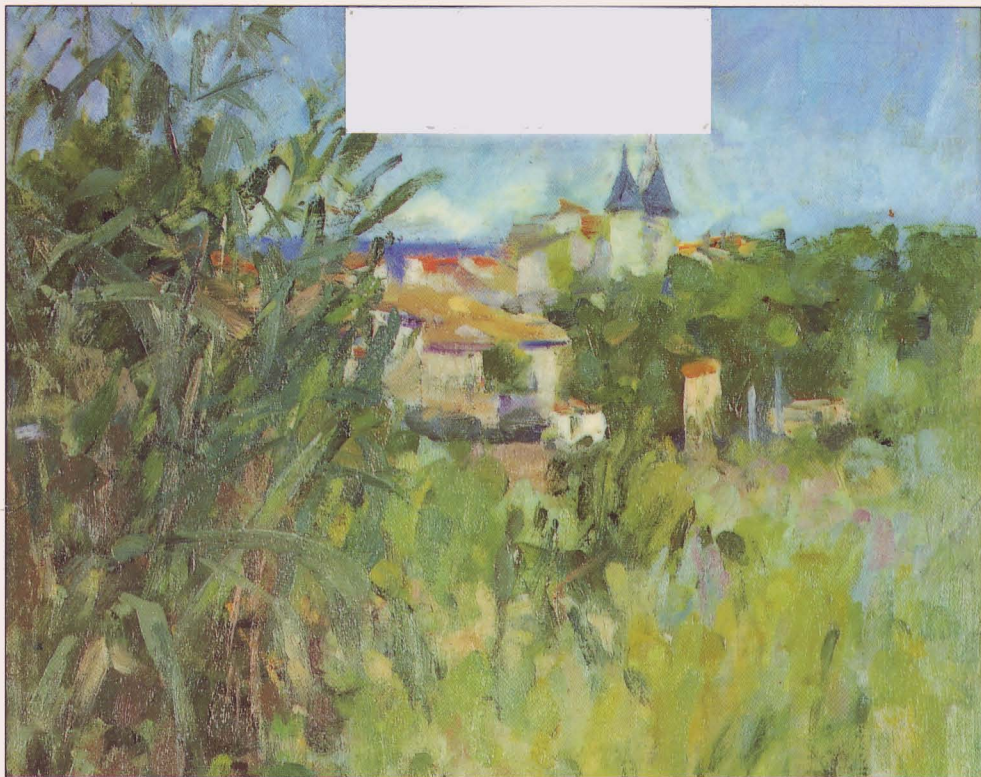


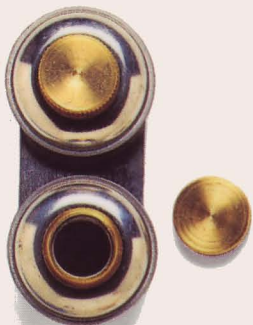
AN INTRODUCTION TO OIL PAINTING

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

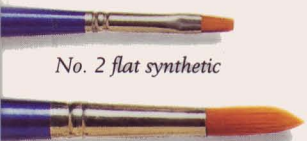


Diana Armfield, RA, Ponzolles; 1988

RAY SMITH



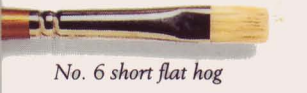
Double dipper (screw top)



