

The Male Torso in the Venetian Style with Thomas Garner

Kline Academy

4 week course Sunday Afternoons, Date 2:00 to 5:00 pm,

Color codes:

Black = in-classwork

Red = what materials to bring to class and what we will discussed. (See “Materials List”, pages 2-3)

Please choose the image you would like to use (see pages: 5 - 6) and a larger scale image with be sent to you.

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 (Date) *Imprimitura* Underpainting - first oil-out your canvas with a thin layer linseed oil and then wipe it down with a rag. Then apply a thin layer of Raw Umber with some linseed oil evenly over the whole canvas. Wipe that down too till you get about a 30% gray of the yellowish/brown. Then we can start to sketch out the basic structure of the figure using more Raw Umber with touches of Linseed oil. Once it starts to look about right we can start wiping out the light areas with rag or brush and adding Umber as needed. This makes it easy adjust proportions and edges around till you reach perfection.

- Bring to class a gesso primed 18x24” canvas or canvas panel. Painting with only Raw Umber, and Lead White (or Gamblin Flake White Replacement).

- Demo and Discuss oil paint materials list and palette. (See “Warm/Cool Palette”, page 8) (fat over lean)

Week Two (Date) *Grisaille* – under painting. Attention to anatomy! In the following order: apply a very thin layer of black in the deep darks, the core shadows, 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. Use linseed oil as needed with both black and white. (See “Optical Mixing” page 7 and “Value and Aerial Perspective”, page 10)

- Ivory Black and Lead White (or Gamblin Flake White Replacement).

- Demo of *Grisaille* technique of scumbling light over dark.

Week Three (Date) Color - 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.” Use linseed oil.

- Painting full palette.

- Demo of color application.

Week Four (Date) 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.

- Demo of glazing and *Alla Prima* touches. Talk about how to apply Bitumen and Varnish at a later date when it is completely dry to give the painting a warm glow.

And Keep on Painting!

Materials list for Venetian Figure Painting

Oil Paint Color (See Palette page: 8)

Oil Color list (Required)

- Ivory Black
- Lead white (alternative: Gamblin Flake White Replacement)
- Burnt umber
- Raw umber
- Burnt Sienna (or better Transparent Oxide Red)
- Yellow Ochre
- Alizarin Crimson
- Vermilion (or Cadmium Red Light)
- 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 stores are of good quality. 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: (optional) Oleogel from Natural Pigments (<http://www.naturalpigments.com>) Preferred brand, but available only online or at the Blue Rooster in Los Feliz.
- Dammar varnish, you can buy later when painting is finished.

Brushes etc (see Page 13)

- Filberts, #1,4, 6,12,18 Langnickel Royal SableTek Brushes: Available at <http://www.dickblick.com/>. 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.
- Brights, #1,4,8. Flat synthetic bristle brushes. I recommend Princeton Aspen 6500B or Silver Bristlon 1902 Bright: Available online at www.dickblick.com.
- Filbert #6. I also recommend Princeton Aspen 6500B or Silver Bristlon 1903

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!

Palette

- 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

- 18x24" primed canvas or canvas panel

Clean up (recommended)

- Silicoil brush cleaning tank
- 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.

Project Development

This studio course focuses on the classical male torso as a way of developing a deeper understanding of the nuances of human anatomy. It specifically focuses on the male anatomy as the muscle structure is generally more evident.

