

OBJECTS OF DESIRE: The Lives of Antiques and Those Who Pursue Them

Thatcher Freund

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#1666993 in Books Pantheon 1994-01-18 1994-01-18Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x 6.00 x .75l, 1.09 #File Name: 0679421572291 pages | File size: 59.Mb

Thatcher Freund : OBJECTS OF DESIRE: The Lives of Antiques and Those Who Pursue Them before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised OBJECTS OF DESIRE: The Lives of Antiques and Those Who Pursue Them:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Calling all Furniture LoversBy AnneI knew I would like the book simply by its title and the intriguing cover photo. I turned pages quickly and enjoyed his thorough research. I loved how he speculated on the life various pieces of furniture may have had and enjoyed the characters he interviewed who bought and sold great furniture. Their personalities were portrayed vividly. Most enjoyable and surprising was to learn how exciting auctions can be. In addition to being a very pleasant read, I feel more knowledgeable about walking into antique shops and looking around. The book affirmed my interest, research and pleasure in antiques. Great read!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book but made me crazy with desire...By BookchicMy desire was to actually see the objects this book followed. I really liked this book but it drove me crazy! I wanted to see these objects that the book followed and so I spent endless hours on the internet searching for clues in the hopes I could catch a glimpse of these three antiques. No such luck...so I would say this book left me a bit unfulfilled. If you love antiques, poking around yard sales and flea markets this book will fascinate you and I would suggest you add it to your bookshelf.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Public History student thinks this was killerBy MandiI read this for a class on using non-traditional sources for research as part of our object analysis section. The book was

written very well, informative and entertaining. Great fun for people interested in material culture, the history of objects, American furniture, or the antiques business.

Traces the evolution of the American antiques market by focusing on the fortunes of three valued eighteenth-century pieces as they pass through the hands of modern pickers, dealers, restorers, and collectors. 15,000 first printing.

From Publishers Weekly This is such an interesting--at times even exciting--look at the American antiques trade that it's unfortunate the material is presented in such a convoluted style. Freund, a freelance writer, relates so much trivia that he frequently goes off track, as, for example, when he takes paragraphs to tell us that one dealer once met an antiques "picker" whose father was a newspaper editor. Yet the book is otherwise notable, for Freund accurately reads the pulse of the trade, appreciates the love of "things" that causes many dealers and collectors to be forever on the prowl. Here he focuses on the annual Americana Week in Manhattan--in this instance, 1991--which opens with the Winter Antiques Show and includes events at auction galleries. He tracks three masterpieces of 18th-century American furniture--a sofa table, which fetched \$75,000 at Sotheby's; a card table, auctioned also at Sotheby's for \$950,000; and a blanket chest, priced at \$250,000, which failed to sell at the Winter Antiques Show. He traces the provenance of each piece and introduces us to such major dealers as Harold Sack and to the first-rank auctioneers and collectors. The book will enthrall those for whom patina is all. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This book tells the story of three art objects: a pine blanket chest made for a farmer in the 1750s, a rare Chippendale card table, and an inlaid sofa table from the Federal period. The author's discussion of the provenance of these highly prized pieces and of what happened to them when they came up for sale at Manhattan's annual "Americana Week" (an event of such importance that all major auction houses schedule their largest sales of American furniture at this time) makes for fascinating reading. However, instead of providing useful features like illustrations and indexing, the author focuses on gossip about art patrons' skirt lengths and the choice of hors d'oeuvres served at gallery openings. In addition, the book's story line moves back and forth between the present day and the 18th century, and the result is both maddening and confusing. Useful only in comprehensive art collections.- Margarete Gross, Chicago P.L. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s Vividly well-written love story about antiques, those who collect them, and those who sell them, as debut author Freund follows the adventures of three major pieces of furniture from their crafting centuries ago to their present-day sale in the Manhattan antiques market. Freund devises an exciting framework for his tale, introducing us to the three objects one piece at a time, then to each antique's present owner, then to the sales people at Sotheby's and elsewhere who are handling each piece, then to the former owners of each piece--all of this building up to the big auction at book's end. Most richly done is the coverage of who made what when, passages that soak us in the handicrafts of the Colonies. There's a pine blanket-chest with false drawers, still coated with its original robin's-egg blue paint, made for a Connecticut farmer in 1750 or so--an object so utterly plain and unadorned in the Queen Anne style that the reader (and visitors to the Winter Antiques Show where it's being exhibited) can hardly believe anyone will pay the present owner's \$250,000 asking price. Then there's a fabulous Chippendale card table, decorated by a genius for carving vines and leaves that seemingly turn in the wind and catch raindrops, a piece made in 1759 for a Philadelphia millionaire and whose breath-of-life carving Freund describes as fondly as Pygmalion might describe Galatea's hip. Will it go for a million? The inlaid sofa table from the Federal period, which has passed through the fond hands of many millionaires--\$100,000? Connoisseurship that floods the reader's cells like fine brandy and Havanas. The passages about the lost time recaptured in each piece sing. -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.