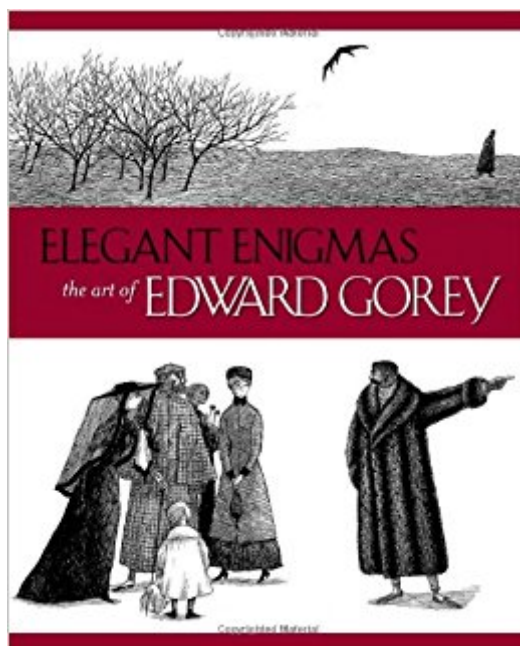


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# Elegant Enigmas: The Art Of Edward Gorey



## Synopsis

The delightful tales and theatrical drawings of Edward Gorey (American, 1925-2000) reflect a special kind of genius for what is left unwritten and unseen. In *Elegant Enigmas: The Art of Edward Gorey*, more than 175 reproductions include samples from Gorey's books, illustrations produced for other writers, theatrical sets and costume designs, and a wealth of individual pieces, many never before published. Sketches, typewritten manuscripts, doodles, and musings join the generous selection of finished works.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

\*Learn how Edward Gorey was influenced by George Balanchine and Louis Feuillade.\*See sketches for Gorey's costumes and backdrops for *The Mikado*.\*Revel in the marvelous illuminated envelopes the budding artist sent to his mother.

Karen Wilkin, a curator and critic specializing in twentieth-century modernism, is the co-author of *The World of Edward Gorey* (Abrams, 1996) and the author of *Ascending Peculiarity: Edward Gorey on Edward Gorey* (Harcourt, 2001), as well as monographs on Anthony Caro, Stuart Davis, Hans Hofmann, Helen Frankenthaler, Giorgio Morandi, and David Smith. She is a regular contributor to *The New Criterion*, *Art in America*, and *The Wall Street Journal*, and a contributing editor for art for *The Hudson Review*.

I truly hate to give this book a poor review because I absolutely love the strange, surreal and wonderful work of Edward Gorey. Quite prolific in his life, Edward Gorey produced lots of work

beyond the illustrations he produced for books. When I received the book I was quite disappointed while leafing through its pages. I had expected an overview of his work with a focus on drawings, envelopes (he drew on them often when he corresponded), and illustrations that were prominent or worth mentioning. Unfortunately, while the book does give the reader a sample of Mr Gorey's work the bulk of the book is a near chronological list of his books and a reprinting of select pages. This book would only appeal to Gorey's fans and such is a waste as they most likely already own many of the books already and have seen the art before. There were a few surprises but overall there was not much reason for me to thumb through the book repeatedly.

"Elegant Enigmas" catalogs the contents of a traveling Gorey exhibit from a few years ago. The book is heavy on original art reproduction and slim on any new biographical content (slim, that is, if you have read "Ascending Peculiarity"). With the name Pomegranate affixed as publisher, you know you will be presented with high quality printing, and an overall well-made book. Image selections from Gorey's well-known works (such as Doubtful Guest, Hapless Child, Willowdale Handcar, Gilded Bat, Deranged Cousins, etc.) look BETTER in this book (with thick semi-gloss paper) than in the Amphigorey collections (standard thinner paper). There's also a number of color images, including rare designs for a 1983 Mikado production. Reproductions of envelopes Gorey sent to his mother, drawn while he was attending Harvard. And the most interesting inclusion of all: drafts for book ideas. Draft of a Blue Aspic image. Alternate covers for Fatal Lozenge and Object-Lesson. Buy it for the art and the behind-the-scenes drafts. If you are looking for a lot of biography material, you're probably better off with "Ascending Peculiarity". (NOTE: Pomegranate's "Floating Worlds: The Letters of Edward Gorey and Peter F. Neumeyer" is also an excellent, excellent work. If you read the Letters book, you'll feel like you had a chance to visit with the man himself.)

Contrary to what many people think, Gorey did not hate children (due to "The Hapless Child" and "The Gashlycrumb Tinies"). He was however, eccentric and an incredible illustrator. This is a beautifully illustrated book which showcases his talent.

This book is full of wonderful pictures from Gorey's career, including concept sketches as well as finished drawings from every area of his career. A nice substantial introduction covers his life and career and paints a nice portrait of the artist's character. I enjoy going back to the book often just to lose myself in Gorey's unique world of characters and ideas. If you are a fan you have to have this book, although if you're a fan you probably have all the original books and have already have all the

art work included. It may be better as an introduction to Gorey, which is was for me. Includes some stage design work from productions THE MIKADO and DRACULA, but not nearly enough--there could be an entire chapter devoted to DRACULA and I wish there was. Still, it's a fantastic book.

What more can I say except I'm a huge Edward Gorey fan. His illustrations and text are not to everybody's liking but I enjoy the dark humor and witty statements and his illustrations are unique and fun.

The art of Edward Gorey is wonderfully displayed and presented in this rare edition. A great addition to any library

I gave this book as a gift to a family member who is a big fan of Edward Gory. She was thrilled and started to read through it on the spot.

Great artbok! it has all the works from this amazing illustrator!

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