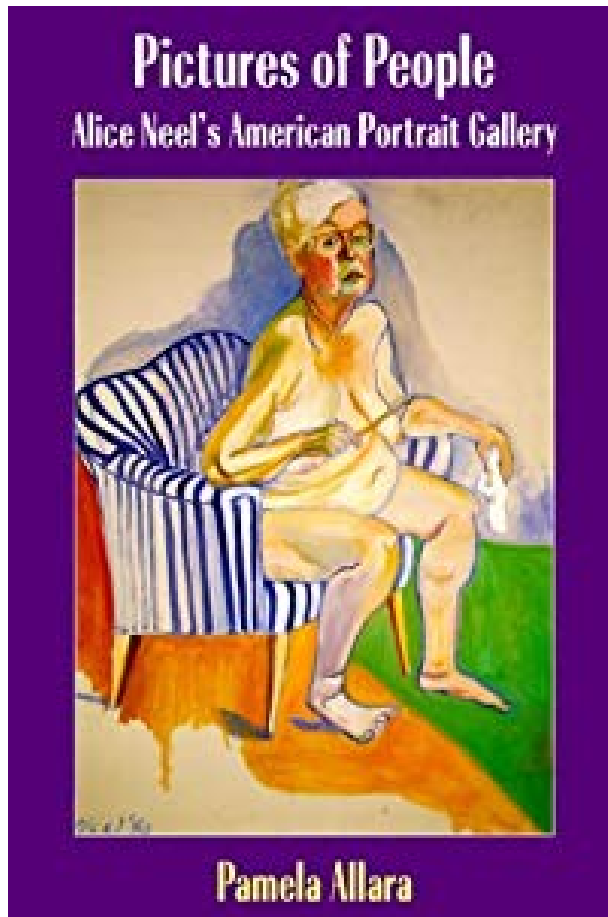


Pictures Of People: Alice Neels American Portrait Gallery



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In this generously illustrated and vibrant chronicle of the life and work of prolific painter and bohemian eccentric Alice Neel, Pamela Allara shows how portraits from a career spanning the 1920s to the 1970s constitute a virtual gallery of American cultural history. While some of Neel's portraits graced the covers of publications like *Ms.* and *Time*, most of her subjects were unknowns -- the marginalized, the disenfranchised, the oppressed. "Every person is a new universe unique with its own laws," Neel once said, but these arresting images of Greenwich Village intelligentsia, of Latinos and Latinas from Spanish Harlem, of gay and lesbian writers and artists, also evoke a profound, if disquieting, sense of time and place. Neel, informed by left-wing politics and avant-garde modernism, infused portraiture with a new energy and relevance, rescuing her sitters for history and rendering them witnesses to their time.