



Brushed Aside: The Untold Story of Women in Art

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Art historian Noah Charney's book *Brushed Aside* is a colorful overview of underrecognized women artists and art influencers throughout history.

While an estimated 75 percent of the human handprints found with cave paintings belonged to women, the record of women artists and their works through time is hazy, Charney notes. This survey of women artists and influencers corrects the record with a focus on European and American artists, patrons, and critics, showing that there have always been great women artists and supporters of the arts, even at times when men got credit for their innovations.

The book meanders through history to illustrate this point, covering those who made notable work even when they were not allowed to be trained or were not given access to the major salons. While sexism and misogyny kept some from being recognized for their achievements, there's also coverage of Mary Cassatt, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Frida Kahlo alongside the book's stories of women like Properzia de' Rossi, a sculptor known for her intricately carved peach pits whose most famous work still in existence is the 1526 relief sculpture *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*.

After its brief overview of women artists in history, the book turns to women who helped form alternate salons and academies that helped women's art to flourish, patrons who supported artists and established collections and museums to preserve those works, and critics and other "influencers" who helped shape the way people think about women in art. And it asks that people do better even now: Charney notes that there is still a need for more scholarship and criticism led by women and more representation of women in collections and in leadership positions at major museums.

Brushed Aside is a spirited art history book covering the unheralded women who shaped art history as artists, patrons, and critics.

SARAH WHITE (September / October 2023)

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