
Painting Module

Introduction

Most people have looked at a painting but not everyone who has looked at a painting has seen it. To have seen a painting means to have grasped and appreciated all the diverse qualities, aesthetic and technical.¹

Among the visual arts, painting has traditionally received the most attention. Throughout history, from primitive times to the present, the signature of an age has frequently been identified through painting.

The mechanics of painting are multifaceted and therefore subject to diverse interpretations and sometimes misunderstandings. Predominantly, painting involves the internal and the external; that is, internal emotions, feelings and personal intent are given external representation through technical manipulation of colour, volume, balance, and other design elements. Students should acquire technical proficiency in various modes of painting, learning to transform personal beliefs and reflections into visual images.

Processes

At the intermediate level, it is both practical and necessary to limit the number of painting media. Although oil painting is time-honoured and popular, it will not be dealt with here. Reference material will provide additional information.

Tempera Painting

Tempera is water soluble and opaque. If thinned down, it will take on a transparent quality, although not as successfully as transparent watercolour. It is possible to paint over areas of tempera paint. It can be lightened with white or darkened with black. Suitable painting surfaces for tempera are paper or illustration board (a good quality paper mounted on cardboard). A tempera painting can be finished with a commercial spray fixative (use under safe conditions only) or spray varnish to protect it.

¹N. Hulton, *First Steps in Art Appreciation* (London: Chiswick Press, 1968), p. 9.

Gouache

Egg tempera, poster colours, and casein are sometimes referred to as gouaches. However, a true gouache is a watercolour paint that is made opaque by the addition of finely powdered clay. It is manufactured by a number of companies and can be bought in tubes. Gouache dries quickly and can be freely overpainted, underpainted, glazed, or built up to an impasto. Gouache is lighter when dry and has a dull matte surface.

Transparent Watercolour

Watercolours can be purchased in cakes or tubes and are usually sold as students' or artists' colours. The artists' colours are more expensive but have greater fluidity and richer colour. When using transparent watercolours, the whites are often reserved; that is, instead of painting on white areas, the white of the page is used. Transparent watercolours can also be incised, blotted, or painted over. Watercolour lends itself to a variety of techniques (wet-on-wet, dry brush, etc.). But since its beauty lies most often in spontaneity, it should not be overworked.

Different brushes can be used to apply watercolours: round and flat sable and squirrel hair brushes, oriental round and flat brushes, or synthetic bristly brushes. Special paper is required. It is available in varying weights and textures. (Japanese rice paper can also be used.) The paper must be prepared before paint is applied to it. Usually it is soaked in water and then dried on a flat surface to which it is fastened with kraft or butcher tape. It must be handled with care to avoid finger marks.

Acrylic Paint

Acrylic paints are made by combining pigment with plastic (acrylic or vinyl resins). Although they resemble oil-based paints in appearance, they are better for classroom purposes because they are soluble. Unlike oils, they dry quickly, emit no fumes when mixed, and require no special cleaning agents. However, they are virtually impossible to remove from clothing or brushes once dried to their plastic state. Acrylics are versatile; they can be used to achieve transparent, opaque, and impasto effects. Matte or gloss finishes can be obtained by adding appropriate commercial media. They do not yellow, fade, or crack.

Acrylics are hard on natural fibre brushes; nylon acrylic brushes may be more economical in the long run. Palettes can be of paper, wood, glass, or plastic. Suitable painting surfaces include gesso panels, masonite panels painted with white latex paint, and canvas prepared and stretched.

Painting Slides

PA 1	Shawn Steffler/Mr Buggin's Night-Time Café
PA 2	Marilyn Koop/Two Sisters
PA 3	Maureen Greene/Sea with Blue Whales
PA 4	Paul Parsons/Shootie Shoot, Bannerman Park
PA 5	Ray Mackie/Egyptian Passages
PA 6	J.W. Morrice/The Ferry, Quebec
PA 7	Ilse Hughes/Prince and Princes of Wales - Arrival, Government House
PA 8	Julia Pickard/Woman Reading
PA 9	Ilse Hughes/Still Life
PA 10	Alistair Drysdale/Still Life #2
PA 11	Conrad Furey/Toiler of the Sea
PA 12	Kathleen L. Knowling/Anna
PA 13	Greg Curnoe/Mariposa 10 Speed
PA 14	Patricia Holland/Cock-A-Doodle-Do
PA 15	Keith Fillier/Still Life with Chair
PA 16	Alfred Pellan/Floraison/Blossoming
PA 17	Harold Town/Music Behind
PA 18	J.P. Lemieux/The Evening Visitor
PA 19	Shawn Steffler/Caterpillar Archipelago
PA 20	Arch Williams/Ferryland A Century Ago