In the classical Venetian style of painting we will do a master copy of the male torso following the step-by-step process of indirect painting, Drawing, Value, and Color, to achieve the depth and atmosphere characteristic of traditional oil painting in the following steps:

- 1) **Imprimitura Underpainting**, This is basically the sketching and drawing stage of painting to develop the overall outlines and structure of the figure applying raw umber for dark areas and wiping out color in the light areas all while the paint is still wet.
- 2) **Grisaille**, This is the Value stage. Working exclusively with Black and White we map the overall system of dark and light values with attention to the direction of the light and the various types of shadows: deep shadows, cast shadows, core shadows, and tonal drop off areas.
- 3) **Color**, In the color stage the full impact of the Venetian technique is realized, glazing dark over light and scumbling light over dark to achieve the element of temperature, warmth and coolness, that gives atmosphere to your painting.
- 4) **Final Touches**, This stage is a continuation of the color stage adding more glazing and scumbling to give that rich sense of depth and color with some alla prima brush strokes in the highest highlights. At this point we make any color corrections and add some of the background

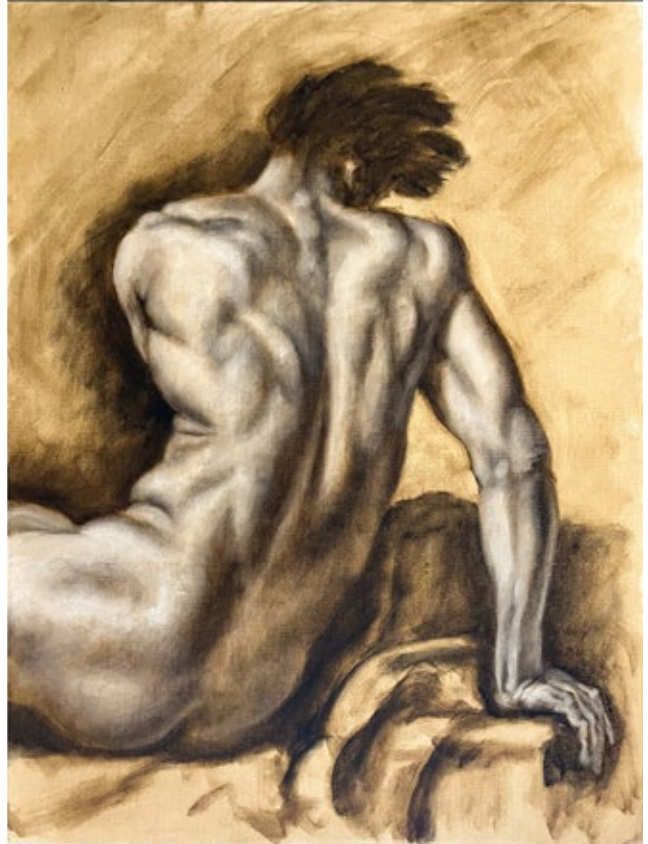
Project Development

Male Nude copy in the four stages of the Venetian style

Imprimitura Underpainting



Gisaille



Color



Final Touches



Samples of the Male torso in Classical Painting

Students will pick the one they prefer and a larger format will be sent to them to print and or use digitally.

