

Wednesday, July 13, 2022

Tom Anderson's Glossary of Terms

Adjacent Colors

Those colors literally closest to each other on the color wheel; also used to describe colors that lie next to one another in a painting. Adjacent complementary colors appear brighter together because each reinforces the effect of the other. **(Note: Yellow & purple enhance each other as do red & green and orange & blue.)**

Advancing Color

The perception of a color, usually warm (orange-red), as being close to the viewer.

Aerial Perspective

This describes the effect of atmospheric conditions on our perception of the tone and color of distant objects. As objects recede toward the horizon they appear lighter in tone and more blue due to the scattering of light in the atmosphere. **(Remember: "Blue-gray is far away.")** Artists tend to use a cool color such as blue to paint objects viewed in the distance **to achieve a sense of space**. Some artists like to work from the palest tones through to the darkest tones in the foreground to create distance and depth. **(Remember: "Brown is in the foreground".)** This principle is used particularly in landscape painting.

Alla prima

Literally means “at first” and is a direct form of painting made in one session or while the colors remain wet. What’s never talked about is the fact that you can add sessions to this. (As opposed to “indirect” painting in which the painting is built up in layers.” This is at the technique employed by artists when they want to paint spontaneously. It is, however, a difficult style to master as it requires fluent brushstrokes and a skillful manipulation of the paint. **This technique was used by Bill Alexander, Rembrandt and Monet.**

Blending

A soft, gradual transition from one color or tone to another. A clean, dry brush should be used. Blending may involve slightly softening the sharp outline of a single object against a background, or working on the whole painting, so that it takes on a rounded, seemingly three-dimensional effect. **This is achieved by making “x’ strokes, cross-hatching and patting.**

Bristle Brushes

Hog hair or bristle brushes are used extensively in oil painting. They have coarse hairs which hold plenty of thick paint and yet retain their shape. Bristle brushes are useful for covering large areas with a uniform tone and for blending. **Soft brushes (like sable, talon or krypton) are used at end for glazing and *finer* painting.**

Chalk Pastels

Chalk pastels are the best way to create a preparatory drawing. Red is the best color to use since it recedes, looks cleaner and has a warm effect.

Chiaroscuro

(Pronounced: “key-are-oh-scoo-row”) Gradual receding from light to dark with the main five values: light, medium, dark, reflective & shadow (and pointillism.)

Chroma

The intensity or saturation of a color. Chromatic is the term used for an image that has been drawn or painted in a range of different colors. **Keep most of the color in the brush so that it will be used throughout the painting.**

Complementary Color

Two colors, of maximum contrast, that are opposite each other on the color wheel. The complementary of a primary color is the combination of the two remaining primary colors. For example, the complementary of blue is orange-red, the opposite of red is green and the complement of yellow is violet.

Cool Color

Generally, a color such as blue is considered cool. Distant colors appear bluer due to atmospheric effects as cool colors are therefore said to recede.

Darks

Those parts of a painting that are in shadow. Darks are not what they seem... but are many colors mixed into a single dollop... sometimes there's more red or more yellow or more blue

Dry Brush Technique

A method of painting in which paint of a dry, or stiff, consistent is stroked, or rubbed, across the canvas. Sometimes a painting can be very wet, or semi-wet, and a dry brush can soften the edges of it.

Fat-Over-Lean

First step: The layers of paint are applied deeply onto canvas. (In other words, the layers are thinned out with oil and applied vigorously.” Second step: Use less oil and more pigment. The rule applying to oil painting in layers, in which each superimposed layer should have a little more oil in the paint than the one below it, with less risk of the paint cracking.

Fixative

A surface coating which prevents charcoal, chalk & Conte crayon from becoming dusty & from mixing with overlaid color.

Gesso

Flat acrylic based paint. Used to prime canvas.

Glaze

A film of transparent or translucent oil color laid over another dried color or underpainting. The oil paint is usually mixed with an oil painting medium to make it more malleable. This can be done many times. (Titian did it 30 times!)

Grisaille (pronounced: “gri-seal-lee”) A painting rendered completely in place and white.

Highlight

The lightest tone in drawing or painting. In oil painting techniques white constitutes the lightest tone.

Hue

Describes the actual color of an object or substance. Its hue may be red, yellow, blue, green and so on.

Impasto

A thick layer of opaque paint, often applied with a painting knife, or a bristle brush, which is heaped up in ridges to create a heavily textured surface and a look of fresh immediacy. Artists often scrape the paint off the surface of the support and apply the color again if it does not retain the crispness of the effect requires. (Note: Often taken directly from the tube. Rembrandt was famous for doing this.)

Sfregazzi

(Pronounced: the “s” is silent, then it’s “fr-eh-gaah-zee”) By this term is meant a peculiar thin kind of glazing, which is executed by dipping the finger into the color and drawing it once lightly and evenly along the part of the picture on which it is to be applied...such as the shade on the cheek, the limbs, etc., or wherever it is wished to lay a soft thin shadow. It is easy to understand that the layer of color must be very thin. These sfregati are distinguished from the glazings by the manner in which they are executed, as well as their effects. The glazings, which are commonly mixed with Magic Clear, may be applied either with a brush, or with the hand, but instead of drawing the finger once along the part to be painted, it may be rubbed in with the whole hand. Glazings are used for laying a flat transparent tint, but sfregazzi for soft shadows only.

Sfumato

(Pronounced: silent “s” then, “foo-ma-toe”) From the Italian word for smoked: a term used for soft smoke-like edges.

Velaturas

Translucent coat of paint that allows the dry undercoat to appear as through fog.