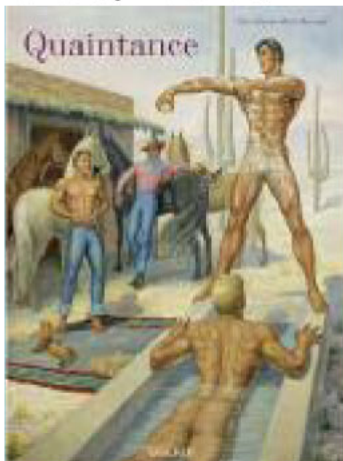


■ **THE FLAMBOYANT LIFE AND FORBIDDEN ART OF GEORGE QUAINANCE** (Taschen, rrp £69.99). This sumptuous 168 page book is a full collection of all of the surviving work by George Quaintance. His paintings, drawing and sculptures were some of the most influential pieces in mid 20th century American arts,



although the subject matter (semi nude men) meant his work was never judged on its merit. He was one of the most flamboyant gay characters and a pioneer of 'male physique' paintings. I defy any gay man to not recognise at least half a dozen of his pictures. His paintings featured on magazine covers in the US and Europe from the early 1950s and heavily influenced other famous gay male artists, such as Tom of Finland. He also went a long way to shaping the emerging American gay consciousness of the 1940s/50s. The first cover illustration for pioneering magazine, *Physique Pictorial*, was a Quaintance of a semi-nude young man riding a stallion, a challenging picture of 'the perfect man'. This ensured him a long run as their cover artist of choice. His instantly recognisable style of semi nude men, with no genitals (other than outlined in tight jeans or through strategically placed diaphanous materials) is innocent yet seething with homoeroticism. The foreword and intro by Reed Massengill covers Quaintances

personal life in detail, including his very own 'airbrushed' look and style, and his lifelong attraction to Latino and Native American men, many of whom modelled for him and became long term lovers. This huge book, (11.4 x 15.6") almost as big as some of the models packets, is another Taschen triumph, with high quality colour reproductions of all of Quaintances work and commentary by Ken Furtado, along with superb close ups of the paintings and artwork. It's an ideal gift for the older gay man or anyone with an interest in the development of gay imagery, or just for yourself to perv over. The pictures look as fresh as the day they were painted and knowing the story of the artist's life, loves, passions and affairs makes it more fun to flick through. Acquaint yourself with Quaintance, you won't be disappointed.