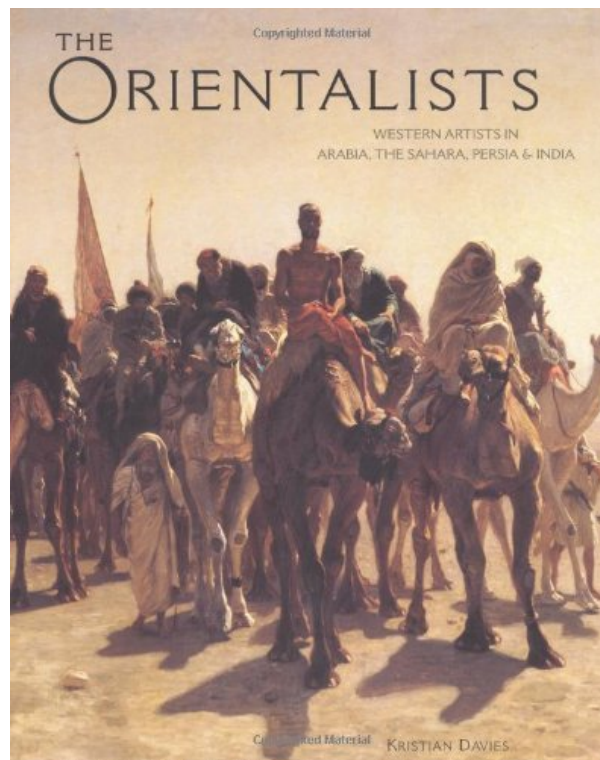
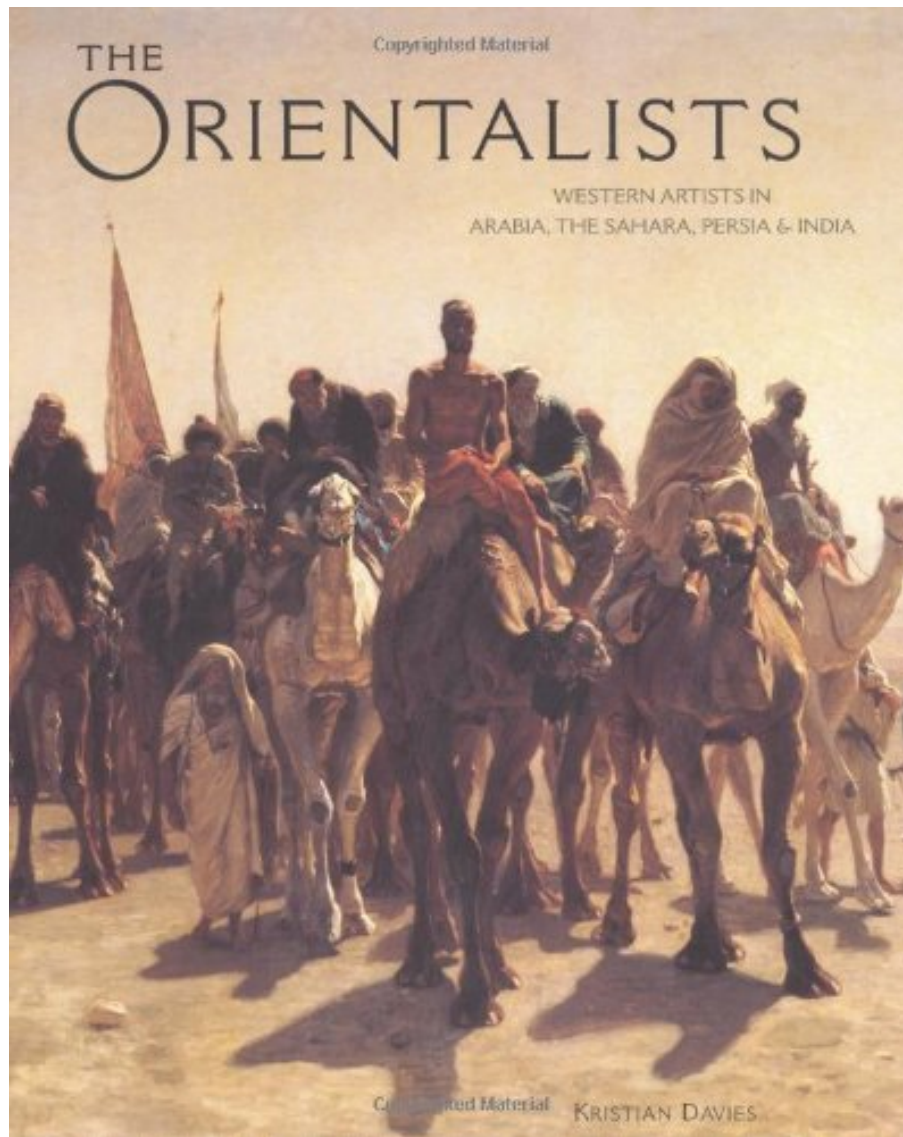


