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Richard Diebenkorn



Synopsis

Beloved artist Richard Diebenkorn (1922–1993) is best known for paintings that powerfully evoke the California coast from San Francisco to Los Angeles. A West Coast native, Diebenkorn captured the light and color of the land and sea in a way that resonates with anyone who has spent time there. This volume contains a biographical introduction by Sarah C. Bancroft, an essay on Diebenkorn's influences by Steven Nash, and an essay on Diebenkorn's works on paper by Edith Devaney. Together these bring the artist's rich, four-decade-long career into focus. The book covers Diebenkorn's three distinct periods, which saw him gain recognition as a leading Abstract Expressionist in the early 1950s, then turn to figurative painting, before embarking on a highly successful period of abstract paintings and drawings • the Ocean Park Series. It is the perfect introduction to the work of this seminal California artist.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Richard Diebenkorn is an expanded edition of Gerald Nordland's authoritative study of the painter, first published in 1987 and now reissued by Rizzoli, a leading publisher of fine-art books.

Diebenkorn, who died in 1993, long ago entered the pantheon of great modernist artists. He was an early abstract expressionist, then went through a less successful stage of figural painting. Abruptly changing direction in the late 1960s, he rediscovered abstraction in an extraordinary series of grandly conceived paintings titled "Ocean Park," produced over a span of nearly 20 years. With strong vertical and diagonal constructions serving as structure for large areas of fresh, lyrical color, the elegant juxtapositions and satisfying geometry of "Ocean Park" make it his masterpiece; almost

half this oversize book is devoted to the series. Nordland's descriptions and analyses of the paintings, based on 40 years' study of Diebenkorn's life and work, guide the reader to a deeper understanding of the painter's intentions and achievements. The text is clear, straightforward, and largely convincing, though there is surprisingly little comparative material by other artists. Graceful, understated design that complements the paintings, and extremely sensitive color reproduction, make the book itself aesthetically satisfying and a pleasure to look at. This new edition of Richard Diebenkorn maintains the book's status as the definitive study of one of America's most influential 20th-century artists. --John Stevenson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a first monograph on a major modern American painter most often associated with the rise of Abstract Expressionism in the 1940s and 1950s. Nordland knows his subject; the text is celebratory, and perhaps not as critical as desirable, but the insights are succinct. Portraying Diebenkorn's achievements chronologically, it includes discussion of his alternative work in the figurative mode. The text focuses largely on visual description of the painter's themes, but the excellent plates and exhibition history attest to the artist's "master" status. Well designed for academic library use, whether for studio or art historical research, the book is also a viable, if expensive, option for general collections since Diebenkorn's work is found in many museums. Paula A. Baxter, NYPL Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Important: look at the dates of the reviews! The descriptions of the enthusiastic reviewers are most likely are describing the earlier 1987 edition, given the dates of the reviews. This is a later, abbreviated edition of the 1987 book! The publisher described this 2015 book as an "expanded edition of Gerald Nordlund's authoritative" edition of 1987. You do not expand on a 248 page book by putting out a 189 page book. Further, the illustrations in this later edition are disappointing due to both the uneven color quality of the reproductions (too dark in several instances) and the fact that the paper has minimal coating. The illustrations are sort of a sampling from the works illustrated many previous Diebenkorn monographs. If you have the classic and much more complete surveys by Livingston or Nordlund, you will find this book redundant. Certainly not the kind of in depth looks at any particular period or work provided by the Elderfield drawings survey, the Ocean Park books or the Albuquerque or Berkeley books.

As someone exploring the limits of their creative skills, and working hard to expand them, reading about Diebenkorn's influences and path as an artist has been incredible. I haven't read other books about Diebenkorn (yet), but I feel this gives a comprehensive overview of his entire career. It's well written with many full-size color plates.

I knew his work peripherally. This book gave me a broader perspective and history of the man and his art. Good reproduction quality. The "ocean park" work is what I'm most interested in and I wish there was more of that.

Outstanding!

Nordland is superb in this sprawling coverage of intellectual and artist supreme, Richard Diebenkorn. Majestic plates provide everything required to become a believer in this artist's vast talent and sublime insight. One of my all time favorite monographs.

Very good

This book illustrates an amazing insight into Richard Diebenkorn's artistic journey - plenty of colour plates illustrating not only his work but that of the artists who played a valuable part in influencing his own work. Like most artists Diebenkorn began with a classical approach to his work and gradually created his own unique style. When we look at his work, we know it's his. For any artist needing to be inspired or needing to formulate their own direction, this book shows clearly that the work of an artist is always evolving. Well worth acquiring.

---a wonderful book replete with great text and handsome reproductions. Diebenkorn was clearly a fantastic painter who should be better known than he is.

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