

## LEARNING TO LOOK - WEEK V - 2-DIMENSIONAL MEDIA

note: all images are in ArtStor (MAG Learning to Look folder, Week 5 Image Group) unless a specific web site is noted.

### TWO-DIMENSIONAL MEDIA

REMBRANDT van Rijn: *The Militia Company of Captain Frans Banning Cocq (called The Nightwatch)*, 1642, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

REMBRANDT van Rijn: *Self-Portrait as St. Paul*, 1661, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

*Reindeer*, c. 14,000-24,000 BCE, Lascaux, France

*Spotted Horses and Negative Hand Prints*, Pech-Merle Cave, Dordogne, France

*Standing Bison*, c. 15,000-10,000 BCE Altamira Cave, Spain

Frederick Edwin CHURCH: *Niagara Falls from the American Side*, 1867, NGA Edinburgh

Frederick Edwin CHURCH: *Niagara*, 1857, Corcoran, Washington

**SUPPORT**: The surface that holds the paint (canvas, board, plaster or paper). The choice of support has a great impact on the final surface appearance.

Domenico GHIRLANDAIO: *View of Tornabuoni Chapel*, 1486-90, fresco, Sta. Maria Novella, Florence

Fra ANGELICO: *Annunciation with the Fall of Man*, c. 1430, tempera on panel, Prado, Madrid

Claude MONET: *Waterlilies*, c. 1904, oil on canvas, Orangerie, Paris

**Support: Frescos** are painted with water-based paints on a thin layer of still-wet plaster (fresco is the Italian word for “fresh”) that has been applied over a carefully prepared series of plaster underlayers. Suitable for large-scale works.

Bull Dance fresco, Knossos, c. 1500 BCE

MICHELANGELO Buonarroti et al: *View of Sistine Chapel*, 1508-12, Vatican, Rome  
<http://www.godweb.org/blsistineceiling.htm>

Specific fresco vocabulary: arriccio, intonaco, pouncing

Diego RIVERA: *Epic of the Mexican People - Mexico Today and Tomorrow*, 1934-35, Palacio Nacional, Mexico

SEE ALSO: [http://www.gsinai.com/rw/icons/fresco\\_in\\_a\\_church.php](http://www.gsinai.com/rw/icons/fresco_in_a_church.php)

WATCH: The Basilica of San Francesco, Assisi and the Earthquake (1997)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1Fer3yMo5I>

**Support: Panels** of poplar, linden or oak were cut on the cross-section of the tree and were pieced together to make larger image surfaces. The surface was prepared with linen strips and gesso (plaster), sanded to make a glassy, smooth, impenetrable surface.

Fra ANGELICO: *Annunciation with the Fall of Man*, c. 1430, Prado, Madrid

WATCH: FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM DEMONSTRATION  
[http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/pharos/images/swf/panel/Panel\\_5f.swf](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/pharos/images/swf/panel/Panel_5f.swf)

Albrecht ALTDORFER: *Christ Taking Leave of his Mother* (detail), 1520, oil on limewood panel, NGA London <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/work?workNumber=NG6463>

**Ground:** undercoat that prepares canvas or panel surface for paint by sealing the surface and creating a "tooth" that will allow paint to adhere.

**Preparing for the image: underdrawing and underpainting**

anonymous: *Elisha Multiplying the Widow's Oil*, 16<sup>th</sup> century, MAG  
[www.mag.rochester.edu](http://www.mag.rochester.edu). Under the COLLECTION menu search for Elisha.

**Support: Canvas** varies widely in coarseness of fineness of weave according to the artist's taste and means. Canvas came into popular use in Venice at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and its use spread rapidly across Europe, until it almost completely supplanted all other supports by the 18th century.

Paolo VERONESE: *Marriage at Cana*, 1563, Louvre 677 x 994 cm (approx 22' x 32.5')

Auguste RENOIR: *Venice: The Doge's Palace*, 1881, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown

TITIAN Vecelli: *Venus of Urbino*, c. 1545, Uffizi, Florence

## PAINT

- **pigment**, which provide the actual color.
- particles of pigment are suspended in a fluid (called the **vehicle**) that enables the artist to spread the pigment particles over the prepared support.
- This fluid also contains elements that adhere the pigment particles to the surface of the support (the **binder**).