No. 2 flat synthetic



No. 7 flat synthetic



No. 6 short flat hog



No. 6 filbert hog



No. 8 round hog



Linseed oil



Primed linen

Primed cotton
10 oz. cotton duck

Painting knife

Large painting knife



Palette knife



Canvas stretcher



Turpentine



Charcoal



Mahogany palette



Gloss varnish

Tubes of oil paint



Cadmium Red



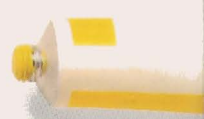
Winsor Blue



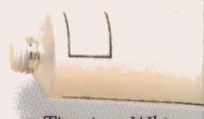
Winsor Green




Burnt Sienna



Cadmium Lemon

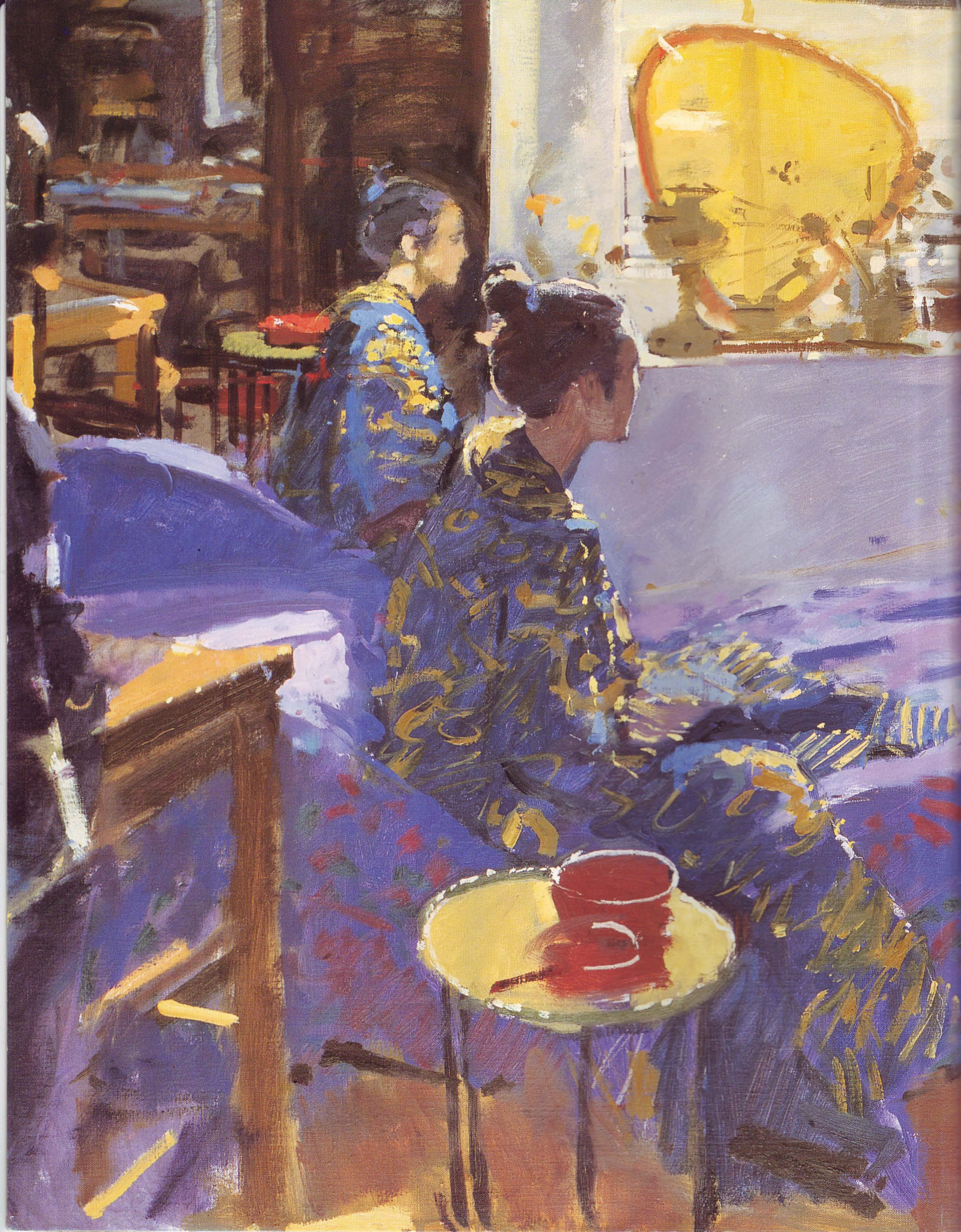


Titanium White

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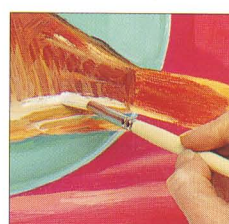
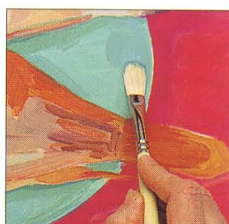
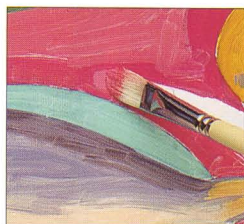
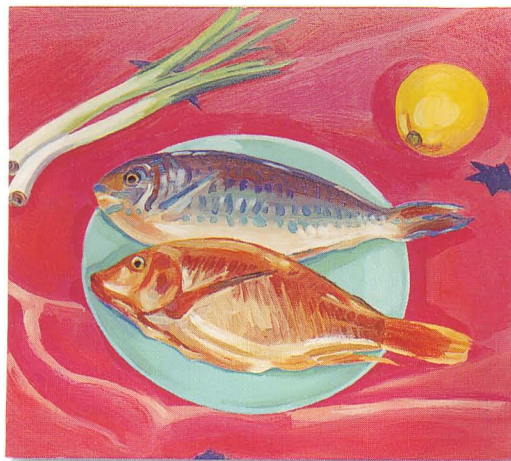




The  Art School

AN INTRODUCTION TO OIL PAINTING

RAY SMITH



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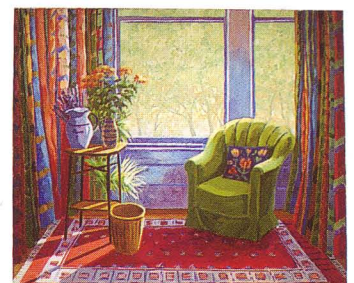
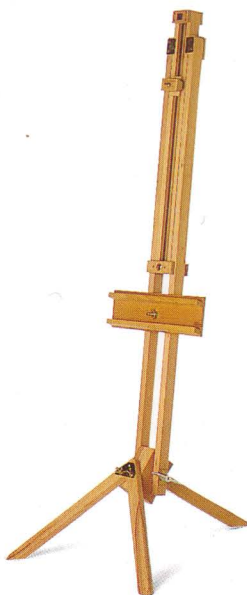
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CHARACTERISTICS OF OIL PAINT



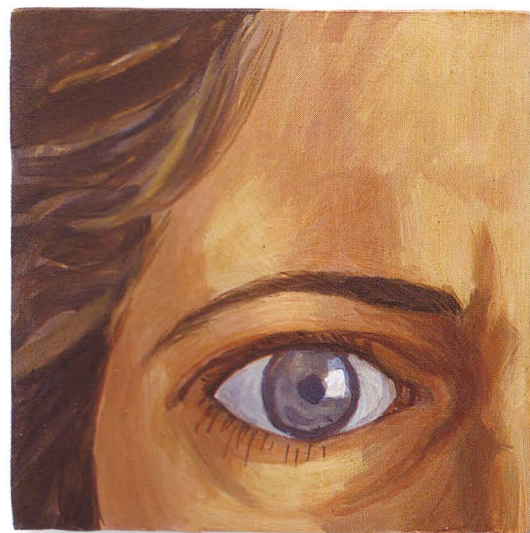
ONE REASON WHY OIL PAINT has been so popular for hundreds of years is that it is an incredibly versatile painting medium that can be manipulated in many ways. Oil paint is so responsive because