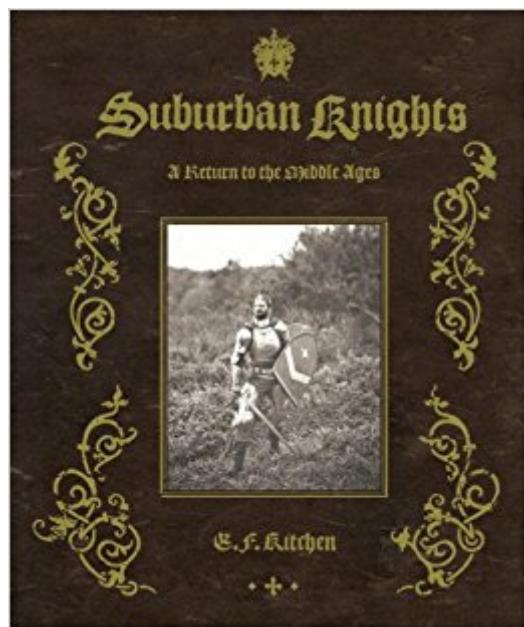


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Suburban Knights: A Return To The Middle Ages



Synopsis

âœlâ™ll be honest, I see a lot of people join because their real life sucks.Â You can come here and be anybody.â•Â "Lord Duncan the Monster Whether theyâ™re bored office stiffs, housewives, or disgruntled war vets, the armor-clad members of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) like to get beat up the old-fashioned way. Boasting more than 30,000 members worldwide, and over 16 âœKingdomsâ• in the United States alone, the eclectic eccentrics of the SCA participate in a variety of rigorous medieval battle simulations. Suburban KnightsÂ is a series of portraits of these 21st-century warriors, in costume and in character as their knightly alter egos. From 2003 to 2005, internationally renowned photographer E.F. Kitchen photographed and interviewed the fighters of the SCA on location at their battles.Â Kitchenâ™s unique approach dispensed with technologically sophisticated cameras, and she instead used a tripod-mounted, 8x10 bellows camera with exclusively handmade and antique lenses. The results are appropriately hoary, sepia-tone images of these fierce warriors lost in time. Suburban knights willfully escape from the 21st-century and into the realm of the SCA, where one can come face to face with the formidable armor and lance of a knight calling himself âœNissan Maxima.â• Warriors are icons for an idealistic code of behavior extolling power and virtue.Â The men and women of the SCA capture a bit of this past glory for themselves, and while a majority of the portraits obscure the faces of these knights, under their thick armor, their features couldnâ™t be made clearer.

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Customer Reviews

âœHer subjects stand in sparse, simple landscapes, but their stances and shields lend them an undeniable air of grandeur.â • The New Yorker, Photo BoothâœThey have a sense of going back in time to a more gentle time â“ everybody is courteous and caring, itâ™s like an extended family.â • E.F. Kitchen, Los Angeles Times

E. F. Kitchenâ™s photographs are included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art among others.â Her work has been published in books including The Greatest Albumâ Covers That Never Were (Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, 2003), and Flora Photographica (Simon & Schuster, 1991), as well as periodicals such as the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Angeles Magazine, and View Camera. She is based in Venice, CA. Leo Braudy is a professor, and the author of Fromâ Chivalryâ to Terrorismâ (Vintage, 2005), and The Frenzyâ of Renown (Vintage, 1997), among other books. He is also the coeditor of the Film Theory and Criticism anthology. His most recent book is On the Waterfront (British Film Institute, 2008) in the BFI Film Classics series, and he is currently working on a book about the intertwined history of Hollywood and the Hollywood sign.

My husband used to dress up and fight in padded weapon tournaments as a wee boy in Los Angeles. This was an excellent 43rd birthday present for him. It's delightfully bizarre, and the quality of the printing is high.

Amazing book, for both the photography and the quotes from the pictured knights.

E.F. Kitchen's eye for detail and style puts her in the class of only a few of the top photographer's alive today in the world. These pictures are superbly crafted in order to display the true fighting style of the age in which they were actually used. Like it or not this is our history of modern war - after this came the tanks! A wonderful book to have in your collection and trust me, proudly show it to your friends. My hat is off to Miss Kitchen and her splendid work.

Excellant book. Nice pictures. I was diappointed that there were so few people in the book and I was really expecting more written about the Society itself and more group pictures. But still a great book and a visual history in the days to come.

EF Kitchen continues to practice the art of photography in her studio in Venice where she creates unique portraits of Hollywood personalities posed in front of richly colorful large squares of living flower tapestries, hauntingly beautiful series of black and white portraits of individuals both known and models, clothed and nude, and flowers in series of sensitive and timeless beauty. But Kitchen also goes into the 'field' and composes series of photographic images as in her lushly colored Xalapa, and Water series - aqueous surfaces swimming with flowers and reeds in a most musical fashion. **SUBURBAN KNIGHTS: A RETURN TO THE MIDDLE AGES** is a collection like no other. Kitchen discovered a group of dedicated people who call themselves The Society for Creative Anachronism - people from all walks of life whose obsession it is to create armor and fighting regalia from the Middle Ages and then actually stage battles in the style of medieval times. Kitchen states "They're trying to escape from the drudgery of everyday life. And from the bombardment of our society -- the bombardment with depressing news. We've become a very rude society. They have a sense of going back in time to a more gentle time -- everybody is courteous and caring, it's like an extended family." Honoring these 'heroes of passion' Kitchen has created another portfolio of images: these outdoor images are captured in the 'old-fashioned' (read 'pure') manner of photography and the results are printed in the long and intense process of platinum prints. The results, beautifully reproduced on the pages of this fine book, are subtly toned posed images of knights and their ladies and are accompanied by quotations that add to the tenor of the mood of the book. This is yet another reason why the art world continues to pay attention to the quiet and sophisticated pure photographic art of EF Kitchen. She is a one of a kind artist, a Renaissance woman, and surveyor of the human condition. Grady Harp, August 10

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