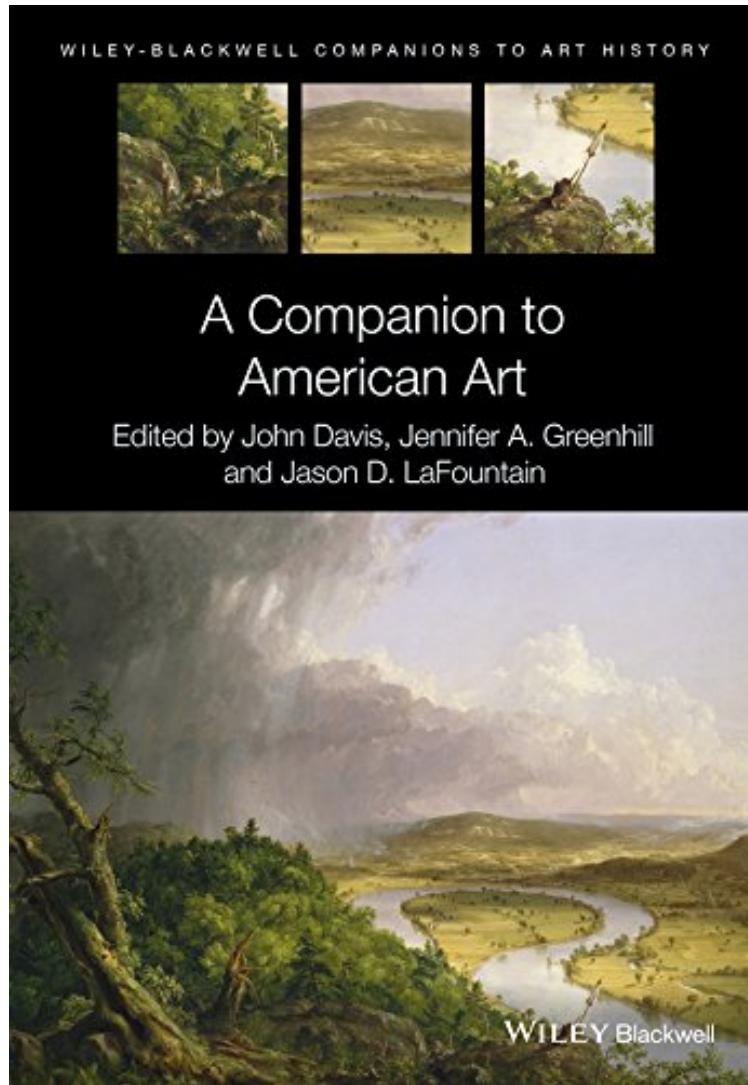


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From Wiley-Blackwell : A Companion to American Art (Blackwell Companions to Art History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Companion to American Art (Blackwell Companions to Art History):

4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A lot of bucks for a lot of verbageBy E. FriedovskyA Companion to American Art is a fascinating selection of thirty-six essays which will surely be scoped by thousands of historians of American art, and as surely be read by at least thirty-six of them. Except for the final essay by Andrew Hemingway, the reader learns nothing about American art history, but all-too-much about contrasting new-but-arcane

methodologies, and critiques of traditional literature in the field. It also abounds with newly minted terminology, based on the manipulation to the point of unrecognizability of existing ones. The English language thus becomes both richer and poorer: richer, because of the extensive additions of terminology; poorer, since the verbiage only obfuscates to the point of unuseability (like this last only vastly more impenetrable). The book is a testament to the divide between art historical research and a need for (unnecessary?) re-invention.

A Companion to American Art presents 35 newly-commissioned essays by leading scholars that explore the methodology, historiography, and current state of the field of American art history. Features contributions from a balance of established and emerging scholars, art and architectural historians, and other specialists. Includes several paired essays to emphasize dialogue and debate between scholars on important contemporary issues in American art history. Examines topics such as the methodological stakes in the writing of American art history, changing ideas about what constitutes "Americanness"; and the relationship of art to public culture. Offers a fascinating portrait of the evolution and current state of the field of American art history and suggests future directions of scholarship.

"Art historians will greet this stimulating series of companions to art history, of which this volume is the eighth, with enthusiasm." (Reference s, May 2016) From the Back Cover A Companion to American Art presents a comprehensive exploration of the methodology, historiography, and current state of the field of American art history. Featuring 35 newly-commissioned essays by leading scholars, readings address both canonical and lesser-known artists, trends, and themes while showcasing a diversity of critical approaches to American art history interpretation. Topics covered range from scholarly overviews of specific chronological periods, movements, and media to in-depth explorations of theoretical concepts; from patronage to popular visual expression; from artistic facture and form to the history of art reception; and from issues of identity and community to reflections on ecology and the environment. Other writings shift focus to the geographical, conceptual, and chronological boundaries of "Americanness"; and the field of American art history, and cover pressing contemporary concerns and suggest future directions of scholarship in research and interpretation. Various art history perspectives are highlighted through several "dialogues," in which scholars exchange ideas about important contemporary issues in the field. Essays also feature personal reflections of individual contributors on the development of the field. Combining innovative scholarship with thought-provoking debates, A Companion to American Art is an indispensable reference to the study of American art and artists from colonial times to the current day.

About the Author John Davis is Alice Pratt Brown Professor of Art at Smith College. His most recent book (co-authored with Sarah Burns) is *American Art to 1900: A Documentary History* (2009). Jennifer A. Greenhill is Associate Professor of Art History, Criticism and Interpretive Theory at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She is the author of *Playing It Straight: Art and Humor in the Gilded Age* (2012). Jason D. LaFountain is Instructor in the Department of Art History, Theory, and Criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.