1) Giovanni Battista Tiepolo



2) Guido Reni



3) Guido Reni



4) Guido Reni



5) Sebastiano Ricci



6) Jean-Auguste Ingres



7 Jacques Louis David



8) William Etty



9) Alexandre Cabanel



10) Titian



11) Ven Den Berghe



12) Gustave Courbet



13) Francesco Hayez



14) Caravaggio



15) Annibale Carracci



16) Anton Raphael Mengs



17) Francesco Monti



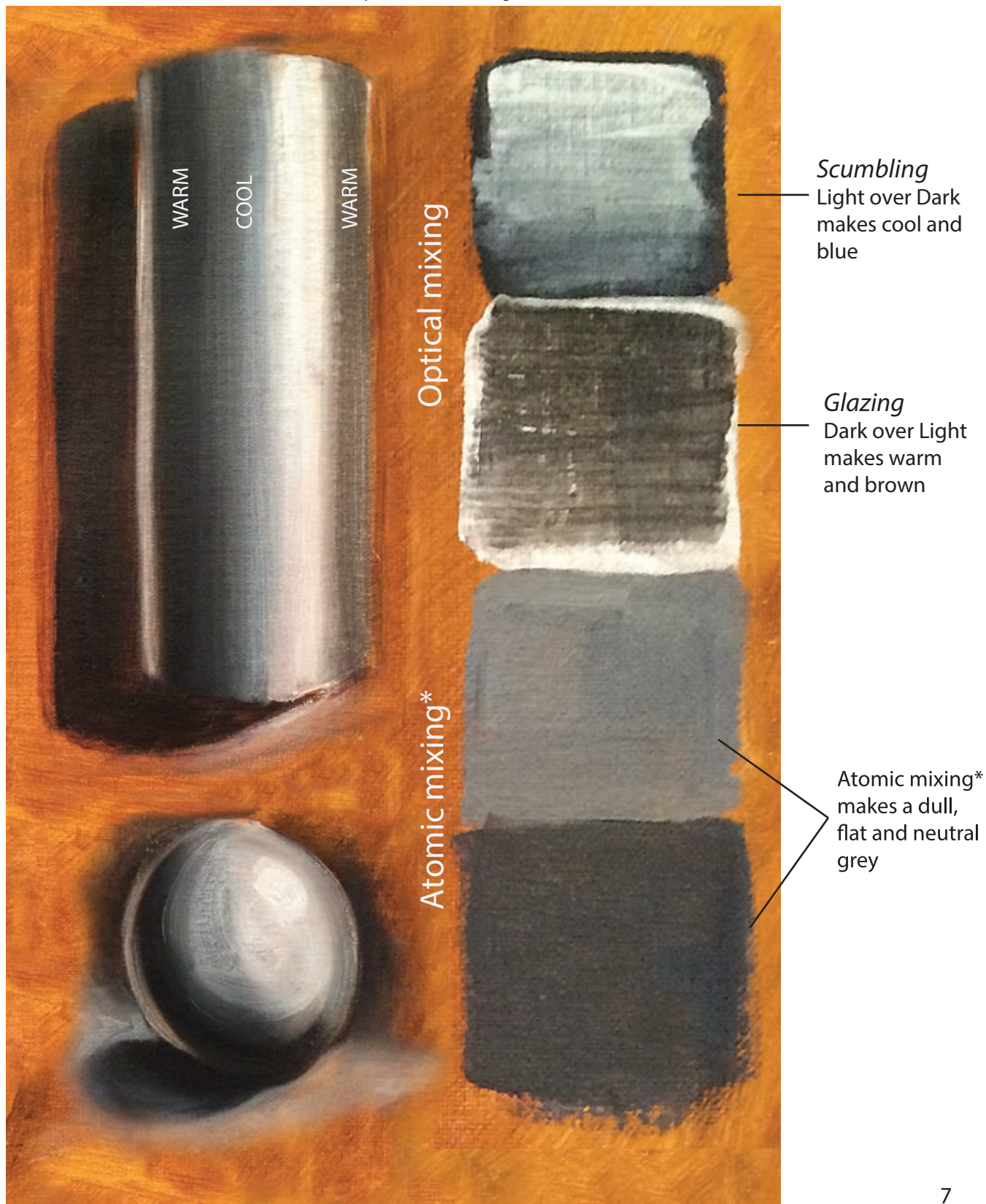
18) Francesco Hayez



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.



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

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.



* 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.

Stretching Canvas



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

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.

