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What Painting Is

James Elkins

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What Painting Is James Elkins

Unlike many books on painting that usually talk about art or painters, James Elkins' compelling and original work focuses on alchemy, for like the alchemist, the painter seeks to transform and be transformed by the medium.

In *What Painting Is*, James Elkins communicates the experience of painting beyond the traditional vocabulary of art history. Alchemy provides a magical language to explore what it is a painter really does in her or his studio - the smells, the mess, the struggle to control the uncontrollable, the special knowledge only painters hold of how colours will mix, and how they will look.

Written from the perspective of a painter-turned-art historian, *What Painting Is* is like nothing you have ever read about art.

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