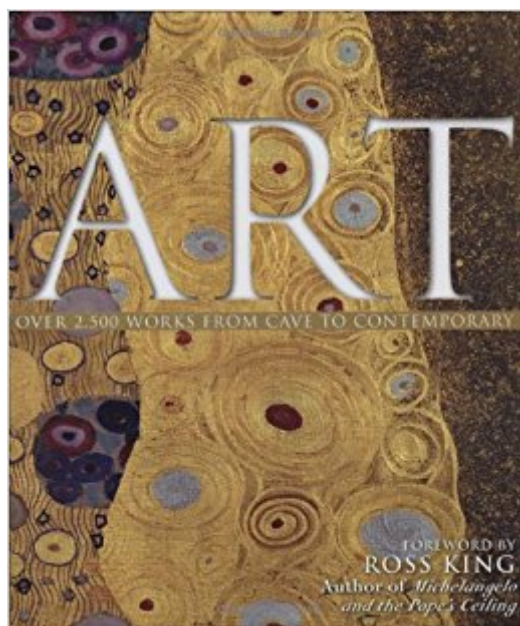


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# Art: Over 2,500 Works From Cave To Contemporary



## Synopsis

ART, the ultimate visual guide to 2,000 of the world's most revered paintings and sculptures, begins with a short section on how to look at paintings and sculpture, explaining the simple steps of formal analysis that swiftly become automatic and greatly increase and inform your enjoyment of art. The main part of the book is a 540-page chronological look at more than 700 artists. This section is subdivided into the main periods of art history with introductions to each period or art movement that explain the key elements and influences of the time. With several paintings by each major artist, this section is a joy to dip into or study in more depth. Key paintings are examined in detail to help you understand the artist's intentions, style, and method. Thematic galleries are interspersed, showing how artists from different periods and places treat the same subject matter, such as landscape, nudes, or animals.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What must a big book of art contain to make it a great big book of art? Many color reproductions, including close-ups. A fluid mix of art history and interpretation set against the larger panorama of world history. Lots of brief artist bios. Clear and concise explanations of media, techniques, aesthetics, styles, and intent. A sense of continuity and stories of radical departures and infamous scandals. Works and artists the reader has never encountered before. A jump-starting foreword by an eloquent art historian, such as Ross King, who opens this exemplary volume, one that surpasses all the criteria above, by declaring, "Great art, more than anything else, is the benchmark of human achievement." • From the genuinely informative introductory primer, "Looking at Art," to

in-depth scrutiny of seminal works to overviews of universal and timeless themes, and a phenomenal array of artists past and present, this grand and exciting survey of the art of Europe and the U.S. with forays into Africa, Asia, India, South America, and Australia, should be the anchor for art collections of all sizes. --Donna Seaman

"ART is a standout book for any student or aficionado, a volume [Ross] King aptly describes as 'an admirable feat and a true joy.'" --BookPage, November, 2008  
Chock-full of gorgeous color reproductions and images, helpful timelines, detailed close-ups, artists biographies, and with histories and explanations written in clear, concise prose, ART is a standout book for any student or aficionado, a volume [Ross] King aptly describes as an admirable feat and a true joy. --BookPage

Art: Over 2,500 Works vs. The Art Museum  
I purchased both "Art: Over 2,500 Works from Cave to Contemporary" (hereby referred to as "Art") from DK Publishing and "The Art Museum" from Phaidon Press, and found them to be very different books. In summary, if you are looking for a reference book, get "Art;" if you are looking for a visual guide, get "The Art Museum." If you are just looking for a single art book, get "Art."  
SIZE If you drop "Art" at 7lbs., you won't necessarily bend the corners of the cover, and you can kind of awkwardly carry the book in your arms or in your lap. With "The Art Museum" at 18lbs., you will most certainly bend the corners of the cover if you do drop it, and you will need to read this book on a large, clear surface.  
PAPER The paper of the pages of "Art" almost feel twice as thick of "The Art Museum," with "Art" having more of a glossy finish, while "The Art Museum" is more of a matte finish. This makes the pictures of "The Art Museum" a little easier to look at, at the cost of durability. Because the weight of the paper in "Art," this seems a much more hardy book. With "The Art Museum," I have to be extremely careful that I do not tear or crease the pages as I leaf through the book.  
PICTURE QUALITY Hands-down, "The Art Museum" has done a much better job in reproducing the original colors of the artworks. "Art's" pictures, when comparing the same paintings, seem washed-out and under-saturated. And as written by other reviewers, without a doubt, the pictures in "Art" are far too small to be of any real aesthetic use. The large format of "The Art Museum" allows pictures to be seen in far more detail than in "Art," as "The Art Museum's" pictures are generally four times as large as those found in "Art." But there is at least one place where you can see even higher resolution pictures without visiting the museum: The Internet (see Conclusion, below).  
CONTENT & LAYOUT "Art" is a better book for the layman, as specific techniques of artists and interesting points of a piece of art are highlighted and described visually, while "The Art Museum" assumes that you already know these things, or describes them only in

