

Norfolk Painting School Live: Core Notes Pack

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Masterclass

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Introduction



Thank you for joining Norfolk Painting School Live and taking part in one of our Masterclass courses.

These are core notes on the common techniques we demonstrate, to be used in conjunction with any incremental information on the demonstration video or your personal notes.

I suggest that you print the key diagrams and place them on your studio wall for easy reference as you paint.

Once again, thank you for taking part, and happy painting !

CORE METHOD ONE

Indirect



Core Method 1

Indirect '*Grisaille and Glaze*'



Indirect painting means working wet over dry. On the masterclasses I generally pre prepare paintings to simulate allowing for drying time between stages so you will need to manage that at home.

Many indirect methods exist. This is our standard pre-Baroque method, and is suitable for emulating very early painting styles as well as contemporary artists who draw on them (e.g. Richter).

Traditional indirect painting requires you to make some fundamental choices about process. On the demonstration take particular note on the following:

- Whether I choose a Gesso, or a Bole.
- Whether I create an imprimatura or a colour beginning
- Whether I opt for a traditional oil on tempera or an all oil method

A Note on Glazing

Your demonstration video will show how I sequence - or order - the glazes and scumbles on the demonstration work.

To help you with this we provide a separate optical reference pack, which contains key diagrams for your studio. You will be able to download this optical reference pack PDF with your on demand video.

Mediums

Most indirect Masterclasses feature a wide range of medium options including information on the right time to use each one. The standard medium types include:

General Purpose Medium: This is our core 50/50

'Gem Like ' Mediums : These are generally bodied oils or resins such as Megilp or Stand Oil. See the on demand video.

Turbid Media : This is generally a mix of some of the above with Cold Wax Paste.

Velasquez Medium (Calcite Medium) : This is a mix of either oil or general purpose medium and chalk or marble dust. Again see the on demand video for my choices.

Tempera Medium : This is a cold application Canvas Size available from the School. See the on demand video for alternative suggestions or questions ; it's generally a hot topic.

Indirect Core Method

This is a standard indirect method which uses a monochromatic underpainting. Pay particular attention to the ground I select for the Masterclass, and to how monochromatic my underpainting is, as this may be easily flexed.

Over a prolonged session, Stages 4-6 will be repeated as many times as you wish, ensuring the painting is dry between sessions.

In the Masterclass I generally pre-prepare works to simulate drying time. I recommend that you keep stage 7 to one working, placed on top of any optical glazes to ensure it looks 'fresh'.

As with any painting using various media, you should consider optically unifying the dry and completed work with a varnish.

Step By Step

Step by Step checklist

1. Prepare a Short Gesso or a Bole to paint upon
2. Sketch the design lightly in pencil
3. Paint a grisaille using distemper or oil as preferred
4. When the grisaille is dry, oil out and rub dry with a disposable towel, using general purpose painting medium
5. Glaze in the local colours using tube oil and general purpose painting medium, and lightly wipe until workably dry
6. Block in working from large to small, using bodied (semi opaque to opaque) oils
7. Add any detail or impasto you require.
8. Once dry, optically unify with a varnish



CORE METHOD TWO

Ebauche



Core Method 2

Ebauche



Ébauche means 'blank or outline, and refers to the way this method develops complex and modelled Forms from a loose translucent mass sketch, traditionally executed in a dark viscous glaze upon a short ground.

Ébauche is our standard Baroque to Impressionist method and is suitable for emulating the later Old Masters and any academic oil painting, up to and including contemporary ones.

In the late 19th century it became the core upon which most post Impressionist realists based their method, and has remained so.

In respect of 19/20 Century style masters, (e.g. Zorn, Sargent. Schmidt, Seago etc are Ébauche / Impressionist painters), it may be freely blended with Impressionist painting ideas and techniques to create your own style. I strongly recommend that you preserve its optical qualities, as that is the key to a good ebauche.

Traditional Ebauche Masterclasses

Ebauche is a very old method, and in the case of early masters your Masterclass will probably incorporate elements of the Indirect process, and will in effect be an ebauche to indirect

class. In this case for demonstration purposes the Ébauche *may* be executed in distemper, for time reasons, however I suggest that you use an all oil method at home to preserve optical depth.

