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*A renowned historian of western American art
portrays eight western American artists*

Western Art, Western History

Collected Essays

By Ron Tyler

For nearly half a century, celebrated historian Ron Tyler has researched, interpreted, and exhibited western American art. This splendid volume, gleaned from Tyler's extensive career of connoisseurship, brings together eight of the author's most notable essays, reworked especially for this volume. Beautifully illustrated with more than 150 images, *Western Art, Western History* tells the stories of key artists, both famous and obscure, whose provocative pictures document the people and places of the nineteenth-century American West.

The artists depicted in these pages represent a variety of personalities and artistic styles. According to Tyler, each of them responded in unique ways to the compelling and exotic drama that unfolded in the West during the nineteenth century—an age of exploration, surveying, pleasure travel, and scientific discovery. In eloquent and engaging prose, Tyler unveils a fascinating cast of characters, including the little-known German-Russian artist Louis Choris, who served as a draftsman on the second Russian circumnavigation of the globe; the exacting and precise Swiss artist Karl Bodmer, who accompanied Prince Maximilian of Wied on his sojourn up the Missouri River; and the young American Alfred Jacob Miller, whose seemingly frivolous and romantic depictions of western mountain men and American Indians remained largely unknown until the mid-twentieth century. Other artists showcased in this volume are John James Audubon, George Caleb Bingham, Alfred E. Mathews, and, finally, Frederic Remington, who famously sought to capture the last glimmers of the “old frontier.”

A common thread throughout *Western Art, Western History* is the important role that technology—especially the development of lithography—played in the dissemination of images. As the author emphasizes, many works by western artists are valuable not only as illustrations but as scientific documents, imbued with cultural meaning. By placing works of western art within these broader contexts, Tyler enhances our understanding of their history and significance.

Ron Tyler is retired as director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas. He is the contributor to and author of numerous books on art and photography of the American West, including *Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist as Explorer*, *Visions of America: Pioneer Artists in a New Land*, and *Prints of the West: Prints from the Library of Congress*.



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