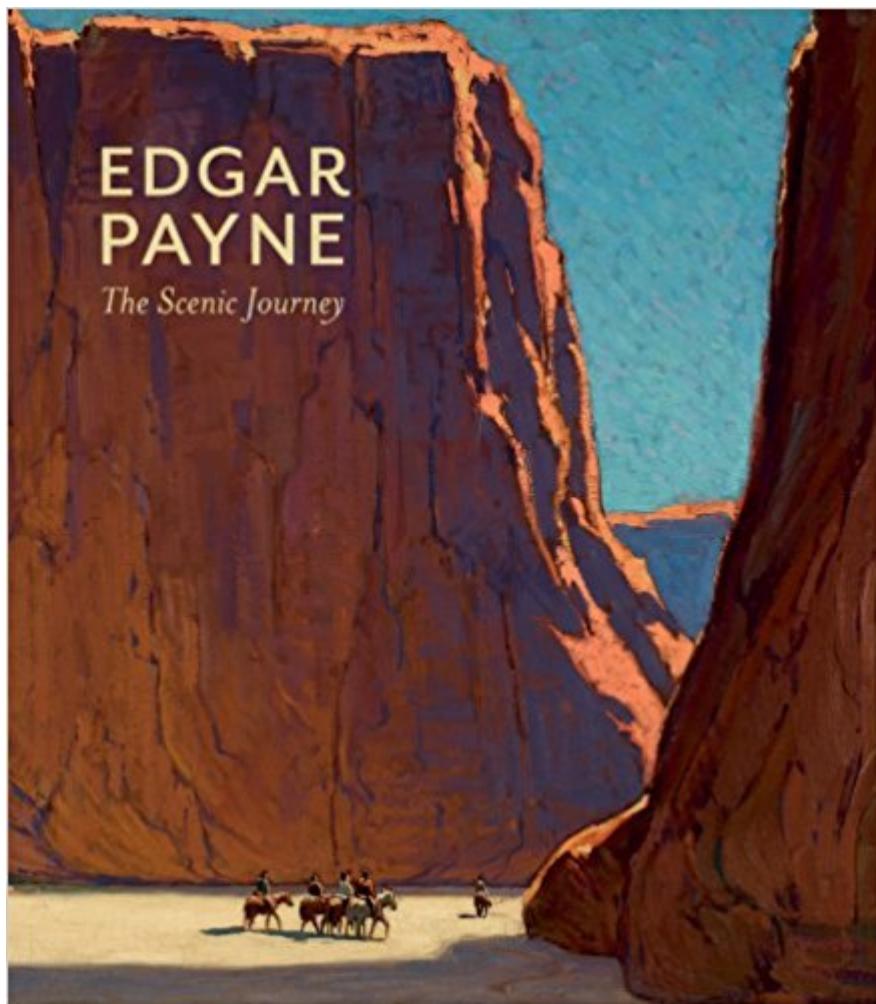


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# Edgar Payne The Scenic Journey



## Synopsis

One of the most gifted of the historic California plein-air painters, Edgar Alwin Payne (1883-1947) utilized the animated brushwork, vibrant palette, and shimmering light of Impressionism, but his powerful imagery was unique among artists of his generation. While his contemporaries favored a quieter, more idyllic representation of the natural landscape, Payne was devoted to subjects of rugged beauty. Largely self-taught, he found inspiration and instruction in nature itself. His majestic, vital landscapes, informed by his reverence for the natural world, are imbued with an internal force and an active dynamism. An avid traveler, Payne was among the first painters to capture the vigor of the Sierra Nevada, and his travels through the Southwest resulted in equally magnificent depictions of the desert. In Europe he rendered the towering peaks of the Alps and the colorful harbors of France and Italy. His unending quest to convey the ""unspeakably sublime"" in his landscapes won him widespread acclaim—one prominent critic called him a ""poet who sings in colors." Released in conjunction with the traveling exhibition organized by the Pasadena Museum of California Art, *Edgar Payne: The Scenic Journey* presents more than 125 reproductions of Payne's paintings, drawings, and decorative arts, as well as rarely seen photographs from the artist's travels and selections from his personal collection of compositional studies. Essays by Peter H. Hassrick, Lisa N. Peters, Scott A. Shields, Jean Stern, and Patricia Trenton trace Payne's development as he traveled the world, discovering magnificence in diverse settings ranging from the California coast, the Sierra Nevada, and the stark Southwest desert to the Swiss Alps and the harbors and waterways of Europe. A richly researched chronology by Shields presents the biographical influences that shaped Payne's illustrious career.

