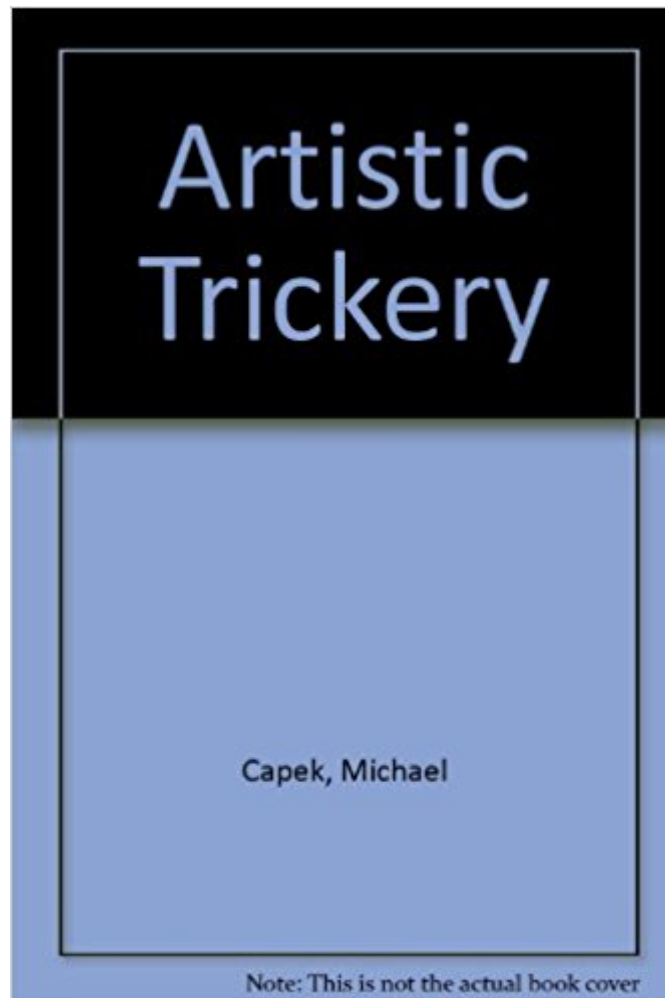




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Artistic Trickery: The Tradition Of Trompe L'Oeil Art



Synopsis

A collection of artistic works meant to "fool the eye" ranges from ancient Greece to current interior designers to show the delightful and beautiful visual jokes that artists have played as they create works startling in their verisimilitude.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the more oddball traditions in art gets a well-deserved spotlight in this lively survey of visual jokes from ancient Roman times to the present. Using many examples, the author shows how artists as diverse as Mantegna, Magritte and Duane Hanson manipulate popular fascinations (e.g, with food, money, health or spatial relations) with their superrealistic renderings (of, for example, fruit tarts, coins, people or architectural motifs); viewers (and many readers of this book) gasp at both the artist's skill and their own gullibility. Americans like William M. Harnett, the Pealle family, Richard Haas, Marilyn Levine and contemporary interior designers are well represented, with the effect that trompe l'oeil seems almost a national pastime. But while the attractive layout and Capek's clear, comprehensive text convey the rationale behind this irreverent genre, the reproductions, otherwise adequate, lack the extreme crispness upon which the form's impact depends. Its impish delights require first-hand experience, or at least extraordinary replication. Ages 10-up. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 5[^]-8. For the student who thinks fun and art are mutually exclusive, this excellent introduction to trompe l'oeil should prove a happy surprise. Trompe l'oeil is the method of "painting something so

perfectly that the viewer is fooled into believing that what he or she sees is real" ; in other words, it is a visual game full of jokes and surprises. Capek writes engagingly and so appreciatively of his subject that his text keeps pace with the abundant and amazingly lifelike reproductions. He explains clearly what trompe l'oeil is, its history, and its common themes and devices--broken objects, money, landscapes, etc. Tucked into the text are features on specific trompe l'oeil artists, as well as a feature on mosaics. At worst, this book will simply entertain; at best it will inspire young artists to achieve the unfathomable level of mastery needed to create these illusions. Glossary appended.

Julie Yates Walton

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