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FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ ART

Elias Rivera

Edwards Lucie-Smith
Edward Lucie Smith, editor
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Southwestern Style.Vibrant colors and varied light play off of figures and settings in Rivera's inspired portraits.

In the oversize *Elias Rivera* (Hudson Hills Press, 12 x 15, 200 color plates, 244 pages, hardcover, $65.00, 978-1-55595-267-9), art critic Edward Lucie-Smith has assembled 200 of the painter's richest works from 1958 to 2006.

Each painting "reflect[s] a moment in time, a thought, or feeling," as actor and friend Gene Hackman writes in the foreword. The actions of the subjects are caught as vividly as in a photograph. In "Fiesta at Santa Fe," amid a throng of people, a man in a hat and bolo tie leans over to hear his companion, who is pointing to an object in the background. The reader can practically hear the din of the music and conversation of the fiesta.

Raised in New York City, Rivera moved to New Mexico as an adult. Many of his paintings depict the brightly colored southwestern fashions and crowded marketplaces of Guatemala, where he spent time in the '80s. Candid renderings of strangers caught off guard feature prominently, as in his "Trump Tower" series, in which business men and fashion plates pass by on glittering escalators.

Lucie-Smith briefly introduces the artist and the book in the first fourteen pages, and the rest is left to the beauty of the paintings. The final pages include a chronology of Rivera's life and a list of his major exhibitions.

A collection of intimate portraits that will transport the reader.

(August 18, 2009)

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