

Oil painting medium Part 4

Other options to consider

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Traditional artist oils are not the only type of this medium available to the figure painter. Two in particular are worth experimenting with.

Griffin Alkyd Fast Drying Oil Paints:

Manufactured from pigments suspended in oil modified alkyd resin and solvent. The most outstanding advantage of the Griffin Alkyd range is their speed of drying which allows a painting to be completed in a single session. The clarity of the alkyd resin allows the full brightness of pigment to show when the colour is dry. Griffin Alkyds can be used in conjunction with other oil colour to produce an extensive range of tones and colour shades. One of the major troubles experienced by the novice when trying oils for the first time is the problem of coming to terms with oily nature of medium and keeping it under control. The very nature of Alkyds means that the oil content is completely different making the medium relatively easy to use. Also the fast drying attributes of Alkyed oils will be familiar territory for users of enamels offering about the same amount of blending time. Griffin Alkyd colours are well worth trying and in many ways provide good introduction to oil painting techniques.

Thinning:

Alkyed oils are thinned with white spirit or turpentine in the same fashion as traditional oils.

Artisan Water Mixable Oil Colour

An oil paint that behaves like acrylic but with a slower drying time. The essential difference between 'Artisan Water Mixable Oil Colour' and conventional oils is their ability to mix with water. A genuine oil colour, which can be thinned with water and cleaned with soap & water. This enables the artist to thin and clean up with water rather than solvents such as turpentine or white spirit (mineral spirits). Artisan is a genuine oil colour made from modified linseed oil and modified safflower oil. It has been specifically developed to appear and work just like conventional oil colour. The depth of colour, buttery consistency, light fastness, opacity/transparency, performance and drying times of Artisan, allow figure painters to use this range for all oil colour figure painting techniques. There are 40 colours in the range.

Water-Mixable Oils:

Oilses and water don't mix my preciouses !!! Yep' your quite right, but these do.

They are genuine oil colour, which can be thinned with water or specially formulated water-mixable mediums. Very basically, water-soluble oil paints don't contain water

themselves; water is just what's used to thin the paints this water then evaporates as the paint dries

Water-mixable oil paints are a safer alternative to regular oil paints. Clean up of these paints simply requires soap and water rather than solvents, such as turpentine or white spirit. Made with modified linseed oil and safflower oil, water-mixable oils mix with water as opposed to repelling it, thus allowing for easy thinning and mixing. These artist quality paints are made with a high pigment load to preserve the strength, brilliance and depth of oils. In addition, water-mixable oil paints are certified non-toxic allowing this range of paints to be safely.

An initial palette should provide a wide colour spectrum and should have a good balance between transparent and opaque colours.

Recommend the basic Artisan palette:

- Lemon Yellow,
- Cadmium Yellow Hue.
- Cadmium Red Medium.
- Permanent Alizarin Crimson,
- French Ultramarine.
- Phthalo Green
- Raw Umber,
- Yellow Ochre,
- Burnt Sienna
- Titanium White.

Which Whites to Use

As discussed in part two adding white to any other colour produces 'tints'. The two whites in the Artisan range offer different working characteristics. Titanium White is the most popular modern white. It is the whitest, most opaque white and gives excellent covering power. Zinc White (Mixing White) is the most transparent white, making it ideal for stronger tints and glazing.

Working with water mixable paint:

I have only tried these paints on a few figures, which means I am still on a steep learning curve. I used my normal techniques of under painting with acrylic with an oil finishing coat and my initial findings suggests that there is not that much of a difference between the two. The medium has a slightly lower viscosity and the transparency slightly higher with some colours. The odour is much lower using water instead of turpentine.

Thinning:

Water should be added gradually, a small amount at a time and mixed well on the palette. If too much water is used or added too quickly, some colours may 'foam' with air bubbles. This can be reduced or avoided by using one of the Artisan mixing mediums. As water is added, some colours will lighten in tone but colour will return

to its original hue as the water evaporates. Colour change here again this problem can be reduced by the use of mediums in addition to water. The colour remains wet and workable after the evaporation of the water, like a conventional oil colour. Beware of over thinning. Water thins the colour by diluting the modified linseed oil. If too much is used, there will be insufficient oil remaining to bind the pigment. The paint surface will be susceptible to damage but will have a matt finish, which is good for figures.

Drying Times

Drying time depends on what you use. I find if you use the water as a thinner it dries a lot faster, if you use the oil medium it takes a longer time and stays sticky until totally cured. Since I tend to work a long time on my figures, the long drying time of oils is not a problem for me. However, a water mixable Fast Drying Medium is also available which improves the flow and speeds the drying and smoothes brushwork. It is excellent for glazing and producing fine detail.

These paints are not particularly expensive so I would suggest that you buy a couple of colours and give them a try.

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