Artist: Shawn Steffler
Title: Mr. Buggin's Night-Time Café
Medium: Acrylic on paper
Size: 25.4 cm x 38.1 cm
Date: 1984
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter The image of a café in a trailer. We can see through the trailer as if it were x-rayed. It is a summer night; the stars shine. There are many objects in the image (look for them) but the image still **appears** to be a simple one. Colours are bright and intense. Shapes are simple and clearly defined. The painting looks a bit like children's art. Why?

Design

Shapes: Distinct, separate, simple. They are often repeated but not necessarily in a regular pattern.

Colour: Pure, intense, strong. Overall the colours are quite cheerful. The blue is repeated throughout the image and gives unity to the picture.

Techniques

Opaque paint has been applied flatly within an outline.

Mood

This work appears to have been executed by a child; however, this is a very deliberate, well-planned organization of components. There is no sense of the accidental (as in children's art) here. Instead, it picks up on the qualities of children's art, especially in the way of seeing and its cheerfulness.

Notes:

Artist: Marilyn Koop
Title: Two Sisters
Medium: Acrylic on canvas
Size: 91.4 cm x 101.6 cm
Date: 1985
Location: Collection of Eleanor Harder, Belwood, Ontario

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter There are two women, one with her arms around the other; neither is smiling. One is more in profile than the other. Their faces are not portrayed in a realistic manner. Their clothing differs markedly: one is dressed in pink with a white linear pattern; the other in black with colourful mystical symbols. Pink flowers top linear stalks.

Design

Colour: The use of black with bright, cheerful colours is unusual. The artist makes use of tints in the pink dress.
Pattern, Texture: The surface is full of dynamic strokes, shapes and colours.
Space: Everything happens in a very shallow visual space.

Techniques

The work is painted broadly and quite loosely in a bold, flat manner. The only exception is the blending to illustrate volume in the flowers, hair, and one pink shoulder. The artist has also employed a curvilinear brush stroke in some areas.

Mood

The artist is concerned with emotions. What is the relationship between the sisters?

Notes:

Artist: Maureen Greene
Title: Sea with Blue Whale
Medium: Oil
Size: 59 cm x 80 cm
Date: 1972
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter This is an extremely busy picture, chock-full of a tremendous variety of fish (describe some) and underwater plant life. Although the image is mainly green, there is a wide range of colour. There does not seem to be one main point of interest. The whole surface of the painting is full of interesting detail.

Design

Colour: The predominant colour, green, gives unity to the image which would otherwise fly off in all directions because of the huge amount of detail and the variety of shapes and colours.

Pattern: Although the fish are all different, there is enough similarity among the shapes, colours, and sizes to create a fairly regular pattern.

Techniques

The artist applied the paint fairly thinly (the canvas surface is evident in some places). She used very small brushes to create the fine detail.

Mood

Playful, fantastic. This painting is rather like a doodle that grew.

Notes:

Artist: Paul Parsons
Title: Shootie Shoot, Bannerman Park
Medium: Oil
Size: Approximately 70 cm x 76.2 cm
Date: Unknown
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter A large grassy opening between the trees in a park with a shootie shoot. Light shines brightly in later afternoon. The three cast shadows and are caught in shadow themselves. The wall of a building in the background catches the light and reflects it. The trees are stylized and simplified by the use of flat rectangular shapes. Many greens appear in the painting.

Design **Colour:** Mostly monochromatic. The light source is easily discerned. Highlights were painted last on top of darker colours. The artist used many tints and shades of green. **Shape and Pattern:** Tree trunks and greenery are repeated to form a pattern, relieved by an open space and briefly repeated at the bottom of the painting. The repetition creates harmony.

Techniques Paint was applied thickly and opaquely. Brush strokes are flat and square. In some areas paint was layered.

Mood There is a feeling of solidity and weight because of the colour and the brushstrokes. Even the sunny patches have substance. Imagine the warmth of the sun and the beginning evening coolness. Imagine being in this place. What kinds of sounds would you hear? Is the wind blowing?

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

This oil painting depicts the use of mainly different shades of green, from warm to cool. In this

painting there is the composition of colour and also the composition of line, both working together to give the effect of freedom and joy in nature.

