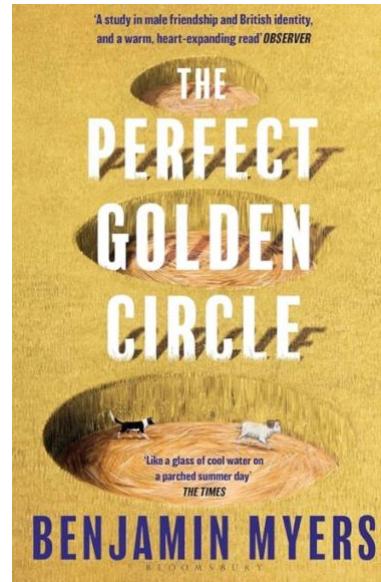


The Perfect Golden Circle

Benjamin Myers



The story takes place in the hot summer of 1989 and we are introduced to the two main characters, Calvert and Redbone. Calvert is a damaged former soldier, veteran of the Falklands war living a monk-like existence in a tiny cottage (the second smallest house in the country!) whilst Redbone is an ageing hippie living mainly in a van, but occasionally with one of several girlfriends. Their friendship develops through their unconventional, but very different, lifestyles on the outside of society and their love of wildlife, nature and the land. They work together creating crop circles in the dead of night. Redbone creates the design and Calvert makes it happen on the ground. Their circles create speculation in the press about aliens and people actually pay some of the farmers to see them. The farmers do not object to the circles as no crops are damaged in the making of them.

Some comments from members of the Group:

"I loved this book mostly because it really caught the human need to be creative, albeit in a quite unusual and mysterious way. Myers' beautiful way with words describing the English countryside and the way the two men felt this so deeply in their bones made for compelling reading. Their feelings of connection to the earth and the past lives lived there is beautifully conveyed and they become consumed by almost superhuman energy as if driven on by past "battle slain bodies of this wonder – England! The repartee and sparse, compact humour between the two friends sometimes reminded me of Shakespeare's fools or clowns and jesters"

"It is a story of two very unlikely friends where what is **not** said is louder than what is said. The idea to centre the novel using the crop circles as the focus was brilliant and Myers' descriptive prose was so good. "***the night steals their thoughts for a few minutes. It drags each man off in a different direction, their feet trapped in the stirrups of a galloping beast called rumination***" Each circle becomes more complicated, culminating in the Honeycomb Double Helix, their final achievement."

"We learn more about their characters in each chapter. The author uses the story as a platform for his own beliefs. Within the framework of the story there are other stories like the fly-tipping, hare coursing, the old lady searching for her dog for 80 years and the meeting with the very posh, very drunk earl – I liked these "

"Redbone and Calvert have had very different paths in their lives but come together due to their mutual love for nature and their disgust with those who disrespect it. They create ever more complicated circles and are amused at the media attention about who was responsible for them and even experts thought they were the work of aliens which leads us to think how close to the truth of this novel"

"I liked the dynamic between these two very different characters. They are moralistic and respectful of Mother Nature and have a deep connection to the land. Their nightly quests do not always go smoothly and they have interruptions from flytippers, a lady with dementia and drunken aristocrats. I enjoyed the book. It was calm and uplifting with a sense of nostalgia. Cleverly written and quite poignant"

"Beautiful poetic prose re English countryside I was particularly interested in the two characters, both very different backgrounds and upbringings but seemingly very close trusting and admiring of each other, military service, trauma of war in the Falklands, dismissive view of government and commonplace life, almost fanatical approach to pursue secret quest for creating corn circles. These guys live in a separate sub culture, one in an old camper van the other in the second smallest house in England, it defies imagination. They have anarchic energy, crazy encounters with folks ie comic engagement with rich entitled landowners. I first heard about corncircles and associated cults when I met In Australia a couple who travelled to England one summer specially to view them. I have recently heard there is another author Andy Thomas who I am led to believe gives very plausible lectures on the paranormal and corn circles . A fascinating novel to read .

"I found this book quite difficult to describe. There are only two characters in the story, Calvert and Redbone. The story centres on Calvert a veteran of the Falklands conflict and a member of the SAS who is surely suffering from post traumatic stress disorder spending his time creating beauty in the countryside making corn circles with his friend Redbone trying to shut out the horrors of his past experiences.

I find it hard to understand why a man so dedicated to the beauty of the countryside and nature preservation would ever join the army. Whether the making of the corn circles clears him of his guilt is never made clear. I also find it hard to believe that two grown men can walk through a field of corn for a couple of hours and not damage the crop.

I enjoyed the first few chapters describing the nightly visits to the cornfields. The author's descriptions were very poetic and took me back to my own childhood in the countryside and the beauty I had enjoyed especially the night skies. However, you could only have so much of a good thing, and I quickly got bored and was disappointed that there was no further major action in the story. I really wanted to pick the pair of them up give them a good shake and tell them to get a life!"

Christine Wright