

# Painting with Georgia



Painting with Georgia Manual

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# WELCOME

Welcome to *Painting with Georgia*. I've been exploring the wonderful world of acrylics for 35 years. My first love affair with drawing and creating with colour was with soft pastels and I was true to them until I discovered acrylics. It was then I really felt I could express myself. We all have a medium that talks to us and acrylics are mine! Although, when teaching a drawing course I still have my students use soft pastels as I feel they are the best medium when someone is starting out and still wants to explore colour while needing to learn to draw.

I find acrylics suit me best. I love the feel of the paint and how quickly I can create using strong brush strokes or, when required, softness and detail. Many years ago I introduced acrylic classes to my teaching schedule and continue to be amazed at how much I continue to learn about the medium. I tell my students that I learn as much from them as they learn from me. And that is true! Through their many questions or problems I find out new approaches or simply new information. What I find I share with the whole class. I believe that in sharing ideas we all learn and that is how some of the pages in this manual came about.

Art is a journey and you'll find there are good and bad days, but always we move forward. When things seem tough or insurmountable, take some time off and come back with 'fresh eyes'. Sometimes it's as easy as stepping back from your work if you have been laboring over it for hours. Sometimes you need to go and have a cup of tea or maybe it means you have to leave it for a day or two. Whatever it takes, do it. When you come back I know you will see what you have been missing. Creating is all about taking your time and stepping back from your work. Most folks tend to labour over their work and never take a break and then wonder why their work looks dull or over worked. Probably because it is!

Just because acrylics can be painted over and over again does not mean you should. Most students keep painting using a colour they don't like and when I ask them why a certain spot has this terrible colour they say either they couldn't stop or they made so much of it they wanted to use it all up. I have discovered the best method to paint is first to create/mix your colours on your palette, apply the colour in a small area (one brush stroke) then take stock of what you have painted. Another bad habit students develop is a brush stroke I've termed 'dabbing'. It is a type of brush stroke that leads to over blending while creating a pattern of little round umbrella shapes. I introduce them to the 'Rule of Three', which means they are only allowed to take 3 brush strokes of any colour and then have to stop. The introduction of 'stacking' your colours works as well. All this and more is explained in further chapters in this manual as well as in my videos.

The pages in this manual all started as class handouts I created for my students while teaching at colleges, community centres and public galleries. They were designed to be guidelines in how to understand and use colour while painting using acrylic paint. Some topics may have the duplicate information but I found it was essential in the new context to include it. We learn through repetition, so please if you find yourself saying, 'gee I read this already' that is a good thing, it means you retained the information!

I have had only positive feedback from my students about this manual. They have told me it is the best thing they have read regarding colour and how to paint using acrylics. I hope you too will find this manual informative and helpful as you move forward on your creative painting journey. It is even more valuable if used in conjunction with my teaching videos.

**Best advice:**

Squint at your work as you paint and at the photo or subject you are using to paint from

Relax and don't be too hard on yourself

Take numerous breaks

Be faithful to your own inner voice

Keep it simple and best of all

Remember it takes 10,000 hours to become an artist

Cheers,

*Georgia*

## ACRYLIC SUPPLIES

### Art Supply Stores

The first step is to find your local art store(s). Ask around and you will find there will be one or two in your area. Watch for their sales as they all have them. In a pinch, you can use your local dollar or craft store, otherwise stay away from these as they tend not to carry the better quality paints or brushes.

### Paints

Buy your acrylic paints in 2 oz / 60 ml tubes, and do not buy those marked with 'hue'. A hue means it is a watered down version of the colour and therefore contains less pigment, which is why it is less expensive.

The following are the basic colours you will need. Prices depend on brand. Do not get student quality! The less you pay the poorer is the quality of paint and colour. If buying Liquitex, make sure the tube is labeled 'heavy'. Get white in as large a tube as possible as you will use lots of it. You will also need a Cadmium Orange in a large inexpensive tube as you do not want to use your higher quality Cadmium Orange to prep your canvases.

Basic Starter Colours	Colours To Get Later	Colours Do Not Need
Cadmium Yellow medium Cadmium Yellow dark	Yellow Ochre Naples Yellow	Burnt Sienna Raw Sienna Burnt Umber Raw Umber Mars Black Paynes Grey
Cadmium Orange		
Cadmium Red light Cadmium Red medium	Cadmium Red Deep Opera Pink	
Alizeran Crimson Quinacridone Red	Rose Red Quinacridone Violet	
Dioxazine Violet (purple)		
Hookers Green Emerald Green	Sap Green Cadmium Green Chromium Green Phthalo Green	
Ultramarine Blue Cerulean Blue	Cobalt Blue Manganese Blue Phthalo Cerulean Blue Phthalo Turquoise	

### **Basic Starter Colours - continued**

Titanium white - Large tube

Cadmium orange - Large inexpensive tube

### **Brushes:**

Make sure the brushes are labeled for acrylic use only!

Best brushes are **filberts**, which have a curved/round end, flat sides. Best sizes are 2,4,6, long handles, approx price \$16 for 3.

Optional are brushes with a straight end - long handles.

You will need one very small brush with tapered end for detail

### **Canvas:**

Boards or stretch canvases – 8 x 10 and 11 x 14 to start with and as you proceed get larger sizes. Stretch canvases are a best as you can simply put a nail in the wall and hang it, no need for a frame.

### **Other items:**

Palette – make sure it is large one. You can reuse/recycle a Styrofoam meat tray or buy a disposable palette

Water container – recycle a large yogurt container

Saran wrap to cover your palette

Water bottle to spritz your palette. Ensure it sprays a fine mist not large droplets.

Paper towels to swipe your brush on

Pencil, eraser to draw with and/or chalk. I find chalk is easier to use when you need to correct your drawing. (Dollar stores carry very inexpensive chalk).

Hair dryer

A table easel or a standalone easel

A oversized shirt to put on over your clothes because if you get paint on your good clothes and it dries, it is next to impossible to get off.

### **Area to Paint in:**

Most overlooked is the place where you paint. Best is a room with windows that have a North West exposure and second a room with windows that have a North East exposure. Direct sunlight is too bright and creates extreme shadows - not the best to paint in. You also want a space where you can stand back from your work to view it. Closets are not the best for this!

## COLOUR APPRECIATION, APPLICATION AND MIXING

### COLOUR APPRECIATION

The first step on your journey is to understand colour. It is not enough to think you can paint simply what you see. I've been told over and over by my students after taking my class in colour they started to see colour like they never thought possible.

I have one of the best and easiest ways to learn about colour. Again it is not enough to be able to spout off the primary and secondary colours. You need to know how to use them effectively to create a visually stunning painting. I feel the more colour you can add to your work the more natural it looks. Using colour creatively opens up a whole new world to explore.

