Eaton lived the type of life that we romanticize and daydream about when we think of the 1920s. Appearing on stage and the big screen, Doris truly had it all...and lost it all in the 30s when the Great Depression hit. Her story is full of excess, tragedy, glamour and achievement. Redniss has a knack for capturing the lives of unique and admirable women who flout convention and achieve great things (maybe she should start a series?) and her storytelling approach is truly an artform.

Kaion says

A look into the world of glitzy Broadway, the vaudeville circuit, and early-20th century pop culture, *Century Girl* is a sprightly, entertaining read that combines just the right amount of color and substance to the subject. As a biography of Doris Eaton, Lauren Redniss struggles a lot more with spinning it all into a narrative, especially in regards to Eaton's post-fame life, which feels somewhat abbreviated. If *Girl* isn't exactly the triumph of the form, it does show Redniss developing her particular storytelling combination -- historical research, whimsy and mixed media work (a style she would perfect in *Radioactive*).

It did seem perhaps at times that Redniss was too close to the subject and couldn't gain the necessary perspective on Eaton as she did on the Curies. There may also be something to the observation that the subject matter in *Radioactive* (chemistry!) has not frequently been portrayed so Redniss was forced to stretch herself a little more in making the story visual and *vital*. **Rating: 3.5 stars**

Heather says

This book is both a fascinating and inspirational story, and atistically GORGEOUS. Redniss is a breathtaking artist, although her handwritten text is slightly difficult to read at times, not for content but for design. The art is so beautiful and captivating, and truly encompasses the glory days of the follies. I would truly encourage this read for anyone who enjoys dance, Arthur Murray, biographies, history of the US, the art nouveau or anything to do with the Ziegfeld Follies. It is a lovely book, an only took about a day to read, as the text is sparse on the primarily graphic pages, but it's worth the read.

Samantha Glasser says

I knew of Doris Eaton Travis because she was the oldest living follies dancer, and because she danced at age 100 on the New Amsterdam stage. (Footage of her dancing can be seen on Broadway: The American Musical). As an avid fan of all entertainment from the turn of the century, I was naturally interested in this book.

Lauren Redniss uses an artistic, scrapbooking style to approach Doris' life, and uses background information, news articles, interviews with her, and photos of her life to paint the picture. The font is the same one they use on the cups at Chipotle, so it looks like scribbly handwriting with different sized letters and wavy lines.

Maybe now that Doris has passed, a more complete biography will be written about her life. Until then, this book is great eye candy.

Grace says

I LOVE this book! I've watched specials on the Ziegfeld Follies since I was little, so this was of particular interest. This book is so beautiful and artistic, combining photos with doodles and lyrical stories. I can't believe Doris is still alive today at 104! And she still dances three times a week! This book embodies her inspiration, and I highly recommend it.

Rosemary says

Doris Eaton Travis lived a fascinating and amazing life. Due to the unconventional format it is only an overview of her life, but there are some brilliant photos in this book. My only complaint is that the text was a bit hard to read at times.

Jillian Brandon says

This was both beautiful to look at and read.

Melanie says

For any fan of showgirls, or enduring women! A beautiful scrapbook, whimsical in its design.

Jarrah says

Doris Eaton Travis, the longest-surviving Ziegfeld Follies dancer, who passed away at age 106, did and saw incredible things in her time. Starting out as one of several children raised in the theatre, Eaton Travis went from Broadway to Hollywood, to running and opening 18 Arthur Murray dance studios, to ranching horses, to earning her college degree in her 80s, back to Broadway! Lauren Redniss tells her story masterfully with drawings and collage, incorporating old photos and newspaper clippings.

courtney says

i want her to do my biography

Curlita says

This book is a biography and an art journal/scrap book all rolled up in one. It is amazing in two senses -- the first is being able to read about an amazing woman who has lived a long and amazing life. The second is that the book itself is an amazing, beautiful, quirky and creative conglomeration of text and images.

I'm glad to see picture books being created for big people! We like to look at pictures too!

Graceann says

It's a bit misleading to mark this as a graphic novel, given that it is non-fiction, but the way the subject is presented, in photographs with carefully selected text, is visually artistic in the most pleasing of ways.

Doris Eaton lived to be well over 100 years old, and stayed mobile almost to the end of her days (she was sharp as a tack, apparently, right up until her last moment). She saw a great deal of history, and even made some of it in her century of keeping body and soul together while being lovely.

Did you know that she introduced the song Singin' in the Rain? I didn't, and apparently she spent many, many years correcting others who assumed that it was Cliff Edwards. She had good reason to remember, given that she loved Nacio Herb Brown and he wrote it for her.

Thanks to the scrapbooks that the whole family kept, and the wonderful adventures that Doris Eaton had, this book is a visual treat. I hope Lauren Redniss does more like this because it was a unique, fascinating way to learn about a life.

Sherri says

Loved it!! Visually amazing and just a fascinating look at a life and history!

Karen says

Imagine if A&E's old Biography series had been co-directed by Baz Luhrmann (Moulin Rouge) and Jean-Pierre Jeunet (Amelie). That's kind of what this book is like. Beautiful in every way. Love it love it love it.

Rachel says

This graphic novel is well worth a read. It is the story of the Ziegfeld Follies girl Doris Eaton Travis. It goes through her life and talks about some of the awesome changes that happened in her life. She faced the challenges with a dancing spirit. There were lots of pictures she and her sisters were really beautiful. She lived to be over 100! What a life she lived full of dancing, turmoil and memories. Very interesting.

Quote from Doris about helping with WWII effort "We were very busy during the war. People would come to us to relieve their anxiety. We used to go up to Kalamazoo once a week to the hospital and teach the fellas there. Some of them had lost legs and arms but we helped them to get back the feeling that they could be part of things"(p. 129).

"Unchanged for some 400 million years, the chambered nautilus is often called a living fossil. As the animal develops and outgrows its shell it builds a new compartment, sealing off the previous one and moving on to the new chamber. Though the previous chambers are walled shut, they remain attached and the vapor inside the empty chambers provides the creature with buoyancy. Thus the past is not lost, but rather supports the continuing organism"(p. 184).
