



Movements in Art since 1945: Issues and Concepts

Edward Lucie-Smith

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A clear, swift-moving account of the visual arts in the past half century. All the most recent trends and artists are discussed including Minimal and Conceptual art, Arte Povera, the influence of Joseph Beuys, Neo-Expressionism, Neo-Conceptualism and the work of Feminist and Gay artists as aspects of Postmodernism. The emergence of the powerful work - until recently considered 'peripheral' - of African-American and regional American artists, and new trends in Latin American, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, modern African, Caribbean and Aboriginal art are all introduced and discussed, providing a world panorama of art at the end of the century. A full bibliography and for the first time comprehensive chronologies of key events from 1940 to the present make this book a unique guide to the main issues, concepts and players.

Movements in Art since 1945: Issues and Concepts Details

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Author : Edward Lucie-Smith

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Hoda hm says

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John David says

Many non-fiction genres sometimes find it difficult to navigate between two audiences: the rank neophytes who need a basic grounding in the topic at hand, and those who already have a thorough knowledge of those fundamentals. It is those of us who are in the middle who sometimes have difficulty finding the right book for them. Edward Lucie-Smith provides some of those big, overarching ideas that are essential for those building on the basics, but the sheer number of painters and sculptors that he throws at the reader is a little disorienting, especially when you're still trying to discern what ties Morris Louis, Frank Stella, and Helen Frankenthaler all under the category of "post-painterly abstraction." Maybe it's just my compulsion to over-categorize and draw connections between all the artists that detracted from the book.

The introduction to the book was really promising, and draws a lot of lines of continuity between the art of pre- and post-World War II. Lucie-Smith argues, for example, that whereas it is often thought that Modernism came to some sort of end not long after this time, the techniques, aesthetics, and materials used to make the art never changed, and therefore this art remained, in many ways, Modernist. The first few pages of each chapter also give some great intellectual background to each of the major movements, i.e., abstract expressionism, post-painterly abstraction, p/op art, and photorealism. But after this, the reader is met with page after page of artists who appear quickly and just as quickly disappear never to be heard from or seen again, with usually just one painting or sculpture to represent an entire artist's oeuvre. Well-known artists like Henry Moore and Frank Stella get two photographic plates, and no one gets more than that. Quickly afterward, I got lost in a welter of names with which I was barely familiar or not familiar at all. What I appreciated most about this book is that I was introduced to many new names that I didn't know before, and now know to keep an eye out for them.

Farnaz says

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Soumitra Giri says

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Ali says

Erik Akre says

A straight-forward and properly detailed/nuanced exposition. As a condensation of so many different movements, it also manages to appropriately concise. A good book to have on the shelf as reference, or to serve as an intelligent introduction to modern, postmodern, and (until the date of publication) contemporary artistic thought/practice.

Pantea says

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David Corbet says

Movements in art since 1945 is an excellent introduction to the major movements and artists of the second half of the twentieth century. Not only does it cover the time period in detail but it provides reference pictures for many of the artists talked about. Many of the pictures are in color which I think is essential to understanding the art works presented.

Brian Hayden says

Smith-Lucie gives a very competent overview. Two brief comments, one positive and one negative.

1. His work to demystify post-Modernism by taking artists like Balthus and treating them as individual human beings rather than dubious representatives of some convenient master narrative of Style A -> Style B -> Style C. This is, by far, the major strength of this book.
2. On the other hand, too much of the treatment of non-Pop art, especially what came after Pop, is implicitly or explicitly based in comparisons *to* Pop. It's understandable inasmuch as (American) Pop was the overbearing stepfather of the second half of the 20th century, but it'd be more interesting to see Smith-Lucie apply the same sort of nuance that he did to, say Abstract Expressionism, to everything after as well. It's

difficult to tell whether this shortcoming arises from an infatuation with Pop, or, on the other hand, a feeling that Pop and what came after were something of a flabby lump of largely indistinguishable quality. I suppose it's to his credit that there isn't a clear positive or negative that emerges from the analysis. There is just the analysis.

Kumaricci says

For all art lovers, a timeless must read.

yves says

This book provides an excellent overview of art movements, the key players and what to look for as you observe these. It definitely helped me further my understanding. However, there were a few disappointments. It occasionally reads more as a list of paragraph biographies of an art collective than an analysis of the movement, and sometimes devolves into art criticism without any explanation of the opinions put forth -- which isn't something I wanted from a book I was hoping would prepare me to form my own opinions. I also wish that Lucie-Smith had been a little more critical of responses. Sometimes, critics are cited giving harsh opinions (particularly on minority artists) without any analysis from the author about this criticism. I also had a bittersweet moment when the author discussed the marginalization of women artists.. and all of the images of art accompanying the text were pieces by male artists not discussed. It could use some improvement, but it's definitely worth a read and I'm glad to add it to my shelf.

Kourosh Ghaniyoun says

Jim says

I chose to read this book because simply it was lying around--in fact, it had been lying around since my high school girlfriend left it in my room in 1996--and the book turned out to be as good as my selection criteria. There's not a lot of interesting analysis here, either in terms of historical explanation of trends or more direct critical engagements with the works discussed. In part, this thinness may be a consequence of Lucie-Smith's comprehensiveness: there are an awful lot of artists discussed despite the fairly narrow 30-year focus of the book. That comprehensiveness is helpful for the mostly uninitiated reader, but the breadth really does seem to come at the expense of depth. Lucie-Smith's critical verdicts are almost always conclusory, in that he just tells you what he thinks of a piece or an artist or a movement without really explaining the basis for his judgment. This is a shame, because I found my intuitions in alignment with his--but I want a book of art

history and criticism to educate my intuitions, not simply to vindicate them without any explicit warrant.

Nicole says

I had to read this as a textbook for my art history class, so right off the bat I didn't like it. Add that to the fact that Lucie-Smith jumps from artist to artist, giving only one or two sentences to describe them. Plus the fact that there aren't many pictures, and the ones that ARE shown don't always represent the main artist he was talking about. Add that all up and you get yourself a solid 2 stars.
