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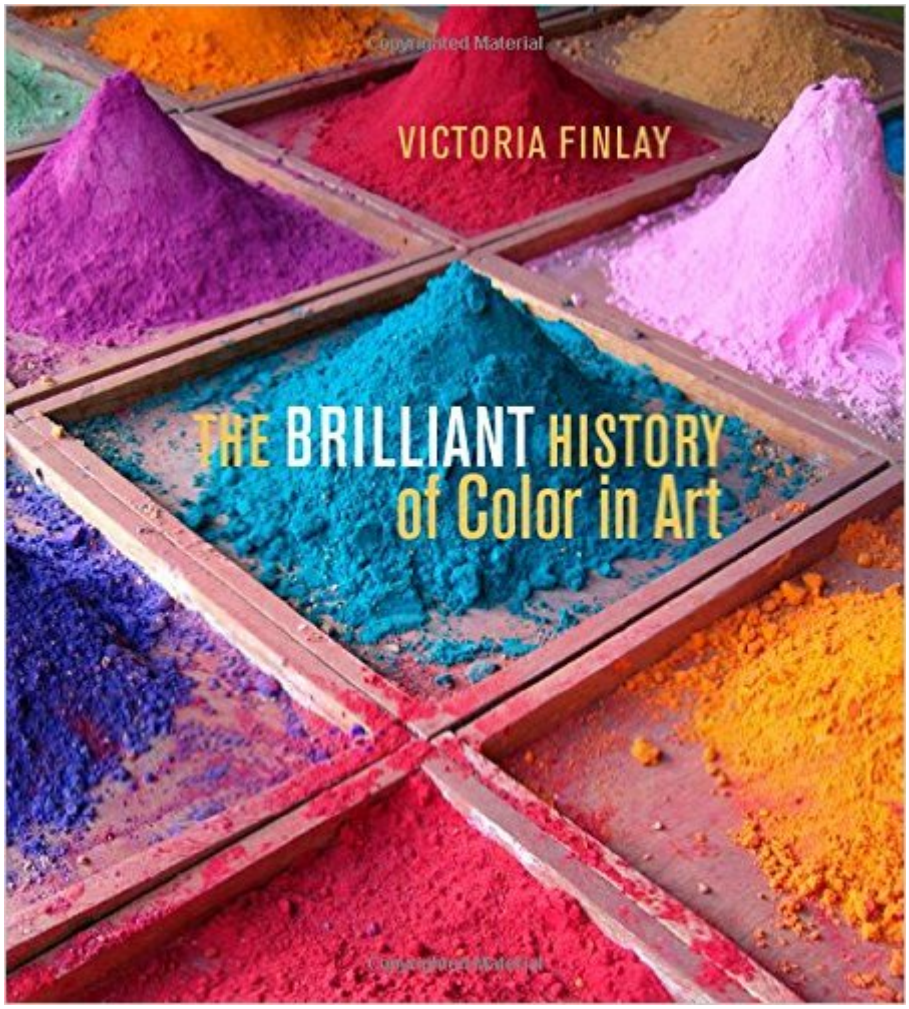
The Brilliant History Of Color In Art



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Synopsis

The history of art is inseparable from the history of color. And what a fascinating story they tell together: one that brims with an all-star cast of characters, eye-opening details, and unexpected detours through the annals of human civilization and scientific discovery. Â Enter critically acclaimed writer and popular journalist Victoria Finlay, who here takes readers across the globe and over the centuries on an unforgettable tour through the brilliant history of color in art. Written for newcomers to the subject and aspiring young artists alike, Finlayâ ™s quest to uncover the origins and science of color will beguile readers of all ages with its warm and conversational style. Her rich narrative is illustrated in full color throughout with 166 major works of art—most from the collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum. Â Readers of this book will revel in a treasure trove of fun-filled facts and anecdotes. Were it not for Cleopatra, for instance, purple might not have become the royal color of the Western world. Without Napoleon, the black graphite pencil might never have found its way into the hands of CÃ©zanne. Without mango-eating cows, the sunsets of Turner might have lost their shimmering glow. And were it not for the pigment cobalt blue, the halls of museums worldwide might still be filled with forged Vermeers. Â Red ocher, green earth, Indian yellow, lead white—no pigment from the artistâ ™s broad and diverse palette escapes Finlayâ ™s shrewd eye in this breathtaking exploration.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After reading this great book, I realized, that you really can’t understand the history of art fully without looking at the history of color. Flipping through the pages of Victoria Finlay’s "The Brilliant