I strive to make colour easy to understand so you will use more than what you simply see. My video on colour is a must see to fully understand about colour.

### COLOUR APPLICATION

There are 3 primary colours and three secondary colours. All six make up the colour wheel. Yet in order to remember them and how they enhance and or darken each other the following is the best way I've found to do just that! So all you need to remember is Christmas, Easter, Halloween.

Three Primary		Three Complementary/Secondary	Remember How?
RED	+	GREEN	= CHRISTMAS
YELLOW	+	PURPLE	= EASTER
BLUE	+	ORANGE	= HALLOWEEN

**Primary colours** are found in nature. Primary colours cannot be made.

**Complementary colours** are made by combining two primary.

If a true complementary colour is put around its primary colour, the edges will 'sing'.

### MIXING COLOURS

To successfully blend secondary colours it is important to consider the predominate component of each colour. You need to mix primaries and secondaries that are in the same family i.e. Ultramarine blue (red bias) with alizarin crimson (blue bias) which when combined will make a great purple. But mixing a Cadmium Red that is vivid and has a yellow bias with Ultramarine Blue will not make a good purple.

To create bright secondaries you must choose two primaries that are biased towards each other.

For muted secondaries you need to choose primaries that have an opposing bias.

A Tertiary Colour is made when two colours are mixed, and then a third colour is added. These are also called neutrals as they are browns, beiges and coloured-greys. There is no end to how many shades can be made. Mixing more than 3 colours though can and will make for a muddy colour.

Why mix? When you mix your own colours you get more subtle colours, the exact shades that are more convincing than store bought colours. You can start though with some secondary colours i.e. Chromium Green, Sap Green, Purples, Cadmium Orange and some tertiary colours i.e. Raw Umber and Paynes Gray all which form good foundations for mixtures and can sometimes even be used as they are.

## **BASIC CONCEPTS IN COLOUR**

To bring attention to a focal point use a warm and or primary colour.

To enhance a primary, place its secondary near it. It will also help bring an area closer. To enhance a complementary place its primary nearby i.e. Placing a light green next to red will make it look brighter and even larger while a dark green will make the red look darker and deeper.

To darken a primary mix it with its complementary colour.

To darken a complementary colour, mix it with its primary colour.

The darker the colour the more the eye is drawn towards it.

The lighter the colour the more the eye is moved away from it.

Warm colours i.e. red, orange and yellow bring objects closer.

Cool colours i.e. blue, green and purple move objects and the eye away i.e. distance in a landscape.

To enhance and give body to your colours, first lay down an underpainting using the opposite/complementary colour as a base, i.e. for a red flower paint an underpainting of green, for green leaves paint red first. When using this method try and develop tonal values at the same time to give shape and shading.

Another way is to prep your canvas using Cadmium Orange, which will give body and warmth to all the colours you paint on top.

I now find that I use both. I prep my canvas first with Cadmium Orange then follow up with an underpainting of the opposite colours. I can then start painting what I see.

When you start to paint, start with a medium tones and then build to lighter and darker tones.



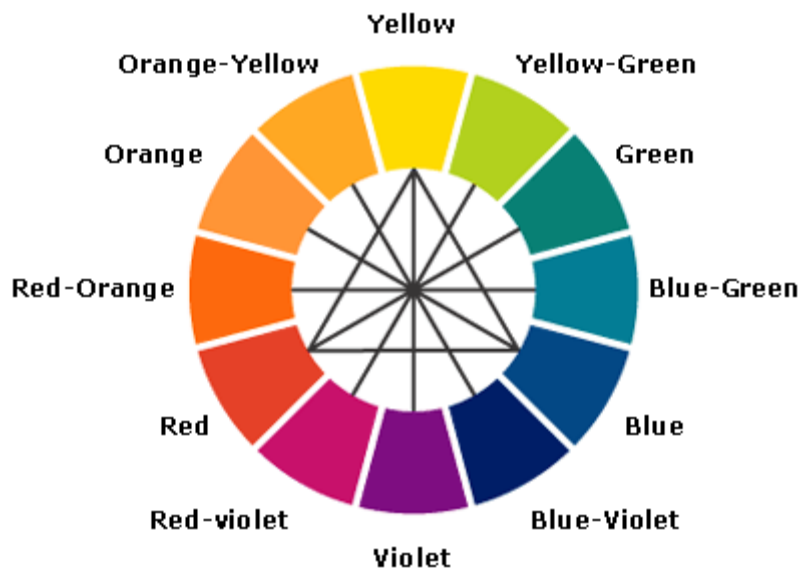
Glazing is a method of overlapping or layering colours. It is most effective with acrylics and oils and to a lesser extent watercolours. Using this method means that you don't have to achieve the final colour in the first application but can paint thin layers of colours over each other to achieve the end result.

Use Black or Paynes Grey with yellow to make cool greens. Otherwise, never use them to darken colours as black, not being a colour, is in search of colour and if used in your painting it will reduce the colour values around it as it absorbs their colour.

Additionally, white as well will flatten a colour (reduce its value). Use it to lighten a colour but not as a highlight. To brighten a colour the best colour to use is Yellow. Never use White on its own as a highlight!

Best two colours for highlights are the palest Blue (White with a tiny little bit of Ultramarine Blue) and or Yellow (White with a tiny little bit of Cadmium Yellow Medium).

Too much use of water in acrylics will flatten your colours when they dry.



Find each complementary colour directly opposite.

## GEORGIA'S TOP TIPS WHEN STARTING TO PAINT USING A PHOTOGRAPH OR A MASTERS' PAINTING

The first step is to learn and understand Georgia's basic lesson in colour and how to use it. My video class on colour maps it out in easy to understand steps.

*When deciding on an image, here are two things I recommend you consider:*

1. Consider a painting by a master, especially if you have not taken any drawing or painting lessons. Make sure the picture is not too complicated i.e. Lawren Harris' white mountains and blue sky. In this way you do not have to know anything about composition. If you have to think about recreating the shapes and colour you see. The easiest way to prep your canvas, when using this type of landscape image, is to prep your canvas using Cadmium Orange which gives a good base and adds depth to the colours you see and paint on top. Once the prepped canvas is dry draw outlines of the objects i.e. the mountains, sky etc. Then start painting the colours you see from the background forward.

2. If you decide to use a photograph, make sure to keep your image simple. Make sure the photo is clear and large enough to see good detail. Working from a photo requires you have some drawing and designing skills, including a good understanding of composition, balance and colour.

If you start by using a simple image i.e. an apple, all you need to know is how large you want to paint the apple. Start by prepping your canvas by painting an under coat of the opposite of the colours you see i.e. for a green apple, start with red paint creating all the light and dark values you see.

