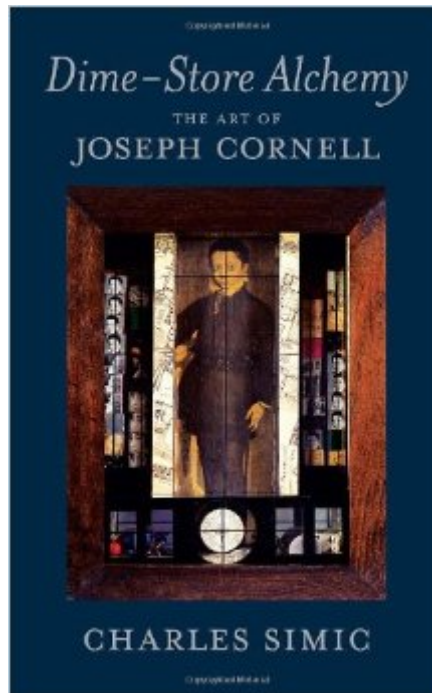


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# Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art Of Joseph Cornell (New York Review Books Classics)



## Synopsis

Now in Paperback In *Dime-Store Alchemy*, poet Charles Simic reflects on the life and work of Joseph Cornell, the maverick surrealist who is one of America's great artists. Simic's spare prose is as enchanting and luminous as the mysterious boxes of found objects for which Cornell is justly renowned.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #197,382 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Movements & Periods > Surrealism](#) #66 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Sculpture > Appreciation](#) #755 in [Books > Arts & Photography > History & Criticism > Criticism](#)

## Customer Reviews

Reading *Dime-Store Alchemy* is a fine way to get to know Joseph Cornell's work (and of course Charles Simic's). Simic uses a writing style which pieces together different elements of Cornell's favorite authors and poets, beautifully reflecting the montage operation created by Cornell himself. As Simic ambiguously reveals aspects of Cornell's life in New York City, the reader finds him/herself on the same search for an understanding of beauty that the artist spent his entire life investigating. Don't miss it!

This elegant book reminded me of "Einstein's Dreams." The book is about the genius of imagination. Cornell's provincial life gave him the opportunity to observe his world closely and let it expand into his art. The writing by the poet Simic is a piece of art in itself.

Then you will love this book of short essays and responses to Joseph Cornell's work by our Poet

Laureate. It's small and without a dustjacket, quite elegant and easy to take with you to read when you find yourself with a few spare minutes.

This adorable book is a pleasure to hold in the hand! 7.25" x 5" and bound in midnight blue cloth lettered in silver and with a Cornell image applied to the front cover it is the perfect size and shape for this group of appreciations and quotations from Joseph Cornell's notes by the poet Charles Simic. I'm in love! But it is only fair to admit that I was a big fan of the work of both men before I ever saw this volume. It would be a treasured gift for that quirky, discerning friend.

After reading the reviews, I was eager to receive this, especially as I'm only beginning my journey into the mind of Joseph Cornell. I was disappointed. The book is tiny - there are photos of only eight of Cornell's works and the prose, although nice, really isn't all that enlightening or inspiring, giving me nary a "hmm" factor. It's a lovely little book for what it is, which isn't much. If like me, you're just discovering Cornell, this is not the place to start. I wish I knew the best place to point you, but I'm looking for that myself.

A wonderful writing assignment I was introduced to at graduate school was to write a poem about a work of art. Poet Charles Simic has written a poem, prose and wonderful reflections - an assemblage of words - on the life and work of surrealist assemblage artist Joseph Cornell and his boxes. This is a treasure of a book if one is acquainted first with the work of Joseph Cornell.

If you are interested in the flaneur, in art, in how nonfiction in the hands of this great American poet can give us insight not just into the work of Joseph Cornell but into our own lives on the streets of our towns and cities, perceiving everything in this daily collage that has order and no order, and could all be art, could all be moving in the right eyes.

Poet Charles Simic has written a beautiful meditation on the work of Joseph Cornell. (Another terrific title brought back into print by New York Review Books Classics.)

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