Venetian Figure Painting with Thomas Garner
Kline Academy
8 week course (3 with a live model) Sunday Afternoons, 2:00 to 5:00 pm, Oct. 12th - Dec. 14th

Please Read and follow this calendar carefully. A fully finished painting can not be achieved in the class periods. You are encouraged to work at home. You may take one picture of the model for homework. A $20 tip for the model is required. Do homework before Wednesdays. Work **must be dry** for class on Fridays!!!

Color codes:
Black = in-classwork
Red = what materials to bring to class and what we will discussed. (See "Materials List", pages 5-6)
Green = *Alla Prima* (ignore if you are doing Venetian Style, see explanation below)
Blue = homework
Sky Blue = live model in class

(New) In an effort to expand the horizon of this class, we are including the option of working in an ***alla prima*** painting style in parallel with the normal class curriculum. (See below for more *alla prima* instructions, page 3)*

Course Background: For an 18 min. discussion on the historical and theoretical background to this course, please go to my Youtube channel Thomas Garner and watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUW8BakSJig

Course Calendar

Week One (Oct 12) Sketching - Model, working from a live model, we will position the model, take a photo (please leave a $20 tip for model) and start with structural and tonal sketches. Then start a large (22x30") definitive drawing in red chalk and colored pencil on toned rag paper. (See "Materials List". pages 5-6)
- Drawing materials only. (No painting materials needed yet)
- Discuss oil paint materials list and palette. (See "Warm/Cool Palette", page13)
- AP *alla prima* with attention to measuring and proportions.
- Homework: work on refining your drawing. With your Prismacolor Terracotta pencils (very sharp), start carefully going over your shadows, edges and background with fine hatching, erasing the red chalk as you go. Attention to defining dark and light tonal areas. (See "Project Development", page 11)

Week Two (Oct 19) Drawing – working from photo of the model, refine drawing details and add high lights in white chalk. Sketch in background. Learn to stretch linen canvas and how to gesso the surface.
- Drawing materials only.
- Discussion on canvas stretching to get you started. (See "Canvas Stretching" page 12).
- AP work from photo from new angle using same measuring techniques.
- Homework before Week Three: 1) Grid your drawing, 2) Stretch canvas, 3) Gesso Canvas 4), Tone Canvas. Be sure canvas is dry before coming to class! 5) grid your canvas. (See "Gridding and Transfer", page 8)

Week Three (Oct 26) Transfer - Transfer drawing to the canvas lightly with a pencil, then go over outlines with a very thin wash of burnt umber, then extend a wash into tonal value areas. Finally put a very thin wash of white in the highlight areas. (See page 10)
- Painting with only burnt umber and lead white. (or Gamblin Flake White Replacement)
- AP work from photo from new angle focus on anatomy.
- Homework: refine transfer.

Week Four (Nov 9) *Grisaille* - Model returns. Start *grisaille* under painting. Attention to anatomy! In the following order: a very thin layer of black paint in the deep darks, the core shadows, the dark tonal areas, and the drop-off areas. Then within the light tonal areas paint a light layer of lead white. When the paint has had a chance to set up, lightly drag some white over the core shadows for the bluing effect. (See "Optical Mixing" page 7 and "Value and Aerial Perspective", page 14)
- Painting with only burnt umber, black and lead white (or Gamblin Flake White Replacement).
- Demo of light over dark scumbling.
- AP new angle from model paint duo tone.
- Homework: refine grisaille, make anatomy corrections.

Week Five (Nov 16) Color - Model, continue with model. Starting in the deep shadow areas, paint in transparent red glazes (Alizarin Crimson and Transparent Red Oxide) to deepen the shadows. Then in the mid-shadow areas lightly overlay touches of warm opaque reds (Cadmium Red Light) to bring some light into the shadows. Mix a local skin color and lightly scumble over light tonal areas. Then apply brighter and duller hues as needed with attention to the principle that: "dark over light creates warmth" and "light over dark always creates coolness."
- Painting full palette.
- Demo of color application.
- AP new angle from model paint duo tone.
- Homework: refine color.

Week Six (Nov 23) Atmosphere - working from the photo, concentrate on capturing the atmosphere with glazes and scumbles. Block in the background and drapery.
- Painting full palette.
- AP new angle from model paint full palette.
- Homework: continue refining, correcting errors and defining background.

Week Seven (Dec 7) Background - working from the photo, focus on the background and drapery. The same principles of dark and light tonal areas apply. Attention to overall tones and relative brightness or dullness of color.
- Painting full palette.
- Demo of alla prima techniques for background and drapery.
- AP from photo paint full palette.
- Homework: continue working on background and drapery and finish your painting.

Week Eight (Dec 14) Final Touches - working from the photo, do the final glazes and retouches trying to create an overall atmospheric continuity between the figure and its environment and add some *alla prima* touches to give a sense of *brio* and liveliness.
- Painting full palette.
- Talk about how to apply bitumen and varnish at a later date when it is completely dry to give the painting a warm glow.
- AP from photo paint full palette.
- Homework: Keep painting!!!

*Notes for those taking the *Alla Prima* track

Alla Prima, also known as Direct Painting, is a very broad heading and can mean as many things as there are artists. The one characteristic they all have in common is found in the word *alla prima* itself. It is Italian for *at first* and has the sense of something done fast or in one sitting, wet on wet. Since the time of the Impressionists it has become the modern way of painting. Done well it can give a great sense of freshness and vigor. This makes it sort of the flip side of the rich sense of depth and mood characteristic Indirect Painting ordinarily taught in this course. That doesn't mean that the two styles can't be compatible, on the contrary, the greatest paintings have elements of both. To be an effective painter you need to know both.

Most people jump into *alla prima* painting from the start without gaining an understanding of the dynamics of optical mixing found in Indirect Painting. Assuming you have already taken this course in Venetian Figure Painting, it is a good time to start exploring the challenges of *alla prima*. As the word *Direct* implies you are going directly for the color you want instead of the round about way in layered painting. But there are some good exercises you can do leading up to a full color palette. They are as follows:

- **Monochrome.** Using one color to establish shapes and proportions. The paint can be applied with anything from solid outlines to smooth washes and wiped and modeled as needed.

- **Duo Tone.** Using two color for specific effects. Here are some examples:
   A) Black and White, like a *grisaille*, it stakes out values.
   B) Ultramarine Blue, Burnt Sienna and White, for creating chromatic grays in cool and warm tones.
   C) Phthalo Green, Burnt Sienna and White, for the magical illusion of full color using only two.

- **Full Color.** Using full palette wet on wet.

Finding your Technique
Alla prima is as much about finding yourself, your own style, as it is about learning a given technique. The calendar above is only a suggestion. You are encouraged to experiment with different color combinations and toned canvas grounds according your own tastes and interests.

