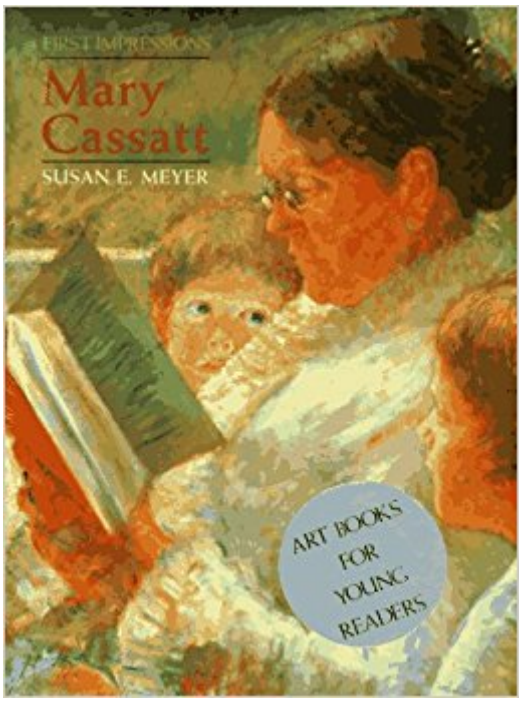
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First Impressions: Mary Cassatt



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Synopsis

Developed especially for older middle-grade and young teen readers, these exciting biographies bring to life the world's great artists.

Book Information

Series: First Impressions

Hardcover: 92 pages

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams; English Language edition (September 1, 1990)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0810931540

ISBN-13: 978-0810931541

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.5 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #1,949,613 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #47 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Art, Music & Photography > Art > History #72 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Art, Music & Photography > Art > Biographies #1889 inÃ Â Books > Teens > Biographies

Customer Reviews

Artfully designed and loaded with high-quality reproductions, these first three entries in the First Impressions series of artist biographies pack a visual wallop. Not surprisingly, their texts match up to the dazzling illustrations--including an electrifying study by Leonardo of rabbits in motion--with varying success. Times being what they are, the artists' personal lives are scrutinized closely. The boundary between fact and colorful speculation can be fuzzy, and Meyer's Mary Cassatt is marred by the author's clumsy (and, in at least one instance, factually inaccurate) efforts to explicate Cassatt's still mysterious intimate life. Conversely, McLanathan nimbly hints at Leonardo's homosexuality while depicting the artist's shifting political milieu with a remarkable immediacy. The dreamlike images of Marc Chagall, a generally less eccentric individual, are gracefully complemented by Greenfeld's down-to-earth, sympathetic prose. Upcoming subjects in the series include Picasso, van Gogh and John James Audubon. Ages 10-up. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 4-8-- In presenting the life of this talented and strong-willed woman of the late 19th/early 20th century, Meyer briefly relates Cassatt's early years and education in America and Europe, and then

concentrates extensively on her time in France. Cassatt's commitment to her family, her determination to succeed as an artist, and her strong sense of ethics and self are shown vividly against the backdrop of Paris in an artistic uproar. Meyer shows, without proselytizing, the conflict between the artist's desire to paint and the expectations of society at that time. Quotes are used from Cassatt's family, friends, and artist-comrades; unfortunately, no sources for these quotes are given. The illustrations are listed with title, medium, and location, but there are no references for any of the information Meyer supplies. While this is a common flaw in nonfiction for children, it is still surprising in a book of this quality. Nicely presented, with 28 full-color plates and 18 black-and-white illustrations, this is lively and eminently readable, and will help round out any collection in the area of women and the arts. --Janice M. Del Negro, Chicago Public LibraryCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is a wonderful introduction to the life of one of America's most famous artists, Mary Cassatt. Few people realize just how influential Cassatt was in bringing about the acceptance and popularity of Impressionism in her native land. Though she spent most of her life in France, Cassatt almost single-handedly persuaded wealthy Americans to purchase Impressionist paintings, with the result that America has one of the world's most outstanding collections of these works today. Cassatt herself was also a highly accomplished painter and the only American woman ever to be awarded a medal of honor by the French government. This little book is lavishly illustrated, with two fold-outs, and several photographs of the artist and her family. I learned a great deal from this engagingly written book for young people, and recommend it highly.

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