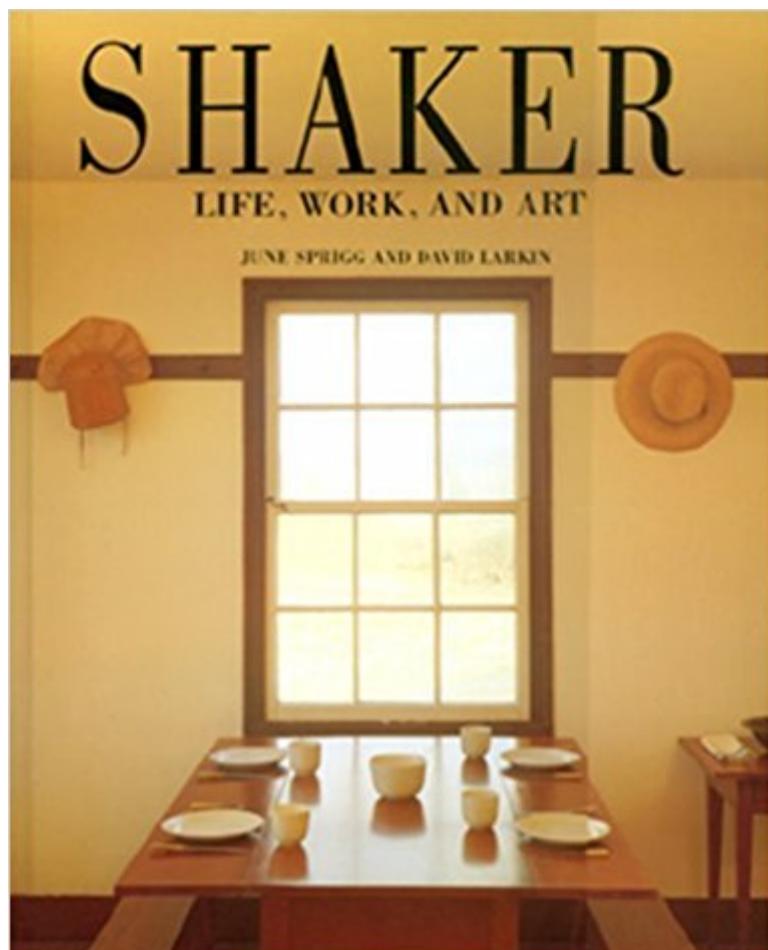


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# Shaker: Life, Work, And Art



## **Synopsis**

Although only a handful of the Brothers and Sisters of America's unique Shaker community are left, the Shaker legacy lives on in the architecture, furniture, crafts, and inventions they created. Shakers were famous for their unusual way of life, for the excellence and simplicity of their work, and for the dance worship from which they drew their name. A comprehensive and insightful text discusses the origins and beliefs, the work and daily life of these remarkable people, and more than 200 full-color photographs taken especially for this book by Michael Freeman richly illustrate their environment and creativity. More than a book of architecture and design, *Shaker: Life, Work and Art* is a celebration of this fascinating American society and a tribute to their pursuit of perfection.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The Shakers or Believers, a celibate 19th century utopian community, have deeded their tradition of simplicity to American culture, most notably in the functional design of their daily routine. Today, Shaker boxes and furnishings are prized collectibles. In this handsomely designed and lavishly illustrated (200 color photographs) survey of Shaker communities, the full flowering of founder Ann Lee's dissidence from the Anglican Church may be viewed. Once numbering nearly 6,000 members, today fewer than a dozen brethren and sisters remain in two of the original 19 communities; Canterbury, N.H., and Sabbathday Lake, Maine. The even tenor of willingly regulated lives is evoked in the hour-by-hour inventory of a Shaker's day that opens the book. Then follows a simply written history of communal life centered on excellent, simple work and dance worship.

Photographs of Shaker handiworkoval boxes, chairs, angel foodcapture this essence. BOMC featured bonus; Better Homes & Gardens Crafts Club selection; Interior Design Book Club bonus selection. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

June Sprigg has been Curator of Collections at the Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Her many publications include By Shaker Hands, The Shaker Legacy, and Shaker Built. David Larkin is a celebrated designer and editor of many successful illustrated books, including The National Air and Space Museum and Fairies. Photographer Michael Freeman's work has been featured in Smithsonian Magazine, Audubon, Geo and in a number of illustrated books.

beautiful photography, little writing. Buy it used for the photos.

June Sprigg's great introduction to the Shakers has happily been reprinted. It is a most beautiful book. It's rare that something that looks at first glance like a "coffee table book" that should be admired largely for its pictures but that also contains such a thoughtful and illuminating text. There is no other book that shows as clearly how the Shakers connected practicality and simplicity with elegance and harmony of design. The photographs are subtle, understated but quite lovely to linger over. It's easy to dismiss the Shakers as a fringe group, and few up us would embrace their doctrine of celibacy. But June Sprigg documents the appeal of their fundamental values: Do all your work as if it was to last for 1,000 years, but live your life as if you knew that the Judgment Day was coming tomorrow. Her ability to articulate this apparent paradox makes this a spiritually moving book. Buy it as a gift for anyone interested in design, or with a serious interest in religion. And be sure to order two copies--you'll want one yourself.

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tomorrow. Her ability to articulate this apparent paradox makes this a spiritually moving book. Buy it as a gift for anyone interested in design, or with a serious interest in religion. And be sure to order two copies--you'll want one yourself.

Shaker: Life, Work and Art is a beautiful book. I first saw a copy several years ago and was disappointed to learn that the hardcover version was out of print. The book has short narrative sections that provide insight into Shaker history, work, and communal and spiritual life. One section captures a "typical" day in the life of the Brethren and Sisters. The enlarged font is easy on the eyes and the top of each narrative page is headed by the famous Shaker wall pegs. The narrative sections are separated by numerous pages of high quality, well-captioned color photographs of Shaker crafts, furniture, and architecture. Lots of beautiful pictures! The Shakers legacy still seems to have a profound impact on our contemporary lives in spite of (or perhaps because of) the simplicity of their work and their unusual communal way of life. Although this book does not present a comprehensive history of the Shakers, it does an admirable job of providing an insight into the lives of these interesting people. This book is deserving of any coffee table and should get a lot of attention in your household. END

Good information and great photos.

I have had a life long fascination with the Shakers, visiting the museums in Harvard, Massachusetts and Canterbury, New Hampshire since early childhood. Reading this book gave me the same sense of calm and comfort as touring those lovely buildings and grounds. The photos are really wonderful and the reason why I bought the book, but I am also very pleased with the text. If you are at all interested in the Shakers, or even just photography or simplicity, I recommend this book.

Beautiful photographs and description of the complex, dynamic simplicity of Shaker work and way of life. Oddly, many resonances with Zen Buddhist and Japanese aesthetic, and some overlaps with American Zen Convert Buddhist communities of the 1970s.

This is a very good book on the Shakers, but I wished for more text. We live near 3 Shaker villages in the northeast, and I would have liked a bit more insight.

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