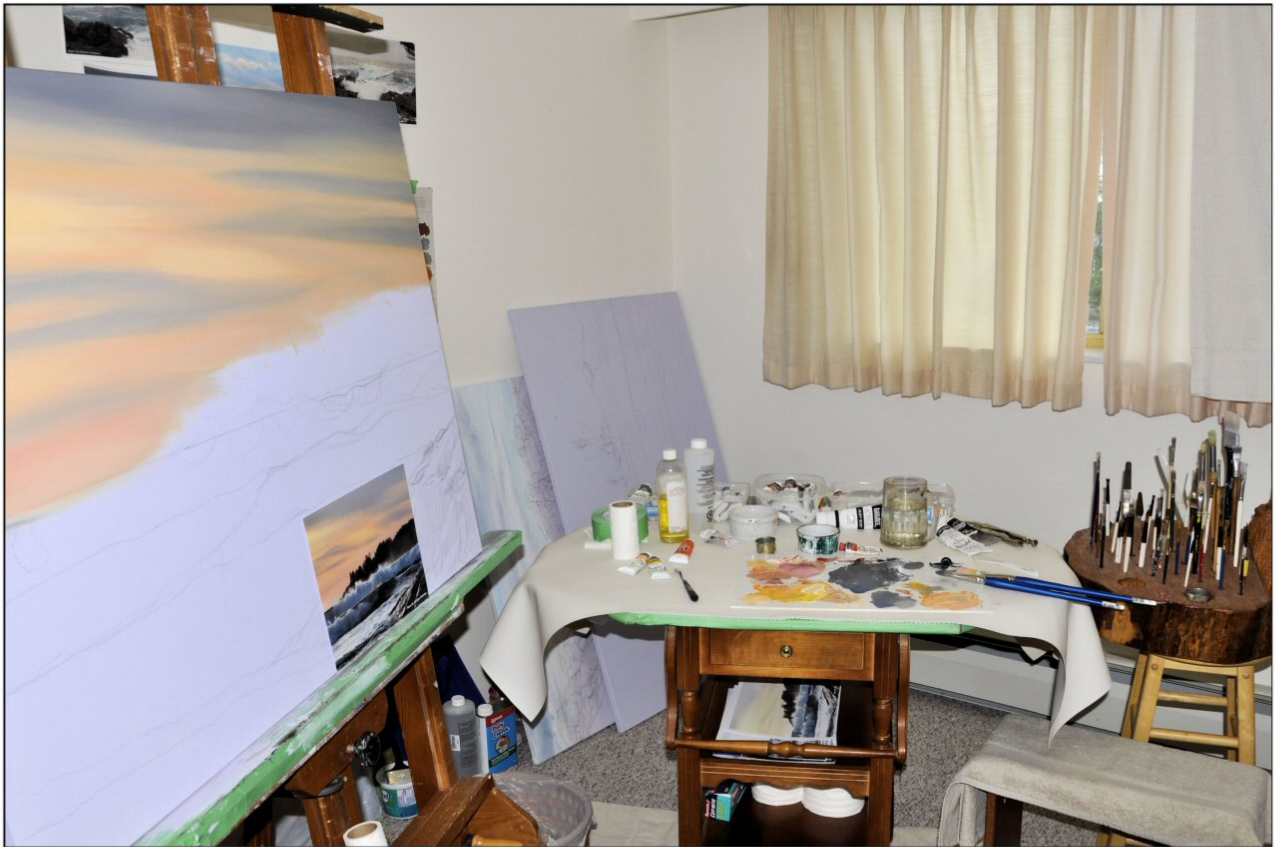


How to Paint With Oil



By Ghislain Bonneau - 2010

Anybody can paint With Oil.

This is just to shows you that anybody can paint with Oil. My son Charles is shown here in my Atelier in 1993 and he was only 7 Years Old on that photo. My daughter Brigitte was 13 and she is seen here in my Atelier in 1994 with a painting I was working on. She was just walking by and I just told her to hold my Palette and I took her picture in front of my painting, but like Charles she also did some paintings of her own. I shown them both some of the basics that anyone should know before painting with Oil, but I did not elaborate more on the subject. At the time they preferred to play outside then to stay inside and paint, but I am sure that today they would appreciate to know more about it and to continue learning on their own. With the basic instructions I am freely giving you here on my Web Site, you will be able to start Painting With Oil on your own, in no time.

Charles at 7 Years old.



Brigitte at 13 Years old.



INTRODUCTION

There is so much to learn about Painting with Oil that I surely could write a book about it but this is not my intention since I don't have the time and don't care for fame and fortune. This essay here contains the Basic information and Techniques that any one would require to know before attempting to do Oil Paintings. I tried to keep it as short and consistent as possible. I go directly to the point and don't excessively elaborate on each and every elements of this Art and I encourage you to check other sources if you want to find out more about anything mentioned in this essay, or to contact me via my e-mail that you will find at the end of this document.

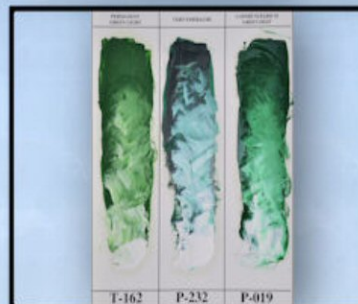
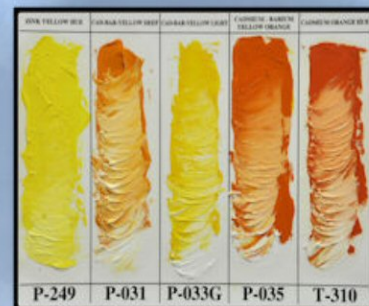
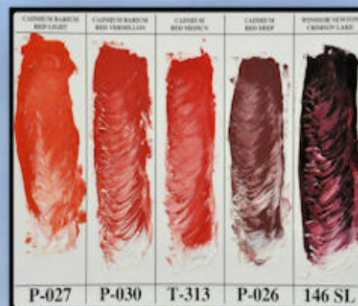
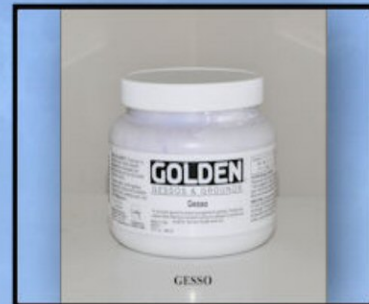
Next page will show you some of what you will need and those images can be open and downloaded. Just click on the Image and this will bring you to the Web Site Page.

There will be references to those images further down the text.



Painting With Oil

What You Will Need

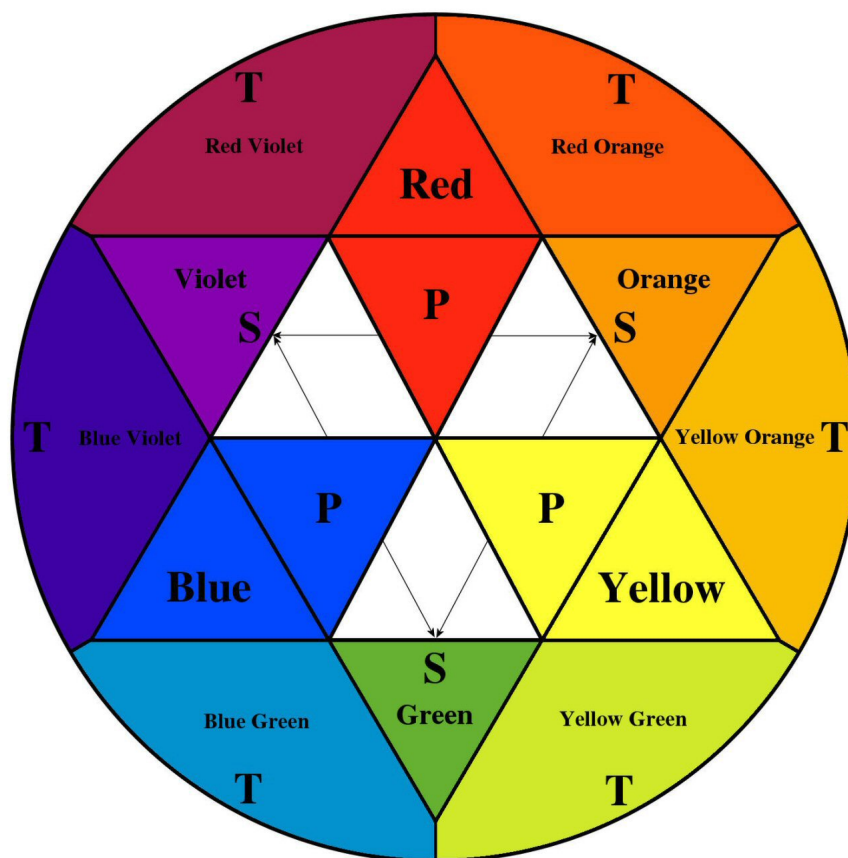


To Open the Images in this Document just Click on the Images and this will take you to the Web Site.
 If the links do not work make sure you are connected to the Internet. If it still does not work click on Edit in the Acrobat Reader Program and then click on Properties, and then Documents.
 At the bottom look for PDF/A View Mode and set it to NEVER. Then all the Links should work.
 If they still don't work you can view and download the Images at <http://www.gbphotodidactical.ca>

Colour Wheel

Primary Colours are RED, YELLOW and BLUE. Secondary colours are made from a combination of two of the primary colours as shown here on the Colour Wheel. As an example to make the Secondary Colour ORANGE you will need RED and YELLOW and the same goes for other Secondary and Tertiary Colours. They are the result of the combination of two adjacent colours on the Colour Wheel. In the Decoration and interior Design Industry they use the colour Wheel to match Colours. For example any colours that are directly at opposite end on the Colour Wheel (Complementary Colours) will create invigorating and trendy colour schemes. For example BLUE and ORANGE go well together or Red-Orange and Blue-Green. Any Colours that are adjacent on the Colour Wheel (Analogous Colours) will create a warmer look. Don't forget that the Colour Wheel shows the Colours at their most pure form and adding White or Black or both to any colours will create many other variations of colour possibility and a very wide variety of grays. Having the Primary and Secondary Colours in your Colour palette plus Black and White is what you will need to learn how to mix any other possible colours.

