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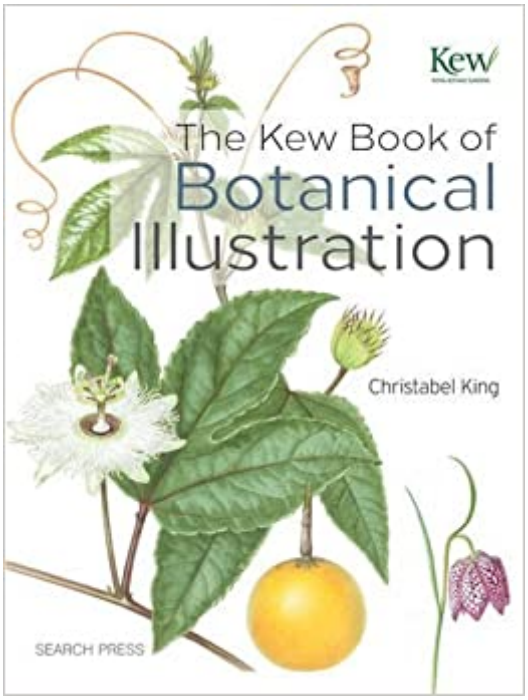
# The Kew Book Of Botanical Illustration

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## Synopsis

Kew is eminent worldwide in botanical science and the study and preservation of plant species, and Christabel King has been doing illustrations for them for 40 years and is their foremost botanical artist. Here she explains both scientific botanical illustration and the looser botanical art, and covers materials, collecting and preserving plant specimens, drawing and painting techniques, magnification, using dividers, drawing from life, composition, light and shade and tranferring drawings. She goes on to discuss painting leaves, flowers, cactii and succulents, wildflowers, trees and plates for Curtis's Botanical magazine. A chapter on travel drawings gives a flavour of the author's passion and worldwide experience. There is a helpful section on suitable subjects for beginners and a glossary of terms. The text is highly illustrated throughout with beautiful paintings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This, as far as botanical illustration is concerned, is pretty much the tablets of stone, the Authorised Version. Kew do not hand out their imprimatur lightly and want to approve every stage of the production. If they sign off, it's a guarantee that everything is absolutely right. Having a book like this, and having Kew in the title, is therefore quite a coup, especially for an independent publisher. On top of that, Christabel King is one of a very select band of illustrators who works at Kew itself and can therefore be regarded as absolutely top flight. I really can't emphasise too much how good this is getting. Botanical illustration at this level is respected and used by botanists around the world for identification purposes. The work produced is better than photography as, rather than show an individual example of a specimen, it can create a typical one, with all the likely characteristics included. As well as a section on using a microscope, there is also advice on preserving specimens

and showing spots and markings. At this level, detail is everything and it gets very minute indeed. For all this technicality, the book is surprisingly accessible. I don't mean for a moment that the casual reader will become a fully-fledged professional as soon as they've read it but, if this kind of work interests you, you won't feel swamped. There's a nice sense of progression to the chapters and Christabel explains everything clearly and, above all, with worked examples. If you do get serious, the chapter on Curtis's Botanical Magazine, with sample pages and a template for laying out a plate, will give you an idea of what to aim for. Despite the weight of its authority, this is not a book solely for the expert, but is accessible to anyone who is reasonably serious about flower painting. You may never reach its dizzy heights, but you'll enjoy the journey and the attempt. Artbookreview.net October 2015 This is not the first book to have the imprimatur of Kew, but they have high standards, so it's not only worthwhile, but hard to achieve. This is botanical illustration at the highest level. Christabel King is not just the practitioner in the field but one of those selected to work at Kew itself. This is flower painting for the purpose of identification and the results will be used and trusted by botanists the world over. Such work is not for including advice on the use of a microscope, preserving specimens and observing spots and markings. The instruction as a result, is of the highest quality. The Artist August 2015 If you are an admirer of those beautiful plates in books on botany then here is a book that shows you how to produce them. The author is a celebrated botanical artist at Kew and has submitted work to Curtis's Botanical Magazine. I am used to books on art talking about using "artistic license" and your imagination to produce works that hold up a mirror to the real world, but do not exactly reflect it. In this book plants are copied exactly and are scientific illustrations as much as they are "art" in the purest sense. This is not a book for the novice painter, but rather for somebody who is proficient in their chosen field and wants to try their hand at botanical illustration. Several types of paint are looked at, including watercolors, pen and ink and pencils and a suggested palette is given, along with suggestions for brands. There are sections on deciding what materials to use, choosing a subject and working from life, as well as working with a hand lens or microscope, correcting mistakes and what not to do if you want to be a good botanical illustrator (rather than just an artist). Full review can be found at: http://myshelf.com Myshelf.com September 2015 With 40 year's experience of botanical illustration working with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and providing illustrations for Curtis's Botanical magazine. Christabel King is ideally placed to share with us her attention to detail when it comes to painting plants. Not only is she able to portray them with enviable accuracy but she also gives them what she describes as their 'poetic element'; something often lacking in scientific botanical illustrations. Here she shows us how to do it, from the materials we need, to choosing a subject where to work, drawing from life to using a