History of Color in Art" is like taking a ride through time alongside a cast of characters with names like Chrome Yellow, Tyrian Purple, and Madder Red as your guides.Finlay digs deep to find little-known stories and facts about the colors that we all know and love (and a few we may not have heard of!) and uses beautiful paintings and images from the Getty Museum to illustrate her unique history. I would venture to say that even if you've never found yourself thinking, `I wonder where cobalt blue came from?' you will find the stories fascinating.Finlay wrote "The Brilliant History of Color in Art" with the intention of making it accessible to young artists as well as those just starting out and her storytelling style achieves this with considerable success. Overall, I found this book informative, fun, and full of inspiring images. It makes a great addition to my library along the likes of Vicki McMurray's "Mastering Color.

I studied art in school and took classes on the subject of color and how it is used and some of the history of color. I really enjoyed reading through this book but especially loved reading it accompanied by the many illustrations and examples. This is one of those books that you can look through again and again and see something different each time. It wasn't and exhaustive history by any means but it gives a good overview and some interesting facts about how colors were made in the early days and how they were used and what they ment. I read this on my computer. I had a digital copy that was given to me to read and review. I am going to buy this one so I can have a hard copy. I loved it!The writing isn't too scholarly so even my middle school aged children will be able to read it and learn from it. Lovely book with lots of lovely pictures to look at!

This is a fascinating book, filled with interesting stories about color through the history of art. The book focuses on a lot of colors that are no longer in use today, where they came from and what happened to them. I am an artist and have been painting for over twenty years and did not know the history of most of these colors. I was pleasantly surprised by almost every chapter!This book doesn't go into a lot of detail. Each chapter is 2 to 3 pages long, with accompanying photos and illustrations, and the content is more of a brief overview rather than an in-depth account. Because of this, I would categorize this as a Juvenile or Youth book, though easily enjoyed by any adult as well. The colors are arranged in chronological order, but you don't need to read the book straight through, you can pick it up at any chapter.I took a star off because I think this book should be physically larger. It's not small and is high quality, but there are a lot of reproductions of paintings that I would have loved to see in a larger format.Recommended!

Excellent book. I bought it for my niece who is starting a college major in Art and she said that it is interesting and helpful. I looked at it before I gave it to her and ended up reading the whole book! I learned the basics about how the materials available to make paint (the book starts with the ancient cave paintings) inspired as well as limited the great artists up until the present day. Just about to buy a copy for my 'museum buddy' and it is not even her birthday.

I love picking up the book at odd times - like when I am procrastinating but need to justify doing so. As an artist, I find the historical background of colors fascinating. In this case, it is well written, and therefore easy and enjoyable to read. It is a wonderful source of trivial information - I can hold my own in any social gathering!

Love It!Finlay condenses a lot of fascinating information in each 2 or 3 page chapter on a specific color - covering how it might have been discovered, the history of its use by artists, its commercial importance or impact on history. Lots of anecdotes and intriguing details that provide a whole new perspective on paints, pigments and art history. It can be read in small doses and is great for starting discussions with kids and grandkids.

This is a really fun book that you can open anywhere and read something fascinating about color. Information is parsed out in bite sized chunks. It's full of beautiful and informative pictures. This is a coffee table style book, not a text book for a college class. If you love history, it's great. If you love art, it's great. If you love color, it's great.

Victoria Finlay is a master at writing the fascinating history of color. I loved her book, "Color: A Natural History of the Palette." It was delightful to read about different colors and her travels to the countries where they originated.

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