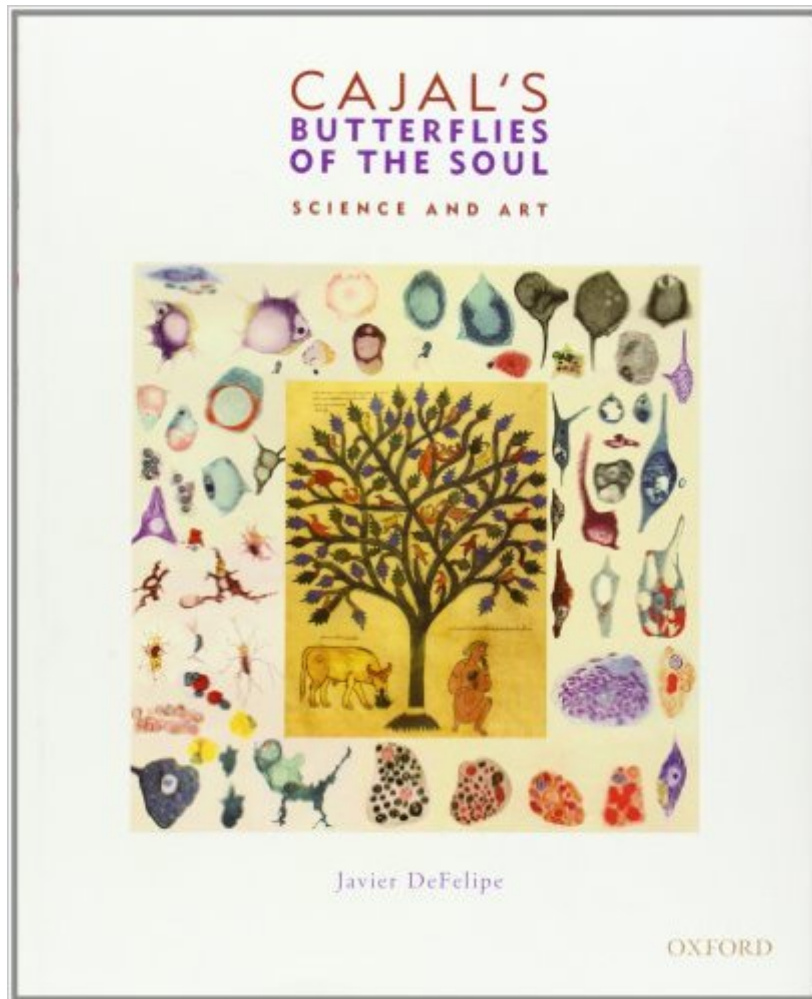


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Cajal's Butterflies Of The Soul: Science And Art



Synopsis

This book contains a large collection of beautiful figures produced throughout the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century and that represent some characteristic examples of the early days of research in neuroscience. The main aim of this work is to demonstrate to the general public that the study of the nervous system is not only important for the many obvious reasons related to brain function in both health and disease, but also for the unexpected natural beauty that it beholds. This beauty has been discovered thanks to the techniques used to visualize the microscopic structure of the brain, a true forest of colorful and florid neural cells. As illustrated by his marvelous drawings, the studies of Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852-1934) no doubt contributed more than those of any other researcher at the time to the growth of modern neuroscience. Thus, we have honored his name in the title of this book, even though the figures contained in the main body of the book are from 91 authors. Looking at the illustrations in this book the readers will not only marvel at Cajal's drawings but they will also find that many of the other early researchers that studied the nervous system were also true artists, of considerable talent and aesthetic sensibility. Thus, the present book contains numerous drawings of some of the most important pioneers in neuroscience, including Deiters, Kölliker, Meynert, Ranvier, Golgi, Retzius, Nissl, Dogiel, Alzheimer, del Río-Hortega and de Castro. The book has been divided into two Parts, Part I and II, the latter containing the main body of the work. Part I contains introductory information that will give readers unfamiliar with the nervous system a better understanding of the importance of the scientific illustrations produced in those days. The second part of the book, Part II, contains the collection of 282 figures with the intention of transforming the reader into an observer. These illustrations have been divided in three main categories: Section I, The Benedictine period: The early days; Section II, The black period: Neurons, glia and organization of the nervous system; Section III, The colorful period: internal structure and chemistry of the cells. This book will be of general interest, not only due to the captivating aesthetic appeal of the illustrations but also because they represent the bases of our current understanding of the nervous system. The reader will find that many of the illustrations can be considered to belong to different artistic movements, such as modernism, surrealism, cubism, abstract art or impressionism. Indeed, these illustrations may also provide artists with a source of inspiration since they reveal a fantastic and virtually unknown world of forms, a microuniverse with an aura of mystery.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The reproductions of neurological drawings in this book are stunning, and hard to find collected in one source like this. The text is fascinating, giving a brief overview of Cajal and other neurological pioneers, as well as a brief overview of the structures depicted. The quality is very high, the book is densely illustrated, and I feel it's worth the price to have this treasure of a book.

This book is incredible, a must for anyone who loves science and art. The pictures are gorgeous, and there's just the right amount of text to provide background without detracting from the art. I am thrilled to have found a great deal on it, as it is usually priced high, but it is worth it for a beautiful coffee table book, or just for reference and enjoyment.

This book is a collector's item for those interested in cell structure and/or those who love beautiful line drawings and delicate paintings with exquisite detail. Plus, there is plenty of text to give the reader plenty of context for the plates. A unique book.

most suited gift from an art historian to a neurologist. requires a reader who can appreciate the medical illustration as an aesthetic object.

Great for neuroscience nerds who also love art. I bought this for my wife as a gift after hearing of the artist on the Big Bang Theory.

Perfect book with detailed illustrations of Cajal's work.

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