microscope and working from pressed flowers. The book is packed full of practical advice to help you achieve lifelike botanical paintings and drawings. Leisure Painter, The July 2015 This, as far as botanical illustration is concerned, is pretty much the tablets of stone, the Authorised Version. Kew do not hand out their imprimatur lightly and want to approve every stage of the production. If they sign off, it's a guarantee that everything is absolutely right. Having a book like this, and having Kew in the title, is therefore quite a coup, especially for an independent publisher. On top of that, Christabel King is one of a very select band of illustrators who works at Kew itself and can therefore be regarded as absolutely top flight. I really can't emphasise too much how good this is getting. Botanical illustration at this level is respected and used by botanists around the world for identification purposes. The work produced is better than photography as, rather than show an individual example of a specimen, it can create a typical one, with all the likely characteristics included. As well as a section on using a microscope, there is also advice on preserving specimens and showing spots and markings. At this level, detail is everything and it gets very minute indeed. For all this technicality, the book is surprisingly accessible. I don't mean for a moment that the casual reader will become a fully-fledged professional as soon as they've read it but, if this kind of work interests you, you won't feel swamped. There's a nice sense of progression to the chapters and Christabel explains everything clearly and, above all, with worked examples. If you do get serious, the chapter on Curtis's Botanical Magazine, with sample pages and a template for laying out a plate, will give you an idea of what to aim for. Despite the weight of its authority, this is not a book solely for the expert, but is accessible to anyone who is reasonably serious about flower painting. You may never reach its dizzy heights, but you'll enjoy the journey and the attempt. Artbookreview.net Christabel's work is outstanding for its combination of beauty and scientific accuracy; her lovely paintings have been mainstay of Curtis's Botanical Magazine for many years, and she has been taught a generation of young artists who have achieved their highest awards for their paintings. Curtis's Botanical Magazine August 2015 This is undoubtedly one of the publisher's best books of the year in association with Kew. Brilliant botanical and scientific illustration. You can see all aspects of this art from study, magnification, looking under a microscope, dissecting plants, sketching, drawing and portraying plants in different mediums. See how to draw all plant parts, beautifully illustrated throughout with many popular flowers such as roses, daylilies, tulips and geraniums. All the classic stages such as observation, composition, light, transfer and materials are included. There are a few step-by-step stages and much information on flower shape, leaf types and colour, which lends an insight into botanical illustration. This book is a masterpiece. www.yarnsandfabrics.co.uk Karen Platt Yarnsandfabrics.co.uk/crafts

Kew's chief botanical artist, and one of Kew's elite band of practitioners, Christabel King has been working as an illustrator at Kew for 40 years. In 1975 she began painting for their prestigious Curtis's Botanical Magazine (the longest running botanical magazine - first edition 1787), after achieving a degree in botany and scientific illustration. She runs successful workshops and courses at Kew and is highly skilled and acclaimed for her work. This will be her first book.

A winner ,I like this book very much and am very glad I bought it . I am a ceramist by training but trough circumstances I had to give that up . I still draw and wanted to specialize in botanical illustration . After a while I wanted to do it the right way and looked for a course near home . I didn't find any - I work 6/7 , so it's not easy ,- so I wanted to draw at home . I plan to use this book as a study book and it is perfect for its purpose . The explanation on how to start is very thorough and detailed . There is information on composition , texture , shading , leaves and flowers . Then at the end of the book you get several plates from ' Curtis's Botanical magazine ' to show one how the finished product could look like , giving inspiration and examples . Christabel King also explains the difference between botanical art and the true botanical illustration . It is a beautiful and useful book .

Wonderful book. Such insightful look at how Christabel King produces her stunning illustrations.

Great book, supplements my beginning art !

I wanna do the job of this ilustrators.

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