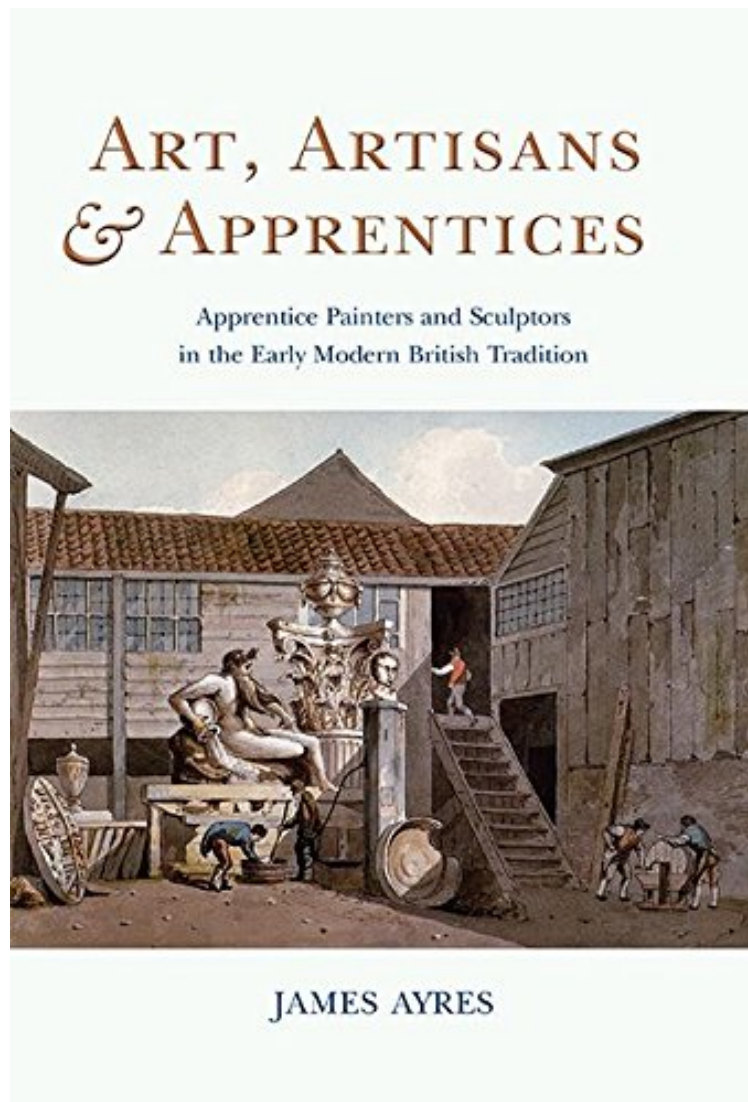


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# Art, Artisans and Apprentices: Apprentice Painters Sculptors in the Early Modern British Tradition

*James Ayres*

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**James Ayres : Art, Artisans and Apprentices: Apprentice Painters Sculptors in the Early Modern British Tradition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Art, Artisans and Apprentices: Apprentice Painters Sculptors in the Early Modern British Tradition:

Before the foundation of academies of art in London in 1758 and Philadelphia in 1805, most individuals who were to emerge as artists trained in workshops of varying degrees of relevance. Easel painters began their careers apprenticed to carriage, house, sign or ship painters, whilst a few were placed with those who made pictures. Sculptors emerged from a training as ornamental plasterers or carvers. Of the many other trades in a position to offer an appropriate background were limning, staining, engraving, surveying, chasing and die-sinking. In addition, plumbers gained the right to use oil painting and, for plasterers, the application of distemper was an extension of their trade. Central to the theme of this book is the notion that, for those who were to become either painters or sculptor, a training in a trade met their practical needs. This 'training' was of an altogether different nature to an 'education' in an art school. In the past, prospective artists were offered, by means of apprenticeships, an empirical rather than a theoretical understanding of their ultimate vocation. James Ayres provides a lively account of the inter-relationship between art and trade in the late seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries, in both Britain and North America. He demonstrates with numerous, illustrated examples, the many cross-overs in the 'art and mystery' of artistic training, and, to modern eyes, the sometimes incongruous relationships between the various trades that contributed to the blossoming of many artistic careers, including some of the most illustrious names of the 'long' eighteenth century.

*Art, Artisans Apprentices* is an important publication that breaks new ground and makes good on its promise to discuss objects of all shapes and sizes. The result is a far richer and more complex picture of artistic production in the early modern period. (The British Art Journal) This is a hugely informative book that answers the question 'how did you train to become an artist in Britain or America in the days before the first formal academies were founded in London in 1768 and Philadelphia in 1805?' (SALON - The Society of Antiquaries Online Newsletter, Issue 325) Ayres's discussion of guilds and livery companies provides a succinct and lucid overview of the subject, which itself remains relatively unknown to many modern scholars. (Martin Postle The Burlington Magazine, November 2016 - CLVII) "A well-published nonacademic specialist on the art and architecture especially of Georgian Britain..." (On the aim of the book) "...to offer intriguing glimpses into comparable experiences in colonial North America." (On his writing style) "He proceeds with rich and colorful anecdotal material and draws easily on an impressive range of literary and historical sources, leaping boundaries of time and place as he does so." (On the presentation) "...it would be heavy going without the very useful interdisciplinary glossary of terms" (continues) "...Oxbow should be thanked for allowing Ayres to include it, and for the elegant appearance of the whole..." (Robert Tittler Journal of British Studies) About the Author As the third generation of his family to have been actively engaged in the visual arts, James Ayres was, in effect, apprenticed from childhood to work in paint, plaster wood and stone. Following graduation from Goldsmiths College, London University and the Royal Academy Schools, a fellowship in the US introduced him to the arts of British North America.