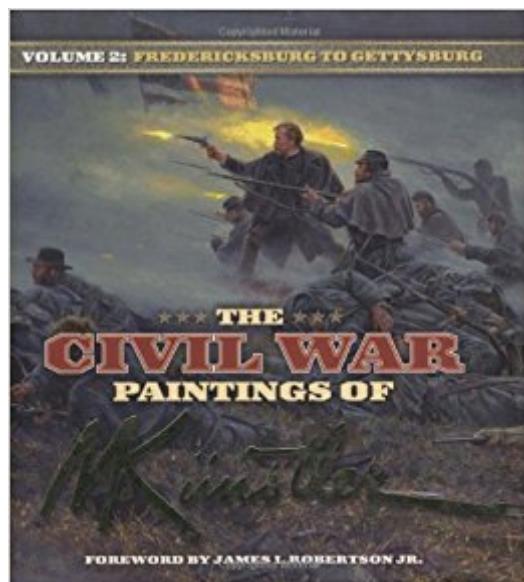


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# The Civil War Paintings Of Mort Kunstler: Volume 2



## **Synopsis**

For nearly thirty years, Mort K?nstler has focused his considerable artistic talent on interpreting the Civil War. In crafting his work to reflect poignant moments or critical instances of the conflict, he has turned to leading historians and scholars?such as Henry Steele Commager, James McPherson, William C. Davis, and James I. Robertson Jr.?for informative details that he has then translated on canvas to create an indelible image of this defining ordeal in America's history. More than 160 of these images?supplemented by preliminary sketches, early studies, and photographs of works in progress?are the basis for the four volumes in this series.

## **Book Information**

Series: Civil War Paintings (Book 2)

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Cumberland House Publishing; 2nd ed. edition (May 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1581825579

ISBN-13: 978-1581825572

Product Dimensions: 6.6 x 1 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #900,425 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Visual Arts > Painting #2293 in Books > Arts & Photography > Painting #2689 in Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > Themes

## **Customer Reviews**

Mort K?nstler is the reigning dean of American historical artists. No other artist has illustrated so many events in American history with such authenticity and drama, from cave-dwelling Native Americans to the space program. He has had numerous one-man exhibitions at galleries such as the Hammer Galleries in New York City; he also was the subject of a one-hour special on A&E Network's Time Machine. His previous books include Images of the Civil War, Gettysburg, Jackson and Lee, and The Civil War Art of Mort K?nstler. He lives in Oyster Bay, New York.

The Civil War is not a main topic in my library but it is impossible to leave it out when studying history of the USA. This is the BEST and most realistic military art from this period that I have ever seen. I was very happy to add this 4 volume set to my library - and at such a reasonable price!

Mort Kunstler's Civil War art is like color photographs of history. He brings character and life to every scene, and invokes deep reverence for the men who fought on both sides, bringing out their inherent humanity. Highly recommended for not only Civil War enthusiasts but for students of history and devotees of great artwork.

History comes alive in Mort Kunstler's paintings. Attention to detail is one of his hallmarks. The book helped me with my research on the battles of the Civil War in Gettysburg.

I think that these book[I bought all 4 volumes] were a great value and made good reading as well as beautiful pictures. The size of the books is a little small but still is large enough to enjoy a the prints.

Mort Kunstler is a fine artist who has made the Civil War one of his important areas of work. He is known for the accurate historical detail in his paintings that come from extensive research and careful composition. While they depict historical scenes, these paintings do not duplicate photographs. Remember, at the time of the Civil War photographs took a great deal of time to set up and expose the film. So, the kinds of action scenes and small moments depicted in Kunstler's work are not scene in most photographs. Yes, he uses photographs of buildings and places to place them in his work, but the composition is all his. While the detail of uniforms, buildings, weapons, and so much else in his work is spot on, you should not think these are mere illustrations of events. His composition, use of light, color, texture, line, and the way our emotions are enlisted show these paintings as important historical artwork. This book not only shows the full paintings, you also get a very interesting article about the composition of the painting, details of the painting in larger format, a bit about the historical event painted, and even some photographs that were helpful to the artist in putting the painting together. You can see the care put into these artistic works when you see these photos and the finished work of art. Pay attention to the horses. Kunstler prides himself in his ability to paint horses and I have to say I think his pride is well judged and justified. He also includes some of the sketches and studies he made in preparing to make the final painting. There are more paintings of the Confederate forces and its officers than of the Union and its officers. I don't know why this is so, but I suspect that the romance of the South creates more demand for art than are requested in the North. More than a few of these paintings are about General Robert E. Lee or include him. He is always depicted with nobility, moral gravity, and even grace. However, the artist always plays it straight. He does not turn his art into propaganda by changing history to depict it as

