

Quaintance

By Reed Massengill

George Quaintance was an artist ahead of his time, a man who forged several successful careers, yet never enjoyed mainstream fame. Had he been born a few decades later, we might know him today as a multi-tasking celebrity stylist, as a coach on *Dancing with the Stars*, or perhaps as the fine artist he aspired to be. But Quaintance, who died in 1957, lived and worked during an era when homosexuality was repressed, when his joyful paintings and physique photos could not depict a penis. In an era before Stonewall, the sexual revolution, gay rights and the AIDS crisis, Quaintance and his high-camp erotic art existed in a demi-monde of borderline legality. Half a century on, the masculine fantasy world created by Quaintance, populated by Latin lovers, lusty cowboys and chiselled ranch hands, retains its seductive allure. His highly

prized paintings—numbering just 55—rarely come to auction, instead selling privately for undisclosed sums. As the preeminent 'male physique' artist of the 1940s and early '50s, his work for *Physique Pictorial*, *Demi-Gods* and *Body Beautiful* inspired a generation of artists like Tom of Finland, Harry Bush, Etienne, and other, lesser stars in their constellation.

This large format, glorious book full of the most amazing images and artwork is a must for any serious gay man's coffee table... it's just brilliant.

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