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## Customer Reviews

One of the most gifted of the historic California plein-air painters, Edgar Alwin Payne (1883-1947) utilized the animated brushwork, vibrant palette, and shimmering light of Impressionism, but his powerful imagery was unique among artists of his generation. While his contemporaries favored a quieter, more idyllic representation of the natural landscape, Payne was devoted to subjects of rugged beauty. Largely self-taught, he found inspiration and instruction in nature itself. His majestic, vital landscapes, informed by his reverence for the natural world, are imbued with an internal force and an active dynamism. An avid traveler, Payne was among the first painters to capture the vigor of the Sierra Nevada, and his travels through the Southwest resulted in equally magnificent depictions of the desert. In Europe he rendered the towering peaks of the Alps and the colorful harbors of France and Italy. His unending quest to convey the "unspeakably sublime" in his landscapes won him widespread acclaim—one prominent critic called him a "poet who sings in colors." Released in conjunction with the traveling exhibition organized by the Pasadena Museum of California Art, *Edgar Payne: The Scenic Journey* presents more than 125 reproductions of Payne's paintings, drawings, and decorative arts, as well as rarely seen photographs from the artist's travels and selections from his personal collection of compositional studies. Essays by Peter H. Hassrick, Lisa N. Peters, Scott A. Shields, Jean Stern, and Patricia Trenton trace Payne's development as he traveled the world, discovering magnificence in diverse settings ranging from the California coast, the Sierra Nevada, and the stark Southwest desert to the Swiss Alps and the harbors and waterways of Europe. A richly researched chronology by Shields presents the biographical influences that shaped Payne's illustrious career.

Scott A. Shields, PhD, Associate Director and Chief Curator of the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, California, is also the author of *Edwin Deakin: California Painter of the Picturesque*.

Edgar Payne is a great inspirational painter, creating amazing compositions (he wrote a book containing many thumbnail compositions). I enjoy his paintings of the American west (mountains and seascapes). But a fantastic and unexpected treasure in the book as presented by Scott Shields, were the photographs and paintings by Payne in northern France of boats I have lived in France for a year, observed much of the country, and examined many paintings, but in my opinion, no harbour or channel image matches the ability of Payne. Payne's ability to capture boats navigating the water

