



# New York Modern: The Arts and the City

*Professor William B. Scott, Professor Peter M. Rutkoff*

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New York City's crowded streets and energetic people, its vast population and enormous extremes of wealth and poverty, its towering buildings and technological marvels have marked it as the quintessential modern city since the turn of the century. Artists in particular identified with New York's newness, believing that it embodied the future and celebrated the excitement of the modern urban lives they both witnessed and led. In *New York Modern*, William B. Scott and Peter M. Rutkoff explore how the varied features of the urban experience in New York inspired the works of artists such as Isadora Duncan, Alfred Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keeffe, Eugene O'Neill, Duke Ellington, Clifford Odets, Elia Kazan, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Jackson Pollock, Merce Cunningham, John Cage, Allen Ginsberg, Arthur Miller, James Baldwin, and Diane Arbus, who together shaped twentieth-century American culture.

In painting, sculpture, photography, film, music, dance, theater, and architecture, New York artists redefined what it meant to be "modern." Rooted in the urban realism of Walt Whitman, Thomas Eakins, and Edith Wharton, New York artists combined the revolutionary ideas and styles of European modernism with vernacular images drawn from American commercial, folk, and popular culture in their attempts to respond to the cacophony of voices and blur of images drawn from the city's bars and cafes, tenements and townhouses, skyscrapers and docks.

Handsomely illustrated and engagingly written, *New York Modern* documents the impressive collective legacy of New York's artists in capturing the energy and emotions of the urban experience.

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