

Painting Basics

Instructors: Ryan Sluggett

Dates: Session B, June 30 - August 1, 2025

Course Mode: In-Person

Meeting Times: MW 9.00-12.15

Distributional Requirements: Humanities

Eligibility: Open to pre-college and college students

Overview

In-person Course. An introduction to basic painting issues, stressing a beginning command of the conventions of pictorial space and the language of color. Class assignments and individual projects explore technical, conceptual, and historical issues central to the language of painting. Enrollment limited to 15 students. 1 Credit

No prior drawing experience required. Rigorous and energized in class work.

Objectives

Accelerate your painting fluency, observational skills, 'in the moment' decision making, and larger conceptual thinking. Learn about painting 'light', color mixing, and the differences between acrylic and oil paint. Keep a sketchbook to delve deep into ideas, try out new directions and reflect on the art/life crossover. Familiarize yourself with historical and contemporary artists, techniques and motivations of artists through slide lectures and 'in the flesh' paintings across the street at the YUAG.

Materials List

You bring:

4 brushes, round, flat, filbert, line

Basic Oil paint. White, 2 yellows, 2 reds, 2 blues, 2 browns

Basic Acrylic set White, 2 yellows, 2 reds, 2 blues, 2 browns

Pad of Canvas paper

Surfaces to paint on (choice of canvas board, or stretcher)

Apron or smock or painting clothes

I bring:

Extra brushes

Extra acrylic paint

Extra paper/ painting surfaces

Rags

Masking tape

Diversity Statement

We are all expected to contribute to creating a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment. This will allow for rigorous intellectual engagement and a deeper learning experience for all. Classrooms are more productive and successful when they include the

broadest range of diversity of all kinds, neurological diversity, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation. It is critical that students are able to approach art as an accessible, integral means of seeing and understanding our world, rather than as an esoteric pursuit.

Attendance and General Classroom Policies

Painting is inherently intensive and messy. Wear clothes that are easy to move in. Aprons or smocks are cool.

You are expected to attend every class, as this is a compressed course! Two absences will result in a lowered grade. Three absences will incur a failing grade. Two late arrivals or early departures equals one unexcused absence. You must come to class prepared to work.

Please feel free and comfortable to ask me questions at any time. Reach out to me for details about homework if you miss a class. I'm also available for individual meetings/ zoom meetings outside of class time.

Homework and participation

The course expects you to spend up to 6 hours a week on completing works started in class and your independent paintings. Depth of engagement and execution demonstrated in each completed work will form the basis for grading.

Preparation for class, willingness to try new approaches, completion of assignments, enthusiasm, completion of weekly reading/watching/ listening homework, participation, and attendance will be considered when grading.

Seeing art IRL will profoundly impact your personal development and fluency as an artist.

Final Grade Calculation

Attendance and Participation 40%
Development of Creative Process 30%
Homework Assignments 30%

At Home Assignment Prompts: details to follow in class:

Sketchbooks: You are expected to fill at least one sketchbook! We will be sharing excerpts of our favorite pages throughout the class... what if instead of posting online, we shared IRL!!? Crazy right?

MIDTERM at home assignment for group critique: Choose one of the following: spend 6 hours.

Self-Portrait and Background 80/20%: make a portrait that fills 80% of the picture plane. The remaining 20% will provide just enough space to narrativize the Figure.

Narrative: a prompt ending in 'ing' is generated by students and shared. Using one or more of the approaches covered in class, make this 'ing' word into a large scale abstract or representational drawing, and make it yours!

Something New: drawing and painting are resilient ancient art forms because they have the ability to absorb so many other media and artforms into their pictorial syntax. What is something new that you haven't seen much of in art yet that you could include to make a picture out of?

FINAL at home assignment for group critique: Use a technique or approach from class/ or art historical or contemporary event, as a reference to develop a work entirely of your own.

Course Outline

June 30 Monday: Light through contrast

Syllabus

'Sketchbook Indoctrination'

Brightest Candle painting

July 2 Wednesday: Color through complementaries

Local color examined and perfected with mixing techniques

July 7 Monday: Paint is paint

Palette painting exploring texture and the 'intelligence of the material'

July 9 Wednesday: Model

Using the three skills touched on so far, light through contrast, color through complementaries, and paint is paint

July 14 Monday : Group Critique

Assignment one will be critiqued by the group

July 16 Wednesday: Collage

Two periodicals, two styles.

July 21 Monday: Museum Visit/ Heads

Paintings visited at the museum will serve as part of a sculptural still life

July 23 Wednesday: Model Gestural

Quick gestural paintings will lead into slower studies of the figure

FINAL DAY July 28 Monday: Personal Project

Final Personal Project will be critiqued by the group