



*Exploring the Art  
of Yesterday...*

*Medieval/Gothic  
Renaissance  
Baroque  
Dutch Golden Age  
Rococo  
Neoclassical*

*To Create Art Today*

**VOLUME 1**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Why Study the Masters?</b>	7
<b>The Importance of Art</b>	8
<b>How to use this Book</b>	10
<b>Questions to help us Understand Art</b>	12
<b>Color Wheel</b>	15
<b>Cavallini</b>	16
<i>Noodle Mosaic</i>	19
<i>Ornamental Mosaic</i>	21
<b>Giotto</b>	22
<i>Fresco</i>	25
<i>Drawing the “Fly”</i>	26
<b>Ghiberti</b>	28
<i>Florentine Copper Relief</i>	30
<i>Aluminum Goldfish Relief</i>	32
<i>Aluminum Tape Relief</i>	33
<b>Van Eyck</b>	34
<i>Calligraphy</i>	37
<i>Van Eyck’s Puppy - Mixed Media</i>	39
<b>Angelico</b>	40
<i>Golden Dots - Marker</i>	44
<i>Gold Leaf</i>	45
<b>Botticelli</b>	46
<i>Egg Tempera</i>	49
<i>Egg Tempera with Pastels</i>	51

<b>Da Vinci</b>	52
<i>Drawing Mona Lisa</i>	55
<i>Shading the Virgin and The Child</i>	57
<b>Dürer</b>	58
<i>Foam Board Print Making</i>	61
<i>Leaf Printing</i>	62
<b>Michelangelo</b>	64
<i>Carving with Michelangelo</i>	67
<i>Sculpting with Clay</i>	69
<b>Raffael</b>	70
<i>Drawing People in Action</i>	73
<i>Pouncing Process</i>	74
<b>Bronzino</b>	76
<i>Florentine Patterns - Markers</i>	79
<i>Designing Pattern with Color</i>	80
<i>Patterns with Paper Maché</i>	81
<b>El Greco</b>	82
<i>Elongated People</i>	85
<i>The Mannerism Cat - Mixed Media</i>	86
<b>Van Dyck</b>	88
<i>Cross Hatching the Owl</i>	91
<i>Painting Van Dyck's Feather - Ink</i>	93
<b>Rembrandt</b>	94
<i>Etching Project</i>	97
<i>Rembrandt's Charcoal Elephant</i>	98
<i>Candle Print Etching</i>	99
<b>Charles Le Brun</b>	100
<i>Light and Shadow Cut Outs</i>	103
<i>Illustrating Your Story</i>	104

<b>Vermeer</b>	106
<i>Painting Light - Acrylic</i>	109
<i>Pastel Light Bulbs</i>	110
<b>Luti</b>	112
<i>Drawing with Conté</i>	115
<i>Ink on Aluminum</i>	117
<b>Gainsborough</b>	118
<i>“Gnarled Tree” One Line Drawing</i>	121
<i>Painting by Candlelight</i>	123
<b>Fragonard</b>	124
<i>Ink Drawing and Wash</i>	127
<i>Ink Drawing and Wash II</i>	128
<i>Using Color with Ink</i>	129
<b>West</b>	130
<i>Historical Drawing - Markers</i>	133
<i>Glazing with Watercolor</i>	134
<i>Coloring the Values</i>	135
<b>Elisabeth Le Brun</b>	136
<i>Portrait Drawing</i>	139
<i>Painting Decked-out Hats - Watercolor</i>	140
<b>Glossary</b>	142
<b>Answers to Chapter Questions</b>	144
<b>Resources</b>	154
<b>About the Author</b>	157

# *Why Study the Masters*

It is important for us to learn from those who came before us. We need to learn about their positive influences but also learn from their mistakes.

In art, we want to learn what made the masters' artwork so memorable that today we still stand in awe of their masterpieces. What did they know and understand that we need to learn to make a similar impact in our world today?

From their artwork we gain an understanding of the past. We are able to see with our eyes what was important to people of that day. We also can learn the importance of creating magnificent art designed to change our world today.

Art is all about communication. A painting can have just as much impact as a book or a song or as much as listening to a lecture.

