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Brave Intuitive Painting-Let Go, Be Bold, Unfold!: Techniques For Uncovering Your Own Unique Painting Style



Synopsis

Adopt a spontaneous, bold, and fearless approach to painting as a process of discoveryâone that results in lush and colorful finished works that will beg to be displayed. This inspiring and encouraging book for both novice and experienced painters teaches how to create colorful, exciting, expressive paintings through a variety of techniques, combining basic, practical painting principles with innovative personal self-expression. Flora S. Bowley's fun and forgiving approach to painting is based on the notion that "You don't begin with a preconceived painting in mind; you allow the painting to unfold." Illustrating how to work in layers, Flora gives you the freedom to cover up, re-start, wipe away, and change courses many times along the way. Unexpected and unique compositions, color combinations, and subject matter appear as you allow your paintings to emerge in an organic, unplanned way while working from a place of curiosity and letting go of fear. "Learn techniques for working with vibrant color and avoiding mud." "Make rich and varied marks with a variety of unexpected tools." "Break compositional rules." "Embrace nonattachment as a way to keep exploring." "Keep momentum by moving your body and staying positive." "Work with what's working to let go of struggle." "Connect more deeply to the world around you to stay inspired." "Embrace layers to create rich complex paintings." "Find rhythm by spiraling between chaos and order.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is visually beautiful and the author does a good job of describing her approach to "painting as a process of discovery". She has a calm and encouraging writing voice. There is not a lot of instruction in this book, compared to most art instruction books. Some might call that lack of

substance; others would call it elegant simplicity. The author is all about right-brain and intuition, so maybe she intentionally kept the words to a minimum. There were some aspects of the book that disappointed me. First, the paper the book is printed on has a flat matte finish (not shiny). This has the effect of making the illustrations less vibrant than they could have been. I was puzzled by the inordinate amount of space devoted to large life-style photos, at the expense of actually illustrating the text. Even when there are illustrations of the text, there are no captions so you have to guess which concept or technique the illustration refers to. If you are wondering what I mean by "life-style photos", here are a few examples: a full page photo of the author doing yoga, another full page of the author swinging on a swing, and a page that has nothing on it except a photo of a candle and a short quotation. There are also some odd choices such as the (presumably intentional) out-of-focus close-up of a painting detail that takes up most of pages 18 and 19. I was left scratching my head asking "What does that add?" The part of the book that I found the most interesting is a series of 20 photos that show the author creating a painting from start to finish. But ironically (considering how much space is lavished on irrelevant life-style photos), the amount of space devoted to those 20 photos is two pages in total!

This book was an recommendation and I went in blind since there was no "look inside" feature; I decided to invest because I researched the author and found that I enjoyed her style, artwork, and energy. That said, this book certainly won't be everyone's flavour. It focuses on aligning mind, body, and spirit more than on painting pictures. And the pictures you're asked to produce aren't necessarily photorealistic (or even illustrative), more ambiguous--almost abstract. The book begins with a basic introduction and offers some advice on treating yourself gently, then it gets into a list of supplies: * Painting surface * Acrylic paint * Palette (not to be confused with 'colour palette') * Foam brushes * Small bristle brushes * Fingers :) * Rags * Etchers (anything that can scratch or make marks on the painting surface) * Stampers (anything that can be pressed onto the painting surface) * Spray bottles (And a personal suggestion: a basic colour wheel if you don't already own one.) Each section which discusses the individual supplies offers some prompts on how to use it, such as (taken from the section under "Small Bristle Brushes"): * Play with creating thick and thin marks in one continuous line * Skip the brush across the canvas to make smaller hash marks * Write the first word that comes to mind However, from section to section, some of these prompts overlap. I also noticed some repetition throughout, especially when it came to (literal) movement.

I have taken Flora's excellent online course, luckily for me, as I live in Norway, far away from her

workshops. When the course was over, I was so full of inspiration. So I ordered the book in order to stay inspired. And I must say, I'm not disappointed! In fact, I love it! This colourful and aesthetically pleasing book offers lots of inspiration and prompts for taking flight and be brave in your paintings, and also in life. It's a wonderful supplement to the online course! However, I think that if you haven't taken the course or workshop you will still find what you need here to paint intuitively. This book is not a traditional 'painting techniques' hand book, for the simple reason that it is about a non-traditional painting process, that is painting intuitively. With that in mind, I think Flora gives you value for money. In chapter 1 (pp 11-37) she gives advice on how to loosen up and let go of those thoughts and feelings that are often stopping us from painting at all. Trust your inner voice and take it into your paintings. This 'psycho babbling' (as someone else put it) is in fact an essential part of intuitive painting and therefore an important 'technique'. In chapter 2 (pp 39-83) you will find lots of practical advice on how you can use different tools to create variety and depth into your painting: foam brushes, bristle brushes, fingers, rags, etchers, stampers and spray bottles. She talks about many layers in the painting, colours and different kinds of variation, tips on how to move on when getting stuck etc., all beautifully and informatively illustrated. Chapter 3 (pp 93-126) will give you more advice on the practical painting process, e.g.

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