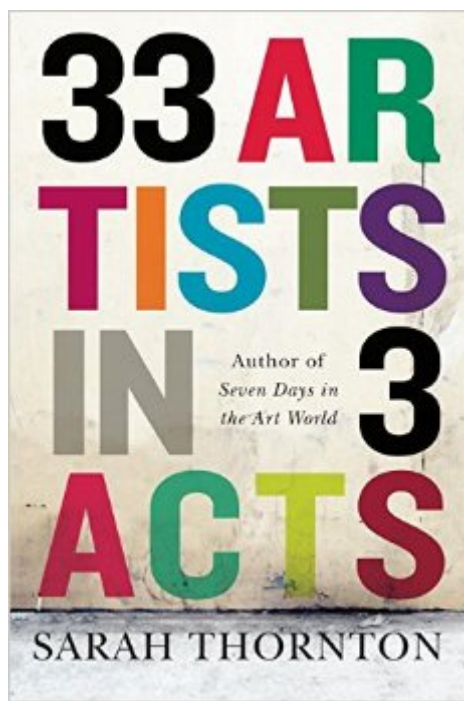


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33 Artists In 3 Acts



Synopsis

This compelling narrative goes behind the scenes with the world's most important living artists to humanize and demystify contemporary art. The best-selling author of *Seven Days in the Art World* now tells the story of the artists themselves—how they move through the world, command credibility, and create iconic works. *33 Artists in 3 Acts* offers unprecedented access to a dazzling range of artists, from international superstars to unheralded art teachers. Sarah Thornton's beautifully paced, fly-on-the-wall narratives include visits with Ai Weiwei before and after his imprisonment and Jeff Koons as he woos new customers in London, Frankfurt, and Abu Dhabi. Thornton meets Yayoi Kusama in her studio around the corner from the Tokyo asylum that she calls home. She snoops in Cindy Sherman's closet, hears about Andrea Fraser's psychotherapist, and spends quality time with Laurie Simmons, Carroll Dunham, and their daughters Lena and Grace. Through these intimate scenes, *33 Artists in 3 Acts* explores what it means to be a real artist in the real world. Divided into three cinematic "acts"—politics, kinship, and craft—it investigates artists' psyches, personas, politics, and social networks. Witnessing their crises and triumphs, Thornton turns a wry, analytical eye on their different answers to the question "What is an artist?" *33 Artists in 3 Acts* reveals the habits and attributes of successful artists, offering insight into the way these driven and inventive people play their game. In a time when more and more artists oversee the production of their work, rather than make it themselves, Thornton shows how an artist's radical vision and personal confidence can create audiences for their work, and examines the elevated role that artists occupy as essential figures in our culture. 44 illustrations, 3 maps

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you don't already hate high-end contemporary/modern art before reading Sarah Thornton's "33 Artists", believe me, you will. In our current upside-down world, truly bad work gets kudos and costs millions while deserving artists who create amazing concepts and thought provoking pieces get ignored. Thornton follows and questions 33 "popular" artists - chosen for their notoriety or infamy more than any other reason I could discern - for a period of four years and gives us the highlights of those sessions in a winding trail that circles the hot spots of the art world. It's a world that few are privy to and that in itself becomes the reason the book seems sensational if not temporarily hot on a few art bestseller lists. Thornton seemingly has her own agenda ("What is an artist?") but sadly, asks the wrong questions. If you're longing to know about each artist's creative process, you'll be sadly disappointed. The interviews seem purposely themed on marketing, worth and fame and have little to do with the art itself other than a description and materials used. That over-priced and over-the-top concepts are a joke pulled on wealthy buyers, Thornton might agree. But what annoys is her sense of being in on the joke and profiting from it alongside the jokesters. Her writing style is easy going and it flows well. She does bring in small details to what could be an academic bore, so for those factors, I'm giving her a few stars. One artist Thornton seems more than a bit obsessed by is Andrea Fraser. I have to admit here and now that I personally find "performance art" to be nothing more than theater dressed up for a gallery. That it can now be purchased as DVDs (or prints from same) makes the genre even more idiotic.

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