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Techniques Of The Great Masters Of Art



Synopsis

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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Other reviewers have given this book five stars and rightly so but I thought they didn't quite reveal how good it is. Don't be put off by the words Great Masters in the title, it actually covers artists from the Old Masters (1300-1860) Impressionists (1860-1905) and Modern Masters (1905-1980). A hundred paintings, in color, from seventy-seven artists are considered and each work gets the same treatment, for instance Roy Lichtenstein's 'Whaam!' gets two spreads. The first page has a small photo of the artist and about three hundred words regarding his painting technique, this text relates to seven small line drawings and captions revealing how he worked. The right-hand page has a picture of Whaam! and a preparatory black and white drawing, both have long captions. The next spread has four life size details of the painting (each with a simple thumbnail of the work to show where the detail comes from) and again long captions explaining techniques and the materials used. It is the life size illustrations that, to me, make this book special. There are plenty of visual art history books, my favorites are the Phaidon series: The Art Book; The 20TH Century Art Book; The American Art Book, all bursting with whole page works of art but it is only when you can see a lifesize close-up of the work (plus a detailed caption) that things somehow start to fall into place and a greater appreciation is acquired. There is something special in looking at part of Henri Rousseau's 'The Dream' or Frank Stella's 'Hyena Stomp' and knowing that you're seeing part of the painting the same size as these artists created it. Apart from looking at art techniques (and art history) in a rather unusual way, another reason I love this book is because it is beautifully designed and printed.

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