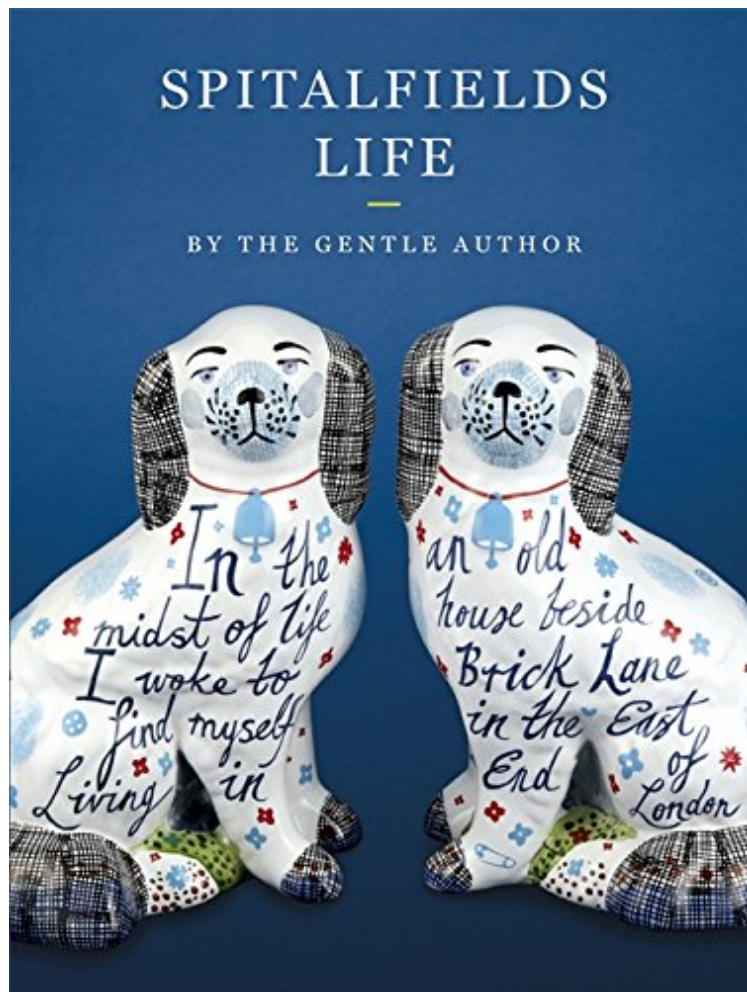


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## Spitalfields Life: In the Midst of Life I Woke to Find Myself Living in an Old House Beside Brick Lane in the East End of London

*The Gentle Author*

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0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. London Calling, and it's for YOU.....By LKPEvery great City deserves to have a great Chronicler. Not only is this a wonderful book -- but it is merely a sampling of a continuing steady flow of evocative and always-surprising stories/essays/insights about London by The Gentle Author. Yes

indeed. You can read this book (and I suggest that you do) but you can ALSO subscribe to an amazing daily blog by the same Author. (same title: Spitalfields Life) Each day, there is something more to consider....the Arts, historic preservation, architecture, incredible photographers, costumers, lost professions and work places of yore, etc. Getting back to the book - a lot of bang for the buck, with great illustrations (some by Mark Hearld, another favorite discovery) and photos to accompany each essay. This book (and the blog) is a somewhat-below-the-radar-gem.....not unlike some of the offbeat and arcane people, places and things that the Gentle Author writes about. But -- now YOU know where to go, to get the goods.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Such a cool concept to write for 25+ years on the same neighborhoodBy E To TheThe Gentle Author writes in a beautiful, intimate, kind sort of prose. He or she plans to continue this Spitalfields blog for over 20 years, so it will be a great record of place and time, especially as London changes during this new century. If you know someone who loves London or Spitalfields in particular, or hails from there, this would be a cherished gift.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Igor StravinskyIt's great, I got a great deal and it was delivered quickly by Royal Mail.

"In the midst of life I woke to find myself living in an old house beside Brick Lane in the East End of London."

