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Oil Pastel For The Serious Beginner: Basic Lessons In Becoming A Good Painter



Synopsis

Oil pastels offer artists a virtually unlimited treasury of creative potential. They're also considered a safe alternative to soft pastels. Oil Pastel for the Serious Beginner shows both new and veteran artists how to make the most of this fabulous medium. Lessons progress simply and clearly from easy subjects and techniques to the more difficult and complex. First, artists learn how to use oil pastels to create traditional paintings in still life, landscape, and portraiture. Then, they'll discover 12 experimental techniques that push the medium of oil pastel to its limits—including impasto, etching, washes, and monoprint; stencil and screen techniques; and even methods for combining oil pastel with soft pastel and mixed media. Whether one is an amateur artist or experienced veteran, Oil Pastel for the Serious Beginner is the ideal one-stop source for mastering this popular medium.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a figurative sculptor I know how to draw and I have been perusing various art books looking for an interesting new medium in which to draw. This book managed to convince me that oil pastels are just the thing. John Elliot has included sufficient information in this book to allow an artist to work in this medium. This book contains a lot of practical advice on materials and oil pastel techniques. To integrate this information it contains six illustrated demonstrations that walk through a drawing from its beginning to its completion. In addition the book is well laid out and contains extremely numerous photographic illustrations.

The author is a pioneer and talented artist in oil pastel. He gives very valuable info about this medium--a long forgotten and underrated, even though promoted by Pablo Picasso...The book, however, is 'sketchy' in details and techniques. The illustrations and art work are excellent, but somewhat repetitive...A good introductory book for enthusiasts of oil pastels and beginners, till a better book is written by someone else---after this medium becomes better used and established in the fine art world. Soft pastels have been with us for many decades, thanks to Degas and Mary Cassatt...Oil pastels are still to be pushed by great masters....Fortunately oil pastels are available at various price ranges for students and professionals...One learns more by trying different brands rather than sticking to just a few brands---Holbein or Sennelier...With increasing concern for toxic dust particles from Soft pastels, oil pastels would be more widely used and this book would serve the newcomers well.

This book is a very good book expressly devoted to oil pastels--but that said, in comparison with the only other book on the subject that I know of, it is a distant second. (There are a couple other obscure ones which I haven't seen) My favorite is "Oil Pastel: Materials & Techniques For Today's Artist", by Kenneth Leslie, 1990, Watson-Guption Pub. Because it is out of print & only available second hand at inflated prices, unless I can bring it back in print, or you are prepared to pay inflated prices (for something you cannot see & evaluate for yourself in advance), we are left with the book by Elliot. Elliot covers a moderate (compared with Leslie!) amount of basic info & gives you a look at the oil pastel works of other artists as well--something I consider very important, especially if the author's work doesn't grab you, & also because you get to see how other sensibilities handle the medium. And he gives a taste of the history of oil pastels; he talks about various papers, etc; he mentions only two brands: Sennelier & Holbein (both premier brands) but there are others he does not mention which are evaluated in Kenneth Leslie's book. Leslie gives you a ton of facts & ideas: shows you how to make your own oil pastels if you desire, & how to prepare paper, etc., for receiving oil pastels (whose oil content can deteriorate paper) & lots of other info very useful for anyone wishing to know technical stuff about the medium. Elliot's book is a good companion to the one by Kenneth Leslie, & I consider myself fortunate to have both. But if you could only choose one, & it were available, I would choose Kenneth Leslie's book!

I just bought the 2014 reprint of this book, oil pastel for the serious beginner by John Elliott. After waiting for years for that opportunity, as I refused to buy the original book going for a silly price on

and elsewhere, I was so elated that it was again available for half the price and as a reprint. Now I have seen the new version, I have to say I am very disappointed: the quality of the pictures is horrendous, half of them are not focussed and great details get lost in a blur, also the print looks like it was made on a home printer on simple cartridge paper - not the picture quality that you would expect from an art book. Oil pastels are beautiful and bright, full of dynamism and life. And all of these qualities are lost in the poor quality of these pictures. This book does not do oil pastels, nor John Elliott, justice. It is a real let down, to my opinion. I will have to send it back just for these reasons. What a shame. e.g. if still in doubt, have a look at pages 53, 75, 97, 123 for some of the worst pictures... awful. Also the preview on is of the older original book and gives better quality pictures!

Oil pastel is a very difficult medium to master and I bought this book looking for some kind of enlightenment that would help me become accomplished in the medium. Maybe my expectations were too high, but I was rather disappointed. The book provides a wealth of examples of work of the artist intermingled with oil-pastel-evangelist preaching and information on techniques used. However even the step-by-steps didn't really help me to get from one step to the next and I was left kind of bewildered where I started. This is the only book on the market that deals exclusively with oil pastels. This is the reason I bought it and as such, it is probably worth buying. However don't expect enlightenment.

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