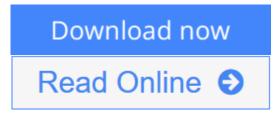


The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing

By David Scott



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What separates the chaos of fighting from the coherent ritual of boxing? According to author David Scott, it is a collection of aesthetic constructions, including the shape of the ring, the predictable rhythm of timed rounds, the uniformity of the boxers' glamorous attire, and the stylization of the combatants' posture and punches. In *The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing*, Scott explores the ways in which these and other aesthetic elements of the sport have evolved over time. Scott comprehensively addresses the rich dialogue between boxing and the arts, suggesting that boxing not only possesses intrinsic aesthetic qualities but also has inspired painters, graphic designers, surrealist poets, and modern writers to identify, expand, and respond to the aesthetic properties of the sport. Divided into three parts, the book moves from a consideration of the evolution and intrinsic aesthetics of boxing to the responses to the sport by cubist and futurist painters and sculptors, installation artists, poster designers, photographers, and, finally, surrealist poets and modernist writers.

With distinctive illustrations and photographs in nine short chapters, Scott creates a visual as well as a textual narrative that supplements and concretely demonstrates the deep, dynamic relationship between the art of boxing and the world of art and literature.





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Editorial Review

Review

"In *The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing*, David Scott addresses the daunting task of establishing a groundwork for the aesthetics of boxing—and succeeds with consummate authority. . . . In Scott's incisive blend of art history, sociology, and sports writing, he makes a daring and original statement about fighters and the artists who enshrined them."—Robert Anasi, author of *The Gloves* (Robert Anasi 2008-03-24)

"In David Scott's hands, boxing becomes a kaleidoscope of psychological, sociological, ethnological, and aesthetic symptoms and indices, which transform the infliction of minor injury into a crucial cultural investment. . . . If boxing then has seemed for so long to encapsulate the neuroses and satisfactions of alphamaledom, it is only because we have missed all the nuances and subtextual activity that this book makes available to us with such shrewd and penetrating analysis."—Clive Scott, professor of American literature at the University of East Anglia (England), member of the British Academy, and boxing enthusiast (Clive Scott 2009-03-24)

"Himself an amateur boxer, Scott considers the rituals, accoutrements, literature, painting, and aesthetic of boxing. . . . From the shape of the ring and the arc of a punch to ropes and punching bags, the author searches for the deeper meaning and the intrinsic qualities of the 'manly art.' . . . Beautifully illustrated and produced, this boxing book is unlike any other."—R. W. Roberts, *Choice* (R. W. Roberts *Choice*)

"David Scott's book is to be greatly welcomed as the latest addition to a small, but growing literature on the art and cultural history of boxing. . . . A tantalising study."—Lynda Nead, *Sport in History* (Lynda Nead *Sport in History*)

"Scott's book can be appreciated by both art and boxing aficionados. It offers new ways to make "sense" of our world through the creative representation of relationships hidden within the most primal of human activities—boxing. I went all 15 rounds with Scott's *The Art and Aesthetics of Boxing*—he won the unanimous decision. He's tricky, clever, and hard to hit."—Dick Stull, *Arete* (Dick Stull *Arete*)

About the Author

A middleweight amateur boxer, David Scott is a professor of French (textual and visual studies) at Trinity College in Dublin. He is the author of several books on semiotics, including *Semiologies of Travel from Gautier to Baudrillard, European Stamp Design: A Semiotic Approach*, and *Pictorialist Poetics: Poetry and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-Century France*.

Roger L. Conover is a writer, curator, and the executive editor of the MIT Press, where he publishes books on art, architecture, and cultural studies. He also is the former boxing commissioner for the state of Maine.

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