it dries slowly, allowing for colors to be modified and moved around on the surface of the painting for some time after they have been applied. This aspect of oil paint makes it an excellent medium for alla prima painting methods (pp.52-53), in which the paint itself can accurately reflect the immediacy of the artist's response to an image. Once oil paint has dried, it can be overpainted in a number of ways without disturbing or dissolving the original color beneath. This means that a complex layer structure of paint can be built up to create different effects.

Changing the texture of oil paint

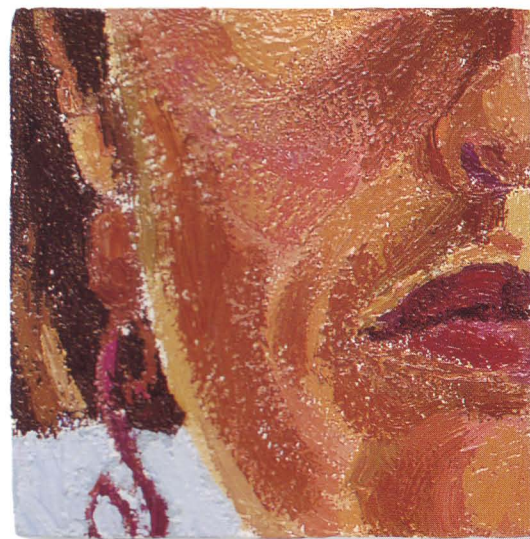
If oil paint is used directly from the tube, it can be painted thickly with bristle brushes in a rich, impasted style. It has sufficient body to hold the crisp shape made by a brushstroke or a painting knife, whether that shape is urgent or delicate. This can give painting a real sense of directness and establish an immediate link between the style of the painting and the artist. Oil paint can also be thinned down slightly to a creamy consistency, and brushed out to an enamel-like smoothness. If it is diluted very thinly with turpentine, or white spirit, the consistency of the paint is ideal for sketching a composition, or if mixed with an