The Technique in a Nutshell
Probably the biggest challenge to *alla prima* painting is keeping crisp, clean colors. Painting wet into wet always runs the risk of the colors getting all mixed up and muddy. The best way to avoid this is first put down your under painting with color that has been

thinned with Gamsol into a light wash so that it absorbs quickly into the canvas and won't mix with subsequent layers. Then premix an array of colors on the palette which match the local colors, shadows and highlight of your subject. In this way the color is then applied thickly with more or less single, clean strokes as if tiling it. Using a palette knife is a good way of avoiding muddying because it presses the paint over underlying paint and leaves nice sharp edges. Experiment with it and then learn to use your brush in the same way. Clean sharp edges are the key to a successful *alla prima* painting.

Materials
The materials list is much the same as the standard list for this course seen here below. Here are a few additional considerations.

Colors
Alla prima generally requires brighter and more opaque colors so you will be relying more on cadmiums and other high chroma pigments and less on transparent earth colors. You are also encouraged to experiment with the array of colors on the market until you find a palette that is pleasing to you. Our standard palette is good for most things but here are a few things you will need for sure:
- Titanium White
- Phthalo Green
- Burnt Sienna

Mediums
The same mediums can be used here: Gamsol, linseed oil, Oleogel.

Brushes
The same brushes but only the bristle flats and brights mentioned below. Be sure they come to a razor sharp edge.

Canvases
You will need a new canvas for each class. You can use any size you feel comfortable with but it should not be so big that you can't finish it in one session. Also you are encouraged to experiment different toned grounds or just white. The below are my recommendations:

16 x 20" canvas boards Fredrix Archival Watercolor Canvas boards. They have perfect tooth and absorbency and require no further gessoing. Most store-bought canvases require two or three extra coats of gesso to make them smoother.

Toned Canvases
For a Chromatic Gray tone mix in equal portions of Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Sienna. A little more Sienna will make a warmer gray and a little more Blue will make a cooler gray. Spread the mixture over your canvas board with thinned with Gamsol. Let it sit for a minute or two (only!), then wipe it down with a paper towel until you get about a light 30 to 40% gray. Be sure it is dry before coming to class. If you run out of time do the same with acrylic paint instead.

Photo
You will need to take photos of the model from various angles for the days we don't have a model. (please check with model about photo fee).

Please see the standard materials list below.

Standard Materials list for Venetian Figure Painting

Drawing materials:
-1 sheet 22" x 30" cotton rag paper, vellum finish, cream or fawn color (Stonehenge)
-Large Drawing board 26" x 38" that fits the paper
-Cretacolor Sanguine "Dry" (dry chalk, not wax based!) and chalk holder
-White Charcoal pencil
-Prismacolor color pencils: Terracotta, and Tuscan red
-Pencil sharpener
-Kneaded eraser, regular eraser, and refillable precision erasers (like Staedtler Mars stick)
-Narrow knitting needle or wooden dowel (thickness of a knitting needle) for measuring
-Yardstick for measuring and gridding
-Artist tape

Painting materials:
Oil Color list (Required)
-Ivory Black
-Lead white (alternative: Gamblin Flake White Replacement)
-Burnt umber (choose a brand that tends toward reddish hue. The low-end Blick's is fine. The expensive Old Holland, for example, is too brown.)
-Raw umber
-Burnt Sienna (or better Transparent Oxide Red)
-Yellow Ochre
-Alizarin Crimson
-Vermilion (or Cadmium Red Light. I like the cheap Blick's just because it has low tinting strength)
-Ultramarine Blue
-Cerulean Blue

Optional (colors for a more complete palette but not essential for this course)
-Cadmium Yellow Light
-True Cadmium Red Light (for full tinting strength)
-Bitumen (asphaltum) (Rembrandt brand)
-Permanent Green (Phthalo Green Blue)

Most common brands found at local art retailers are of good quality, however I generally recommend buying the best you can afford.
Here are some brands I highly recommend: Michael Harding, Old Holland, Williamsburg, Rublev (Natural Pigments) and Maimeri.

Medium
-Gamsol odorless mineral spirits (please use only this as it rated with the lowest toxicity)
-Cold-pressed or Refined Linseed oil
-Gel medium: Oleogel from Natural Pigments (http://www.naturalpigments.com) Preferred brand, but available only online or at the Blue Rooster in Los Feliz

Varnish (you can buy this later when project is completely dry)
-Dammar varnish
-1" short handled bristle brush for varnishing

Brushes etc
-Langnickel Royal SableTek Brushes: Available at http://www.dickblick.com/. Long Filberts, #1, 2,12, 16, 18
    These are about the best brushes I have ever used. They combine the stiffness of bristle and the softness of sable, clean easily, are long lasting, keep their form, and are reasonably priced. Synthetic brushes have come a long way in recent times and the good ones way out-strip the natural fibers.

-Flat synthetic bristle brushes. I recommend Princeton Aspen 6500B or Silver Bristlon 1902: Available online at www.dickblick.com
    Brights, #4, 6, 8

Recommended brands include: Rosemary, Da Vinci, and Escoda, Princeton, Signet, Winsor Newton.
You can't make good paintings with bad brushes, period!!! Don't skimp on brushes, it's worth the extra expense. Come to class with NEW brushes!

-Medium size Palette
-Small palette knife
-Small palette cup for Gamsol and Linseed oil. (Please only use small cups as they release less fumes!)

Canvas*
We are going to paint the figure the same size as the drawing. So your canvas should be about 22 x 30" (20 x 30 or 22 x 28 are okay standard sizes.) Linen is best, but cotton is okay too. Most store-bought canvases require a couple of extra coats of gesso to make them smoother (but not too smooth!!!)
-1- pint of acrylic gesso
-2" brush for applying gesso

*For this class I used a regular store-bought 20 x 30 cotton canvases. I then stretched medium weave unprimed Belgian linen over it (the cotton canvas below gives extra support.) Then I prime it with about 5 coats of white gesso lightly sanding between coats, only enough to remove the burrs while not destroying the feel of the linen weave texture. This is a lot of extra work, but gives you a beautiful surface texture you can control. This is Not required but is worth going the extra mile. For this you will need to buy the unprimed linen, stretcher pliers, and a staple gun (see "Stretching Canvas", page 12.)

