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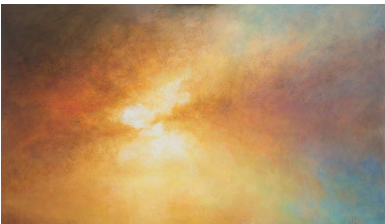
A Brief History of Oil Paint

Natural oils like poppyseed oil, flax, and walnut **oil were known since ancient Egyptian times of around 4000 BC**; therefore, the Flemish painters like Jan Van Eyck were not the "inventors" of oil paint, instead they developed a stable vehicle/binder using drying oils. Linseed oil wasn't used widely as a binder for paints until Van Eyck's time. By the 1400s, **oil painting became en vogue during the Renaissance** and linseed oil was the preferred binder, and walnut oil and poppyseed oil were also used to grind with pigments to make paint because of their distinct qualities of colorlessness; etc. All three were used as additives to manipulate the quality of paint as painting mediums like we still do today.

A few other major developments occurred before oil paint is what we know of it today. The **range of color improved** from those using natural minerals and gems when **dyes became known in 1856** by William Henry Perkin. He "attempted to synthesize quinine when he made a purplish dye from "...oxidizing impure aniline with potassium bichromate, Mauvine -- the first organic (based on carbon chemistry) colour was born." This preceded the distillation of coal tar which was also responsible for many new pigments to come." **The 19th Century brought the Industrial Revolution with chemists generating synthetic color pigments**, and "...the **invention of the metal tube and the arrival of the railways** all combined to facilitate this movement in painting. Bright new colours in portable, stable tubes and a method of easy travelling around the country provided us with paintings from one of the most famous periods ever." Lastly, the 20th century brought the pigments I prefer most. "During the first decade the Hoechst company brought out the first 'Hansa' yellows (aka Lemon Yellows)." "In 1936, Phthalocyanine was developed, a deep transparent blue with tinting strength and moderate cost. The first quinacridones were introduced as Permanent Rose and Permanent Magenta." In the 1990's, the use of lead pigments -- including a most wonderful "Lead White" -- were banned due to health concerns.

A Few Common Techniques Using Oil

Wet on wet was made popular in the 80's by television programs on PBS featuring William Alexander and my hero, Bob Ross. Also known as "alla prima" and "direct painting," it is almost like oil sketching; it can be completed in one sitting. "The paint is applied wet onto wet directly onto the canvas usually with no underpainting or sketches." The common technique used by Bob was to paint the "background" first, then "mid-ground", and then "foreground." ***I also paint "Alla Prima" but usually from life and without regard for the sequencing of back, mid, and foregrounds; instead, I transfer the large blocks/shapes of color I observe onto the canvas with approximate coloration, value, sizes, and shapes first, and then refine them by adjusting their relative sizes, proportions, colors, values... along the way, so that they develop the proper visual inter-relationships with the other blocks on the canvas just like those which we observe in nature with our eyes. My technique is simple, I work from using thinner paint first adjusting to thicker paint with time in order to give a stable physical structure to the painting itself. Remember... approximations of large areas first and details later.***



From www.kenbushe.co.uk

Glazing is applying translucent layers of paint allowing the light to travel through to the white gesso and bounce back to your eyes much like dry layering in watercolor. "Glazing tends to give colors more luminescence... they are mixed optically using single transparent layers of color... Each layer must be completely dry before applying subsequent layers." Some create a monochromatic under painting of the subject first, one that establishes the value (dark/light) of the painting. My friend "Rainey" Rodriguez sometimes uses a black gesso instead of white to absorb all the light that gets transmitted through resulting in a Tim Burton-ess world. Use an alkyd resin medium in oil paint to make the paint cure, "dry" faster. **Glazing is supposedly the technique used by the "Oil Masters" of oil painting.** More about glazing on page 2 of <http://www.Lee-Su.com/G2010/Techniques.pdf>

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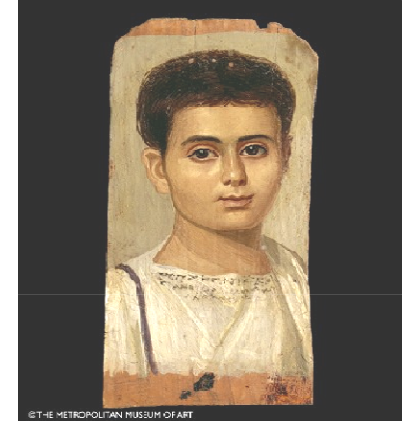
A Few Common Techniques Using Oil - continued

Encaustic is painting with wax and pigment. "This technique has been dated to as early as the fourth century B.C. Although wax may appear to be a fragile material, some encaustic paintings from A.D 100-125 survive today in the form of head and shoulder wax portraits set into mummy casings in Greco-Roman Egypt. To prepare the encaustic medium, I (molly cliff hilts) melt beeswax and add damar(sic), a hardening and stabilizing agent, then filter and cool the mixture for later use. It usually takes a day to make up a large batch." The physical properties of an encaustic painting is that paint can be applied much more thickly on the surface of the painting. Remember the term "impasto?" (See materials and methods guide from class 1.) I have never painted with encaustic. They now make encaustic paint in a tube... Please refer to the following site for more information <http://www.mollycliffhilts.com/encaustic-technique.php>



Molly Cliff Hilts, *Vertigo*, 2008, **wax**, oil, ink, 48 x 48

Mixed Media is like jazz. Work with whatever material that fits the purpose at that time. It is a wonderful way of working but requires the desire to learn through experimentation and perhaps "messing up" a lot. It allows one to use that which is in front of you, available, tactile, ready to be manipulated. Usually, there aren't as much documentation of past artists using the exact type of materials so one gets a feeling of being at the **forefront of ones own "medium."** Of course, I know that everything has been done in one way or another before, but still it is fun and educational to re-discover it. I enjoy and am a proponent of experimentation, but please be careful with the materials you use because some may be volatile or at least can make you feel nauseated. **Experiment in a well ventilated area and with the awareness of another person...** pretty please!



Portrait of a boy, Roman Period, 2nd century A.D. **Encaustic** on wood, h. 15 in. (metmuseum.org)



Leslie Tejada, *Caliente*, Oil/**Mixed Media** on Canvas 36" x 48"

There are so many competent artists willing to share their knowledge on the web. What ever you wish to know about, just Google it, bring it in, and I can talk about it with you.

Demo: A 2 Step Glass Palette

The prices of materials are estimated on the high side on previous materials list, but regardless, a glass palette can be your best friend. It is easy to clean, relatively light to carry, and you can put plastic wrap over it to save your paint.

Material List: 16"x24" or any size

1/8in Glass	Foam is		glass
40% grey paper	1/4 inch		paper
1/2in foam core	larger than		foam
Duct tape	glass!		

Step 1: Prepare & stack the materials

Step 2: Tape the edges 3 times minimum