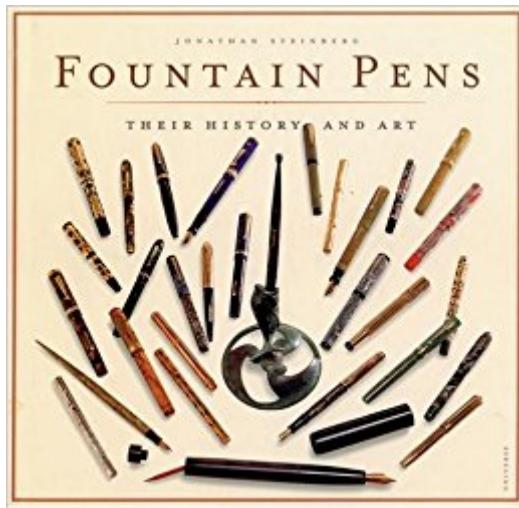


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# Fountain Pens: Their History And Art



## **Synopsis**

Transform your view of the handwritten word with this beautiful illustrated guide to the art of the fountain pen. In an intimate trim size perfect for giftgiving, *Fountain Pens* traces the history of the development of the pen from early reservoir systems to self-filling pens to modern reproductions. Lavishly illustrated, the book features more than one hundred four-color images, from lush photographic portraits of individual pens to rare vintage advertisements and original patent illustrations. A celebration of the pen from quill to nib, *Fountain Pens* will be a valued addition to the libraries of collectors and enthusiasts alike.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Jonathan Steinberg is a international lawyer who is also a leading expert on fountain pens. He is the organizer of fountain pen shows in New York, Milan, and Bologna and has appeared as a collectibles expert on CNBC, NBC, BBC and is a collectibles advisor to USA Today and Forbes Magazine. He is also the author of *Fountain Pens: A Collector's Guide*.

This handsome volume reflects the high quality standards, cantankerous spirit, and eccentrically traditionalist preferences that seem to characterize many of us who are drawn to the impractical beauty we call insist upon calling fountain pens. An introduction and six chapters tell the story of this writing instrument, its long evolution, its demise in the twentieth century, and its rebirth as a

collector's item here in our twenty-first. Five lavishly illustrated chapters meander their way from the pre-fountain-pen spectacle of rooms-full of 'inexpensive scribes' with quill in hand doing the work of a small illiterate class ('Pre-1880s: before the fountain pen', pp. 22-39) on to moderate levels of pen production ('1880-1910: early marketing efforts, pp. 40-52) to the rise of a corporate behemoth (1910-1925: competing with Sheaffer', pp. 54-85) to the fountain pen's twentieth century misfortunes ('1930-1940: how the depression affected the market', pp. 86-107); '1945: the war: how bargain debasement nurtured the ballpoint pen', pp. 108-121) and finally to a day when--mirabile dictu--people write books about fountain pens ('The future: the rebirth of the cottage industry', pp. 122-128). Mr. Steinberg is neither an economist or sociologist and so given to amusingly sweeping explanations of pen life: 'By the 1930s the world was in the grips of the Great Depression. The public wanted to be dazzled by technological marvels to take their minds off their economic woes. Hence the uncommon popularity of the Schneider Trophy seaplane races and the land-speed record attempts ... For fountain pen design, the Great Depression made utilitarianism and functionality the order of the day.' However, Steinberg *\*is\** a lover of pens and that's why he's a capable author of a coffee-table illustrated book like this one. One closes this book with several impressions forming themselves in his brain. First, there is the sheer technological challenge of making a pen where ink flows in the directions it's supposed to, with tolerable evenness, and a refusal to leak. This is one of those small technological adventures that culminates in something the rest of us take for granted rather than to the cleaners with ink stains around the pockets. Then there is the sheer variety that flourishes within somewhat unbending natural limits. As with dogs, there are only so many ways and means to make a pen. Yet the plethora of canine breeds on offer has its parallel in the dazzling display of pens of which photographs, paintings, and reproduced advertisements flavor this book. If you are so inclined, you may well find a resource that will educate you more thoroughly about fountain pens. But probably not with a more satisfactory outcome for the appreciative eye.

I've read 8 books on fountain pens in the last few days. Only Steinberg's captures the view, the love, the depth, the feeling, the expansive history of this writing instrument. Lambrou's *Meisterbuch mit 500 Seite ist gut*; Twydale's shorter work is outstanding in its way; But this one has the feel. Buy it. Buy more than one.

If you own three books on pens, this should be one of them.

For fountain pen collectors of all stripes, this book is a gem. Easy to read, a joy to peruse, yet so informative, it goes a long way to show that fountain pen history is not arcane but an integral part of the human experience. I had the pleasure of meeting the author at the Long Island Pen Show recently. Mr. Steinberg was full of good will: thoughtful, friendly, and instructive. Because \*Fountain Pens\* reflects his sense of humanity, it is clearly among the superior guides to this wonderful hobby.

This is a beautiful book. The covers and pages are of high quality papers. Steinberg has written a truly excellent book on history of the fountain pens. Though by no means it is comprehensive and detail but definitely more than adequate for any serious collectors as part of the essential knowledge on fountain pens. The illustrations are well laid out accompanying the story and they are simply superb. A very elegant book and suitable for both beginners and serious collectors. Even good as a gift to introduce someone to pen collecting. I simply love the book and a pleasure to read it.

I purchased this as a Father's Day gift for my dad, who is a fountain pen addict. He loved the book and the history, but especially the pictures of the old ads for some of the classic fountain pens. He continues to talk about the book and for about \$20 I found a gift that has become one of his favorites.

I've received the book yesterday. It is not the first related to Fountain Pens that I see, but this one is really nice. It is not written as the others but as a review of the history and the kind of pens. I've read almost a half of it last night!

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