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Painting Portraits



Synopsis

With 110 color plates and 20 black and white illustrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Without doubt the best book on portrait painting (or painting in general for that matter) that I have come across. Kinstler's lively, conversational style makes it highly readable, his paintings make it a visual feast. This book will appeal to everyone: professional artists, amateurs and curious laypersons who have never wielded a paintbrush in their lives. Apart from the obvious step-by-step painting guides and notes on technique, this book is packed with invaluable practical information. Kinstler provides advice on topics most books of this sort barely touch on: studio layout, canvas stretching, transporting materials, painting on location, lighting, clothing etc. In short an indispensable handbook for the working artist and a fascinating insight into the world of art for the merely curious.

Kinstler's adroit painterly style reminds me of James Montgomery Flagg [although it's been forty years since I've seen a Flagg painting]. I was surprised on rereading the book that a portrait of Flagg can be found on p. 22. Most portrait painting is characterized by a deadly formality. It is, I fear, the nature of the beast. And most portraits in the book are of famous or vainglorious people and are necessarily formal. When he is given leeway with friends such as Thom Wolfe or Katherine Hepburn, his work sizzles. Luckily, he has chosen these very portraits to illustrate his technique. Even the most gifted portrait artist has something to gain from this book.

I bought this book old. However books like this are precious assets to a personal library, clearly depicting what things a student who wants to understand and do better portrait drawing should do. Lot of books shares the thoughts in a subtle way rather than live examples. I am thankful to the author to depict things in such a great way.

Bought on recommendation of reviews. This book is almost all black and white instruction/notes on technique. What a bummer for someone who is an aspiring portrait painter; not inspiring at all. Plus, the style is not current; which is fine if you live in an area where all portraiture is like something you'd see at a Midwestern City Hall... Perhaps this book is meant for the experienced painter who would use this as a reference to improve their work. As it was inexpensive, I would not spend more money by returning it.

In the fine print the book I received WAS described as "Revised Edition". However I thought I was ordering the original version. Sadly I paid more for a used copy than the original price from the publisher. My copy is in good condition as described but absolutely not worth what I paid. Be aware!!

If you are looking for a book giving excellent advice as to how to be a professional portrait painter this is the one for you. If you are looking about the HOW to paint portraits, even the author tells you this book is NOT for you. Just a few step-by-step and little. Very good if you want to know about the business of being a portrait painter and how to think about backgrounds, hands etc. But not much to do with the "HOW TO" of doing portraits per se (The author even says this himself). So, it is probably "5" with respect to what he wants to do but since most folks seem to want details on color, features etc., it is about a generous 3.

I really love the work of Kinstler! A pure Sargent of our day! Anyone looking to learn from a modern day Sargent should grab a copy of this great book. He knows his craft and that is one thing that stands out in the way the business of Painting Portraits is well communicated by Kinstler in this great book! I'll recommend to all portrait artists out there!

This is by far the best book. He takes the time to explain his set up, a bit about his history (interesting) and how he approaches Portraiture. A must have for any artist wanting to paint portraits.

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