



Portrait Painting Atelier: Old Master Techniques and Contemporary Applications

Suzanne Brooker , Domenic Cretara (Foreword)

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The art of portraiture approached its apex during the sixteenth century in Europe with the discovery of oil painting when the old masters developed and refined techniques that remain unsurpassed to this day. The ascendancy of nonrepresentational art in the middle of the twentieth century displaced these venerable skills, especially in academic art circles. Fortunately for aspiring artists today who wish to learn the methods that allowed the Old Masters to achieve the luminous color and subtle tonalities so characteristic of their work, this knowledge has been preserved in hundreds of small traditional painting ateliers that persevered in the old ways in this country and throughout the world.

Coming out of this dedicated movement, *Portrait Painting Atelier* is an essential resource for an art community still recovering from a time when solid instruction in art technique was unavailable in our schools. Of particular value here is a demonstration of the Old Masters' technique of layering paint over a toned-ground surface, a process that builds from the transparent dark areas to the more densely painted lights. This method unifies the entire painting, creating a beautiful glow that illuminates skin tones and softly blends all the color tones. Readers will also find valuable instruction in paint mediums from classic oil-based to alkyd-based, the interactive principles of composition and photograph-based composition, and the anatomy of the human face and the key relationships among its features.

Richly illustrated with the work of preeminent masters such as Millet, Géricault, and van Gogh, as well as some of today's leading portrait artists—and featuring seven detailed step-by-step portrait demonstrations—*Portrait Painting Atelier* is the first book in many years to so comprehensively cover the concepts and techniques of traditional portraiture.

Portrait Painting Atelier: Old Master Techniques and Contemporary Applications Details

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Alyssa Greatbanks says

I thought this one was going to be the best of the bunch, but it turned out to be less than that. The directions were very complicated and it provided few useful techniques.

Danny says

The info presented in this book is very useful, there is just a lot of information to absorb. I think to really get the most out of the book one would need to actually spend some time practicing the things learnt to really make them stick. Probably too much info to retain by just reading alone without putting into practice what is read.

Tara Lewis says

There is some good information in here on colour and grisaille techniques, however don't be fooled by the exemplary portraits on the front and back covers. The examples inside are clearly not by the same artist and aren't that great. That was disappointing. It's useful for reminders if you are studying at ateliers but as an introduction, it would be too complicated without actually seeing what the author is writing about.

David says

"The art of portraiture approached its apex during the sixteenth century in Europe with the discovery of oil painting when the old masters developed and refined techniques that remain unsurpassed to this day. The ascendancy of nonrepresentational art in the middle of the twentieth century displaced these venerable skills, especially in academic art circles. Fortunately for aspiring artists today who wish to learn the methods that allowed the Old Masters to achieve the luminous color and subtle tonalities so characteristic of their work, this knowledge has been preserved in hundreds of small traditional painting ateliers that persevered in the old ways in this country and throughout the world."

Simon Yoong says

Good instructional book on portrait painting. Covers all the important areas, emphasises on glazing and building up tones. However, there is a sharp difference in quality of the author's portraits and that of the others shown in the book.

Lydia says

Excellent information, especially of technique and tools. Now to put it to use.

Anita says

Not as great on portrait painting as I would have liked-the examples of portraits and the how-tos were not my favorite, or that masterfully done, but as an oil painting reference book it was great. It answered many questions about mediums, supports and technical stuff in a clear and updated way. Great to have in one volume.

Mya says

I don't like it. The cover isn't drawn by the author and the majority of art examples in here aren't, either. She goes into theory but there are much better books on this subject, like James Guerney's for example. There is no advice here that is special or revolutionary to be worth the hassle. A rather disappointing read all in all.

Stacey says

I have always loved the way Barbara Kingsolver turns to nature to find the perfect metaphor for the situation her characters are facing. In this case it's flight behavior, obviously, driven by the combined effects of global warming, poverty, and an unsatisfying marriage. This novel is one of her best.

Péter says

This book is truly amazing.

It's full of fascinating little tricks and written in such an elegant and neat style that some sentences I just read over and over again.

Obviously not a how-to-paint guidebook but the title refers already to that.
