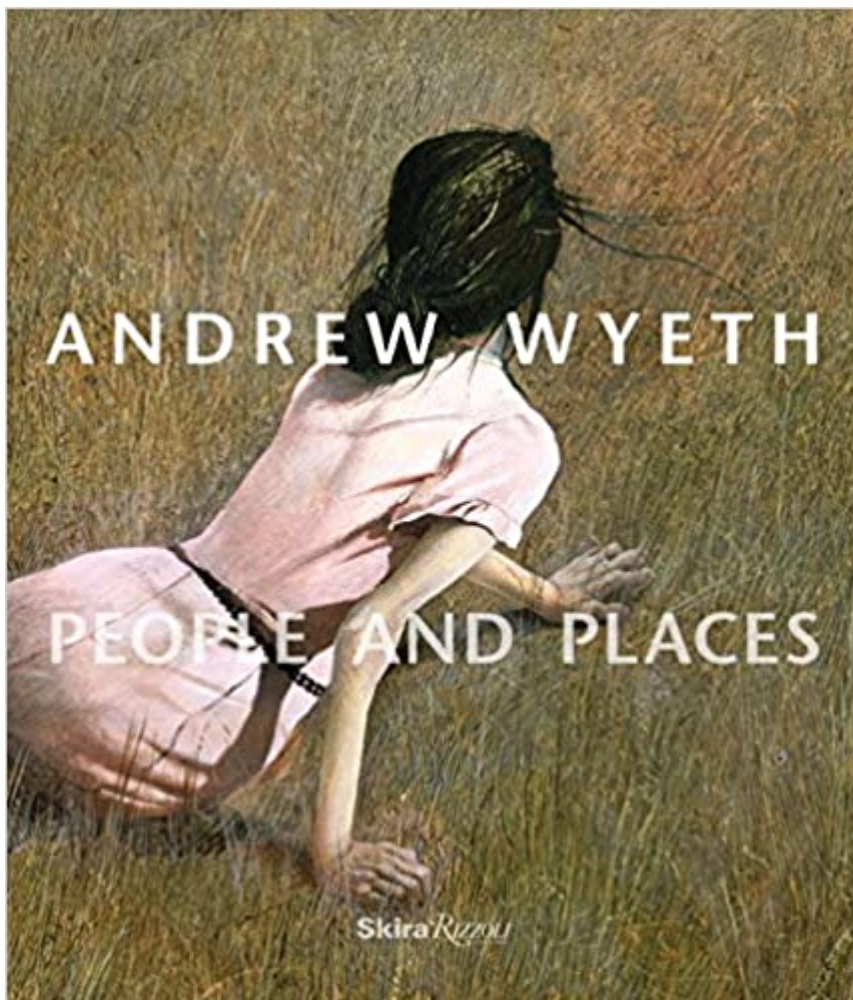


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# Andrew Wyeth: People And Places



## Synopsis

The major paintings of iconic American artist Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009) presented together in an accessible volume. Andrew Wyeth is an essential introduction to the enduring masterworks of this profoundly popular American artist. Published on the occasion of the centennial of the artist's birth, this handsome book highlights works spanning the entirety of the artist's seven-decade career painting the landscapes and people he knew in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, where he lived, and in Maine, where he summered. Many of his most important landscapes and portraits were created in and around his Chadds Ford studio, now part of the Brandywine River Museum of Art, with which Andrew Wyeth was intimately connected since its founding in 1971. A short introduction provides an overview of his life, and descriptive captions contextualize some fifty of the artist's finest and most beloved paintings, including Pennsylvania Landscape (1942), Wind from the Sea (1947), Christina's World (1948), Trodden Weed (1951), Roasted Chestnuts (1956), Braids (1977), and Pentecost (1989). Readers will also be treated to works previously unseen, such as Betsy's Beach (2006) and Crow Tree (2007).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Thomas Padon is director of the Brandywine River Museum of Art, Chadds Ford, PA. Karen Baumgartner is senior researcher at the Andrew Wyeth Catalogue Raisonné, in Chadds Ford, PA.

Good selection of Wyeth paintings; some of which not often available. Narrative contains interesting anecdotes.

