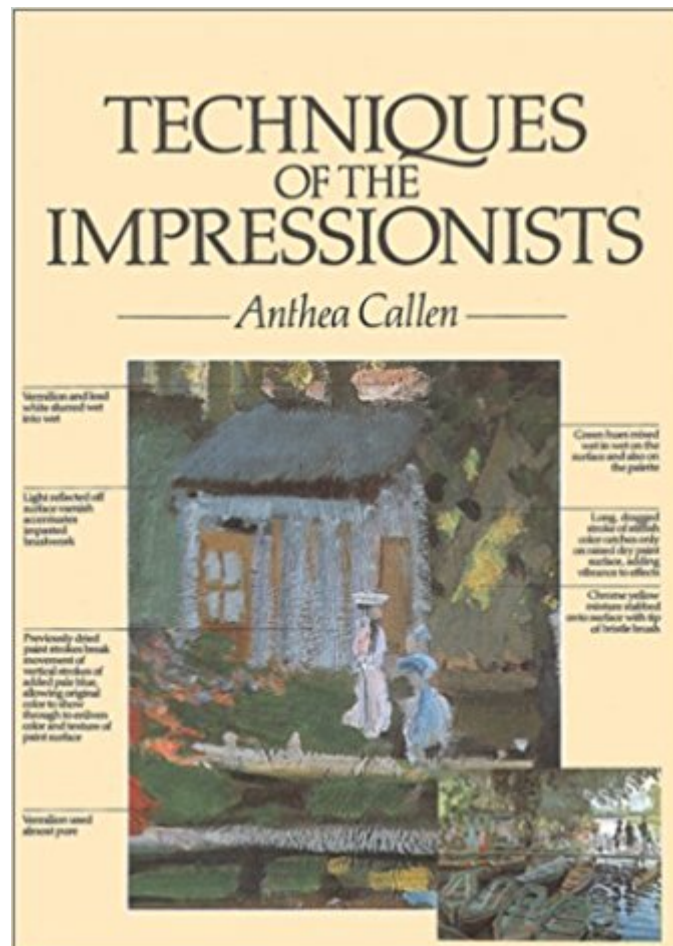




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Techniques Of The Impressionists



Synopsis

This authoritative analysis examines thirty key paintings in detail, from 1860 to the end of the century. The artists - from Coubet to Pissaro and Toulouse-Latrec - represent almost every aspect of the Impressionist movement. A full discussion of how paint and color effects are achieved as well as the artists' training, availability of materials, and the influence of photography are discussed. Includes over 200 color illustrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There seem to be so many books on the techniques of the old Masters, but it's very difficult to find books on actual painting techniques of the Impressionists. This book discusses this topic in extreme detail. Small sections of paintings are magnified with arrows pointing to specific areas, describing how they were probably done and with which paint colors. As a context to the primary subject matter, you also get a fair amount of art history. This part I found interesting as well. I read this book for hours at a time and was thoroughly fascinated and inspired. If you love the Impressionists and (especially) if you are a painter yourself, you will really appreciate this book.

This is an excellent overview of impressionist painting as well as a good introduction to painting methodology in a particular historical context. The author provides the reader with a basis for really understanding the aesthetic agenda of the impressionists by explaining the context in which it developed; traditional academic painting, material changes in the artist's media, the influence of photography, political undercurrents and broader social change, as well as the character of each

individual painter. But it's the illustrations that really make this book useful, engaging you both through ideas and concrete examples of their application. Great for the painter, fans of impressionism, or anyone wanting to understand the visual arts.

The author devotes 3-4 pages for each work of art, pointing out elements of the design, use of colors, and style of each artist portrayed. The art as a whole is shown, then various parts of the whole are blown-up and described in detail. Very useful tool for understanding how each artist approached his subject, highlighting problem areas, over-painted areas, and other details of interest on each painting. I only wish there were a whole book like this on EACH of the artists presented, with equivalent commentary on all their work!

Three words: It's a classic. Okay, that's four words, but whatever. The writer of this book is the teacher every working artist should wish was his or her art history instructor in school. This book is not some effete, fancy-pants, literary hoop-de-doo that's long a verbage and short on facts. It's really real, as in real technique in real time, which builds real understanding for the reader to appreciate the real men and women doing the real painting of the late 19th century. Really. I'm truly impressed.

This book was first published in 1982, & it has been reprinted several times. My copy is the 2001 printing, with the same cover as the 1993 printing here--broad yellowish border around a detail of Monet's La Grenouillere. The illus. still seem to be the 1980s color printing quality. Nevertheless, there is so much to be learned from this 190-page, heavily-illustrated book. The book begins with the Introduction & Background. The author gives a detailed discussion of the typical academic training in Paris during the 19th century; this was the way the Impressionists' teachers were trained, & these were some of the painting methods the teachers passed on. Of course, everybody knows that the Impressionists rebelled against academic practice. After reading this section of the book, I understood just how radically different the 2 ways of painting were. After the introductory chapter, the book proceeds through the 1860s, 1870s, 1880s, & 1890s. Each decade begins with an illustrated 10-page introduction which describes the important artistic innovations. Then the individual paintings appear, with 1 page of info. about the artist, a square with strokes of the colors used for that painting, & details (pix of parts of a painting) with descriptions of how they probably were painted. Small pix show where on the whole painting the details are located. The 30 paintings are listed in the Table of Contents to make it easy to find a specific work or artist. Whether you read

the book straight through or just browse & read about whatever pix interest you, in my opinion, there is much to be learned here.

I have read the reviews of Mason Dixon and "A Customer" (both from 2004) and I agree with them. What they wrote is basically what I think (and I won't repeat here what they have said). I do add the following explanation of why I rate the book at "only" 4 stars--which of course is a high recommendation. While the book is very helpful and well done, its reproduction of paintings is rather mediocre (not horrible, not great). Nevertheless, it IS sufficient to illustrate points made in the text and to give a decent idea of the paintings' beauty. Overall, a very nice book.

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