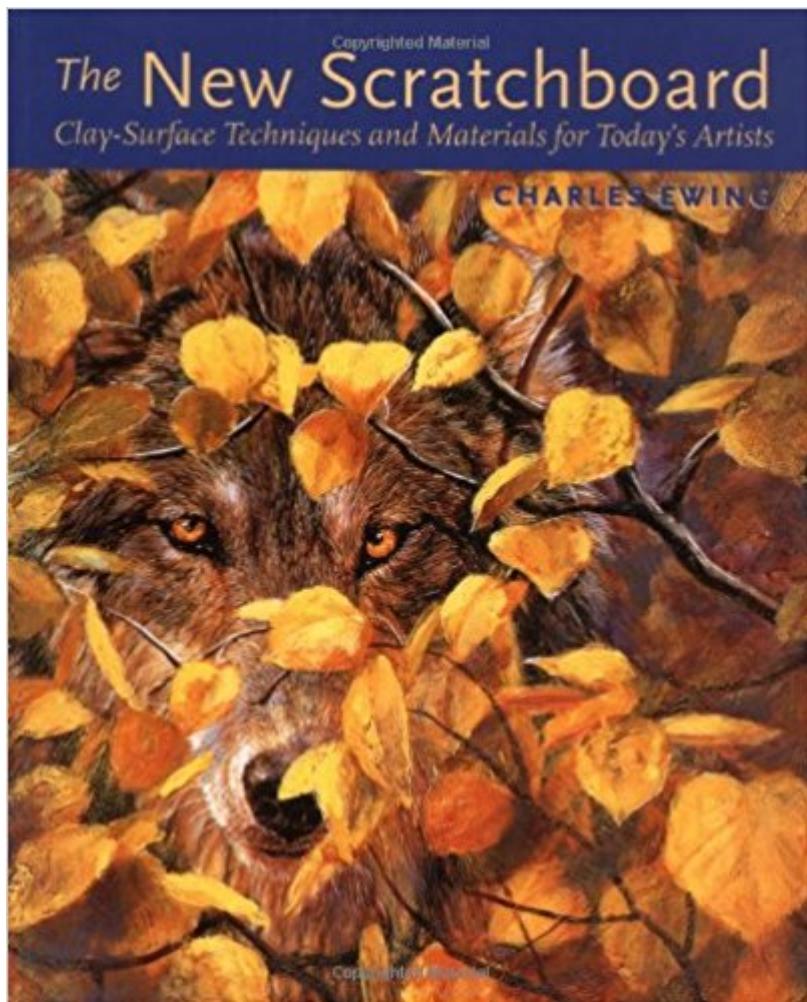


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# The New Scratchboard



## Synopsis

Artists looking for a fresh approach to their work will enjoy this rich resource offering complete instruction on the dynamic art form known as scratchboard. The book outlines the long history of the art, from petroglyphs, sgraffito, and scrimshaw to the state of the medium today, pointing out new surfaces, tools, and methods. Basic techniques are explored, such as scratching on an ink-blacked surface and applying ink or acrylics on a white clay surface. Other methods are reviewed: airbrush, gouache, watercolor, oils, tempera, and colored pencils. *âœArtists looking for new ways of interpreting their work will be pleased to find this on library shelves.â•â* "Library Journal, July 2001

## Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Watson-Guptill (January 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0823046583

ISBN-13: 978-0823046584

Product Dimensions: 10.5 x 8.5 x 0.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,589,962 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #53 in Books > Arts & Photography > Graphic Design > Airbrush #4346 in Books > Arts & Photography > Painting

## Customer Reviews

Colorado painter, printmaker, and educator Charles Ewing explores art on clay surfaces in *The New Scratchboard*. Unfired porcelain clay applied in a thin layer to a support gives a surface that is both absorbent and easily scratched. Images are created by applying and removing pigment. Ewing looks at the long history of clay-surface art and describes the nature of clay-coated surfaces. He presents a staggeringly wide range of pigment that media artists can employ on scratchboards, including graphite, colored pencils, charcoal, ink pens, watercolor, acrylic, gouache, oil, etc.

Application and removal tools are equally diverse. Chapters about using India ink and color on white clay surfaces include demonstrations and exercises, and Ewing also provides extensive demonstrations of printmaking techniques such as relief, intaglio, and lithography. The book is exhaustively illustrated by a wide range of artists who have exploited the easy versatility the clay surface affords. Ewing's own work portraying horses and animals from the wild on inkboard reflects a mastery of line, form, and rhythm; his black-and-white rendition of four dancing ravens, for

example, is simultaneously amusing and realistic. Any artist is sure to find a captivating technique from the wide media illustrated, each with its own unique characteristics. Although saturated with technique, the book celebrates experimentation, which is perhaps best captured in its being "dedicated to those with a 'What if...' curiosity that always prevents them from exactly following a recipe." --Mary Ribesky

Most of us have done simple scratchboard drawings in grade school. Ewing has taken the concept, invented his own clay surface for it (under the name Claybord), and elevated the method to a sophisticated art form. He begins by outlining the history of the art, from petroglyphs, sgraffito, and scrimshaw to the latest uses of white clay surfaces, acrylics, airbrush, etc. Artists looking for new ways of interpreting their work will be pleased to find this on library shelves. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is such an informative book on scratchboard art whether you are a newbie or experienced. Great information in different methods and media used.

insightful, providing many new concepts and ideas along with materials and tools for different effects, easy reading and full of works from truly great artist with snippets of how they produce some of their works. Great reading and a wonderful reference

This is an inspiring book on using white claybord. The works and ideas in it are fascinating at the least. If you wish to learn about the black scratchboard I suggest a pen and ink drawing book.