Notes:

Artist: Ray Mackie
Title: Egyptian Passages
Medium: Acrylic paint, chalk pastel
Size: 84 cm x 84 cm
Date: 1985
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter We can see a centrally-placed circular shape (a window?) some triangular shapes within (pyramids?), and spheres tinged with yellow (planet?). The foreground has some blurry shapes (bushes?) in it.

Design

Colour: Essentially monochromatic; tints and shades of blue.

Shape and Line: Sometimes lines are used to describe/outline shapes.

Texture: There is a variety of texture in this image because of the variety of ways the artist applied the paint.

Techniques

Vigorous brush strokes were made with a large paintbrush. Some strokes are partially blended. The artist added touches of chalk pastel in another colour.

Mood

Very still because of the cool blues and the central circular shapes where the eye rests. What might the artist be trying to express? Passages of time (from ancient Egyptian to modern?). The artist does not provide many clues as to subject matter. The viewer must work hard to see all possibilities, and in the end can only speculate about them.

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

Part of a series about passing from one condition, or state of mind, to another.

Notes:

Artist: J.W. Morrice
Title: The Ferry, Quebec
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 61 cm x 81.3 cm
Date: c. 1907
Location: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter The painting includes a river (the St. Lawrence), a dock with a building, horses, people, a ferry crossing the river coming to the dock, a headland with boats and buildings in the distance. Large wet snowflakes fall from the overcast sky. Smoke spirals from the ferry. The picture is an impression rather than a realistic representation of a scene.

Design **Colour:** Cool, muted. The largest area of colour is the blue water, above and below which are horizontal bands of white.
Space: The viewer's perspective is somewhat above the dock, looking out over the buildings and people.

Techniques The artist applied paint flatly and broadly, with the exception of details such as people. Details on the headland, water, boats, and docks are painted in a linear fashion over an initial application of paint.

Mood Cold, quiet. There are no active lines. The atmosphere is of a still, cold winter afternoon.

Notes:

Artist: Ilse Hughes
Title: Prince and Princess of Wales - Arrival Government House
Medium: Watercolour, pen, and ink
Size: 17.8 cm x 12.7 cm
Date: June, 1982
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter The work documents Prince Charles and Princess Diana on the occasion of their visit to Newfoundland in the summer of 1982. They are quite distant in the picture as they come down the steps of Government House. Even though they are far away our eyes are drawn to them. In addition to the stone building, we see two Mounties and a group of people at the foot of the stairs. The group faces the Prince and Princess. A band plays at the left. We see flowers and foliage.

Design

Centre of Interest: The artist draws our eyes to the Prince and Princess by placing a bright contrasting colour (red) near them.

Balance: Asymmetrical.

Space: Spacious because of the transparent quality of the medium. The change in size of figures also suggests this.

Shape: Suggested rather than well-defined or detailed.

Techniques

The artist made a quick, fluid sketch with pen and ink. Later, she loosely and thinly applied watercolour to the sketch. As a result, the colour is fairly transparent and gives a light, airy feeling to the work. Shapes are blurry because wet paint was laid directly next to wet paint. The pen was used to provide detail.

Mood

The work is spontaneous, light, cheerful, pleasant. It is a record of a happy event in Newfoundland history.

Notes:

Artist: Julia Pickard
Title: Woman Reading
Medium: Acrylic on rice paper
Size: 55.9 cm x 76.2 cm
Date: 1983
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter A woman is reclining and reading. There is no small detail. Hair face, feet, and hands are barely suggested. Shapes have fuzzy edges. The woman's dress merges with the background.

Design **Colour:** Analogous (blue and purple), very quiet effect.
Shapes: Very fluid and loose, no clear outlines.
Texture: Influenced by materials. See Artist's Comments below.
Line: Line is used sparingly to suggest detail, to separate shapes, and to create space.

Techniques The artist painted wet paint next to wet paint on a damp sheet of rice paper. The paint is fairly transparent because there is a high proportion of water to paint. The white paper surface is evident in some places. The texture of the rice paper is very important (see Artist's Comments below).

Mood Colour, lack of detail, and strong horizontal movement create a quiet, peaceful mood.

ARTIST'S COMMENTS.

Rice paper is beautiful, delicate, semitransparent and in some papers there is a natural thread-like fibre running through them in a random fashion. Because of these qualities the artist can create a feeling of mysticism in the art work. However, because of the extreme fragility of the rice paper, it must be handled with great care and patience.

