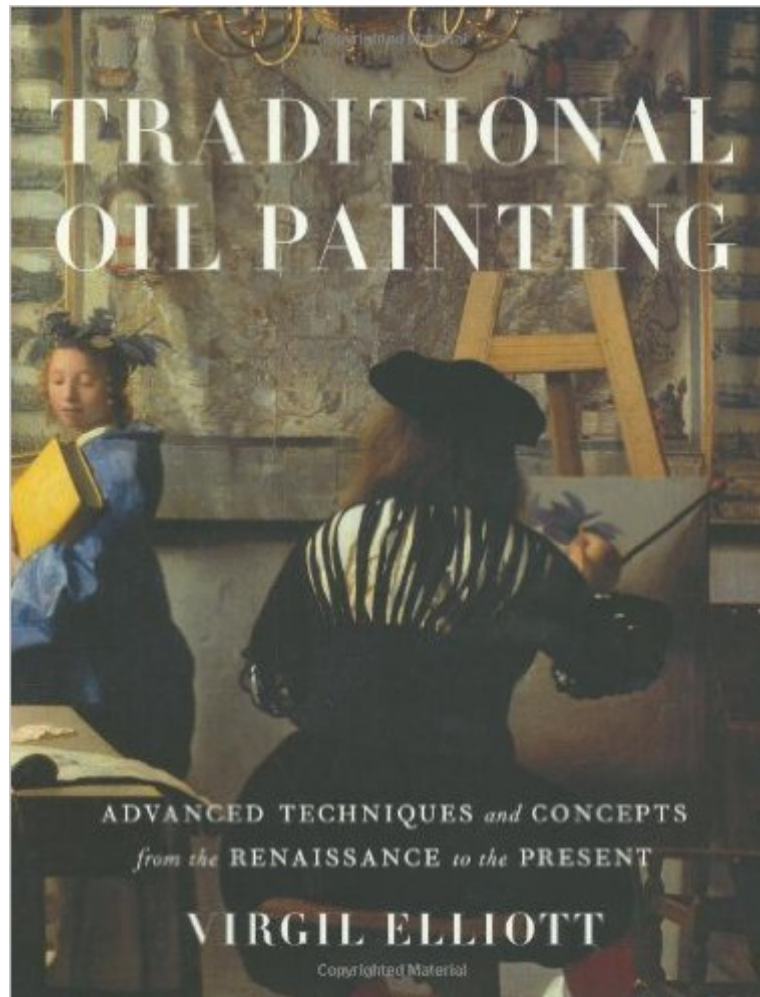


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# Traditional Oil Painting: Advanced Techniques And Concepts From The Renaissance To The Present



## Synopsis

The only book that lets artists explore the highest levels of realistic oil painting. As more and more artists today look to the past, there has been a tremendous resurgence of interest in painting realisticallyâin creating convincing illusions of three-dimensional depth on two dimensional surfaces. How did the Old Masters create their masterpieces? What kind of education allowed these great artists to create such beautiful work, and how can an artist learn these lessons today? Traditional Oil Painting answers those questions and many more. This comprehensive sourcebook explores the most advanced levels of oil painting, with full information on the latest scientific discoveries. Author and distinguished artist Virgil Elliott examines the many elements that let artists take the next step in their work: mental attitude, aesthetic considerations, the importance of drawing, principles of visual reality, materials, techniques, portraiture, photographic images versus visual reality, and color. Traditional Oil Painting helps artists master the secrets of realistic painting to create work that will rival that of the masters.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For artists pursuing high quality art this is for you. This book is technically correct, fully researched and invaluable in a genre where a lot of the books are light on information. Virgil Elliott manages to communicate the real methods used by masters - past and present. Not an easy feat. He has disseminated quality knowledge with brevity. There is a no nonsense handling in his voice that is packed with experience which makes easy reading for anyone with an inclination for the brush. What I particularly like about the book is its' detailed and straightforward information backed by visual demonstration. You won't find much irrelevant information here. This man knows what he's talking

