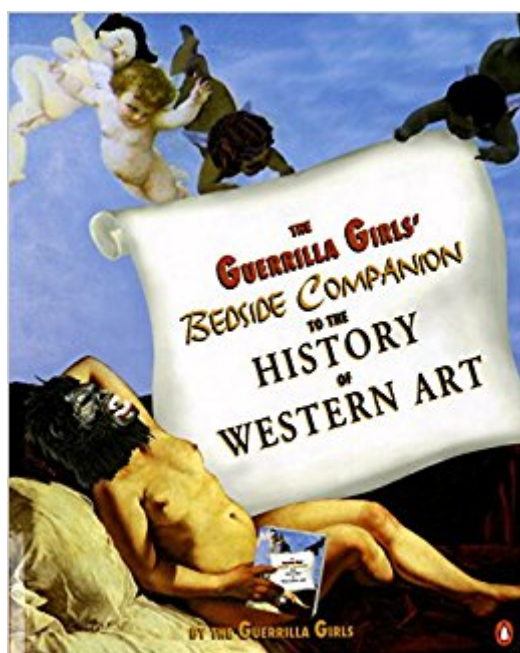


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# The Guerrilla Girls' Bedside Companion To The History Of Western Art



## Synopsis

We were Guerillas before we were Gorillas. From the beginning, the press wanted publicity photos. We needed a disguise. No one remembers, for sure, how we got our fur, but one story is that at an early meeting, an original Girl, a bad speller, wrote 'Gorilla' instead of 'Guerilla.' It was an enlightening mistake. It gave us our mask-ularity. Ever wonder about the abundance of naked male statues in the Classical section of your favorite museum? Did you know medieval convents were hotbeds of female artistic expression? And how did those "bad boy" artists of the twentieth century make it even harder for a girl to get a break? Thanks to the Guerrilla Girls, those masked feminists whose mission it is to break the white male stronghold over the art world, art history-as we know it-is history. Taking you back through the ages, the Guerrilla Girls demonstrate how males (particularly white males) have dominated the art scene, and discouraged, belittled, or obscured women's involvement. Their skeptical and hilarious interpretations of "popular" theory are augmented by the newest research and the expertise of prominent feminist art historians. "Believe-it-or-not" quotations from some of the "experts" are sprinkled throughout, as are the Guerrilla Girls' signature masterpieces: reproductions of famous art works, slightly "altered" for historic accuracy and vindication. This colorful reinterpretation of classic and modern art, as outrageous as it is visually arresting, is a much-needed corrective to traditional art history, and an unabashed celebration of female artists.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

YA-The Guerrilla Girls are a group of anonymous artists and art professionals whose mission is to

expose racism, sexism, and homophobia in the art world. The introduction presents an overview and critique of traditional art history, and following chapters highlight various time periods and the female artists who were at work during those eras. From classical Greece to the present, the group introduces many "mistresspieces" that have been overlooked by traditional male critics. This irreverent and sometimes angry review of art history makes use of humor and satire to illuminate the issues and to exact a small revenge on a field that has dismissed many gifted individuals on the basis of gender and/or ethnicity. A chronology of general women's history entitled, "Guerrillas in the Midst of History" opens the book. Lively text and a creative adaptation and interpretation of famous works will hold the interest of teens while introducing them to a revisionist and more inclusive history of art in the Western world. Debra Shumate, Bull Run Regional Library, Manassas, VA Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

The Guerrilla Girls are a collective of female artists and art-world professionals. Their largest contingent is in New York City, but they have been sighted all over the United States, Europe, and wherever truth, justice, and the American way of discrimination still prevail.

A delightful expose on women artists gives just enough information for researchers to build on. I use this book for my Women Artist class and add to the Guerilla Girls information with additional images both from the women artists themselves and from male artists with similar themes as a point for class discussion. Would love to see a more extensive book but maybe I should do that myself!

women have been left out of, and shortchanged, in the art world. This is a book with interesting information about female artists that you may not have come across before. The writers are activists for women in art. The cartoony character of the book, while whimsical, makes one wish for a larger book on the topic with more information. It's great as far as it goes.

The Guerilla Girls simply have no equal; the book is genuinely fascinating, and also full of annoying tidbits of how the art world has worked against women artists throughout the ages; notably good artwork and layouts, which adds to the enjoyment of the read. I couldn't put it down. If you're a woman artist, this is a must-read: you need to know where you fit into "the big picture" so to speak.

I was at my university bookstore picking up my two art history courses' textbooks and I saw this book and my heart jumped! A year ago in my first 2-d design course my professor had told us all

about the Guerilla Girls and I had just finished taking a sociology course that made me feel more inclined to female equality. Between my Sociology Now! textbook and reading this Guerilla Girls book, I feel more strongly and proud about my gender more than anything else and have analyzed so many situations in correlation to the subject. This book is a terrific resource for learning more about women's place in art throughout centuries. I was a bit disappointed that it didn't do more about statistics or criticism about how we are still underplayed in society, such as the famous 'MoMA Has 5%...' ad that I've seen just about everywhere. What about how we were perceived a hundred years ago? They speak about women's rights, what they can and could not do, comparatively to men and, though interesting, it's still not what I expected. Thus, this book is terrific as a reference or introduction to the history of female artists, one that you should have in your collection just because we are often (still) overlooked in the art world.

I love the breezy tone of this book and the few artists they picked to talk about are good. However, they stop after Eva Hesse and Ana Mendieta, and only include those two because they died young. Verdict: great for pre-WWI artists, not so great after.

The main forewarning I give is this: the Guerilla Girls wrote this book. Yes, that's obvious, but when you read that, you should be thinking of militant feminist artists and art historians. With that in mind, the book is written with a definitely militant voice, but it is definitely well-written, well-researched, and gets their message across. It was a great deal shorter than I was expecting, since I didn't look at the page count, but it was an enlightening (if quick) read, and more of a glimpse and enticement into the world of non-white-male artists.

I am a college student and just last semester I took a Western Art History course (Renaissance-Contemporary), during which I hungered for more information about female artists. I then ordered this book which seemed like a fun way to learn more about female artists and the eras in which they lived. I was amazed at how much women (of all races and creeds) and their achievements have been marginalized throughout history. I was also amazed at the guts and courage possessed and utilized by the female artists mentioned and praised in this book. That they could resist the humongous pressure to conform to societal norms and persevere to live their lives on their own terms (and make their art on their own terms!) is incredibly inspiring. I am now taking a class dedicated to celebrating and exploring women artists and their art, and it is so awesome! Thank you Guerrilla Girls!

interesting

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