



# The Complete Guide to Anatomy for Artists & Illustrators: Drawing the Human Form

By Gottfried Bammes

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Since it was first published in 1964, Professor Gottfried Bammes' *Die Gestalt des Menschen* has been considered the definitive book for artists learning to draw the human form. Deconstructing the body into its smallest components, Bammes asserts the importance of learning the structure of bones, muscles and parts in order to accurately draw a human figure.

Whilst the original German has been sought after in the English speaking world, a translation has been long lamented. Now, for the first time, Bammes' most famous work has been translated by Search Press into the English language.

Faithfully reproduced in translation, with over 540 original diagrams, drawings and photographs, and spanning over 500 pages, new and experienced artists can finally drink in the vast knowledge lovingly presented by the late professor.

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**The Complete Guide to Anatomy for Artists & Illustrators: Drawing the Human Form** By Gottfried Bammes **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

July 2017 This is the most substantial volume on anatomy and figure drawing I've ever seen, and it might also be the most accessible. The secret I think is that by giving himself space Gottfried Bammes does have to cram everything in together. Each drawing includes just enough information to illustrate the point in hand and no more. All the skeletal and muscle structure is there, but in artistic, rather than medical detail. Photographs, block diagrams and classical examples serve to enhance the experience. The book is structured so that you're only aware of the section you're in, and never intimidated by the rest. This is a thorough course and not really for the beginner, but neither do you need to be a specialist to appreciate it. The Artist March 2017 Gottfried Bammes (1920-2007), once Professor of Artistic Anatomy at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, was the prolific author of many successful books on life-drawing, some published in English. The Complete Guide to Anatomy for Artists & Illustrators, initially published in 1964 as *Die Gestalt des Menschen*, is undoubtedly his masterpiece. The nine editions of this book in German are a measure of its success and impact and this - the tenth and the first in English - is very welcome. The bulk of the book consists of six chapters devoted to regional anatomy, each integrating descriptions of the structural components in relation to the dynamics of function and to artistic expression. The final section of each chapter gives relevant examples from works of art. Throughout, the emphasis is on providing the teacher with progressive methods of instructing the student to acquire an integrated approach that combines art and science. Three further chapters address more general issues: bodily proportions in relation to age and gender; the dynamics and bearing of the human body; and the "building blocks" of the body, namely, the skeleton, muscles, and skin and fat. The English text sometimes betrays its origin but any weakness in translation is fully compensated for by the wonderful range of more than 1,200 illustrations which speak a universal language. The anatomical drawings are notable for both their clarity and attractiveness. There are also sketches and diagrams by the artist-author and photographs of nude models that cover a wide variety of ages and body-forms. The diagrams of silhouetted figures and limbs in action, with the skeleton and muscle delineated, are particularly informative. The medical historian will be interested in the introductory chapter, showing how Renaissance humanism called for more than the simple rendering of the human form, which had previously satisfied the demands of mediaeval religious painting. Leonardo da Vinci, though not the first anatomist, launched the study of anatomy as an artistic, dynamic process. Vesalius set new standards for scientific observation, discrediting Galen, and, with Stephan von Calcar, reached new heights of artistic anatomical representation. This volume can be warmly recommended as an essential reference book for professional figurative artists and illustrators, for teachers of life drawing, and for keen students of the art.

<http://bshm.org.uk/notice-board/book-reviews-alt/> Barry Hoffbrand - British Society for the History of Medicine Apr-17 Gottfried Bammes's *The Complete Guide to Anatomy for Artists & Illustrators* was originally published in Germany in 1964 and is considered to be the definitive guide to drawing the human body. It has now been translated into English for the first time and contains over 1200 photographs, diagrams and drawings within its 500 pages. A must for anyone serious about capturing the human form in detail.

The Leisure Painter This is the most substantial book I've seen on the subject of anatomy. Substantial, however, doesn't mean incomprehensible and, looking into its pages, it becomes possible to believe the jacket's claim that the original German edition is "bestselling" - even though I doubt it would have troubled the literary pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*. Gottfried Bammes does a remarkable job of explaining every aspect of both anatomy and the practice of drawing it in a way that simplifies without reduction to absurdity. Anatomy, rather like perspective, is complex and comes with the additional hazard that, when writing about art, any author needs to avoid something that looks like a medical textbook. That Gottfried avoids this is, in large part, down to the quality of the drawings he uses to illustrate everything. He has a lightness of touch

that, while it might be out of place in a hospital lecture theatre, is more than adequate in a drawing studio. The result is not only manageable, but looks and feels manageable. On top of this, the way the book is structured makes each section a unit in its own right; you can concentrate on the room without feeling weighed down by the rest of the building, large and ornate though it is. I'd hesitate to recommend this as a primer but, if you're interested in anatomy for artistic purposes, I doubt you'll ever find a better, and certainly not a more complete, guide. Artbookreview Originally published in Germany in 1964, this has become a definitive guide to drawing the human figure. This is the first English translation of the complete work. The tome contains over 12,000 drawings, diagrams and photographs covering all aspects of the human form. Structure, function and anatomical processes are all described in detail. It is a systematic approach to learning anatomy offering steps and exercises to reveal practical development for the artist. It provides an in-depth look at the subject. The book includes Anatomy For Artists Past and Present; The Proportions of The Human Body; Bearing and Movement; Building Blocks; Lower Extremities; Skeleton; Muscles; Upper Extremities; Neck; Head including facial features and Artistic Freedom. It talks about measuring processes, developmental stage and proportion 3-dimension and space, poses and all factors that have to be taken into account when drawing. The developmental sequences, for example, of knee construction are fascinating. The highly detailed instruction is probably beyond the Sunday painter, but for any serious painter of the human form, this is the best book I have seen. Illustrated with fine examples of well-known artists such as Michelangelo, Matisse and Durer. Brilliant. [yarnsandfabrics.co.uk](http://yarnsandfabrics.co.uk)

#### About the Author

**Gottfried Bammes**, born in 1920 in Freital, Germany, worked as an art teacher at the College of Fine Arts in Dresden. Bammes was a prolific writer and artist, was considered to be a master of life drawing and anatomy, and produced numerous books on the subject in his lifetime. In 1974 he was awarded the National Prize of the German Democratic Republic for Science and Technology and received the Culture and Art Prize of the City of Freital in 2000. He died in 2007.

#### Users Review

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##### **Kristen Hamilton:**

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