Secret Knowledge Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters by David Hockney

Like searching for the holy grail, retrieving lost secrets from the past has always been a tantalizing, alluring quest. Isaac Newton immersed himself in arcane alchemical lore as he obsessively pursued the uncorrupted knowledge of the ancient Greeks, and Immanuel Velikovsky shot to infamy by rewriting science to explain biblical miracles and Egyptian mysteries. Now David Hockney, a prominent British artist who lives in California, claims to have discovered why pictures became far more realistic in the 15th century. In Hockney's version of the history of Renaissance art, neither divine inspiration nor the skill of genius caused this dramatic shift. Instead, lenses and mirrors provide the hidden explanation of how Caravaggio, Holbein, Raphael, Giorgione, and van Dyck were able to produce paintings that are as deceptively natural as photographs.

Does the use of optical devices mean that the great masters were cheating? Their desire to avoid detection might provide one reason for the lack of written historical evidence to support Hockney's argument. Disturbing though his conclusions are, they deserve to be taken seriously because he is himself an artist. By ferreting out forgotten tricks of the trade, Hockney seems to undermine his own status as a celebrity painter. His reliance on...

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new stunning realism. If you want a great introduction/summary of the findings in the book, Lawrence Weschler’s article, “Through the Looking-Glass: Further adventures in opticality with David Hockney,” is available for free in full-text with color photos from The Believer online. The wall, or art history from 1400-1900 becomes a three-part story: you have pre-optics (awkwardness), optics (the disappearance of awkwardness), and post-optics (the return of awkwardness). Art Techniques & Principles. Secret Knowledge (New and Expanded Edition): Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters. 4.14 (2,061 ratings by Goodreads). Paperback. In this passionate yet pithy book, Hockney takes readers on a journey of discovery as he builds a case that mirrors and lenses were used by the great masters to create their highly detailed and realistic paintings and drawings. Hundreds of the best-known and best-loved paintings are reproduced alongside his straightforward analysis. Hockney also includes his own photographs and drawings to illustrate techniques used to capture such accurate likenesses. The Secret Knowledge (2013) is the seventh novel by Scottish writer Andrew Crumey. It is his first since returning to his original UK publisher Dedalus Books, and was awarded a grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Part of the writing was done while the author was visiting fellow at the Institute of Advanced Study (Durham). In 1913 composer Pierre Klauer envisages marriage to his sweetheart and fame for his new work, The Secret Knowledge. Then tragedy strikes. A century later, concert Review of David Hockney’s ‘Secret Knowledge’ (2nd edition, 2006). The book was originally due to be entitled “The lost knowledge”, indicating that for a long time (between the second half of the fifteenth century until the early nineteenth century) the use of optical instruments had been an essential part of doing painting, and that the artists had lost knowledge of how to use them from the second half of the nineteenth century. The masters of art, and optics: Ingres. In 1999, Hockney (who at that time lived in California) visited the exhibition "Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch" at the National Gallery, during a stay in London.