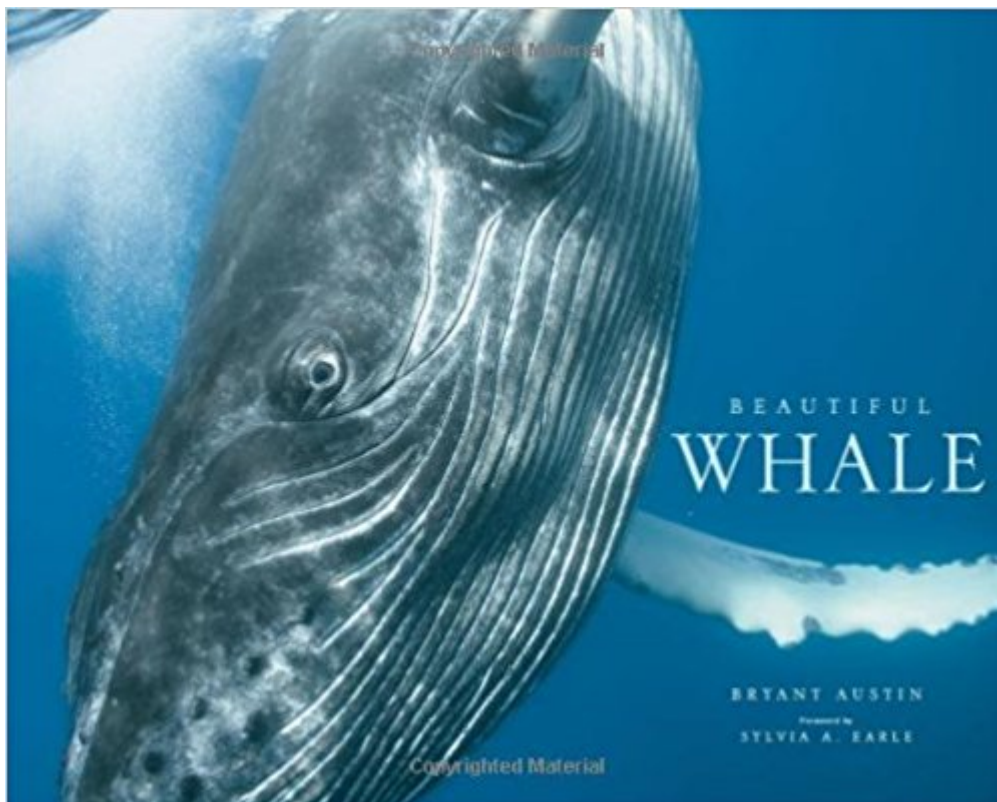


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Beautiful Whale



Synopsis

Photographer and conservationist Bryant Austin's breathtaking photographic project *Beautiful Whale* is the first of its kind: It chronicles his fearless attempts to reach out to whales as fellow sentient beings. Featuring Austin's intimate images--some as detailed as a single haunting eye--that result from encounters based on mutual trust, *Beautiful Whale* captures the grace and intelligence of these magnificent creatures. Austin spent days at a time submerged, motionless, in the waters of remote calving grounds waiting for humpback, sperm, and minke whales to seek him out. As oceanographer Sylvia A. Earle says in her foreword to the book, "As an ambassador from the ocean--and to the ocean--Bryant Austin is not only a source of inspiration. He is cause for hope."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Bryant Austin is a fine art photographer whose work has exhibited internationally including countries such as Norway, Japan, Spain, Chile, UK, and the United States. He lives in Carmel, California. Sylvia A. Earle is an oceanographer and the founder of Mission Blue, an organization dedicated to establishing marine conservation sites around the world.

