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Flash From The Bowery: Classic American Tattoos, 1900-1950



Synopsis

Between these pages are images of the original acetate rubbings from Charlie Wagner's turn of the 20th century tattoo shop, The Black Eye Barbershop, in the Bowery at Chatham Square in New York. This is the only known art that has survived from this shop, where Samuel J. O'Reilley's modern-day electric tattoo machine was born and patented. The imagery of this classic flash preserves the origins of American tattoos, when tattoo art was transferred to the client from these templates via an acetate stencil. Everything was done by hand until O'Reilley's electrified tattoo machine changed history. This rich heritage of folk art has more than 900 individual pieces of flash that provide commentary on the shop's clientele and reveal some of the social, economic, and political ideas of the time. Including nautical themes, Asian imagery, flowers, boxers, circus characters, and plenty of girls, this is an exciting collection of early American flash and a necessary book for the tattoo artist, aficionado, and student.

Book Information

Hardcover: 400 pages

Publisher: Schiffer; 1 edition (November 18, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0764339281

ISBN-13: 978-0764339288

Product Dimensions: 9.7 x 2.1 x 12.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #400,274 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 in Books > Arts & Photography > Other Media > Body Art & Tattoo #917 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Beauty, Grooming, & Style #3125 in Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > History

Customer Reviews

Cliff R. White opened his first tattoo shop, Cliff's Tattoo, in Centereach, New York, in August of 1989. He has been researching and collecting tattoo memorabilia and history for almost 30 years.

This book contains an astonishing number of authentic traditional tattoo designs. If you are a traditional tattooer, a tattoo historian, or a folk art enthusiast, this book is worth its weight in gold. Each page is thoughtfully laid out and the designs are boldly and skillfully outlined in black, unlike in "Sailor Jerry's Tattoo Stencils," where the designs are direct photocopies of original acetate stencils.

The subject matter is understandably limited here- just about every design can be classified as a ship, an anchor, a woman, a flag, a dragon, a snake, or a rose; but within those subjects there is incredible variety and artistry. The paper quality could be better- the pages are a bit like children's construction paper, but this is more than compensated for by the book's size, and the sheer quality and quantity of the artwork it contains.

A must for tattoo reference. Huge. Hundreds of pictures. Only complaint is the paper of the books is really cheap and delicate (almost like newsprint) will damage the page if you trace with tracing paper.

Very very happy with this purchase! Amazing book quality, it arrived in perfect condition and very fast, I would recommend this seller. Will definitely shop soon! Thank you!

Wonderful look into tattoo history. Must have for any tattoo artist.

great book

If you're into old American Traditional tattoo art, buy this! It's a great book to have in my collection, and I could look through it all day.

if you are a tattoo artist, or a tattoo enthusiast you will love this book. It is worth every penny!

Hugely Successful Gift That He Not Only Loves, But I Love To Look At It As Well. A Really Great Purchase.

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