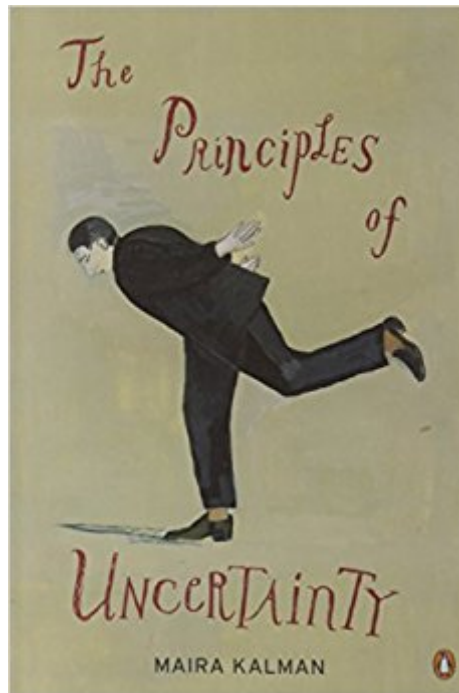




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# The Principles Of Uncertainty



## Synopsis

Maira Kalman paints her highly personal worldview in this inimitable combination of image and text. An irresistible invitation to experience life through a beloved artist's psyche, *The Principles of Uncertainty* is a compilation of Maira Kalman's New York Times columns. Part personal narrative, part documentary, part travelogue, part chapbook, and all Kalman, these brilliant, whimsical paintings, ideas, and images - which initially appear random - ultimately form an intricately interconnected worldview, an idiosyncratic inner monologue.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best of the Month, October 2007: In 2005 Maira Kalman brought a fresh vision to Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*, filling the pages of the reference classic with her whimsical illustrations. And much like its multi-talented creator--who has illustrated children's books and New Yorker covers and collaborated on fashion projects with Kate Spade and Isaac Mizrahi--her new book, *The Principles of Uncertainty*, defies easy classification. Is it philosophy? Art? Memoir? Travel? Sociology? The answer is All of the Above (and more). This charming collection of text, paintings, and photography presents a "profusely illustrated" year in a life, with illustrated musings that range from a young Nabokov "sitting innocently and elegantly in a red chair" to two stuffed rabbits in the window at Paris's Deyrolles taxidermy to Kitty Carlisle Hart at home in her "pearly pink palace." Delightful, inspiring, and often very moving, this little charmer is a book you might find nestled on Wes Anderson's coffee table. --Brad Thomas Parsons --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Reviewers were not faint in their praise of *The Principles of Uncertainty*, even if they spent most of their energy attempting to describe it. And no wonder: the list of items that Maira Kalman describes in the book could almost fill a book itself, even without her illustrations. Readers who are unfamiliar with Kalman's work but respond to even a few items on that list should probably take a look at *Principles*. Those who know her children's books or illustrations will be excited to see her take on a broader range of topics, including the images and confusion of the dreamworld [that] linger in our waking hours; and create deep emotion and consciousness from her art (New York Times Book Review). But as with any book, the most important question will be whether the images "here, mostly visual" affect the reader's own perceptions of the world. Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is an irresistibly charming book. The quirky art & the naked perplexity of the author as she confronts life -- its tragedies & its mitigating, if bittersweet pleasures -- is honest and down-to-earth. Kalman reminds me a lot of Lynda Barry. Neither artist is concerned about looking or sounding profound or sophisticated. They both respond to the world the way we all do when we strip away our pretensions and our intellectualism and admit our ignorance, our fallibility, our wonder, and our fear. Approach this book in the same spirit and it will work its magic on you, too.

I can't believe I didn't review this previously, as I've reviewed other books of Maira's and this may well be my favorite - certainly it was my first of her adult books. When I opened it in the bookstore I was so enchanted I bought it without even checking the price! I only knew I couldn't wait to take it home and I did and then I bought 3 more and have given them to special people who deserve them. Not everyone you know deserves Maira Kalman, certainly not everyone I know does, but those who do will know you love them when you hand over this delightful book. I've said it before, I'll say it again, it's like having a wonderful friend to share thoughts and points of view and oddments that no one else but you and she will ever notice. I don't know how someone creates work that appeals to so many, and yet feels so personal to each of us. A true treasure, long may she paint and stitch and see and collect, and love and share all of those things with the rest of us.

This is an extraordinary book. Through the unusual medium of seemingly simple but powerful

pictures and small pithy segments of text, the author offers us a way to capture fleeting moments of joy in a world where sorrow often lies not far beneath the surface. Kalman brings us into her special universe of oddities, the honey cake with which her family celebrates holidays, her oddball box collection, hats people wear, bizarre hairdos. She invites us to make our own serendipitous mental collection as a distraction from discord or sorrow. In some ways we already do that in our family, pick out the bizarre moments in daily life, but Kalman expands those moments into a program for living: We humans are special, even in our frailty. I immediately bought 4 more copies as gifts for those close friends and family members who have the gift of gentle humor and quirky observation.

Maria Kalman isn't just a genius. She's the best kind of genius there is. The painter-illustrator-storyteller widow of Colors magazine founder Tibor Kalman is precisely the kind of person you'd imagine as your fantasy next door neighbour. Someone who thinks nothing of wearing feathery pink hats on warm summer days. Who invites you over for gingerbread biscuits and music. And tells you why she's had a lifelong crush on Abraham Lincoln. Her simple illustrations and seemingly random observations about grass, fresh pickles, the weather or ruffled collars are so dense with energy and joy they force you to take quiet pauses in between pages. Whether you flip through her books, or follow her "visual column" in the New York Times [f&A âA Â], you can't help but look at the world a little differently. You may even spot a few more butterflies and ladybugs than you're used to. My favorite page in "Principles of Uncertainty" is this: 'On the wall was a dress i embroidered. It said "Ich habe genug", which is a Bach cantata. Which i once thought meant "I've had it, I can't take it anymore". But I was wrong. It means, "I HAVE enough". Which is utterly true. I happen to be alive. End of discussion. (But i will go out a buy a hat).'

Quirky topics, wonderful artwork. As a daily writer of nonsense, and a loose-sketch artist, I find it fun and inspiring. It was suggested by my daughter, who checked it out from the library. I ordered two used copies, one for me and one for her. One had a cloying inscription which was much fun -- "We'll be together forever" sort of thing, and the book ended up in the Salvation Army collection a year after the date of the inscription; the other might have been dropped in a puddle, but each was special in its own way.

The Principles of Uncertainty is an entertaining picture book for adults that should actually come out in a coffee table format - large and ready to be thumbed through at random. It contains light everyday philosophy and random thoughts of a charming and reflected woman and it is filled with

soft humor - the kind that makes you smile rather than break out in laughter. In a way it is as if this little book originated from another time and age - when ladies had tea - a lot. In New York. This may make less sense to someone who has never been in there. Finally, the illustrations are comical and very well done. This is really what makes this book more than anything else. Buy it, enjoy it, and let it sit out to be thumbed through again and again.

I love this book!! I ordered three books and am going to order two more! I've read it through 4 times so far and am sure I will read it many times more. Her paintings are adorable and wit makes me laugh out loud. I share her feelings of uncertainty and questions about the meanings of so many of life's ambiguities.

I love this book, it has so much heart. I purchase this for all of my friends' birthdays. makes a wonderful gift. I typically tear off the jacket and give it to them with the gorgeous hardcover underneath (it's stunning).

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