Notes:

Artist: Ilse Hughes
Title: Still Life
Medium: Acrylic
Size: 55.9 cm x 71 cm
Date: 1985
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** Still-life painting of flowers, vase, and table, set beside a window. There is a variety of colourful flowers.
- Design** **Colour:** Colours are bright and cheerful. The contrasting black helps neutralize the sweetness, giving the eye a rest. The repetition of the rose colour throughout the composition helps establish unity.
Texture: Actual and implied.
- Techniques** The artist has combined drawing and painting in this image. Some areas were painted in a linear fashion (the image is drawn) and in more painterly fashion elsewhere. Some areas are more detailed than others. The ground becomes part of the painting. The artist also employed transparency and opacity in the same image. She used a dry brush in some areas. This gives a completely different texture.
- Mood** Bold, energetic. Colour and line are dynamic.
- Notes:**

Artist: Alistair Drysdale
Title: Still Life #2
Medium: Acrylic polymer
Size: 61 cm x 76 cm
Date: 1972
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** We can see a table, two chairs, a stove, some fruit, and a pitcher. The table is seen from the side.
- Design** **Positive/Negative Shapes:** The shapes between the chair rungs and back become as important as the chair itself. In some places the positive and negative shapes merge and blend, becoming unclear.
Colour: Opaque. The use of blue and black unifies the picture. The touch of red is enough to balance the weight of the dark colours.
- Techniques** The artist used large flat brush strokes, blending them slightly in some areas.
- Mood** Solid and still because of the strong horizontal line in the middle of the canvas and the use of strong verticals, all of which imply some sort of grid.
- Notes:**

Artist: Conrad Furey
Title: Toiler of the Sea
Medium: Acrylic
Size: 91 cm x 105.8 cm
Date: 1978
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** Two men in a boat on the ocean. One man attempts to row while the other holds on to the sides. The boat appears to tip towards the viewer and we see a great deal of the inside of it. An island is in the far distance. All objects are simplified and stylized (see especially the faces). The water appears to be a solid mass with solid peaks (much like icing on a cake).
- Design**
Colour: Predominantly an analogous colour scheme (greens and blues) plus some neutrals.
Shapes: Gently rounded or curved; all clearly defined and separated.
Balance: The tipping feeling of the boat is emphasized by the bulk of the visual weight occurring in the lower right corner of the picture.
- Techniques** For the most part paint has been applied flatly and opaquely. There is, however, some evidence of blended strokes, although it is very subtle.
- Mood** Playful, gentle, quiet as a result of the simplicity of approach, gentle curves, and stylization.
- Notes:**

Artist: Kathleen L. Knowling
Title: Anna
Medium: Oilstick on paper
Size: 111 cm x 76 cm
Date: 1985
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** A figure is crouching at the base of a bright red pillar. She has a dark mysterious face. She looks very solid, somewhat like a heavy stone sculpture. Her cloak is heavily textured. The colour scheme is simple - blue, red, and the neutral colour of the robe.
- Design**
Colour: Three distinct vertical bands of colour - warm red, neutral beige, cool blue.
Shapes: Distinct, large, simplified, some slight modelling.
Texture: Strong repeated diagonal movement of the marking tool.
- Techniques** Oilstick applied in a repeated stroke.
- Mood** Mysterious and strong. The person cannot clearly be seen because of her dark face, yet she appears to be solid and strong because of her size, the modelling (she almost appears to be made of stone), and the simple design. We feel we do not know all aspects of her. She is enigmatic.

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

Ann was a prophetess who recognized Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 2:36-38).

This work is one of a series entitled Biblical Women.

Notes:

Artist: Greg Curnoe
Title: The Mariposa 10 Speed
Medium: Watercolour over graphite
Size: 110.2 cm x 181.3 cm
Date: 1973
Location: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter A racing bicycle with a yellow frame and black seat is viewed from the side. It is centrally located, almost filling the frame. The blue background is semitransparent and quite textural. The space between the spokes is broken geometrically and by the change in colour value.

Design **Composition:** The bicycle is placed centrally on the page, equidistant from each edge, yet it takes up only a small percentage of the painting surface. **Contrast:** The bicycle is very detailed; the background is rough and abstract. **Shape:** The bicycle is not placed in real space but in a light, airy undefined space.

Techniques The bicycle was painted with a small brush in highly detailed and realistic manner; the background with a large brush, abstractly.

Mood Lightness and strength are qualities of a good racing bicycle. These are emphasized in this painting. The gradation of colour between the spokes of the wheel reminds one of the clicking precision of motion of the racing bicycle.

