

Secret Knowledge (New and Expanded Edition): Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters

By David Hockney

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Join one of the most influential artists of our time as he investigates the painting techniques of the Old Masters. Hockney's extensive research led him to conclude that artists such as Caravaggio, Velázquez, da Vinci, and other hyperrealists actually used optics and lenses to create their masterpieces.

In this passionate yet pithy book, Hockney takes readers on a journey of discovery as he builds a case that mirrors and lenses were used by the great masters to create their highly detailed and realistic paintings and drawings. Hundreds of the best-known and best-loved paintings are reproduced alongside his straightforward analysis. Hockney also includes his own photographs and drawings to illustrate techniques used to capture such accurate likenesses. Extracts from historical and modern documents and correspondence with experts from around the world further illuminate this thought-provoking book that will forever change how the world looks at art.

Secret Knowledge will open your eyes to how we perceive the world and how we choose to represent it.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
British painter David Hockney, well known for his cool and lovely paintings of California pools, has taken on the new role of detective. For two years Hockney seriously investigated the painting techniques of the old masters, and like any admirable sleuth, compiled substantial evidence to support his revolutionary theory. *Secret Knowledge* is the fruit of this labor, an exhaustive treatise in pictures revealing clues that some of the world's most famous painters, Ingres, Velázquez, Caravaggio (just to mention a few) utilized optics and lenses in creating their masterpieces. Hockney's fascination with the subject is contagious, and the book feels almost like a game with each analysis a "How'd they do that?" instead of a whodunit. While some may find the technical revelation a disappointment in terms of the idea of genius, Hockney is quick to point out that the use of optics does not diminish the immensity of artistic achievement. He reminds the reader that a tool is just a tool, and it is still the artist's hand and creative vision that produce a work of art. (296 pages, 460 illustrations, 402 in color.) --*J.P. Cohen*

Review
When looking at pictures, one can have no more stimulating and provocative companion than Hockney. ("The Times Literary Supplement", London)

About the Author
David Hockney was born in England in 1937 and studied at the Royal College of Art. He achieved international acclaim by his mid-twenties as part of the pop art movement and has gone on to become one of the best known artists of his generation.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Donofrio:

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Knowledge (New and Expanded Edition): Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters is kind of book which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

Rhonda Silva:

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