In an Olympic year awash with books about London, no work came close to the eccentric charm and warmth on offer in Spitalfields Life by the anonymous "Gentle Author". This deadpan blogger's encounters with East Enders old and new, now transformed into a sumptuous volume, built into an irresistible group portrait of modern metropolitans and their overlapping histories... rather like WG Sebald \* Boyd Tonkin, The Independent \* A whole piece of London is here, ghosts of Spitalfields' past haunting the vibrant present. It is unlike any other book. \* Susan Hill, Spectator Books of the Year \* The Gentle Author builds up a convincing picture of urban life below the radar of the urban sociologist . . . His accounts should be enjoyed (as they are intended to be) as relics of ordinary lives, demonstrating how the ordinary is so often extraordinary on close inspection \* Spectator \* Every once in a while a book just takes my breath away. . . Spitalfields Life is evidence, were it needed, that though it is all there and free to read online, there is still something very special about the book in the hand, especially when it is a work of art in its own right \* dovegreyreader.typepad.com \* A joy to read, whether you know Spitalfields or not . . . It's not for nothing that the author's observational skills and ability to convey them to the reader have led some to liken them to Pepys and Dickens . . . Some places have a heart and a soul, a special something, and if it touches you it will grip you and hold you and captivate you. Spitalfields is such a place . . . An unusual book that's pure joy, a tribute to life \* We Love This Book \* A thing of sheer wonder, and I don't know where to start with all the things I love about it . . . By celebrating the extraordinary things that make this area special it must be hoped The Gentle Author will help protect them. And the sumptuous prose is accompanied by some stunning visuals. . . All in all it's a joy to hold, a joy to read and a joy to look at. \* It's Nice That \* Beguiling . . . follows in the tradition of Pepys or Dickens in its attention to the lively diversity of the city \* The Lady \* A lovely book . . . A celebration of London life in all its unpredictable quirkiness, a paean to what the Gentle Author sees as Londoners' defining feature - their resourcefulness . . . They are given a fitting memorial in these eloquent pages \* Times Literary Supplement \* Charming yarns and fascinating nuggets of local history . . . there's plenty to admire in this endearing, beautifully illustrated volume \* Time Out \* SPITALFIELDS LIFE points you to London's hidden gems \* Stylist \* For the brief time of reading, one steps into the skin of the subject, and inhabits them. Inherits them, perhaps. \* Evening Standard \* This fine collection includes many memorable episodes on the history and heritage of the area, and many colourful characters such as a rhyme collector, street artist, rapper, mudlark and a master bell founder \* The Times \* These wonderful stories shine anew in an attractive, beautifully illustrated book format. We can't recommend it highly enough \* Londonist \* For a unique insight into everyday life in the East End, let blogger The Gentle Author take you on a journey into Spitalfields' street life, art, markets, houses and culture . . . A treasure trove \* Evening Standard ES magazine \* Following in the footsteps of Dickens, Pepys and Orwell, the author blends history with interviews in a series of short pen portraits . . . An elegantly presented, generous and good-natured book, it offers an antidote to the sense of disconnection a big city such as London can engender. A city is its people and here they are celebrated in a way that will resonate beyond the East End \* Financial Times Weekend \* My London book of the year. . . A quite beautiful design from Saltyard Books. . . East End life tumbles from these pages in truly Chaucerian abundance. . . Each interviewee fits a piece into the magnificent mosaic. As a result of this painstaking work of listening, shaping and explaining, comments the Gentle Author, "the city has become a more human place for me". It will for every reader too \* Independent \* Lovingly drawn portraits of remarkable, ordinary folk . . . a towering achievement . . . SPITALFIELDS LIFE is undoubtedly a significant work of social history \* Guardian \* If someone created a local blogs award ceremony, Spitalfields Life would sweep the nominations list like the King's Speech. We'd certainly select it for best blog, best interviews and best (relative) newcomer. The format is simple, but done with panache. Every single day, the 'gentle author' tracks down a fascinating local character for an interview and photo shoot. Just in the past three days we've had a foam merchant, a man with 330-year-old wallpaper, and a selection of clowns at the annual Grimaldi service. Whatever next? \* The Londonist \* Sam Johnson would have said, "If you aren't reading Spitalfields Life, you are tired of life, " etc. It's

wondrous. \* Twitter @ Skdadl \*About the AuthorThe Gentle Author runs the blog <http://spitalfieldslife.com/>.