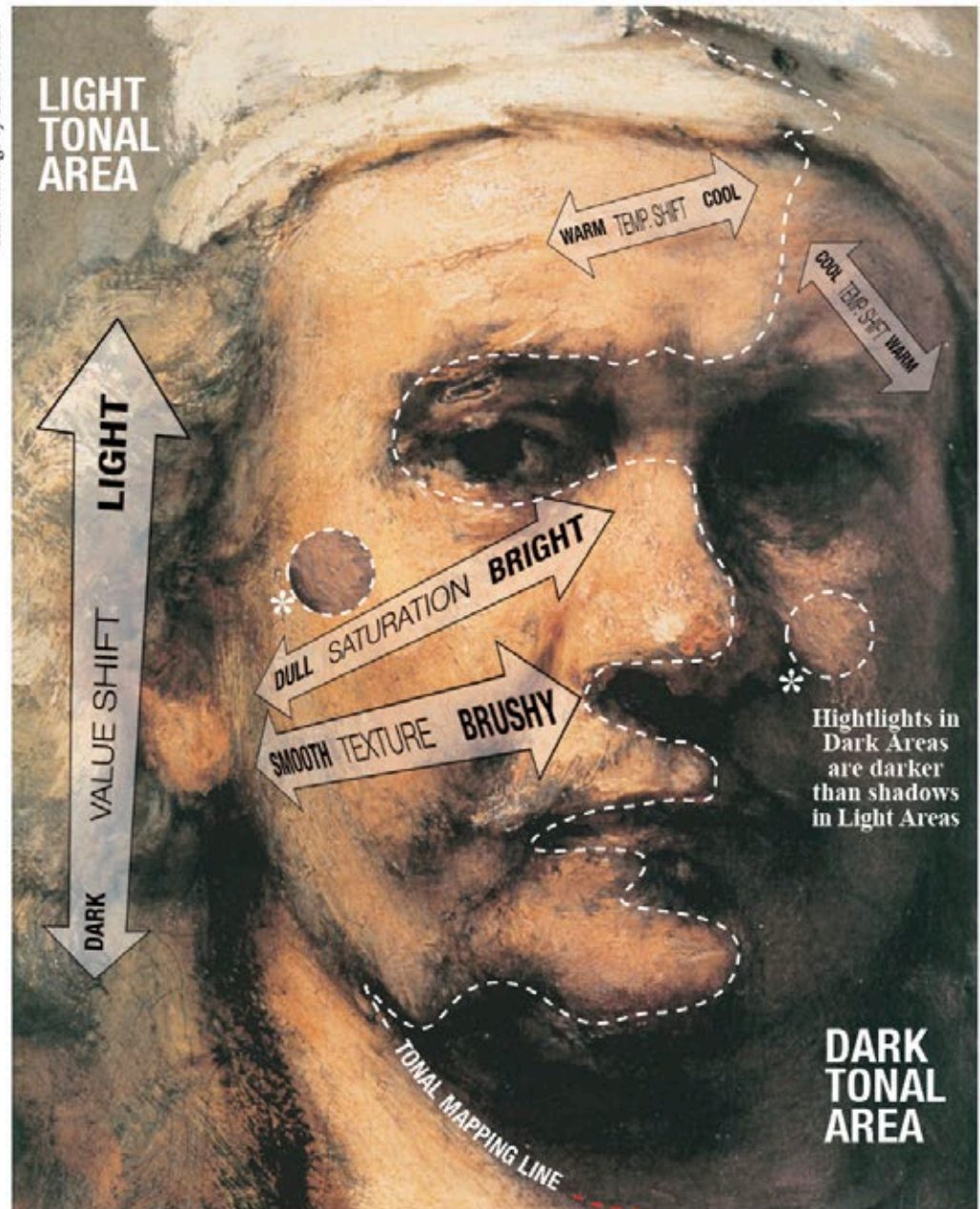
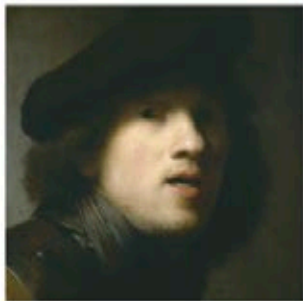
Temperature Shift: the movement between warm and cool colors. Within the big tonal areas, do your modeling more with warm and cool hues rather than with dark and light values.

