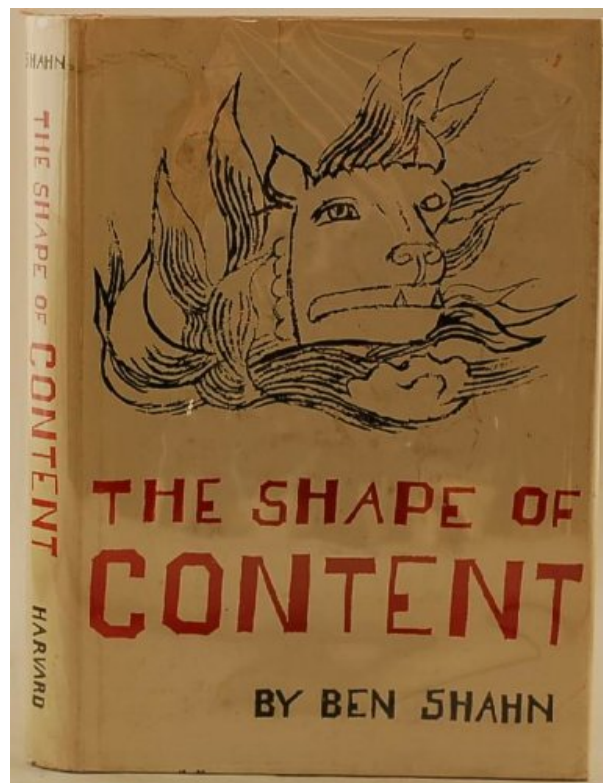
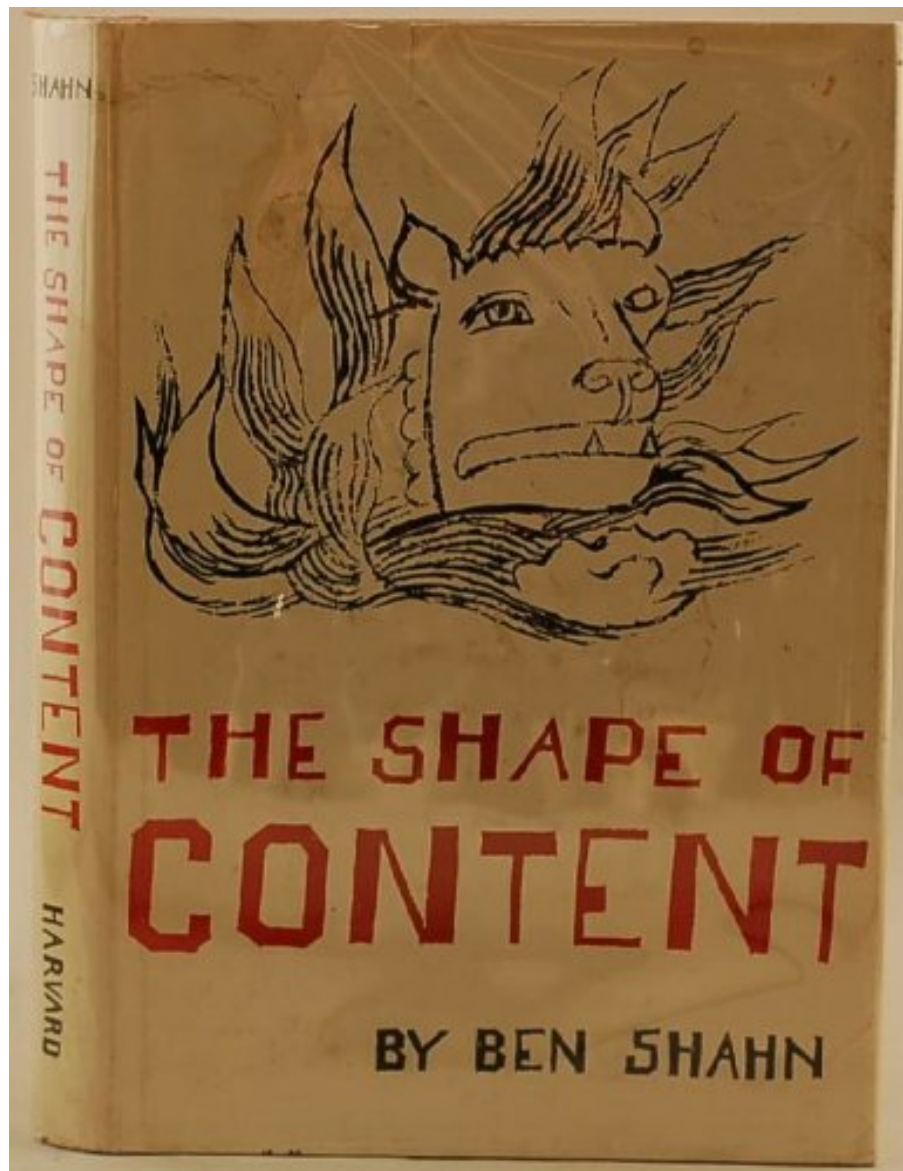