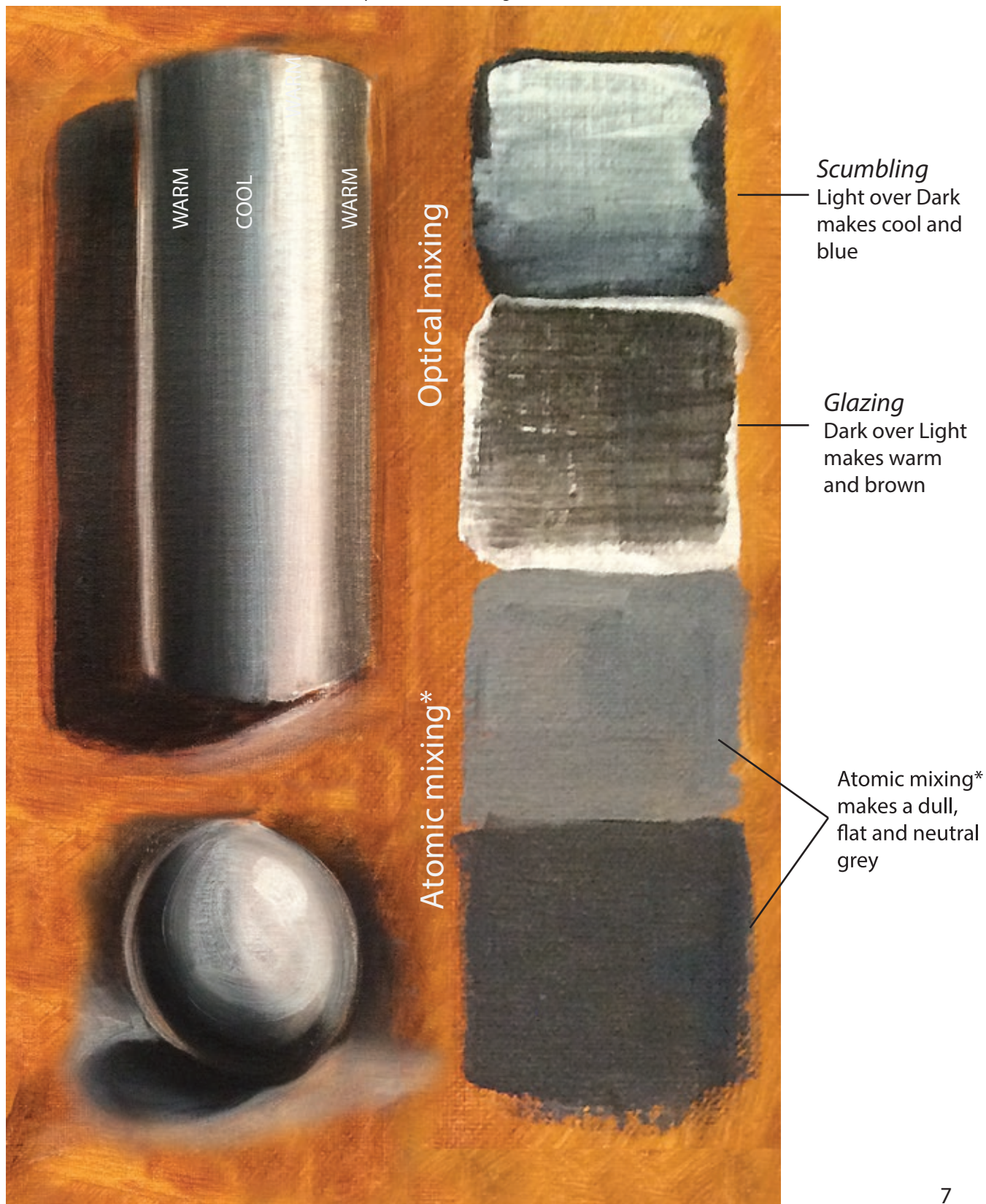## Clean up (recommended)
-Silicoil brush cleaning tank and fluid
-Artist's soap, Lint-free rags or paper towels
-Hair Conditioner. I find that a good way to maintain a sharp shape to your brushes after washing them is to apply some regular old hair conditioner to the brush, pull it straight and let it dry as is. No need to rinse it, just paint when you are ready to paint.

OPTICAL MIXING
Dark over Light, Light over Dark: the Order of Painting

Optical mixing is at the core of this course. The order in which paint is applied effects the temperature of a given color. This effect is rooted in the natural physical properties of color perception. *Glazing* (dark over light) gives a sense of warmth and *Scumbling* (light over dark) gives a sense of coolness. The samples below use the exact same Black and the exact same White, only the order changes.

WARM COOL WARM

Optical mixing

Atomic mixing*

Scumbling
Light over Dark makes cool and blue

Glazing
Dark over Light makes warm and brown

Atomic mixing* makes a dull, flat and neutral grey

7

*Atomic Mixing and Optical Mixing are terms defined by Charles Locke Eastlake
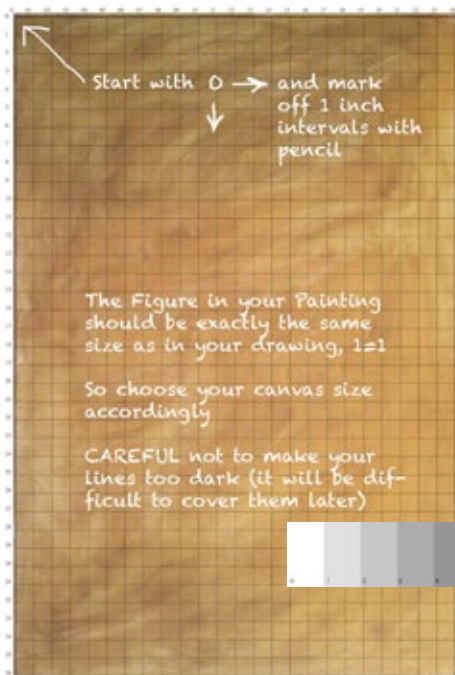
Gridding and Transfer

1) Grid your drawing. Like sample, very lightly draw a grid over your drawing at 1 inch intervals starting with 0 at the upper left hand corner and number the lines.

2) Stretch canvas.

3) Gesso canvas with 2 or 3 coats of acrylic gesso very lightly sanding between coats just to remove the burrs but not the canvas texture.

4) Tone your canvas with yellow ocher and a touch of burnt umber thinned with Gamsol. Let sit for a minute or two, then wipe down with paper towel to about a 30 to 40% gray smooth consistency. NOTE, if you run out of time use acrylic paint instead. DON'T come to class with a wet canvas!!!

5) grid your canvas the same way you gridded your drawing with 1 inch intervals*. Go lightly with the pencil.

Start with 0 → and mark off 1 inch intervals with pencil

The Figure in your Painting should be exactly the same size as in your drawing, 1=1

So choose your canvas size accordingly

CAREFUL not to make your lines too dark (it will be dif-ficult to cover them later)

30 to 40% gray

* This is for a painting that will be same size, 1=1 as your drawing. If you want to make your painting bigger you will need to find an-other proportion such as: 1=1.25 or 1=1.5

Project Development

This is the basic project development we will be following in this course. We will work through one pose (different from the below) with the following four steps:

1) Sketches and detailed drawing. Red chalk for the overall sketch and then start erasing the chalk as the form is refined and carefully redrawing it with colored pencil: Prismacolor Premier: terracotta and Tuscan red. Lights in white chalk.

