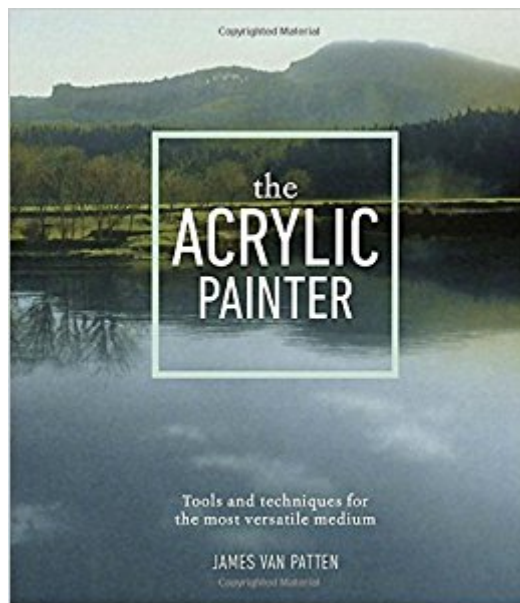




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# **The Acrylic Painter: Tools And Techniques For The Most Versatile Medium**



## Synopsis

A complete course on acrylic painting for beginners and experienced artists that covers classic approaches and new innovations. Embraced for versatility, quick-drying properties, and non-toxicity, no medium offers a wider range of effects for creating highly expressive art than acrylics. With its flexibility and ease of use, acrylic paint is a must-try for painters no matter your skill level. Here noted artist and School of Visual Arts instructor James Van Patten draws from years of experience to show you how to use acrylics to achieve a variety of results from watercolor-like transparency and the flatness of tempera and gouache to the buttery quality of oils. He presents an insider's look at the most up-to-date tools, materials, and techniques used by top painters in the medium to produce highly expressive art. Van Patten offers guidance on materials, processes, balance, and composition, and focuses on effectively using color in painting. Replete with detailed step-by-step technical demonstrations and a catalog of inspiring works by notable past and contemporary artists, as well as the author himself and his students, *The Acrylic Painter* provides a complete, classic art instruction manual for painters of all abilities in one of today's most popular types of paint.

## Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Watson-Guption (April 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0385346115

ISBN-13: 978-0385346115

Product Dimensions: 8.7 x 0.6 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #395,936 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #101 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Painting > Acrylics #303 in Books > Arts & Photography > Painting > Watercolor

## Customer Reviews

"This beautifully illustrated and clearly written book is destined to become the Bible for acrylic painters. Based on a lifetime of experience as a painter, Van Patten walks the reader through the various properties of competing brands and products of acrylic paint, brushes, additives and supports. He describes and demonstrates a wide variety of techniques including blending, layering, feathering, rewetting, glazing, stippling, wet-into-wet and much more besides. Van

Patten also discusses a broad swath of artistic endeavors ranging from hyper-real rendering to painterly abstraction. He introduces basic color theory and shows how knowledge of it can be used in practical situations. Along the way the book is peppered with tips on studio practice, demonstrations, analysis of paintings, solutions for framing and a great deal of sheer enthusiasm for both the medium and the art of painting in general. It's hard to imagine a book that could be more useful, practical, informative and inspiring for an acrylic painter."

JOHN PARKS, painter and faculty member at the School of Visual Arts in New York, author of *Universal Principles of Art*

James Van Patten shares his world of painterly know-how as a masterchef communicates a lifetime of kitchen savvy. This book is redolent with the taste of color, the sound of paint, the smell of canvas . . . and replete with visual spectacle. It's easy to consume, just follow the recipes."

MARILYNN GELFMAN KARP, author of *In Flagrate Collecto*, professor of art at New York University

James Van Patten is an innovative and gifted technical painter who brings decades of insight into the making of this book."

JAMES KIRK and MARK R. SMITH, artists and educators

James Van Patten is a native of Seattle, Washington, where he graduated from the University of Washington in 1965 with a BA in art education with an emphasis on painting. He completed his MFA in 1968 in Painting with minors in both Art History and Printmaking from Michigan State University. He has taught painting (as well as other studio classes), and lectured in art history at the university level in the ensuing years on both coasts and in the Midwest. Presently, he is a professor of painting at the School of Visual Arts in New York, NY. There he has taught the only course in acrylic techniques offered by SVA for over twenty years. He's spent bulk of his career in the studio as a practicing artist, working primarily in acrylic paint on large-scale landscape paintings. OK Harris, New York, NY represented him exclusively for over thirty years, and for over a decade the Plus One Gallery of London has shown his work exclusively in England. His work is featured in collections throughout the United States and Europe.

Good book. Very thorough, very professional yet easy to understand.

great book and great delivery

An excellent book full of very useful information

This book is very simply and clear.

This is a good book.

