

ARLIS/NA Multimedia & Technology Reviews

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Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts

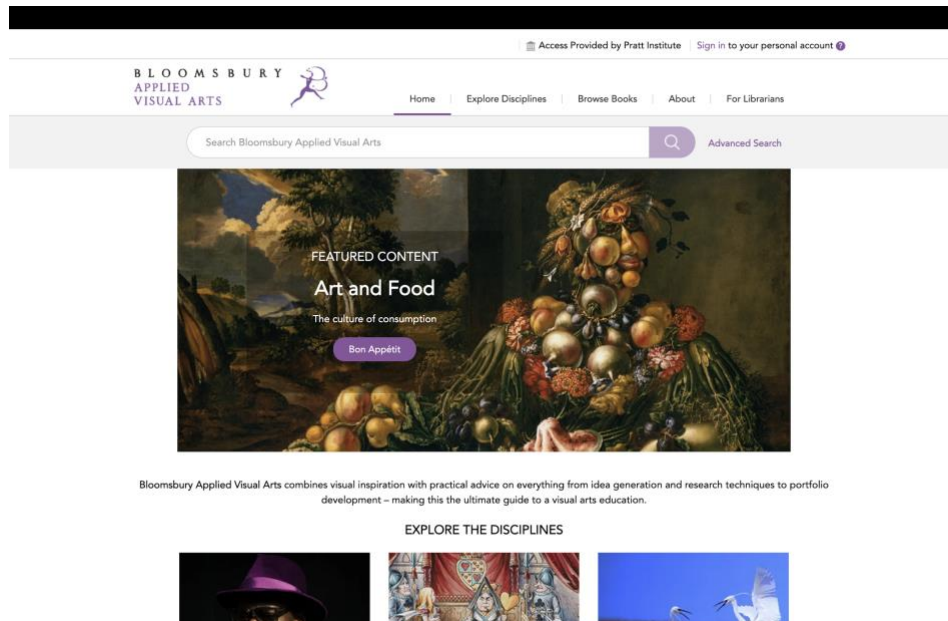
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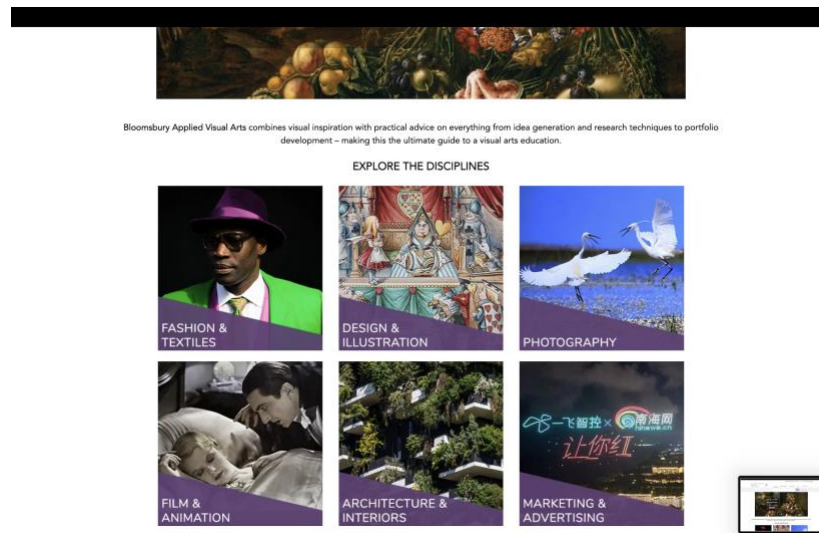
Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts, a library of 170 titles published by Bloomsbury Publishing, aims to provide students in the visual arts with practically minded resources for inspiration, technical advice, and career development. The digital resource library is organized according to major visual arts disciplines: fashion and textiles, design and illustration, photography, film and animation, architecture and interiors, and marketing and advertising. Within each discipline there are a number of "Basics" and "Fundamental" series, fit for practitioners of all levels. More intermediate resources include both hands-on exercises and more theoretical "required reading", as well as instruction on career management.