2) **Transfer the drawing** with a 1" grid onto a canvas (22x30" circa) toned with yellow ocher and a touch of burnt umber. Once it is lightly drawn with a normal pencil, start painting with a thin Gamsol wash of burnt umber. Then a very light wash of lead white only in highlights.

3) *Grisaille* **stage.** First with a very light wash of ivory black thinned with linseed oil and Gamsol (or Oleogel from Natural Pigments) in the deep shadows, cast shadows, core shadows and drop-off tonal areas. (Please note that the illustration to the right is only partially completed in the *grisaille* stage.) When dry start with lead white, first in the light areas and then carefully dragged over the core shadows and lightly into the mid-shadows as needed, but avoid the deep shadows. This process may be done wet on wet as well.

4) **Color stage.** With the *grisaille* dry, start first with the background drapery layout in bold strokes so as have a sense of the relative lightness and darkness of the overall composition. Then mix a basic *local** flesh color with lead white, a little yellow ochre and vermilion (or cadmium red Light) and a touch of black as needed to desaturated the color. Lightly apply transparent reds to mid-dark areas. Lightly apply the flesh color in the local color areas and then carefully scumble it into the light and dark tonal areas as needed allowing the *grisaille* under-painting to influence the tones and tints of the flesh color. Later add more dark glazes, light scumbles and final touches as needed. Then in *alla prima* add the drapery and background elements. When everything is dry, put in the final glazes and scumbles over everything to give a unifying feel of atmosphere. After a couple of weeks of drying, work in a layer of bitumen (optional). Then after another couple of months, apply a coat of Dammar varnish.

*Local color is the actual color of an object without the influence of shadows, highlights of reflections

Stretching Canvas

HOME WORK BEFORE WEEK THREE

This is only for those who wish to learn to stretch their own canvas. Otherwise buy a primed, pre-stretched canvas. Linen is best.

Most store-bought canvases require 1 or 2 coats of gesso because there is too much tooth (roughness.) You want it be fairly smooth with only a little of the weave to the touch (but don't overdo it). Lightly sand (medium grade sandpaper) between coats just enough to remove the burrs.

What you will need:

1) stretcher bars or a regular store-bought pre-stretched cotton canvas. The canvas should be the same size as your drawing. Bigger canvases should have a reinforcement bar on the back like sample to the left.

2) Unprimed Portrait Medium Belgian Linen (8.85oz).

3) Stretcher pliers.

4) Heavy Duty Staple Gun and staples.

5) staple remover tool or flat screw driver.

6) White Acrylic Gesso.

7) scissors

Warm/Cool Limited Palette

For Classical Indirect Oil Painting

The Venetian palette was rather limited, but the with "dynamic" mixture of colors between warm and cool, they were able to obtain a rich array of hues. A well organized palette is helpful in reaching this goal.

In this palette the colors are ordered on Warm and Cool Axes and alternating Transparent and Opaque.

Cool →

Warm

Cerulean Blue
Opaque

Alizarin Crimson
transparent

Ultramarine Blue
transparent

Ivory Black
Semi-transparent

Vermillion*** or Cadmium Red Light
Opaque

Burnt Sienna or Transparent Red Oxide**
transparent

Burnt Umber*
transparent

Lead White****
Semi-Opaque

Yellow Ocher
Opaque

* Reddish Burnt Umber. Every brand is a little different. E.g. expensive Old Holland is too brown whereas cheap Blick's is just right.

** Look for a Transparent Burnt Sienna. Some brands make it quite opaque. Transparent Red Oxide is a good alternative.

*** True Vermillion can be very expensive and toxic. Many brands make an imitation "Hue". Vermillion makes the best skin tones, but Cadmium Red Light is a good alternative.

**** Gamblin makes Flake White Replacement which is a good non-toxic alternative.

Warm/Cool Extended Palette

For Direct *Alla Prima* Oil Painting

Direct *Alla Prima* painting generally requires stronger colors. This palette is similar to the Venetian palette with the addition of some strong Cadmiums, Raw Umber, Green, and an Opaque Titanium White. Indirect painting suggest colors whereas Direct painitng goes directly towards the desired color. So, for example, you could never get a strong green by mixing yello and blue like you can get straight for the tube.

Cool →

Warm

Alizarin Crimson
transparent

Cerulean Blue
Opaque

Ultramarine Blue
transparent

Ivory Black
Semi-transparent

Raw Umber
transparent

Phthalo Green
transparent

Cadmium Red Med
Opaque

Vermillion***
or Cadmium Red Light
Opaque

Cadmium Yellow Medium
Opaque

Burnt Sienna or
Transparent Red Oxide**
transparent

Burnt Umber*
transparent

Titanium White
Opaque

Yellow Ocher
Opaque

* Reddish Burnt Umber. Every brand is a little different. E.g. expensive Old Holland is too brown whereas cheap Blick's is just right.

** Look for a Transparent Burnt Sienna. Some brands make it quite opaque. Transparent Red Oxide is a good alternative.

*** True Vermillion can be very expensive and toxic. Many brands make an imitation "Hue". Vermillion makes the best skin tones, but Cadmium Red Light is a good alternative.

Value and Aerial Perspective

A few general rules about giving your subject a sense of depth without the help of any lines of perspective.

Value Shift: the light to dark modeling of the subject.

Tonal Areas: the big light and shadow areas that organize the space. *Note how the Highlight in the dark area is darker than the shadow in the light tonal area.