oil painting medium it can be formulated as a glazing color. The painting medium enables the glaze to become a transparent stain that modifies the appearance of a color beneath. Oil paint can be used "stiffly," or unmixed, to create textured dry brush and scumbled techniques (pp.26-27) with bristle brushes, or it can be used in smoother manipulations with soft hair brushes. Of all the painting media, oil paint is the one best suited to blending techniques, in which one color or tone can be made to fuse smoothly and almost imperceptibly into another.



A smooth board is overlaid with thin layers of transparent color



This rough board emphasizes the thick strokes of rich color

DRAWING GRID A drawing grid is made up of a series of squares that enable an artist to transfer a sketch proportionately onto a large-scale support. The grid can easily be produced by drawing squares onto a piece of acetate or tracing paper and then laid over the sketch.

DRY BRUSH TECHNIQUE A method of painting in which paint of a dry or stiff consistency is stroked or rubbed across the canvas. It is picked up on the ridges of the canvas or by the texture of paint on the surface, leaving some of the color on the canvas still visible and producing a broken color effect (*see also* scumbling).

EASEL A frame for holding a painting while the artist works on it. Landscape painters tend to use sketching easels, which are of a light construction. A good sketching easel allows the painting to be held securely in any position from vertical to horizontal. The heavy radial studio easel and vertical studio easel are suitable for studio work.

EXTENDER A pigment which has a limited effect on a color. It may be added to control the properties of a paint or to reduce the cost. Examples are chalk and china clay.

FAT-OVER-LEAN 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 beneath. This ensures that each layer is more flexible as a dried film than the one below it, with less risk of the paint cracking.

FERRULE The metal part of a brush which surrounds and retains the hairs.

FIXATIVE A surface coating which prevents charcoal, chalk, and Conté crayon from becoming dusty and from mixing with overlaid color.

FLAT COLOR An area of matte color of uniform tone and hue.

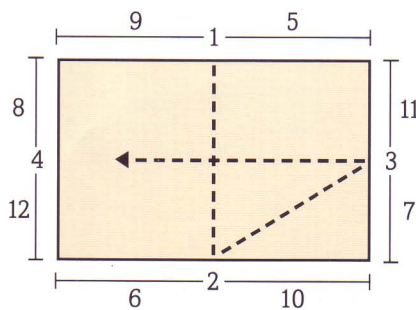
FUGITIVE Colors that are not lightfast and will fade over a period of time.

GESSO A traditional ground for tempera and oil painting on panel comprising animal glue (rabbit skin glue) and plaster of paris. In northern Europe, chalk and glue were used for the same purpose. Not to be confused with the product acrylic gesso (primer), which is also commonly available as a primer for acrylic painting.

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.

GROUND The surface on which color is applied. This is usually the coating rather than the support. A colored ground is useful for low-key paintings where the ground provides the halftones and the unifying element for the different colors. A colored ground can also be applied as an imprimatura, or as a primer that has been colored.

HALFTONES Transitional tones between the highlights and the darks.



Stretching a canvas

HATCHING Making tonal gradations by shading with long, thin brushstrokes. Often used in underpainting.

HEEL OF BRUSH The base of the hairs near the ferrule.

