

The Art of Art: Art Is Its Own Language

Dan Matson

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The Art of Art, authored by attorney, painter, gallery owner, and poet Dan Matson, consists of a constellation of contemporary poetic verses that cover myriad aspects of art and reflect Matson's deep understanding of and passion for all forms.

The book consists of a foreword and four segments. In the section "Art of Art I," Matson's poems contemplate artist, aesthetic, space, creation, poetry, music, and sculpture. In "Art of Art II," the poet examines theater, composer, dancer, architecture, author, and film that moves. The following section explores photo, cyberspace/cybersound, cycle, critic, award, and epilogue. Finally, in "Art of Art IV," the volume ends with the author's postscript that explains his poetic and artistic work.

The volume makes a substantial poetry book that can be sold in Matson's gallery. The poems are simple yet interesting, modest yet inspiring. Matson uses agreeable visual imagery and common expressions in original and creative ways to compare objects, making the pieces more interesting. In addition, the poet chooses each word carefully so that both its meaning and sound contribute to the tone and feeling of the poem. He also uses free verse that is closer to natural speech in order to establish a better connection with his art-loving audience. For example, his poem on an artist illustrates his style:

Emerging from unseemly sources and discretions.

Seeking identity in disparity

That only art knows

An energetic surge quickens artist's pulse

As art strikes repeated flashes,

And, briefly,

Only artist holds original.

The Art of Art is an exhibit of Matson's poetic skills and a panoramic display of the varied art forms. Matson's poem on architecture makes another illustration to involve multiple forms of art in his book:

Architecture is the art

That surrounds with art

What it builds with art

Mass intrudes space imposing shape,

Sterling view for more than one generation

The volume does, however, have a limited appeal as well as an average cover design. Moreover, the work is composed of 409 pages of very short poems—three to four lines on each page—giving the false impression of prolificacy. The internal design of this book could certainly have been made more compact and appealing.

Overall, though, *The Art of Art* might provide a gripping literary experience to bona fide art enthusiasts and serve as a literary vehicle to connect or reintroduce the avid art lover to poetry.

RICHARD SKAFF (July 2, 2013)

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