Tonal Mapping: try to pull together tonal areas into single large forms so as to organize the composition for greater impact.
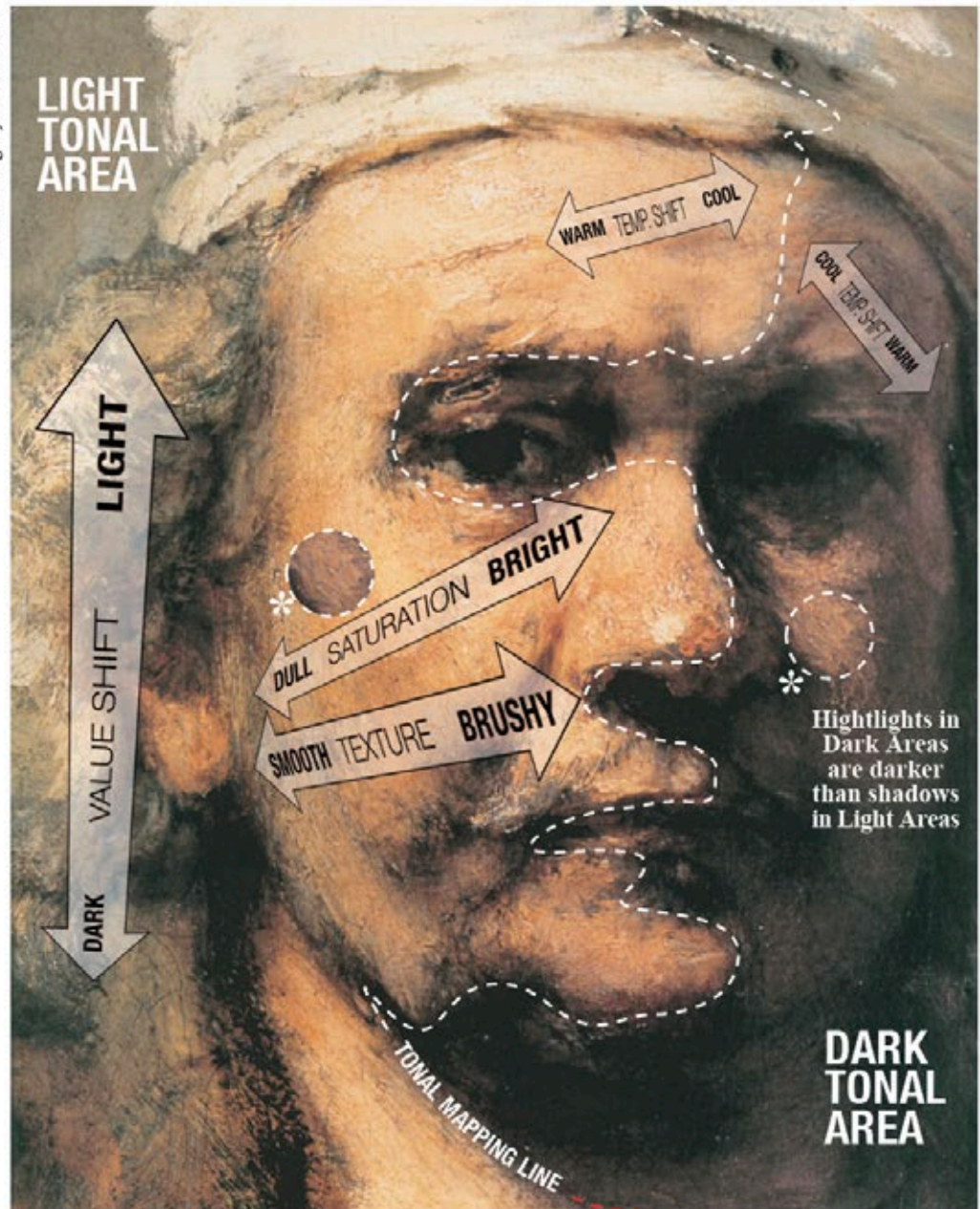
Temperature Shift: the movement between warm and cool colors. Within the big tonal areas, do your modeling more with warm and cool hues rather than with dark and light values.

Saturation: (Brilliance) things close up appear more brilliant, as they move further away, they become duller or more gray.

Texture: things that are up close should be painted with lots of brush work; as they move further away, the brush work should be smoothed out.
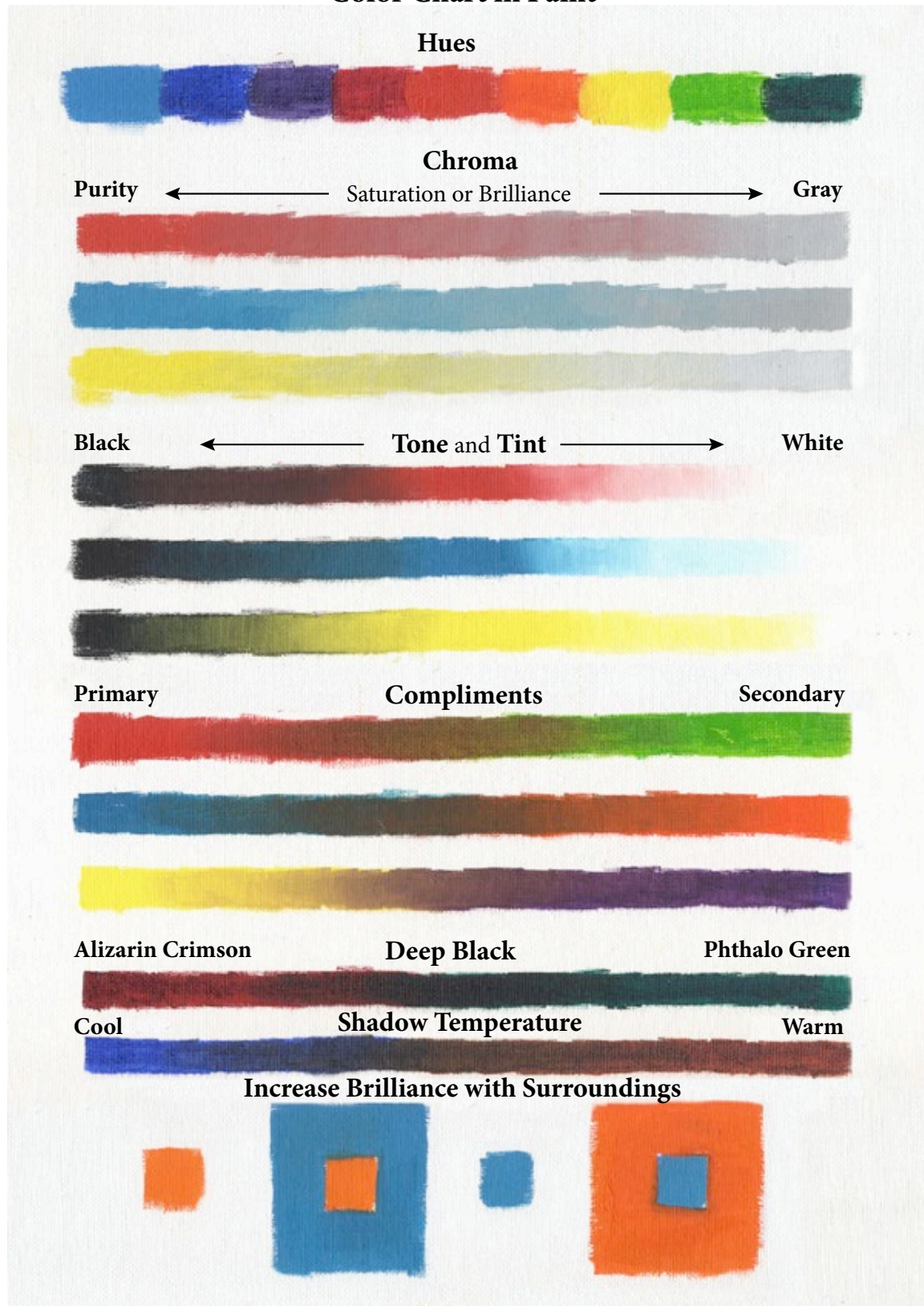

All Paintings by Rembrandt

LIGHT TONAL AREA

WARM TEMP. SHIFT COOL

COOL TEMP. SHIFT WARM

LIGHT

VALUE SHIFT

DARK

DULL SATURATION BRIGHT

SMOOTH TEXTURE BRUSHY

Hightlights in Dark Areas are darker than shadows in Light Areas

TONAL MAPPING LINE

DARK TONAL AREA

Color Chart in Paint

Hues

Chroma

Purity ←——— Saturation or Brilliance ———→ Gray

Black ←——— **Tone** and **Tint** ———→ White

Primary   **Compliments**   Secondary

Alizarin Crimson   **Deep Black**   Phthalo Green

Cool   **Shadow Temperature**   Warm

Increase Brilliance with Surroundings

Grayscale

Print, fold along bottom edge,
glue stick together, and trim
along dashed edge.

