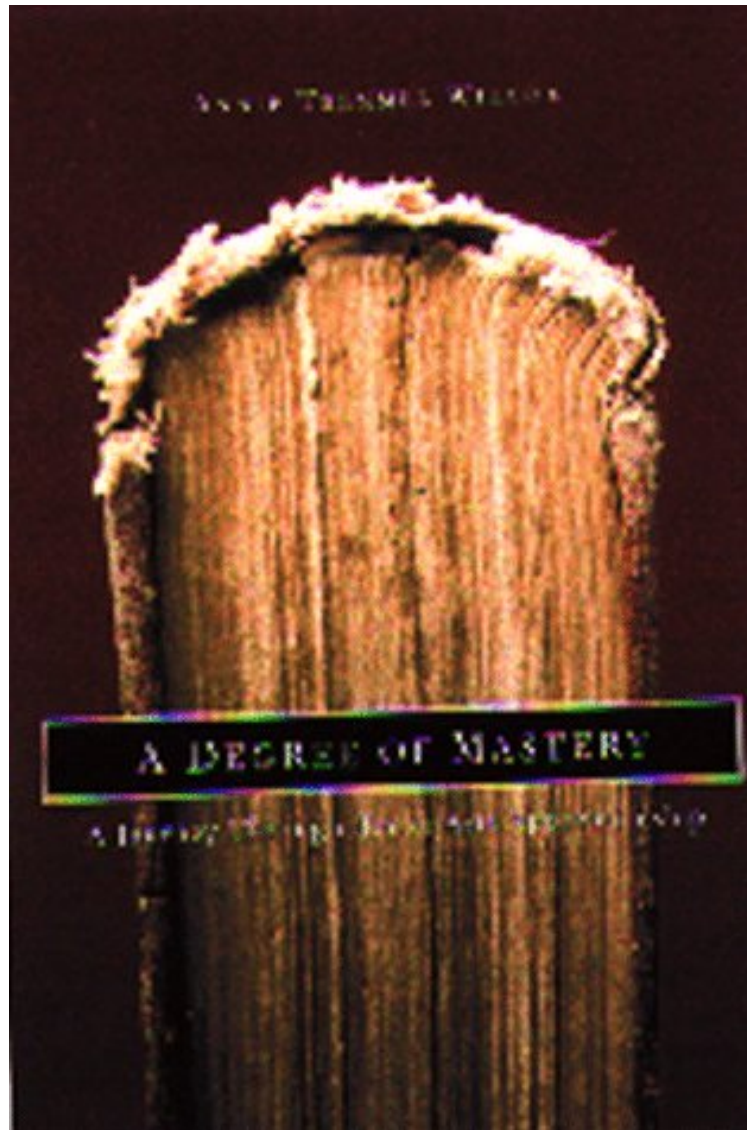


(Download) A Degree of Mastery: A Journey Through Book Arts Apprenticeship

A Degree of Mastery: A Journey Through Book Arts Apprenticeship

Annie Tremmel Wilcox

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Annie Tremmel Wilcox : A Degree of Mastery: A Journey Through Book Arts Apprenticeship before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Degree of Mastery: A Journey Through Book Arts Apprenticeship:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Literal or spiritual - take your pick By tzefirah A practical person can read this book as an extended essay on how to approach an apprenticeship, and how to bind conservation texts. A

spiritual person can add layers to the stories and extrapolate life lessons. Either way, the main character/author is extremely sympathetic character. Her teacher had amazing gifts, both as a conservator and as a teacher. The book is deceptively short. Looks like a quick read, but was so meaty and detailed, I found myself reading it for several weeks in order to digest all the material carefully. If your taste runs to the obscure, the "sleeper," I hope you enjoy this book as much as I did. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Acceptable Book By swschenk Coffee Table Book 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Genuine Pleasure By David Ozonoff I loved this book. At once a touching tribute to the renowned conservator and binder to whom the author was apprenticed, a look into apprenticeship, and an insight into the ethos of book conservation, the book is a delight to read. If you know even a little about how books are constructed (and even if you don't) you will learn a lot about the physical objects that obsess so many of us. After reading the paperback I went out and bought the hardcover. Destined to be a classic among bibliophiles.

Learning the craft and secrets of a master book-binder

From Booklist Borrowing a narrative technique from fiction writers, Wilcox alternates between the telling of two stories: a detailed account of just how you handle a book that needs restoration, set against the author's recollection of her experience as the first woman apprentice to the master bookbinder William Anthony at the University of Iowa. Wilcox has the craftsman's eye for texture and nuance. This is a love story of sorts, although there is not a shred of sentimentality: the love of the apprentice for the teachings of a master; the love of the artist for the right tools; the love of the restorer for the object that needs care. When Anthony dies before Wilcox's apprenticeship is complete, we can see how his teachings have prepared her to finish the journey on her own. Controlled and unadorned, her chastely sumptuous prose pares experience like leather, so that the acts she chooses to illuminate for us--the art and act of teaching, the activity of learning, the relationship of tools to action--are silken and supple. Grace Anne A. DeCandido From Kirkus sA meticulously crafted description of a writing teacher's apprenticeship in bookbinding and conservation with an internationally known master of the field. Wilcox tells her story by referring to the copious notes she compiled while serving as the first female apprentice to William Anthony, the founder of the Center for the Book at the University of Iowa. She found that writing down her experiences was the best way to "hold onto the terrors and successes of learning a handcraft," and it's her preservation of the freshness of her encounter with a new craft that makes this book compelling reading for those who may not share an interest in its rather narrowly focused subject matter. She draws readers into the world of book arts by immersing us totally in its richly descriptive technical jargon: Leather bindings have red rot (a condition that causes them to crumble at the slightest touch), pages are foxed (spotted with rust from bits of iron), books are rebound in alum-tawed pigskin. She describes restoration processes, such as chemical washing, mending torn pages, resizing, and sewing bindings, with such detail and precision that one is left with the impression that he or she is actually learning the craft rather than merely reading about another's experience. Her relationship with Anthony (who died of cancer before the end of the five-year apprenticeship program) is an integral part of her story, and she chronicles his patient advice and support as he guides her through her first restoration, teaches her to sew her first Coptic stitch across a binding spine, helps her to manufacture her own tools, and advises her on professional matters, such as estimating private restoration jobs. The rarity of such intense personal mentoring relationships in today's economic climate renders Wilcox's experience both a nostalgic throwback to an earlier era and a potential model for recuperating current pedagogical practices. Book lovers will love this book. (Book of the Month Club alternate selection) -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. About the Author Annie Tremmel Wilcox earned her Ph.D. in English at the University of Iowa in 1994. She has taught writing for more than fifteen years and also works privately as a rare-book and paper conservator and teacher of book arts.