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Anatomy Lessons From the Great Masters: 100 Great Figure Drawings Analyzed

By Robert Beverly Hale, Terence Coyle



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This classic book, whose foremost author was one of the great artistic anatomy teachers of the twentieth century, is an invaluable instructor and reference guide for any professional, amateur, or student artist who depicts the human form.

Revealing the drawing principles behind one hundred inspiring masterpieces, the book presents work by Leonardo, Michelangelo, Rubens, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, and other greats. These superb portrayals of figures knew that the secret of drawing them was seeing how underlying bone and muscle structures mold the body's surface forms. Readers are shown how to learn from these great examples as the authors guide them through all the steps they would take in a life class or studio working with live models.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Anatomy Lessons from the Great Masters provides an anatomical counterpart to Robert Beverly Hale's classic reference book, *Drawing Lessons from the Great Masters*. Terence Coyle, who for several years assisted Hale at the Art Students League of New York, kept detailed notes of Hale's lectures and teaching methods. He combined these notes with 100 drawings to illustrate how the great masters portrayed specific parts of the human physique. As Hale points out, master artists such as Rembrandt, Leonardo, and Raphael "absorbed the technical details of anatomy so well that these details could be set down instinctively.... If an artist has to occupy his mind with the task of clumsily grouping the elemental facts of anatomy as he draws, there can be little room left for really important matters--such as the spirit of the drawing and the artist's expressive intent." Coyle provides several examples within the study of each anatomical area to illustrate the variety of styles and methods employed by the masters. The book treats, in order, the rib cage, the pelvis and thigh, the knee and lower leg, the foot, the shoulder girdle, the arm, the hand, and the neck and head. A complete series of anatomical reference plates by Dr. Paul Richer is included. By applying the timeless anatomical principles the great masters have handed down to us, any artist can begin to acquire the means by which to express the "really important matters." --*Mary Ribesky*

From Library Journal

It's rare to find good, comprehensive books on drawing the anatomy. Each of these the first, the return of a classic; the second, a focused study; and the third, lessons from the masters deserves a place on library shelves. Bridgman was a legendary teacher at New York's Art Students' League. There, he originated a system of drawing known as "constructive anatomy." In 1952, his seven books on anatomy were gathered into one volume, which became a standard work at art schools and universities. Published now for the first time in paperback, it holds up as an indispensable volume, with more than 200 illustrations of hands and hundreds of images of arms, shoulders, heads, torsos, legs, knees, and feet. Fairley's book concentrates on those troublesome extremities hands and feet. Sketchbook exercises are followed by eight detailed painting demonstrations in watercolor, oil, and other media. Fairley then continues on to portraits in which variations in age, skin tone, composition, mood, and movement are integrated. Advanced students will find Hale and Coyle's *Anatomy Lessons from the Great Masters* a rich source of inspiration. Hale, like Bridgman, was one of the great teachers at the Art Students' League. His student, Coyle, gathered together Hale's famous lectures to produce this compendium. Hale drew on principles found in 100 masterpieces by such artists as Leonardo, Michelangelo, Rubens, Raphael, Dürer, Titian, and Rembrandt. In 1995, Giovanni Civardi's trilogy *Drawing Human Anatomy* (Sterling, 1995), *Drawing the Female Nude* (Sterling, 1995), and *Drawing the Male Nude* (LJ 3/15/96. o.p.) reached a high standard for good, basic books in this genre. These three surpass Civardi's works and are highly recommended for serious artists and comprehensive library collections.

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About the Author

Robert Beverly Hale was America's best-known teacher of figure/anatomy drawing during his long years as an instructor at the Art Students League and other fine institutions. The late master also curated American paintings and sculpture for the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Terence Coyle, an artist and respected teacher whose work is exhibited often and included in many notable collections, homes in New York and Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

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