10

9

8

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6

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3

2

1

0
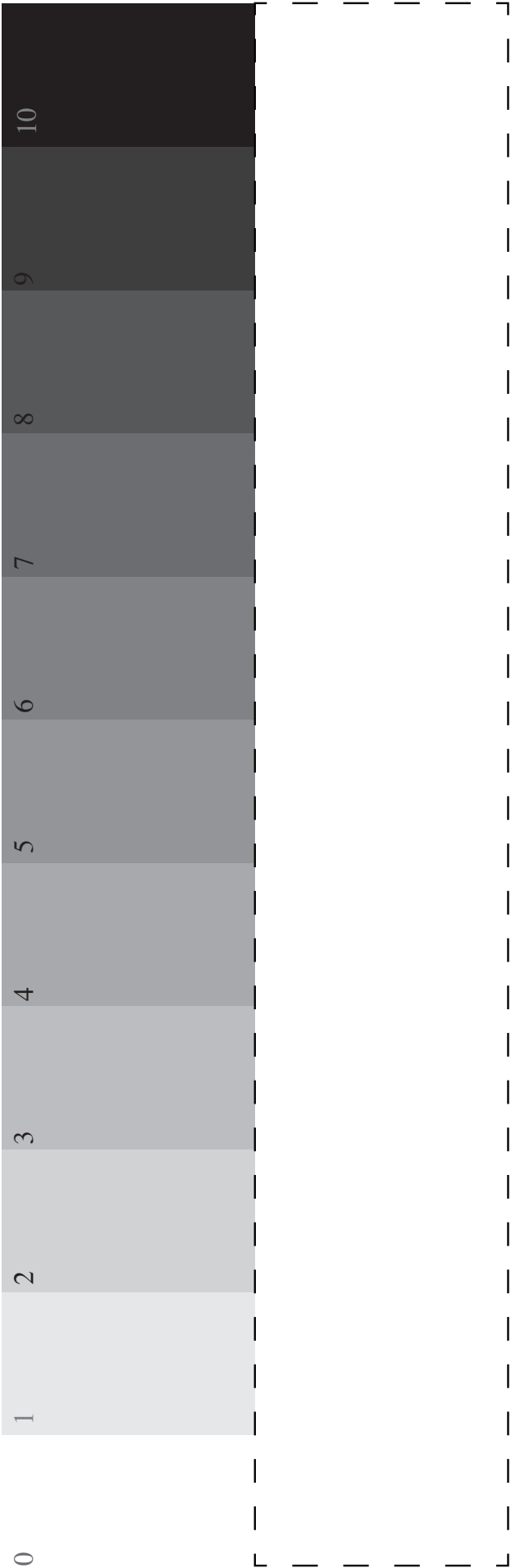
BRUSH STROKES

In general terms it is good practice to make your brush strokes as a gesture of the whole arm and not just from the wrist. This gives a good flowing motion. Try to hold the brush as far back on the handle as you can. This keeps you at an objective distance from the painting so you can work the whole composition instead of becoming absorbed in details. Avoid dabbing, that just makes mud! Make single, long, flowing, determined strokes. Start out by doing them slowly and observe what is happening as you are laying down your stroke. Know what is on your brush!

Laying Over

Laying Over is how you paint wet over wet without mixing with the color below.

Very light pressure, barely touching the canvas

Very low angle°

Give underpaint time (a couple of minutes) to "set-up" and grab the canvas before laying over. Often laying over can be helped with plenty of medium.

"Raking"

Raking (my term) is like raking your lawn. This is good when you do want to mix your stroke with wet paint below.

Very high 90°angle

Drag with enough pressure to pull up the wet paint below so that it mixes with your new stroke.

"Sucking-up"

Sucking-up (also my term) is good for pulling up and removing paint with a push and pull motion. It is particularly useful when doing your wipe-out wash modeling

First push down with much pressure

Then pull up.

The suction of the brush pulls up the paint.

The two main types of brushes are Bristle and Sable. Bristle is stiff and good for laying in large areas and thick impastos. Sable soft and is good for blending and fine detail. For this course I recommend Langnickel SableTek as it combines the characteristics of both.

Bristle is stiff and bends along the whole arc (or belly) of the brush fibers.

Sable is soft and bends at the base of the fibers.

SableTek is stiff at the base and curves softly at the tip.

Suggested reading:

1) Joseph Sheppard, How to Paint like the Old Masters. 1979 Watson Guptill
2) Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, Methods and Materials of Painting. 2Vol. 1847 Dover Pub.
3) Ralph Mayer, Artist's Handbook of Materials and techniques. 1940 Viking
4) Max Doerner, The Materials of the Artists, 1934 Harcourt
5) Giorgio Vasari, The Lives of the Artists and On Techniques c. 1550 Many Publishers
6) Cennino d'Andrea Cennini, "Il Libro dell'Arte" (The Craftsman's Handbook), c. 1398, Dover Pub.
7) Benvenuto Cellini. The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini c. 1566 (Penguin Classics)
8) Susan Vreeland, The Passion of Artemisia 2002, Penguin
9) Virgil Elliot, Traditional Oil Painting 2007 Watson-Guptill
10) Juliette Aristides, Classical Painting Atelier 2008 Watson-Guptill

Suggested reading for drawing

1) Juliette Aristides, Classical Drawing Atelier 2006 Watson-Guptill
2) Charles Bargue and Jean-Léon Gérôme by Gerald Ackerman, Drawing Course. Paris: Art Creation Realisation, 2007.
3) Robert Beverly Hale, Drawing Lessons from the Great Masters, New York: Watson-Guptill, 1989
4) George Bridgman, Bridgman's Complete Guide to Drawing from Life. New York: Sterling, 2009
5) Harold Speed. The Practice and Science of Drawing. New York: Dover Publications
6) Anthony Ryder, The Artist's Complete Guide to Figure Drawing. Watson-Guptill, 2000
7) John Ruskin, The Elements of Drawing. New York: Dover Publications

This course is largely based upon Eastlake's Methods and Materials of Painting. It is not required reading but the student should be aware of it's importance as an historical document. It is very long and at times tedious reading but very rich in details. Above all it was published shortly prior to the explosion of Impressionism and is thus unfettered by modernist ideas and is an excellent representation of the Western academic tradition up to that point. Be aware, as with any dated material, that in the face of new research and science, not all the information provided therein is one hundred per cent reliable.