*I've now mentioned three ways you can prep your canvas. Here they are again:*

1. The fastest and easiest way is to prep your canvas is using Cadmium Orange. Cadmium Orange is a redish orange colour that will enhance and give warmth and good depth to Blues, Greens and Purples.

or

2. You decide to start by painting an underpainting using the opposite colours, make sure you use the same tonal values of what you see i.e. If the sky is a light Blue you will use a light Orange, if the leaves are a dark Green you will use a dark Red, if the flower is a light Yellow you will use a pale Violet. Painting the tonal values allows you to establish them making it easier to follow when you paint the actual colours and it also allows you to see before you start if there is a good balance between them.

or

3. Use both methods. Prep your canvas first with Cadmium Orange then paint your underpainting in opposite colours and tonal values.

**More tips**

When drawing a landscape use the horizon line as starting point. Using chalk, draw the horizon line across your canvas and refer the rest of your drawing to it.

If there is no horizon line, start by noting with chalk where you want the top of your object and where you want it to end on your canvas, then draw the object.

Make sure you are using the right size canvas.

Make sure your painting dries well if you are going to glaze. Use a hair dryer if necessary.

If painting a landscape start from the back of the image and work toward the foreground.

If painting a single object, paint the object first then decide later on the background colours and whether or not you need a horizon line.

Whatever main colour you are using start by establishing its medium tone and from that you can create the darker and lighter shades.

## HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD PHOTOGRAPH TO PAINT

One of my stock sayings is *'what may be a great photo does not always translate into a great painting'*

When I have asked students why they chose a certain photograph, the following were some of their answers:

- They loved the colours
- There was a certain feeling/emotion they wanted to capture
- It reminded them of a time and place that meant something to them

In discussing what they should look for in choosing a photo, the following are what the photo should and should not have:

- Good composition
- Good tonal values
- Three focal points
- It should not be a simple snap shot which generally has poor tonal values and composition
- It should not be 'photo-shopped' so the colours are so enhanced they look unnatural which is why many post cards and calendars look like they do.

Many students travel and take photos they want to paint afterwards. I've suggested the following:

- Take your time when you are setting up your shot
- Do not be rushed by other people in your group
- Bracket your shots, in other words, take more than one
- Think of what you are looking at through your view finder as though it will be a painting
- Do not try to include everything you see in one shot
- Take the shot from different angles
- Realize there is a big difference between taking photos that you want to remind yourself of where you've been and those you will later want to paint
- Think about maximizing the image i.e. a close up shot
- If setting up for a still life take the time and make sure all the elements you want are correct in the shot. Do not think you can make adjustments after when you start to paint

Other considerations:

Cropping

- There is often within a photo one or maybe more possibilities for an interesting painting. Too often students see the whole photo and want to paint it but when we discussed it we find a more interesting image once we crop or reduce the field to be painted.

Enlarge

- Think about enlarging the main focal point(s).

#### Elimination

- Eliminate a tree or two. Never put a tree on the edge of your painting as though to frame your work, when simply having its branches come from the side of your painting and overlapping your focal point will suffice. Or, eliminate those pesky branches hanging down from the top of the photo. Reduce the amount of foliage or people. Simple is better.

#### Using more than one photo - Never!

- Another problem is when a student uses more than one photo to create the painting. One has to consider that the photos will probably not have the same light direction, perspective or proportions.

#### Changing colours or adding more stuff - Never!

- This always presents so many problems that I cannot begin to mention them. I try to dissuade a student from doing this.

Always try and think outside the box! Bring a new direction to your work.

## **GEORGIA'S TOP TIPS WHEN STARTING TO PAINT WITH ACRYLICS**

Draw as much detail as possible before you start

If your drawing skill is poor perhaps you might want to take some drawing classes as well. Otherwise, when first starting to use the medium keep your pictures simple i.e. a single apple. Or you can always trace the image.

Use the right size canvas. If the image you are using is square, use a square canvas. In other words, be aware of the size of your image and make sure your canvas is proportionate to it. Or be prepared to crop.

Use only 1 large palette at a time i.e. a large Styrofoam meat tray not many little ones.

Buy the suggested list of colours, making sure they are not "hues" and if purchasing the brand Liquitex, make sure that they say "heavy".

Use good brushes i.e. round tipped Filberts made from a synthetic bristle for acrylics only.

Change your water often and use a large water container i.e. a large yogurt container.

Have a water spritzer to keep paints moist and use it often. Never have pools of water on your palette.

Place your paint on your palette in the same spot every time and, most importantly, on the outer most edges leaving more room in the middle to mix. Place your warm colours on one side and the cool colours on the other. Put white at the top and when you use it take from the edges not through the middle of it therefore as I say you've corrupted the whole thing with one colour.

Squeeze out more paint than you think you will need.

When mixing colours, keep them contained to a small area i.e. size of a loonie, instead of spreading the paint all over your palette and leaving less area for mixing. Keep your mixed colours close to the colours you used. Mix together a maximum of only 3 colours so your colour remains clear, not muddy, plus you will increase your chances of recreating the colour if and when you run out. Create the medium tone first, then mix lighter or darker tones on the edges of that. In this way you will end up with a gradation of the colour to use and it is all in one spot.

Use more paint than you think you should. Try not to water down your paints and use a paper towels to wipe brushes of excess water and paint.

White should be added to all colours as all are transparent and you want them to be opaque to cover your canvas.

Never use pure White as a high light, instead use the palest Yellow or Blue. When using White realize that it lightens but it does not brighten

Do not use Black to darken colours, instead use your colour sense i.e. Red to darken Green.

Do not use Browns or Paynes Grey for shadows, instead use cool colours i.e. Blue, Green and Purple.

Create perspective. Your foreground and or main focal point should have stronger colours, hard edges and background and other focal points should be less colourful with softer edges.

Realize you will not achieve the desired colour in one application. It generally takes a few applications to achieve the proper colour, either by using wet on wet or glazing. In fact the more layers you add the more intense your tonal value will look. Don't forget acrylics dry darker.

"Dabbing!" This type of brush stroke creates a repetitive stroke, instead use brush strokes appropriate for the area i.e. using curved strokes for round objects. I recommend taking only 2-3 brush strokes at a time, then stop, this helps to avoid dabbing and gives you time to evaluate your work.

Step away or sit back often from your work. Taking a break will give you a fresh 'eye' to your work.

Have fun

## GEORGIA'S ORANGE THEORY – PART ONE

*My philosophy is that if you can successfully draw and paint an orange you can paint anything.*

To start drawing the image sketch light lines.