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

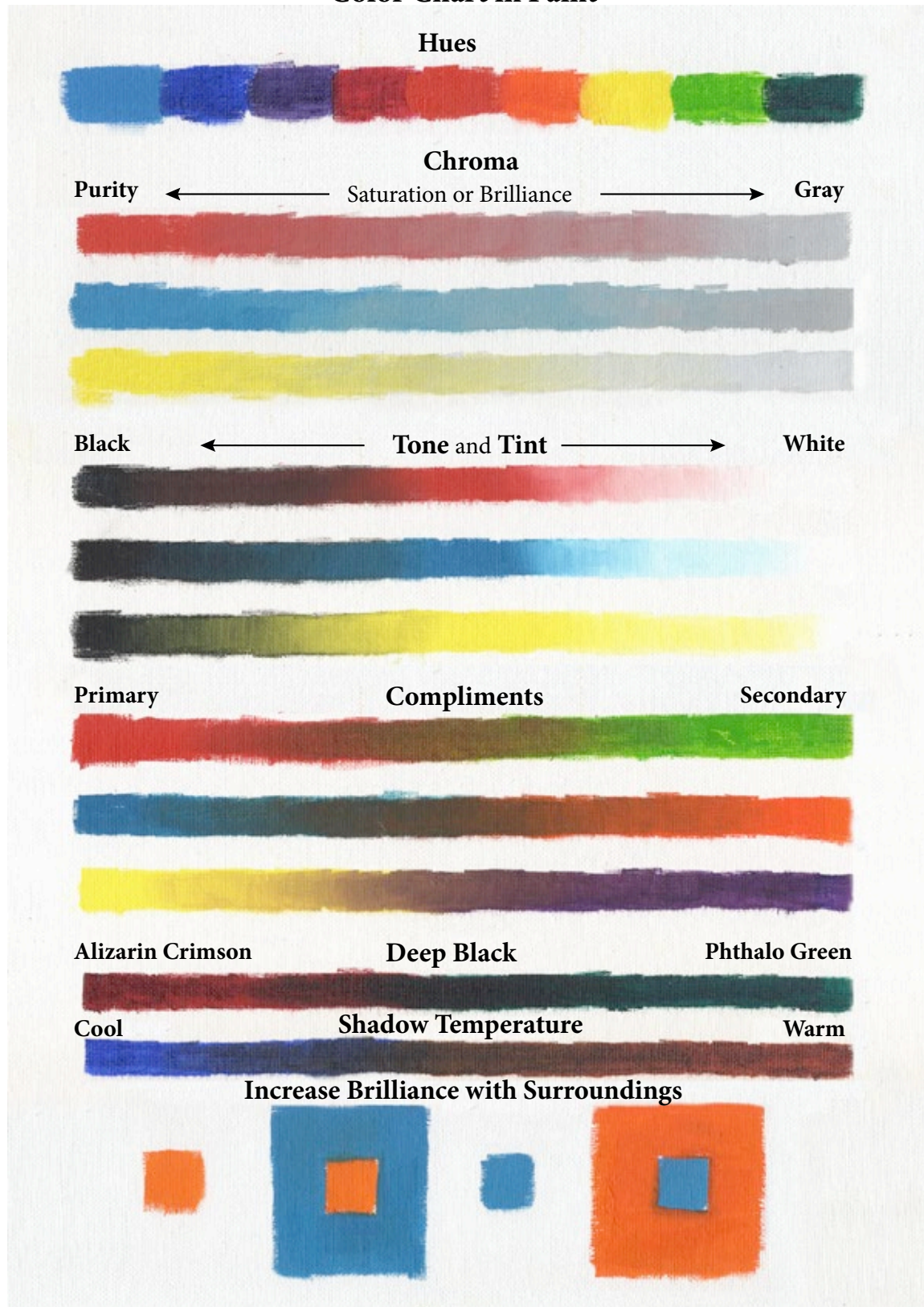
Texture: things that are up close should be painted with lots of brush work; as they move further away, the brush work should be smoothed out.



