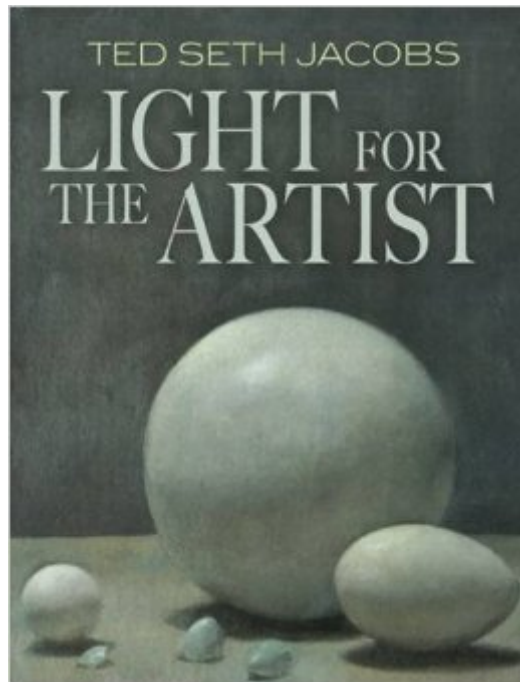


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# Light For The Artist (Dover Art Instruction)



## Synopsis

Intermediate and advanced art students receive a broad vocabulary of effects with this in-depth study of light. The guide offers detailed descriptions that start with the basics – the direction of light, reflections, and shadows – and advance to studies of light in natural and manipulated situations. Examinations of subtler light effects include foreshortening, field effects, multiple light sources, colored light, depicting the light source, and the behavior of light on shiny surfaces. Lavishly illustrated with diagrams and paintings, this volume applies its principles to figure, still life, and landscape paintings. Author Ted Seth Jacobs stresses the importance of comparing real-life vision to the canvas, since no system of rules can substitute for close and careful observation. Jacobs points out common errors, suggests light effects that artists should keep in mind, and discusses how preconceptions can be put aside in order to see the world more clearly.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars – See all reviews (10 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I have heard much about Ted Seth Jacobs and his approach to seeing color, and certainly his technical ability is what they say it is. However, I am afraid that I cannot give this book more than three stars. It is not about the content of what he says - what he has in there is accurate, and he has good basic illustrations to prove his points. In fact, I bought this book sight unseen essentially for the information the book contained. So while the content itself is not an issue, I do have some issues with the way it is presented. The two main problems I have with the book are the format and the color reproduction. The format makes the book nigh unreadable; and basically all the color reproductions of the paintings in it make me wonder if Mr. Jacobs really painted in those colors, or if

it is some regrettable problem with the color reproduction during printing. The book is absolutely cram-packed with information-dense text in a two-column layout. This works for magazines, where the articles are shorter, but makes for extremely tiresome reading in a large book. As I said, the information is accurate, and Mr. Jacob's illustrations to prove those points are simple and easy to understand. But the text is very dense, and very dry, and it makes it hard to get through without getting tired. Another part of the problem is the lack of chapter breaks. There are a couple in the beginning, but the last half of the book is essentially one long unbroken column of text (which runs the outside length, and the wonky-colored pictures on the inside). The other problem is the color reproduction. The paper in my book is still pristine white, so it's not yellowing of the paper itself.

Light For the Artist is a short 100 or so pages that packs in a lot of information. It's the type of read that feels like it was written by an educator/professor and for students: lacking in friendly tones and densely worded, it can be fairly inscrutable. But that isn't to say there isn't useful information in here; certainly, mastering light is arguably the most important discipline of a painter. The book isn't about technique nor style. Rather, the author is careful to note that it is about explaining light in detail so the artist can use that to make their own work more sophisticated. The book is broken down into three sections: (1) Symbolism and Perception: Word Versus Light. (2) The Nature of Light: It's Structure Action, And Effects. (3) Toward a Philosophy of Perception. Within those sections, subjects include directional quality of light, light moving through space, orchestrating light effects, stripping away preconceptions, foreshortening of light, multiple light sources, light on shiny surfaces, light as the teacher, and more. The book is thorough in its approach to light but honestly it does read like a physics textbook - very dry and you have to reread a lot in order to understand the points presented. That isn't to say that we're dealing with hard physics here; there are no prisms, light spectrum, wavelengths, or any of those concepts. But what is discussed is done in a very dry, impenetrable, and blocky way. I found myself rereading a lot. Most, if not all, of the images in the book are from the author. That was a bit problematic to me in a book that purports in the very beginning to not be about one style. In order to really make the points work, I would have liked to see all kinds of examples from different artists and especially different eras.

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