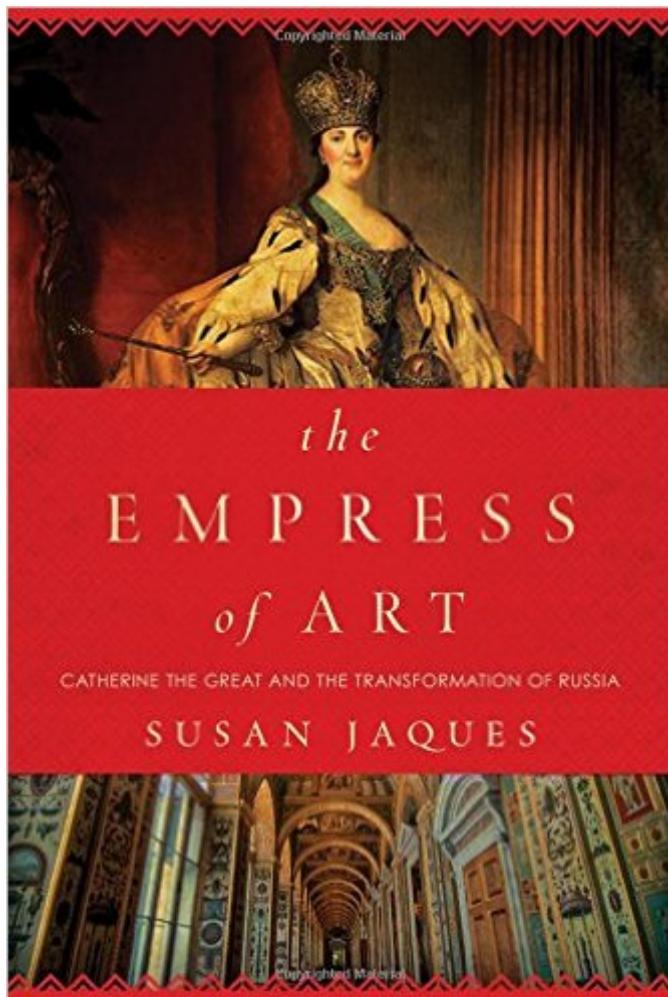


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The Empress Of Art: Catherine The Great And The Transformation Of Russia



Synopsis

Ruthless and passionate, Catherine the Great is singularly responsible for amassing one of the most awe-inspiring collections of art in the world and turning St. Petersburg into a world wonder. The Empress of Art brings to life the creation of this captivating woman's greatest legacy. An art-oriented biography of the mighty Catherine the Great, who rose from seemingly innocuous beginnings to become one of the most powerful people in the world. A German princess who married a decadent and lazy Russian prince, Catherine mobilized support amongst the Russian nobles, playing off of her husband's increasing corruption and abuse of power. She then staged a coup that ended with him being strangled with his own scarf in the halls of the palace, and she being crowned the Empress of Russia. Intelligent and determined, Catherine modeled herself off of her grandfather in-law, Peter the Great, and sought to further modernize and westernize Russia. She believed that the best way to do this was through a ravenous acquisition of art, which Catherine often used as a form of diplomacy with other powers throughout Europe. She was a self-proclaimed "glutton for art" and she would be responsible for the creation of the Hermitage, one of the largest museums in the world, second only to the Louvre. Catherine also spearheaded the further expansion of St. Petersburg, and the magnificent architectural wonder the city became is largely her doing. There are few women in history more fascinating than Catherine the Great, and for the first time, Susan Jaques brings her to life through the prism of art. 16 pages of color images

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Empress of Art is a thoroughly researched and beautifully written book that provides deep insight

into the life of a fascinating ruler and moment of time. More importantly, it resonates with the conviction of the transformative power of art to stir passion, crumble conventional expectations, and inspire confidence in a better future. A persuasive argument that what made Catherine the Great so "Great" was her ability to use art to elevate this effect from the personal to universal level, to lead Russia to the staircase of history and begin its ascent. Highly recommended for all lovers of history, art, and passion!

This is a very important historical book that touches a wide variety of subjects through the collecting frenzy that Catherine the Great went into with fantastic results. Susan Jacques is able to get the reader into the mind, world, habits and fascinating relationships that Catherine developed while collecting massive amounts of art. The book contains an enormous amount of information on painters, sculptors, collectors, dealers, politicians, architects and many more that were involved in one of the most important movements of art in history. This work is a "must" read for anyone that is planning to visit or that has visited the Hermitage and all those palaces in and around St. Petersburg. Every painting, sculptor, building, gardens, fountains and so much more that one finds in these palaces will come alive when one goes through the pages of this book. It is enjoyable, compelling and I will definitely read it several times. Thank you Susan Jacques for all this great work.

I am in the middle of reading this book and don't want to put it down. I didn't know a lot about Catherine the great, and find the book most fascinating in its slant about her and her desires.

Catherine the Great was not only one of those who transformed Russia, but also one of those rare rulers who understood the importance of art as a tool of augmenting Russia's image in the eyes of the other, more advanced nations. This compelling and beautifully written book demonstrates to what extent Catherine was obsessed with buying huge art collection, thus creating the Hermitage Museum. Not only did she cause Russia to become a global superpower; she has also elevated the status of women rulers and art connoisseurs and collectors. This is a book to be cherished and read again and again. Thanks, Susan Jaques.

An exceptionally well-written biography. Reads more like a novel! Susan Jaques is remarkable.

Simply Amazing!

This was a real historical read on a great person who did a lot for the Russian people but is barely given much credit in the history books.

Very informative, detailed, perhaps a bit too long.

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