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Review of Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics

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LJ Review Cover Sheet and Survey

Your name: Michael F. Russo

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Title of the book: *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*

Author or editor of the book: Frederic Spotts

This book is recommended for: public & academic libraries

Comments for your editor:

Review

Author: Frederic Spotts

Title: *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*

Publisher: The Overlook Press

Release date: January 2003

Number of pages: pages. 488

Features: 100 B/W and 4 color illustrations; indexed

Format: Hard cover

ISBN: 1-58567-345-5

Price: \$37.50

Unlike biographies of Adolf Hitler which focus on the ideological and humanitarian disaster wrought by his intense anti-Semitism, Spotts' book posits that the thirteen-year nightmare of the Third Reich was just as much a result of Hitler's artistic nature. Though other authors have touched on certain aspects of Hitler's artistic side—Speer (*Inside the Third Reich*) on Hitler's obsession with monumental architecture, Fest (*Hitler*) on the relationship between the dictator's grandiosity and his love of Wagnerian opera—only Spotts has leapt with both feet into a full exploration of Der Führer as artist.

Spotts argues that it was Hitler's aesthetic nature that compelled him to destroy society only to re-create it according to the image in his artist's eye. All the arts felt his deadening influence, and his influence was very, very personal indeed.

While truly seminal art always envisions something new, Hitler's art—the art of centuries past—envisioned nothing new. Modern art repelled him. Spotts makes the point visually, with numerous photographs and drawings—many by Hitler himself. Hitler used Germany and, later, Europe as his canvas to make a picture his stunted mind could understand. Spotts, with scholarship and true artistry, has exposed this picture in a book that is accessible to the average reader, but that will be of interest to academicians as well.

Michael F. Russo

Louisiana State University Libraries

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The best book on the matter is Frederic Spotts's *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*, which takes Hitler's artistic side seriously. Spotts comments: "He had a modicum of talent" at least in sketching buildings "but what technique he learned he picked up on his own. Like most amateurs, he began by painting simple landscapes. With neither innate originality nor professional training, he went on to imitate the watercolors and prints of the south German school and the postcard scenes "everyday urban views" that were popular at the time.. Moreover, he had to paint the sort of thing that a 3,042 words. Frederic Spotts *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* New York: The Overlook Press, 2003. Leaders throughout history have frequently deployed the arts as a means by which to display their power. Hitler is unusual, however, in that art was central to his political vision. He was intensely interested in the arts (painting, sculpture, music, and architecture) and dreamed of forging a state whose artistic and cultural achievements would rival those of ancient Greece and Rome. [Read more](#)

Pre-publication book reviews and features keeping readers and industry influencers in the know since 1933. Current Issue Special Issues All Issues Manage Subscription Subscribe. Writers' Center.Â Former American diplomat and cultural historian Spotts takes seriously Adolf Hitler's claim that he made an art of politics and a work of art of the Nazi state. "If I were to assess my work," Hitler remarked in 1941, sounding the two overarching motifs of his regime, "I would first emphasize that in the face of an uncomprehending world I succeeded in making the racial idea the basis of life, and second that I made culture the driving force in German greatness." The best book on the matter is Frederic Spotts's Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics, which takes Hitler's artistic side seriously. Spotts comments: "He had a modicum of talent" at least in sketching buildings "but what technique he learned he picked up on his own. Like most amateurs, he began by painting simple landscapes. With neither innate originality nor professional training, he went on to imitate the watercolors and prints of the south German school and the postcard scenes "everyday urban views" that were popular at the time.. Moreover, he had to paint the sort of thing that a A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism-and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends.Â I highly recommend this book if you want to know more about the real Hitler, not just the crazed anti-semitic and warmonger, here you find an equally crazed man, but motivated by artistic concerns as a means to truly remake society. ...more.

