An Introduction to Acrylic Painting
ART 199

Yvette Deas, Instructor

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. To learn and develop basic acrylic painting techniques.
2. To understand and apply color theory, value structure, and compositional considerations.
3. To explore materiality and the impact of acrylic paint handling.
4. To use formal analysis and conceptual analysis in the critique of art work.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND STUDIO PROJECTS

WEEKS 1 - 2  COLOR, VALUE & COMPOSITION

WEEKS 2 - 3  IMPRESSIONISM and POST-IMPRESSIONISM
We will break down the techniques of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists and apply it to both their traditional subject matter (landscape, figure), as well as non-traditional fare, using their techniques of an impasto, non-blended surface. Weather permitting, we will go outside for plein-air painting. Artists to consider: Cassatt, Degas, Gaugin, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Seurat, Sisley, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh.

Project 1: Landscape painting based on low-resolution photo, using Impressionist techniques. Using a smart phone (preferably) or cheap camera, take several landscape photos of your own choosing. These should NOT be high quality pictures! As a class we’ll decide which to paint from.

WEEKS 4-5  EXPRESSIONISM (and a few friends)
Adding to our techniques a thinner, flatter, application, we will also introduce charcoal, and work on surfaces that include paper, cardboard and wood. Various approaches within Expressionism are considered: figurative distortion, expressiveness of line, and dramatic emotion. Artists to consider: Francis Bacon, Romaine Brooks, Jay Defeo, Dix, Ensor, Klimt, Kokoschka, Kollwitz, Lebrun, Anita Malfatti, Munch, Nolde, Schiele, Soutine.

Project 2: Portraiture and distortion. Option of self-portrait or portrait of other, using distortion to dramatic effect.
WEEKS 6-9  POP ART (and a few friends)
Acrylics are particularly well-suited to Pop Art. Here we exploit it’s plasticity and synthetic nature. Colors may range from natural to industrial to neon. Our world is the world of mass production, the artificial, marketing, consumerism, celebrity and conscious cultural appropriation. Artists to consider: Evelyn Axell, Jim Dine, David Hockney, Robert Indiana, Jasper Johns, Kiki Kogelnik, Takashi Murakami, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, Yuko Shimizu, Wayne Thiebaud, Tom Wesselman.

Project 3: Collage study into paint. Students will amass imagery, either their own or publicly sourced, around a theme, and then manipulate those images using collage. Manipulation may be done either by hand or computer. The resulting study will form the basis for your painting.

EVALUATION: For Students taking this class for a letter grade or Credit
The grades will be based on completion and quality of both in class and out of class assignments, individual progress, effort, and class participation/attendance.
25% Attendance. See below.
25% Effort and Improvement. To evaluate yourself, ask, “Am I pushing myself beyond my comfort zone, or am I doing what comes easily?” “Am I trying as hard as I can?”
25% In-class work. Come to class prepared and organized. Follow all instructions. Participate. Be focused and engaged. Ask questions when needed.
25% Outside work. Follow all instructions. Keep up with all assignments. If you require clarification, take the responsibility to find answers either from me (office hours, email) or from your fellow students.
Plan to spend 8-10 hours per week on outside work.

ATTENDANCE: For Students taking this class for a Letter Grade or Credit
Attendance is crucial in this class. Students will be responsible for all information presented in class – information will not be repeated. Slide lectures will not be repeated. Students begin with an A, each absence reduces that grade-portion by a half-mark (e.g. from A to A Minus). Please come to class on time; being late two times will count as one absence. Any student who reaches the end of the quarter with perfect attendance (no lateness or absences) will receive an A Plus for that grade-portion.

MATERIALS
1. DRAWING MATERIALS: Charcoal pencils, compressed charcoal, vine charcoal (big – the biggest you can find -- and small), Kneaded eraser, white eraser. Small sand-pad, matte knife. Pencil sharpener.
2. INITIAL SUPPORTS: Pre-stretched and primed canvases, 18” x 24” (1 piece), Other supports discussed in class.
3. PAINTS: Titanium White, Zinc White, Lemon Yellow, Aureolin Yellow (if you can find it), Cadmium Yellow Medium Hue, Cadmium Red Light Hue, Alizarin
Crimson, Sap or Olive Green, Viridian, Cerulean Blue, Pthalo Blue, Ultramarine Blue, Dioxazine Purple, Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber. Note: for the Cadmiums, choose one with the word “HUE.” This is the synthetic (and non-toxic) version.

4. **MEDIUMS:** Acrylic matte and/or gloss medium 16 oz, Slow Drying Medium, Molding or Modeling Paste. Choose one other medium for fun: cement, lava, glass beads, etc...

5. **BRUSHES:** 2” utility brush (cheaper at Home Depot), variety of brushes in all shapes (round, filbert and straight) and sizes – at least 10, both bristle and synthetic (and sable or other animal hair, if you like). Don’t worry about whether the brushes say “Acrylic” or not. **Note:** cheap sets of brushes (approx. $8 - $12) can often be found at Michael’s or Amazon.

6. **OTHER:** Palette knife – METAL ONLY. 3 large plastic (lighter to carry), glass or metal containers: one to hold your brushes, and 2 for water. They should be big enough to fit your biggest brushes. For your palettes, you should use disposable wax paper palettes. I highly recommend Masterson Sta-Wet Premier Palette, with sponge and sheets. This can keep your paints wet and usable for a week or longer (especially if you put in frig), and will save you a lot of paint (and $), in the long run. Viewfinder – you can buy this or make it yourself – I recommend the “Viewcatcher,” small grey plastic from any art store. Toolbox or other container for paints, pencils, etc. Strong cylinder to hold brushes while painting, small baby food sized jars hold excess paints. Rags (lots): cloth (can make, or buy “bag of rags” – Blick), blue paper towels for mechanics (Home Depot), or regular paper towels.

**Art Supply Stores (Coupons and student discounts may be available for all, please ask):**
- Accent Arts, 392 California Avenue, Palo Alto 650-424-1044
- University Art, 2550 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA 94061 (650) 328-3500
- Dick Blick. Often cheaper than the others, locations in San Francisco and Oakland, On-line supplies.
- Amazon online.
- Michael’s (often cheap for brushes, always coupons online).
- Utrecht (stores and online)
- Artist and Craftsman – online (also store in Berkeley)
- (Coupons and student discounts may be available, please ask the vendor.)

Please note that the cost of materials varies widely. If you are a careful shopper, the cost can be reduced greatly. If you are starting from scratch, total material cost can vary between $300 and $550, at least.