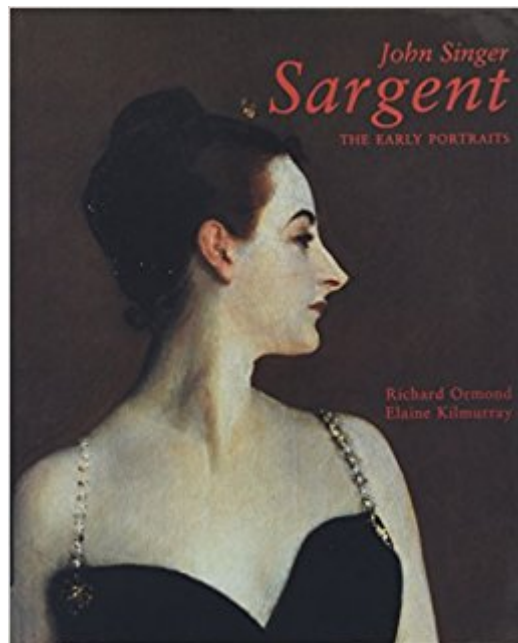




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# John Singer Sargent, Complete Paintings, Volume 1: The Early Portraits (Vol 1)



## Synopsis

This magnificent book is the first volume of the definitive catalogue raisonné of the works in oil, watercolor, and pastel of the beloved painter John Singer Sargent. This volume catalogues portraits by Sargent from 1874, when he began his training in Paris, and covers pictures painted while he was establishing his reputation in Paris, during his early years in England, and on his first professional visit to America in 1887. Volume two will record portraits painted from 1890 until the end of the artist's career. The entire catalogue raisonné will bring together nearly 600 portraits, some 1,600 subject pictures and landscapes, and three mural cycles. The early portraits in this book range from private images of Sargent's family and friends to studies of writers and fellow artists and formal portraits of Parisian celebrities and patrons in France, England, and America. These include his most controversial work, Madame Gautreau, and studies of some of the major artistic figures of the day: Claude Monet, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Ellen Terry in her role as Lady Macbeth. Each work is catalogued in depth, with a biographical account of the sitter, a discussion of the contemporary context of the painting, and a detailed provenance, exhibition history, and bibliography. Almost all of the paintings are shown, mostly in color, including some that have never been reproduced before. The fruit of some sixteen years of research, this valuable reference provides a broad and comprehensive view of Sargent's art. Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This work, published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the result of 16 years

of research, is the first volume of the definitive catalogue raisonné of Sargent's works in oil, watercolor, and pastel. This volume covers Sargent's formative years in France and England and his first professional trip to America in 1887. His subjects range from family and friends to writers and other artists, as well as the famous Robert Louis Stevenson looking gaunt and the actress Ellen Terry in her role as Lady MacBeth. It was also during this creative period that Sargent painted the well-known group portrait "The Daughters of Edward D. Boit" and the portrait of Madame Gautreau, the controversial and exotic "Madame X." The planned Volume 2 will cover Sargent from 1890 to the end of his career, bringing together nearly 600 portraits, 1600 landscapes, and three murals, many reproduced for the first time. Volume 1 is illustrated with 80 black-and-white and 180 color reproductions. Each sitter is identified, with discussion on the context of the painting, along with provenance and exhibition history. A good companion to Trevor Fairbrother's more text-driven *John Singer Sargent* (LJ 7/94). Highly recommended for all collections. —Joseph C. Hewgley, Nashville P.L., TN Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"This is the first volume in a complete-works catalog that will include oil paintings, watercolors and pastels by the 19th Century American expatriate. . . . It encompasses a number of his most famous paintings, reproducing them beautifully in color and providing a number of luscious closeups of his virtuoso brushwork. The superb introductory essay sets his work against artistic theories of the period, and detailed entries on the paintings provide even biographical accounts of the sitters. A book that amply justifies its sixteen years of labor — and not only to specialists." —Alan G. Artner, *Chicago Tribune*