Use very sketchy lines to create a quick light drawing that you can then work over in more detail.

To start, find a reference spot and work from it i.e. top of the orange. Draw a little to the right and then a little to the left and hopefully the lines will meet successfully at the bottom. If your lines don't meet then go back and check your start lines. Never draw using a continuous line, even for a simple object like an orange.

### Creating tonal values

The area closest to you is the darkest. The closest area will be the roundest spot of the orange nearest to you, so that area will have the darkest, brightest, warmest tones

The areas further from you which will be the edges will have the lightest, coolest tones.

### Light Source

You need to create a light source and the best way to do this is actually opposite to what you may think. You need to make the area - the background - the darkest area, in this way you will create a lovely contrast to where the actual highlight, now a very light area, hits the orange.

### Create a Balance of your Tonal Values

There should always be a balance between the dark and light areas.

The light direction will affect the where the shadows fall.

The edges of the shadow closest to the viewer should be darkest, not the area immediately under the orange.

The area in the middle of the shadow will be paler.

### Outside and Bottom Edges of the Orange

The bottom edge of the orange will have a 'lightish tone' to give the illusion the bottom of the orange is turning under. This lightish bottom edge will also be a good contrast where the shadow begins.

All the outside edges of the orange will be soft, using *lost and found* lines (lines that are broken) and will not be the darkest.

Remember something that is round will become more oval as it turns away from you.

### Brush Strokes

Move your strokes in the direction of the object i.e. curve strokes for a circular object.

### Colour Sense

Use your colour sense using the complementary colour as a base colour to give more depth and intensity to the orange i.e. use Blue tones first before painting the orange it's Orange colour.



Use Red to deepen the hot spot (closest) and pale Yellow as a highlight. Use a mix of these colours in the background.

### **Placement, composition and perspective**

Don't start your drawing in the centre of your canvas.

Don't take lines to the edges of your canvas as it takes the eye off the canvas

Don't start your drawing at the bottom of your canvas as it flattens it.

Don't draw so your all objects line up on a single line either vertically or horizontally.

Use overlapping if, possible, to create perspective,

Things i.e. edges that are further away they are lighter, smaller and softer edged

Remember to have 3 focal points and one rest spot, even if only painting a single orange

Keep it simple

*Quote taken from the book The Forest Lover by Susan Vreeland (a book about Emily Carr)*

\*art isn't reproducing visual facts it's the difference between Perception and Conception

Dictionary meanings:

Perception: 1. The act of perceiving. 2. Intuitive recognition or appreciation; insight

Conception: 1. The act of conceiving (to imagine) 2. A concept (general notion or idea).

3. Origination: beginning

Most importantly - have fun!

## GEORGIA'S ORANGE THEORY – PART TWO

*"if you can paint an orange you can paint anything"*

### THIS BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE DEMONSTRATES THE MOST COMMON ERRORS MADE WHEN PAINTING MONOCHROMATIC TONAL VALUES

- Placement is too low on the canvas
- Bottom edge of the orange is flat
- Edges are the darkest areas and are too defined
- Large areas of the same tonal values
- No light direction indicated
- Brush strokes are flat not curved
- Orange appears flat



### THINGS DONE TO IMPROVE THE BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE

- Placement is more in keeping for the size of the canvas
- Bottom of the orange is rounded and lightish tone used
- All edges are softened using lighter tones
- All areas have multiple tones
- Light direction emphasized by darker background
- Curved strokes are used to emphasize roundness
- Orange appears round



### TERMS WHEN USING BLACK AND WHITE

*To indicate areas closest to us*

Bigger, Darker, Bolder, Brighter, Hard Edged

*To indicate areas i.e. edges, areas furthest from us*

Smaller, Lighter, Lightish, Softer Edges

## Georgia's Orange Theory - Part Two

## Continued

### THIS COLOUR IMAGE DEMONSTRATES THE MOST COMMON ERRORS MADE WHEN PAINTING TONAL VALUES IN COLOUR

- Placement is too centered
- Bottom edge of the orange does not appear round
- Edges are too dark plus used red, a primary colour, both which bring the areas closer
- Large areas are of the same tonal values
- No light direction indicated
- Brush strokes do not follow contours
- Background is Paynes Grey so it absorbs colour, similar to black
- This canvas was NOT prepared using Cadmium Orange or was an underpainting of Blue used
- Pure white is used as a highlight which should never be used.  
Remember White lightens - does not brighten
- Orange appears flat and painting is unbalanced



### THINGS DONE TO IMPROVE THE COLOUR IMAGE

- Placement uses the space better, making the painting more interesting
- Bottom edge of the orange is rounded and there is the use of the lightish colour
- All edges are soft using lighter tones and cooler colours
- All areas have multiple tonal values
- Curved brush strokes are used to emphasize roundness
- Light direction emphasized by area of dark background  
i.e. in upper Right corner
- This canvas was 'prepped' using, Cadmium Orange and an underpainting of Blue in multiple tones.
- Palest Yellow used for highlight.
- Yellow mixed with the Orange colour to brighten and warm areas to bring them closer
- Red and Yellow primary 'warm' colours used bring some areas closer.
- Orange is a 'warm' colour but is a secondary colour so is used on edges to make them recede, and appear rounded
- The object appears round and the painting is balanced



### TERMS WHEN USING COLOUR

*To indicate areas closest to us*

Bigger, Darker, Brighter, Warmer, Primary Colours, Hard Edged

*To indicate areas i.e. edges, areas furthest from us*

Smaller, Lighter, Lightish, Cooler, Secondary Colours, Softer Edges

# COLOUR CHART

Colour	Type	Complementary Colour	How to Remember	Warm or Cool	Bring things closer	Pushes things Away	Light tone use as a	Mix with to darken	Complementary to Enhance	Mix to create new colours
<b>Red</b>	Primary	Green	Christmas	Warm	Yes	No	Highlight	Green	Green	Yellow Orange Blues
<b>Yellow</b>	Primary	Purple	Easter	Warm	Yes	No	Highlight	Purple	Purple	Orange Greens Blues Black
<b>Blue</b>	Primary	Orange	Halloween	Cool	Yes/ No	Yes/ No	Highlight and shadows	Orange	Orange	Yellow Orange Red Purple Green
<b>Green</b>	Secondary	Red	Christmas	Cool	No	Yes	Shadow	Red Blue Purple	Red	Red, Purple Blue Yellow
<b>Purple</b>	Secondary	Yellow	Easter	Cool	No	Yes	Shadow Round Edges	Dark yellow Dark green	Yellow	Yellow Orange Red Green Blue
<b>Orange</b>	Secondary	Blue	Halloween	Warm	Yes/No	Yes	Round edges	Blue Purple	Blue	Yellow Red Purple Blue