I bought this book online, without having physically seen it before. For this reason my first impression was not the best. In fact, at first glance it didn't appear to contain any scratchboard work at all. Scratchboard, to me, is high-contrast black ink and white clay, with the possibility of color after the black and white has been rendered. You won't find this book geared to my definition. Chapters 3 and 4 contain the majority of the "black and white" pieces. Chapter 3 is small and deals pre-inked clay surfaces (like Claybord Black). It has a few examples of the traditional scratchboard look, but most of them have color added. Chapter 4 is larger and deals with applying india ink to the white clay surface. I have to admit, there are some really nice pieces in this chapter, but rather than looking like scratchboard, they tend to look more like ink and wash. My favorite is the one mentioned in the main review, with four ravens dancing on a fallen totem pole. Very nice. A careful

look does reveal some nice "traditional" scratchboard pieces done on Essdee Scraperboard, but they are few. This book is not about working with Essdee Scraperboard, it is about working with Claybord. Strangely enough, there are pieces that have no scratching at all, including some excellent contributions by Stephen Quiller. I think the book is poorly titled. It should be called Claybord: Clay-Surface Techniques and Materials for Today's Artist. It was written by the inventor of Claybord, and is essentially an instruction manual on how to work with a variety of media on Claybord. I don't have a problem with a book on Claybord. Some might even argue that Claybord IS the new scratchboard. Fine, why not put Claybord in the title? I just think the title should be descriptive of the book's contents. Since the overview of the contents is explained in the main review I won't go into too much depth. Charles Ewing explains his own development as an artist, his discovery of scratchboard, and the needs that drove him to create a new product (Claybord). He never claims to be a traditional "scratchboarder" and in fact, he says "By traditional scratchboard standards, I was far from being labeled a purist then, and I'm afraid the little purity I had has further degenerated in the intervening years". This book is about very untraditional methods. He does go through a history of using scratches for making art, the development of scratchboard, and an explanation of clay as a surface for making art. He goes on to demonstrate at least some of what is possible with a clay surface. The techniques are well explained and the writing flows well. This is a "picture" book so I have to admit I haven't read it word for word. Basically, if you lose the expectation that you are going to learn about traditional scratchboard this is a pretty nice book. If you enjoy experimentation and the exploration of media and surfaces, you will be happy with what you find. On the other hand, if you are looking for traditional scratchboard instruction you would be much happier with Ruth Lozner's excellent book, *Scratchboard for Illustration*. It's now out of print so good luck finding it.

This is a wonderful book for experienced painters with that want to expand their horizons or for anyone who wants background information on clay-surface techniques. It shows how a wide range of painting and drawing techniques can be used in conjunction with scratchboard techniques to create a stunning array of results on these very versatile surfaces. The book starts out with background information on clay-coated surfaces including history, and the types of surfaces and their characteristics. It then covers application and scratching tools. A basic vocabulary and an overview of various mediums that can be used on them are also here. Several sections highlighting different surfaces and mediums follow. These include ink-coated clay surface, India ink on white clay, color medium on white clay and printmaking with the clay surface. Each section includes at

least one demonstration of a work in progress from start to finish. The printmaking chapter is the largest and includes eight demos. These demonstrations are meant to showcase a general technique rather than create an identical copy of the work. My favorite part of the book is the beautiful artwork throughout. I may even buy a second copy to cut out and frame some of this vast array of gorgeous art. Captions for each piece include artist, title, size and a basic description of techniques used. My favorite is "Madame Butterfly", a whimsical piece that combines acrylic airbrush with scratching techniques. I also loved the many black and white wildlife images. There is a great material resource directory and a helpful index in the back. I admit I have not really tried any of the techniques shown here. I think they are a bit above me as a beginning artist. I would definitely buy the book again though just for the example images and the inspiration they provide to encourage me to develop my own skills.

I must admit that, after I received my book, I thumbed through and was amazed at the artistic renditions that I saw on the pages. I was excited to delve into The New Scratchboard and learn the techniques and practices that helped to produce such fine work. When I actually started to digest the content, I soon realized that this book was not really about my favorite method (scratchboard), but more about the medium Clayboard. I have always thought of scratchboard as a type of art or technique rather than a medium on which different artistic styles can be practiced. There is actually very little emphasis on scratching in this book, other than the acknowledgement that scratching brings out the light details on various pieces. While impressive, the content does not instruct to the level that I was hoping. The message of the book can be summarized very simply.. "If you paint in oils, try this on Clayboard. If you paint with watercolor, try it on Clayboard. If you use pastels, try it on Clayboard. If you use most any medium, try it on Clayboard, which by the way, can be coated or uncoated with India ink and scratched away to reveal highlights." Overall, the book is very colorful and inspiring. It may get the juices flowing to try new methods on Clayboard, but it does not live up to its title. I would rename the book "The Versatility of Clayboard".

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