MY COLOUR WHEEL



P = Primary Colours S = Secondary Colours T = Tertiary Colours

Things you must know first

First I must tell you not to look for any kind of particular style or to Copy on other people's work. Just be yourself when you Paint and empty your mind. As your technique will improve your own personal style will start to emerge and will find it's way by itself. To find your style is not really important for now, just let your style find you instead, and believe me, it will. When I paint nothing else exist around me, I am totally absorb by what I do and this is the Ultimate relaxation. I am part of the painting that I do. By this I mean that I place myself in the scene or the subject so that I will be able to reproduce the mood and feelings of the scene and the subject in my painting. If it was hot and humid, I want to be able to reproduce those elements, if it was cold and windy or dry, those weather conditions should be part of the scene. If the subject is a person then I put myself in that person and feel everything that person was feeling in place and time to be able to reproduce the emotions and atmosphere of that scene. One day I said this to my Son and Daughter and my Son asked me....."Dad where you in the little girl when you where painting her" My son was referring to Painting # 60 that you can see on my Website, At this LINK below

http://www.gbphotodidactical.ca/painting_single-page-39.html

and I replied, Yes I was there in her place, and I was picking up the flowers in that moment in time and nothing else existed or mattered for me. When I took the photo of the little Girl to do the painting she did not see me or anybody else around her either, she was totally concentrated in what she was doing and she did it with Innocence, Simplicity and Love and those are the feelings that I tried to reproduce in the painting when I did it. Why did I choose OIL as a medium over Water Colour or Acrylic or anything else is simply because Oil does not dry as fast and it gives me time to correct my mistakes and I can also use the (BORROWING) Technique. The Borrowing technique is simple and very effective. It permits you to mix colours directly on the canvas rather than always on the palette like when you use Water Colour or acrylic paint. Note that with acrylic paint you can add something called (a Retardant) with the paint so that it will slows down the drying time, but this Retardant changes the viscosity and texture of the paint and I don't like that. With Oil paint, I use only Oil in the mix to control the viscosity of the paint depending on what I paint and the texture I want to obtain with the paint. I never use any other medium to do that I only use Linseed Oil. Some artists makes their own medium to dilute the viscosity of the paint, because the paint comes out very thick from the paint tubes most of the time and you have to add something to the paint to dilute the pigmentation and make it more malleable. As an example for the Borrowing technique if you would be doing grass, the first step in Oil is to use a large brush and to apply a good quantity of paint of different tone and colours in all parts of the grass area creating shaded area and sunny area. This first coat of paint application I call THE BASE COAT. So there will be areas with bright grass and other with dark grass and maybe also different colours here and there, and after you have finish applying all the Base Colours and Tones in the grass area, then you use a small brush that you hold pointing down and you brush upwards in the dark area just enough to put paint on the brush and then you move to the bright area and paint dark grass with the dark paint on your brush.

When no more dark green is on the brush you move to the darker grass and continue to brush upward with the small brush that now contains bright green, and back and forth. You start with the grass that is further away doing very small grass and work your way forward to the bottom of the painting where you will have longer grass. The same Borrowing technique can be used for Rocks, Clouds or Tree trunks or waves. Borrowing also gives you the opportunity to create unique colours and tone patterns that normally would be impossible to reproduce on a palette because it would take too much time to mix each and every one of them. This is the big difference between other medium and Oil, there will always be much more colours and details when using Oil to do your paintings. In my paintings there is lots of different colours and tones, much more then there can ever be possible with Water or Acrylic paint, and not all colours where mixed on the palette, most of the time the colours are the result of the Borrowing Technique and where mixed directly on the canvas. This is the main reason as why I prefer Oil over anything else since my style is Realism and the more colours and the more details there is in my paintings, the better.

I did Pencil drawings, charcoal, ink, water colour, Pastels, and many more but Oil was the one I like the most for its ease of application and its great flexibility for creating texture. Painting should be a very relaxing experience and don't worry about the outcome. I treat every painting as **(a study)** where I do something different every time to learn more and to perfect my technique. I improve after every painting I do and the next one is always better then the previous one. Be patient and tolerant of your mistakes, this is how you will learn, by doing mistakes. I never do the same scene twice, because each is unique and have it's own theme to learn from. On one painting I might do rocks to improve my technique with rocks, and the next painting it could be water and the next clouds, and the next trees. Every painting I did had a reason to be, I choose my scenes very carefully to learn more about those different elements, and don't expect to do everything perfect the first time. If you are looking for perfection, DON'T PAINT, Painting is an art and one that will permit you to get those deep down feelings out on your canvas and you must do it freely and in a very relaxing manner. No stress, no Rules, no NOTHING, Just YOU, and your Canvas. The most important thing is to have FUN doing it, if it become stressing to paint, take a break and just remember what I said on this page. Some artist say that they are waiting for inspiration to paint. This is not actually true, it's not really Inspiration, you must wait that you have the urge to express your emotions on your painting to be able to do a good job. If someday you don't feel like painting, DON'T. The urge to paint will come back, because sometime you need to take a step back and to take a good look at your work and to try to situate yourself in this new way of expressing yourself. When you will have the urge to paint it's because you have the need to express your emotions. Painting is an Art and it is all about the reproduction of Human Feelings and Emotions. The paintings you will do will become part of you, because they will contain your Emotions, your Feelings and your Love. I got a hard time to let go of my paintings, sometime it takes a couple of years before I put them on the OK to sell list and some of them I just can't let go and I will always keep them with me. Like Leonardo Da Vinci he could not let go of the Joconde, he kept it with him all his life and brought it with him everywhere he went.

Do you really need to know how to draw first, before you start painting with oil?

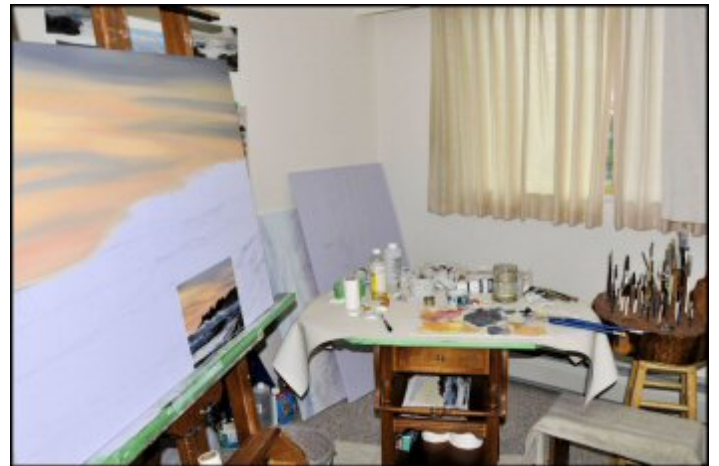
I will tell you that before I took my Art course with the Famous Artist School I did some drawings here and there just for the fun of it and I did not know what I was doing but it was fun. In the course I learn about composition and Perspective, and both of those are the base from which your drawing will grow. You must learn how to draw in perspective if you want to do buildings, roads, fences and things like that. But drawing is not very important if you do just landscapes. I will tell you a secret, I Don't really like to DRAW, and when I prepare a painting I just measure the horizon line to make sure it is straight and I draw the most essentials that I will need to paint over it. For rocks I draw the shaded areas so that I won't have to look at the photo I paint from at every brush strokes. For trees I only make a line where the sky won't show so that I don't Have to paint the sky where there will be trees. You will see some of the sky through the trees and the line is below that. As for learning how to draw, you either have it in you or you don't, but only time and practice will get you better as the years go by. So you don't have to wait 5 years before starting to paint. Just do simple landscapes and never draw the fine details before you paint, just do the contours of the main objects and most important your horizon line. Your horizon line should always be straight no matter how high or low it will be, once you have decided where you want it, just measure with a tape and draw a line for your horizon. So you don't really need to learn how to draw, it will come with practice. If you want to do portraits and human figures then you might want to check how to do those as well. It depends what you want to paint. Just to give you an Idea of what you should learn if you are serious about Oil Painting, here is some of what I have learned from my Art course, and it was in that order.

- 1-Intro to pencil drawing.
- 2-Design and composition.
- 3-The Elements of composition.
- 4-Perspective and reflections.
- 5-Form, the basic of drawing.
- 6-Texture and how to draw Shadows.
- 7-Introduction to colour and the effect of light.
- 8-Choosing a colour Palette and mixing colours.
- 9-Painting Techniques and tricks. (The Borrowing Technique.)
- 10-Let's start Painting.

All this should suggest you to get informed about all of the above so that you will know what you are doing when Painting. About 70% of Artist never took a course and don't know anything about all the above, so if you don't, it will just be, one more. That proves that you can paint even if you don't know much about it and how to draw, but I strongly recommend you to get this information or to take a course about all the above. With the internet it should be easy for you to get that information. For the composition part you can check out the PDF The Art of Composition in Visual Art, that I have written and that is available in the download page on my Website. In Visual art it is better to know what you are doing so that you can exploit your full potential.

MY ATELIER

My Atelier is simple but effective. I use a Tea Wagon, as a mixing Table that I can easily pull closer to the Easel or to push it out of the way. The mixing surface is a Plexiglas 22 X 24 inches that gives me lots of room for mixing my paint and is very easy to clean.



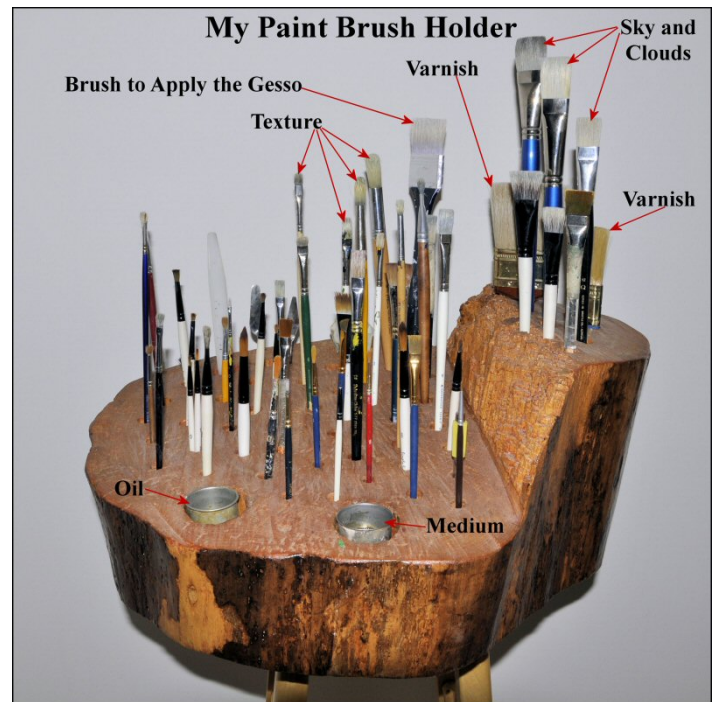
MY PAINT TUBES

I use plastic containers to hold my paint tubes that I keep in separate colour order for quick access to find them. I have a container for each of the following colours, RED, YELLOW, BLUE, GREEN and BROWN. I have two or three Tubes of each colour I use in my palette and when one is empty I put down the number and the colour information on my next shopping list, and I still have two more tubes to use before I run out. In total I have 20 different colours in my Palette plus Black and White.



MY BRUSH HOLDER

I found this cut three log in a ditch on the side of the Road and I saw in it the potential for a great brush Holder. I left it exactly as I found it and I only had to drill holes of different size to fit most of my brushes and then I applied several coats of varnish to seal the wood to prevent it from drying and cracking. It is heavy but does not take much space. This brush holder keeps my brushes in order and give me quick accessibility. I always keep it close to my mixing table when I paint.



