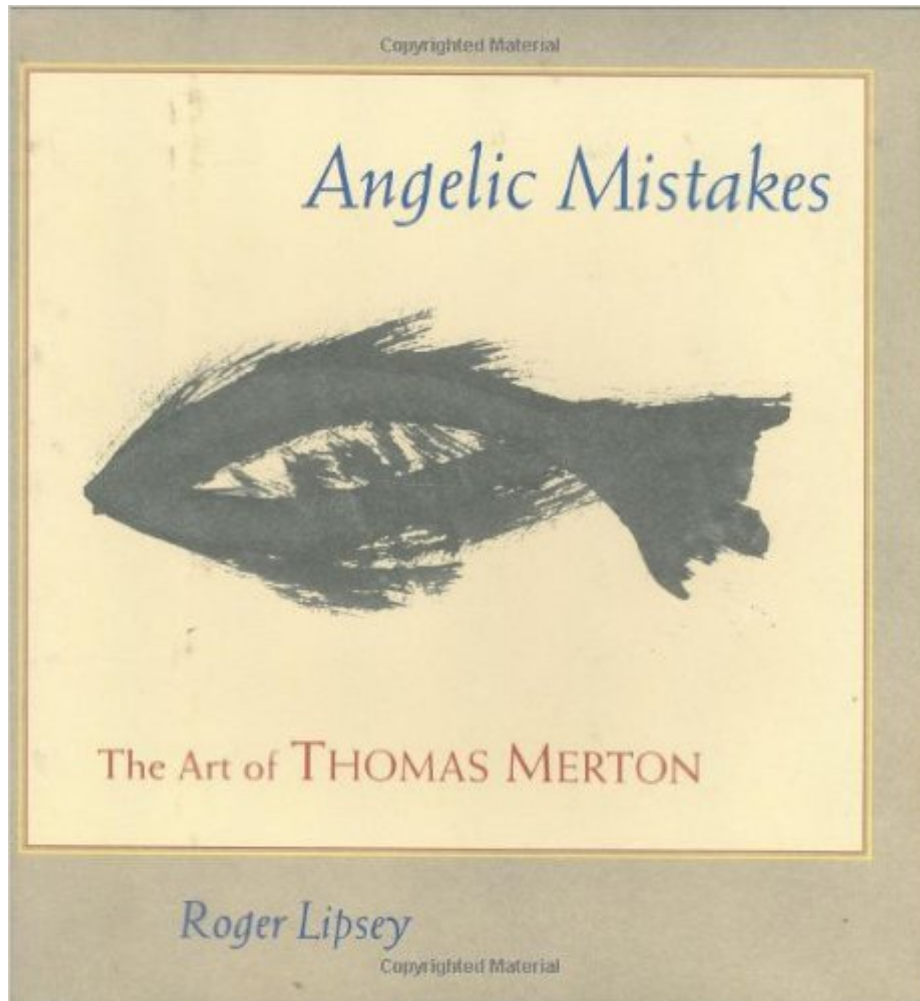


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# Angelic Mistakes: The Art Of Thomas Merton



## Synopsis

In the last decade of his life, while living as a hermit-monk in dialogue with the world, Thomas Merton created a body of visual art that has remained largely unknown and little studied in the nearly forty years since his death. With this book, Merton's art at last moves out of the shadows to be appreciated for what it is: a revealing expression of his state of mind and heart in the 1960s, and a visual correlative to his mature works of spiritual writing such as *New Seeds of Contemplation* and *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. Roger Lipsey provides a fascinating analysis of the simple and striking images and their significance in Merton's journey. He finds in them resonances with Asian calligraphy and American abstract expressionism, and relates them to the influence of Merton's wide circle of friends, which included such diverse figures as the Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, the poet Czeslaw Milosz, the Zen scholar D. T. Suzuki, and the artist Ad Reinhardt among many others. But the centerpiece of the book is the art itself, presented in a portfolio of thirty-four representative pieces that reflect the changing themes and methods of Merton's work. Each is accompanied by selections from his writings from the 1960s that reflect the inward and outward territories Merton was exploring in the period when these remarkable images were created.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Angelic Mistakes: The Art Of Thomas Merton* by Roger Lipsey is a descriptive collection and history of works of art created by the mind and hand of Catholic theologian and hermit-monk Thomas Merton during the last decade of his life and which until now has remained largely unknown to the

general public. Providing readers with a compendium of Merton's work with each piece being accompanied by an extensive caption, *Angelic Mistakes* is a "must" for anyone who has read and appreciated Merton's writings, as well as a choice selection as a church, seminary, and academic library "Memorial Fund" acquisition.

This is a wonderful book for several reasons. It has great pictures done by Merton coupled with his writings that often reveal common ground between image and word. It also has thoughtful essays that explore the sources of inspiration for Merton's art and writing—sources as diverse as Japanese calligraphy and contemporary art. What emerges from this book is how Merton was very much like the classic Asian poet artists that he admired. Roger Lipsey has put something wonderful together in this book—he combed through hundreds of essays and pieces of art to find powerful pairings of word and art. The research for this book is impressive—Lipsey writes of Merton's creative process, his sources of inspiration and how he learned from a variety of teachers in East and West. And here's another reason to check this book out—what does the art of a spiritual master look like?

I had the impression that Merton had done a lot more calligraphic drawing than appears in this book, and also that his drawings would have been a bit more varied. Nevertheless, as a Merton fan, I will treasure this book because it gives me a glimpse into a part of his personality that is not well-documented elsewhere.

wonderful morning reading .

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