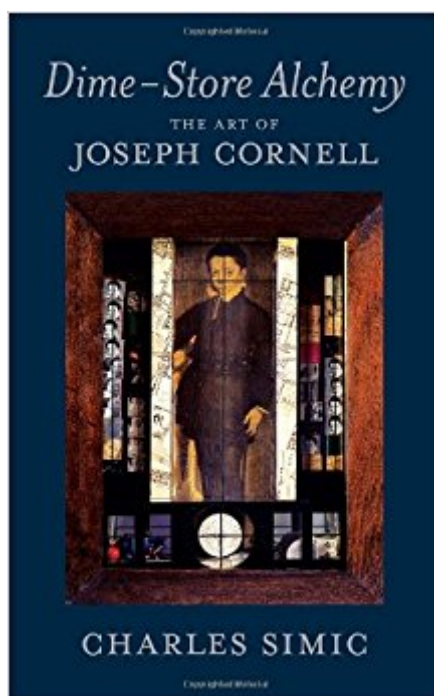


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Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art Of Joseph Cornell (New York Review Books Classics)



Synopsis

Now in Paperback In *A Dime-Store Alchemy*, poet Charles Simic reflects on the life and work of Joseph Cornell, the maverick surrealist who is one of America's great artists.

Simic's spare prose is as enchanting and luminous as the mysterious boxes of found objects for which Cornell is justly renowned.

Book Information

Series: New York Review Books Classics

Paperback: 88 pages

Publisher: NYRB Classics; Main edition (September 20, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590174860

ISBN-13: 978-1590174869

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #143,912 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in Books > Literature &

Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Surrealism #18 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Individual Artists > Essays #26 in Books > Arts & Photography > Sculpture >

Appreciation

Customer Reviews

It's hard to do justice to the charm and power of Joseph Cornell's boxes. His reliance on collage, indifference to technical display, and Surrealist mining of private obsession make him very much a modern artist, yet his work also brings to mind bourgeois parlors, the tidy vitrines of collectors, and the odds and ends children carry around for comfort and distraction. It is an art at once hermetic and matter-of-fact, sophisticated and simple. Appropriately, this study is neither a straightforward critical account of Cornell's art nor a merely literary embellishment of it, but rather a parallel text: written by Simic (*Hotel Insomnia*), one of our best poets, it includes his own poems and reminiscences, as well as quotations from a variety of other writers. Simic mingles biography and critical discussion with selections of writings from the artist's notebooks. The book emerges as a piece of writing constructed along the enigmatic lines of Cornell's art. And that art, as Simic sees it, gathers from the scattered pieces of the American past a new, redeeming reality; at heart, this art is a religious practice. Only seemingly random, Simic's approach develops both the plain detail of Cornell's life

and illuminates the nature of his work. Illustrations. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.
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“Dime-Store Alchemy...is the most sustained literary response this far to Cornell’s boxes, montages, and films...incisive, freewheeling, dramatic • a mixture of evocation and observation, as lucid and shadowy as the imagination it celebrates...Dime-Store Alchemy is a meeting of kindred spirits that is itself a work of art.”
• Edward Hirsch, *The New Yorker*
“A beautiful book that evokes Cornell’s artistic spirit.”
• Harper’s Bazaar
“Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell, [is] a fascinating long-out-of-print book that explores the eccentric genius of the artist through the insightful and often obsessive lens of the poet Charles Simic, who examines eight of Cornell’s most remarkable boxes. It is, more than anything, a meditation on beauty and the art of imagination. Simic’s writing itself is a metaphor for Cornell’s thoughtful collages, stitching together elements of texts by some of the artist’s favorite poets and authors...What makes Dime-Store Alchemy most exceptional is the elegant parallel between the poetry of Cornell’s work and that of Simic’s narrative interpretation of it, at once an embodiment of and commentary on the power of remix in creation.” --
The Atlantic

If you are interested in Joseph Cornell this is a collection of poems you might want to review from an acclaimed writer and poet. Interesting insight and interpretation of Cornell’s assemblages

This adorable book is a pleasure to hold in the hand! 7.25" x 5" and bound in midnight blue cloth lettered in silver and with a Cornell image applied to the front cover it is the perfect size and shape for this group of appreciations and quotations from Joseph Cornell’s notes by the poet Charles Simic. I’m in love! But it is only fair to admit that I was a beeg fan of the work of both men before I ever saw this volume. It would be a treasured gift for that quirky, discerning friend.

A wonderful writing assignment I was introduced to it graduate school was to write a poem about a work of art. Poet Charles Simic has written a poem, prose and wonderful reflections - an assemblage of words - on the life and work of surrealist assemblage artist Joseph Cornell and his boxes. This is a treasure of a book if one is acquainted first with the work of Joseph Cornell.

Mostly text for scholars or enthusiasts. Hardly any works illustrated. Choose another one.

Poet Charles Simic has written a beautiful meditation on the work of Joseph Cornell. (Another terrific title brought back into print by New York Review Books Classics.)

Great book

Then you will love this book of short essays and responses to Joseph Cornell's work by our Poet Laureate. It's small and without a dustjacket, quite elegant and easy to take with you to read when you find yourself with a few spare minutes.

If you are interested in the flaneur, in art, in how nonfiction in the hands of this great American poet can give us insight not just into the work of Joseph Cornell but into our own lives on the streets of our towns and cities, perceiving everything in this daily collage that has order and no order, and could all be art, could all be moving in the right eyes.

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