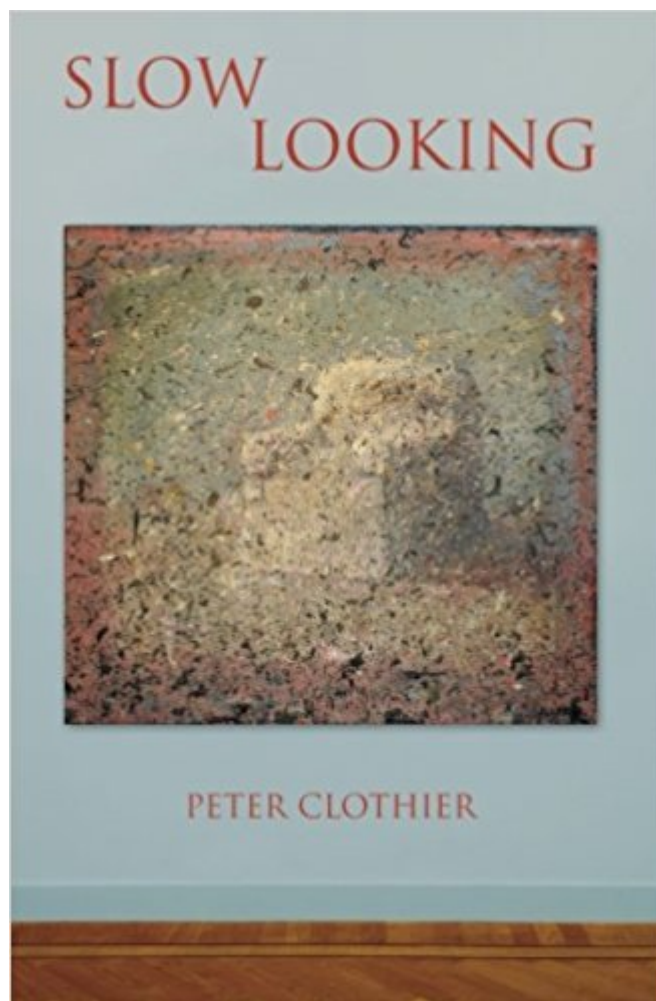


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# Slow Looking



## Synopsis

Slow Looking describes and elaborates on the author's "One Hour/One Painting" sessions, an idea he developed to practice a different, more profound and more rewarding way of looking at art. It combines the practices of meditation and contemplation, asking participants to sit for a full hour in front of a single work of art. Slow Looking and "One Hour/One Painting" are about learning to drop the baggage of prejudice and expectation at the door and taking time to really examine what is actually there. In fourteen brief and highly readable chapters, and including an engaging and interactive audio demonstration, this book describes the process and invites readers to try it out for themselves.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

PETER CLOTHIER enjoys a world-wide following for his blog, The Buddha Diaries. Choosing his life-long calling as a writer over an academic career in the 1980s, he has since devoted himself exclusively to his work as a writer and art critic for national magazines. Much influenced in recent years by Buddhist thought and practice, he is known as a public speaker who inspires audiences with a fresh approach to the creative process. He lives and works in Southern California.

Very useful information.....ESP in leading art museum tours

Peter Clothier's important new book "Slow Looking: The Art of Looking at Art" guides the reader seamlessly through the history, process, and ideas behind his "One Hour/One Painting" sessions. Clothier's development of "One Hour/One Painting" began with the realization that along with most

museum or gallery visitors, he increasingly spent more time looking at the information label on the wall than at the artwork itself. To combat this habit, Peter began to spend an hour silently and inquisitively gazing at one work of art. Much influenced in recent years by Buddhist thought and practice, Clothier combined elements of meditation and contemplation in these sessions and found more profound and rewarding experiences. In a "One Hour/One Painting" session, Peter Clothier invites small groups of participants to sit in front of a single artwork for a full hour in a gallery, museum, or studio environment. Clothier recently hosted "One Hour/ One Painting" sessions during the Diebenkorn: The Ocean Park Series exhibit at the Orange County Museum of Art and at the LA Louver Gallery. Peter, also, held a session in my Santa Monica Airport studio. Clothier began as he usually does with a brief introduction describing the hour to take place and then gently guided the participants by explaining the principles of closed-eye breath meditation, how to relax and refresh the eyes, and provided encouragement to rid the mind of expectations and pre-judgments. For me and most of the participants that evening, the hour moved quickly as Peter led us through alternate closed and open-eyed moments. As Clothier explained, "this was individual work without initial discussion or interaction and allowed each participant to experience the artwork as fully as possible, without interruption." At the end of the hour, however, Peter invited responses and a rich discussion of the experience followed. Peter Clothier's "Slow Looking: The Art of Looking at Art" is written in clear, supportive language that illuminates art and meditation. Clothier seeks to achieve a harmony of mind, heart, and body in his life and writing and "Slow Looking" provides rich examples for us to learn from and follow. In the book, we are encouraged to seek a pure visual experience with art through a beneficial process of contemplation, stillness, and serenity. "Slow Looking" also provides access to an audio and a video demonstration of a "One Hour/One Painting" session that invites readers to try it out for themselves. Highly recommended!

Then look again, does it look the same? Enjoy the details. Don't assume what you see at first glance is all there is.

Some of the finest examples of art criticism and essays on the history and importance of art are from the pen of Peter Clothier. He is widely read, widely respected among art viewers, art collectors, academicians, and artists alike. Reading Peter Clothier always offers learning, in a humanitarian, warm manner. This new book is no exception. Clothier's inviting style of writing shares his own experiences, and in the case of SLOW LOOKING there is considerable introductory time spent on his discovery of the pleasures and fulfillment of meditation. For it is meditation that is at the core of

his now popular sessions in gathering a group of people to enter a space - a gallery, a museum, a studio - to step out of the noise and bothering distractions of the world in which we live to silently sit before a painting for one hour, leaving all else outside to enter the moment of slow looking at a work of art. Clothier talks to his audiences (usually groups of around 20 or so) to prepare them for the experience of actually absorbingly seeing a painting. His encouragement is guided with advice on posture, on breathing (perhaps the most important guideline to finding center), and clearing the mind so that moments of looking at various areas in a painting will slowly reveal the beauty or the essence of that work. Never having had the privilege of participating in one of these Slow Looking sessions, this reviewer can only identify with the manner in which Clothier so gently and surely guides his reading audience to turn away from the habit of walking past a work of art or judging a painting based on hurried opinions colored by experiences of the day or the life or the moment of quick passage that cloak an art work's being. But the manner in which the author writes this book - especially his gently encouraging tutelage on the treasure of meditation techniques - brings the reader very close to understanding his goal of Slow Looking. In his last chapter Clothier shares with us the following: 'it's all about living consciously. This is something we are not much in the habit of doing. I'm sad to say that it was more than fifty years before I myself began to recognize the need to wake up from the sleepwalk I had assumed to be my life, and I suspect there are many others like me. We live in a dream-like state, unaware that we are not truly awake, not truly making conscious choices for ourselves, but simply being driven this way or that by whatever breeze happens to take us. We go through the motions of our lives like automatons, simply believing this to be "who we are." What Peter Clothier accomplishes in this poetic book is a viable alternative to what he has just described. It may start with slow looking at art - and finding the true bliss of discovery where that moment is found - but reading this book is as much about altering our perception of the world and our finding our own meaning in the universe as it is a guide to discovering art's essence. As well as any spiritual writer Peter Clothier helps us to learn how to be in the moment. And for that, and the lesson of Slow Looking, we are indebted. Grady Harp, February 13

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