



Word Painting Revised Edition: The Fine Art of Writing Descriptively

By Rebecca McClanahan



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Word Painting Revised Edition: The Fine Art of Writing Descriptively By Rebecca McClanahan

Paint Masterful Descriptions on the Page!

Writing strong descriptions is an art form, one that you need to carefully develop and practice. The words you choose to describe your characters, scenes, settings, and ideas--in fiction, poetry, and nonfiction--need to precisely illustrate the vision you want to convey. *Word Painting Revised Edition* shows you how to color your canvas with descriptions that captivate readers. Inside, you'll learn how to:

- Develop your powers of observation to uncover rich, evocative descriptions.
- Discover and craft original and imaginative metaphors and similes.
- Effectively and accurately describe characters and settings.
- Weave description seamlessly through your stories, essays, and poems.

You'll also find dozens of descriptive passages from master authors and poets--as well as more than one hundred exercises--to illuminate the process. Whether you are writing a novel or a poem, a memoir or an essay, *Word Painting Revised Edition* will guide you in the creation of your own literary masterpiece.



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Word Painting Revised Edition: The Fine Art of Writing Descriptively By Rebecca Mcclanahan **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #397036 in Books
- Published on: 2014-12-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .75" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 265 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"There is no better book than *Word Painting* and no better teacher than Rebecca McClanahan to illustrate how memory and observation are shaped into language that is lively and alive. McClanahan offers brilliant and helpful examples of how sensory detail, intimate moments, characterization, atmosphere, mood, and metaphor combine to create poems, stories, and essays that lift from the page and soar into the reader's imagination. If you want to be a better writer, you need to read this book." —Dinty W. Moore, author of *Crafting the Personal Essay: A Guide for Writing and Publishing Creative Nonfiction*

"*Word Painting* is both a joy to read and terrifically useful, whether you are working on your first short story or your fifth novel. Eloquent, practical, and deeply wise, Rebecca McClanahan reveals how to move beyond flat description into writing full of music, color, and surprise, and then how to enliven character, setting, and plot. Brushstroke by brushstroke, note by note, she vividly demonstrates the ways technique leads to art and, most importantly, the way art teaches us to become 'beholders' of the world. By the time I reached the third chapter I was quoting whole passages to my students, having already taken copious notes for myself. This is a writing guide full of sense and sensibility, and a work of art in itself." --Suzanne Berne, novelist and winner of the Orange Prize for fiction

"Rebecca McClanahan's *Word Painting: The Fine Art of Writing Descriptively, Revised Edition* is a specialized guide to mastering the art of evocative writing, from improving one's personal powers of observation to crafting standout metaphors to seamlessly incorporating vivid descriptions into stories, essays, or poems. Enhanced with exercises, *Word Painting* is a superb self-teaching tool." --*Midwest Book Review*

About the Author

Rebecca McClanahan has published ten books--of poetry, essays, writing instruction, and memoir--most recently *The Tribal Knot: A Memoir of Family, Community, and a Century of Change*. Her work has appeared in *Best American Essays*, *Best American Poetry*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Sun*, and numerous anthologies. McClanahan's awards include the Wood Prize from *Poetry*, a Pushcart Prize in fiction, the Carter Prize for the Essay, the Glasgow Award in nonfiction, literary fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the North Carolina Arts Council, and a Governor's Award for Excellence in Education. She currently lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, and teaches in the MFA programs of Rainier Writing Workshop and Queens University.

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