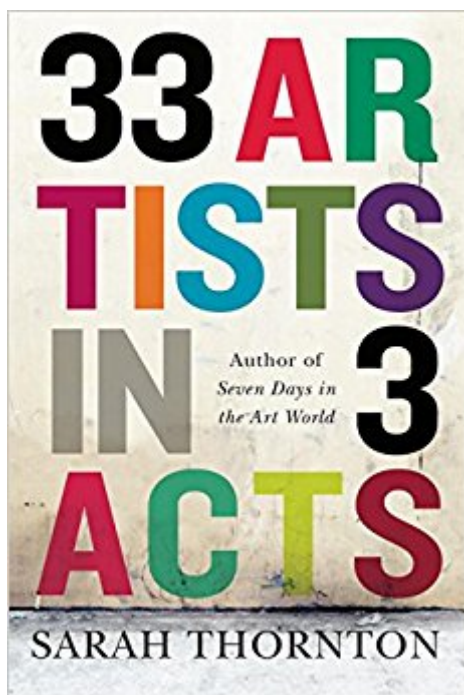


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## 33 Artists In 3 Acts



## Synopsis

This compelling narrative goes behind the scenes with the world's most important living artists to humanize and demystify contemporary art. The best-selling author of *Seven Days in the Art World* now tells the story of the artists themselves—how they move through the world, command credibility, and create iconic works. *33 Artists in 3 Acts* offers unprecedented access to a dazzling range of artists, from international superstars to unheralded art teachers. Sarah Thornton's beautifully paced, fly-on-the-wall narratives include visits with Ai Weiwei before and after his imprisonment and Jeff Koons as he woos new customers in London, Frankfurt, and Abu Dhabi. Thornton meets Yayoi Kusama in her studio around the corner from the Tokyo asylum that she calls home. She snoops in Cindy Sherman's closet, hears about Andrea Fraser's psychotherapist, and spends quality time with Laurie Simmons, Carroll Dunham, and their daughters Lena and Grace. Through these intimate scenes, *33 Artists in 3 Acts* explores what it means to be a real artist in the real world. Divided into three cinematic "acts"—politics, kinship, and craft—it investigates artists' psyches, personas, politics, and social networks. Witnessing their crises and triumphs, Thornton turns a wry, analytical eye on their different answers to the question "What is an artist?" *33 Artists in 3 Acts* reveals the habits and attributes of successful artists, offering insight into the way these driven and inventive people play their game. In a time when more and more artists oversee the production of their work, rather than make it themselves, Thornton shows how an artist's radical vision and personal confidence can create audiences for their work, and examines the elevated role that artists occupy as essential figures in our culture. 44 illustrations, 3 maps

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Another art world page turner.” - *Globe and Mail*

“A masterful picture of 33 artists, keenly bringing details of their lives to the surface with a skilled hand.” | With effortless sophistication, Thornton takes readers on a journey across the globe and into the homes and minds of contemporary artists. In the process, she banishes cynicism about modern art, revealing it to be a volatile, healthy enterprise still deeply engaged with the world. - *Publishers Weekly*, Starred review

“Will startle even art-world insiders.” - *San Francisco Chronicle*

“[T]he Jane Goodall of the art world.” - *Washington Post*

“How can one be a real artist in the real world? Thornton sets off to find out, meeting and debating with many of the most important artists around the globe. Credibility, integrity, legitimacy, recognition and truth in art are all tackled here. While the basis of the book is contemporary art, the themes are of universal interest.” - *The Bookseller*

“Engaging and ingenious.” - *The New Statesman*

“A vivid and entertaining read.” | Thornton meets some interesting artists and her direction can be playful. Her interviews with Andrea Fraser stand out, as do all her meetings with Ai Weiwei.” - *The Guardian*

“Thornton nails some wonderful portraits of the people that, well, do wonderful portraits. These characters are no longer creators of icons but icons themselves and Thornton is in the front pew” - but taking notes, not praying at all.” - *Monocle*

“Inspiring” - as unique as each of the artists featured.” - *Carolina A. Miranda, Los Angeles Times*

“A readable, approachable introduction to the rock stars of [contemporary art] and their work.” - *Kevin O’Kelly, Christian Science Monitor*

Sarah Thornton’s *Seven Days in the Art World* was named one of the best art books of the year by the *New York Times* and is available in sixteen languages. She was the chief writer on contemporary art for *The Economist*. She holds a BA in art history and a PhD in sociology.

Couldn’t put it down. As someone who enjoys but doesn’t hold much contemporary art up to the importance or value as classical/ traditional art, I found myself loving the perspective as well as the insights and candid interviews. It was easy to read through, and provided a beautiful and sometimes harsh view of aspects of the contemporary art scene. Great read, which I’ll be returning to again and again.

Although I liked Sarah Thornton's first book, *Seven Days in the World* better, this was still a very interesting read. The book is ultimately Sarah's opinions on the intentions and motives of various famous contemporary artists. A bit gossipy, a bit insiders scoop, it ultimately does a good job of showing a range of personalities who make up the varied, complicated and fraught stables of art world stars. And it's pretty clear she doesn't think much of Jeff Koons!

As an artist some of the author's explanations/clarifications were unnecessary for me. But if you don't know that much about the art world it's a great read. It was especially nice to read about the wildly different studio practices of various artists, from the factories of Koons and Wei, to the much smaller studios of Cindy Sherman and Gabriel Orozco.

An engrossing read. As an artist, normally I don't pay much attention to the opinions of other artists but this is an exceptional volume. I like how the author engages the people she interviews and the questions she asks.

It was a didactic yet enjoyable experience throughout the different art scenes in the world. Well chosen representatives of the elite art world so would like to see from such a good author about the underdogs.

I learned a lot about artists practicing now and their work that had been only 'names' before reading this book. It helps to search the web for images of them work discussed.

Very interesting if you care about contemporary art and its many complexities

Poorly organized but interesting interviews. Wish there was more diversity of artists interviewed.

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