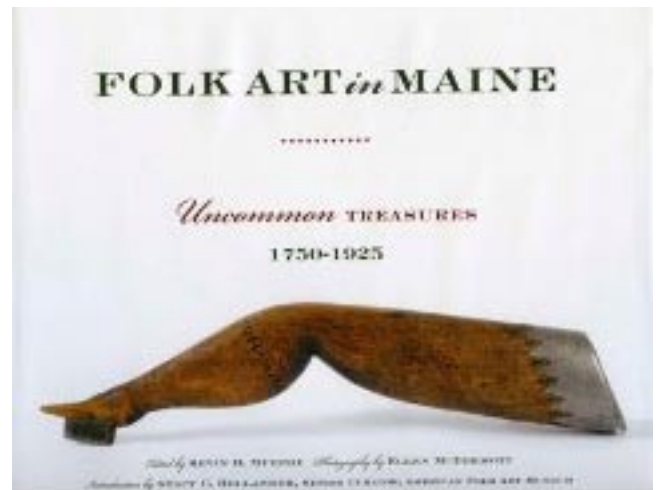


Heather Shaw  
**Picturing America**

- 2008 (1/3)
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**Folk Art in Maine: Uncommon Treasures 1750-1925**,  
 edited by Kevin D. Murphy (Down East)  
 978-0-89272-766-7

Although Maine lies on the northern frontier, its folk art is about as central to America as it comes. From the austere and unsmiling portraits by deaf painter, John Brewster, Jr., to the particular tools of the fishing trade, **Uncommon Treasures** brings out the best in museums from Waterville to York.



**Revelations: Photographs of Cleveland's African American Churches**  
 by Michael Stephen Levy  
 (Kent State) 978-0-87338-937-2 \$

“These pictures are intimate, deeply personal, capturing men and women in prayer and praise, in moments of great joy and intense grief,” writes the late Honorable Stephanie Tubbs Jones in her foreword. They’re also carefully rhetorical. Levy, who spent 16 years as a photographer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, uses the diptych, sometimes triptych, to challenge fuzzy answers. Even with such titles as “Time” and “Crossroads,” these photos aren’t messing around with abstractions; Levy aims and shoots and hits his mark.



• 2008 (2/3)

**Clyde Singer's America**

by M. J. Albacete

(Kent State, published in cooperation with  
Canton Museum of Art) 978-0-87338-921-1

Clyde Singer, who described himself as a “working stiff,” only painted on Mondays, his day off as assistant director at the Butler Institute of American Art. “Quotidian” was probably not the adjective he had in mind when at the age of 27 he participated in 82 exhibitions in 56 cities. But that year was also 1933. European exiles were flooding into New York, criticizing the American Scene style of painting — Grant Wood, Edward Hopper, Thomas Hart Benson — as fascist.

The America Scene was born of the Ashcan Eight, a group of mostly reporter-illustrators who turned to painting in order to portray real life realistically. Although the American Scene never recuperated its prestige after WWII, Clyde Singer continued his generally optimistic visual commentary on the state of the union until his death in 1999.



**The Likes of Us: America in the Eyes of the Farm Security Administration**, edited

by Stu Cohen, with a foreword by Peter Bacon Hales (David R. Godine)

978-1-56792-340-7

In the late 1920s and into the 1930s, as part of the New Deal, the Farm Security Administration sent photographers across the country to create a visual record of American life. This book collects work from several of those trips. Walker Evans in Louisiana and Alabama, Ben Shahn in West Virginia, Dorothea Lange in California, Sheldon Dick in Flint, Marion Post Wolcott in Miami Beach and New Orleans.

When the photographers finished an assignment, they sent their negatives to photo editor and project manager Roy Stryker. For present-day photo journalists, his critiques and suggested shooting scripts are an essential allure of this book. The 175 photographs were reproduced in duotone from the original negatives located at the Library of Congress.



Baptism by a Primitive Baptist church in Morehead, Kentucky, in 1940. Photographed by Marion Post Wolcott.

- 2008 (3/3)

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**Who We Were: A Snapshot History of America** by Michael Willams, Richard Cahan, and Nicholas Osborn (Cityfiles Press) 978-0-9785450-1-7

**Who We Were** is a visual commentary of America, but with the push of a button rather than the labor of paint, of special moments rather than the everyday. This collection begins in 1888 and ends in 1972, 350 photos later. (The authors say they looked at a million photos over ten years.)

There are kids and kisses, neon, airplanes, floods, hangings, a family's pig, Homestead Act houses, patriotic displays of vegetables, four mice dead in a trap (a woman holds the trap) double exposures, and plain silliness. Great good fun and highly inspirational; you'll want to haul the old pics out of the closet and send them to [www.scanmyphotos.com](http://www.scanmyphotos.com) to make your own book.

**Chicago's Nelson Algren**, photographs and text by Art Shay, with a foreword by David Mamet (Seven Stories Press) 978-1-58322-764-0

In 1950, The Nation Book Award presented its first awards, and *The Man with the Golden Arm* by Nelson Algren was the winner in the fiction category. The novel tells the story of a WWII vet with a heroin addiction who discovered a talent for dealing cards while in the service. Just before the award, *Life* magazine staff reporter Art Shay pitched a story and won an assignment to follow the writer around his South Side Chicago neighborhood. Although *Life* dropped the piece (drug addiction is a hard sell), and a book with Doubleday dried up as well, the photographer and the writer remained friends.

The photos, taken with a Rolleiflex and a Leica, follow Algren on his Schwinn, peeking in windows, hamming with friend Marcel Marceau, listening to housewifely complaints, contemplating an afternoon party girl, speaking with lover Simone de Beauvoir (yes, she was married to Sartre). While he was at it, Shay snapped photos of waitresses, children, coffee breaks, and bullet holes with equal measures of irony and joie de vivre. Sixty years ago, Algren wrote an introduction for this book that was never made titled, *If You Don't Like These Pictures, Get Your Own Damned Camera*. Don't miss this wonderful book, and be sure to read the captions.

Seven Stories also publishes most of Algren's once out-of-print work.

