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# 101 Things To Learn In Art School



## Synopsis

What is the first thing to learn in art school? "Art can be anything." The second thing? "Learn to draw." With *101 Things to Learn in Art School*, artist and teacher Kit White delivers and develops such lessons, striking an instructive balance between technical advice and sage concepts. These 101 maxims, meditations, and demonstrations offer both a toolkit of ideas for the art student and a set of guiding principles for the artist. Complementing each of the 101 succinct texts is an equally expressive drawing by the artist, often based on a historical or contemporary work of art, offering a visual correlative to the written thought. "Art can be anything" is illustrated by a drawing of Duchamp's famous urinal; a description of chiaroscuro art is illuminated by an image "after Caravaggio"; a lesson on time and media is accompanied by a view of a Jenny Holzer projection; advice about surviving a critique gains resonance from Piero della Francesca's arrow-pierced Saint Sebastian. *101 Things to Learn in Art School* offers advice about the issues artists confront across all artistic media, but this is no simple handbook to making art. It is a guide to understanding art as a description of the world we live in, and it is a guide to using art as a medium for thought. And so this book belongs on the reading list of art students, art teachers, and artists, but it also belongs in the library of everyone who cares about art as a way of understanding life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This small book, just 6 inches square, excels in presenting ideas that both artists and designers, at all stages of their careers, cannot be reminded of too often. (Interior Design) Kit White's *101 Things to Learn in Art School* is a delight. Anyone who has ever visited an art museum, made art, or

read about it could learn something from this little book. (Beth Williamson Cassone) There cannot be a better, smarter manual for anyone crazy enough to want to become a visual artist, or for the encouraging and/or bewildered loved ones of such a person. (Kurt Anderson Studio 360 Blog) Everyone craves useful wisdom, right? Especially when they're young, and even more especially if they want to become one of those modern alchemists known as visual artists. Well, here it is: page for impeccably crafted page, the best, most thoughtful and lucid primer available for any young (or old) would-be maker of art. (Kurt Andersen, novelist, Heyday, Turn of the Century and public radio host, Studio 360) Kit White gives us a 'manual' in every sense of the word, a lifetime of art-making condensed into 101 cogent maxims that fit in the hand of the aspiring artist. (Wendy Steiner, author of *The Real Real Thing: The Model in the Mirror of Art*) There is a great myth that somehow rules constrain creativity. With grace and wit, Kit White's new book dismantles this received idea, and many others along the way. If the cardinal rule of writing is 'show, don't tell,' Kit White has done exactly that -- he shows us what art-making is by example as much as through the rich content of this incisive book. (Polly Apfelbaum, Artist)

Kit White is an artist and Professor of Painting at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn. His work is in the permanent collections of many museums, including the Guggenheim Museum.

I just picked up *101 Things to Learn in Art School*, by Kit White. I found this square little book in the beautiful Getty Center in LA. The book is covered in black rubber and is really fun to hold and touch. Though it is essentially about making art, and some of it is devoted to perspective and composition, much of what White says can be applied to writing and creating in general. There are pages and pages of inspirational messages, coupled with black-and-white reproductions of famous artists' work as interpreted by White. The best thing about this book is it makes you want to create. The drawings are beautiful and make you think about paintings you haven't seen in a while. This is a gentle and brilliant book. Below are some of the more memorable quotes: Art is the product of process. Whether conceptual, experimental, emotional, or formal, the process you develop yields the image you produce. The materials you choose, the methods of production, and the sources of the images should all reflect the interests that command your attention. The process does not stop with each work completed. It is ongoing. The cumulative result of that process is a body of work. Art is a continuing dialogue that stretches back through thousands of years. What you make is your contribution to that dialogue. Therefore, be conscious of what has come before you and the conversation that surrounds you. Try not to repeat what has already been said. Study art history

and stay alert to the dialogue of your moment. Complexity derives from the presence of contradiction. The world is not simple. It is rife with complexity. The impulse to eliminate the contradictions that create complexity is natural. But to simplify may be to render a false condition and therefore an incomplete description. Embrace the irreconcilable elements, the contradictions. They are part of any portrait of a moment. Making art is an act of discovery. If you are dealing only with what you know, you may not be doing your job. When you discover something new, or surprise yourself, you are engaging in the process of discovery.

I bought this as a Christmas gift for my 11-year-old daughter who is sure she wants to be an artist. I wasn't sure whether it would be one of those fluffy faux books -- more greeting card than ideas. I was initially delighted to find it was not, but then concerned it would be above her. I now think some of the ideas are over her head at her age, but she can grow into understanding them -- there's enough to engage her, even at 11. I am an amateur artist & also am getting something out of the book, so it's win-win. Our local art museum sets up drawing seats with for patrons on Friday nights & Sunday afternoons -- as a result of reading this book (with its emphasis on drawing), we started going to the museum for that in the New Year.

Fun book showing me different drawing style. I hope to keep practicing these styles and become a better artist. Even if I don't it was a fun read. The engaging sketch of a dog on the cover captured my attention. I have done a few sketches of my daughter's dog. I hope I can complete one that is frameable. Thanks for the inspiration and motivation to try drawing a furry dog.

GREAT

Very nice book, purchased it used but it looks brand new! Highly recommended!

The best little book for art lovers and artists. Just bought this for my daughter who is off to college and who is a fantastic artist. It's a must have for art students.

I'm a photographer, not an artist, but I still found some good, basic ideas to help my creativity. A quick and fun read.

I bought this book for myself in Amsterdam, then ordered several copies for my artist friends. It's a

wonderful book which gives almost profound ideas about art in a very simple way. I recommend it to anyone who practices art or loves art.

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