Art originated with God and He is undeniably the Master Creator! All of the art we create is something that imitates what has already been created. In this book you will experience the artistic expressions of artists of all kinds. They were all very proficient in their artwork, and if they were able to talk to us today, it would be interesting to know what they would tell us about how to create meaningful and beautiful artwork of our own.

Throughout this book, you will find many different stories about the artists that created magnificent art. You will meet artists that struggled with insecurity, some who had no friends, some who died never knowing how special their art really was, some who gained wealth through their art, and some who couldn't even purchase their own tools.

Some art portrays the depravity and sin of mankind. Even these pieces, if created with artistic excellence, can be studied to discover foundational skills that merit imitation.

# VERMEER

1632 - 1675

## GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

*Oil Painting - Baroque*

*Dutch Golden Age*

How did Vermeer make good use of light and dark values in this painting?

What are some of the largest geometric shapes he used to design his composition?

Where did Vermeer place some lost and found edges in this painting in order to lose the shape?





Johannes Vermeer, circa 1665, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 39 cm., Mauritshuis, Netherlands,



The Milkmaid, Johannes Vermeer, circa 1660, oil on canvas, 45.5 x 41 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Johannes Vermeer (VERMEER) was a Dutch painter who enjoyed painting people in the comfort of their homes. He wanted to show how the middle class lived.

Vermeer always worked carefully and slowly in order to make the best masterpiece he could. Because he wanted his art to be outstanding, he painted with some of the most expensive pigments.

As you can see in his paintings, he was a master at painting light. Often he had his subjects stand by an open window so the light from the outside would give a glow to their face and clothing. It is obvious he often used the same rooms to paint in as

the furniture and decorations are the same. He also painted the same people over and over again. Vermeer painted a world that seemed more perfect than real life by using rich colors and warm light.

During the war with France, Vermeer could not sell any of his art. Because he was also an art dealer, his inventory of paintings of great artists did not sell either. He became depressed and very upset because of this immense burden. When he died he left his wife and children in debt.

People who knew him in his home town of Delft liked his work, but after he died he was forgotten until much later. Today Vermeer's art is treasured, and he is now considered one of the greatest painters of the Dutch Golden Age.



# PRIMARY PROJECT

## Painting Light - Acrylic



### Materials

Black or dark blue construction paper

Acrylic paint in yellow, white, magenta & turquoise

Small paint brush

Drinking straw (the narrower and shorter the straw the better)

Container of water

Paper towels

Bowls in which to mix paint

Water

# Process

1. Mix some acrylic paint in small bowls with just enough water so that it flows easily. You might want to experiment mixing up some that is very runny and some that is a little less runny. They will both work differently.
2. Put a small puddle of white runny acrylic on your dark paper.
3. Take a straw and give a hard blow to the puddle of paint so the fireworks spread out. Put the end of your straw right on the paper and in the paint as you blow.
4. For this first layer you can use a paintbrush to spread out the center of the white paint.
5. When you are through blowing the white paint, place small amounts of another color on top of the white layer and at different places in the fireworks. Using your straw, do the same procedure as before.
6. Do this procedure several times with different colors. End up using white and again use a brush to pull the star burst out from the center.

## OPTIONAL PROJECT

### Pastel Light Bulbs



# Materials

Pastels

Pencil

Scissors and tape

Black construction paper

Scrap construction paper

# Process

1. With a small piece of scrap construction paper draw one light bulb with its base. Keep it about 2 to 3 inches in size.
2. Cut out the light bulb keeping the outside paper as your stencil. Use tape to fix any extra cuts in the paper.
3. Decide where you want to place your bulbs on your dark paper and draw a white line where you want to connect the bulbs.
4. Lay the stencil at the correct location and while firmly holding it in place, draw around the inside edge of your stencil with a pastel. Then smear it to fill the entire area.
5. Make as many light bulbs as you desire with your stencil. Add a glow inside each bulb with your white pastel.
6. With a black pastel, add some curved lines around the base of the light bulbs. They should curve up like a gentle smile.



Woman Holding a Balance, Johannes Vermeer, c.1664, oil on canvas, 39.7 x 35.5, 1942, Courtesy of the National Gallery of art, Widener Collection

**Make a Masterpiece with the help of Video Instruction.**  
*Learn more about Watercolor by creating this pastel project with Sharon at [CreatingAMasterpiece.com](http://CreatingAMasterpiece.com).*