Joseph Sheppard's book is a reasonably good handbook guide to our area of interest. He studied for many years under Jacque Maroger who was a distinguished scholar of the old Masters and whose name is virtually synonymous with medium supposedly used by the Masters.

Glossary

These are very brief, one-liner, definitions of words used in this course. They are in no way complete definitions and you are encouraged to ask for any further clarifications of these and other terms not included here.

Alla prima: Italian for painting done wet on wet or painted in one sitting. Direct painting.
Aerial or **Atmospheric Perspective**: where objects that are further away are given the illusion of depth by rendering them lighter, lower in contrast, duller and with cooler tints.
Balsam: tree sap used in making viscous painting mediums
Baroque: period in art history, roughly the 17th century, characterized by dramatic theatrical movement and lighting, and twisting asymmetrical compositions.
Binder: the vehicle or medium that mixes with pigment to make paint.
Bitumen: also called Asphaltum, is a tar-like substance, traditionally used over a completed painting to give an extra sense of depth.
Block-in: straight simplified sketch lines to layout the main forms.

Bole: reddish brown clay pigment paint used for ground color.

Bottega: Italian word for atelier or artist's workshop.

Bright Brush: a short flat brush

Brightness: the relative purity of a hue, its saturation or chroma.

Brio: to paint with vigor and energy

Broken Color: where lower layers of paint show through gaps of higher layers.

Cast Shadow: the shadow cast onto an adjacent surface by a form in a composition.

Chiaroscuro: Italian for the high contrast of lights and darks.

Chroma: the relative brilliance or purity of a given hue going towards gray, not to be confused with lightness or darkness of value.

Classical: a set of timeless ideals about beauty, harmony, and proportion of forms generally rooted in the Greco-Roman tradition, characterized by closed, rational forms.

Classical Realism: refers to an artistic movement in late 20th century painting that places a high value upon skill and beauty, combining elements of 19th century neoclassicism and realism.

Closed Form: where the emphasis of a composition is about circumscribed shape as opposed to effects of light and shadow. (See Classical and Open Form)

Comparative Measuring: a method of visual measuring in which one element of the subject is measured against other elements.

Composition: where the subjects of a picture are organized according to the rules of hierarchy, balance, repetition, and movement.

Counterpoint: the shifting of weight of a figure.

Core Shadow: (also called Shadow Edge or Shadow Accent) the darkest strip of shadow usually juxtaposed with the middle-tones or local color and gradating into the reflected light shadows.

Dead Coloring: the initial laying-in of basic low chroma color masses of a painting.

Direct Painting: like *alla prima* but specifically working in full color from the beginning usually wet on wet. (See glazing and scumbling.)

Dryer: a substance that makes the paint dry faster.

Drying oil: an oil that dries over time such as linseed oil, poppy oil, safflower oil, etc.

Dynamic Mixing: Term used by Eastlake to describe hues and temperature shifts given by glazing and scumbling.

Fat over lean: an adage about the proper order of applying paint to avoid cracking. First layers should be thinned with turpentine, later ones with oils of higher and higher viscosity. This is always good practice, but when using oleo-resin mediums it is not much of a concern.

Envelope: a guide form that encloses the furthest extremities of a drawn figure.

Filbert Brush: a flat rounded brush.

Fresco: murals painted on wet plaster so it is absorbed into the wall itself.

Fugitive: color that fades over time.

Genre: types of subjects in painting, more specifically, scenes of everyday life.

Gesso: ground paint of chalk or calcites used for preparing canvas for painting.

Glazing: the application of transparent paint over a dry layer, usually dark and transparent paint over lighter areas. Glazing tends to warm up colors. (See Scumbling.)

Grisaille: French for painting with grays, for the under-painting in values.

Ground: the surface you are painting on. Canvas, panel, etc.

Halfpaste: an opaque mix of color and medium scumbled in a semi-transparent way.

Halftone: or mid-tone, the midway tones between lights and darks.

Illusionism: believable pictorial space employing mathematical perspective.

Indirect Painting: painting built up with wet over dry effective for capturing rich effects of depth, transparency and optical grays. The focus of this course.

Impasto: thick, pasty application of paint, usually with the addition of calcite mediums.

Imprimatura: Italian for ground preparation with a transparent glaze usually in earth colors allowing light to

reflect off the gesso ground and give an overall tone to the painting (gesso plus toning.)

Key: the overall tonal value and or chroma of a painting. High key is for bright and low key is dark.

Laying-in: blocking-in the general colors or values of a painting.

Lightfastness: the opposite of fugitive, color that won't alter with exposure to light.

Line of Motion: an imaginary line drawn to indicate the general thrust of a figure.

Lost and Found Edges: the variation of relative darkness and lightness of edges as they intersect with one another.

Local color: the actual color of an object apart from lights, shadows, and reflections.

Long paint: an enamel-like consistency given with viscous mediums where the paint smooths out or flows out leaving little or no signs of brush strokes. Stand-oil, Venice Turpentine and other viscous mediums make paint "long" (See short paint).

Matt: a surface that is not glossy due to the diffusion of light. Wax medium does this.

Maroger Medium: invented by the eponymous researcher, it is a gel medium recipe used by the Dutch Masters made of Black Oil and Mastic resin. It has thixotropic properties

Massing: the blocking-in of general forms to achieve an organized composition. See Notan)

Medium: fluids used to change the consistency of paints including solvents, oils, resins, balsams, emulsions, etc.

Midtone: (see halftone.)

Modeling: to give a rounded appearance to an object by applying lights and darks.

Monochromatic: having one hue or color plus white.

Naturalism: idealized realism derived from observation of nature.

Negative Space: the area surrounding a positive shape.

Notan: Japanese design concept in which a composition is defined by the juxtaposition of flat dark and light area shapes.

Oiling-out: spreading oil or resin medium over a dry area before painting another layer.

Open Form: where the emphasis of a composition is on forms that are broken up by strong effects of light and shadow characterized by lost and found lines and shape, and sometimes by loose brush work. (See Closed Form and Baroque)

Optical Gray: term used by Eastlake (also called Dynamic mixing) referring to grays created by scumbling or glazing. Eastlake refers to Atomic Mixing as its opposite where color is mixed together on the palette.

Overlapping Planes: where one form obscures another.

Picture plane: the imaginary window the picture looks out from.

Planar Analysis: a structural description of form in which complex curves are reduced to generalized planes.

Pouncing: old method of transferring a drawing (cartoon) to the painting surface by dusting charcoal through pinholes in the paper.

Primary colors: red, yellow, and blue hues that can't be created by mixing.

