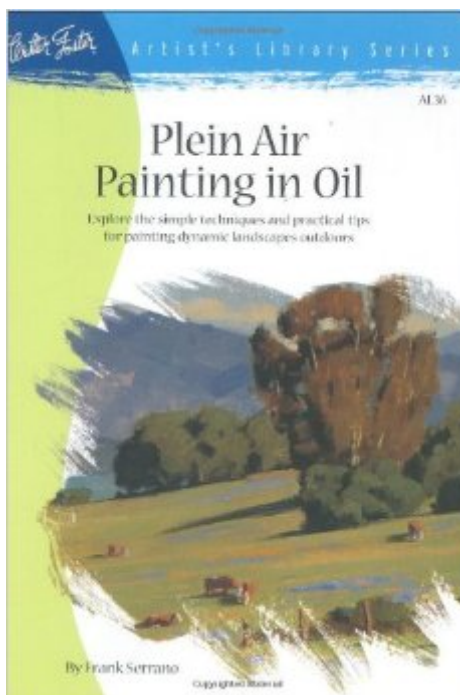


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# Plein Air Painting In Oil (Artist's Library Series)



## Synopsis

Explore the simple techniques and practical tips for painting dynamic landscapes outdoors. When you are ready to take your hobby to the great outdoors, then you are ready for this comprehensive guide by Frank Serrano. *Plein Air Painting in Oil* will teach you everything you need to know to paint outdoors with oil, accurately portraying clouds, trees, rocks, mountains, and other natural landscape elements. You will learn the essentials of the craft, such as working with light and shadow, choosing a subject, and achieving a variety of atmospheric effects. You'll appreciate the way Serrano communicates the traditions and basic techniques of this unique artistic genre with simplicity and clarity, helping you discover the peaceful joy of painting en plein air!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I am a beginning plein air painter. As a working adult, I don't have time to take a university extension course or enroll in local art classes. For the time being, I have to make do with instruction from books, and inspiration from published collections, galleries, art shows and museums. I purchased and read a large number of books - in and out of print - on drawing and painting. There is a great deal of fine material out there, but at the very beginning stage I find Frank Serrano's little book to be the most helpful. Winston Churchill came to recreational painting as an adult, and in his characteristic fashion described, in another very inspiring little book ("Painting as a Pastime," Odhams, London (1965), the essential challenge (facing the blank canvas, brush in hand), and the essential quality the beginner must find within him- or herself: the audacity to put the first daub of

paint on the canvas: "Having bought the colours, an easel, and a canvas, the next step was to begin. But what a step to take! The palette gleamed with beads of colour; fair and white rose the canvas; the empty brush hung poised, heavy with destiny, irresolute in the air. My hand seemed arrested by a silent veto." There are numerous "how to get started" books in print that deal with oil painting. What makes Serrano's so valuable is it's simple, direct approach to putting the paint on your brush and then on the canvas. It is a quality of this book, and not a failing, that it does not attempt to cover too much material. Serrano sticks to the basics, and describes them with admirable simplicity and directness. His approach is not so simple as to be condescending, though. As a beginning painter, I feel some of the lack of control that I felt when learning to drive.

This little gem is one of the FINEST how-to books about oil painting that you will ever read, or come across in your life-time. I strongly suggest that you get this book before it goes out of print-and enjoy it forever. For a mere price of a fish-and-chips order, you just cannot go wrong. But, the problem with that fish-and-chips order is that once eaten, everything is gone forever. You will have this book for as long as you live to enjoy, and possibly to share, if you were to buy a copy. You simply cannot go wrong there. Can you? The hidden beauty of this amazing little book is that it is only 64 fantastic pages that you could read again, and again without getting bored. Every single line of the text is full of secrets. Serrano uses only eight oil paints, and three brushes in order to create those depths, and textures in each painting in the book. When he describes each painting in the book, it is like you are painting that painting by yourself alone, and Serrano is behind you holding your hand with your brush. For example, how to do trees simply, and rapidly without fiddling endlessly with details; or, skies; or the time of the day; or foggy/misty scenes; or whatever you fancy...I wish I had this incredible book back during my university days...There are 12 painting lessons from easy to complex topics; and a wonderful gallery at the end. Here are the lessons: painting step by step; creating dynamic compositions; simplifying a subject; capturing light & shadow; expressing mood; building texture; finding a good focus; conveying time of day; depicting distance; deciding what to paint; using negative space, and exercising artistic licence.

As a bit of background, Walter Foster was a real painter and early on in his career circa 1930 started a specialty publishing company churning out art instruction books usually filled with step by step demonstrations. When I first started painting as a kid you could find dozens of these covering different genres. They were usually large format (maybe 12 x 16"), nicely printed on heavy stock, ran 18 to 24 pages and sold for about a \$1 each. To a kid who wanted to learn how to paint getting

a new one with exotic images to emulate was like opening presents on XMAS. Well, time marches on and Walter Foster publications are still with us, albeit in a smaller format, but the formula is still pretty much the same. A working artist scripts a booklet with a limited number of demonstrations on a central theme, adds in some equipment recommendations, some technique/instructional material, and a book is born. This particular title is from the "Artist Library Series" and is useful for the beginning oil painter that wants to move outdoors for the plein air experience. There are a great many books available covering outdoor painting and this one is a good example of the "quick sketch/loose realism" style. The author summons up a dozen or so lessons each with a practice painting shown in 3 or 4 steps of completion which the reader can emulate and alter to suit their needs. Most of the scenes are of southern CA and I could recognize several without looking at the title or origin info, which is a good sign when you're learning landscape painting as opposed to just painting generic skies, trees and rocks. This is exactly the sort of book a beginning outdoor oil painter should be looking for.

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