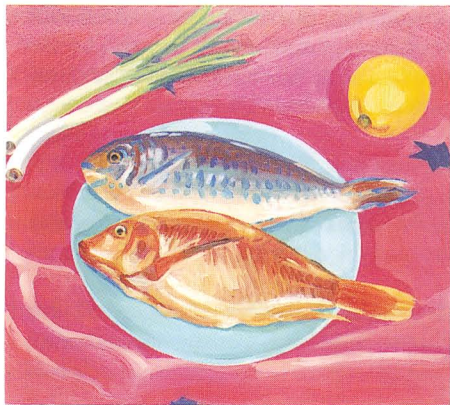
HIGH-KEY COLOR Brilliant and saturated color. Some oil colors, especially the transparent ones, are dark when used directly from the tube, so a little white can be mixed with them to give a saturated color effect. Alternatively, such colors can be used thinly on a white ground for a similar high-key look. High key paintings are usually painted on white or near-white grounds.

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

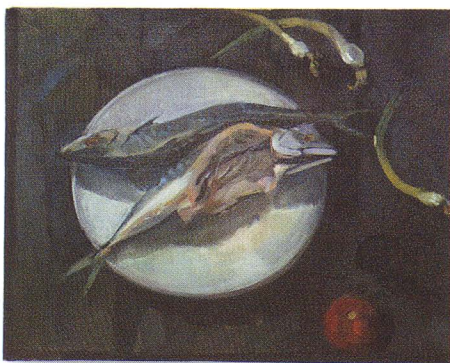
HUE Describes the actual color of an object or substance. Its hue may be red, yellow, blue, green, and so on.

IMPASTO A thick layer of 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 required.

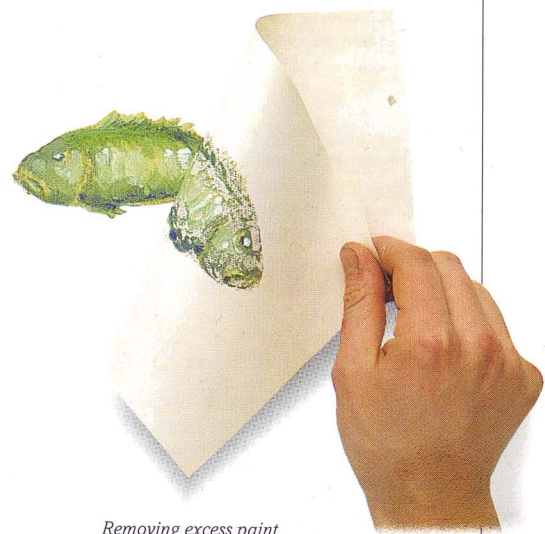
IMPRIMATURA A thin overall film or stain of translucent color over a white priming. This is applied before the artist begins to paint. It does not affect the reflective qualities of the ground, but it provides a useful background color and makes it easier to paint between the lights and darks. It also allows for an economical style.



High-key color



Low-key color



Removing excess paint

OIL PAINTING

LAY IN The initial painting stage over a preliminary drawing where the colors are applied as broad areas of flat color. This technique is also known as blocking in.

LIGHTFASTNESS The permanence or durability of a color.

LINSEED OIL A vegetable drying oil from the seeds of the flax plant used as a binding material in oil color. Linseed oil is the most commonly used oils and it dries more quickly than semidrying oils. The oil does not dry by evaporation but forms a solid film.

LOW-KEY COLOR Subdued, unsaturated color that tends toward brown and gray. Tertiary colors are low-key in appearance and produce neutral hues similar in mood and tone.

MAHL STICK A bamboo or aluminum stick about 4ft (1.25m) long with a ball-shaped end. If you paint with your right hand, the stick is held with the left hand, with the ball end touching the canvas so that the right hand can rest on the stick while painting. This helps hold your hand steady if you need to work on a particular area.

MASKING TAPE Pressure-sensitive tape used to protect areas from paint.

MEDIUM The binding material or "vehicle" for pigment in a paint system. In oil paint, a vegetable drying oil such as linseed oil is the medium. An oil painting medium is used to modify the consistency of oil paint in techniques such as glazing. A typical oil painting medium is made up of a mixture of stand oil (linseed oil that has been boiled) and turpentine.

MONOPRINT A unique print taken from a work created on a slab of glass or laminate.

OIL STICKS A type of oil paint blended with waxes in the form of sticks and applied directly to the canvas. Colors can be modified with a piece of cloth or a finger. Oil sticks, unlike other drawing materials, are extremely creamy in texture and are good for working wet-in-wet.

OPAQUE PAINTING Paintings that use predominantly opaque paints and the techniques associated with them.

