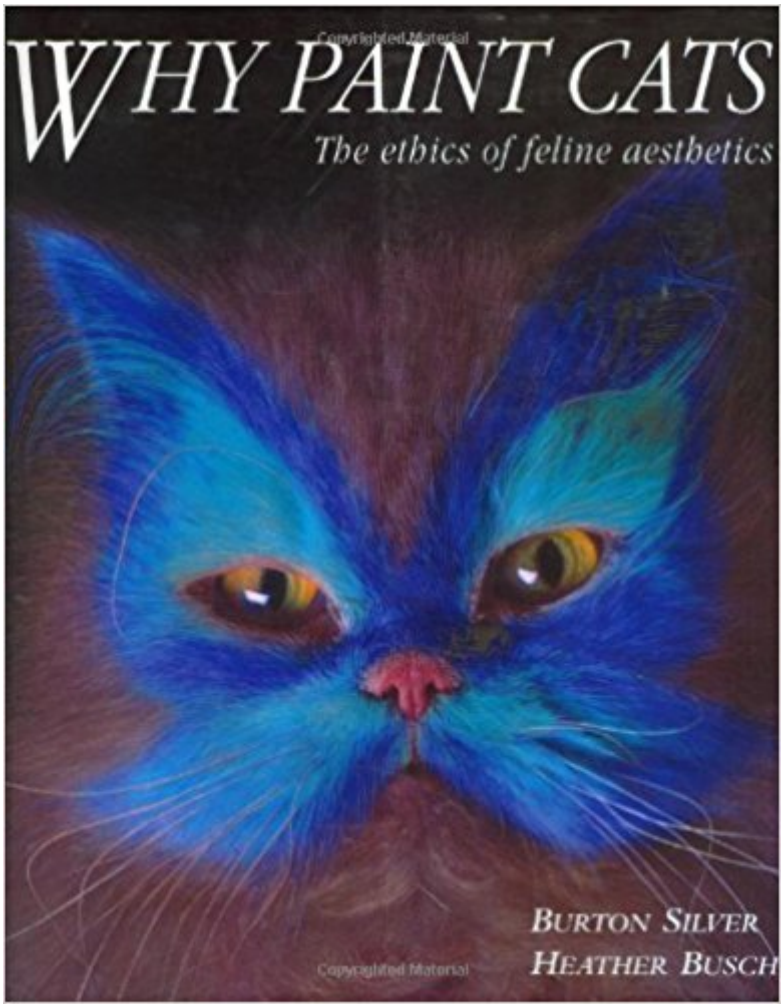
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Why Paint Cats: The Ethics Of Feline Aesthetics



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Synopsis

Why did a woman in California pay an artist $5,000 to paint her cat to look like a pig? What made a New York stockbroker spend even more than that to have the image of Charlie Chaplin painted on his cat'Ã Â¬?s posterior? WHY PAINT CATS reveals that, far from being an amusement for the idle rich, this seemingly aberrant behavior is part of a new art movement that claims to promote a better understanding of the cats in our lives. Following the international success of their previous collaboration of feline aesthetics, WHY CATS PAINT, Burton Silver and Heather Busch turn their scholarly attention to the cat as canvas. The authors detail all the latest trends in the movement, including the highly controversial Retromingent Expressionism, drawing conclusions that will provoke and amuse, startle, and enlighten. Exhaustively researched and lavishly illustrated, this insightful and engaging book raises important ethical questions and explores the rights of pet owners to reinvent their cats in the name of art.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While the popular and enduring Why Cats Paint (1994) profiled the creative output of house pets, highlighting tabbies and Persian long-hairs with smeary abstract canvases they ostensibly made, the authors' latest volume inverts the paradigm, and offers instead the cat-as-canvas. Rexes and Siamese sport rainbow colors on their faces and flanks or graphic designs on their hindquarters: cats are transformed into butterflies, or clowns, or furry American flags. Presented as the document of a developing art movement, the book features a potpourri of artists and their "schools" (Neo-Totemism, Semiotic Anthropomorphism, Avant Funk), pairing big photographs with