Colour Beginning

For masterclasses showing traditional works created using an Italianate palette the tonal ebauche will be replaced by a loose and chromatic imprimatura.

This is termed a colour beginning, and is useful for both contemporary painting as well traditional works which employ an Italianate palette (eg Claude, mid to late Turner).

Pay particular attention to my reasons for selecting a traditional or chromatic ebauche, and note how this affects my choice of ground.

Ebauche Core Method

This is a standard Ebauche method. Ebauche can be demonstrated as ebauche to indirect or ebauche to direct using a tonal around or a colour beginning as appropriate. Please check your Masterclass on demand video to ensure that you have the correct ground and pigment choices for the study.

Step By Step

Step by Step checklist

1. Prepare a short Gesso or Bole (as per my standard ground recipes)
2. Sketch the design loosely in fluid paint, concentrate on masses rather than details
3. Block in the masses using viscous translucent paint (usually but not necessarily a de-saturated dark), and lightly wipe it workably dry. A short ground will take in the ébauche so it generally will not need to be wiped.
4. Work up the shade planes in semi opaque body colour. Blend lightly into the ébauche.
5. Work up the lit planes in opaque colour. Blend lightly into the shade planes.
6. Add any high impasto you require.
7. Once dry, unify with a varnish.



CORE METHOD THREE

Direct



Core Method 3

Direct

This is my standard 20th century wet into wet method, for Masterclasses on artists such as Bomberg, Morandi, Modigliani and Hitchens.

To emulate earlier direct painters such as Constable, Cox, Corot, early Monet or Turner - use an Ébauche to Direct technique.

For Impressionist studies you will see me use a variant of the ebauche to direct technique, which allows me to build nuanced but pure colour in a rigorous way.

The key challenge is to keep the paint fresh and clean. To do this work the blocks methodically - trying not to rework them.

Use a short ground, and try to make any accents of impasto touches in one stroke which must not then be touched or reworked.

Subtractive Mixing

It is very important to pay attention to the rules of Subtractive Mixing when painting directly, as this will give you clean and accurate mixes. I strongly recommend that you print out the standard School colour wheel diagram and pin it next to your easel.

Dedicated subtractive mixing tuition, including a range of useful exercises can be obtained on our Simply Oils program which is available online and in person.



Direct Core Method

This is a standard Direct method. Direct means wet into wet and therefore the key challenge here is to work precisely and with economy. This method is suitable for more traditional alla prima and fa presto studies, particularly if used in conjunction with an ebauche to direct process.

Step By Step

Step by Step checklist
1. Prepare a Gesso (as per my standard ground recipes)
2. If required start with an Imprimatura (of any type), but wipe it workably dry before you proceed
3. Sketch in your design with fluid oil or pencil
4. Block in using large brushes - work over the entire support
5. Repeat using medium brushes
6. Finish using small brushes
7. Add any impasto using 'bright' brushes or knives.
8. Direct paintings are generally presented unvarnished.



CORE NOTES

Studio Craft



Studio Craft

Studio Craft is all about creating the right things to paint with, in particular, core mediums and grounds. In addition to this I have noted some common processes such as Tonking and Sgraffito which require the use of equipment, will almost certainly feature in any demonstration we do.

It is very important that you keep an eye out for the studio craft I use in each demonstration. In particular I recommend that you take advantage of the interactive facilities we offer to ask *why* I have made the choices I have: grounds and medium choices are generally a matter of judgement.

If you are new to the School or require a refresher course in core studio craft, subtractive mixing, the `direct and Ebauche process, setting a palette, equipping a studio, selecting brushes and tools or even how best to hold a brush, then I strongly recommend taking our most popular 'how to' course, Simply Oils.



Flemish Bole, A short ground Gesso and a Venetian Bole

General Purpose Medium

50/50 general purpose painting medium replicates a traditional mix of oil and solvent, using a modern resin and low odour thinner combination.

