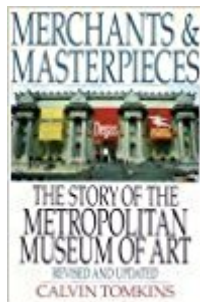




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Merchants And Masterpieces: The Story Of The Metropolitan Museum Of Art



Synopsis

Unlike the treasures of European museums, accumulated during centuries of royal patronage and plunder, the Metropolitan's vast collection reflects the tastes and resources of only a handful of remarkable nineteenth- and twentieth-century individuals, including J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Philip and Robert Lehman, who developed, along with their millions, a taste for immortality through art. Blending anecdote with lively social history, Calvin Tomkins reveals the ideas, personalities, and financial power behind the Metropolitan's dramatic climb to greatness. His story is nothing less than the story of art in America.

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Customer Reviews

Unlike the treasures of European museums, accumulated during centuries of royal patronage and plunder, the Metropolitan's vast collection reflects the tastes and resources of only a handful of remarkable nineteenth- and twentieth-century individuals, including J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Philip and Robert Lehman, who developed, along with their millions, a taste for immortality through art. Blending anecdote with lively social history, Calvin Tomkins reveals the ideas, personalities, and financial power behind the Metropolitan's dramatic climb to greatness. His story is nothing less than the story of art in America.

It's always good to read Tomkins, but I was hoping for a little more contemporary insiders' gossip. This is serviceable, but unless you're going for a degree in museum management, you might want to skip it. I had the feeling (perhaps unfounded) that whoever was writing Tomkins' paycheck was

looking over his shoulder most of the time.

The history of our country's greatest art museum sounds dull and pedantic. Mr. Tomkins's history is anything but dull. There are revelatory altercations between curators and trustees, monumental egos of wealthy donors that still need to be assuaged, and enough descriptions of dysfunctional interpersonal relationships that read like the "true confessions" of gossip magazines. And yet there is a wealth of facts and figures to keep the most demanding of readers satisfied. This museum means a lot to me. I learned art history just by being exposed to the best of the best. My mother took me many times when I was a little boy, from 1947 to 1955. Thereafter, I would go on my own. I've seen a lot of changes to the "Met" over the years, and this wonderful, easy-to-read book explains how it all happened. You will not be disappointed. It's entertaining and informative at the same time. Mr. Tomkins is a well-known writer; this book is his masterpiece. (written by Steven E. G. Melamed)

Outstanding! Book was in pristine condition. Super fast shipping. Many thanks. Pat

Great book! Hope it's reissued in a new edition.

Excellent

Fast service. Item as advertised. Thank you!

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