THE GESSO

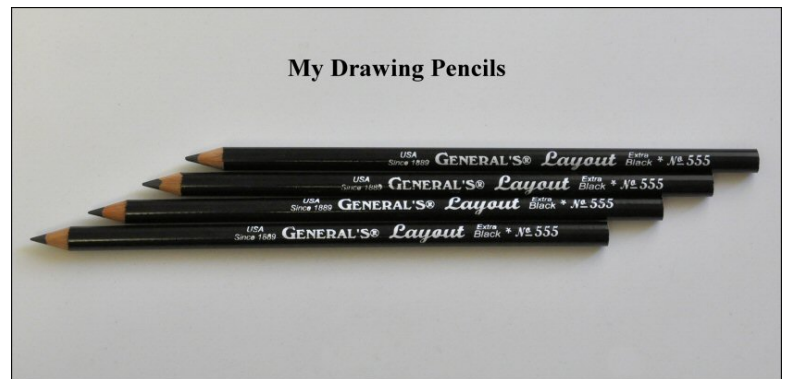
The Gesso is an Acrylic base that you can put on your canvas prior to painting over it. Gesso makes the surface a little stiffer and prevents paint from soaking into the support (canvas, paper, wood, etc.), and it gives the surface a little more texture, called <tooth>, so the paint sticks better. It can be painted over with Acrylic or Oil Paint. The Gesso can be thinned with water, but I use it as it is. I just add some purple Acrylic colour to give it a mid tone value. Gesso dries very fast and



becomes very hard, so be aware of any droppings and the mess that you it could make on the floor. It's a good Idea to put a Painters tarp or News paper on the floor before you start.

MY DRAWING PENCILS

I use those pencils to draw directly on the canvas the main contour lines of the Objects and some details as I see them on my Reference Photo. They don't smear if you pass your hand on it and they leave the canvas clean.



THE SPATULAS

I use the stainless steel spatulas to paint rocks and sometime water and waves at high sea. I use the plastic spatulas only for mixing my paint.



Preparation procedure before painting.

1-I choose a Scene that I like and I try to improve the composition on it if I can. Most of the time I work from my own Photos and sometime I change the sky on the computer and print my new reference photo. I work mostly with real objects for my still life paintings and scenery's and sometime I add a piece of my imagination here and there. Do not work only from your imagination since your objects like, flowers, drapes, tables, linen and anything you can think of and want to use in your paintings will lack realism.

2-I decide of the Size of the painting that will match the scene depending on how much details I want to put on it. I suggest that you start with a small canvas size and work your way up as you will be more comfortable with painting with Oil and as your style and abilities will get better defined. My first painting was only 9 by12 inches and you can see it on page Three at the top. Today I am working with 30 by 48 inches. I did one that was 36 by 60 inches and that one was my 16th painting.

3-I decide of the Overall tone value and colours that I will use on this painting depending on the mood of the subject. This is where it is very important to try to visualize the final painting in your head. If I can't see it in my head at that point I stop until I can make a clear image of what the painting will look like when it will be completed. I might make some adjustment to the reference photo on the computer to match the image in my head that I want to produce on the canvas and print it.

4-I prepare the surface of the Canvas by applying a coat of Gesso. You have to apply the Gesso very quickly because it dries very fast. If you see that you have some droppings of gesso down on the canvas, brush over it immediately, don't wait when you will be there to spread it with the rest of the coat, because chances are that it will be dry already and it will leave a mark and dried Gesso is very hard to remove. I wait till the next day before I start to draw and to paint over the Gesso.

5-I decide of the location of the light source, this should have been done in step one above but here I make sure I got this right. This will help me to put my shadows at the right angle and always keep the light source in mind during the whole process of the painting. This is Very Important so make sure you keep your light source in mind throughout the whole painting process.

6-I start to paint and I always do the sky first because it is always further away, and everything else overlaps over it, Then I do what ever comes next that is further away, like threes of mountains. Then I continue down the painting until I reach the bottom and whatever is on top of everything else. During the whole process of painting I always keep in mind the Position of the Light Source, tone value, and colour refractions on other things around them. I finish by adding the shadows area, the highlights, texture and details. And I am done.

MIXING COLOURS

I don't use any other medium to dilute my paint other the Linseed Oil, any other medium would be too liquid and very hard to control the right viscosity that I am looking for in my paint. The viscosity of the paint is very important when painting with Oil, you want just the right thickness for the kind of details or texture you want to have and if the paint is too diluted, the paint will be too liquid and you won't be able to make any kind of texture.

So when I mix my paint the first step is to prepare the White by applying some Linseed Oil in it and mixing it well before using it to mix with other colours. Four or five drops of linseed Oil should be enough because you don't want to make your white too liquid, just enough so that it will mix well with other colours. You will see that when you start mixing the Oil with the white, the paint will be flaky at first and you must mix it until the Oil is very well evenly mixed with the paint.

Make small twisting motions for a while and then pick up the paint with the larger side of the spatula and turn it over and mix some more with small twisting motions and repeat the turn over and twisting until the white is very smooth. Now that your White paint is ready pick it up with the spatula and put it at the top right or left of your mixing table so that it will be out of the way to mix your other colours.

Then just pick enough white to prepare for your next colour mix and when adding other colours you will see if you need more Oil in the mix or not. Some paint comes out of the tube with lots of Oil already so you won't need to add Oil and some colours are very thick and dry.

For Sky's you will always need lots of white and very little pigmentation of blue to get the colour you want, so when making a colour for the Sky use a very small amount of pigmentation to start mixing with some of your white and add more colours gradually until you get the right Tone Value that you want for that particular colour. For mixing other Colours if the intended Tone Value will be dark then start with the pigmentation and add White to it, but if the final tone value will be bright then you start with the white and add colour pigmentation gradually to your white. Be aware that too much white in your colours will make them look chalky and they will lack purity. The first few times that you will mix your colours you will probably mix too much. At the end of the day when you will have finish painting you will see that you mixed too much colour and you will have to throw all away, but if you paint the next day and that you don't have finish your painting just put a wax paper over your mixing palette and slim it down close to the paint to remove as much air as possible. Push out the air from the centre out and make sure you have some mixture all around so that the wax paper will make a good seal on the paint in the centre. I usually just dip my finger in the Oil and pass it around the Palette to seal the wax paper. The paint will be harden a bit the next day but it will still be usable. After the second day you must clean your mixing surface and throw out any left over paint. Just mix the colours as you need them and don't use up all the white right from the start. In other words don't make a whole bunch of paint just to paint a small area with a colour, you will find that it does not take that much paint to cover a large area. In time you will adjust but know that today I still have some left over paint on my Palette when I am done, because it is better to have a little too much then not enough, if you don't have enough colours mixed on your palette, you will have to make more mix to finish your painting and getting the exact same colour again could be very difficult Wasting paint is part of the process of painting, so don't feel too bad about it, every body waist paint. Unless you use the left overs and splash them on a canvas to make some kind of a modern or futuristic style.

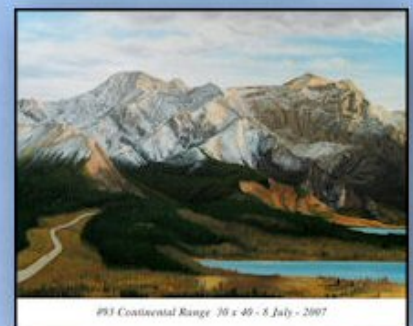
Mixing palette samples.



I only work on a particular part of the painting at one time in a painting session. So I only mix the colours for that particular part of the scene on that day. Here is one example of mixing colours for a part of the mountain I was doing on Painting #93.



Encircled in red was the only part of the Painting that I was doing on that day. Completed painting is on the right.



Calibrating Your Tone Values.

Some artist prefer to go back and fort all over the painting with no specific order of any of the tone value. Some start with the mid-tone values and then work on the darker and brighter part of the paintings to match the mid-tone values. I don't have to do it this way to keep track of the tone values because I make the whole painting in my mind first, even before I start to paint it. Once I see the whole thing very clearly in my head, then and only then I can start to paint it, and if I try to paint it and I don't see it in my head, my painting will be a mess. So I do the painting in my head first and then I have a clear picture of what the painting will look like when it will be completed, then I can easily reproduce the Image I have in my head, onto the canvas. The image I have in my mind is not the lines and the drawing of the scene that I want to paint, but rather the colours and tone value of every elements on the Image and I don't see any fine details and I don't need to.

Direction of the Light Source.

The first thing I look for in a painting to evaluate an artist is the shadows and the direction of the light source. If I can clearly define the location of the light source, it's because the artist had it in mind while doing his painting and did a good job on his shaded areas. So this Artist probably had an Art course. Most artist who did not take a course don't know that the first and most important thing to do when painting is to decide in the location of the light source, and the Light Source could be either the Sun or an artificial light and then you can make your highlights and shadows accordingly. So it is easy to know if and Artist was aware of that or not, because when looking at someone Else's painting, if I can't determine the position of the light source, and the shaded areas are in all directions and don't make any sense, chances are that this artist did not take a course and doesn't know anything about it. Below is a sample photo that shows you how to find the light source. From the top of any object to the end of their respective shadows, draw a line upward towards the sky using a ruler and this will give you the direction of the light source. Of course you must see the top of the object and the end of its shadow to be able to determine the direction of the light source. See examples on the photo below and realize that the sun is very far away so the lines don't converge towards each other, but they probably would if the light source was a lamp and if it was close by, so in that case the lines would converge towards each other to the light source and the shadows would have different length.



HOW TO CONFIGURE YOUR SHADOWS

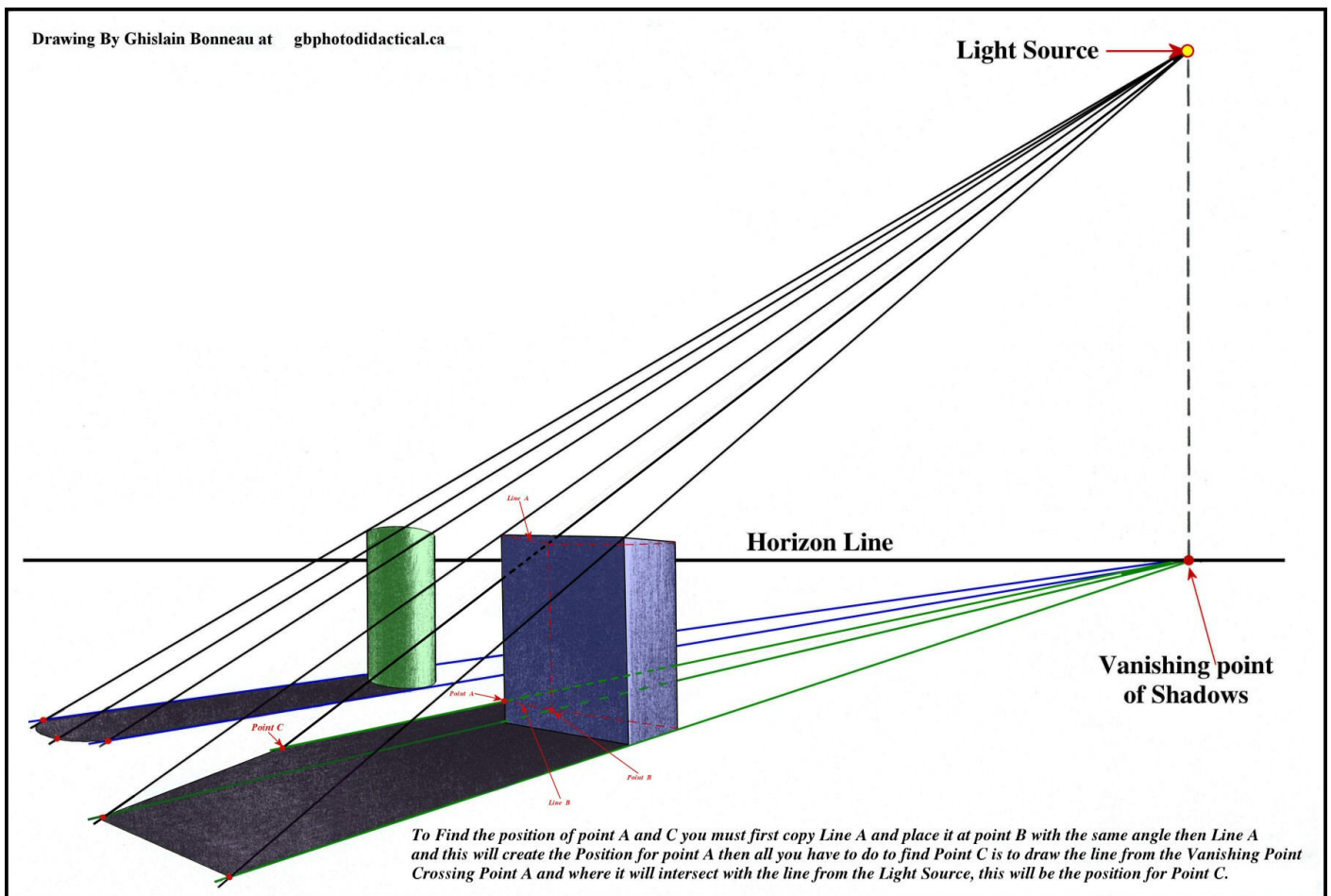
Light rays Always travel in a straight line, so that should be easy for you to draw straight lines.