Fast drying, versatile, archival and of low toxicity it is my standard general purpose medium.

To make it simply mix GALKYD and GAMSOL in equal quantities in a clean screw cap jar or stoppered bottle.

Combine well before first use, and **top off with a little** GAMSOL after use, if the medium is to be stored for any period of time.

Good Practice

50/50 like all mediums is volatile, and will thicken if left exposed to air.

Minimise this by keeping it in a stoppered air tight flask, jar or bottle, topped of with a *little* solvent

Balance the fact that small amounts will tend to spoil quickly against the chance that a big batch will be expensive if you let it turn to gel.

If your 50/50 does thicken it may be possible to revive it with extra Galkyd. Stir some in and if it still looks wrong, leave to combine before discarding the batch.



Gamsol and Galkyd, the raw ingredients

I recommend that you do not mix traditional solvents with modern resins and vice versa.

Standard Grounds

Grounds are fundamental to success. Pay particular attention on your masterclass to the ground I have chosen and why I have done so.

Historically distinct, Ground and Gesso are used interchangeably by modern painters. To make my standard School Short Ground:

1. Obtain a quantity of decent quality white acrylic paint
2. Prepare one part chalk (whiting) to 3 parts acrylic by volume
3. Add a little water to the chalk to form a paste
4. Mix the chalk paste into the acrylic
5. Store in a tub with a lid
6. This ground is suitable for oil or tempera to oil
 - To make a whiter ground substitute chalk with fine grade marble dust.
 - To make a bole, substitute it with a natural earth pigment e.g. Red Ochre, Raw Sienna
 - To lengthen the ground saturate it with 50/50 medium before use. Long grounds are not suitable for distemper.



Working into an oiled out layer creates the opportunity to create sfumato effects

Special Grounds

On specific masterclasses I may create a special ground such as a Sno- Cem style base for a Seago or a ground for Varnish Painting in the manner of Gainsborough or Peinture d' essence like Degas.

Be sure to check the on demand video , or better still attend live and use the advantage for interactive Q&A opportunities as I demonstrate.

Oiling Out

Oiling Out is an indirect painting technique used as a preliminary step before resuming Indirect work. It can be done for many reasons, so be sure to check why I am doing it, in your masterclass.

1. Oiling out prepares a dry painting to take a fresh layer of paint. To oil out:
2. Apply some 50/50 general purpose painting medium onto the dry picture
3. Wipe it touch dry with a disposable kitchen towel

Note: Pay particular attention to my medium combinations when oiling out and use the interactive Q&A nature of our live demonstrations to check your understanding.

Sinking In

Sinking in is the term used to describe oil paints which appear to lose lustre when dry. Oiling Out is a standard way of offsetting sinking in, however most finished paintings will still benefit from a unifying varnish when dry.

Preparing a Transitional Layer

Oiling out also provides an ideal surface for transitional glazing as well as the placement of fine detail. In these specific cases I will choose the best Oiling Out medium on your Masterclass.



Oiling Out will allow you to create a *sfumato* effect of transitionless blends if done with the right medium.

Tonking

Tonking will feature in most Masterclasses as it is an ad hoc way of managing Rheology by either reducing excess impasto or stabilising paint which is too fluid.

1. Tonking is a method for removing excess paint, whilst leaving a workable underpainting in situ. To Tonk:
2. Apply a clean piece of kitchen towel flat to the support
3. Rub gently with the palm or back of your hand, until the excess paint is absorbed.
4. Gently peel away and check for workability



Tonking removes excess paint making it easier to carry on working



Sgraffito

Sgraffito means scratching into wet paint to create marks and textures. This can be done with a fingernail, brush handle or silicon tipped clay shaper tool.

Sgraffito is equally useful for traditional and modern painting styles and is often done very quick and naturally in conjunction with applying paint (by simply reversing the brush), rather than as a separate stage.

In your masterclass pay special attention to both the paint mixture I create to facilitate sgraffito, the area I place it over., and the tools I select to create it.