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

This is one of the series of full-scale water colours of bicycles I own. The Mariposa is a hand-built road racing bicycle. It was badly damaged in a car-bike accident several years ago (the original machine - not the painting).

Notes:

Artist: Patricia Holland
Title: Cock-A-Doodle-Do
Medium: Acrylic on canvas
Size: 61 cm x 89 cm
Date: 1985
Location: Collection of the artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** The image is of a rooster whose feathers and tail spreading out around him. His red comb and orange beak are directly in the centre of his head feathers. The background is purple with straight black lines in it. Some purple appears on the body of the bird. Bright, almost luminous, red lines zigzag out around the rooster.
- Design** **Line, Texture, Colour:** The image makes very strong use of all three. The line is bold, angular, radiating. Lines are also evident in a textural sense. They radiate from the head, indicating the irregular texture of the feathers and the body. Colours are strong. The red clashes in its neon quality with the purple, black, and white.
- Techniques** The paint has been applied quite flatly in some areas and very thickly in others. The artist scratched through the thick paint making actual texture there. After the painting dried, she rubbed purple paint into some areas of the textured white. This gives a sense of unity to the picture, which might otherwise seem to consist of isolated parts.
- Mood** Noisy, disconcerting. The harsh sound of the rooster is visually implied.

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

Cock-A-Doodle-Do was inspired by the raw majesty of a single rooster over his brood. Texture is a very important element in my work and the white feathers were a perfect stimulus to get my energy ignited. The orange florescent flagging used to deter rooster's escape provided an interesting formal element to the composition; that is, the harsh bright edges and angles contrasted against the fluffy white. My intention was only limited in that I wanted to portray the power of the rooster without overshadowing his humorous side. structurally, thick modelling paste was laid on and with quick directive strokes the shapes emerged. Colour was then added with the same spontaneity.

Notes:

Artist: Keith Fillier
Title: Still life with Chair
Medium: Oil on linen cloth sized on masonite
Size: 61 cm x 76.2 cm
Date: 1981
Location: Collection of artist

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** A still life: table, chair, sideboard, and empty bowl, cup, bottle, glass, wine bottle, jug, basin, and so on. The surface of the table appears to be tipped up, as does the bottom of the pitcher. Spatial planes (the table, cabinet, wall) are broken into geometric shapes of colour. Objects are portrayed abstractly rather than objectively.
- Design** **Colour:** Generally warm.
Texture: Both actual and implied. The surface is quite active because of colour and texture. The use of texture unifies the whole picture.
Space: We see things from different points of view in one painting -the table from above, the cabinet from the front, the pitcher from the front and the side at the same time.
- Techniques** The paint was applied thickly. In some areas small but noticeable brush strokes were used; in other areas the blending of colours is quite subtle. Actual texture is often evident. In some areas one colour was overpainted with another.
- Mood** The painting has a feeling of warmth, even nostalgia. Is it possible that the empty receptacles might have an emotional significance for the artist?

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

This work reflects Cubist art styles popular in Europe (1910-1920) by such painters as Picasso, Braque, Gris. The painting, although reflecting historical concepts in art, is modified around Post Modernist standards, a movement not popular in the 80s where artists attempted to revive past standards and traditions in art.

Notes:

Artist: Alfred Pellan
Title: Floraison/Blossoming
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 180.4 cm x 146.1 cm
Date: c. 1956
Location: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** This painting has much detail in it. There is a variety of shapes, some of them organic, others geometric. The shapes often contain some type of pattern and there is a tremendous variety among the patterns. Identify as many as you can. There are many colours in the painting. Many of them are primary colours. The painting is therefore quite intense. Black has been used all over the surface and helps unify the picture.
- Design** **Shapes:** Well-defined, distinct. Both organic and geometric shapes are repeated throughout the composition.
Colour: Primary, bright, intense.
Texture: The artist used both real and implied texture. Try to find examples of both.
- Techniques** Paint has been applied flatly in most areas. Very little volume is evident. Sometimes the artist added foreign materials to the paint to give it texture.
- Mood** Active, cheerful. Try to relate the title to the image.
- Notes:**

Artist: Harold Town
Title: Music Behind
Medium: Collage of masonite back T.V. panel with plastic component cardboard container, straws, labels, stamps and envelope, music sheets, fan, razor blade, thread, fabric, string, arborite, corrugated cardboard, printed papers, tissue paper, and gouache on masonite.
Size: 103.2 cm x 102.5 cm
Date: 1958-59
Location: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter This piece is made up of a collection of three-dimensional objects - fan, straws, labels, etc., all attached to the canvas in various way. Bright paint has been dripped and painted on some sections of the surface.

