



Painting the Digital River: How an Artist Learned to Love the Computer

James Faure Walker

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"This book is as much about painting as it is about the digital world. But beyond both it's really about visual intelligence. What makes it a joy to read is the lovely match between Faure Walker's subject and his style of writing: apparently artless, just making itself up as it goes along, but actually always with a witty spring, and never slack."

-- MATTHEW COLLINGS, artist, critic, author, and television host

"As a painter himself, James Faure Walker opens up a provocative dialogue between painting and digital computing that is essential reading for all painters interested in new technologies."

-- IRVING SANDLER, author, critic, and art historian

"Faure Walker has a distinguished background as both a painter and digital artist. He is an early adopter of digital technology in this regard, so has lived the history of the ever-accelerating embrace of the digital. On top of this, he is a good storyteller and a clear writer who avoids the pitfalls of pretentious art-world jargon."

-- LANE HALL, digital artist and professor

"Using a wide stream of fresh water as a metaphor, Faure Walker depicts a flow of ideas, concepts, and solutions that result in digital art. All the core elements of an art-style-in-making are here: ties with mainstream and traditional art, stages of technological progress, and reflections on the bright and varied personalities of digital artists. With a personal approach, Faure Walker presents vibrant, exciting, emotionally overpowering art works and describes them with empathy and imagination. This entertaining, sensitive, and observant book itself flows like a river."

-- ANNA URSYN, digital artist and professor

"Something like this book is overdue. I am not aware of any comparable work. Lots of 'how to do,' but nothing raising so many interesting and critical questions."

-- HANS DEHLINGER, digital artist and professor

"Here is the intimate narrative of a passionate yet skeptical explorer who unflinchingly records his artistic discoveries and personal reflections. Faure Walker's decades of experience as a practicing painter, art critic, and educator shine through on every page. The book is an essential resource for anyone interested in digital visual culture."

-- ANNE MORGAN SPALTER, digital artist, author, and visual computing researcher

This book is about art, written from an artist's point of view. It also is about computers, written from the perspective of a painter who uses them. *Painting the Digital River* is James Faure Walker's personal odyssey from the traditional art scene to fresh horizons, from hand to digital painting--and sometimes back again. It is a literate and witty attempt to make sense of the introduction of computer tools into the creation of art, to

understand the issues and the fuss, to appreciate the people involved and the work they produce, to know the promise of the new media, as well as the risks. Following his own winding path, Faure Walker tells of learning to paint with the computer, of misunderstandings across the art and science divide, of software limitations, of conversations between the mainstream and digital art worlds, of emerging genres of digital painting, of the medieval digital, of a different role for drawing. As a painter and computer enthusiast, the author recognizes the marvels of digital paint as well as anyone. But he also challenges the assumption that digital somehow means different. The questions he raises matter to artists of every background, style, and disposition, and the answers should reward anyone seeking insight into contemporary art.



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