Step-1 = First draw your Horizon line and then draw a Vertical line down from the Light Source to the Horizon line. This Point where those two lines will meet is called the Vanishing Point and this is where all Lines from the Bottom Sides of any Object will meet. The Shadows vanishing point will fall on the Horizon line directly Below the Light Source.

Step-2 = From the Vanishing Point draw lines that will touch the Bottom Side part of all Objects. With a single Light Source all shadows should recede to the same vanishing point.

Step-3 = From the Light Source may it be either a lamp or the Sun, draw lines that will touch the top corners of the form of any object and continue them until they strike the surface of the plane on which the form is standing. This will be where the Lines from the Light Source will meet the Lines from the Vanishing Point that passes on each side of each objects.

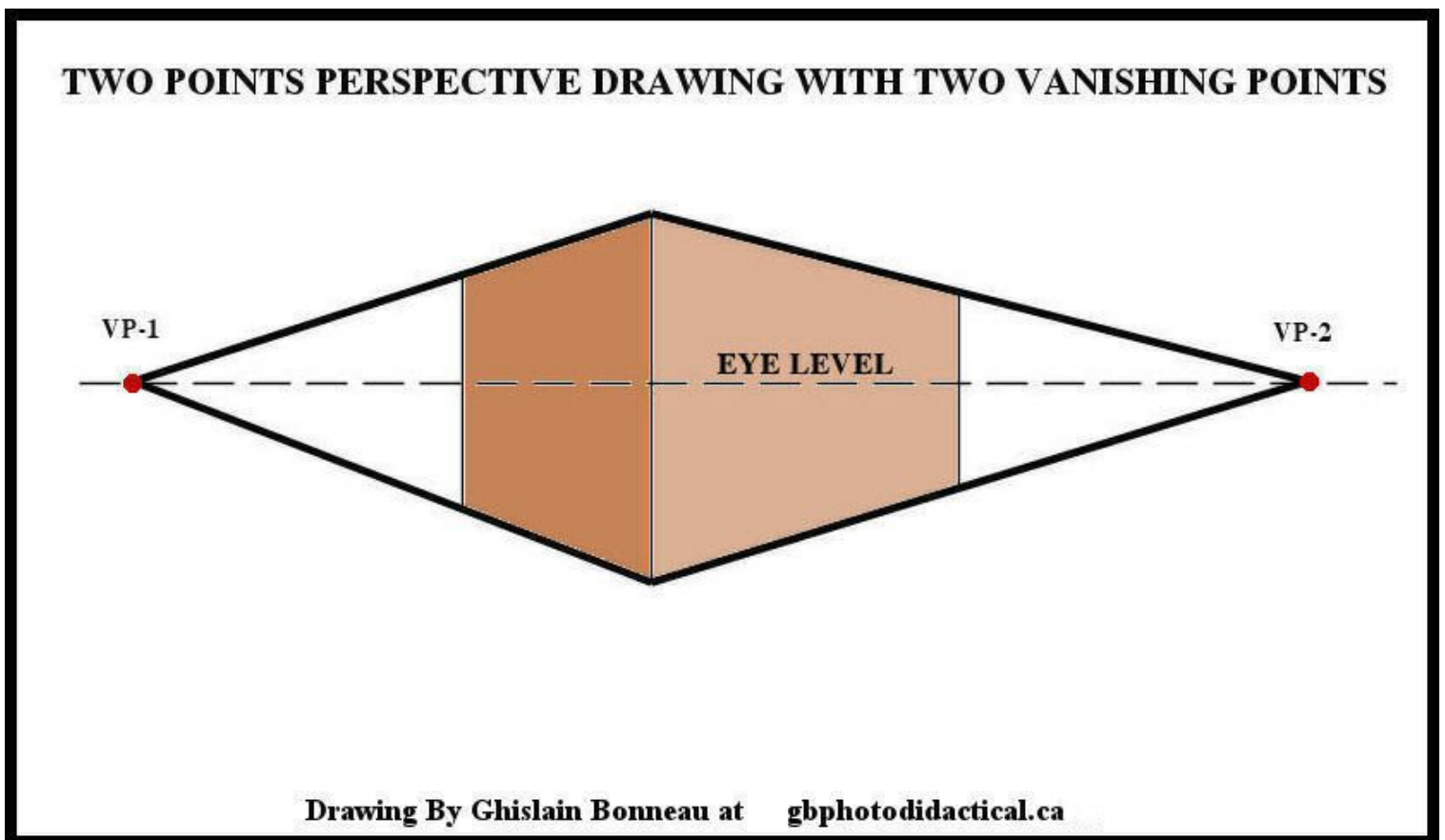
The shadows will then be SHAPED by the INTERSECTING POINTS from the Lines that came from the light Source in combination with the lines that came from the vanishing point. The lines from the vanishing point will give you the direction of the shadows and the lines from the light source will give you the length of the shadows. Make other forms and drawings to practice enough until you will get the hang of it and that you won't forget this.



Please note that contrary to the above drawing, contours of the shadows should be well defined the closer they are to the subject and not as defined and flew the further away the shadows will be from the subject. This is caused by Light Reflection from adjacent objects that are in the sun. You will find more information about (Light Reflection from other objects) in the PDF *The Art of Composition in Visual Art*, right after page 22 Here in the above drawing the shadows where made well defined solely for a better understanding of how to draw them.

How to Draw in perspective.

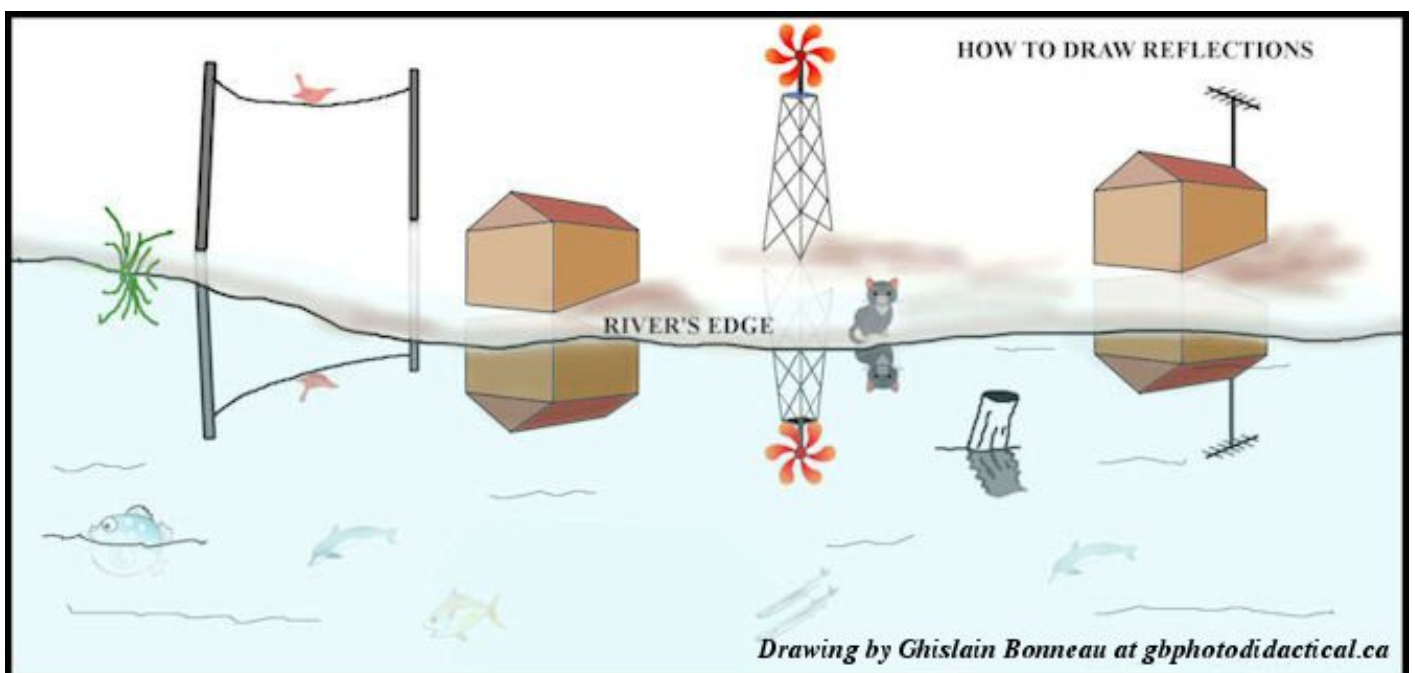
There are two sets of parallel lines in a Two Points Perspective Drawing and those lines will appear to converge towards each of their own Vanishing Points at the Horizon or you Eye Level. Drawing in perspective is all about the height of your point of View or the Eye Level. This is what will determine the perspective lines of any objects that are part of your drawing. So it is very important to know here that if your eye Level is situated in the middle of the object like in the drawing below, that the lines on each side of the building will be parallel going up and down and not converging towards each others. If you lower your Eye Level then the lines on each side of the building will tend to converge towards each others going up to a third Vanishing Point. If in the case where you are very high in the sky like in a plane then the third Vanishing Point will be lower and the lines on each side of the building will converge towards each others going down to this third and low Vanishing Point. You can practice drawing buildings in perspective and just draw the main contour lines for now without any details. Later on you might want to try to add windows or bricks. The same principle will apply to all the elements on the same drawing according to the height of the Eye Level. Note that your Vanishing Point don't need to be on the drawing itself, they could be very far away. In this case I use to tape my drawing on the table and put a piece of tape far away on the table and made a point on it that I would use with a ruler to make my drawing in a three Point Perspective. For a more detailed view of three Point Perspective, just click on image below.