Nobody bought me off to write this review, so I'm going to tell the truth--this is not a good introduction to acrylic painting. For that, check out *Painting in Acrylics* by Lorena Kloosterboer. That will get you much farther than this rather rudimentary book will. Personally, I bought this book not because I needed another intro to acrylic painting book but because, yes, I liked the cover. I looked forward to seeing more such paintings inside. But most of those inside are paintings of marshes full of dead plants and water filled with rotting vegetation. Just a weird vibe. Then there's the tracing of photographs and completing one little section of a painting at a time before moving on to the next. I have seen hyperrealists paint without tracing or using projectors, so I know it's possible. But forget that--this book is just too sparse to function as a good intro to working with acrylics. I would have given this book three stars because it is pretty average for an intro to painting book--light on content. But because of the very bloated bought-and-paid-for reviews, I kicked it down a notch.

The definitive guide to acrylic techniques. A must for anyone interested in painting. Beautiful photography and comprehensive insights that give any aspiring artist the tools they need to fulfill their visions.

James Van Patten, a local to Seattle, Washington, graduated from the University of Washington in 1965 with a BA in art education. When I first picked up Patten's book *The Acrylic Painter* I didn't know I'd be learning from such an amazing teacher, as well as one who once lived only a couple hours from myself. It's no wonder Patten eventually became inspired by water and wetlands, as there is an abundance of that here in Oregon/Washington! Of course, I didn't find out I was learning from a local until the end of his book. The reason I chose Patten's book is all in the name, *The Acrylic Painter: Tools and techniques for the most versatile medium*. Acrylic paint was the first paint I ever touched, mostly due to it being the most commonly used paint for beginning painters. Unfortunately, without doing the research yourself, you won't realize just how complex this paint can be. Looking back now, I don't see how I could have gone any further into my career as an artist without this book. I first thought of acrylics as the easy option for artists. I mean, you look at the price alone and you're going to get more bang for your buck with acrylics. So that is where I

started, before I began to learn the many frustrations that comes with working with acrylics. As a self-taught artist, I didn't have the schooling and teachers to grow me in the art of working with acrylics. No one was there to tell me that acrylics dry so fast, or that you shouldn't pour more than you need to work with at that time, or that there are additives you can mix into it to slow the drying process. Books soon became my teachers, and believe me, I've read a lot. Up until Patten's book, almost every book I picked up felt like a really boring art class. Reading through these books just wasn't an option as much as I tried. Patten's book was one of two books on acrylics that I fell in love with from the moment I turned the first page. For an entire summer it became my life source. His book answered so many questions about acrylics that I've had over the years, and taught me so many tricks of the trade that have opened new doors for me as a painter. What I loved first about his book was how Patten doesn't just speak about acrylic paints generically. As an artist, the first question that runs through my mind when I meet another artist is, "What brand of paint do you use?" I get kinda nosy and want to learn which brand, body, and consistency they prefer. Patten touches on this subject from the get go. I was soon pleasantly surprised to find my paints of choice are right up there with Patten's. Through his teachings I have become so much more familiar and comfortable working with my paints. I no longer look at paint additives like their foreign objects, or look at the more expensive brands of paint like they're too far out of my league. Learning to use your paint right makes a difference in whether or not you will become a successful artist in both product and profit. (Better product and less waste.) With the proper palette and formula, my paint has come to last so much longer. My second biggest curiosity when I meet an artist is their brushes. A brush to an artist is like an extension of their own hand. As a beginner, your standing in the paint aisle at Michaels and you're staring at the brushes thinking, "What does it all mean!?" The fibers, the shapes, the angles, and the brands! Even to this day, I mostly make my decision using my own imagination and observation. I basically run the brush across my hand and watch the movement of the fibers and say, "Yup! Looks about right!" Patten dedicates an entire chapter to palettes and brushes, and it's just beautiful! The same benefit that comes from choosing a proper brand of paint comes when choosing a proper brush. Better product and a longer lifespan. You aren't replacing brushes every couple weeks, or finding fibers glued to your canvas. You're getting finer, straighter lines, and less unwanted lines. Just the same, I could go on and on about each chapter following, but I think you get the gist. From painting surfaces, to learning what gesso really is and what it's used for, to color theory and finding out that the color wheel doesn't just consist of primary and secondary

colors, and finally the proper way to finish and present your art, he literally touches on everything. James Van Patten makes the world of acrylics so much bigger, especially for a small artist like myself. I honestly can't thank him enough for what this book did for me this summer. I have a lot more confidence in my knowledge and the choices I make as an artist, and it's already showing in my work. I've ventured out to Michael's (to my husband's dismay, ha!) and have slowly started adding products to my studio. I would honestly suggest this book to any artist, even if it's just for the purpose of a great reference book. James Patten's advice and experience alone makes it worth the read. -I received this book for free through blogging for books in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own and are not swayed in any way by publisher or author.

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