All Paintings by Rembrandt

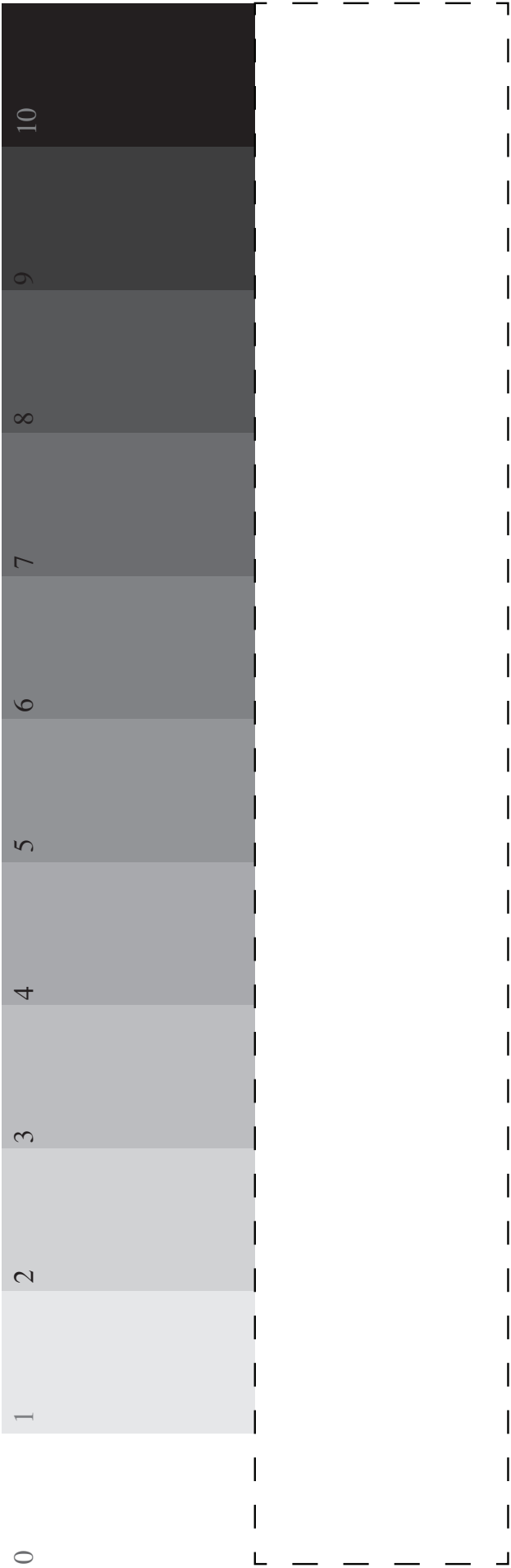


Color Chart in Paint



Grayscale

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



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.



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

Very high 90° angle

"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 Gupstill
- 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-Gupstill
- 10) Juliette Aristides, Classical Painting Atelier 2008 Watson-Gupstill

Suggested reading for drawing

- 1) Juliette Aristides, Classical Drawing Atelier 2006 Watson-Gupstill
- 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-Gupstill, 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-Gupstill, 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 its 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: Italian 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 15

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 *Imprimatura*)

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.

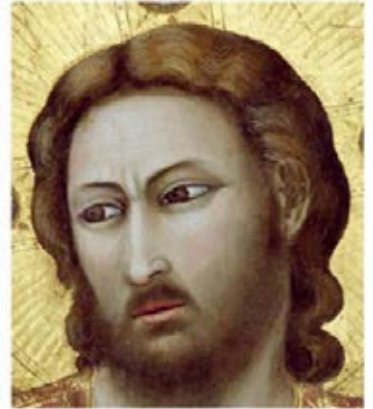
Wash: a quickly applied coat of paint that is thinned with turpentine to a watercolor-like consistency.

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 called 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!

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!