REFLECTIONS.

Reflections are easy to do once you will know how they work. They are not the flipped version of the reflecting images on a water's surface, but are rather what you would see if you were yourself on the surface of the water on each spots of reflected images. The illustration below shows this phenomenon in the tower and you can see more of the underside of the tower's top platform because you are looking at it from the water surface where the reflection is. You can also see that the fan's blades are closer to the tower's top plate from this low point of view. This drawing also show you how much of the reflected objects you will see according to their distance from the river's edge. Of course this drawing suppose that your eye level is at a normal person's height standing.

The result could be different like in Perspective if your eye level was lower or higher. This, you will have to study on your own, I just can't give you examples of all possibilities. The inverted image can be used to determine what you would see of the object. The distance from the ground to the top of any objects is the same in the reflection except that the image in the reflection starts also from the bottom of the object where it is on the ground. So if the object is further away from the shore you would see less of its reflections in the water. All the angles are always opposites and all reflections are always darker in tone value then the original object on land. Reflections are always at exactly 90 degree with the surface of the water. Look at the Pole on the left and even if it is leaning to the right, the top of the pole will be perfectly at 90 degrees with the top of the pole's reflected in the water. Now look at the second pole, it's reflection is shorter because the pole is further away. Measure the height of the pole from the ground and the same distance will give you how much of the pole you should see in the reflection on the water's surface. The two houses are the same size but the one on the right is further away from the shore so you will see less of it's reflections in the water. Practice reflections till you won't forget how to draw them.



Retrospective

The direction of the Light Source, How to configure your Shadows, Drawing in Perspective and How to Draw Reflections are the very basic principles of Drawing and know that I can't go in details here but I am sure I gave you just enough to get you started in the right direction. This is not all there is about those topics and it will be up to you to check on the Internet or in a good book for more information. I could have elaborated for about 20 pages more on each of those topics but this essay is about painting with Oil and I would miss the point, so I must keep all the rest to a minimum.

EVOLUTION IN PERCEPTION.

When I started to do Oil paintings I noticed that most of the colours turned to RED on my paintings, RED was predominant in all the first paintings I did, then as I painted more, YELLOWS were predominant in my paintings, and a couple of months later BLUE were predominant and then GRAY'S started to be more apparent and then AIR DENSITY started to show. What happens here is that the brain is adjusting to this new way of expression and all colours are experienced by the brain separately one by one and they become predominant in a certain period of your learning process. On some famous artist they define those as the Blue period or the Red period and so on. You will choose instinctively scenes that have the colours your brain wants to first experiment. Don't even think about it, this will come by itself and the order of the colours probably won't be the same as I have experimented it. RED, YELLOW, BLUE, GRAY'S, so for you they will probably come in a different order. This is caused by your brain adjusting like if you would adjust the colours on a monitor one by one to get the best possible picture; this is exactly what your brain will be doing. Choose your scenes very carefully, not too difficult at first and then gradually add more elements on your compositions. On every painting I did I tried to master a new element, first I did lots of paintings with rocks, I am very fascinated by rocks and I like very much to do them. Then I worked to do more clouds, and then trees, and fall scenes and then reflections on a lake or a water pond. Then I worked to learn how to do drapes and linen or cloth, and then flowers and then waves and stormy Sky's, and winter scenes and people and still life and boats and on and on and on. So every painting where a study on each of those elements and I did as much paintings as I had to do to master each one of them until I was satisfied and then moved on to the next thing I wanted to learn. Today I am to master sand on beaches with water reflections on them, this I haven't done yet and my photos of the west coast of Vancouver Island have lots of those. So my next paintings will be on that element that I still have to master. After that I don't know what else I could learn maybe nudes or fantasy paintings. I don't really know where this will take me but one thing I am sure of, is that I will paint till I drop dead. When you start painting with Oil or Acrylic you will find that it is very easy to miss some spots where the white of the canvas will show through the paint so make sure all the canvas is painted over. To eliminate this problem I use an acrylic white Gesso that I previously tone down with some Purple acrylic colour to give a background of a mid-tone value to work from because it is not as contrasting like the white of the canvas is. It will be much easier to find the right tone value for your painting and the purple is not as contrasting and distracting as the white is. The purple does not show through as much as pure white does and if there is places where my paint is very thin the canvas doesn't show as much.

Base Coat and Texture.

Creating Texture using Oil Paint is creating the illusion of the real thing and in my Realism painting style I try with the help of texture to give the illusion of reality. The softness of the clouds in the sky, the play of the leaves in a tree, the texture of a brick wall or rocks and the play of water on the ocean will all have their very different techniques to create the illusion of their own respective texture on them. To be able to create texture over a certain area of your painting you must first paint a background that I call the **BASE COAT**. For everything you will paint there will always be a Base Coat that you can apply First and then you can paint your texture, details, highlights and shadows. The Base Coat is normally of a Mid Tone Value of what ever will be painted over, so that it will be easy to make the colour either lighter or darker when you will add details, highlights, and shadows. This is where you must start to develop your sense of vision to be able to see more details before you start to paint a scene. Take a good look at the scene you want to paint and try to see behind the details all the different colours and tone values that makes the background of a certain part of your scene. The base coats should always be very smooth and not too thick but with lots of pigmentation, so don't put too much oil in the mix to make your Base Coat. Always use a large brush and apply the Base Coat by pressing hard on the Canvas so that the paint will cover all the small holes on the canvas and the paint will stick better to it.

When the paint of the Base Coat is all applied, brush lightly from one side to the other holding your brush at a small angle with the canvas and press very lightly to remove all texture. This is what I call the Brush Off Technique. Always finish with the Brush Off over your Base Coat because the next day the Base Coat could be dry and if you left some texture on it, they might not match what you will paint over it. The most important reason for the base coat is to hide the canvas and to make it easier to create your texture without any worry of leaving any small areas of the canvas not painted over. Depending on the texture and effect that you want to obtain, the Base Coat could be fresh or dry depending if you want the Base Coat colours to mix with the paint that you will put over it. To create texture realize that the viscosity and thickness of the paint is very important. For Sky's I use a large brush that I pass from left to right and from right to left very lightly after I have applied the **BASE COAT**, to soften the lines and the surface of the paint to give it a smooth surface. I first paint the blue sky area and I don't paint where the clouds will be. After the sky is painted and smoothed out, then I can make the clouds. For Leaves in a tree, the first thing to do again is to paint a Base Coat colour that will be behind the leaves to simulate all the other leaves in that tree. This is where the choice of the size of your canvas is very important because the size of your canvas will determine what technique you will use to make your textures and how much details you will be able to put on it.

When I finish painting for the day I check to see if I can use my left over paint as a Base Coat for another area of my painting and if I have to, I adjust the colours and tone and I spread the base coat smoothly to make sure not to leave any textures, because Tomorrow I might not be able to paint and the next time I paint the Base Coat will be dry. Some Old Masters Painted without any texture on their canvas and sometime even repainted another scene over it. I like texture very much because it helps to create the illusion of 3D and help to emphasize the illusion of Depth and distance. There is less texture and paint on distant objects but the closer they are the thicker the paint and texture will be.

Texture can not be show to everybody one by one because everybody has a different style and see the world differently and will then probably reproduce it differently on the canvas, so you will just have to learn how to work your brush and experiment until you get the texture and the look that you want to achieve, this is one thing that you will have to learn by yourself.

When doing texture, do it in a playful manner and don't be scare to mess up your painting, this is how you will learn to make texture. If you are too stiff and rigid and scared, you will never be able to learn how to do texture. Don't be afraid to experiment with different brush and brush strokes until you get the result that you want. Like some people say, it's all in the wrist and that applies to creating texture as much as playing the piano. To create texture on a brick wall, don't try to do one brick at a time instead before doing any contour lines of the bricks, look at the overall tone and colours of the wall and reproduce that where the wall will be, this will become the Base Coat for the brick Wall and then you can make texture with a large flat brush by tapping gently here an there with very little paint on the brush to create texture. Then you make your brick lines and create some shaded areas and highlight areas.

Painting a forest border is also very simple and you can use the same principles. Don't paint every tree one at a time. First apply the Base Coat with the background colours that will probably be dark green since the interior of the forest is dark. Then make the top of the trees that are highest and further away and then the front tree line. Don't paint the trees in the front all the same size and shape. Beauty in nature comes from it's diversity. So you have trees of different size, heights, tones and colours. They are all different from one another.

The photo Down Below **is an example of a Base Coat done with left over paint.** I had just finished to paint the sky and some of the wave and I was done for the day. So I used the left over paint to do the Base Coat behind the waves that I will paint later. Note that the sky colours are not right yet because I am not finish with that painting. I have to add more pink in the sky. There is more tools then just paint brushes that you can use to create and make texture. Sometime I use News Paper bunched up in a small ball like or I use Hygienic paper or sponges or foam, cut in a way to create different patterns and textures. Texture is everywhere you look and not just in nature. The carpet on the floor has a texture and the drapes also have their own unique texture. Like a brick wall texture does not come from a single element but from an ensemble of elements bunched up together. So every surface has a texture and it's either smooth or ruff and either shiny and reflective or dull.



TIPS ON MIXING COLOURS

Look at the colour you want to produce and start with the closest version of it you have in your Palette. For example if you want to produce a yellow-green start with the Yellow and add some green to it very gradually. If the result is to be more on the green side then start with the Green and add some Yellow Gradually until you get the Green you wanted.

Go easy with the white to lighten your colours, if you use too much white in your mix the resulting colours will become chalky and lose their richness. Again if mixing a Blue-Green, start with the Blue and add green gradually if the resulting colour is to be more Blue than Green. The other way around is also true if you want to mix a Green-Blue that will be more green than Blue then start with the Green and add the Blue Gradually. The best way to become familiar with the colours in your palette is to start mixing colours.

Just use two colours at one time and add some white to them and see what the result will be. Notice that adding white to colours will make them look cooler and adding black will make the colours look warmer. Every time you will change the amount of one or the other colour, the resulting Colour will be different. Just for the fun of learning and experimenting, lets start to mix some BLUE and GREEN with white,. and then try to add YELLOW instead of WHITE. Do the same with two other colours and see what happen. Start mixing your colours from the centre of your Mixing Table or Palette and work your way around it.

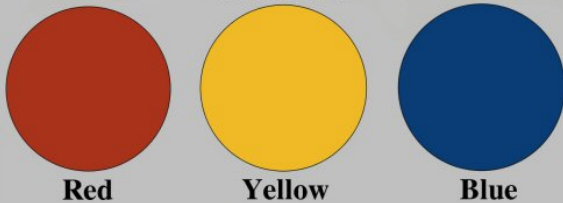
Keep it simple until you can produce any colour you want. As you will learn more you will be able to incorporate more colours in your palette and into your mix. Simplicity has always given me the best result. Mixing too much colours together only makes muddy dirty Gray's that lack richness and interest . Wipe your mixing spatula before you change colour to avoid mixing unwanted colours with one another. If you have a hard time to get the colour you want just stop your mixing and look again at the colour you want to produce. Use the colour on your palette that is the closest to the colour you want to achieve and add a bit of another colour to get it closer to what you want. Only Time and Experience will give you the best way to mix your colours to get the results you want, just remember to keep your mix simple and to keep your brush and spatula clean before you change colour.