ORIENTALISTS: WESTERN ARTISTS IN ARABIA, THE SAHARA, PERSIA AND BY KRISTIAN DAVIES



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The Holy Land, North Africa, Persia, India - these are places whose history is filled with both beauty and pain. The artists painted many sides that captured this duality—the dignity of faces, and the powerful color and beauty of architecture, calligraphy and clothing, but also the brutality of poverty and the tragic outcomes of violence.

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Featuring over 300 images, culled from 45 different institutions in seven different countries, many of these pictures have rarely been seen publicly since their creation a century and more ago. Having both traveled and lived in the region, author Kristian Davies approaches this often misunderstood genre of art from a fresh perspective. The book is designed to be a primer, a fresh new approach and redefinition of the genre. Richly

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Written in a personal, engaging tone, *The Orientalists* emphasizes both the extraordinary talent of these artists and the beauty and nobility of the worlds they traveled in. It will show a reader that perceptions have not always been as uniform or simple as "us" and "them."

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Most helpful customer reviews

28 of 29 people found the following review helpful.

Unmatched Colorfulness

By Michael Billmann

In the last years i've read many books about the academic painters of the 19th century. Masters, who belong to the greatest of mankind,

fall into oblivion due to the unquestionable admiration of dilettante garbage in museums and the media.

Kristian Davies gave us with this art book a small jewel at hand, an important contribution for the improvement of the situation.

Contrary to many authors of other art books, most of them troublesome to read and see the end of the book, Davies, with his easy, flowing, personal and knowledgeable writing style, captivate his readers.

He weaves facts with his own experience and shared his love for oriental paintings, which were a great help to understand these countries, not only at his journeys. So he describes the impressing moments, when he saw a foreign area and culture for the first time, and miracly it appeared familiar to him, due to the great works of

the despised Oriental painters.

Beside topic chapters concerning the roads and market places, faith or the representation of the woman, there are individual chapters about particular important masters. Not only relatively well-known ones, such as Gerome or Repin, are represented, but also largely unknown artists such as Vereshchagin or Bauernfeind. The German Gustav Bauernfeind, for sure one of the most ingenious German painters of all times, is not only almost unknown in Germany. His partly tragic life has, like Kristian Davies shows, large similarity with that of the painter Gauguin. Gauguin is pampered by the critics, Bauernfeind ignored, because he belongs to the academic painters. A tribe allegedly unable to inspire their pictures with life. That's ridiculous and wrong, as you can see by the enormous selection of the large sized, detailed and colorful pictures in this book.

This book deserves, as first art book, 6 stars!

22 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

Unbelievable, Amazing Book! A Treasure!

By J.H. Tudor

This book absolutely blew me away. I manage a prestigious museum's bookstore in a major US city and have seen every single art history book that's come on the market in the last five years. I can honestly say that this book definitively sets a new standard for color reproduction and readability [it's easily the most accessible art book I've ever seen.] It contains hundreds of eye-popping color reproductions [and detail studies] of paintings that define the genre, some never having been seen by anyone for over a century. Plus, it's definitely NOT boring [like some other art books I could mention.] Author Kristian Davies has created a vibrant new hybrid of art history, personal experience, reflection and scholarly review. This book sets the bar so high for art books that it may never be surpassed. Highly recommended. If I could give it 6 stars, I would! And WHO is this new company Laynfaroh? I expect more great things from them in the future.

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

A Tradition of Painting that Died Out

By Marco Antonio Abarca

The Orientalist painters were contemporaries of the Impressionists. Whereas most educated people know of Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir and the other Impressionist Masters, the Orientalist Masters are today almost unknown. Their obscurity is almost Darwinian in its completeness.

Kristian Davies like a physical anthropologist has gone back in time and dusted off the layers of dust that cover the Orientalist's paintings. What we discover are a number of painters with a virtuoso technique and a solid command of the Western painting tradition. The high quality of the brush work, vivid colors and attention to detail are simply astonishing. There are few painters today that can match their technical skills.

After the September 11th terrorist attacks, these first artistic contacts between the West and the Orient take on special interest. Davies bravely enters into Edward Said's Orientalist debate. He uncovers an artistic vision that is much more complicated than a simple we versus them.

This is a beautiful book with very high production values. There are over 300 images of American, European and Russian Orientalist masters. This book is highly recommended.

See all 29 customer reviews...

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