## TOP TIPS FOR DRAWING

- Are you using the right size paper or canvas? Is the paper/canvas facing the right direction i.e. horizontal, vertical?
- To start your drawing, identify your main reference point. From this point you can draft the rest of your drawing. It must be drawn correctly, placed in the right area and the perspective correct, because if it is off then the rest of your drawing will be off as well.  
Use sketchy pencil strokes as guide lines to establish position, shape and the size of objects. Draw from the right, then the left and see if you meet in the middle. If not then go back to the beginning and see what needs to be changed. Never use a continuous line to draw. Sit back often to observe your drawing. Use your sense of proportion and knowledge of negative and positive space to draw your images.
- Keep your picture balanced i.e. light and dark areas, colour, shapes etc.
- Do you have 3 focal points of interest and one rest area? The first focal point must be the main point of interest.  
Does the eye move around on your page, not resting in only one area?  
Have you placed or lead any lines into the corner, thereby leading the eye out of the picture? If so change them  
Is your main focal point in the center, making it difficult to move the eye around the rest of the picture?  
Have you divided your picture in half? If so change it.
- Have you used interesting repetitive shapes/colours/lines to help strengthen your focal points?
- Have you used your sense of colour (refer to colour chart)?
- Use black with yellows to make interesting greens only, never use black to darken a colour. Avoid the use of browns out of the tube, make your own.
- Have you used overlapping to create dimension and perspective?
- Have you given your picture texture?
- Have you used brush strokes to create shape and texture, i.e. move the brush or created lines to enhance the shape of the objects?

- Does your light direction make sense throughout your picture? Do all your shadows and shading make sense? Have you used a dark shade in the background to indicate your light source? This way you create drama in your picture as well as a contrast to your highlights.
- Do your tonal values make sense? Is your shading one solid dark area? Use multiple tones with the darkest area being most likely on the front edge of the shadow and a slightly pale shade in the middle. Use cool colours not browns.
- Have you used organic shapes? Have you made use of lost and found, hard edged and soft edged lines?
- Use a mirror to check perspective or turn it upside down if it looks odd. Do you have a well placed horizon or horizon line, placing your objects on solid ground and therefore not floating in space. Grounding the objects will enhance your focal points.
- If in doubt leave it for a day or two.
- Never asks someone's opinion if you are not prepared to hear that they don't like it.
- Try squinting more!

Keep it simple.

## TOP TIPS FOR PAINTING YOUR OWN LANDSCAPE

- Keep it simple! Crop until you reach the area you want to paint keeping your eye only focused only on the area you want to paint. Do not add more than what is necessary. No overhanging branches from the top or sides of your picture!
- Establish a horizon line that is not in the middle of your page.
- Use sketchy guidelines to establish the position, shape and size of objects. Do you have any lines leading to corners or to the middle (you don't want them to). Draw as much as possible before you start to paint.
- Make sure you have a good balance of your negative and positive and dark and light spaces.
- Do you have three focal points of interest and one rest area? The first focal point should be the main point of interest.  
The main focal point will be larger, darker and more interesting than the others.  
Does the eye move around on your page, not resting in only one area?  
Have you placed or lead any lines into the corner, thereby leading the eye out of the picture?  
Is your main focal point in the center, making it difficult to move the eye around the rest of the picture?  
Have you divided you picture in half? Never do this.
- Use interesting repetitive shapes/colours to strengthen your focal points.
- Use your sense of colour to enhance your focal points.
- Use overlapping to create perspective
- Create texture by using a variety of brush strokes but do not `dab`.
- Use brush strokes to create shape, i.e. Move the brush in the direction of the objects shape?
- Your light direction should make sense throughout your picture. Use a dark shade in the background to indicate your light source and create drama in your picture as well as provide a contrast to your highlights.
- Do all your tonal values make sense?

- Your shading should not be one solid dark area. It should have multiple tones with the darkest area being on the outer most edge and with a small, paler area in the middle.
- Use organic shapes, especially triangles.
- Make use of lost and found/ hard edged and soft edged lines.
- Never asks anyone's opinion if you are not prepared to hear that they don't like it.

Keep it simple



## WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT ACRYLICS IN A FEW SHORT LESSONS

### **DRAWING** - you have learned:

- some basic drawing skills i.e. find your reference spot and draw from it and draw what you see.
- the more information you can draw, the easier it will be to paint.

### **COMPOSITION** - you have learned:

- create some interesting positioning of objects i.e. off edge.
- larger can be better. Do not place object too close to top, bottom or centre of your canvas.
- overlap objects to help perspective
- when drawing landscapes, find and use the main horizon line and draw it so you can relate the rest of the picture to it.

### **COLOUR** - you have learned:

- basic colour theory, how to use and remember primary and secondary colours i.e. Christmas, Easter and Halloween.
- never use Black or Paynes Grey to darken any colour.
- White lightens but does not brighten, it also cools or reduces the value of a colour.
- Yellow brightens a colour.
- warm primaries, Red and Yellow, bring areas closer.
- Orange although a warm colour is a secondary colour so does not bring area closer and if reduced in value, i.e. using white, it pushes areas away, especially on edges.

### **PREPARING YOUR CANVAS** - you have learned:

- Use Cadmium Orange to paint the whole surface, let it dry then draw your images with chalk.
- Use opposite colours to paint an underpainting.
- Leave some of the underpainting to help enhance your colours i.e. think of the Group of Seven. Or, after you have finished and have totally covered all your underpainting you can replace some of that underpainting colour around areas to help enhance and bring those areas closer.

**GEORGIA'S ORANGE THEORY FOR DRAWING AND CREATING PERSPECTIVE -**  
you have learned:

- Draw and paint what you see, then take ownership of what you created by putting on the finishing touches using the knowledge and skills you have learned.
- To turn the edges of objects so they look round use lighter cool colours and paint off edge a little to make them soft or blurry. You don't want hard razor sharp edges.
- To bring areas closer use darker, brighter and or primary colours
- To push areas further away i.e. shadows use the cooler colours purple or green

**PAINTING -** you have learned:

- keep your paint wet on your palette by using a spritzing bottle.
- place all your colours close to the edges of your palette, leaving more room in the middle to mix
- if your paint gets too tacky on your canvas dry it completely before you continue or it will lift off your canvas i.e. use a hair dryer to speed up the drying process.
- use more paint to cover your canvas.
- use proper brush strokes to create better perspective i.e. curved brush strokes for round objects.

**GLAZING / WASH -** you have learned:

- after your paint has dried use minimum paint to glaze over areas to reduce a tone or change a colour i.e. glazing with Cadmium Orange or Cadmium Yellow over some areas on your picture can warm it up.

