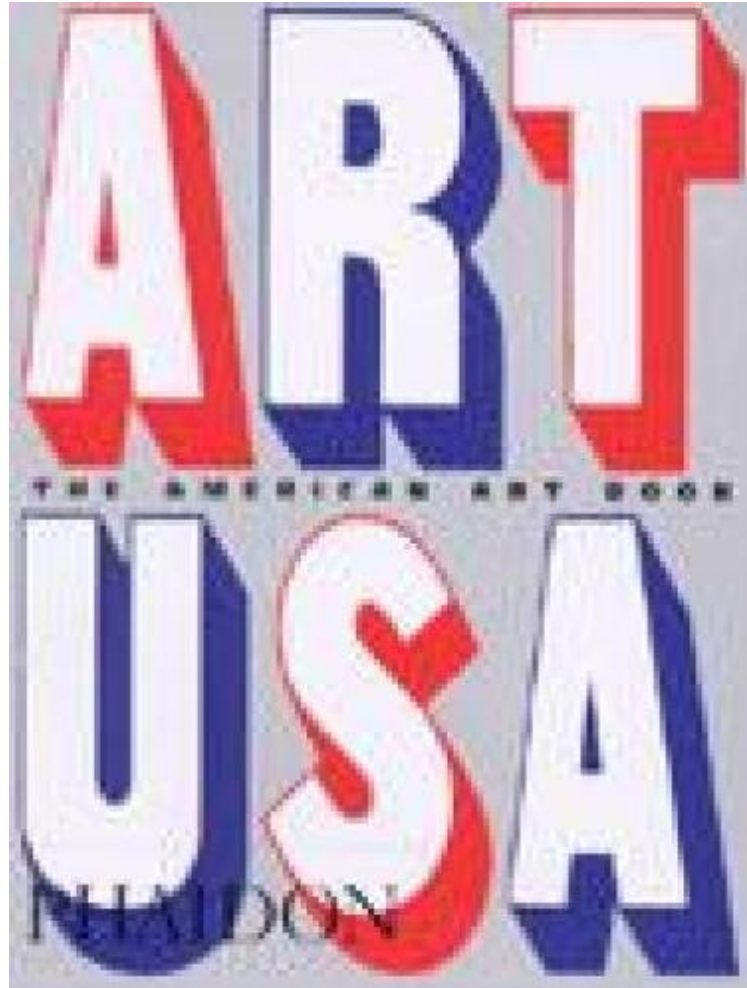


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The American Art Book

Editors of Phaidon Press

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Editors of Phaidon Press : The American Art Book before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The American Art Book:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great resource for Art Class! By L. MacBeth This is amazing for my high school class. I bought 2. One of them I cut up and laminated the pages. The students use it to compare and contrast and have conversations about art. The other one students use as a reference. The short paragraphs that top each page are excellent examples to the students of formal analysis and the cultural and historical context behind the work. Wish I had 30 copies. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As an artist I hate too much wording. By Erica Lampe As an artist I hate too much wording. I love this book because it is mostly just pictures, and gives a quick over view of American artists in compact form. I bought many other of Phaidon Press' books like these. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A terrific selection of works by American artists. By Gordon Ross A terrific

selection of works by American artists spanning the past 200 years. The text for each art work is short and informative and well written. The images are all large, one image on each page. An excellent book for anyone interested in modern, contemporary or 19th century American art.

This text presents an overview of the most influential and best-loved American artists and their works. It covers three centuries, ranging from Puritan portraits and the American Impressionists through to the videos and digital works of today's conceptual artists. The book is shown in an A-Z format, and seeks to encourage readers to contemplate the connections between art, American history and popular culture.

.com Accessibility is the code word for Phaidon's new 500-page dictionary of American art. The book values images over words, and its longest text is the introduction, which is printed in large, bold face and hardly fills one page. But it does describe the book's mission well: "Each artist is represented by a full-page color plate of a significant work, accompanied by an informative and engaging text that places the artist in the context of contemporary movements and preceding traditions...."--concise and informative. By arranging the artists alphabetically, the editors set up some odd and amusing juxtapositions. For example, the suited subject of an Alice Neel painting appears to speak and gesticulate excitedly about the overstuffed cornucopia of Louise Nevelson's crates found on the opposing page. The caption over each work includes four artists' names in bold print that function as hyperlinks of a sort, allowing readers to skip, for example, from Willem de Kooning's *Woman I* to Jean Michel Basquiat's *Skull* to Alfred Maurer's cubist-like painting *Woman with Curlers*. This way, with each visit to the *American Art Book*, readers can discover and follow countless narratives throughout the three centuries of American art. Filled with large, expertly reproduced images, *The American Art Book* is, like its cousins *The Photo Book* and *The 20th Century Art Book*, a high-quality and surprisingly inexpensive volume that would be a worthy addition to any art lover's library. --Loren E. Baldwin
From *Library Journal*
This volume continues the immensely popular but critically challenged series that began with 1994's *The Art Book*. Some 500 artists, organized alphabetically, are each given one page, which is filled by a large-format reproduction of one work, a 150-word essay, cross references to other artists, and rudimentary data on the artist and the work. For those seeking scholarly or even basic reference standards, the problems are manifold. No introductory materials describe how the artists or the representative works were chosen or what parameters were used (what qualifies as "American" art, anyway?). The unsigned essays are too short to define an artist's place in history, and, in any case, the essays are mostly given to descriptions of the single piece at hand. Potentially one of book's best features, the cross references are treated as a half-hearted afterthought. The publisher is largely correct in dismissing these concerns, however. This work is meant as an introduction and as such gets the facts mostly right, presents mostly defensible choices, provides a sweeping scope, and brings it all in at an unbeatable price. For small and medium general collections.
A Eric Bryant, "Library Journal" Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From *Booklist*
The simple format of Phaidon's A to Z series has, in this instance, yielded a dazzlingly diverse and openhanded survey of American art from colonial days to the present. By presenting one well-chosen example of the work of each of 500 painters, photographers, sculptors, and folk artists in alphabetical order, the editors liberate their creations from chronology, regionalism, and the categorization of schools and movements, an approach that creates some wonderfully unexpected and revealing juxtapositions. An installation by contemporary word artist Jenny Holzer faces a nineteenth-century painting by Winslow Homer; a winterscape by Grandma Moses is shadowed by a black-and-white abstraction by Robert Motherwell; and an interior by Charles Sheeler is followed by a photograph by Cindy Sherman. Such unlikely pairings enable the viewer to see beyond the obvious and discover fresh connections as well as clarify differences in artists' perception, intent, and style. Referrals to kindred artists and the brief but informative accompanying texts offer just enough information to whet a reader's appetite for more, and the plates are superb.
Donna Seaman