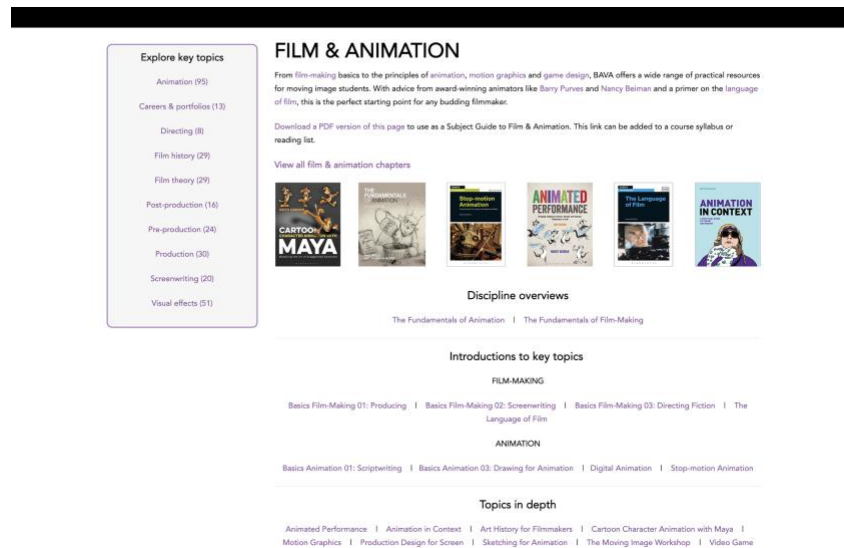
The homepage of Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts

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Individual pages (also serving as subject guides) further break down the disciplines into a number of sub-topics. At a glance, these pages communicate the key areas covered by the resources. The "Explore Key Topics" side-panel brings users to an index of chapters tagged by topic, while the links at the bottom of the page bring users to entire e-books. Users can otherwise only see a list of e-books by turning to the "Browse Books" page, which lacks the filtering features users can apply to chapters. The search feature also indexes by chapter with filters available to narrow down searches by key topic. Both the key topics side-panel and the search bar bring users to the same results, but the advantage of the search feature comes primarily from full-text searches of chapters.



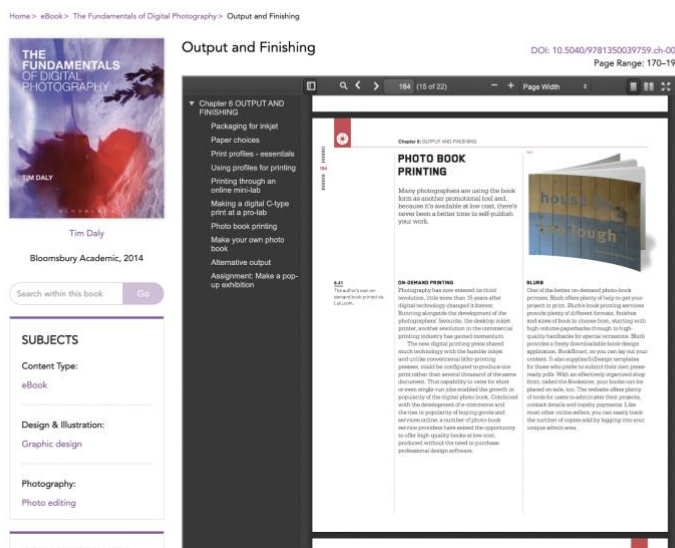
The Bloomsbury core disciplines.



The Film and Animation discipline page.

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The books and chapters themselves are excellently rendered, with (according to Bloomsbury) 150–250 full color images per title, the option for personal download of chapters via the print button, and a smooth and functional full-screen viewer. On mobile, many of these features are diminished by layout changes and screen size, but all the content remains available. Many chapters contain further sub-sections captured in a side-panel table of contents, which facilitates use of these resources as reference material. The contents accurately reflect the resource’s commitment to providing granular, practical introductions for new to intermediate students in the visual arts. The titles take nothing for granted when explaining how to point a camera or craft a portfolio.



The page view for a chapter of the book The Fundamentals of Digital Photography.

The resources in Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts have been aptly selected for the target audience of visual learners, especially for students who may want to frequently refer to reference material in a specific chapter as they move through the learning process. Delivering these titles digitally makes sense for the same reason, especially given the quality of the digital titles. The limitations of the search and browse features can make discovery more difficult than necessary, but it is still possible to consistently find the right resource. Bloomsbury also adds new resources on a regular basis. Applied Visual Arts also supplies the title list as an Excel Sheet, which has some additional metadata and may aid collection development selectors in evaluating the resource.

Librarians interested in the benefits of Bloomsbury Applied Visual Arts, such as facilitation of self-learning, explicit focus on applied basics, and breadth of coverage, will have to balance them with the financial cost. Although Bloomsbury offers a free thirty day trial, institutions will ultimately need to request a quote and pay to secure ongoing access for their users. Bloomsbury does not provide general pricing information. Comparable open-access resources include [MERLOT](#), [Open Textbook Library](#),

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and other introductory titles in the library catalog, among others available online, and librarians will need to choose between curating resources that fit their students' needs with the broad coverage and disciplinary topics of this resource.