Pigments: Pigment is the actual color in paint, which generally is finely powdered. Principal types of pigments:

- ❖ Earth colors - made from naturally colored clays, rocks and earths, such as ochres, sienna, umber, and red iron oxides. Usually very stable and light fast.
- ❖ Lakes - made by precipitating a dyestuff often made from plants by bonding the color onto an inert substance such as chalk, gypsum or clay, which then sinks to the bottom. The liquid in which the dye was suspended is then drained or evaporated away. Often less stable and light-fast than earth pigments.
- ❖ Synthetic or artificial pigments are derived from man-made combinations or are the by-products of industrial processes. Although some synthetic pigments are ancient in origin, most were introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Synthetic pigments are generally light and color fast, very saturated and consistent in color.

Vincent van GOGH: *Starry Night*, 1889, Museum of Modern Art, NY

Diego VELÁZQUEZ: *Infanta Margarita*, 1653, Kunsthistorisches, Vienna

Jasper Francis CROPSEY: *The Spirit of War*, 1851, NGA Washington

CIMABUE: *Crucifix*, c. 1270, Church of San Domenico, Arezzo (height: 336 cm/11')

LEONARDO da Vinci: *Ginevra da Benci*, c. 1480, NGA Washington

### **Types of paint: tempera used on fresco**

Michelangelo et al: View of Sistine Chapel, 1508-12, Vatican, Rome  
<http://www.godweb.org/blsistineceiling.htm>

### **Types of paint: tempera used on parchment/vellum/panel**

anonymous Flemish: Book of Hours for Rome Use ("The Collins Hours"), c. 1445-50, tempera on vellum, Philadelphia

Sandro BOTTICELLI: *Madonna of the Magnificat*, c. 1485, Uffizi, Florence

GIOTTO: Ognissanti Madonna, 1305-10, Uffizi

Andrew WYETH: Chambered Nautilus, 1956, Wadsworth, Hartford

### **Types of paint: oil on panel or canvas**

Joseph M.W. TURNER: *Rockets and Blue Lights*, 1840, CAI Williamstown

Oil paint is a mixture of pigment which is dispersed/suspended but does not dissolve in a drying oil such as linseed oil or cottonseed oil which serves as the binder. (drying oil: vegetable oil that does not evaporate, but rather oxidizes through adding an oxygen atom, solidifying to a tough, leathery film when spread in thin layers). The great advantages of oil paint are that (1) it dries extremely slowly, allowing subtle blending of colors, and (2) it can be used to achieve many textures.

Gerhard RICHTER: *Betty*, 1988, St. Louis Art Museum

Gerhard RICHTER: *Clouds*, 1982, MOMA

van Eyck: *Ghent Altarpiece*, c. 1435, o/p, St. Bavo, Ghent / detail of God

### **Demonstration of Oil Techniques:**

Joseph Shepherd: *How to Paint Like the Old Masters*. Watson-Guption Publications, New York, 1983

### **Condition: To varnish or not to varnish, that is the question**

Elisabeth Louise VIGÉE-LEBRUN: *Portrait of the Comtesse Marie-Theresia Bucquoi*, 1793, Minneapolis Institute of Art

LEONARDO da Vinci: *Virgin & Child with St. Anne*, c. 1508-10, Louvre, Paris

Vincent van GOGH: *Wheat Fields with Cypresses*, June 1889, NGA London

LEONARDO da Vinci: *Mona Lisa*, c. 1504, Louvre, Paris

SASSOFERRATO: *Virgin & Child Embracing*, 1660-85, NGA London

PIERO della Francesca: *Portrait of Federico da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza*, 1465-66, tempera on panel, Uffizi, Florence

CIMA da Conigliano: *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, c. 1502-04, oil on synthetic panel, transferred from wood, NGA London

Girolamo ROMANINO: *The Nativity*, c. 1525, oil on panel, NGA London

SEE: "Right or Wrong - The Restoration of the Sistine Chapel Ceiling" at <http://msopal29.myweb.uqa.edu/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/1990/05/14/arts/review-art-after-a-much-debated-cleaning-a-richly-hued-sistine-emerges.html>

#### OTHER INTERESTING SITES:

conservation of a Greek vase:

<http://www.mfa.org/master/sub.asp?key=1854&subkey=4552>

conservation of Hans HOLBEIN's *Henry VIII*:

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker/exhibitions/henry/conservation.asp>

*The Mona Lisa Revealed* (NOTE: I have not yet reviewed the video, so cannot comment on the quality!) <http://monalisarevealed.com/>

#### REVIEW

J.M.W. TURNER: *Burning of the Houses of Lords & Commons, Oct 16, 1834*, 1835, Cleveland Museum of Art, 36" x 48"

Sandro BOTTICELLI: *Mars and Venus*, c. 1475, NGA London, 27" x 68"

Gustave CAILLEBOTTE: *The Floor Scrapers*, 1875, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Jacques-Louis DAVID: *Oath of the Horatii*, 1785, Louvre, Paris