**WET ON WET -** you have learned:

- paint using wet on wet to create soft edges i.e. skies and clouds.
- you can use a colour directly on top of a wet colour to change it and not have to mix it on your palette prior to using it, i.e. placing White or Yellow over top of a wet paint on your canvas.

**STACKING YOUR COLOURS -** you have learned:

This method of painting allows you to place your tonal values side by side in small brush strokes to create a gradation of colour and so eliminates over blending and creating muddy colours.

**MOST OF ALL YOU HAVE LEARNED - HAVE FUN, SQUINT AND TAKE BREAKS OFTEN!**

## **SO YOU THINK YOU HAVE FINALLY FINISHED YOUR PAINTING!**

### ***What You Need To Ask And Look For To Make Sure It Is!***

**The first and most important question to ask is:**

- Does your main focal point stand out? Then ask does your eye move around the whole painting, touching on the other two focal points? Is there a rest spot?

If your focal points do stand out and the eye does move around but you still feel there is some improvement needed to raise the standard of your painting to a more accomplished/ professional look, the following list should help you achieve that and perhaps at the same time enhance or improve your focal points.

### **THE FINAL TOUCHES**

#### **Colour**

- Did you start with an underpainting using the opposite colours to the ones you actually see or did you use a wash of Cadmium Orange? Both methods will enrich, add depth and intensity to your top colours and your painting.
- Have you used your colour sense to move the eye around your picture i.e. Primaries to enhance your focal points?
- Did you mix a maximum of only three colours to make new colours, making sure they sparkle and look fresh?
- Did you make your own browns? Hopefully! Best method is to use Cadmium Orange and a little Ultramarine Blue. The more Blue the darker the Brown.
- Did you use Black, to darken a colour? Hopefully not! Remember, Black is not a colour so it is in search of colour and will flatten the colour you are trying to darken.
- Did you use Paynes Grey ? Sparingly, if at all? If used to darken colours it will deaden your colours, much like black.
- Does your over all painting look dull? If so then you probably used too much water if using acrylics and too much turpentine if using oil paint.

#### **Shadows**

- Did you use only cool colours i.e. Blue, Purple or Green? Never black or brown!
- Did you paint the areas on the edges and bottom of your object the darkest. Hopefully not. If so you need to change them.
- Do your shadows make sense i.e. do they all go in the same direction? Did you paint your shadows as a wrap around the bottom of your object instead having it come forward or off to one side?
- Did you use the 'lightish' tone on the bottom of your object to turn it under.

### **Light direction – background - highlights**

- Did you use the method of painting a dark area to signify the light source? This method creates a great contrast to the area where the light reflects on your objects.
- Does your background enhance or does it take over your picture? Did you combine only the colours used to paint the main focal points?
- Did you use White as a highlight. Hopefully not ! Use only the very palest warm colours to signify highlights i.e. Palest Yellow or Blue? Never simply use White!

### **Objects**

- Do all objects and areas have a vanishing or diminishing point?
- Do the objects, areas in the background have softer edges and colours that are less intense?
- Are all objects in perspective to their placement in your picture i.e. taking people or animals from another photos and adding to your picture is difficult as they all need to be in the same perspective and have the same light shining on them.
- Are the edges, areas on all objects that are closest to the viewer darker, warmer?
- Are edges and areas on objects that are furthest away from the viewer slighter lighter or cooler to help make their edges turn?
- Did you add objects because you felt the space needed it, making your picture too busy. Ask yourself, are they really needed?

### **Dark areas – tonal values**

- Areas, objects that move back in your picture should get lighter – cooler.
- Areas, objects that move forward in your picture should get darker – warmer.
- Is the darkest spot in the centre of your painting? If so change it. Never have the darkest spot in the centre or near outside edges.
- Did you use enough paint and create clear areas of tonal values.
- Have you left large areas of all the same tonal values. If so you need to break it up with some glazing or washes.

### **Brush strokes**

- Do all your brush strokes enhance the shape, help the perspective of objects i.e. rounded strokes for round objects, straight strokes for straight objects?
- Did you use repetitive strokes? If so change and mix them up, unless used to enhance your work. Remember no dabbing!
- Did you use the same brush stroke through out
- Did you try to use the stacking method to blend?

## GLAZES AND MEDIUMS

### *The Final Step*

For the longest time I did not endorse the use of mediums or glazes as my past experience with them was not a happy one.

I've always taught my students how to create glazes using minimum water to dilute their paint. There are painterly glazes that have more paint than water to build up a colour base and very watery glazes to simply brush over lightly over a base colour to brighten or darken it, i.e. a very watery yellow over a green to brighten it or a watery purple to darken it. All this can be done without having to repaint the whole thing and it works well.

Then one of my students inadvertently prepped her canvas with a gel she then had to continue using the gel mixed with her paints so her paint would adhere to the canvas. We both found this interesting and I realized why some previous students' paint would not adhere to their prepped canvas because they had probably used a gel mixed with their primer. But it was also interesting how the mixing of the medium with the paint somehow made the paint stickier. Personally I did not like the feel of the paint and even though it extend the drying of the paint I did not think that was such a good thing. I teach a method of building your paint base up using glazing by adding water to the paint so if it is taking longer to dry that slows and interferes with this process.

Also, it was high gloss gel she was using and as much as I want my pictures to have some gloss I do not want them to have a high gloss. Because I use so little water all my pictures have a gloss to them. I also use what I call a 'dirty' brush for two reasons.

**One**, so I have some crossover of colours from one area to another thus maintaining continuity in colour. Only when I change my colour completely do I wash my brush and then I make sure to take all the water off before dipping it into the new colour.

**Two**, using this method of a 'dirty' brush I am using thick pure paint that has very little water added to it and so even when I glaze using a watered down colour it is over paint that has not been diluted, so I am maintaining a gloss.

But having said all of that I decided to try a glazing gel. First though I wanted one that was a low gloss and not a high gloss. This can be hard to find. But I did find one after searching through all the selves. I also found way more mediums and gels than I had ever known existed. The one I wanted is by Golden and is called- Acrylic Glazing Liquid (satin). Satin is another term for low gloss.

I tried using it with my paints but because I am so adept at painting without a glazing gel I found it annoying to keep dipping into the medium before mixing my paints. So I discontinued using it. But what I did do though was to apply it over my picture after it had air dried for 48 hours.

I think it added an overall evenness to my final painting and so I am recommending the use of it in this fashion. I also let it dry flat so there would be no drip lines. Who knew an old dog could learn new tricks.

