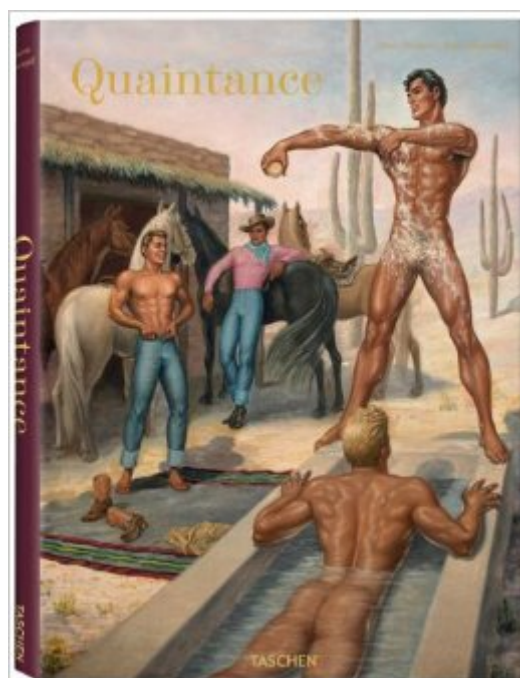


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# Quaintance



## Synopsis

Physique painter as Renaissance man: The flamboyant life and forbidden art of George Quaintance

George Quaintance was an artist ahead of his time, a man who forged several successful careers, yet never enjoyed mainstream fame. Had he been born a few decades later, we might know him today as a multi-tasking celebrity stylist, as a coach on *Dancing with the Stars*, or perhaps as the fine artist he aspired to be. But Quaintance, who died in 1957, lived and worked during an era when homosexuality was repressed, when his joyful paintings and physique photos could not depict a penis. In an era before Stonewall, the sexual revolution, gay rights and the AIDS crisis, Quaintance and his high-camp erotic art existed in a demi-monde of borderline legality. Half a century on, the masculine fantasy world created by Quaintance, populated by Latin lovers, lusty cowboys and chiseled ranch hands, retains its seductive allure. His highly prized paintings—numbering just 55—rarely come to auction, instead selling privately for undisclosed sums. As the preeminent male physique artist of the 1940s and early 1950s, his work for *Physique Pictorial*, *Demi-Gods* and *Body Beautiful* inspired a generation of artists like Tom of Finland, Harry Bush, Etienne, and other, lesser stars in their constellation. Raised on a farm in rural Virginia, Quaintance traveled a fascinating path of reinvention: at various points in his life he was a Vaudeville dancer, the favored portraitist of Washington's smart set, and a celebrity hair designer—though he never actually touched hair. TASCHEN's Quaintance traces his remarkable life story and reintroduces his colorful, kitschy and culturally resonant paintings—works that made George Quaintance the most popular and successful physique artist of his time, and one of its most intriguing figures. Text in English, French, and German

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

TASCHEN Books, under the editorship of Dian Hanson and with the exceptional writing of famous photographer cum writer Reed Massengill, has published a very large, heavy, well produce monograph on the artist George Quaintance, in many ways the progenitor of Touko Laaksonen, better known professionally as Tom of Finland. Quaintance (1902 - 1957) may not be a name easily recognized in fine art circles but his importance lies in his brave depiction of models found in physique magazines in a time (pre-Stonewall) when such art was 'undercover' and very marginalized. But public opinion did not stop Quaintance from becoming well known visually: his 'cartoons' were kitschy renderings of hypertestosteroned men in macho settings - out on the Wild West arena where cowboys mixed with equally muscle bound men of both American Indian and Mexican origin. To study Quaintance's works closely (and this book offers ample opportunity to do just that) results in accepting that his artistic technique was less than polished and that his main driver was to produce images that were scintillating and erotic. Massengill's narrative explores the background of this artist and shares the facts that his models (such as Victor Garcia and Angel Avila) were his life partners du jour. The colorful life of George Quaintance is woven through the commentary on his art in a way that allows the reader to understand why it is important that this monograph be published. Quaintance was in many ways a pioneer in graphic art the same way Wilhelm von Gloeden (1856-1931) and Bob Mizer (1922 - 1992) were to photography of the male nude. This is another quality book published by TASCHEN, a company that keeps us thinking and observing what others fear. Grady Harp, December 10

40 x 30 cm book, with 168 pages. Texts about Quaintance's life and oeuvre in english, german and french. The cover and the interior pages are made of excellent materials and the size and definition of the images are amazing.

This is a large book(16" tall) printed on heavy stock paper with large prints and fold outs. If your into erotica of all era's of art this is another for your collection. Its simply a fun book to have and it is a true representation of erotica art of that era especially in the advertising world. I'm glad I made it a part of my collection.

For no apparent reason, I put off purchasing this incredible book for years -- and for years I've missed savoring the unparalleled artistry of the remarkable Quaintance. Don't wait a minute longer and begin enjoying this book as soon as possible. No one has taken his place in this unique genre of art -- and quite possibly no one ever will again.

.....most gay men (over 40) with a fair amount of education in history, literature, or the arts know who Quaintance was or at least heard of him. If you didn't know who he was or even if you did, you have to have this book. Quaintance's work is especially way back then when one could get arrested for anything remotely illustrating "gay", was an incredible work of art that every gay man should see and straight confident men too with a taste for out of the norm artwork.

This is an amazing book, many of the photos show close up images of the paintings where you can see the brush strokes and canvas texture. The photos and illustrations are a wonderful and complete representation of such an art pioneer - a true tribute!

I wasn't familiar with George Quaintance and only stumbled upon him while researching early American gay literature. After reading part of his biography I was intrigued with the dichotomy between his upbringing and his flamboyant tendencies. It is almost as though the conventional gender roles of the time, perhaps exaggerated through the lens of a country boy in Virginia, are translated in his depiction of strong, virile men-- many with softer, almost submissive figures uniformly focused on the central male "hero". The book is much larger in size than I expected but I am grateful since it shows more of the detail in Quaintance's work. I am tickled that these homoerotic paintings are exceedingly sensual while being completely devoid of any full frontal nudity. The more you read about his life and work, the more interesting a character he becomes. In one part of the story we see Quaintance offering hairstyle imaginings for women where the model would pose for Quaintance and he would draw them but with an innovative hairstyle of his own conception. This is literally the earliest version of hairstyle preview software now used in high end salons. I think Quaintance is an underrated and under appreciated gay history icon.

Enjoyed this beautiful collection of the homoerotic artwork of George Quaintance whose output was mostly in the decade 1947-57. His erotic drawings of the male physique rank among the greatest of his era -- comparable with Tom of Finland, Etienne. The compositions, many set in the Southwest, are also well-constructed. The quality of paper in this book is excellent. It has small

versions of each Quaintance artwork and full color plates of some of the best known. High quality work at a relatively inexpensive cost. Highly recommended.

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