Piper Masterclass study showing Sgraffito into Impasto (Dec 2020)

MASTERCLASS NOTES

Colour Lists



Colour Lists

To help you equip your studio I have put together some palette suggestions which will enable you to have a go at any painting from three distinct periods : Old Master, Impressionist and Modern.

Generally speaking, it is important to remember that saturation cannot be increased, and therefore it is impossible to re-create a vibrant contemporary painting (after David Hockney for example) using a naturally subdued Old Master Palette.

I have chosen colours available my colourman, Robert Gamblin, however any other brand can be substituted, with the caveat that the 'same' colour in different brands, may well differ to some degree.

If you are an experienced colourist then you will find it easy to find analogous and alternative colours, if not then consider taking the Colour Mixing module of our online Simply Oils course, or attending either Simply Oils or an Impressionist workshop at the School.

A Note on Student Paints

For the demonstrations I use student grade paints where possible, and Artist grade for areas demanding high chroma and purity, as well as to obtain colours not available in student ranges.



1980 Range Student Paints are available from the School Shop.

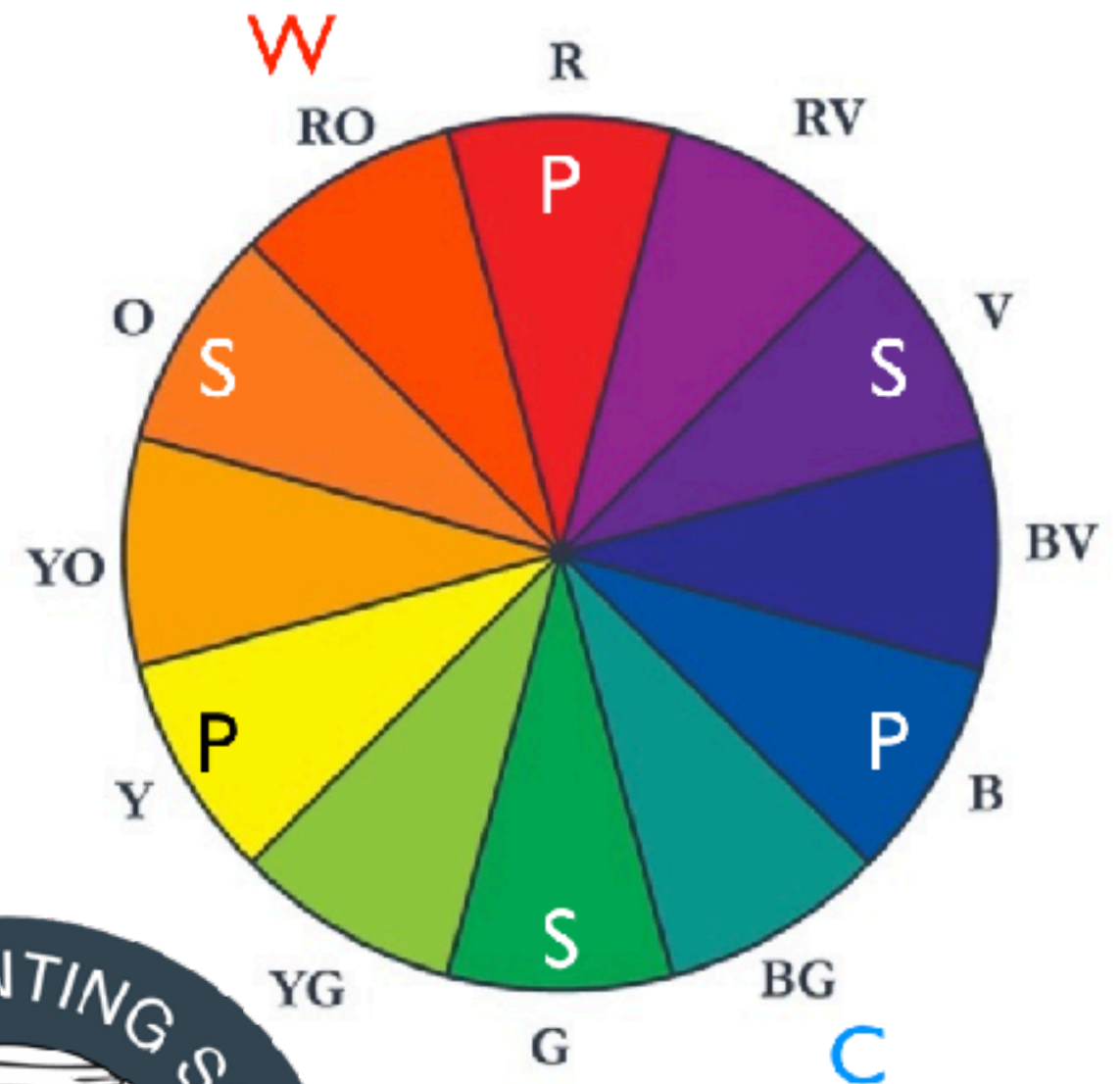
Standard Colour Wheel

This is the standard triadic colour wheel diagram for your Masterclass. The Primary and Secondary Hue families are notated, as are the warm and cool Axes.

A practical in depth session on reading and using this colour wheel for clean colour mixing is available within our Simply Oils program.

I do not recommend that you use alternative colour wheels for general painting study as they have limited application.

This wheel can also be used for other purposes, including colour planning and Impressionist modelling of Form by colour temperature. These processes are covered in part on various Masterclasses, and in depth in our Studio courses.



Standard Colour Wheel.

An Old Master Palette

Old Master studies require a subdued range of limited colours. This palette suggestion will give you that, plus a range of colours for traditional glazing. As most modern colours are too intense try to subtractively mix these down in intensity, reserving the brightest colours for small areas. Colours marked * are useful but too strong and should be combined with inclusions to reduce their tinting strength, as directed on the masterclass. For an alternative palette for this period see the website of our colourman, Robert Gamblin, [here](#):

