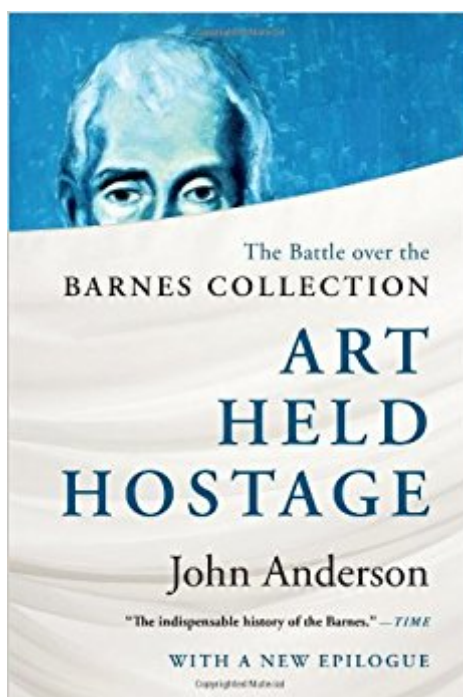


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Art Held Hostage: The Battle Over The Barnes Collection



Synopsis

• Money, pretension, horrid behavior by cultured people • (New York) • John Anderson's tale delivers it all in fabulously juicy detail. This is the story of how a fabled art foundation's greatest collection of impressionist and postimpressionist art in America, including 69 Cézannes, 60 Matisses, and 44 Picassos, among many priceless others came to be, and how more than a decade of legal squabbling brought it to the brink of collapse and to a move that many believe betrayed the wishes of the founder, Dr. Albert C. Barnes (1872-1951). Art Held Hostage is now updated with a new epilogue by the author covering the current state of this international treasure and the endless battle over its fate. 8 pages of photographs

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Anyone familiar with the Barnes Museum knows the inherent irony of the collection - some of the greatest works of art housed in what amounts to a converted residence, with no logic to the pattern of display other than a sheer "wow" factor over seeing Cezannes, Matisses and other masters shown matter-of-factly. This priceless assemblage, and the battles that have been waged over its ownership and rights of management make for one terrifically enjoyable read. Outside of the art world, few people even knew of the Barnes's collection until the latter part of last century, when battles, both in court and in the news blew its cover. Struggling financially, and with management consisting of (overwhelmingly) less than capable minds, the foundation which owns and manages the collection approached bankruptcy and battles began over a touring show of the pieces. The very ugly underbelly of this battle made headline news for months, and spilled over into relations with

neighbors of the museum, Philadelphia area politicians, art students and lovers, and the wishes of a very private man who appreciated art, but underappreciated the legacy he bequeathed a small minority college in Chester County, Pennsylvania. John Anderson does a great job profiling the players in the battle (his take on Richard Glanton, a lawyer with political aspirations who was a key player in the battle) is dead on. Often times, the characters in this true story seem larger than the paintings and legacy they are battling over - Anderson gives the various egos at work here more than enough room, which makes the book both entertaining, and troubling (particularly when the reader considers that these people are battling over one of a kind masterpieces).

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