OPTICAL MIX When a color is arrived at by the visual effect of overlaying or abutting distinct colors, rather than by physically mixing them on a palette.

PERSPECTIVE The method of representing a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional surface. Linear perspective makes objects appear smaller as they get farther away by means of a geometric system of measurement.

PHTHALOCYANINE Modern organic transparent blue and green (chlorinated copper phthalocyanine) pigments of high tinting strengths and excellent lightfastness. Also known by trade names.

PHYSICAL MIX When a color is created by premixing two or more colors together on the palette before application to the support. Wet-in-wet and wet-on-dry techniques refer to mixing paints on the support itself.

PIGMENT A solid colored material, in the form of discrete particles, which forms the basic component of all types of paint. In oil painting, pigments are bound together with a semidrying or drying oil, such as linseed oil. Pigments come in different forms and the amount of oil used to coat each type of pigment will vary.

PLEIN AIR This term refers to painting in the open air. *Alla prima* techniques are normally used in this situation.

PRIMARY COLORS The three colors of red, blue, and yellow in painting that cannot be produced by mixing any other colors.

PRIMING This refers to the preliminary coating laid onto the support prior to painting. A layer of priming protects the support from any potentially damaging components of paint and provides the surface with the right key, absorbency, and color before painting.

RECEDING COLOR The perception of a color, usually a cool (blue), as being distant from the viewer.

REFRACTIVE INDEX A measure of the degree of refraction of a substance. The ratio between the angle of the incident ray in air with that of the refracted ray in the substance produces this measure.

SGRAFFITO A technique, usually involving a scalpel or a sharp knife, in which dried paint is scraped off the painted surface so that the color of the surface, or a dry color painted previously, is visible. This is often used for textural effects.

SABLE BRUSH Mink tail hair used to make fine brushes. Normally used in watercolor techniques, these brushes can also be used in oil painting for fine detailed brushwork or final touches and highlights.

SATURATION The degree of intensity of a color. Colors can be saturated, i.e., vivid and of intense hue, or unsaturated, i.e., dull, tending toward gray.

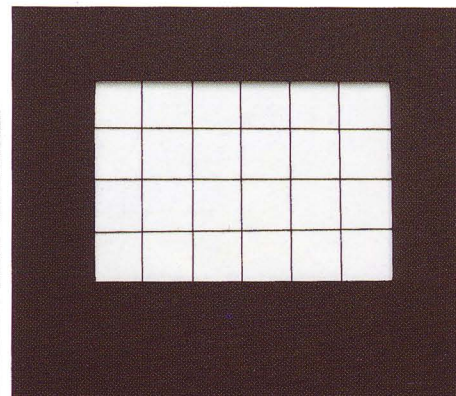
SCUMBLING A painting technique in which semi-opaque or thin opaque colors are



Ready-primed
canvas



Alla prima



Viewfinder

loosely brushed over an underpainted area so that patches of the color beneath show through.

SECONDARY COLORS The colors arrived at by mixing two primaries, i.e., blue and yellow make green, red and yellow make orange, and red and blue make violet. However, if different proportions of each primary color are combined, a range of tones of the secondary color can be produced.

SHADE Color mixed with black.

SIZE Rabbit skin or other glue used to protect canvas from the potentially damaging effects of oil in the paint before priming and to seal or reduce the absorbency of wooden panels. The binding material for gesso.

SOFT HAIR BRUSHES These are used mainly in watercolor painting but are also suitable for precise brushwork in oil painting. They can hold a great deal of thin paint while still retaining their shape.

STRETCHER The wooden frame on which a canvas is stretched.

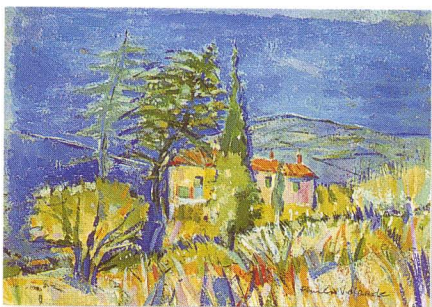
SUPPORT The material on which a painting is made. Almost any surface can be used, but artists tend to use either a wooden panel or a canvas to work on. These materials are available in a range of textures and weights.

TERTIARY COLOR A color that contains a proportion of each of the three primaries (see also unsaturated color).