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## **Review**

In this brilliant book, which brings the many talents of Ben Shahn... into one crisp, clear, unified, astounding career, the primary focus is the exploration and explanation of the relationship between Shahn's paintings and photographs... The first half of the book consists of four exquisitely written essays by Kao, Katzman, and Webster, beautifully illustrated with superb reproductions of Shahn's photographs and related materials, including detailed notes. The second half is an exhibition catalog with a wealth of quality reproductions of his paintings and photographs. -- J. Natal "Choice"

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A modern painter discusses meaning and form in contemporary painting and offers advice to aspiring artists.

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- Dimensions: .1 pounds
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Must have for the creative

By Amazon Customer

Must read for the creative. Written well. Timeless advice for the young student and prospective for the rest of us.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Found this in college, still love it at age 42

By victoria b larson

This is the best part in my opinion, and a part of my manifesto: Shahn's "capsule recommendation for a course of education".

"Attend a university if you possibly can. There is no content of knowledge that is not pertinent to the work you will want to do. But before you attend a university work at something for a while. Do anything. Get a job in a potato field; or work as a grease-monkey in an auto repair shop. But if you do work in a field do not fail to observe the look and the feel of earth and of all things that you handle — yes, even potatoes! Or, in the auto shop, the smell of oil and grease and burning rubber. Paint of course, but if you have to lay aside painting for a time, continue to draw. Listen well to all conversations and be instructed by them and take all seriousness seriously. Never look down upon anything or anyone as not worthy of notice. In college or out of college, read. And form opinions! Read Sophocles and Euripides and Dante and Proust. Read everything that

you can find about art except the reviews. Read the Bible; read Hume; read Pogo. Read all kinds of poetry and know many poets and many artists. Go to and art school, or two, or three, or take art courses at night if necessary. And paint and paint and draw and draw. Know all that you can, both curricular and noncurricular — mathematics and physics and economics, logic and particularly history. Know at least two languages besides your own, but anyway, know French. Look at pictures and more pictures. Look at every kind of visual symbol, every kind of emblem; do not spurn signboards of furniture drawings of this style of art or that style of art. Do not be afraid to like paintings honestly or to dislike them honestly, but if you do dislike them retain an open mind. Do not dismiss any school of art, not the Pre-Raphaelites nor the Hudson River School nor the German Genre painters. Talk and talk and sit at cafés, and listen to everything, to Brahms, to Brubeck, to the Italian hour on the radio. Listen to preachers in small town churches and in big city churches. Listen to politicians in New England town meetings and to rabble-rousers in Alabama. Even draw them. And remember that you are trying to learn to think what you want to think, that you are trying to co-ordinate mind and hand and eye. Go to all sorts of museums and galleries and to the studios of artists. Go to Paris and Madrid and Rome and Ravenna and Padua. Stand alone in Sainte Chapelle, in the Sistine Chapel, in the Church of the Carmine in Florence. Draw and draw and paint and learn to work in many media; try lithography and aquatint and silk-screen. Know all that you can about art, and by all means have opinions. Never be afraid to become embroiled in art of life or politics; never be afraid to learn to draw or paint better than you already do; and never be afraid to undertake any kind of art at all, however exalted or however common, but do it with distinction."

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

What is Art?

By Jane Mess

What's good about this book is that it defines art and discusses what it should be. Shahn says art is conventional and nonconformist, and it should be objective and subjective. The definition of art is the key point I found useful. I did, however, think that he could've kept it a little shorter. He digresses a lot. It's still a quick read (131pgs). I recommend this book to artists, whether writer, painter, etc., who are having trouble finding subject matter to depict or are unsure about what appeals to audiences.

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