Design **Colour:** Bold, bright, exciting, energetic.
Texture: Actual and implied. The paint drips give energy and variety to the image. They also provide a major focus of interest because of their size, colour, and contrast to other materials.

Techniques Three-dimensional materials are fixed to the canvas and some are painted over.

Mood Exciting, active because of the kinds of colours, shapes, and textures used. What kinds of sound do you think the artist was trying to suggest?

ARTIST'S COMMENTS

The collage features the back of Albert Franck's old T.V. set and was meant to convey some of the sense of sound behind things, walls, bands, doors, etc., ... drinking straws function as a metaphor for the pipe organ in the sense that, through made to carry liquid, they are also often the source of stage sound. However, no matter what I set out to make or create, the work ultimately has a life independent of any initial intention.

Notes:

Artist: J.P. Lemieux
Title: The Evening Visitor
Medium: Oil on canvas
Size: 80.4 cm x 110 cm
Date: 1956
Location: National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** The scene includes a human figure without facial features. It is somewhat mysterious since it is not clearly defined, and somewhat ominous because the figure is so big. A large expanse of snow and blue-grey sky looms behind the figures. A tiny line of narrow headland can be seen in the distance.
- Design**
Shapes: Simplified, no apparent detail; they are therefore abstractions of reality. They also appear to be solid masses.
Balance: Symmetrical. One very large solid vertical figure balanced by one small horizontal line.
Colour: Very muted.
Space: Great depth, partly because of value and partly because of size variations.
- Techniques** Oil paint was applied flatly, opaquely. There is a slight texture to the surface and edges are slightly blurred.
- Mood** Mysterious, ominous, still. An unknown figure looms large, no active lines create movement in the picture. Things are unexplained, left to the viewer's imagination.
- Notes:**

Artist: Shawn Steffler
Title: Caterpillar Archipelago
Medium: Acrylic on paper
Size: 33 cm x 51 cm
Date: 1983
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Subject Matter A group of islands are viewed from directly above. The picture is a fantasy, with fish fishing off wharves, icebergs in a warm ocean. Although the islands, docks, and road are seen from above, everything else is pictured as if we were standing beside it (note houses, trees, fences).

Design **Space:** Steffler uses the child's way of portraying things from more than one point of view at a time. Compare this to Keith Fillier's painting (PA 15)
Colour and Shape: See Steffler (PA 1) Colour and shapes are crisp and clear.

Technique See Steffler (PA 1)

Mood A sense of play and fun.

Notes:

Artist: Arch Williams
Title: Ferryland A Century Ago
Medium: Acrylic
Size: 54.5 cm x 75.6 cm
Date: 1979
Location: Memorial University Art Gallery

DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Subject Matter** This is a Newfoundland outport scene. It comprises the town, two bodies of water, and an isthmus/breakwater between foreground and hills in the background. There are many details in this picture. Look at the buildings, the pebbles, the stages and flakes, the boats, the fences. It is as if every detail is important and has been duly recorded by the artist.
- Design** **Space:** The artist did not use, to any degree, changes in size, detail, and colour to give the illusion of perspective (depth). Instead, every object and detail is lovingly recorded regardless of distance in the painting.
Colour: Local colour. Objects tend to have the same brightness regardless of distance.
- Techniques** The artist used broad strokes in large areas to place some colours. He sometimes partially blended colours in these areas. He switched to a small brush for small details. The artist applied the paint fairly thinly. The texture of the canvas surface is evident in some places.
- Mood** Enthusiasm for the subject matter, indicated by the detailed description.
- Notes:**

Painting Project #1: Basic Colour Mixing

Key Learning

Paint and Supplies

The thickness of paint and the strength of colour is directly affected by the amount of water mixed with it. A good supply of clean water should be kept on hand to clean brushes and mix colours. If the water begins to muddy the colours, it is time to replace the water. Paper towel or rags should be kept handy to wipe brushes and mop up spills. To maintain the brushes, wash them with soap under lukewarm or cool running water. Remove excess water and store the brushes in a container with their bristles pointing up. The surface of the paper/ground is important. Although white, fairly heavy paper (not newsprint) is appropriate for colour mixing exercises, a variety of weights, textures, and colours of grounds may be used.

