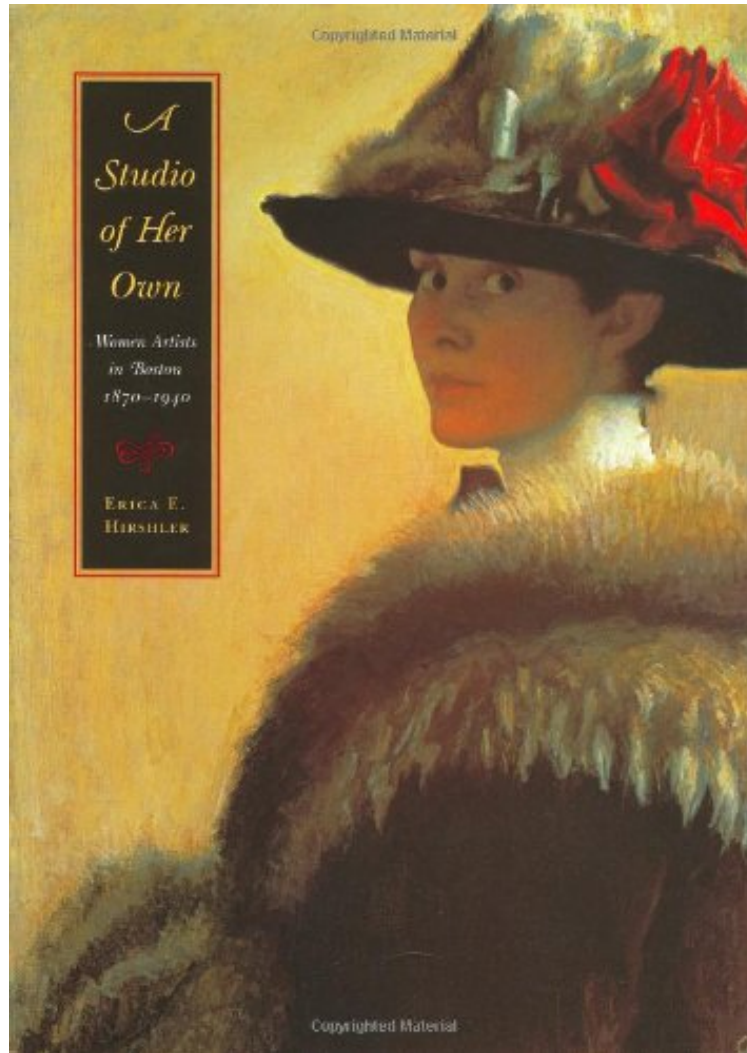


A Studio of Her Own: Women Artists in Boston 1870-1940

Erica E. Hirshler

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Erica E. Hirshler : A Studio of Her Own: Women Artists in Boston 1870-1940 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Studio of Her Own: Women Artists in Boston 1870-1940:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. American Women Artists of the 19th 20th CenturiesBy Bill KayeA Studio of Her Own: Women Artists in Boston 1870-1940, by Erica Hirsler is all about the struggle of Boston-based female artists to find a "voice" (or better still, "a brush") on the Boston art scene, until very recent times. Hirshler is a curator at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and recently curated an exhibit of Women in Art 1780s to the 1980s, most of them American, and most of these coming from Boston. This exhibit has toured the U.S.; I saw it in Naples, FL; it is currently in Japan. It contained the works of such well-known non-Bostonians as Mary Cassatt, who spent her career

in France and Georgia O'Keefe, who spent hers in New Mexico. However, many of the artists were in fact Bostonians or New Englanders. Some of the women painters were married to well known male painters, and shared a studio; some had famous painting brothers (i.e., Ellen Hale); some just came from wealthy families and didn't need to make a living. It was a difficult existence for a woman to make a success as a painter, let alone get commissions and make a living; some gave up trying; a few succeeded. In this regard, women as painters parallels the female experience in other professions (law, medicine) in the same era. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Used, came without dust cover. By Cow Town Girl This came without a dust cover so I wasn't happy about that. The book itself was in very good shape. It's a duck shoot buying used but sometimes that's all that's available. It's an interesting read. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. An important contribution. By Bonnie Hurd Smith In the interest of full disclosure, the author and I are both involved with the Boston Women's Heritage Trail. However, my respect for her work stands on its own. Hirshler's book is an important contribution to understanding women artists in Boston during the nineteenth century and how it was that this group was able to step forward and become professional artists. She looks at the historical forces that both kept them back and propelled them forward, who they were, what training they received and where, where they lived and worked, how they were received by their families and the public, and so on. She also examines the work itself as a curator, and provides great insight into style and technique. This book is thorough, and fascinating. Also, the images of the women's work are fabulous. These women were not only courageous, they were GOOD! I use Hirshler's book all the time in the talks and tours I give about Boston women artists. It is an essential resource. --Bonnie Hurd Smith

As early as 1889, one Boston art critic had reported that "there is nothing that men do that is not done by women now in Boston." The city of Boston saw perhaps the largest concentration of women artists in the country, and *A Studio of Her Own* tells the interwoven stories of 40 of them in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It explores their lives and work both individually and communally, taking particular note of the relationships they formed, which enabled many of them to excel. Along with individual portraits of the artists, the book includes discussions of such contextual issues as the importance of the Arts and Crafts movement, concerns of marriage, family and sexuality, and the role of the MFA School. *A Studio of Her Own* is the definitive work on an important moment in America's cultural and artistic history.

From *Library Journal* Complementing a Boston Museum of Fine Arts exhibit of the same name, Hirshler's book chronicles the birth and evolution of women artists who trained or were centered in Boston. The John Moors Cabot curator of American painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Hirshler found her niche rediscovering lesser-known artists with her previous work, *Dennis Miller Bunker: American Impressionist*. She hits her stride with this new study, providing a standard for regional treatments of women artists. The book not only surveys artists grouped together solely by gender or artistic medium but also establishes the intertwining and harmonious relationships among several Bostonian generations. In addition, the original research generates fresh interest in a largely forgotten or unknown aesthetic stratum of New England. Hirshler delves into challenges specific to female artists, thus marrying art history with social history and appealing to a wider audience. Abundant illustrations, artists' biographies, and extensive footnotes make this essential for academic libraries specializing in art history. Rebecca Tolley-Stokes, East Tennessee State Univ., Johnson City Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. an intelligent survey of the intersection among feminist, cultural, and artistic issues in a pivotal 70-year period. -- *The Boston Globe*, December 2, 2001 -- Richard Dyer more than mere catalog examines the lives and works of 40 artists, in effect ensuring their survival in the public consciousness. -- *The Boston Globe* -- Christine Temin original research generates fresh interest Hirshler delves into challenges specific to female artists, thus marrying art history with social history -- *Library Journal*, August 2001 -- Rebecca Tolley-Stokes tells the interwoven stories of 40 women artists and their resourcefulness in dealing with societal restrictions. -- *Publishers Weekly*, August 13, 2001 *Publishers Weekly*, August 13, 2001 About the Author Erica E. Hirshler is John Moors Cabot curator of American painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She is the author of "Dennis Miller Bunker" and a contributor to "The Bostonians."