
British sporting art and artists, dating from the eighteenth century, have been studied by art historians and documented in innumerable publications. In contrast, American animal and sporting art and artists, born from the British tradition and flourishing a century later, have received much less examination.

In this “first comprehensive, scholarly work” devoted solely to American artists, Reuter chronicles the relationship between art and American field sports and country life. He has compiled and written biographical entries for 2,384 painters and sculptors; to be included, the artist *must* have been born before the end of 1936; must have produced at least one drawing, painting, or model of an animal or sporting subject; must have worked in America; and must have been cited in at least one verifiable reference source. Many expected names appear—John James Audubon, Martin Johnson Heade, and Frederic Remington. But, many inclusions are surprises and some might even argue that the animal and sporting works by such diverse artists as George Bellows, John Singer Sargent, Stuart Davis, and William Henry Rimmer—all of whom are included in the volume—can not be convincingly aligned with the genre. Each entry follows the same, standard format seen in many biographical dictionaries and encyclopedias (name, life dates, education, training, work experience, exhibitions, etc.). Over 400 images, many of which have not been previously published, are included.

A foreword by William H. Gerdts, art historian and author with a specialization in American art, provides a brief historical overview of the evolution of animal artists their areas of concentration—farm animals, sporting animals, wilderness animals. Wendell D. Garrett, editor-at-large of the Magazine Antiques provides a comparably brief overview of the rise of a sporting culture in this country.

Reuter’s preface to the volume is untraditional and personal. This publication is a reflection of his life experiences in and deep love for country life and culture; field sports; and sporting art as seen and enjoyed at private estates and art museums and galleries, often in the company of family friends and colleagues from both the sports and art arenas. Illustrated with photographs that show favorite horses and hounds, relatives and friends, and his familial homestead, Reuter’s remarks introduce him. In addition to being the newly appointed curator of fine arts at The National Sporting Library, he is the proprietor of Middleburg’s (Virginia) historic Red Fox Inn, art dealer, gun enthusiast, shooting coach, operator of a private game preserve, and gentleman farmer, overseeing farming and livestock raising—as done by his parents and grandparents before him.

This handsome and hefty volume, a true labor of love, is also well researched and carefully edited. Its extensive bibliography is testament to unique character of American sporting art. This reference book is recommended for library collections with strengths in the following areas: American art; foxhunting, field sports, and country life; British sporting art and artists.

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