

News from Simon & Schuster

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The Turning Point

The Abstract
Expressionists
and the
Transformation
of American Art

"**THE TURNING POINT** is intelligent, balanced, and thoroughly informative. And, best of all, it brings back the glory days of the New York art scene with a you-were-there vividness."

-- Deborah Solomon, author
Jackson Pollock: A Biography

"April Kingsley makes us share the dynamism and danger of the adventure, the sense that these artists had of working on an edge. We feel their compulsive energy, their obsession for pushing forward work unlike any seen on earth to that point. And throughout, Kingsley treats these complex emotional and intellectual issues with clarity, tact, and grace. This is the way to write about a cultural movement -- with sweep and empathy, as living history. It's a wonderful achievement."

-- Eleanor Munro, author
Originals: American Women Artists

"This vibrant, intimate, gripping group portrait of American Abstract Expressionists shows how the anguish of their personal lives fed into their art."

-- *Publishers Weekly*

APRIL KINGSLEY

dashing blond Dutchman Willem de Kooning, an illegal alien who, years before, had jumped ship in New Jersey.

Others in this portrait are immigrants too: Arshile Gorky from a politically defunct Armenia; Mark Rothko, a doubt-wracked escapee from a Jewish ghetto in Russia; and the old German, Hans Hofmann, who had experienced the horrors of both world wars. With them was the chain-smoking Philip Guston, who had grown up in Southern California surrounded by bizarre cults (his paintings actually having been shot at by the Ku Klux Klan); Adolph Gottlieb, a tough street-smart painter from the Bronx, who was the opposite in just about every way of the moneyed, cultivated Californian Robert Motherwell. William Baziotes seemed as suave as a motion-picture gangster, but deeply introspective. Bradley Walker Tomlin was debonair but as quiet and gentle as his friend James Brooks. Buddha-like Ad Reinhardt, the nay-saying moralist who was always in the picture but never really joined the group, shared a severe and puritanical style with Clyfford Still, a gaunt and taciturn son of a farmer from North Dakota. Both men contrasted with former steelworker David Smith, who could swill beer and swap stories with longshoremen, who in turn was very different from the sophisticated city-slickers Lee Krasner and Barnett Newman, the latter of whom rushed to join the group, monocle in place.

THE TURNING POINT is April Kingsley's first book. She has taught at a number of schools, has been a curator at the Museum of Modern Art and the Pasadena Art Museum, and has written art criticism for such publications as *Art News*, *Artforum*, *Art International*, *The Village Voice*, and *Newsweek*. Combining personal biography with a fresh critical evaluation of the artists' works, Kingsley takes us into the dynamic and adventurous world of the Abstract Expressionists, showing how they helped to make New York the post-war international capital of art and culture. With **THE TURNING POINT**, Kingsley gives us a detailed portrait of the most exciting and most important group of painters in American history.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

April Kingsley was born in New York. She received an M.A. degree from New York University's Institute of Fine Arts and is completing a Ph.D. degree at the City University Graduate Center. She has been a curator at The Museum of Modern Art and the Pasadena Art Museum, and has written art criticism for *Art News*, *Artforum*, *Art International*, the *Soho Weekly News*, the *Village Voice*, and *Newsweek*. She has taught at the School of Visual Arts, the Rhode Island School of Design, and Queens College and City College in New York City.

Ms. Kingsley lives in New York City and is married to the artist and writer Budd Hopkins.