You can buy mediums to slow down the drying even more, mediums to bulk up your paints to make them really thick, there seems to be a medium for every conceivable idea you can think of. It's up to you if you want to experiment but as I say, "I think it is better to spend your dollars on good paint and brushes". Although now you can add to your supply list - Golden's Acrylic Glazing Liquid (satin) to be used as a final coat to your paintings.

## **DO YOU WORRY IF THE PAINTING OR PHOTOGRAPH YOU ARE COPYING IS COPYRIGHTED?**

### **Some Answers You May Find Interesting**

Individual artists hold the right of copy right to each of their works even after they have been sold. The purchaser may own the original but not the copyrights. The artist can copy the piece even after they have sold it, i.e. produce prints etc.

\*In general, an artist's work created on or after January 1 1978, will have copyright protection until 70 years after the artist's death. If the artist had a will and stated in it that he/she still owned the copyrights the specifications of their will, will determine who subsequently has inherited the right of copyrights.

If there is no will, then the laws in each country and Province will have to be considered.

Works that are in the public domain i.e. Public galleries, art books and art calendars can be legally copied by anyone.

So if you want to photocopy an old masters painting you can.

Originally works created between 1909 and 1978 were protected only if they were publically displayed, reproduced or sold with the understanding it was copyrighted. But with the new laws in 1978 that changed \*see above i.e. An artist's work created on or after January 1 1978, will have copyright protection until 70 years after the artist's death according to US laws. In Canada it is 50 years. Always check your own country's laws as they do vary.

**Q.** If I'm learning to paint by copying other artists' works from the internet or pictures in books for my own benefit (not wishing to sell them), is that legal? Also, can I legally sell a copy of a painting of another artist (living or dead), so long as on the front of the painting I sign my name followed by "copied after" plus the original artist's name?

**A.** Historically, artists perfected their skills by copying the works of old masters. In fact, this still goes on today in many American and European museums, where each copy is required to have different dimensions from the original in order to prevent sale of the copy as an original.

Copying pre-existing works is legal, so long as the original work is in the public domain (meaning that the copyright on that work has expired). If, however, the copyright has not expired, the copyright owner has several exclusive rights, including the right to reproduce the copyrighted work and the right to sell the copyrighted work. This means that unless a defense such as fair use is available, the making of an unauthorized reproduction of a protected work (for example, copying another artist's painting) is an infringement if the copy is substantially similar to the original. The unauthorized sale of an infringing copy may also be an infringement.

It is, therefore, important for you to determine whether the works you copy are still protected by copyright or whether those works are in the public domain. When your copies are substantially similar to the original, you are safe only in copying works that are in the public domain. Merely identifying the source of the work you copied will not provide you with a defense, and doing so may even make it easier for the copyright owner to pursue a claim of infringement against you.

**Q.** I know the artists and when I go to their sites I am able to down load their images and copy them. Am I breaking any laws?

**A.** Both acts are against copy right laws. If an artist has a site to sell from they want purchasers to be able to look at the work in an easy and large format, which is great for the purchaser but unfortunately at the same time makes it easy for anyone to down load and copy it. There is currently no software to prevent any one from downloading an image except their own internal voice that tells them this is wrong. They should email the artist and ask permission that for learning purposes they want to copy one of the paintings and she/he may or may not give permission. Always best to ask! If you get caught you could be charged with copyright infringement.

**Q.** In the 18th and 19th centuries, before the invention and common use of photography, a book publisher could be granted rights to have an engraver etch a plate of an old master's painting for printing purposes. May I take a digital photo of a 200-year-old printed etching, print the photo and legally sell it? I have only eight pages from the original book, so I can't check the front or back pages for a copyright notice, although I do know the original artist and engraver.

**A.**The U.S. Constitution provides that congress has the power to create a law for the purpose of providing copyright protection for limited periods. While the duration of copyright protection has been expanding over time, it is still limited. As of the date of this writing, the period of protection for an individual is the life of that individual plus 70 years. For a work created anonymously or under a pseudonym or a work created by an employee of a business entity, the period of protection is 95 years from first publication or 120 years from original creation, whichever period expires first.

Consequently, a 200-year-old work would not be protected by copyright. An individual could go to the original source (the actual engraving) and produce a digital copy without restriction, though it would certainly be polite to acknowledge the artist and engraver.

Note that the answer is different if you're not using the original engraving. If you are using a recent photograph of the engraving, it would be unlawful to copy the photographer's contemporary work because the photographer has a copyright in that photograph.



## EXPLANATION OF ART PHRASES OR CONCEPTS USED IN MY ACRYLIC CLASSES

### **Prepping Your Canvas**

In my class this means the first thing you need to do is to paint the surface of your canvas using an inexpensive Cadmium Orange. You can water it down so it's not so intense or even add white to it if you want to cover an old painting to reuse a canvas.

*Why you should do this?*

This prepares the surface of the canvas for paint.

More importantly it gives you a warm base colour to paint on, giving a warm glow to your top paints, especially if you leave some of the orange colour peaking through or around the edges of your objects. The orange colour will as well enhance: the Blues you use to paint with; the Yellow in the Orange will enhance any Purples and the Red in the Orange will enhance any Greens. It is a nice all around colour to use to prep your canvas as you can see to enhance a wide range of colours.

### **Underpainting**

In my class this means creating a loosely painted picture using the opposite colours to the ones you see or will be using, i.e. a Red apple will be under painted in tones of Green. You want to use as many tones as possible when underpainting so your object have a 3D look.

*Why you should do this?*

It creates a positive base that will enhance the colours you will paint on it.

It allows you to see if you have placed your objects in the right position and if your drawing is correct before you start in earnest to paint your picture. It is easier to make corrections at this stage.

It starts you seeing the tonal values as you create all the dark and light tones you see and establish the light direction.

### **Blend /Or Soften The Edges Of Your Colours**

In my class this is the way I encourage students to blend without over blending all their colours. After you have placed some colours that are similar but have some variety of tonal values, clean your brush of excess paint and then softly blend only the edges of one colour into the next colour i.e. highlights into the surrounding colours. You do not want to blend the whole area trying to create an air brushed look and in effect losing all the interesting separate colours and tones you initially created.

*Why you should do this?*

This is a method to try and not over blend. You want to try and keep the integrity of your original colours and tones.

### **Stacking Colours To Create A Blended Look**

I started using this method to break students of the habit of over blending their paints. In this method you are encouraged to place colours side by side, so the 'eye' does the blending. You place colours in patches on your palette and softly blend only their connected edges or leave a small space between the two colours and create a blended colour and paint it between the two colours. You will create a gradual gradation of colours and tones.

*Why you should do this?*

This is done to prevent over blending, so your mixed colours do not have an overall sameness in colour and tone. If you leave the colours side by side, the colours will maintain their integrity and the 'eye' of the viewer will actually do the blending.