about and communicates so, par excellence. The picture quality and choice of selection is revealing and appropriate making them relevant to his discussions. If there can be any fault found and I don't think this is incredibly bad, the author just doesn't tell you how to paint an apple, or a jug or flower, which if you've come this far in your quest for artistic quality-you probably don't need to be told again. Really this book is a classic and is destined to become an essential resource for students and professional painters alike. Virgil Elliot's years of experience and practical reasoning are apparent in the quality of writing. I thoroughly recommend it. It is a MUST have. To add, for fans of the great William Bourguereau there is also a section and demonstration of his method-a GREAT credit to the author for this - I have never come across this generosity before. Virgil Elliott has stripped away the layers and given it all to you here. Well done.[...]

Virgil Elliot is an extremely knowledgeable artist who understands painting in the way only an experienced practitioner can. That said, I still found myself wanting more from this book. While it contains an accurate, concise summation of traditional techniques and concepts in oil painting, it does not elaborate on these practices with adequate illustrations. In his introduction, Virgil Elliot makes clear that he was pressured by the publisher to include demonstrations and samples of his own work against his own inclination to keep the book pure as a reference manual - not a "how-to" book. This is quite evident, as the processes are not very well documented with sufficient photography. Although, I think the publisher was RIGHT to suggest documenting the various historical processes visually through Elliot's hand! I wish he recognized the value of this more. Serious artists ARE plagued by the myriads of amateur how-to books on the market, however, I think Elliot's work is clearly above this mess. I applaud Elliot's mention of the differences between modern store-bought paint and hand-made paint used by past masters AS WELL AS his discussion on the transparency of pigments. His discussion of the opacity and permanence of pigments is precisely the kind of information I would expect in a book discussing advanced techniques. Back to criticism - in my opinion, the omission of visually well-documented demonstrations of the discussed concepts and techniques are a major flaw in this work. Virgil Elliot is incredibly knowledgeable on the subject of traditional oil painting - I just wish the book contained better visuals.

This is not a "how-to" book; it is an excellent reference book to keep within reach when you are working. The older books are so obscure, so difficult to try to understand (I am thinking of the Doerner book in particular) and based on speculation about the techniques and materials used by the masters of the past. Mr. Elliott has kept abreast of discoveries by conservators in the major

museums using the most up to date, sophisticated technology; as well as the continuous testing of other experts in various fields (Paint manufacturers) and the ASTM. That is why he can warn about using zinc white; how and when to use the umbers; how to organize your pigments and use them according to their innate characteristics; the safe support to use for your painting; why some paintings from the '70s are falling off the canvas, etc. Again, it is an invaluable reference tool. I think other reviewers have been thinking of it more in terms of a how-to book, rather than as nuts-and-bolts information to bring to your own artwork.

I am a representational painter in oils ([...] for review) and I thought this book might have some interesting tidbits, especially about Vermeer or Rembrandt but I was extremely disappointed. There is some disjointed factual knowledge about a variety of techniques some of the masters used but it is so unspecific ("more study is needed") as to be literally unhelpful. What we can come away with is that there really is no, one old master technique but an evolution of techniques through the ages as new materials were discovered and experimented with. What is quite unfortunate is the inclusion of the author's own work in an attempt to demonstrate/illustrate the technique he is discussing. Not only do these "demonstrations" offer no clear understanding of any methods or differences in paint handling, they show how poorly the author himself fails to incorporate what he has just described. One glaring example is his lack of understanding purity of tone, the very thing that separates the masters (particularly William Bougereau) from the amateur scumblings of the mediocre and one of the most elusive but magical aspects of painting in oils. To his credit he does a fine job of listing materials, their uses and their evolution through the ages and how these products fair against recent developments in the field. There is also an interesting, though clinical, examination of perspective although this is getting away from the premise of the book.

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