Book. Hitler and the power of aesthetics was merged with this page. Filled with evocative photographs and reproductions from Hitler's 1925 sketchbook, Spotts's study of the Fuhrer's fascination with architecture, painting, sculpture, and music is . . . elegantly composed and richly documented ("The New Yorker"). Photographs throughout. 7 people like this topic. Portions of bibliographic data on books is copyrighted by Ingram Book Group Inc. Want to like this Page? Sign up for Facebook to get started. Sign Up. It's free and anyone can join. Already a member? Log in First time visiting Audible? Get this book free when you sign up for a 30-day Trial.Â Publisher's Summary. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that, contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism - and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. Hitler's vision of the Aryan superstate was to be exp Hitler's aim was the Aryan super-state, but it was to be expressed as much in Nazi art as in politics. Culture was not only the end, to which power should aspire, but the means of achieving it. This reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations examines his perverse obsessions and shows how his artistry - expressed in spectacles, festivities, parades, rallies and political dramas, as well as in architecture, painting and music - destroyed any sense of individuality and linked the German people with his own drives.Â @inproceedings{Dreijmanis2002HitlerAT, title={Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics}, author={John Dreijmanis and Frederic Spotts}, year={2002} }.

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Featuring a new introduction by the author. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism-and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. Hitler's aim was the Aryan super-state, but it was to be expressed as much in Nazi art as in politics. Culture was not only the end, to which power should aspire, but the means of achieving it. This reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations examines his perverse obsessions and shows how his artistry - expressed in spectacles, festivities, parades, rallies and political dramas, as well as in architecture, painting and music - destroyed any sense of individuality and linked the German people with his own drives. In a wide-ranging argument which covers topics as varied as Wagner&apo March 3, 2003 Issue. *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*. by Frederic Spotts (Overlook; \$37.50). February 24, 2003. [Save this story for later](#). [Save this story for later](#). There is something refreshing about the deadpan tone that Spotts brings to his book on Hitler the artist. He has no grand theory to push, and pronounces his subject merely interesting. At times, he takes understatement too far, as when he mentions the occasional shrillness of Hitler's oratory. But his study of the FÄ¼hrer's fascination with architecture, painting, sculpture, and music is for the most part elegantly com

Featuring a new introduction by the author. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism-and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. Hitler's vision of the Aryan superstate was to be expressed

A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is a deftly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. In this acclaimed work, Spotts. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is a deftly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. When Hitler caught the doodle bug. Frederic Spotts examines the artistic impulse at the heart of Nazism in Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics. Geoffrey Wheatcroft. Sat 19 Oct 2002 00.35 BST First published on Sat 19 Oct 2002 00.35 BST. These two insights form a starting point for Frederic Spotts's remarkable new book. You may qualify "artist" with "would-be" or "talentless", or you may say, as Spotts does, that "Hitler's problem - in a way his tragedy - was that he confused aesthetic drive with aesthetic talent". But there's no escaping the central role that art played in his life, and in the political drama of National Socialism. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that, contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism - and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. A fascinating contribution to our understanding of Hitler's complex, chaotic, and catastrophic personality, and a compelling study of Hitler's artistic policies in the Third Reich." (Foreign Affairs).

Frederic Spotts's new book, "Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics," has a wonderful beginning, and typically it comes with just the right photo: Hitler lost for hours in contemplation of a model of his native city, Linz, Austria, which he planned to turn into an unparalleled cultural center. Eerily reminiscent of Wotan brooding in Valhalla or the "mad" King Ludwig II of Bavaria, this dream world took place in February 1945 deep in the Führer's Berlin bunker, his 1,000-year Reich collapsing in flames above him and the Russians at the Oder, only when Hitler caught the doodle bug. Frederic Spotts examines the artistic impulse at the heart of Nazism in Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics. Geoffrey Wheatcroft. Sat 19 Oct 2002 00.35 BST First published on Sat 19 Oct 2002 00.35 BST. These two insights form a starting point for Frederic Spotts's remarkable new book. You may qualify "artist" with "would-be" or "talentless", or you may say, as Spotts does, that "Hitler's problem - in a way his tragedy - was that he confused aesthetic drive with aesthetic talent". But there's no escaping the central role that art played in his life, and in the political drama of National Socialism. In This Review. Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics. Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics. By Frederic Spotts. 420 pp, Overlook Press, 2003. Purchase. A diplomat turned historian, Spotts offers a fascinating contribution to our understanding of Hitler's complex, chaotic, and catastrophic personality, and a compelling study of Hitler's artistic policies in the Third Reich. Spotts believes that if Hitler had been "like Mussolini, a cretinous philistine without interest in the arts, he would have been less destructive." One thing is certain: his interest in these domains exceeded his talents by far. Loading... Stay informed. Get the latest book reviews delivered bi-weekly. Sign Up. Email. Thank you for signing up. Stay tuned for the latest from Foreign Affairs. Get the Magazine. Save up to 55%. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that, contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism - and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. "A fascinating contribution to our understanding of Hitler's complex, chaotic, and catastrophic personality, and a compelling study of Hitler's artistic policies in the Third Reich." (Foreign Affairs).