Colour Mixing

The three primary colours - red, yellow, blue - may be combined to mix all other colours, except black and white, including tints and shades of colours (to be addressed in next project). Mixing two primary colours in equal proportions gives secondary colours (orange, green, purple). Mixing two primary colours in varying proportions gives a wide range of intermediate colours. A colour wheel illustrates all of the above. Colours directly opposite each other on the colour wheel are complementary colours. Complementary colours are examples of contrasting colour. Colours next to each other on the colour wheel are analogous colours and are very similar colours. Mixing three primary colours together - red yellow, and blue **or** a pair of complementary colours (for example, blue and orange) - gives tertiary (neutral) colours such as browns and greys.

Materials

- ! paint (tempera or watercolour)
- ! brushes
- ! water containers
- ! palettes (old plate, muffin tray, compartmentalized trays, etc.)
- ! paper towel or rags
- ! paper
- ! cartridge paper for final work

Motivation

Visuals

PA 1, PA 2, PA 3. After studying the images individually, compare them in terms of primary, secondary, and tertiary colour. How does colour unify each painting? Describe the types of colours in the works: Would these images be as effective if more subdued colours were used?

Experimenting

To learn about paint and colour mixing, try the following:

- a) Make a colour wheel.
- b) make a design using one pair of complementary colours and the tertiary colours resulting from their mixture.

Suggested Theme

An activity evoking excitement and colour (e.g., rock concert, sports event) or decorative designs such as are seen on cars, furniture, fabrics, and so on.

Studio

Make a final painting using the three primary colours and their mixtures.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and the process (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes:

Painting Project #2: Value

Key Learning

Paint

Mixing white with any colour makes that colour opaque.

Value

Value is the lightness or darkness of a colour. Adding white to a colour makes a tint of that colour and lightens its value. Adding black to a colour makes a shade of that colour and darkens its value. A monochromatic painting is one that is a single colour including values (tints and shades) of that colour. Placing successive values of a colour next to each other creates the illusion of three-dimensional volume on a two-dimensional surface. Blues, greens, and purples are considered cool colours; reds, oranges, and yellows are considered warm colours. Artists sometimes choose cool colours to make their paintings feel cool, quiet, or sad, and warm colours to make their paintings feel warm exciting, or cheerful.

Materials

- ! tempera
- ! brushes
- ! palettes
- ! water containers
- ! paper towels or rags
- ! paper

Motivation

Visuals

PA 4, PA 5, PA 6. After studying each slide individually, compare the images in terms of value. How does the restricted range of colours in each painting help to create the mood?

Experimenting

To learn about value, try the following:

- a) Make a value scale. Choose one primary/secondary colour to work with.
- b) Make a design using a warm monochromatic colour scheme and one using a cool monochromatic colour scheme.
- c) Paint a simple object in monochrome to show volume.

Suggested Theme

Mood, as suggested by the human figure.

Studio

Make a final painting using monochrome to portray mood and/or volume.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and the processes (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes:

Painting Project #3: Transparency

Key Learning

Paint

If paint is mixed with lots of water, it becomes transparent. The colour and texture of the paper are very important. The white of the paper becomes part of the colour; therefore, tints of a colour may be made by adding varying amounts of water to the paint. In this case, it is not a good idea to make a tint by adding white paint to a colour because white paint would make the colour opaque.

Watercolour Techniques

In the wet-in-wet technique colours will bleed (blend together) if they are laid on premoistened paper or if one wet colour is placed next to another wet colour. Shapes will have fuzzy edges. To obtain hard crisp edges, paint must be laid on dry paper. To retain white areas of the paper, the resist technique may be used. A layer of wax, grease, or rubber cement may be applied to the paper surface in places that the artist decides will remain white. Any paint which goes on top of these materials will be "resisted" and the white paper surface will be untouched by colour. The artist may use a dry brush technique: excess paint is removed from the brush and the brush is moved along the paper surface. Some paint is picked up by the surface and a scratchy quality is given to the painting. Watercolour may be combined with many other media including pencil, ink, marker, pastel, and crayon.

Materials

- ! watercolour tray
- ! brush
- ! water containers
- ! palette
- ! paper towels or rags
- ! practice paper
- ! one or two sheets of watercolour paper

Motivation

Visuals

PA 7, PA 8, PA 9. After studying the slides individually, compare then in terms of transparency and watercolour techniques. How have the artists used paint and surface to achieve a transparent effect?

Experimenting

To learn about transparency and watercolour techniques, try the following:

- a) Make a value scale of tints of one colour using white paper and mixing the colour with varying amounts of water.
- b) Divide a sheet of white paper into several boxes and experimenting with the watercolour techniques above. In addition, invent your own techniques: use a sponge or paper towel to remove some colour, scratch into the colour, combine with other media, etc.