is as skillful as Monet's paintings of train stations and locomotives. In Shield's book, he presents photographs and how Payne translates these images into paintings. I found this fascinating to examine. Before Payne, J.M.W.Turner was considered a master of boats and waves. And am sure there are many more that I am not aware of, because of my limited and amateur knowledge. But having sketched boats in Angers, France, boats along the Loire River, and along the coast near St. Malo, I can appreciate the challenge of composition and the difficulty of capturing waves and boats in motion. One time in China, along the Li River in Guangxi Province, I started to draw a bamboo boat, as I drew, the owner walked on board, started the motor, and drove away. I finished the sketch as best as I could. Another day, I took a bamboo boat down the Li River, drawing other boats and riverscapes as I went. These were fantastic instructional experiences. It is clear to see that wherever Edgar Payne travelled he could find opportunities to learn, explore, and express. In art school, much of the time drawing in the studio is spent upon gesture and motion. Payne's ability to depict boats on water may be due partially to his ability to capture the gesture of objects in motion, illustrated by his American west paintings of riders and pack horses and seascapes of ocean waves. Painting horses and riders is not easy, as beginners often find that their living subjects seem more like stone and statues and their compositions simplistic. At sea moving boats, or on hills with moving animals, they are often not exactly in the same perspective, and it is easy to present them in a way where even the public can sense something is not correct about the image. However, Edgar Payne seems to handle this easily. With water in France, he conveys the waves without getting obsessed with the intricate details concerning the reflections and waves in the water (as he did along the American west coast). So while the book features much of Payne's images of the American west, his studies, photographs, and paintings in northern France, are exceptional. I enjoyed Scott Shields' presentation concerning the breadth of Payne's efforts. I encourage enthusiasts to sketch and paint at zoos and along lakes and rivers, making interesting compositions and capturing the gesture of movement. The goal is not always to be successful at creating a masterpiece, but rather to observe, learn, and try. Edgar Payne sets the inspiration and example. I believe that studying Edgar Payne through Scott Shields' book can be very instructive. If one is a linear thinker, Payne's work may still be a mystery. But if one is intuitive and can connect the dots, Payne's work presents the possibilities. This book is much more than a coffee table book filled with pages of great paintings. This book is about how to see, what to feature, and how to express the subject. This book is a treasure. I found the book to be much more helpful than many books about how to draw and paint. I now show this book to anyone interested in painting and drawing who will tolerate listening to me and enduring my long explanations.

This book has the best full color plates from which the fledgling artist can see the expression and brushstrokes that made Payne such a prolific and successful painter. The historical perspective was well defined and gives a glimpse of the pioneer spirit of this early western artist and his wife, who was also an extremely talented artist in her own right. Payne's California Sierra landscapes are particularly poignant in that they give a glimpse to the reason why so many people have been drawn to the spectacular variety of scenery of California. I bought this book as a compliment to Payne's 'Composition of Outdoor Painting,' which is the definitive book for outdoor painters.

The Book arrived July 5, 2013 via regular postal service. It's in great shape (new) well packed & Shirk Wrap. The Book is larger than I thought (11x12 1/4) 267 pgs w/ very large color plate's, sketches & photo's. The auto & biographical of Payne's life & career is very well done. I think Payne's painting technics must be covered in other books. These authors seemed overly concerned with documenting "who or what gallery owned the paintings". I wish more of this great artist's "technics, & Philosophy or tricks of the trade" might have been covered, @ least with some of his family & artist friends. A Beautiful Book. Cliff Givens

Edgar Payne captured the grandeur of the West, the sunlight and shadow, the size of the place and the smallness of man in the landscape. He also did it so simply that it looks easy....but it isn't. As a landscape painter, this book is one of my favorites and also most helpful in terms of brush technique, composition, and color choice. The book doesn't tell you how he did his magic, but a magnifying glass is all you need. This book will transport you to a wonderful place and another time.

I love this book... But I haven't read it. I'm a landscape painter, so this rating is not for the text. Its not an instructional book, its a biography (I think...ive only scanned it) This book is great because its filled with large, full color, good quality images. You can see the brushwork in the paintings. It's a thick book too. It doesn't have the close up detail images, but you can see so much in the other ones I didn't miss those. It also is separated by the locations he was painting in conjunction with his career, which I liked.

A beautiful classic from which any plein air artist will benefit. His draftsmanship and reduction of forms is inspiring.

This book is a must for fans of Edgar Payne. One of the few museum catalogs where the color and values are remarkably true to the art, the scholarship, and the printing quality throughout, are a joy. Of course, the best is to catch the show in one of its museum venues, but, this wonderful book will sustain long after the paintings have returned to their (lucky) respective owners.

I purchased this book before attending the Edgar Payne show in Tulsa. What an amazing, inspiring artist. It's great to refer back to the artwork in this beautiful book.

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