In his book *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* Frederic Spotts (2003) argued that our image of Hitler as a monster is incomplete. He asserted that historians have failed to appreciate the place of Hitler's aesthetics in our understanding of his motives and aims. Spotts pointed out that the young Hitler pursued a career as an artist for a number of years, until professional failure and the opportunity for political success offered him the narcissistic gratification through demagoguery that he so longed for from the arts. Once in power, it was Hitler's obsession with aesthetic matters. A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism - and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. I highly recommend this book if you want to know more about the real Hitler, not just the crazed anti-semitic and warmonger, here you find an equally crazed man, but motivated by artistic concerns as a means to truly remake society. ...more. Hitler's aim was the Aryan super-state, but it was to be expressed as much in Nazi art as in politics. Culture was not only the end, to which power should aspire, but the means of achieving it. This reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations examines his perverse obsessions and shows how his artistry - expressed in spectacles, festivities, parades, rallies and political dramas, as well as in architecture, painting and music - destroyed any sense of individuality and linked the German people with his own drives. In a wide-ranging argument which covers topics as varied as Wagner's A startling reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations, Frederic Spotts' *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* is an adroitly argued and highly original work that provides a key to fuller understanding of the Third Reich. Spotts convincingly demonstrates that, contrary to the traditional view that Hitler had no life outside of politics, Hitler's interest in the arts was as intense as his racism - and that he used the arts to disguise the heinous crimes that were the means to fulfilling his ends. "A fascinating contribution to our understanding of Hitler's complex, chaotic, and catastrophic personality, and a compelling study of Hitler's artistic policies in the Third Reich." (Foreign Affairs). Frederic Spotts has written numerous books on European political and cultural affairs. His study of Bayreuth is regarded as the standard work on the subject. *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* was written while Spotts was a visiting scholar at the Institute for International Affairs at UC Berkeley. Read more. Product details. This is an unexpected approach to the study of Hitler and Nazism and shows itself to be sophisticated and stimulating. As Albert Speer emphasizes in his memoirs, Hitler actually saw himself as an artist and in many ways his movement was a stage-managed spectacle which of course extended to architecture and art.

Hitler's aim was the Aryan super-state, but it was to be expressed as much in Nazi art as in politics. Culture was not only the end, to which power should aspire, but the means of achieving it. This reassessment of Hitler's aims and motivations examines his perverse obsessions and shows how his artistry - expressed in spectacles, festivities, parades, rallies and political dramas, as well as in architecture, painting and music - destroyed any sense of individuality and linked the German people with his own drives. In a wide-ranging argument which covers topics as varied as Wagner&apo The following excerpt comes from Frederic Spotts excellent book Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics: "During his first four years in power, Hitler took only one concrete action regarding the visual arts. In June 1933 he received a group of anti-Modernists, including Paul Schultze-Naumburg, who showed him photos of the collection in the Kronprinzen-Palais, a branch of the National Gallery. With some 500 Modernist works, this was the world's premier museum of the avant-garde. Hitler was suitably outraged and gave orders for the director, Ludwig Justi, to be sacked and the paintings to be removed. Former American diplomat and cultural historian Spotts takes seriously Adolf Hitler's claim that he made an art of politics and a work of art of the Nazi state. An illuminating view of the Führer's nature and aims, well defended and very well illustrated. READ REVIEW. bookshelf. 0. Hitler and the power of aesthetics. by Frederic Spotts "§ RELEASE DATE: Jan. 20, 2003. Former American diplomat and cultural historian Spotts takes seriously Adolf Hitler's claim that he made an art of politics and a work of art of the Nazi state.