Suggested Theme

Landscapes, seascapes, or the human figure would be appropriated.

Studio

Make a final watercolour painting using any of the techniques learned, ensuring that the transparent quality of the paint is maintained.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and the process (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes:

Painting Project #4: Opacity

Key Learning

Paint

Paint is applied using less water than in the transparent technique. Mixing white with a colour tends to make it opaque. Not all colours, even though they are in the same medium, are equally opaque.

Shape

Paint may be applied very flatly so that little evidence of the brushstrokes is seen. There may be no change of colour within shapes, and shapes may be clearly defined or separated from other areas. On the other hand, a variety of colours may be seen within a shape. Brush strokes may be quite evident. Blending may be fuzzy as opposed to clearly separated, and shape boundaries may be irregular. Paint may be applied on top of wet or dry paint.

Materials

- ! tempera
- ! brushes
- ! palette
- ! water container
- ! paper towels or rags
- ! paper

Motivation

Visuals

PA 10, PA 11, PA 12, PA 13. After studying each slide individually, compare them in terms of opacity and variety of paint applications. Within each painting how do colours help define shapes? How is the paint applied to the surface in each of these?

Experimenting

To learn about opacity and paint application, try the following:

- a) Test a variety of colours for their covering power (opacity) on a coloured background. Try combining white with some of the colours to see if it increases their opacity.
- b) Make a design with large simple shapes where the paint is applied flatly and no brushstrokes are evident.
- c) Make a design with large simple shapes where the edges are soft and blurry and shapes run into one another.

Suggested Theme

An abstraction of a designed object or a still life could be interesting. Students would work to reduce the forms to simple hard-edged geometric shapes or to simple soft-edged organic shapes.

Studio

Make an opaque abstract painting incorporating brush work, and colours.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and the process (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes:

Painting Project #5: Texture

Key Learning

Paint

Paint may be applied in one or more thicknesses to give texture. When paint is applied so thickly that it has real depth, it is used in the impasto technique. Paint may be applied in small strokes of varying colour to look textural. Materials such as sand, powder or vermiculite may be added to paint to give it actual texture. Many other three-dimensional foreign materials may be glued or otherwise attached to the painting surface to give it texture.

Texture

Texture may be actual or it may be implied.

Materials

- ! tempera
- ! acrylic (optional)
- ! brushes
- ! palette
- ! water container
- ! paper towels or rags
- ! paper
- ! any other type of ground such as wood, cardboard, metal (optional), foreign materials to add to paint or to affix to surface (optional).

Motivation

Visuals

PA 14, PA 15, PA 16, PA 17. After discussing the slides individually, compare them in terms of texture and materials. In each painting, how has the artist used actual or implied texture?

Experimenting

In order to learn about actual and implied texture, try the following:

- a) Create texture using paint only.
- b) Create texture using foreign materials and paint combined

Suggested Theme

Fantasy animals, natural or designed objects might provide interesting possibilities in terms of texture.

Studio

Make a final painting incorporating actual/implied texture appropriate to the subject matter.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and processes (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes:

Painting Project #6: Space

Key Learning

Space

In addition to the same technique studied in Drawing Project #6, colour may be used to show space in a two-dimensional image. Bright colours appear to advance; dull colours to recede. In landscape this is known as an aerial perspective. Space is also described by point of view. Shapes of objects depend on the location of the viewer.

Materials

- ! tempera
- ! acrylic (optional)
- ! brushes
- ! water containers
- ! palettes
- ! paper towels or rags
- ! paper
- ! a variety of surfaces such as canvas, fabric, wood (optional)

Motivation

Visuals

PA 18, PA 19, PA 20. After studying the slides individually, compare them in terms of space and depth. It is treated differently in each one. Which one uses colour? Which one uses size? Which one uses linear perspective?

Experimenting

To learn about two-dimensional space, try the following:

- a) Create space in a landscape primarily through the use of colour.
- b) Create an image in which the space is reversed. Place large dull-coloured detailed objects in the foreground and small bright-coloured objects in the background.

Suggested Theme

Group situations or events involving numbers of people (e.g., arenas, concerts, band members, ice skaters) might be interesting for this project. Outdoor scenes are also useful.

Studio

Make a final painting using colour or point of view or any other technique to show space in a painting.

Summary

Display all of the student work and discuss in terms of the objectives and the process (successes, problems, surprises).

Notes: