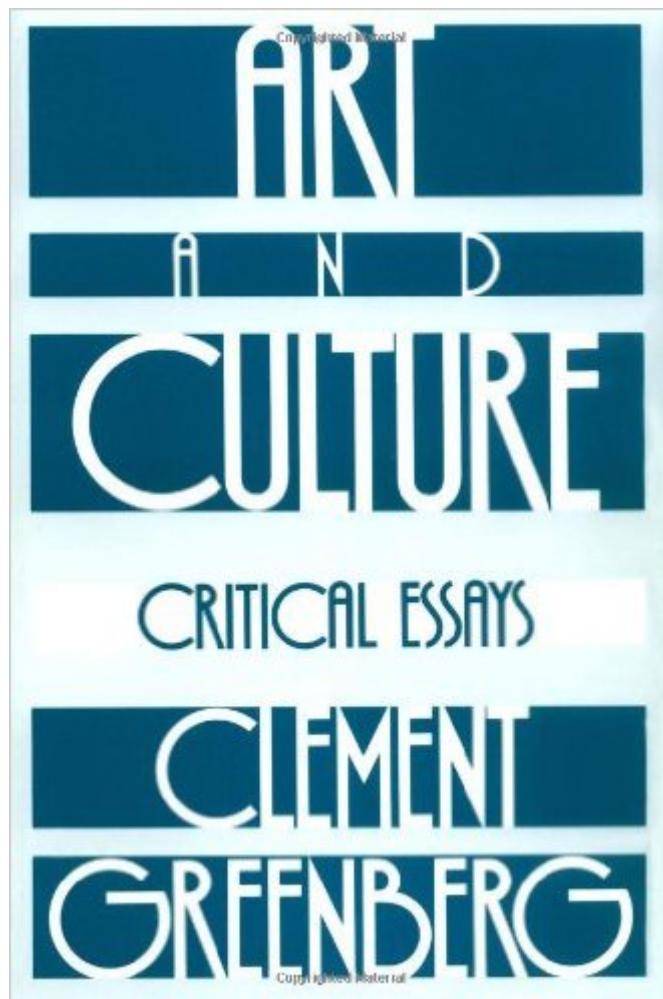


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Art And Culture: Critical Essays



Synopsis

"Clement Greenberg is, internationally, the best-known American art critic popularly considered to be the man who put American vanguard painting and sculpture on the world map. . . . An important book for everyone interested in modern painting and sculpture." *The New York Times*

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Clement Greenberg, who died in 1994, is still considered by many to have been the greatest American art critic of the 20th Century. Even today his work continues to be discussed, supported and attacked by many of the cognoscenti of the art world. "Art and Culture" is a collection of his essays that he edited for publication in 1961. The book is divided into five parts: culture in general; art in Paris; art in general; art in the United States; and literature. Most of the essays are quite short and eminently readable. In an essay on T.S. Eliot, Greenberg praised the critical skills of the poet, noting that Eliot speaks of the facts of a work rather than an interpretation, and this was the same approach that Greenberg took. Greenberg's basic thesis was that the essential quality of painting that distinguished it from other arts was the surface of the work, and that modern painting was moving more and more from looking into the depth of the image to a concern with the plane of the painting, citing among other things, the abandonment of perspective, cubism's attempt to reduce the subject to a single plane, and the disappearance of shading which gives depth to a picture. For those who have never considered this thesis, applying it to styles from cubism to abstract expressionism to color field painting should certainly provide new insights into such work. Even if

one doesn't agree with Greenberg's thesis, his writing is so clear and easy to follow that it is worth reading just for his style. After the convoluted writing of critics like Michael Fried, it is a relief to find that thought about art need not be obscure. The essays include short pieces on artists from Renoir and Cezanne to Hans Hoffman and Milton Avery.

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