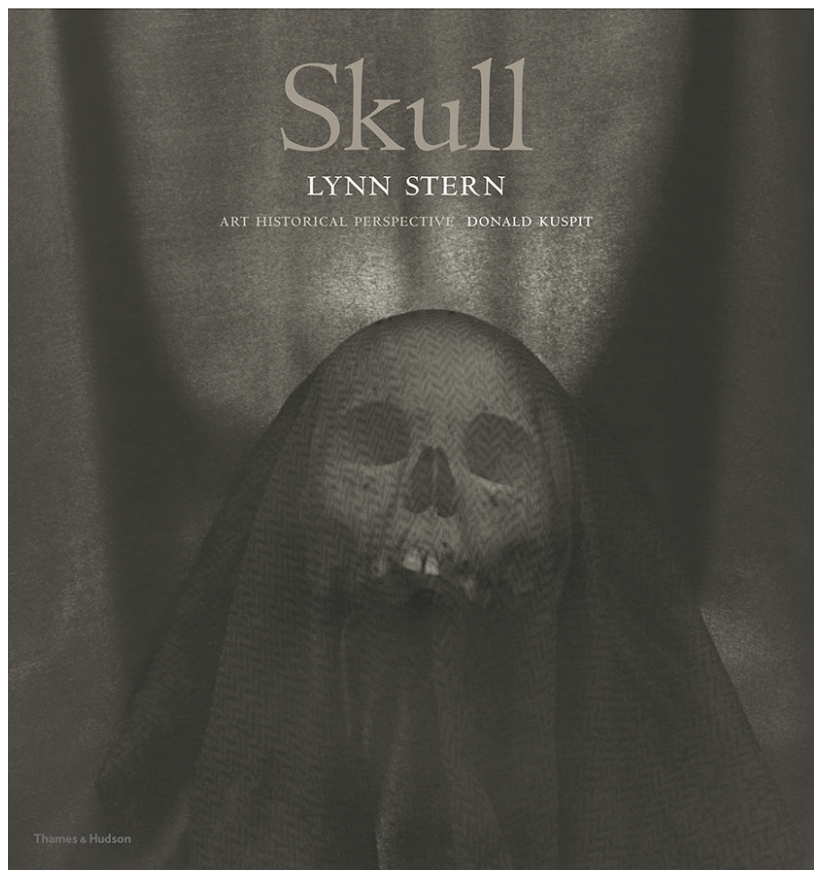


## BOOKS

# BOOK REVIEW: SKULL BY LYNN STERN

December 14, 2017



*For the last twenty-five years Lynn Stern has been photographing skulls, both human and animal, some clearly recognizable and some highly abstract. Skull presents the resulting eight series—several of which have never been seen and some not previously seen in their entirety.*

This gorgeous coffee table book features 150 beautiful reproductions of Lynn Stern's largest body of photographic works. These enigmatic images of skulls account for perhaps the most sophisticated exploration of the subject matter by any artist, ever. In several short essays dispersed throughout the book, Donald Kuspit has wisely woven a view of Stern's photography in relation to the use of skulls in western art over

the last 700 years. Kuspit, famous for his book *The End of Art* is always a good read; art historical and philosophical wisdom spiked with surprising satirical jabs dealt to many contemporary art world giants. Stern's methodical photography practice using veils of fabric and the natural north light from her studio windows has produced incredible visual texture reminiscent of Seurat's charcoal drawings. In the eight distinct photographic series made by Lynn over a 25 year period, human and animal skulls come and go in a dreamy and eerie play of light, shadow, and lost edges. The book offers an exquisite contemplation of the specter of death that is almost spiritual and is freshly distinct from the pop usage in most recent and contemporary art. —David Molesky