"This second volume of Ormond and Kilmurray's comprehensively researched catalogue raisonné of Sargent's work in oil, watercolor, and pastel provides the most extensive provenance, publication, and exhibition histories to date for nearly 150 extant and untraced or destroyed portraits and portrait studies from the decade during which the artist reached the pinnacle of his career. . . . [An] impressive package, [and] an invaluable research tool for scholars. Essential. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and researchers." —Choice

"This magnificent, erudite compilation demonstrates fittingly that Sargent was the outstanding society portraitist of his age. . . . It is a volume that should be in every library." —Byron Ireland, *Day by Day*

"This superb monument of art scholarship finally does justice to the greatest portrait painter of modern times." —New York Sun

"The Early Portraits is a lavishly illustrated, handsome publication, fully embodying the high standard for art books, particularly those on painting, we have come to expect from Yale University Press. . . . This is fine, evocative writing, which goes far to suggest why

Sargent's early portraits merit our close attention. The Early Portraits thoroughly establishes the factual record of their creation and has immediately become a standard reference in their continuing appreciation." •Mary Crawford Volk, New England Quarterly

This is an absolutely fabulous collection of the works by Sargent (I just ordered the last two volumes of this 9-volume series). As a portrait painter myself, I loved reading the backstories on his works, which also serve as a loose biography of Sargent as well as illustrating some of his general techniques and how he approached his work. Not only are these stories entertaining to me, but offer valuable ideas for my own work. Also interesting and entertaining are the stories of how his life intersected with the many famous and talented people whom he knew and painted. The books are lavishly illustrated with large color prints (I've read other reviews criticizing the reproductions, but myself, I find these critiques groundless). Sargent's great-nephew (Richard Ormond), who oversaw this project, not only did a commendable service for his great-uncle's legacy, but also for any artist, library, and art historian who might want a definitive catalog of Sargent's life works. This is now one of the go-to treasures of my personal art library.

I have say, as excited as I was to get this book...I was let down. There are many of the images that are so dark that there is no definition in the shadows. I know that he did not paint floating faces, or at least that many. I love Sargent's backgrounds to his portraits, and on so many of the images, it's just flat black (his tonal depth is lost). There is even one image that the woman's dark hair falls into the flat black as well...just a floating face. I know that he would represent hair in the shadows with a single brush stroke (which I love) and they've been lost to poor printing. Not all images are like this. So it's still a valuable reference. The information however is so extensive. So I'll keep it and enjoy the reading.

Beautiful reproductions of paintings.

Got it for my fiancée, both avid Sargent admirers, scouring, looking for the best Sargent compilation I could find, a complete works, or part of a complete works in & while I haven't seen it myself, I know what she says, the books weight and Quality, the brilliance of the prints, the presentation of all subject, essentially everything about the book, it being the finest artbook she's ever seen, which is impressive to top Taschen's Complete Caravaggio. I don't think you'll be disappointed, she wasn't. This was posted mobile, forgive the grammar.

For the most part, this is a magnificent compilation of all the portraits Sargent did until 1889. The faces leap off the page, sometimes "more alive than the sitters themselves." The short essays about the creation of each work, the life of the sitter, etc., are interesting and though repetitive (there is a similarity among his subjects--rich, pampered, often without much upstairs) never get dull. My only complaint with the book is the way the side-bar notes are handled. Often a work not detailed in this book (the first of a four-volume catalogue raisonnee) is referred to for comparison, but is not illustrated, or is shown in a postage-stamp size picture (example: a lot is told about the models for Carnation Lily Lily Rose, but the repro itself is about 1" square, and impossible to see in detail. But for the most part this is a gorgeous book, indispensable for those of us still caught up in Sargentolatry, and just whets the appetite for the next volume.

Very good book

I have always loved Sargent. So many marvelous portraits, such exquisite technique and marvelous execution. If you like detail and portraits without much fawning over the subject, you'll love Sargent.

A beautiful book with fine color plates. Well written.

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