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Edward Hopper Paintings and Ledger Book Drawings

Texts by Deborah Lyons and
Brian O'Doherty
152 pages, 56 color plates
and 69 illustrations
English edition
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PRESS RELEASE

Premiere at Schirmer/Mosel

Edward Hopper: The Ledger Book Drawings

Schirmer/Mosel has just released a new and extraordinary book about the most prominent representative of Realism in American art, painter Edward Hopper (1882-1967). It not only showcases the best paintings from his masterly oeuvre, but also juxtaposes them—for the first time—with the handwritten notes and sketched copies he made for each of his works in plain ledger books, commonly used for bookkeeping at the time, in conjunction with his wife Josephine (Jo) Nivison.

Although originally intended as pure inventory ledgers containing sales information (when, to whom, and for how much), the *Ledger Books* also contain many private observations and personal comments in addition to pure facts and technical data concerning materials, colors, and manufacturers. For the most part, these comments were written down by Jo Hopper and are often identified as "quotes by the painter." Jo's role in the conjugal division of labor was obviously bookkeeping, and today this is a source of valuable documents and a rich repository for the examination of the seminal works of this American painter. Edward Hopper shaped America's collective imagination like no other artist. His central motif was modern life in its mundane and most banal moments, moments that captured 20th century America's attitude towards life. With minimal means he succeeded in creating austere representations of existential drama and insatiable longing.

The excerpts from the *Ledger Books* presented here were derived from Hopper's estate, which was bequeathed to the Whitney Museum in New York in 1968. Hopper felt a close attachment to the museum ever since his first solo exhibition there in 1920. Today, his masterpiece *Early Sunday Morning* (1930) is one of the museum's main attractions.

On a scale never before published, our book presents 56 paintings and corresponding inventory entries from Hopper's notebooks. It not only sheds light on the artist's record keeping, but also provides insight into the creative process of a withdrawn and quiet man who dedicated his painting to everyday things, but seldom commented on it in public.

The introductory texts were written by Hopper specialist and New York resident Deborah Lyons and well-known art critic and writer Brian O'Doherty (alias Patrick Ireland), an artist in his own right and a long-time friend of the Hoppers.

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