Mixing the Primary Colours

The best way to go about learning how to mix colours is to start with the primary colours plus black and white. Later on you can add other colours to your Palette as you will become more comfortable with mixing colours. In the demonstrations below, the size of the coloured circles indicates the approximate proportions used in the mixtures that will create the desired colour.

Primaries



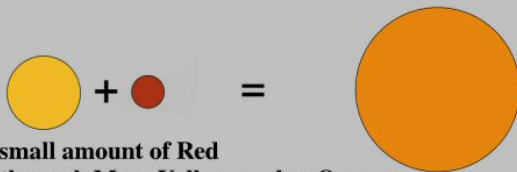
Red

Yellow

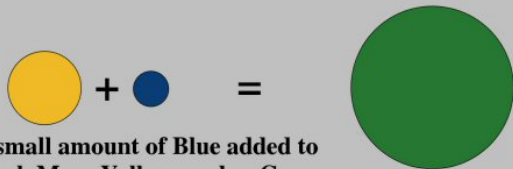
Blue

These three Primary colours can produce a great variety of other colours. On this Page I show you some of the different colours that can be created by mixing these primaries. With Oil, White is used to Lighten a colour.

Secondaries --- Orange, Green, Violet



A small amount of Red with much More Yellow, makes Orange.



A small amount of Blue added to much More Yellow, makes Green.



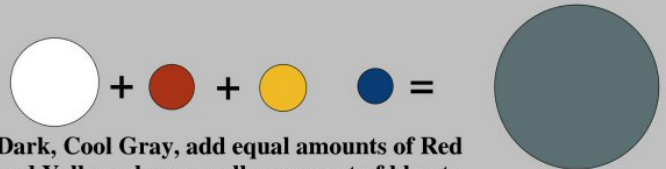
A small amount of Blue added to much More Red, will make Violet.

Combining all Three Primaries

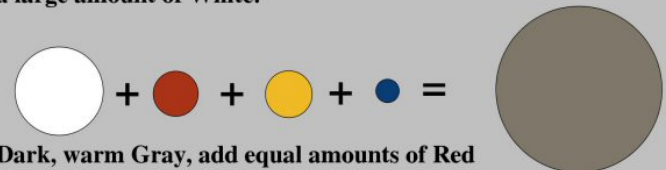
Here is some of the Colours that can be created by combining all three Primaries.



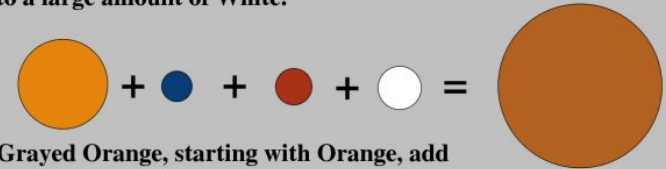
Brown is mostly Red plus a small amount of Yellow and a Tiny bit of Blue



Dark, Cool Gray, add equal amounts of Red and Yellow plus a smaller amount of blue to a large amount of White.



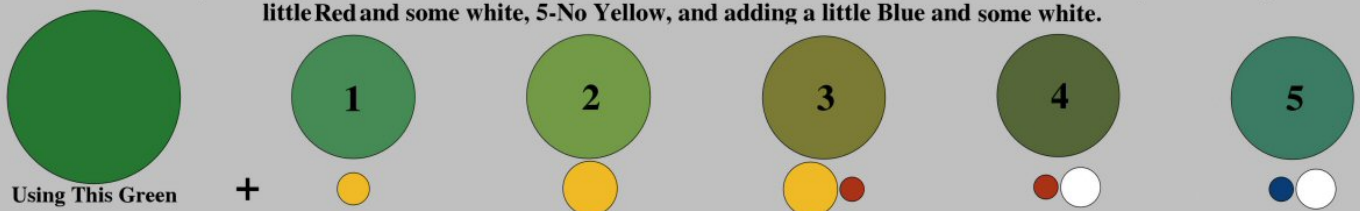
Dark, warm Gray, add equal amounts of Red and Yellow plus a very tiny amount of Blue to a large amount of White.



Grayed Orange, starting with Orange, add a tiny bit of blue plus a small amount of Red and add some White to lighten.

By Ghislain Bonneau at <http://www.gbphotodidactical.ca>

Below is some examples on how you can create a wide variety of colours just by adding a tiny bit of another colour in the mix. Starting with all the same green notice how the green has changed in all the five examples below. 1-adding a little Yellow, 2-adding a lot more Yellow, 3-adding a lot of Yellow plus a little bit of Red, 4-No Yellow, and adding a little Red and some white, 5-No Yellow, and adding a little Blue and some white.



Latitude, Texture and Clouds.

LATITUDE:

You will probably work from a photo to do your paintings, so notice that the dark areas are much too dark on a photo compare to what you will see with your eyes in the real world. When you work from a photo you must keep in mind that the camera has a very narrow Latitude. LATITUDE, means the ability to perceive details in bright and dark areas of an image. A Wide Latitude will show details and a Narrow Latitude will be a loss of details.

The human eye has a wide Latitude and can perceive details in both dark and bright areas at the same time even if the range of brightness is considerable between them. Digital Cameras work and see the world differently they have a wide latitude in the dark area but the Camera gives priority to the brighter area and the dark areas are always too dark. So when you paint from a photo you must improve that Latitude to what your eyes would see and correct the shaded areas to see more details. Don't reproduce exactly what you see from a photo, you must always improve the colours, the contrast the brightness the Overall Tone value and also correct the Latitude. You should be able to see lots of details in the shaded area and never use black to darken a colour. I rarely use black except for making Gray's and to improve the quality of the colours but never to darken them. When you paint evergreen trees on a sunny day, there should be more yellow in the mix with all your green colours and also true for everything else that is in the sun.

TEXTURE:

In another Texture related problem you must know that from a close distance you will see individual strand of grass but not from far away. The texture of far away hill or grass fields won't show individual strand of grass. Use a large flat brush and hold it upward at a very close angle with the canvas and put very little paint on it. Now after applying your Base Coat just tap lightly starting from the highest and farthest hill and work your way down. You can use the borrowing technique here to make a play of different colours while you are also making the texture of the far away grass in the hill side or in the fields. You must use different techniques to create texture at different distances. Painting with Oil will give you a much greater flexibility and control over texture and the thickness of the paint that you want to use. Never, Never, Never paint from others Artist Painting and try to reproduce them because you will only Copy their mistakes and you will bring that along with you in your baggage of knowledge. How do you know if that other Artist did it correctly and the best way it should be done? Even if that Artist is renown and well known, that does not mean that he does not makes mistakes. It's OK to work from your own photos or maybe from someone Else's photos with their permission, but never from someone Else's painting.

CLOUDS:

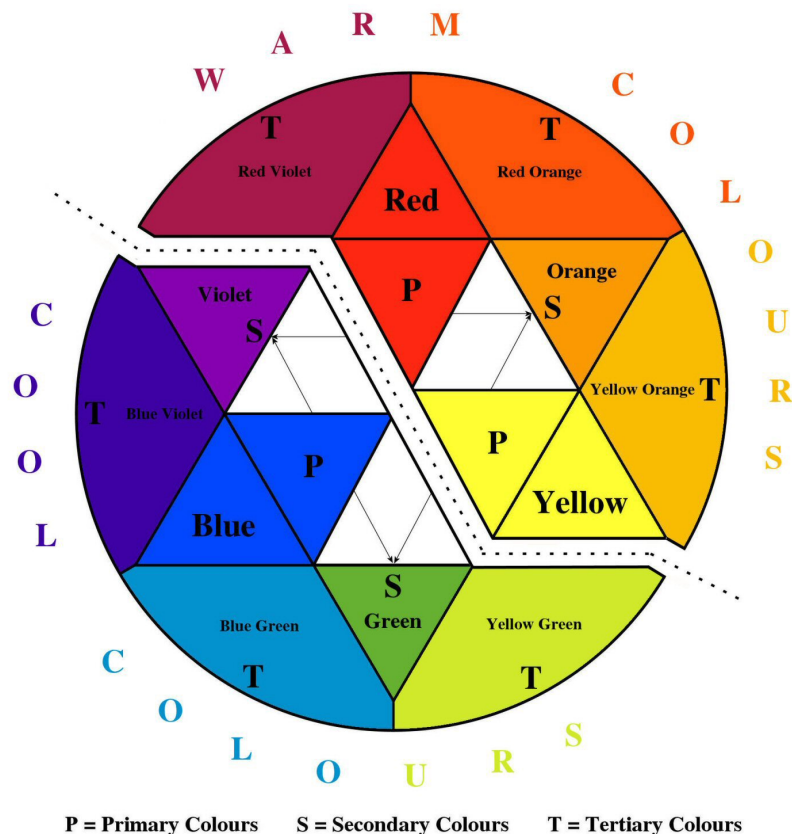
Look at Clouds as if they were 3D objects like big rectangular boxes, they have thickness, depth and different shapes. The clouds far away are thinner and elongated. The clouds should get bigger and bigger as they are closer to you and the closer they are to you the more you will see the underside of them. On a painting and a photo you can't see the clouds that would be directly above you, but to give more depth and the effect of 3D the clouds must get bigger and bigger very gradually from far away at the Horizon to close to the top of the painting where you will see more of the underside of the clouds.

ALL ABOUT COLOURS

COLOUR is all about pigmentation and perception. See The Art of composition for more details. Some materials are very rich in pigmentation and those materials are purified to make the paint you will use from your paint tubes. They have been made from some plants, animals and minerals. When you are mixing those pigment you are mixing pure colours. So colours are actually Pigments of pure colours. **HUE** denotes the position of a particular colour on the colour wheel. It has nothing to do with darkness or brightness of a colour.