Standard Old Master Palette

Recommended Tubes
W: Titanium White
W: Transparent White (Zinc Oxide replacement)
BLK: Ivory Black
Glazing Black: Van Dyck Brown
R: Venetian Red
Glazing Red: Alizarin Crimson*
Glazing Red: Brown Pink*
Glazing Orange: Transparent Earth Orange or Red
O:Burnt Sienna
Glazing Orange: Asphaltum*
Y: Yellow Ochre
Glazing Yellow: Gold Ochre*
G: Terre Vert
G: Sap Green*
B: Ultramarine Blue*
V: Ultramarine Violet



An Impressionist Palette

Impressionist Paintings require the use of a wide range of warm and cool pigments for each Hue family, for example a warm and a cool yellow. Black is included in this palette for Barbazon works, and studies after classically trained Impressionists such as Manet or Degas. Glazing colours are omitted. Useful Old Master colours - eg Burnt Sienna should carry forward for creating desaturated camaieu underpaintings. For an alternative palette for this period see the website of our colourman, Robert Gamblin, [here](#):

Standard Impressionist Palette

Recommended Tubes
W: Titanium White
BLK: Ivory Black
R+ Cadmium Red
R- Alizarin Crimson
V+ Colbalt Violet
V- Dioxazine Purple
B+ Ultramarine Blue
B- Turquoise
G+ Sap Green
G- Viridian
Y- Cadmium Yellow Light
Y+ Cadmium Yellow
O- Cadmium Orange
O+ Cadmium Red Light



A Modern Palette

Modern works often demand high chroma pigments. Most of these colours are very robust in mixes (have a high tinting strength) and create good glazes (are translucent). You should add colours from both the Old Master and Impressionist palettes to this selection, bearing in mind how they differ. Old Master colours not annotated with a * lack saturation, and most Impressionist pigments appear strong in masstone, but are weaker than modern pigments in mixes. For an alternative palette for this period see the website of our colourman, Robert Gamblin, [here](#):

Standard Modern Palette

Recommended Tubes
W: Titanium White
W: Transparent White (Zinc Oxide replacement)
BLK: Mars Black
BLK: Ivory Black
R: Perylene Red
V: Quinacridone Magenta
B: Phthalo Blue
G: Phthalo Green
Y: Hansa Yellow
O: Permanent (Mono) Orange

