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Book Review: William Robinson Leigh: Western Artist, by D. Duane Cummins

Henry S. Marks

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WILLIAM ROBINSON LEIGH: WESTERN ARTIST, by D. Duane Cummins, University of Oklahoma Press, 224 pp., \$19.95.

The life and works of Western artist William Robinson Leigh, who focused his work on the unspoiled culture of the Southwest, are discussed in a new book published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

Leigh was born in West Virginia in 1866 to parents who had lost nearly everything in the Civil War. He trained at the Royal Academy in Munich, Germany, and for many years made his living doing illustrations for such magazines as Scribner's and McClure's.

As he grew older, he began painting subjects in the unspoiled culture of America's Southwest, focusing on the Indian who often appears alone in Leigh's art. He emphasized the Indian's individualism and closeness to nature.

Until the decade before his death, Leigh struggled as an artist. In his old age he wrote, "We are all like marbles--big, medium, or little; and Fate . . . sets us rolling."

Finally, after World War II, Americans re-examined their values in the face of the atomic age and Leigh's work met with newfound appreciation. Art critics and newspapers praised him, calling him the "last of the great Russell-Remington-Leigh triumvirate."

Thirty color plates and 70 black and white illustrations are included in the book as a representative sample of Leigh's lifetime of work.

Editor