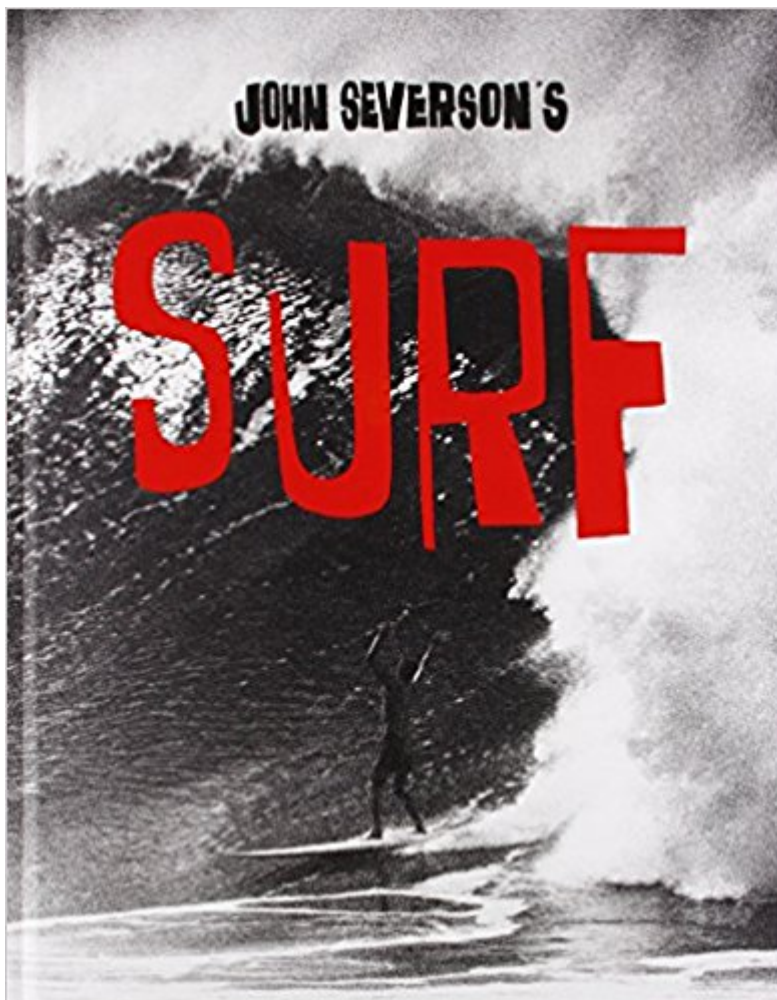


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# John Severson's SURF



## Synopsis

John Severson (born 1933) revolutionized pop culture's vision of surfing and surf culture through his prolific artistic output that transverses decades and disciplines. He began his career as a painter, selling his canvases at Long Beach State College. These first works consisted of oil paintings, photographs, drawings and prints relating to Hawaiian and Californian surf culture. In 1958, Severson expanded his repertoire and created a series of popular surf movies, such as Surf Safari, Surf Fever, Big Wednesday and Pacific Vibrations. While his were among the first surf movies, it was the posters associated with them, hugely popular when issued in the 1950s and 1960s, that remain collector favorites today. Showcased in these early posters, his graphic skills translated easily to Surfer magazine, which he founded in 1960. The magazine was the first to celebrate and revolutionize the art and sport of surfing, establishing it as a powerful pop culture phenomenon. The first issue was a 36-page collection of black-and-white photos, cartoon sketches and short articles--every aspect of which was created by Severson himself. His photographs appeared in Life, Sports Illustrated, Paris Match and other print venues. John Severson's SURF explores Severson's surf odyssey through painting, photography, film and publishing. Featuring an interview with the artist by Nathan Howe, artist and curator at Puka Puka, Hawaii, foreword by Gerry Lopez, surfer and co-founder of Lightning Bolt surfboards and afterword by Drew Kampion, author and former editor of Surfer, John Severson's SURF documents the birth of surf culture and serves as a testament to our ocean.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John Severson has been documenting surfers in America for over 50 years. As the founder of Surfer Magazine, he's seen the sport go from an "outlaw" adventure banned by local townships to a multimillion dollar industry. While early American surfers might have trouble finding a partner to ride the waves, the biggest problem now is finding a clear patch of surf. He has published his photographers and original artwork in a new book, John Severson's Surf. (Bill McKenna BBC)"John Severson's Surf" is a book that presents the languid-meets-extreme-thrills lifestyle of surfing through paintings and vivid photography. Presented mainly through Mr. Severson's paintings and photography, the book serves a dual purpose as a celebration of a Zeig-like life to envy and as an implicit slap across the cheek of those status-conscious, white-collar elements that are getting ever fresher in their advances upon the wave-riding lifestyle that he helped start back in the 1950's. (Jim Rutenberg The New York Times, Styles Section)

For longtime surfers like me this book is a time machine back to the "good 'ol days" of surfing--the kind of time when you called a friend so you wouldn't have to surf alone. I still own all the Surfer magazines beginning with the first full color cover (a photo of Ricky Grigg at Banzai Pipeline) which are inside the Surfer magazine binders you could buy from the magazine. For anyone who surfed pre-Gidget (or there about) this will bring back pleasant memories of surfing before it became the "cool" thing to do. Days of relaxation and sun with your friends as we surfed uncrowded waves at our favorite spot (s). Going home at the end of a good day slightly sunburned and sandy with the memories of riding some good waves. Those were truly the days for me and my friends who juggled life and school around the swell direction. The book is a well done hardcover with beautiful period reproductions in both b&w and color. The inclusion of many of Severson's art pieces is fully another great part of the time machine along with the (early) grainy photos of surfers dropping in with an impossible take-off or just hanging around the beach. The inclusion of various Surfer magazine covers is a nice touch, along with a few of Severson's surf movie posters--which I still have a collection of. Those, along with my period long board, magazines (including Severson's Skateboarder magazine) and now, this great book, is all I need, to go back to a time when things were a lot different. If you were there you know what I'm talking about. If you weren't lucky enough to hang at the beach in the '60s this book will give you a good insight into that whole period of surfing. I still remember my high school P.E. coach telling my mother that anyone who surfed was a bum. Needless to say she had a few "words" with him on that subject. But it is true that back then surfing and surfers were considered outside "the norm" for "regular" people. But this very fine book opens

that door to an era that will never happen again--uncrowded beaches with good waves with nobody out there--and lets us all think about a time that was much different. Aloha.

I was reading Surfer magazine in the early 1960's ... and this book by Mr. Severson show cases his time at the helm of the magazine ... what now could be called its golden years ... when surfing was really in its infancy as a sport. John gave a bunch of us kids a reason to go to the beach and watch the "names" at that time in California ... god bless you John Severson ... from an old man now who was a kid then.

Wonderfully makes the connection between the sublime excitement of surfing and the inspiration of the artist-surfers such as Ric Griffin and of course Severson himself.

Classic coffee table book on Severson's substantial contribution to the development of West Coast Californian surfing. Belongs on every surfer or ex-surfer's book shelf! Well illustrated!

Cawabunga!

The book was a gift to my son and he said it is a great book and should have a 5 star rating.

Gave this to my 30 year old daughter for Christmas! She loved it.

amazing history through photos.....great fun to look at and read

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