### **Three Brush Strokes And Stop**

When students continue to over blend or dab I ask them to take this approach.

*Why you should do this?*

They will take more time to see what they have done and stop over working and blending the paint.

### **Dabbing**

Dabbing is my term for those who take small tentative multiple repetitive brush strokes which leads to creating unnecessary repetitive patterns. Students use this stroke because they are uncertain of themselves and their effort to blend the colours. Using a Filbet brush you will create shapes that look like small mushrooms or umbrellas.

*Why you should not do this?*

Repetitive brush strokes cause more interest in an area than is intended, as the eye will always seek out a pattern. I encourage students to take actual brush strokes that will enhance the shape of the object.

Stopping this type of brush strokes also helps to stop over blending.

### **Scrumbling**

Not a term I use often but this type of brush stroke does work wonders when you want to soften a large area that you may have put too much detail into and or too much colour or too dark or bright a colour. This brush stroke is simply a messy crisscross stroke using a neutral colour.

*Why you should do this?*

It will help to neutralize, soften or reduce the strength of an area you want to make less intrusive or important in your painting. It should help to push the area back.

### **Turning Your Edges - Using Secondary Colours**

In my class I use this phrase to have students finish off the edges of the objects, using one or two or all three of the secondary colours. Orange and or Purple are the most common colours to use.

*Why you should do this?*

All edges are in effect areas that are going away from you, so we need to find a way to turn them and in using one or all three of the secondary colours on these edges we will

turn or take them away from us.

### **Paint 'Off Edge' - To Finish and Soften Your Edges**

In my class I use this phrase as another way to soften and at the same time turn an edge. You use this method after you have finished your background. It is one of the last things you do. You use one or two or all three of the three secondary colours and lightly paint 'off' your edges, so in effect they look messy or blurry. You do not have to do this all the way around and in fact do it only on the edges here and there, so you are creating that 'lost and found' look. You never want your edges to have a hard 'cookie cutter' edge.

*Why you should do this?*

No object has a solid sharp edge or line around it. Leaving your edges razor sharp will make your objects look odd or false.

Use lost and found lines to finish and soften the edges

### **Soften Your Edges**

This is another phrase I use often. To soften an edge you can use one or all three methods: either paint 'off edge'; use one or all three secondary colours; or create a 'lost and found' breaking line look.

*Why you should do this?*

Again, as no object, flower, face, tree or house has a solid line or edge around it this makes it appear more natural.

### **Glazes Or Washes**

Using this method you use a watered down colour applied thinly over a previously applied colour. You can use a pure colour from the tube to do this i.e. Cadmium Yellow to brighten a Green or to be use over another Yellow to enhance the intensity; Purple over another colour to darken it; Orange over a colour to warm it up etc.

*Why you should do this?*

This the easiest way to change a colour, to brighten, darken or add more of a base colour or to change the tonal values, all without having to repaint the whole area.

### **White Lightens But Does Not Brighten**

This phrase I say often as I find students using white to try and brighten a colour. In explaining it I say that white reduces the value of a colour and more you add the less intense or bright the colour becomes.

*Why know this?*

So you will think of adding Yellow to brighten not White when more brightness is needed.

### **Highlights - Use Primary Yellow or Blue**

Students often will use pure White as a highlight. This is a No No! White is not a colour.

Always use colour, no matter what you are painting. For highlights use the palest Yellow or Blue. Both are primary colours and, as we know, primary colours make areas come forward and highlighted areas are an area that should come forward. The best colours to use are White with a dab of Cadmium Yellow medium and or White with a dab of Ultramarine Blue.

*Why know this?*

White is not a colour and we always need to use colour. Primary colours bring areas closer.

### **In The Background - Use Secondary Colours Purple Orange or Green**

I started reminding students if they were undecided about what colours to use in the background that any or all three of the secondary colours should be used.

*Why do this?*

Secondary colours take things back.

### **Other Basic Phrases That Are Self Explanatory**

Use your palette to create your colours

If the colour you created and used is not right stop using it and ask yourself what needs to be changed

If in doubt about colour.... There are only six colours consider to find the right one.

When asking yourself about a colour make sure you actually see it in your minds eye and then you will actually see it if it is there in your object.

Use yellow to brighten

Use purple to darken

Use one or all three secondary colours in your backgrounds

Use one of your primaries in the foreground or to make things pop

Use yellow or blue (with white) as a highlight.

Use purple or orange (with white) on edges

Use white to make your transparent colours opaque.

Use more paint and do not start painting with a transparent colour.

Keep an open mind

Have fun!

## INTERESTING INFORMATION

Sometimes I come across some interesting information that may not have any relevance to my art classes but it is interesting any way. This tidbit is in answer to a student asking about pricing their art.

### WHY SOME PEOPLE EARN MORE THAN OTHERS?

A local good singer is starving and Lady Gaga made an estimated \$62 million in 2012.

Lady Gaga does not have to be 5000 times better than the local artist in order to earn 5000 times more.

### TWO FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

**Imperfect Substitution** is the willingness to pay a lot more for that which is only marginally better  
and

**Joint Consumption** technologies allow a popular artist's work to be purchased simultaneously by millions.

Either one can lead to higher pay, and when combined, they spell super pay.

Imperfect substitution is easy to understand. Lesser talent is often a poor substitute for great talent. Three mediocre singers won't satisfy an audience as much as one excellent one.

A major corporation will hire the best lawyer, a lawyer who is 10% less competent can't compensate by working 10% more or charging 10% less. So the demand for better 'anything' increases more than proportionately.

## GEORGIA'S ART CLASS STUDENT CREED

I had a student who was forever saying her work was awful and she couldn't do it (in truth her work was fine). I tried many ways to encourage her and in exasperation I created, somewhat tongue in cheek, this Student Creed. The odd thing is that all the rest of the class took it to heart, except, guess who? Yup, the one person for whom I created it. I decided to include it in my manual forever as it does apply to everyone who paints.

Acknowledge you are entering an exciting new artistic journey that has ups and downs.

Acknowledge that there may be good days and some not so good days but all days are sent to challenge you.

Acknowledge you will learn something new every day.

Promise yourself never to speak negatively of yourself or your efforts.

Promise to look on the sunny side making your optimism come true.

Promise never to say "if" but always to say "when".

Promise to be enthusiastic and to celebrate your and other people's successes, regardless of how small.

And most importantly keep in mind . . .

When asking anyone's opinion i.e. family members etc., be prepared to hear they don't like it, or worse, graciously hear their opinions on how they feel you could make it better.

And lastly, keep your sense of humour intact and be prepared to laugh at yourself and possibly your work.