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Graven Images: New England Stonecarving And Its Symbols, 1650Ã¢â‚¬â€œ1815



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Synopsis

In Puritan New England, with its abiding concern for things not of this world and its distrust of forms and ceremonies, one art flourished: the symbolic art of mortuary monument stonecarvers. This carefully researched, beautifully illustrated work was the first to consider this art in depth as a meaningful aesthetic-spiritual expression. It is reissued for todayÃ¢â ¬â„¢s readers, with a new preface outlining changes in the field since the book appeared in 1966.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“The classic exemplar of the method of looking at icons on gravestones and relating them to religious texts in an effort to reveal their meaning was perfected by Allan Ludwig in his Graven Images, first published in 1966Ã¢â ¬Â¦This edition provides the young scholar with a time-tested model of scholarship and analysis and the seasoned scholar with new reflections on old work.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Journal of American Folklore

Ã¢â ¬Å“ Ã¢â ¬ËœA big, superbly printed collection . . . To leaf through this book is to confront a vanished community trying to make sense of itself through art.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Greil Marcus, Rolling Stone)Ã¢â ¬Å“Graven Images is a classic text in American Studies. It led a generation into the graveyards of New England to look with fresh eyes on a neglected American art form. LudwigÃ¢â ¬â„¢s insights are as original and inspiring today as they were in 1966, and this book still provides the best single source for images of New England gravestones, with its hundreds of beautiful photographs. ... Students, scholars, and anyone who brakes for old graveyards will

welcome this indispensible book.Ã¢â ¬Â• (David Watters, former editor of Markers)

If you are looking for a good, sophisticated book on New England gravestones and those who carved them, this book is certainly the one to read. Although it is somewhat academic in nature, it is profusely illustrated with photographs and descriptions are well-written and sourced. I can not think of many other works out there that come near this in terms of amount of useful information, clarity and pictures shown as examples. I give this book 5 stars without hesitation.

A well written & beautifully photographed book of stone engravings in our early New England history. Amazing to see how many different & unique symbols were carved into stone & requested by loved ones to "stand watch" over their beloved family's graves! An A+++ book to keep in your archive of reference books for early Stone Carving ART...very inspiring for those who live in antique homes & love early grave-site imagery to use in a "different" way! HIGHLY RECOMMEND!

This tome arrived within days of ordering. It is an excellent source - superbly documented and written for the layman and researcher alike. This book is extensive - bringing to the forefront extensively researched data about New Englands' early settlers burials, those who mastered the gravestone carvings, and the designs and lettering which were unique to specific geographic NE areas.

This book was purchased for the genealogical section of our local library to assist people interested in their genealogy to understand their heritage or to be used as a guide for those artists who are interested in early stonework.

Planning a trip to an old cemetery in New England and wanted to have a better understanding of those grave marker symbols. Now I do. Very informative.

Fascinating, thorough consideration of the historical art sprinkled over the Northeast.

Particularly striking are the many plates which provide a rare insight into the artistic notions of a culture that generally frowned on decoration. As a document on early American notions of form, the books holds its own with the best studies of architecture, pottery and antiques that I have seen.

I’m a longtime history and burial ground enthusiast, but only recently made my first trip to New England (Boston) and was able to see two historic burial grounds on the Freedom Trail (King’s Chapel and Old Granary) - loved them - until then, I had seen some beautiful headstones from as early as the mid-19th century in places like Missouri, Texas, and Kansas, but had never before seen the Puritan-inspired carvings from the late 1600s through the 1700s. This book made for great follow up reading - as an adapted PhD dissertation, it can be a bit heavy at times, esp. in the beginning in introducing the intersection of religious history, art history, and historical methodology, but it really hits its stride in Part II and the first part of Chapter III...the number of individual illustrations is between 250-300 and are absolutely amazing. Some important points I picked up on were the mistaken notion that the Puritans had no religious art; the matching of Puritan and Biblical references to the iconography on the stones; the use of period (1600s/1700s) "emblem books" or primers as models for the iconography - the famous Joseph Tapping stone I saw in Boston came to life when compared with the page from Quarles’ "Hieroglyphiques of the Life of Man." A good bibliographic essay at the end provides some useful reading, but by 2015, it is dated (I read the 1999 reprint) - HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

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