Jewish Artists And The Bible In Twentieth-Century America
Jack Levine, George Segal, Audrey Flack, Larry Rivers, and R. B. Kitaj have long been considered central artists in the canon of twentieth-century American art: Levine for his biting paintings and prints of social conscience, Segal for his quiet plaster figures evoking the alienation inherent in modern life, Flack for her feminist photorealist canvases, Rivers for his outrageous pop art statements, and Kitaj for his commitment to figuration. Much less known is the fact that at times, all five artists devoted their attention to biblical imagery, in part because of a shared Jewish heritage to which they were inexorably tied. Taking each artist as an extensive case study, Jewish Artists and the Bible in Twentieth-Century America uncovers how these artists and a host of their Jewish contemporaries adopted the Bible in innovative ways. Indeed, as Samantha Baskind demonstrates, by linking the past to the present, Jewish American artists customized the biblical narrative in extraordinary ways to address modern issues such as genocide and the Holocaust, gender inequality, assimilation and the immigrant experience, and the establishment and fate of the modern State of Israel, among many other pertinent concerns.

Book Information

Hardcover: 260 pages
Publisher: Penn State University Press; 1 edition (January 29, 2014)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0271059834
Product Dimensions: 8 x 1.1 x 10 inches
Shipping Weight: 2.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars â€” See all reviews (1 customer review)
Best Sellers Rank: #674,887 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #161 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Design #341 in Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > Themes > Religious #961 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Art History

Customer Reviews

I enjoyed the author's study of Raphael Soyer, an iconic 20th Century New York City immigrant artist, the first book on him since the Abstract Expressionists came to dominate the contemporary art scene. (A number of his own books were published during that period). What she had to wrestle with there was the fact that during his lifetime he adamantly refuted and rejected any characterization of him as a "Jewish" artist, including cooperation with authors seeking to include
him in books designated as studies of Jewish artists or Jewish art. (See his correspondence on the
Smithsonian site with one such author, and the prior letter to him from Leon Kroll, some fifteen years
older and a native born American, who was of the same mind on the subject. In this book, Baskind
briefly reviews the life and work of five significant 20th Century American artists, who were Jewish
by birth and secular by faith, but who reflected, in a significant segment, no matter how small, of
their work, biblical themes and images. The artists are, in order of treatment: Jack Levine, George
Segal, Audrey Flack, Larry Rivers and Ron Kitaj. All were born between 1915 and 1932, only Flack
survives. Treatment of each of the artists is limited to a brief biographical study as relevant to the
topic. In addition, there are more detailed analyzes of their use of Biblical imagery and of the
commentary and reflections upon biblical subjects which have these writings a living document
applicable to the lives of the Jewish people over the more than 23 centuries of their existence.
Within the context of her treatment of each artist, reference is also made to other Jewish artists as
an indicator of the fact that the conceptualizations by these few are not unique manifestations by a
small handful.

Download to continue reading...

Jewish Artists and the Bible in Twentieth-Century America Composing for the State: Music in
Twentieth-Century Dictatorships (Musical Cultures of the Twentieth Century) The Warburgs: The
Twentieth-Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and
the Making of Modern America (Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America) Feminist Bible
Studies in the Twentieth Century: Scholarship and Movement (Bible and Women 9.1) North
American Women Artists of the Twentieth Century: A Biographical Dictionary (Garland Reference
Dictionary Form (Roget's Twentieth-First Century Thesaurus in Dictionary Form) Carceral
Fantasies: Cinema and Prison in Early Twentieth-Century America (Film and Culture Series)
America's Social Arsonist: Fred Ross and Grassroots Organizing in the Twentieth Century Jonah
and Sarah: Jewish Stories of Russia and America (Library of Modern Jewish Literature) The
Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen: 70 Fun Recipes for You and Your Kids, from the Author of
Jewish Cooking in America The Jewish Study Bible: Featuring The Jewish Publication Society
TANAKH Translation The Bible: How to Read, Study, and Understand the Bible (The Bible, Bible
Study, Christian, Catholic, Holy Bible) The Bible Study for Beginners Series: Learn the Bible in the
Least Amount of Time: The Bible, Bible Study, Christian, Catholic, Holy Bible, Book 4 Gender and
Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Chinese Literature and Society (Suny Series in Feminist Criticism
and Theory) (Suny Series in Feminist Criticism & Theory) Actors and Onlookers: Theater and