text. For example, in Hans Holbein the Younger's "The Ambassadors," "The Art Museum" tells you that it uses anamorphosis, without telling you what anamorphosis is; "Art" describes the technique. Additionally, "Art" uses callouts to point to a place of interest in a work of art, rather than in plain text as found in, "The Art Museum." "Art" does several other things well that "The Art Museum" does not. "Art" has a timeline describing each period of history, so you can see when the Baroque period lined with the Qing Dynasty, giving you a more global view of art. "Art" also breaks down each period into genres and sub-genres, like Baroque on the left margins, and Dutch Baroque or French Baroque on the right margins. "The Art Museum" lays out each genre of art into rooms like a museum, and generally, the historical description of the genre is superior of what is found in "Art." However, the font used by "The Art Museum" bothers me quite a bit, as sometimes there seems to be not enough space after a period, so it looks like a run-on sentence. If you're just looking to browse, "The Art Museum" may be fine; if you're looking to see how each period coincides with the others and understand how the genres and sub-genres are classified, "Art" is superior.

**ART SELECTION** Neither book does a super great job of selecting the masterpieces of every artist, as they do tend to miss some obvious choices, as stated in other reviews. I am more disappointed in "The Art Museum," because with being "unrestricted by the constraints of physical space," I am appalled when I see masterpieces and artists in "Art" that are not included in "The Art Museum," as the latter is billed to be more comprehensive. This is where "The Art Museum" fails me the most. For example: 1) In "The Art Museum," Johannes Vermeer's masterpiece, "Girl with a Pearl Earring," is not even mentioned, while it is in "Art." 2) In "The Art Museum," there is no mention of Frans Hals, where he is described in "Art." 3) In "Art," not a single one of Claude Monet's landscape "Water Lilies" are shown or mentioned, which I found extremely odd, but will give "Art" more of a pass because it is one-fourth the volume of "The Art Museum," and "Art" does have "The Water Lilly Pond." Both books are heavy on Western art, light on most anything else. "Art" has about six pages devoted to Chinese art. "The Art Museum" has twenty pages but also include Japanese and Korean art. It should be noted that Chinese art history spans roughly 4,000 years, and only gets about 1-2% coverage in either book.

**CONCLUSION** Neither "Art: Over 2,500 Works from Cave to Contemporary" nor "The Art Museum" are bad books. Both will work fine on your coffee table. "The Art Museum," with its massive size, will be more impressive, though "Art" is a more useful piece of work. If you want something pretty, get "The Art Museum." If you want something utilitarian, get "Art." This is assuming that the price doesn't matter to you. If you do get "Art," the recommendation is to have a tablet (Windows 8, iPad) close by, so that you can look up the pictures in finer detail on Bing Images or Google Images, which, in many cases, will be at a higher quality than in a published book. In

conclusion, I've found that the best art book in the world is still, without a doubt, Wikipedia.

This is a great reference guide, all in color which is amazing. Exceptional book. My only complaint is that the art is printed with a too yellow tint, an error throughout the book. This was frustrating. However, slightly-yellow, full-color, high-resolution images sure beat the black and white photos of old. For this price, you can't find a better compilation. 1000s of masterpieces, all those trips to museums, right in your hands.

This is a wonderful choice for a study of art history. I didn't take the class in college and have always felt I was missing something. So glad to have this comprehensive study with amazing examples of art. I am so enjoying it!

This is a great book, and has tons of pictures, covering all of the movements/ism's and major artist. It breaks down a picture often and describes 4 or 5 focal points in many of the most important paintings. It also shows timelines of each major era and the sub-movements in that era, and expounds on the most important and influential artists of each era. I liked how this book also focused briefly on the driving influences occurring in the world surrounding a movement and each individual artist, which is interpretive, and what I personally value a lot. This would include how one movement led to another, and how one artist affected another. Can't think of anything I'd like to see changed. It's about 10" by 12" and nearly 2" thick. This is great grand picture of how art developed over the centuries, and a perfect starting point to go off on separate studies where your interests lie from here.

The best quick reference book about art I ever read. Perfect Quick reference for a budding art enthusiast

This book is beautiful. Every time I open it I find another new and exciting work of art. I would love to see some of these pieces in real life, but for now this book is fantastic for the coffee table. It has a ton of information and it is easy to get lost in it for a bit.

I agree with the reviewers who took issue with the size of the illustrations. As a weighty, illustrated coffee-table book it is useless since you cannot see the details in the artworks that are the subject of commentary in the text. Nonetheless, ART is a comprehensive global history of art in a field flooded

with works that concentrate on Western art. Zaczek's text, for that reason alone, is an excellent history of art. Nota bene: This is a very heavy book. Don't plan on carrying it with you anywhere.

I received this book one day early. I love what I see and I have not seen everything. The colors of the individual representations seem to be true to the original as well as it can be expected.

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