It is most unfortunate that this People and Places is the best book published on the occasion of the centennial of Andrew Wyeth's birth. Unfortunate because the book is just too small. Reproductions of paintings on art books are normally just shadows of the original art work but when you get a 48 x 43 inches painting and reproduce it on a 7 x 8 inches photograph then you are losing too much. The largest plate on the book is 7 x 8 inches if you don't count the double spreads which are not much larger anyway. Besides, double spreads far too often ruin paintings and photographs. There are about 50 plates, all of them small. The reproductions are of good quality. The book has been published by Skira Rizzoli in association with the Brandywine River Museum of Art. It has an introduction by the Museum director, Thomas Padon, and a very informative biography of the artist written by Karen Baumgartner, senior researcher at the Andrew Wyeth Catalogue Raisonné. They could have used a larger font for the text. Andrew Wyeth has been vilified by many art critics who look down at Wyeth's work whilst praising mediocre artists such as Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and the likes. It seems to me that those attacks might be one of the reasons why there has been so much over interpretation of Wyeth's work in recent books. It is as if they are trying to compensate the attacks on Wyeth's work by equating his work to the obscure work of those artists who are more popular with big city art critics who dislike Wyeth. It was recently on the news that Three men charged in New York over fake Damien Hirst artworks sold to a multitude of buyers on ... I had a good laugh. One of the so called artwork was "Esculetin" from Hirst's series of spot paintings. It is a white large canvas filled with colourful circles. It looks like a school homework from a ten years old child. Actually, I am pretty sure that if one goes around schools looking at thousands of children's homework they will find several that preceded "Esculetin" and are pretty similar to Hirst's so called artwork. It is much easier to forge an artwork from Hirst than one from Andrew Wyeth. An art dealer in New York said counterfeit Hirst prints are rampant online. Why this digression? Because Wyeth's work is still looked down by many critics, reason why in the year of his centennial there is not a single good book to celebrate his birth. Brandywine Museum, which benefits so much from Wyeth's work, should have stood up for one of the greatest American artists and published a really good book to celebrate Andrew Wyeth's centennial. Instead, what the public got is this little book and the awful "In Retrospect" where there are no plates section, many of the reproductions are of very poor quality because they are either tinted or clearly went through some photoshop sharpening, the text is too over interpretative and there is chapter that is right down insulting and approaches Wyeth's art from a really

pedestrian viewpoint. Of course, the author of that chapter used a politically correct "app" to criticise Wyeth and thanks to that she got a full page on the New York Times... Art scholar David Cateforis, who edited the book *Rethinking Andrew Wyeth*, said that Wyeth was attacked by critics in the 1960s and 1970s and into the 1980s, and by the 1990s was largely written off, Cateforis said. "He was out of bounds because of the way he had been turned into a villain by art critics." On the occasion of *Andrew Wyeth: Memory and Magic* at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, one Anne R. Fabbri wrote, "A hundred years from now (Wyeth's) paintings will be gathering dust in the storage bins of any institution unfortunate enough to have acquired them. The only requests to view them will come from quirky academics in psychology or history trying to decipher the oddities of 20th Century culture, specifically how and why a mediocre artist specializing in banalities became an icon for America's middle classes. It was the 15 seconds of fame of an otherwise irrelevant critic. I was in Bologna a short while ago. I visited their medieval museum. There I saw extraordinary sculptures and artefacts made hundreds of years ago. People looked in awe at the work of those medieval artists but some genius had the idea of placing, together with the medieval work, modern artwork which looked like trash. It was sad to see them side by side. 100 years from now people will still look in awe at the medieval art work whilst those modern monstrosities will not even physically exist anymore as most of them are made of cheap material. It reminds me of the "art" of Gustav Mezger, a bin bag, which had been thrown away by a cleaner in the Tate Gallery. Wyeth is one of the greatest American artists. 2017 is the centennial of his birth. There are no good books to celebrate the date. We only have this small book and the awful *In Retrospect*. Andrew Wyeth didn't get the book he deserved in his centennial. And he is still being mercilessly attacked by art critics. Never mind. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says that the "Blue whale is the most massive animal ever to have lived... there are reports of 33-metre catches that may have reached 200 metric tons. The heart of one blue whale was recorded at nearly 700 kg (about 1,500 pounds)." Andrew Wyeth is a big, majestic blue whale with a 700 kg heart. Those critics? They are just whale parasites.

Really nice quality book from the Brandywine River Museum, where you can see a great collection of Wyeth works. The book is fairly small for an art book (about 7x8), but the reproductions are excellent. There is about 30 pages of text with an essay on Wyeth's painting life, which is concise and well written, followed by full page or two page reproductions. In some cases the reproductions that span more than a page would have been better if smaller and on one page, since being spread

across the second page makes them harder to see due to the crack of the book binding. The art looks crisp and the colors are great. One complaint is that there are no page numbers on the pages of the art work even though in the essay the page numbers are referred to throughout. The lack of page numbers and how some of the two pages spreads look prevent me giving this 5 stars, but overall it is a nice handy reference to some of Wyeth's greatest works at a reasonable price. This book is related to a major retrospective at the Brandywine through mid-September 2017.

Not what I expected ...returned it

Great book.

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