



# Unstill Life: A Daughter's Memoir of Art and Love in the Age of Abstraction

*Gabrielle Selz*

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**Awarded the 2015 Best Memoir from The American Society of Journalists and Authors**

**Luminous and revealing, a daughter's memoir of the art world and a larger-than-life father.**

In 1958, soon after Gabrielle Selz was born, she, her parents and her sister moved to New York, where her father, Peter Selz, would begin his job as the chief curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art. What followed was a whirlwind childhood spent among art and artists in the heyday of Abstract Expressionism. Gabrielle grew up in a home full of the most celebrated artists of the day: Rothko, de Kooning, Tinguely, Giacometti, and Christo, among others.

Poignant and candid, *Unstill Life* is a daughter's memoir of the art world and a larger-than-life father known to the world as Mr. Modern Art. Selz offers a unique window into the glamour and destruction of the times: the gallery openings, wild parties and affairs that defined one of the most celebrated periods in American art history. Like the art he loved, Selz's father was vibrant and freewheeling, but his enthusiasm for both women and art took its toll on family life. When her father left MoMA and his family to direct his own museum in California, marrying four more times, Selz's mother, the writer Thalia Selz, moved with her children into the utopian artist community Westbeth. Her parents continued a tumultuous affair that would last forty years.

Weaving her family narrative into the larger story of twentieth-century art and culture, Selz paints an unforgettable portrait of a charismatic man, the generation of modern artists he championed and the daughter whose life he shaped.

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