Norman Rockwell: Behind the Camera by Ron Schick

Great Price, Great Book

Norman Rockwell: Behind the Camera is the first book to explore the meticulously composed and richly detailed photographs that Norman Rockwell used to create his famous artworks. Working alongside skilled photographers, Rockwell acted as director, carefully orchestrating models, selecting props, and choosing locations for the photographs--works of art in their own right--that served as the basis of his iconic images. Readers will be surprised to find that many of his most memorable characters—the girl at the mirror, the young couple on prom night, the family on vacation—were friends and neighbors who served as his amateur models. In this groundbreaking book, author and historian Ron Schick delves into the archive of nearly 20,000 photographs housed at the Norman Rockwell Museum. Featuring reproductions of Rockwell's black-and-white photographs and related full-color artworks, along with an incisive narrative and quotes from Rockwell models and family members, this book will intrigue anyone interested in photography, art, and Americana.

This book is great for anyone who is interested in the practice of illustration and particularly the work of one of its masters, Norman Rockwell. This book talks a bit about his creative process, but the bulk of it is devoted to displaying some of his reference photos alongside of his final work. He devoted a great deal of time constructing poses and props of his reference photos. But when it came time to paint, he didn't mechanically copy his photos, he masterfully reworked the images into well designed, emotionally compelling images.

For anyone interested in more detailed exploration of how to use photos as reference for creative work, I'd recommend reading Andrew Loomis' "Creative Illustration."

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