Iconic America: A Roller-Coaster Ride through the Eye-Popping Panorama of American Pop Culture by George Lois

Great Book But There's Something You Should Know About It.

What is America? It's Monopoly and Mickey Mouse, but also Sinatra and Fred Astaire. It's the Declaration of Independence, but it's also Barbie and Playboy, Winslow Homer and Rudi Gernreich’s topless bathing suit. This juxtaposition of images reflects America’s unique eclecticism, and the unprecedented influence that the images of America’s pop culture have had on the world. This book works as a great treasury of Americana, and as a mischievously enjoyable observation on all things truly American. Fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger and famous adman George Lois have crafted an enlightening book, searching American history to find over 350 people, symbols, and things of import. Their iconic and iconoclastic choices are entertainingly presented through surprising visual juxtapositions. Inspired by Tommy Hilfiger’s passion for Americana and George Lois’ wit, Iconic America dramatizes the national ethos, and makes us think about who we are and what we stand for, with humor and charm.

Features:
* Notes:

The title of this review stems from my reaction to the size and heft of this book when I first saw it. Clocking in at some 300+ pages, and a hefty size, it's one monster of a book. And it has just about everything that is a part of the American iconography over the past 225+ years of existence. It has Burma shave signs. It has Andy Warhol. It has the Nike Swoosh. It has apple pie. It has Santa Claus.

Tommy Hilfiger may not be the best writer in the world, but he does have an eye for the most memorable icons of the past almost 2½ centuries. There are iconic paintings that have captured American History
and Americana (Leutze's Washington Crossing the Delaware and Wood's American Gothic to name a couple). There are the brand names that are associated with America (Mc Donald's the Pillsbury doughboy and the previously mentioned Nike swoosh). Cinematic memories (Frankenstein, Dracula, Jimmy Stewart, etc.) architectural masterpieces (the Guggenheim, the Empire State Building, Penn Station, etc.) and moments in history (The Hindenburg, the Kennedy assassination, Lou Gehrig's farewell speech) all vie for your attention in these pages.

Some may be scandalized by the appearance of an actual Playboy centerfold (from a 1971 issue) in these pages, or a picture of a topless bikini by Rudi Gernreich, but myself I was more scandalized by the pictures of Michael Jackson and O. J. Simpson and their respectively famous gloves. Yeech!

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