

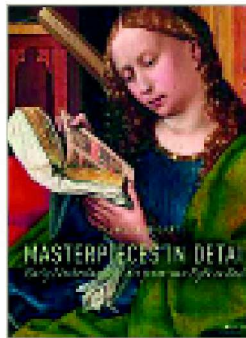


## Art book is well worth the price tag

**MASTERPIECES IN DETAIL: EARLY NETHERLANDISH ART FROM JAN VAN EYCK TO BOSCH** by Till Holger Borchert (Prestel, £75)

READERS of this column might gasp at the price of this book, but believe me, when you get lost in its wonderful pages you will see that it is worth it in comparison to the average weekly wage.

Till Holger Borchert is one of the world's authorities on this subject and here enables us to discover the exquisite minute details of 40 of the most important works painted in Belgian Flanders at the same time the Italian Renaissance was taking



place.

Whereas the Italians were creating artificial mathematical perspective, Jan Van Eyck shows us the more natural approach of aerial perspective; creating space through colour and tone.

His painting techniques were a major influence on those artists who followed.

The author then takes us through the works of Rogier Van de Weyden, the creator of one of the most powerful Pietas, colourist Quentin Metsys, Hans Memling, whose landscape backgrounds astound us with their minute detail and character, and many other artists that we are less acquainted with, most of whom had large workshops and interacted with each other.

The journey takes us through to the later Masters of Rubens and Van Dyck enabling to understand not only the course of art history, but of the changes in fashion, subject matter and the artists' thought processes.

To take photographs of this calibre without a flash is awe-inspiring and Hugo Maertens, in collaboration with the art galleries, will get the readers' total respect and thanks.

If you cannot visit the galleries, this book is almost as good as being there, perusing the masterpieces in comfort, quiet and observing them time and time again.

Do not be put off with the price; it is a learning experience you will not forget.

