



The Essential Gombrich

By Richard Woodfield

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Professor E.H. Gombrich is acknowledged as one of the most influential scholars and thinkers of the 20th century. His writings include three major narrative works - The Story of Art, Art and Illusion and The Sense of Order - and ten volumes of collected essays and reviews. This anthology presents a selection from all these books, as well as six pieces which have previously not been published by Phaidon.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

To the extent that any art historian becomes "famous," Sir Ernst Gombrich is the most famous art historian in the world. He is the author of the seminal work *The Story of Art*, a staunch champion of the traditional canon, and a perceptive analyst of artistry and illusion. This massive collection includes essays, excerpts from the groundbreaking *Art and Illusion*, autobiographical notes, and reflections on artists from Raphael to Saul Steinberg. Gombrich is not a modernist, and he has been criticized for his misunderstanding of abstract painting; but his conceptions of art encompass modern psychology and history, the study of gesture and ornament, and the social history of art. Above all, Gombrich stands against sweeping generalizations, maintaining that works of art "are not the results of some mysterious activity, but objects made by human beings for human beings."

From Library Journal

Gombrich, the author of three of the most influential works of art history written this century?The Story of Art (1950), Art and Illusion (1960), and The Sense of Order (1979)?is one of a handful of art scholars whose works range across the entire history of art and have had an impact on a number of disciplines. Though the above works are well represented in this collection, editor Woodfield has drawn from the whole of Gombrich's career to include autobiographical sketches, a tribute to the poet and literary scholar I.A. Richards, meditations on Goethe and Schubert, and a delightful essay on the humorous drawings of Saul Steinberg. Gombrich's forays into social history make this work useful for multidisciplinary collections. A comprehensive bibliography of Gombrich's works is included. Highly recommended for public and academic libraries that do not already own his three major works.?Martin R. Kalfatovic, Smithsonian Inst. Libs., Arlington, Va.

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Review

"To read these essays is to feel in close touch with a rare and crucial thing, a large mind at full tilt, curious, ambitious and civilized."-The New York Times

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