faux-interpretive essays about each cat and artist. Perhaps the most amazing entry is a portrait of Charlie Chaplin, supposedly painted with peroxide and vegetable dye on the rear end of a ginger and white cat named Burger. Amusing as a novelty item if nothing else (and very amusing at that), the book also offers a gentle kick in the pants to the gods of art criticism: a cat painted like a fish, for example, succeeds in "redefining and blurring the relationship between fur and scale, fin and tail, in order to create a shared intent that transubstantiates the species and repositions the notion of symbiosis." It's all so weird that it's sort of irresistible. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

“You'Ã Â¬?d think a person would have better things to do with $5,000 than to have her cat painted to look like a pig. . . . I personally appreciate feline beauty without a brush, but for the person who has every art book, my bet is they don'Ã Â¬?t have one showcasing cats as canvases.” — Atlanta Journal-Constitution “I would not paint a cat if someone paid me to do so. I would not paint a cat if Picasso rose from the grave and taught me how. If a cat represented the last piece of canvas on earth, I still would not paint that cat. I just know better. Sadly some people do not. . . . I'Ã Â¬?m pretty sure it'Ã Â¬?s not a hoax.” — Jackson Clarion-Ledger“Suggests itself both as art and an art. Who am I to kibble?” — San Francisco Chronicle“Painted cats transform into art with a purrpuss.”— Las Vegas Review Journal“By the time you finish flipping through WHY PAINT CATS, the latest art-book collaboration by writer Burton Silver and photographer Heather Busch, you'Ã Â¬?ll have more questions than answers. Seeing Charlie Chaplin'Ã Â¬?s face painted on a cat’s rump has that effect.”—Heather McKinnon, Seattle Times“It felt wrong. I was appalled. Then I began to flip through the book, and was knocked back on my heels by the beauty of (some) of the works of art. A question I'Ã Â¬?d never considered nestled in my brain: Why not paint cats?”—San Diego Union Tribune “Kitty Porn . . . What a little tramp! . . . Always wanted to paint your cat like an alien but never had the balls to try?”—Maxim magazine

I bought this book several times to give as a gift. There is nothing else like it, except it's sequel :-) You just have to see the beautiful photos to believe it.

Warning: This book is not for people who take themselves (or anything else) too seriously.I love "Why Paint Cats." The photography and concepts are incredibly well executed and clever. The commentary and 'interviews' are the best part of the work, poking fun at everyone involved,

especially art critics (fortunately). The authors have the stuffy self-importance of the critical world down perfectly, right down to the 'references', for example: "The artist's depiction of a green-eyed purple cat as a metaphor for monster...draws a clear parallel between the socially noxious effects of television and the environmentally destructive consequences of feline-avian conflict in the urban context," - D. Koplos, The Green-Eyed One-Tailed Spying Purple Parrot Eater. L.A. Art Times, 2001.The work is startlingly original and can be read on several levels. I heartily recommend it in every way.

I was really disappointed with the book. This was totally my fault as I did not read the description carefully. I would have never guessed that this book could come so small. I thought for the price I was getting the large coffee table size that my opthamologist's office had. It is hard to appreciated the beautiful paintings in such a small size. I am very interested in buying another copy in a larger size if one is available.

Fascinating what people will do (and spend) to further enhance their cat's appearance! This book provides the best photographs and text for one to inhabit a world where few people get to go.

So fascinating

Weird thing to do to cats. I thought I was getting that hilarious collection "Why Cats Paint", the send-up of modern art critique. Should have examined it more closely. The quality of the photographs is good, but I don't care for what they were doing .

The book was much smaller (3"x3") than I anticipated but still has the pictures I was looking for.

The subject matter of ethics itself was not the primary reason for the purchase; the subjects themselves was. The thought of trying to paint any of our felines and the resulting trip to the emergency room provides endless amusement and conversational fodder. The art itself is creative, the cats seem rather unaffected by it, and overall it is hilarious.

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