TINT Color mixed with white. "Tinting strength" is the strength of a particular color or pigment.

TONE The degree of darkness or lightness of a color. Crumpling a piece of white paper allows you to see a range of tonal contrast.

TONED GROUND Also called a colored ground. An opaque layer of colored paint



Working on a white ground

of uniform tone applied over the priming before starting the painting.

TRANSPARENT PAINTING A painting technique that relies on the transparency of the paints used.

TURPENTINE (DISTILLED) Used to thin oil color and to make resin varnishes such as dammar varnish. Turpentine is also used as an ingredient in a number of oil painting mediums. White spirit can be used instead of turpentine.

UNSATURATED COLOR Sometimes known as desaturated color. A pure, saturated color becomes unsaturated when mixed with another color into a tint or a shade. When three colors are mixed together in unequal amounts, the resultant color can be called a colored neutral.

VALUE The extent to which a color reflects or transmits light.

VARNISH Protective surface over a finished painting imparting a glossy or matte surface appearance to a painting.

VIEWFINDER A rectangular hole to the scale of the artist's support, cut in a small piece of cardboard to act as a framing device. This is held up at arm's length so that the scene to be drawn or painted can be viewed through it and the most pleasing composition can be found.

VISCOSITY A measure of the flow characteristic of a color or medium (e.g., stand oil is more viscous than alkali-refined linseed oil). Oil paint with some viscosity is described as having body.

WARM COLOR Generally, a color such as orange-red is considered warm. In accordance with atmospheric or aerial perspective, warm colors appear to advance toward the viewer.

WET-IN-WET Working with wet paint into wet paint on the surface of the support.

WET-ON-DRY Applying a layer of wet paint onto a dry surface.



Proportion of oil to pigment

A NOTE ON COLORS, PIGMENTS, AND TOXICITY

In recommending Winsor Blue and Winsor Green (which are trade names of the Winsor & Newton Company) we are recommending "Phthalocyanine" pigments; other artists' material manufacturers refer to them by their own trade names. These include Phthalo Blue and Green, Monestial Blue and Green, and so on. Similarly, in recommending Permanent Rose we are recommending a "Quinacridone" pigment. If you have any doubts about which pigment you are buying, refer to the manufacturer's literature.

We have tried to avoid recommending pigments, such as the Chrome colors, which carry a significant health risk. Toxic pigments such as Lead White or Cobalt Blue should also be avoided when making your own colors. In the case of colors such as the Cadmiums, however, there is nothing commercially available that matches them for color and permanence. But there is no danger in their use nor in that of other pigments, provided artists take sensible precautions.

Solvents are damaging to your health, so always keep the lids of solvent jars screwed on tight and use only as much as you need. The long-term effects from inhaling the fumes of distilled turpentine and white spirit include loss of memory, the inability to follow an argument, and paranoia.

A NOTE ON BRUSHES

The brush sizes given here refer to Winsor & Newton brushes. They may vary slightly from those of other manufacturers.

Bristle brushes



Protective case

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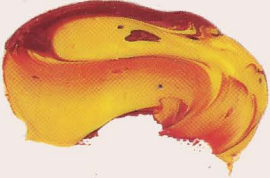
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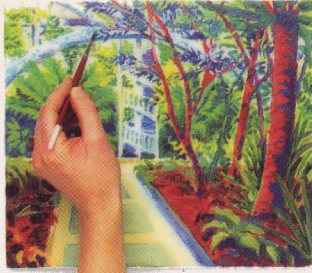
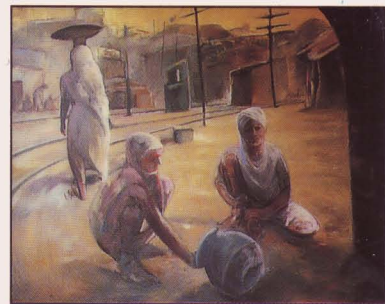
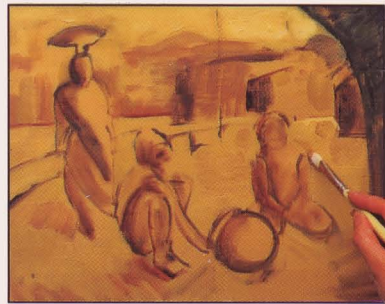
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