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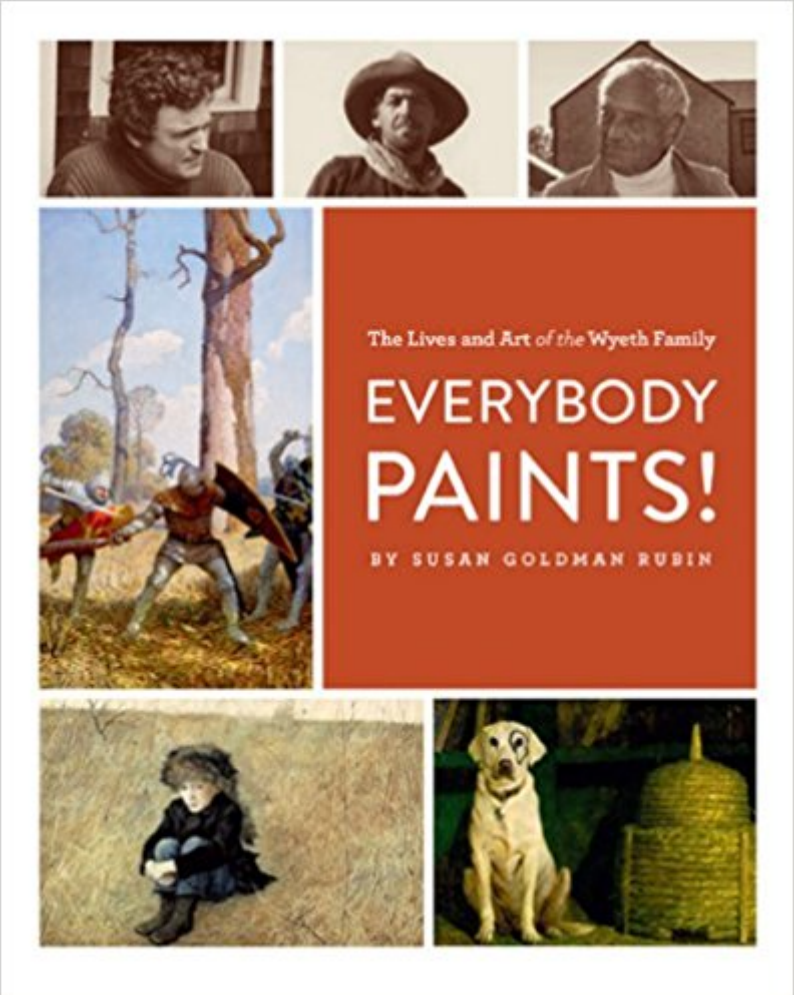
Everybody Paints! The Lives And Art Of The Wyeth Family



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Synopsis

In this distinctive volume, acclaimed biographer Susan Goldman Rubin shares the fascinating story of the WyethsÃ¢â ¬â •N.C., Andrew, and JamieÃ¢â ¬â •three generations of painters and arguably the First Family of American Art. The accessible text traces the events that shaped their art and the ways their art influenced them in return, while the crisp design showcases gorgeous reproductions of the works that have made the Wyeth family legendary.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 15 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 7 UpÃ¢â ¬â •Reminiscent of the Duchamps of France, the Wyeths are a family of painters: three generations, in fact, of artists. Here, the author gives a chronological account of how the Wyeth men came to be painters and of how their lives intersected. This "first family of American art" began with Newel Convers (N.C.), Massachusetts-born in 1882, oil painter and noted illustrator for both major magazines and a series of children's classics such as Treasure Island. His son Andrew (1917Ã¢â ¬â œ2009), whose initial artistic success came at the young age of 20, originally used watercolors to create scenes of Maine life, then switched to tempera to paint works such as his poignant "Christina's World." Andrew's son Jamie, the only one of the three still alive, uses combined media to create his portraits of dogs, friends, and neighbors. The text is clear, concise, and very complete for such a slim volume. While the family's existence in the Pennsylvania

