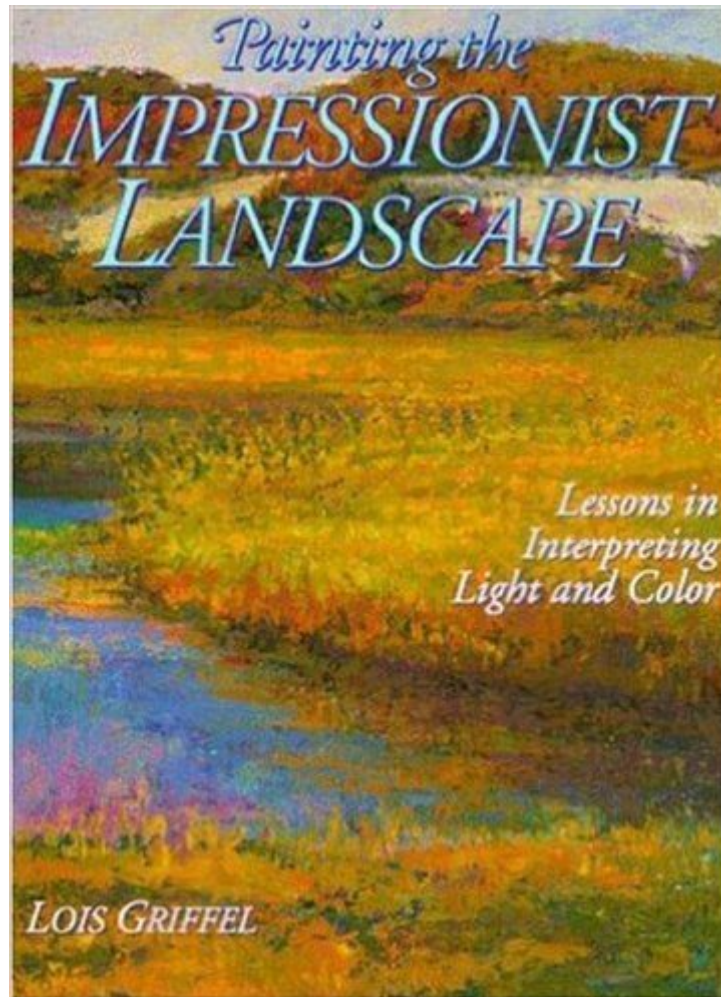


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# Painting The Impressionist Landscape: Lessons In Interpreting Light And Color



## Synopsis

Impressionismâ€™s techniques as well as its practitioners, past and presentâ€™ continues to excite the passion of artists and art enthusiasts alike. From the plein-air landscapes first painted near the forests of Barbizon outside Paris, through the fields of Giverny that Monet immortalized, to the art of American expatriates such as John Singer Sargent and the European-trained American nativists like William Merritt Chase, the influence of impressionism on American art has had a long and distinguished history. Through artistic principles developed by Charles Hawthorne, an influential American impressionist and educator who studied with Chase and founded The Cape Cod School of Art, the rich legacy of the impressionist tradition was passed on to several generations of twentieth-century American artists. In *Painting the Impressionist Landscape*, Lois Griffel, the current director of The Cape Cod School of Art and an accomplished artist in her own right, explores and illustrates Hawthorneâ€™s philosophy and theories about color and light, enabling artists at every level of ability and experience to apply his insights to their own work. The first part of the book, â€œFundamentals of Color and Light,â€• elaborates on the circumstances and individuals that contributed to the development of impressionism. The author then outlines the progression of the study of color and light that is covered in detail later in the book, from simple block studiesâ€™ the most effective way to learn to use pure color to express the effects and quality of lightâ€™ through the more complex rounded forms in still lifes and portraits, to the most challenging forms intrinsic to landscape. Griffel then discusses the essentials of colorâ€™ its terms, the impressionist palette, and color mixingâ€™ as well as how established color theory expresses and influences the impressionist approach. The second part of the book, â€œImpressionism in Practice,â€• takes readers through a series of explorations that guides them toward a mastery of the impressionist landscape. Griffel begins by itemizing the materials that artists need to prepare for painting outdoors and describing how the light of the setting affects color within the context of a composition. The detailed chapters on the studiesâ€™ from sunny day and cloudy day blocks, to still lifes and portraits, culminating in landscapesâ€™ are all structured to lead readers through each step, enabling them first to evaluate, then eventually realize in their own painting, Hawthorneâ€™s enlightening perceptions about capturing the radiance of natureâ€™s light in art. Beautifully illustrated with the art of the author, her colleagues at the artistâ€™s colony in Provincetown, and selections by Monet, Sargent, and Hawthorne himself, *Painting the Impressionist Landscape* is a lively and informative guide to expressing light as color in art.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I hate writing negative reviews and I'm pretty sure people hate to read them, but Griffel's book is a proverbial "tale of two cities". On one hand she includes an abundance of atmospheric palette knife paintings and on the other hand her text deals with subjective issues and questionable exercises more appropriately found in a basic painting book. There is little, if any, connection between the examples and her text. Potential customers are likely to purchase the book based upon the paintings thinking there will be at least a modicum of technique or demonstration as to how they were done; they will be disappointed. To be fair the actual title of the book after the colon is "Lessons in Interpreting Light and Color", and the book does talk about light and color. However, a lesson is supposed to teach something and there are precious few conclusions offered up by the author. She relies primarily on block studies which are simply value/temperature exercises that have no special relevance to the impressionist landscape any more than they might have to still life or portraiture. Block studies are a traditional teaching tool employed by the academic art community going back to the 19th century. Additionally, the author uses an extended palette which, in my opinion, is an anathema to the Impressionists' approach. There's not much meat here and what there is has very little to do with landscape painting. If you want to acquire the book for examples of a particular style, then it might be worth the expense and does provide useful models to emulate in your own work. But, if you want a treatise on how and why she painted the way she did, it just isn't here. At one time Ms.

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