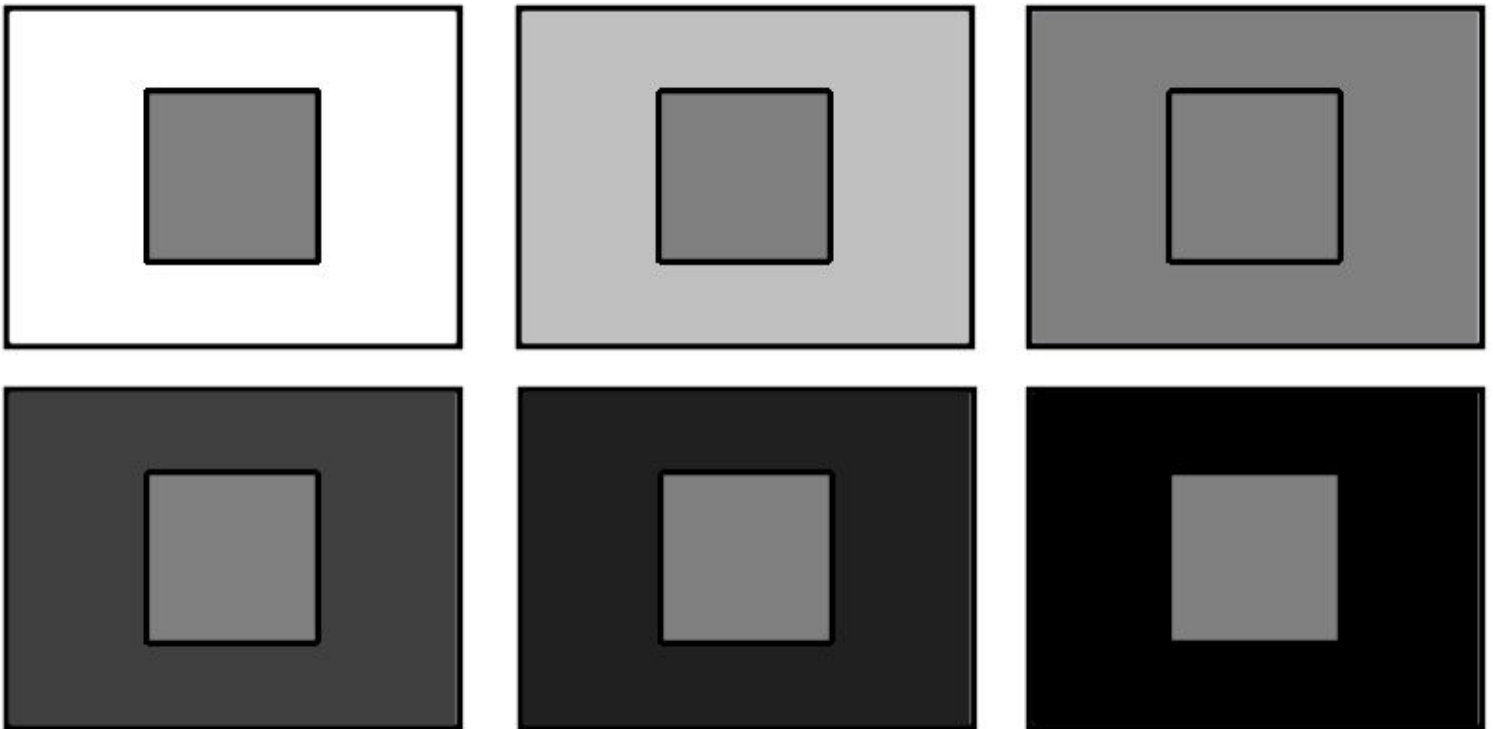
1-HUE is the NAME of every colour. Warm and cool colours are represented in the quality of the HUE. If you would make a line on the Colour Wheel between Yellow and Yellow Green at the bottom right of the wheel and extend this line between the opposite side of the wheel between Violet and Red Violet you would notice that all hues on the right side of that line centring around Orange are more warm the the colours on the opposite side around the Colour Blue that appears to be cool colours.

MY COLOUR WHEEL



2-VALUE. The first dimension of any colour is HUE and the second dimension is VALUE. So when I talk about the HUE I refer to the Name of the Colours and when I talk about the VALUE of a Colour this is only the brightness or darkness of a Colour. The word Tint refers to the Value of the Colour. To make a tint we add some white to a pure colour and to make a shade we add black to a pure colour. In all the case above we did not change the HUE of the Colour we only change it's VALUE or tint if you want. We made it brighter or greyer and darker.

3-INTENSITY is the third dimension of a colour. The intensity of a colour will refer to it's Strength, Saturation or it's Purity. Any pure colour like RED that does not contain any white or black in it will reflect more red light then if it was changed by adding white or black to it. This Red would then appear less Red to our eyes and would not reflect as much red light and would not be as bright. For example if you did not toned down the white of the canvas while you applied the Gesso, when you will paint shadows they will appear too dark compared to the contrast of the bright white of the canvas but once the painting will be completed they wont look as dark and they will be OK. So it will be very difficult to work your tone values right if you work on a white canvas. This is why it is important to tone down the canvas before you start to paint. I use purple because it is neutral between red and blue and has some white and black in it. So it's intensity is down and not as contrasting. The Gray in the middle of all the squares of the image in the link below has the same Value but will appear brighter or darker depending of the Value of the colours around it. To show this I only use black and white and it works the same way with colours but is not as evident.



ADVANCING AND RECEDING COLOURS.

Warm colours like Yellow, Orange and Red appears closer to us then cool Colours like Violets, Green and Blue if those where viewed from the same distance. So it is a good Idea to use Cooler colours as objects are further away. With distance colours not only become Coolers but also Greyers. So adding Black and White to the Colours of far away objects will crate greyer and lighter Colours and will accentuate the effect of Depth and Distance. This effect of creating distance in a painting is called Aerial Perspective, and I personally call it (AIR DENSITY.) See the PDF file, The Art of Composition in the download page for more details on Air Density.

COLOURS AND LIGHT

Under different Light Condition Colours will look different because of the colour of the light over it and the colour of the surrounding objects that reflect light rays back on the object. Reflected light rays from near by objects can change the brightness and colour of an object. This is better explained in details in the PDF (The Art of Composition) that you will find in the download page on this Web Site.

COLOURS AND THEIR RELATED EMOTIONS.

RED = Excitement, Heat, Love, Suggest Strong Emotions **DARK RED** = passion and Hate.

YELLOW = Cheerful and Happy, Sun, Sunshine, Joy, Gaiety, Life.

ORANGE = Friendly, Appetizing, House Interiors.

PINK = Romance, Quiet and Sentimental

BLUE = Calm, Distance, Air, Quiet, Moonlight and Evening,

GREEN = Nature, Outdoors, Plants, Coolness, Horror, Ghostliness

PURPLE and VIOLET = Mystery, Dark and Serious moods.

BLUE-PURPLE = A Predominance of Grayed Blue-Purple will suggest **DEPRESSION**, so avoid them unless you are trying to suggest such a mood.

RED-VIOLET = Rich, Luxury, Elegance

Bright Warm Colours are generally used for Excitement and Gaiety, So you would not use those for quiet and Sentimental scenes. Cool and Grayed Colours are mostly use for Stillness or Despair. So you would not use those for exciting and violent scenes.

BLACK and SHADOWS. If you ever run out of black you can make your own **BLACK** by mixing together Ultramarine Blue and Burnt Umber or Burnt Sienna. This mix will give you a beautiful Rich Black. Black can be use in conjunction with White to make cool Gray's and also to add qualities to a colour that would be to bright and pure by itself. Pure colours are rarely use as they are when they come out of the Paint Tubes.

You will always mix White and some Black to a Pure colour. I rarely use Black to darken Colours, I prefer to use darker Pigmentation then to add black to darken a Colour and this is why I have a wide variety of dark and bright colours in my Palette. The reason is that Black is too neutral and create more often a grayish darker colour then the darker version of the colour I am aiming to get. Shadows can be boring in a painting but can also become a centre of creativity and interest if you know how to do them. Shadows are never solid and Opaque Colours they are the absence of direct light and the product of the refracting surrounding light on them. Never use just Black and harsh and purplish Tones to produce shadows. Shadows are not just the grayed version of one colour, they should be warm with a coolness at their edge to suggest the reflected light from it's surrounding, or they could be cool with a warm colour at their edge to produce interest. Generally Colours in the shade will tend to go towards blue, but that blue is warmed by all the surrounding refracted light and colours. My Palette is extensive enough to give me all possibilities to mix any colours that I see in the real world. By my Palette of course I mean all the different Colour I use to make my mixing. (See the colour charts on Page 2 that are all part of my Palette.) All artist have their personal Palette and this will make their paintings unique in HUE and VALUE because the resulting colours on the painting where mixed using different Colours available in their own particular Palette.

PAIN TUBES.

Oil Paint Tubes Winsor & Newton has a high level of pigment and provides good covering power. I only use Winsor Newton for Titanium White and Ivory Black. I buy them in a big tube 200 ml format that is much less expensive then the Grumbachers. For all other colours I use Grumbacher Pre-tested paint that is of the highest quality but much more expensive. **Grumbacher Pre-Tested Oil Colours** are made with the finest pigments, milled in select alkali-refined linseed oil for the professional artist. Grumbacher Pre-tested Oil Colours is the paint that I have always used right from the beginning.

GRUMBACHER MAX WATER SOLUBLE OIL COLOUR. Max Oils clean easily with soap and water, yet retain all the characteristic of traditional oils. May also be used in conjunction with conventional oil mediums or colour. I can tell you that Max Oils mixes very well with other Oil colours and react the same way as ordinary expensive Oil paint. Looks like it does the job very well but I am not sure if it will resist well to yellowing and darkening in the long run. It is much less expensive and the Brush are easier to clean. I will probably hold on to the original Pre-tested version but if I can't find the colour I want I will buy the Max version of that same colour without any hesitation. **Linseed Oil**, Improves flow, increases gloss of oil paints. Add directly as it is to your white and colours for mixing. You can thin the Oil with some solvent before mixing. Linseed Oil was used to make traditional oil mediums. This is the only Oil I have ever used, its the best. **Medium Diluents**, Personally I don't use any other medium then Linseed Oil to thin my paint or to clean my brush before I change Colour while painting. I believe the less ingredients mixed with your Oil Paint, the better control you will have on texture and ease of application. Note that there is good Diluents like the Grumbacher Diluent II, that you might like to use.

Check the Internet for more details. **Liquid Brush Cleaners;** I only use the Stevenson Odorless Mineral Spirit to clean all my brushes and my mixing table right after I finish painting and it does the job very well.

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR BRUSHES.

Brush Cleaning is important if you want your brush to have a long life, If they are not cleaned properly they will harden and they will lose their flexibility. I clean my brushes in three distinctive steps.

1-The first step is to remove as much paint as possible from the brush with a paper towel or a rag, then I dip them in an odorless solvent to remove the paint from the hair. Use a small ceramic bowl and put about half an inch of solvent. Start to clean the smaller brush first and finish with the bigger brush last. Be very careful not to splash the solvent in your eyes, wear protective glasses to protect your eyes. Move the brush in the solvent from left to right while pressing gently on the brush in an up and down motion.

2-Step two, remove the solvent from the bowl and rinse your brush in running lukewarm water (**never hot**) and add a strong detergent like (Comet) in the bowl and repeat the same cleaning technique.

3-Step three, rinse the bowl and the brush again in running lukewarm water and this time use a hand soap bar and gently brush all your brush on it on each side of the brush and rinse under cold water and move the brush in the same manner in your hand from left to right and up and down to remove all the soap. Dry your brush with a clean rag or paper towel. Do Not pull on the hair of the brush to clean them, instead apply pressure with your fingers on each side of the brush in the rag or between the paper towel. Your brush are now clean, put them in an upright position in a brush holder for drying until the next time you will need to use them.

OTHER STUFF YOU WILL NEED.

BRUSHES: With time you will know what brushes are best for textures and details and clouds and grass and rocks. Ask the Store sales person to help you and to suggest what is best for you. Mostly brushes for painting with Oil are made of either white hog bristle or red sable. Large Bristle brushes are best for laying in large areas and thicker coats of paint and the red sable hair brushes are softer and finer and are better for smaller areas and fine details.

