

Born Under Saturn

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a rare art history classic that the new york times calls a delightful scholarly and gossipy romp through the character and conduct of artists from antiquity to the french revolution born under saturn is a classic work of scholarship written with a light and winning touch margot and rudolf wittkower explore the history of the familiar idea that artistic inspiration is a form of madness a madness directly expressed in artists unhappy and eccentric lives this idea of the alienated artist the wittkowers demonstrate comes into its own in the renaissance as part of the new bid by visual artists to distinguish themselves from craftsmen with whom they were then lumped together where the skilled artisan had worked under the sign of light fingered mercury the ambitious artist identified himself with the mysterious and brooding saturn alienation in effect was a rung by which artists sought to climb the social ladder as to the reputed madness of artists well some have been as mad as hatters some as tough minded as the shrewdest businessmen and many others wildly and willfully eccentric but hardly crazy what is certain is that no book presents such a splendid compendium of information about artists lives from the early renaissance to the beginning of the romantic era as born under saturn the wittkowers have read everything and have countless anecdotes to relate about artists famous and infamous about suicide celibacy wantonness weird hobbies and whatnot these make born under saturn a comprehensive quirky and endlessly diverting resource for students of history and lovers of the arts this book is fascinating to read because of the abundant quotations which bring to life so many remarkable individuals the new york review of books

madness and the romantic poet examines the longstanding and enduringly popular idea that poetry is connected to madness and mental illness the idea goes back to classical antiquity but it was given new life at the turn of the nineteenth century the book offers a new and much more complete history of its development than has previously been attempted alongside important associated ideas about individual genius creativity the emotions rationality and the mind in extreme states or disorder ideas that have been pervasive in modern popular culture more specifically the book tells the story of the initial growth and wider dissemination of the idea of the romantic mad poet in the nineteenth century how and why this idea became so popular and how it interacted with the very different fortunes in reception and reputation of romantic poets their poetry and attacks on or defences of romanticism as a cultural trend generally again leaving a popular legacy that endured into the twentieth century material covered includes nineteenth century journalism early literary criticism biography medical and psychiatric literature and poetry a wide range of scientific and pseudoscientific thinkers are discussed alongside major romantic authors including wordsworth coleridge blake hazlitt lamb percy bysshe shelley keats byron and john clare using this array of sources and figures the book asks was the romantic mad genius just a sentimental stereotype or a romantic myth or does its long popularity tell us something serious about romanticism and the role it has played or has been given in modern culture

from picasso s cubism and duchamp s readymades to warhol s silkscreens and smithson s earthworks the art of the twentieth century broke completely with earlier artistic traditions a basic change in the market for advanced art produced a heightened demand for innovation and young conceptual innovators from picasso and duchamp to rauschenberg and warhol to cindy sherman and damien hirst responded not only by creating dozens of new forms of art but also by behaving in ways that would have been incomprehensible to their predecessors conceptual revolutions in twentieth century art presents the first systematic analysis of the reasons for this discontinuity david w galenson whose earlier research has changed our understanding of creativity combines social scientific methods with qualitative analysis to produce a fundamentally new interpretation of modern art that will give readers a far deeper appreciation of the art of the past century and of today than is available elsewhere

this impressive volume presents a thorough examination of all aspects of physical impairment and disability in medieval europe examining a popular era that is of great interest to many historians and researchers irene metzler presents a theoretical framework of disability and explores key areas such as medieval theoretical concepts theology and natural philosophy notions of the physical body medical theory and practice bringing into play the modern day implications of medieval thought on the issue this is a fascinating and informative addition to the research studies of medieval history history of medicine and disability studies scholars the english speaking world over

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