I've loved whales since I was 5, and having purchased numerous books of underwater photography, I was starting to ask myself "are there any NEW ways to photograph a whale?" As spectacular as they are, pictures of Humpbacks breaching or Sperm Whale pods are a dime a dozen these days. I wouldn't have given this book a second glance if I hadn't done some research on Mr. Austin's work

first. This book contains some of the most incredible pictures of whales I've ever seen. The imagery is startling in its detail, scale, and intimacy. For a long time, whales have been depicted as almost mystical creatures, rather than flesh and blood. These pictures are so much more natural and organic-looking ; we seen tiny sucker marks around a sperm whale calf's jaw, hair follicles inside a humpback whale's tubercles, the concerned eye of a mother whale keeping a close watch on this human interloper while her calf swims alongside, the fine skin texture of a Minke Whale - really, I could go on a while. The photos also give a great sense of the sheer size of these creatures, helped by the book's huge 12"x15" format and the numerous full-size close-ups of the whales' eyes. I've never seen a Sperm Whale look this big and imposing before - or this gentle and inquisitive either. Bryant Austin's goal was to create life-size, high-resolution composites of whales, of which three are included in this book as foldouts (scaled down, of course!). While he expresses frustration at his early attempts at creating life-size composites, the photos of a Humpback Whale mother and her calf in the first chapter are probably the most affecting. In comparison, the pictures of a Dwarf Minke Whale in the final chapter aren't as interesting. While the four-page foldout composite is superbly done, the particular cetacean seems to lack the personality of the Sperm and Humpback Whales featured earlier. If you love whales, you will almost certainly love this book. My only real complaint is that only three species are featured, those being the Sperm, Humpback, and Dwarf Minke Whales. If Bryant Austin ever does a Beautiful Whale II, I'd love to see some shots of Grey and North Atlantic Right Whales. Faces that only a mother could love, but faces that need to be seen!

If you want to cry, this exquisite, astonishing, heart-rending work will do it. The actual physical book is a triumph in itself, somehow managing to convey the size and majesty of the fierce beauty of these beautiful beings. You will see the color blue in previously unimagined ways. The author's own complex feelings, shared with total vulnerability, as well as his dedicated struggle to achieve this multi-leveled work of art, resonate throughout. His artistic and humanistic genius promise even greater achievements, and this writer urges those who can offer support to future projects, to find a way to do so.

My pre-order copy just arrived and I dropped everything to read it. And wonder over it. And delight over both the incredible photography and the lyrical, empathetic narrative. I'll admit that I was so transfixed by the images that I kept finding myself distracted from that narrative, so I'll return to it shortly to give the commentary the attention which is its due. Those who are not already whale nuts

may well find themselves converted. And those of us who are will nod our heads in understanding that this work certainly will contribute to that conversion. Beautifully conceived and executed!

A stunning book not only because of the photography, but also the personal connection to the whales the author so clearly articulated. To be able, and willing, to share that with those of us who feel the same, but may never have the chance to see these beautiful creatures ourselves, is a gift. Thank you. My only wish, is that the entire photographic content had been done in color. Personal preference only and not a criticism that it wasn't. I was a bit surprised by the combination however, when I opened the cover.... Still a gorgeous book and I would buy it again.

This is some of the most beautiful and meaningful photography, and chronicled contact with whales that I have ever seen. The commitment of Bryant Austin to these incredible creatures must create awareness of their intelligence and plight. How I would love to see the life size photographs. The descriptive passages about the author's process of taking these photos, observing and relating to these individual cetaceans is haunting, moving and uplifting! If you love the sea and its creatures, and you are interested in whales. This book is a captivating experience. Beautiful Whale

Well. It really is, as stated -- beautiful. Big format. Slim book. With some incredibly fine detailed images of whales. Up front and massively personal. The author must surely be the Ansel Adams of whale photography. Some of these images are jaw dropping. Stunningly beautiful. Anyone who loves whales will love this book. And if you don't love whales -- you will when you see this book. A keeper.

Only the cold-hearted won't find reading and viewing this book a deeply moving experience. Whales are creatures that are both very mysterious and unexpectedly familiar, and Bryant's stunning photos illustrate why - their size and habitat are alien to human experience, but their curiosity and, yes, their eyes - are wholly intelligent. Bryant is doing very important work and I will be following his future efforts closely.

The book is absolutely beautiful! It has a wonderful collection of pictures from select species of whales in stunning, lifesized print. It also contains a narrative of the author's life and dealings with the creatures. The book is approximately 18" (wide) by 12" (tall). It's a great thing for anyone with the appreciation for these awesome mammals.

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