countryside and the sea coast of Maine often seems idyllic, Rubin does not shy away from recounting family eccentricities, disagreements, and problems. The women in the three artists' lives are shown to be important influences in the men's work, but all of them remain in the background. This well-told biography is beautifully illustrated with color reproductions of all three artists' works and a few black-and-white family photos. While Robert D. San Souci used N.C.'s illustrations to accompany his picture-book text in N.C. Wyeth's Pilgrims (Chronicle, 1991), and Richard Meryman's First Impressions: Andrew Wyeth (Abrams, 1991) is recommended for teenagers, Rubin's is the first title to combine the lives of all three artists in a work geared to a middle school audience. An ideal introduction to the Wyeths.Ã¢â ¬â •Nancy Menaldi-Scanlan, formerly at LaSalle Academy, Providence, RI

Starred Review Similar in format to RubinÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Wideness and Wonder: The Life and Art of Georgia OÃ¢â ¬â„¢Keeffe (2010) and Delicious: The Life and Art of Wayne Thiebaud (2007), this colorful little book takes on the challenge of introducing three generations of artists in the Wyeth family, and it appears to be the only book on any of the Wyeths published for young people in more than 20 years. A student of Howard Pyle, N. C. Wyeth found early success and a lasting reputation for his dramatic illustrations in magazines and books. Trained by his father, Andrew Wyeth is remembered for his realistic portraits and landscapes. Apprenticed early in life to his father, Jamie Wyeth is best known for his haunting paintings of people and animals. While focused primarily on the artistsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ lives and their work, the clearly written text also describes the Wyeth households and family dynamics from generation to generation. Rubin adroitly meets the challenge of presenting three artists in one book, letting each story flow naturally into the next, while the occasional narrative overlap reinforces the story as a whole. The clearly written and engaging text, the well-integrated design elements, and the excellent reproductions of paintings and photos make this an informative, visually appealing presentation. Grades 6-10. --Carolyn Phelan

Great intro to the Wyeth family. Marketed as school-age oriented book but suited me just fine!

great book for adults and children alike.

Nicely done!

Wonderful book for adults and children. My 9 year old grandson read it after we finished

homeschool and was so eager to share the information with us and his 7 year old brother.

For years it was my pleasure to work in the New York Public LibraryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Central ChildrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Room, located in the Donnell Library. The Central ChildrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Room was the crown jewel of childrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s literature in the city, and amongst its many treasures (which included a parrot-headed umbrella owned by Mary Poppins/P.L. Travers and the original Winnie-the-Pooh toys) were N.C. WyethÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s original paintings from the book Robin Hood. I might be mistaken, but IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m pretty sure we owned them all. Certainly we didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t put them all on display, but a fair number of them were available for the public and they turned out to be quite a draw for the local illustrators. Since those days the Donnell has been sold and the paintings transferred to the main branch of NYPL where they now grace the walls of the President of the libraryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s office. If you would like to see them it is not out of the question, but it is also not as easy as it once was. I, for my part, havenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t seen them in years. With that in mind, I think it makes perfect sense why I was drawn to Susan Goldman RubinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s latest artistic picture book biography Everybody Paints! Not content to tell merely the story of one famous painter, Rubin dares to encapsulate the lives of three generations, with a particular focus on one painter in each. N.C., Andrew, and Jamie are presented to kids here in a clear-cut way that honestly displays their very interesting work.Meet the bronco buster. ThatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s one name you might give to N.C. Wyeth. Born to parents that thought heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢d be better suited as a farmhand than as an artist, N.C. set about to prove himself. Before long he was apprenticed to the great Howard Pyle and became his star student. Wyeth became adept at cattle round-ups as well as painting scenes of action and adventure. His talents brought his lucrative illustration projects like Treasure Island, Kidnapped, and Robin Hood. Along the way he sired talented offspring, each of whom had some kind of talent. Andrew Wyeth pursued his art with the same fervor as his dad, but while the fine art community had never officially accepted his father, Andrew was embraced almost immediately. In his footsteps followed Jamie, a painter who could work on everything from picture books to portraits of presidents. This is their story.Writing a biography of the Wyeths for children isnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t as fraught with potential peril as writing a biography of other artists might be. Having cut her teeth on bios about Diego Rivera (Diego Rivera: An Artist for the People) and Andy Warhol (Andy Warhol: Pop Art Painter) the Wyeths must have struck Ms. Rubin as a true relief. This is not to say that there havenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t been rumors floating around them for years, but vague rumors are far easier to elide than numerous confirmed affairs and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The

FactoryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•. The content is presented in a very nice, straightforward style. We meet each Wyeth in turn, and the narrative will slip from one to another without so much as a herk or a jerk. The sections are not particularly long. Indeed, the book itself is infinitely readable at just a scant 112 pages. That means that if a kid wants to do a bit of serious research they may need to find some additional books to cover the material more extensively. That said, Rubin provides the basic overview and allows the reader to fill in gaps on their own. Nothing wrong with that when youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re dealing with childrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s book biographies.It was a Kirkus review of this book that sniffed that this particular book is ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“undersized and overdesigned.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• The ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“undersizedÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• criticism strikes me as particularly silly, perhaps in light of the fact that as a librarian IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve seen too many art books rejected by child readers because they were ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“too bigÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• to comfortably carry home. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m a New York City librarian, so kids in my town have to lug and tote every book they take from the library themselves. There is no helpful waiting car to dump the load into. With that in mind our little patrons become quite savvy in the ways of pick up and retrieval. Imagine, if you will, that you are attempting to woo a kid with the assignment to read a book about a famous artist into reading this book. I can attest that thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s nothing worse than being cut off mid-spiel by a child who points out, quite logically, that the book is ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“too bigÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•. I mean thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s no comeback to that! So yes, itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s true that the images in this collection arenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t the size that they are in real life. But that is more than made up for when it comes to the sheer number of images present.To the second criticism, that of being ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“overdesignedÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•, the book actually one in a series of artistic biographies done in a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“gift bookÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• style. Some of you may recall the rather gorgeous Sparky: The Life and Art of Charles Schulz that came out a couple years ago by Beverly Gherman. Like this book it wasnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t afraid to play around with an eclectic design. Lots of large fonts, different colored pages, and images, images, images. In this book Rubin skillfully alternates between photographs of her subjects and their families and their paintings. To an adult, I suppose the layout of this book might feel jarring but IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m quite fond of it. It kept me awake, allowed my eye to travel from text to image and back again freely, and best of all when Rubin mentions a famous photograph itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s right there for you to look at.You see, one complaint IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve heard fielded at artistic biographies is that they donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t contain enough images of their subjectÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s work. How are you supposed to care about someone if you canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t see what it is that they themselves

cared about? When Ms. Rubin wrote Diego Rivera I adored it. Some librarians, however, wanted a lot more images. Full paintings would be described but never seen. One might point out that in an internet age itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s fairly easy to see pictures of things whenever you want to, but the point stands. A book about an artist should do its duty and give its subject proper due. With that in mind, Everybody Paints! fairly pops with pictures. I donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t know enough about the rights to reproduce painted images in the way Rubin presents them here. What I do know is that sheÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s done a stand up and cheer job of it. Nothing major feels like itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s missing.In spite of the fact that thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s been a real push to promote great nonfiction books with kid readers, it can be a hard sell. Adults that are my age or older have a hard time remembering any particularly great books of nonfiction from when we were young (and no, the Childhood of Famous Americans series does NOT count). Few of us are aware that weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re in a golden age of great childrenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s informational titles. What Everybody Paints! does is typify this kind of book. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a hard subject that requires a deft hand. And with her abundance of experience in this particular area, Susan Goldman Rubin does her subjects proud. As beautiful as you would expect, and three times as fun as you might think to read.For ages 9 and up.

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