Priming: preparation of canvas or other surfaces for painting traditionally with rabbit glue sizing, calcite chalk gesso, and lead white. Today acrylic gesso is used. (See *Imprimitura*)

Quattrocento: Italian for 1400s used to talk about the Renaissance. *Cinquecento* is 1500s.

Realism: like naturalism but without idealization, often describing social conditions.

Reductive Painting (or Drawing): also called Highlight Rendering or subtractive, on a wet toned surface, the under-painting is drawn by wiping away wet paint of the highlight areas.

Reflected Light: a weak ambient light illuminating shadows, not from the main light source, and is often light bouncing off nearby surfaces.

Relational Measuring: a method of measuring in which key elements of a subject are locked into a structural or anatomical relation to all the other elements.

Renaissance: roughly the 15th through early 16th centuries, artistic revolution characterized by the revival of classical ideals, illusionism and serene naturalism.

Resin: a derivative of conifer tree saps used in making varnishes: Dammar, Mastic, Amber, Copal, alkyd (artificial), etc.

Retouching Varnish: a light temporary varnish.

Romanticism: historically the period of the early 19th century, characterized by strong, irrational emotion and dark forces, often given as the polar opposite of Classicism.

Saturation: a pure intense hue without gray (see Chroma.)

Scumble: Like glazing but with thinly applied opaque or semi-opaque color (halfpaste) over wet or dry, often giving broken coloring, creating a foggy atmospheric effect. Scumbling tends to cool colors. (See Glazing.)

Secondary Colors: green, orange and violet mixed from two primary colors.

Sfumato: Italian for gradating or blending.

Shade: darkening or adding black to a given color. (See tint.)

Short paint: virtually all modern tube oil paints have a short consistency, like butter, where the peaks and troughs of the brush strokes remain visible. (See Long paint.) Walnut oil, safflower oil, and other industrial additives increase the "shortness" of paints.

Sighting: taking visual measurements of a subject.

Sight-Sizing: a method of visual measuring in which the subject is placed in strict relation to the painting surface such that at a given point of view both appear exactly the same size and allows for great accuracy.

Sprezzatura: Italian for nonchalance, making a painting look like it was easy and not overworked.

Stand Oil: a heavily thickened and viscous linseed oil.

Stippling: applying paint with little dabs to create a rough texture.

Tempera: paint made from egg emulsion and pigment, the main paint used before oils.

Temperature: the relative warmth and coolness of a given hue.

Termination Line: the edge between darks and lights.

Thixotropy: the quality of gel medium to be a solid at rest and a liquid in movement.

Tint: the lightening of or adding white to a given color. (See shade.)

Tone: the value of a color moving between light and dark.

Toned: to Tone, Toning: a darkened ground color to paint over.

Tooth: the texture of a ground surface.

Top Tone: the solid and unmixed appearance of a color straight from the tube, (see undertone).

Trompe l'oeil: French for trick the eye, an illusionistic extension of the viewer's space.

Turpentine: more properly called Essence or Spirits of Turpentine, it is a volatile distillate of pine tree resin and commonly used as a solvent for oil paints.

Under Tone: translucent appearance of a color spread over a light or white surface.

Value: the darkness and lightness of a tone. It is that which gives a sense of volume or roundness to a drawn or painted subject.

Varnish: a resinous substance used in medium and for final protection of a painting.

Velatura: Italian for a thinly applied, transparent or translucent coat of paint.

Venice Turpentine: is a balsam from larch tree sap. It is a high viscosity medium, similar to stand-oil, and is used to give a flow-out in glazing and mixing in mediums for a long enamel-like quality.

Wash: a quickly applied coat of paint that is thinned with turpentine to a watercolor-like consistency.

Renaissance Style in Brief

Here are a few samples for a quick overview of the evolution of Renaissance Art.

Renaissance Art evolved very quickly from the flat, Byzantine appearance of Medieval Art (left) to a high degree of realism or, more accurately, Naturalism. Medieval Art was symbolic in nature and aimed at representing the figure of Christ as a spiritual entity as opposed to a physical body. When Giotto (right, ca. 1305) painted Christ with, what appeared at the time as, stunning realism, with realistic shadows and with emotional expression, many people saw it as blasphemous, as it is still considered blasphemy to represent the divine in some Western religions. However, in the age of Humanism, realistic, materialistic representation won the day and was eventually fully embraced by the Church as an important vehicle for the Christian narrative.
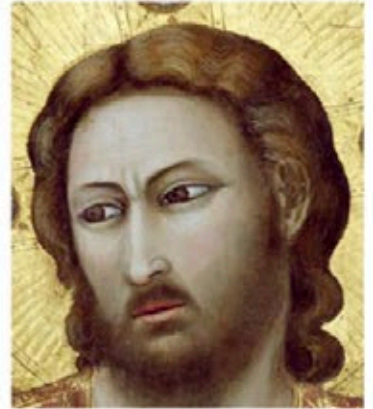
The High Renaissance was marked by the achievement of perfection in drawing which was characteristic of the Florentine school. Here Botticelli (left) and Michelangelo (right) are excellent examples of this. However on closer inspection, as exquisite as they are, there is something flat, even cartoony, about them: hard-edged with simple dark-over-light shading typical of *drawing* and typical of most painting up until that time. What they lacked was *atmosphere*, also call aerial perspective, that effect that breathes life into the window onto the world that is painting.

Artists of the time recognized this problem. With this in mind, Leonardo was experimenting with the idea of *sfumato*, literally the *smoky* edges of reality. Here in the Mona Lisa (below left) the hard edges are gone. Everything is soft and subtle.

Change was in the air. Here are two portraits by the great Umbrian artist, Raphael (left two above) that clearly illustrate this sudden shift in painting. The first one (middle above) is an early self-portrait that has all the characteristics of the Renaissance style mentioned above. The second one created late in his brief career (died at 37) showing an extraordinary evolution. It is no longer about just *drawing* but about *color* too. Simple value gradations have been supplanted by complex interplays of value and color temperature. The figure has come alive!

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Venetian School

Something indeed was in the air and the Venetians ran with it and turned it into something new and exciting; all within one generation. Above is the work of the great Venetian Master, Giovanni Bellini. In the early days of his very long career, he painted in tempera in the style of the High Renaissance mentioned above. He became one of the first innovators in the new technique of oil painting. But look at what happened within one generation with his pupils, Giorgione and Titian. For all of the life in Bellini's figures, they still feel a bit rigid and seem to float above the landscape as if they were on a separate plane. Compare that with this painting below (Concerto Campestre, attributed to both Giorgione and Titian) and see how the figures are submerged into the landscape and an integral part of it. You can feel the steamy humidity and almost hear the rumblings of the summer storm brewing in the distance. I know where this place is and it feels just like that on a sweltering summer afternoon. Painting has achieved the breath of life!