RULERS AND MEASURING TAPE. I use a 15 inches ruler, and at times I wish I had a 20.

ERASERS. You will need a soft eraser that won't make a mess and that won't be too hard on the surface of your canvas. I rarely use an eraser but sometime I did. When there is too much lines to erase I just past another coat of Purple Gesso over the part of the drawing I don't want. The Gesso will hide very well the unwanted lines. Always keep an open eye for loose hair brush on your canvas and remove them with a small spatula as you go. I use a strong Hygienic paper to clean my brush while I paint when I change colours.

WAIST BASKET:

I keep a **WAIST BASKET** close by my Easel to dispose of the used paper as I paint and I close and dispose of the plastic bag as soon as I am done painting. Old rags or paper damped with Oil Paint can get very smelly and are a fire hazard, so don't keep them around when you are done. Put on some Relaxing Music and you are ready to paint.

VENTILATION:

Good ventilation is very important when you paint with Oil so keep that window open and let the bathroom fan running, this will create a vacuum and the air will flow in from your window and out the bathroom fan.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT to Never, never, never take the bad habit to put the Paint Brush in your mouth, even if it's just for one second, this is a very unhealthy habit to take. Most of the Oil Paint contains toxic minerals that you don't want to have in your system and those minerals could give you cancer or other deceases. So be aware of this and think twice before you use your mouth as a temporary brush holder. If the paint gets on your skin just wipe off as much as possible and clean your hands when you are done painting for the day. I don't think that you can poison yourself if the paint only touch your skin, I have been painting with Oil for over 45 years and I don't have any Cancer or related decease. Note that I never put the Paint Brush in my Mouth but my hands get paint on them all the time. At the end of the painting session I clean my hands with Mineral Spirit and hand soap. But if you are not sure that it is completely safe you could always check with your family doctor for better advices on this matter.

WHEN IS IT OK TO VARNISH YOUR PAINTINGS.

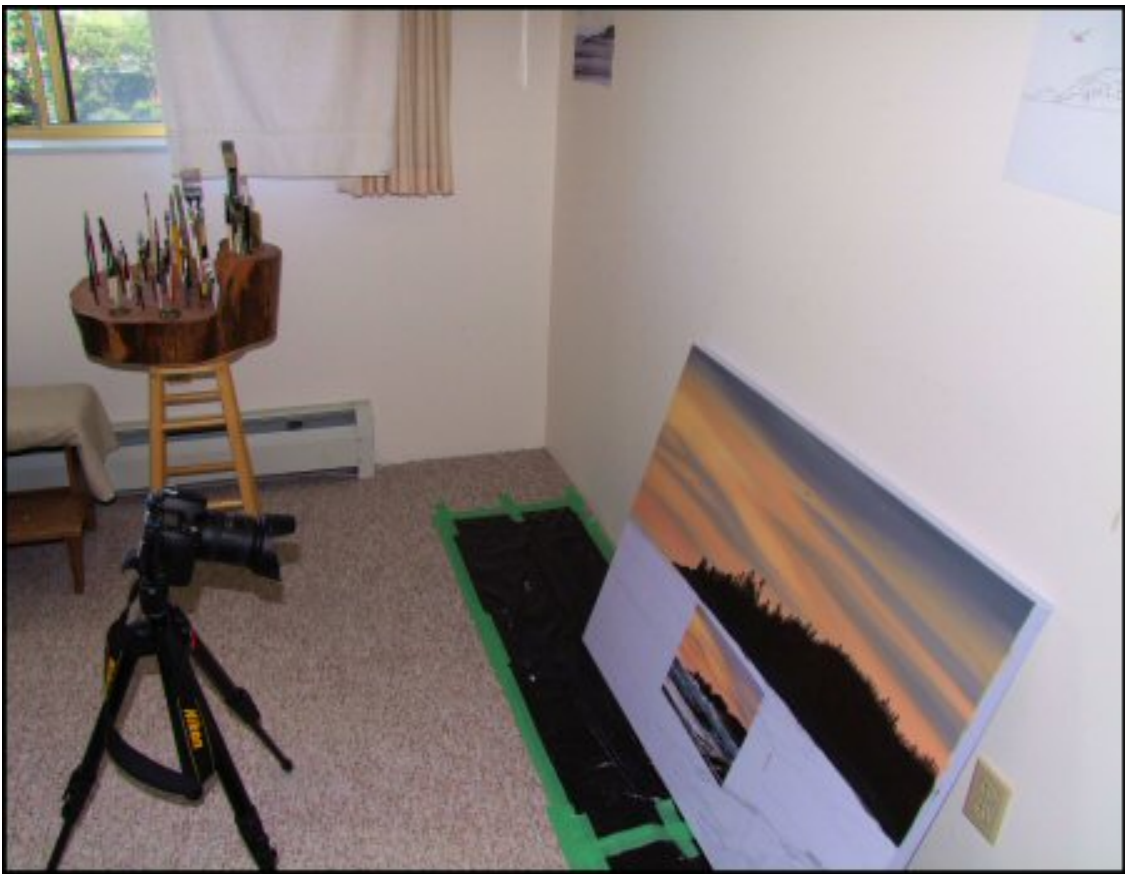
You should wait a minimum of 6 months to a year before applying any varnish over an Oil Painting. The reason is that it takes a very long time to completely dry underneath where the paint is thicker and if you varnish it before six months, the humidity in the paint will be trapped underneath the varnish and the humidity will try to get out and over time the paint will crack. I wait one year before applying varnish just to be on the safe side. So I keep track of the date that each painting was completed and the date I varnished it. When Varnishing with liquid Varnish put the painting on a flat surface and put a protective tarp underneath the Painting because some varnish will drip off from each side. Wait a couple of hours before lifting it to an upright position to prevent drippings runs. Apply the varnish very slowly so as not to make any air bubbles. Wipe off any excess varnish from the sides as you go. I don't recommend Spray Varnish because it is very difficult to apply evenly and Spray Varnish are a hazard for your eyes and your lungs. If you use Spray Varnish make sure you protect yourself and that you have good ventilation.

HOW TO TAKE PHOTOS OF YOUR PAINTINGS.

The photos I use to make my paintings from, I call them the (REFERENCE PHOTO) and I always keep my Reference Photos with the photo of the painting in a file on my computer. Make sure you make copies of this folder and keep it in a safe place somewhere else. If your house burn downs and that you loose all your paintings and photos and computer you would have a copy of all of them somewhere else. All would not have been lost. When you take a photo of your painting it is best to use a tripod and the timer on your camera. The camera must be at the same angle then the painting. To find the right angle make sure you are in dead centre with the painting from each side and from the bottom and top of the painting, then just move your camera up and down by tilting it and you will see each side either elongates and deform or become straight on each side. Put your camera at the point where you will see that both sides will be straight with the sides of your viewing screen, this is how you will find your centre and the right angle to take photo of a painting. Then lock your tripod at that position. Make sure that you include all the painting in the photo, and then you can crop it later in a photo program. Use f11 this is the best Aperture for this purpose if you want the whole painting in focus. It is also a good Idea to sign your paintings. Find the best way to do this and always sign your paintings the same way. As and example I sign mine. G.Bonneau and under the name I put the date 2010/6 The year and the month should be good enough. Of course this is only a suggestion and there is millions ways you could sign your paintings. Make sure your signature does not stand out too much and is not too big and distracting. Never sign too close to the borders leave at least one and a half to two inches of space from either borders. I usually sign with a colour that is of a little darker tone value of the surroundings and I place the signature in a place where not too much important details are.

Some people sign with red or white or a very bright and contrasting colour, this is not recommended, like I said your signature should be discrete and not stand out too much. You should be able to see it only if you get very close to the painting but not from far away. This photo is an example of a good set up. Put your painting at about four feet from the window to get some of it's light and on the ceiling in the middle of that little room there is two 100 watt fluorescent cool lights, **NOT** White Light, White light gives a Yellow light so you must use Cool Light, there is a big difference in the colour. I put the Painting at an angle so that neither the light from the window or the ceiling will create light reflections on the painting. I put my camera on a tripod at the same angle then the painting, and I take several photos at different Exposure Value just to make sure I got it right. I have two big studio lamps specially design for that purpose but what I have shown you here is the simplest setup that will do the job for you, because it's not everybody that have all the necessary studio equipment.

(See Example Photo on the next Page)



RECORD KEEPING.

I took photos of all my paintings and I keep them on my computer and also a hard copy in a big album. Looking back at my paintings gives me the opportunity to see my Mistakes, my Evolution and all the Progress I made from painting to painting. If you want to learn from your mistakes you must keep a photo of all of them. The information that is very valuable to keep about each painting is;

1-The PAINTING NUMBER. The best way to Number them is in the order you did them.

2-The TITLE OF THE PAINTING.

3-The DIMENSION; Either in inches or centimeters, but it should be specified.

4-The DATE it was Completed and also the date it was Varnished.

5-The MEDIUM used; examples = Oil, Acrylic, Water Colour, Mix Media.

6-The SURFACE used; example = Hard Canvas Board, or Canvas, or Wooden surface.

7-The OWNER; You or the person to whom you sold it to or that you gave it to.

All this information I keep with all the photos of my paintings on my computer and also in the album with the photos of each paintings. I have also copy of all this somewhere else, just in case of a fire. And here is an example of all the information I keep with each painting.

MOP means (My Oil Painting) MOP#100 – Title - 30 X 40 inches - 6 June 2010 - Oil on Canvas - Owner (Me, Or Mr. Or Miss. Lucky.)

IN CONCLUSION.

I noticed that the more paintings I did, and the better I got, so never stop painting and I am sure that you also will get better in drawing, mixing your paint and in creating texture as you will do more and more paintings.

I just want to wish you Good Luck with your new Hobby that might become more than you could ever hope for. You never know how far something like this could take you. Some of the greatest Artist of the Past Human History discovered at a certain point in their life that they could express their feelings and emotions onto the canvas and started to paint. Some of them became famous in their life time and others after their death and one thing they had in common is that they all became famous because they succeeded in their Art to express all the emotions and feeling they had inside of them onto the scenes they painted. They found the way to express themselves in a true and simple manner that only few can do with such clarity of expression.

There is many other forms of expressions like, Sports, Music, Dance, and Poetry just to name a few. In Visual Art, like Oil painting, is the best there is because you will have great satisfaction doing them and you also will have something in return that you can keep with you for the rest of your life. For me Painting is the Ultimate relaxation and evasion because when I paint, nothing else exist, but me and my canvas.

I just hope that by sharing my experience and knowledge with you all, that this will help to inspire you to start painting with Oil and that my instructions guided you on the right path to a very satisfying Hobby. Please let me know if you found this simple Essay complete enough and easy to understand so that I can improve it in the future.

Don't hesitate to contact me for any questions about any topics mentioned in this Essay or to send me photos of your paintings to receive my constructive critics on your progress. It would be nice to hear that my effort is appreciated and that now, YOU, also can paint with Oil.

♥ And most of all, Have Fun Doing it. ♥

Artistically Yours.....GHISLAIN BONNEAU.

You will find the Original Version of this Essay at <http://www.gbphotodidactical.ca>

And Just click on How to Paint With Oil.

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