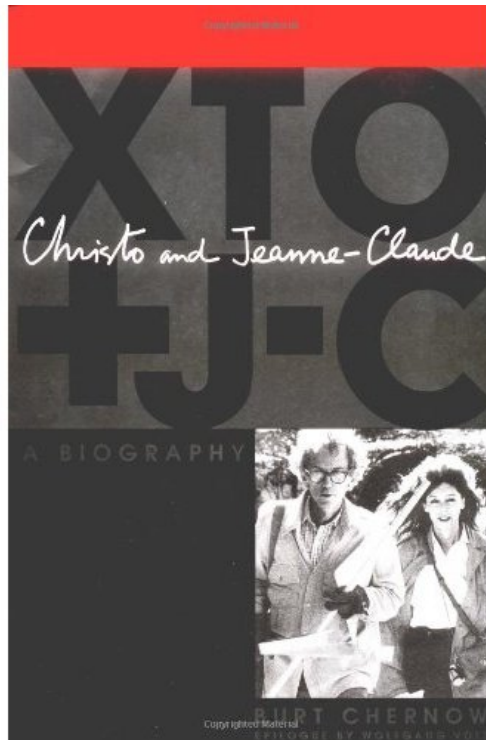


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Synopsis :

Amazon.com Review Take two intertwined lives marked by childhood turmoil, geographic displacement, fierce ambition, and total dedication to a quixotic form of art, add a lively narrative style and you have *Christo and Jeanne-Claude* by Burt Chernow. In 1959, French socialite Jeanne-Claude fell in love with a penniless Bulgarian portrait artist just beginning to wrap small objects in canvas. She had no way of knowing that her life would one day involve a constant round of negotiations with politicians, government agencies, fabricators, factory owners, truckers, laborers, farmers, and everyone else whose good will, expertise, or elbow grease were needed to make Christo's gigantic projects happen. Chernow seasons this cheerfully uncritical authorized biography of the masterminds of such projects as 'Running Fence' and the 'Wrapped Reichstag' with evocative sketches of the '60s art world. An epilogue by Wolfgang Volz, a photographer close to the couple, engrossingly recounts their struggles and triumphs in the '80s and '90s. --Cathy Curtis Read more From Library Journal Though Christo (Christo Javacheff) was born in Bulgaria and Jeanne-Claude (Jeanne-Claude de Guillebon) in French-controlled Casablanca, the curious coincidence of their shared birthday (June 13, 1935) is just one more tie in their joint personal and professional lives. In his exemplary dual biography, the first full-length treatment of these artists, Chernow (founder of the Housatonic Museum of Art in Connecticut) traces their wildly differing early years (he was a penniless exile from Bulgarian communism, while she was the beautiful daughter of a wealthy French military family) through their meeting in Paris in the early 1960s, the slow rise to fame as Christo's avant-garde minimalism caught on with critics and collectors, their early success in New York, and on to the creation of the seminal monumental 'wrapped' works that define Christo to the world at large. Chernow clarifies the couple's lifelong collaboration and justifies the artists' recent self-billing as cocreators of their major works. Chernow's narrative ends in 1983, owing to his death, leaving longtime Christo/Jeanne-Claude collaborator Wolfgang Volz to bring the biography up to date with a personal epilog. Chernow meticulously re-created the ambiance, adventure, and aesthetics that surrounded the creation of major projects such as 'Wrapped Coast' (Australia, 1968-69), and the reader will miss the stories behind later major projects such as 'The Umbrellas' (Japan and California, 1984-91) and 'Wrapped Reichstag' (Germany, 1971-95). Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. Read more See all Editorial Reviews