someone might wish it to have been. I encourage you to take time to linger over these paintings and let the image reveal itself to you in ways that a quick glance can never provide. The detail and power of the composition comes with time and study. The four volumes are arranged chronologically. Volume 1 and is titled "Fort Sumter to Antietam". Actually, it is from the Lincoln-Douglas Debates through Lee's Night Crossing of the Potomac after the battle at Antietam on September 19, 1862. This volume's 44 paintings have a focus on Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson more than anyone else, although there are many wonderful paintings on subjects such as Jeb Stuart's ride around McClellan in June of 1862. You can also see a wonderful clash of arms between regular soldiers of both sides at Second Manassas in August of 1862. Volume 2 takes you from "Fredericksburg to Gettysburg" and includes 47 paintings. While Lee and his officers are given center stage often, we begin to see more of the Union including Joshua Chamberlain who became immortal at Little Round Top even before he entered the service. There are also more depictions of battles with gunfire, smoke, and struggle. We see some magnificent depictions of winter scenes and a touching scene of Stonewall Jackson seeking divine guidance and another with his beloved Anna and their daughter, Julia. She was five months old when he saw her. The painting "End of a Legend" depicting the death of Jackson is one of the most dramatic of the entire series. Actually, he was wounded in this painting and died later. His death is depicted by a gorgeous vision of his last words "Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees". The trees are ablaze in fall colors and he is standing strong and alone looking his horse as it drinks from the river. We also get a painting of Robert Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts that were the subject of the film "Glory". The height of Lee's glory at Chancellorsville in May 1863 is also given a powerful representation. Volume 3 is devoted to the campaign and battle of Gettysburg. Its 39 paintings include a series on General Armistead's charge across the field, and another at Little Round Top. Many of the other events of the battle are given their own depiction as well. The battle scenes are dramatic and frank about the violence without ever displaying the gore of battle merely to shock or cause revulsion in the viewer. Yet, I did find some of the images involving in ways that made me feel for the soldiers of both sides. We also see Pickett in several paintings, but never as a failure. The most powerful and poignant of the paintings is of Lee when he accepted full responsibility for the defeat at Gettysburg by saying it was all his fault. How many of our so-called leaders every display such nobility today? Volume 4 takes us from the end of Gettysburg to Appomattox. These 40 paintings include a wide range of topics and do show more of the Union's victory in the war. We see Grant at Vicksburg, Sherman in Atlanta, and many of generic soldiers in battle. I was particularly moved by the painting of the boy soldiers at Gettysburg entitled "Veterans of Gettysburg". We also get several individual portraits of

many of the key officers in the war. The dejection of the South at the end of the war and the weariness of both sides is shown well. Lincoln's assassination is shown by a painting of the Lincoln Memorial rather than yet another image at Ford's Theater. We also see a Confederate soldier returning to his home, his wife, child, and the land he fought for. The last image is of Lee visiting the grave of Stonewall Jackson. This collection is a treasure. If you are interested in the Civil War, American History, American Painting, or even in history painting in general, this is great collection to have. You can also order these volumes individually: *The Civil War Paintings of Mort Kunstler, Vol. 1: Fort Sumter to Antietam* *The Civil War Paintings of Mort Kunstler, Vol. 3: The Gettysburg Campaign* *The Civil War Paintings of Mort Kunstler, Volume 4: Gettysburg to Appomattox (Civil War Paintings)* You can also order all four volumes as a set *Civil War Paintings* Reviewed by Craig Matteson, Ann Arbor, MI

Reviewed by Irene Watson for Reader Views (10/07) Mort Kunstler's talents are impeccable as he portrays life during the Civil War in his paintings. Well-known individuals such as Robert E. Lee, James Longstreet, and Winfield Scott Hancock stand out while their story is represented through visual intrigue. Being a family history buff myself, I chose this book to review so I could get a better insight of the perils my husband's ancestors experienced during the Civil War. Seeing the pictures, and reading the narrative, gave me an understanding of not only their experience but also the understanding of the first three days of July 1863, when the two armies merged at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Kunstler's paintings are dramatic and spectacular. Every one tells a story, not only as a whole but in the expressions of the faces of the soldiers. One can't help but get drawn in, deeply experiencing the emotions of each individual as they battle for what they stood for. "The Civil War Paintings of Mort Kunstler, Vol Three" is a keeper! Book received free of charge.

Excellent book for fans and soon to be fans

Kunstler renders very nice Civil War paintings and I highly recommend these little books.

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